

DEATH BY EUTHANASIA

Beloved Father



"Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they repose in Thee."

St. Augustine

У блаженному успінні вічний
упокій подай, Господи, повсякчас
поминаному слугі Твоєму, Іван
Лісовий, і вчини йому вічна
пам'ять.

I'm writing this letter at 4:00 AM because I haven't been able to sleep.

My Father, John Lisowy, died in the early hours of Feb 3, 2004. He was being cared for in our home when he developed a wet cough (The Flu). He was suffering dementia, had his leg recently amputated some months previous had overcome some health concerns in his recovery. He wasn't speaking, he had to be fed, but a week prior, he managed to take the hand of his caregiver, raise it to his lips and kiss the caregiver's hand in order to show his love, respect and gratitude.

My 26 year old innocent daughter became concerned that Grampa needed some medical attention for his cough, started yelling at me, and became insistent I take him to see a doctor so they could start him on some anti-biotics fearing the cough if left untreated might develop into pneumonia. I called all day trying to find a doctor that might make a home visit but in the end, had to opt for the services of the doctors at the hospital. The folks at emergency confirmed that indeed it appeared to be an early onset of some respiratory problem, put dad on intravenous liquids and said they would begin medication. He was admitted then transferred to a room upstairs.

Believing dad was in competent caring hands, I relaxed, but the following evening I was surprised to hear that no medication had even been initiated. Asking what the reason for this un-necessary delay was, I was given some poor excuse by a nervous nurse that tried to avoid eye contact. "Tests are pending" she said, "but still have not been ordered" adding that "hospitals operate more slowly". I spoke with Dr. Game and insisted he be started on antibiotics before his condition deteriorated, and could he please have some expectorant for flem. I also added that dad probably could use a Tylenol to ease discomfort. **Instead a young attendant came by with a Morphine needle.** I was surprised that morphine was prescribed him as I understood it is only used in extreme cases of pain. **Uneasy, I trusted the doctor's judgement. An hour later my dad was thrashing. Battling,** I'm assuming it was because he began feeling his lungs filling, his larynx seizing and breath constricting. **He fought for his life.** At 10:00 pm, dad's salaried caregiver and her son left his bedside. The next morning I was informed that Father died in the early hours. They explained that his breathing had become difficult, had slowed further and further until he could breathe no more. **In other words, he slowly suffocated to death.**

His death would have been more merciful had I put a pillow over his face, but that's murder. If a doctor prescribes Morphine, the nurse injects it, it's called "medicine (something good for you) and can be justified because it was carried out by a qualified "physician".

I thanked Jennifer, the one who called to announce my dad's passing but I know, and I know that they know, that what Dr. Game had done to my Father was in fact initiate a Morphine death. "A doctor prescribed Euthanasia". I'm well informed, have access to health information via Internet. I have since confirmed my suspicions through reading side effects of morphine in "The Essential Guide to Prescription Drugs". One only needs to type in "Morphine Euthanasia" on the web and you begin to realize the enormity of the problem, that your story is only one of many. My dad wasn't in pain, or fever. He had

onset of some bronchial condition. I can't for one moment believe that Doctors in a hospital are unaware of "Precautionary Warning" regard the proper use of Morphine. When I opened my dad's mouth to look inside, I saw his mouth was full of a mushy porridge like substance. It was no longer cohesive flem the kind you cough up with a chest cold. It was unlike anything I had ever seen. Contrary to what we want to believe about Morphine, my Dad did not go gently into the night.

Morphine: CAUTION: If you have asthma, bronchitis or emphysema, this drug may cause significant respiratory difficulty, thickening of bronchial secretions and suppression of coughing.

Serious Adverse Affects:

- Swelling of throat, vocal chords, spasm of larynx and bronchial tubes
- Hallucinations, Psychosis, Disorientation, tremor and muscle twitching
- Drop in blood pressure
- Seizures

I can't bear to imagine the heart gripping terror my dad must have experienced when he realized something was going terribly wrong. He was always afraid of hospitals, needles. Now I have good reason to fear.

Today I have a heavy heart and very mixed feelings. At 90, life didn't owe dad anything. He was living on borrowed time. Still, I have this nagging feeling that somehow I had betrayed dad by delivering him into the hands of death. I myself feel uneasy, I feel tricked and betrayed. I'm not going to pursue dad's "**death by morphine injection**" for the purpose of extracting revenge, but I just needed to share this. **When does it make it right for the medical profession to Euthanize?** Does a senior with onset of bronchitis, reason enough to terminate a life. Who decides? Who gave doctors the licence to kill? I have a lot of questions and sleepless thoughts. "Maybe I should have, shouldn't have". If only I knew. **The hospital is no longer the safe refuge it seemed.** Doctors are capable of evasion and deceit. Is the world different today or is it just me? Yesterday I was naïve, trusting. Today I struggle with feelings of confusion, apprehension. There's no easy answer, but I did need to get out of my sleepless bed and share my experience with the world.

Dad was a good man, he loved people, he cared, I loved him, and his caregivers loved him. Though he was 90, unable to speak, suffering dementia and handicapped in various ways, this so called doctor interpreted.

"Vegetable" had enough brains, awareness, connected to feeling, and still maintained the ability to "devise" creative ways to communicate, to express his love, his deep gratitude to those around him.

PS: I asked to have a short version of this letter printed in "Letters to the Editor" of our local newspaper (leaving out specific names of course). They responded:

“Dear Stephanie”

“My condolences on the loss of your father but we really can’t run a letter containing such serious allegations. Perhaps you could raise your concerns with the hospital, AMA or the Health Ministry”. I Laughed.

It seems that Euthanasia at grass roots level reporting in an uncomfortable topic even for Journalists whose mission is to uncover and report “The Truth”. I think I would get a better reception at the local police station. Then it would just die in someone’s file and I would be flagged as “a crazy and dismissed”. This makes anyone want to consider keeping a loaded gun by their bed as an alternative to being pleasantly murdered in a hospital the way my father was. This is the joke.

In writing this article, I have no bitterness, no need for revenge; I don’t even outright condemn “Euthanasia” because perhaps in some “severe individual by individual cases where pain is so unbearable” it’s clearly the compassionate thing to do. My intention in writing this account is to drag this subject out of the clandestine and place it in the light. To initiate discussion, initiate clear guidelines and brainstorm solutions. My Father’s death is not a “personal family matter”. It affects all of us and our quality of life. It affects our Social Conscience, affects our Human Dignity. It affects our ability to Trust.

If we’re going to use our hospitals as slaughter houses for our weak and elderly seniors then maybe we should talk about authorizing some humane forms of euthanasia instead of injecting a man with onset of bronchitis with morphine then waiting until the drug causes him to slowly drown, gag and choke on his own bronchial secretions, together with seizures.

I have a need to know how many hours it took for my dad to die from the time he was first administered the lethal dose of morphine by a qualified physician at the hospital.

Stephanie Baziuk

Thank you Dido
For all the little things
From: =====

Thank you Dido for tucking me in at night when you babysat me so many times, so long ago. I would watch you make my bed meticulously, folding in all the corners, making sure it was a bed fit for a princess. You always made me feel loved when you kissed me on the forehead and said goodnight. In the morning you would wake me up with a cup of hot chocolate and one of your famous homemade dill pickles. A strange combination of taste I still crave today.

Thank you Dido for fixing my bike and my shoes all the time. You were better than any shoe smith, and your handiness always made everything run so smoothly.

Thank you Dido for taking Ene, my friend Christy, and me to the lake every summer. Those memories of you walking the beach chatting with everyone are some of the dearest I hold because they revealed your soul. Kind, friendly, and so sociable. You knew every person by first name by the end of the day on the beech.

Thank you Dido for letting me sit on your lap while you drove the car, letting me control the wheel down the side roads. For fun and for freedom, it was more adventure than any 7 year old could have asked for. Maybe your very early driving lessons are the reason I've never had an accident.

Thank you Dido for always making sure I looked like a shiny penny. You took pride in seeing your grandkids looking polished. I enjoyed every shopping trip with you, and holding your hand as we walked through Woodward's.

Thank you Dido for the secret "top drawer" of your dresser, where you kept treats and gifts for Ene and me. I think you did an amazing job spoiling everyone. You gave from the heart, and I felt it every time.

Thank you Dido for the gift you put aside for me for my wedding some day. The love you showed me surpassed your time on this Earth. This is very special to me.

I could go on Dido thanking you forever and I will. I could never run out of something nice to say about you. I'm so glad that I was able to spend some time with you, and care for you a little in the last few months of your life. My care could only reciprocate a tiny portion of the patience you always showed me and everyone.

I'm relieved that you are free from suffering now and that you are in God's hands. You gave so many beautiful memories. The values you instilled in us will always serve as a reminder of the exceptional Dido you were. Your love will live in our hearts.

Love =====