

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Steph Hatfield: “The Light Behind Your Eyes”

Steph Hatfield · Wednesday, August 8th, 2018

The day he got rear ended in '94 changed his entire life. He broke his neck and from there he slowly got sicker and sicker. When he was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver, we knew it was bad. We didn't think it would turn out the way it did. We never thought for a moment that it would turn into liver failure.

The day we got the news that he was terminally ill, we were devastated, heartbroken, but part of us was a little relieved. I know. That makes all of us all sound like a bunch of horrible human beings. We knew, as much as it hurt us that he was dying, he wouldn't be in pain anymore. He wouldn't be suffering anymore.

He didn't treat it like he was a ticking time bomb. He knew, we knew, but he continued living to the best of his abilities as things deteriorated. At the end of May 2018, he took a turn for the worse. He couldn't walk, he couldn't move himself in bed. I was on a plane on June 1 heading home to be with him, but none of us expected things to happen the way they did.

When the death call started, I knew. I knew he had less than 12 hours, I started making the dreaded phone calls to his close friends. After about 5, I got to the one I was dreading, maybe fearing—his best friend. After that call, it hit me, it hit me he was dying.

A few hours after my phone calls, his best friend came to say his goodbye. Out of those of us that were there, I was the only one who couldn't be inside when he said his goodbyes. Out of all of the phone calls and all the goodbyes, I think the hardest one for me was watching his mother's. The day only got harder; we were moving him every 3 or so hours.

Around 9 o'clock that night, it was just mom and I. We couldn't move him; he was falling off the bed slowly. I did the only thing I could and called a family friend who's a nurse and works in a nursing home. If she hadn't come, I don't know what we would have done to get him moved. I walked her out and I asked her how long. She shook her head and told me what I already knew. Not long.

I'm not a religious person, but I do thank god every day that my brother made it home just in time. He was sitting in dad's chair in the living room, mom was by dad's bedside, I was sitting at the foot of the bed. That's when I heard it, his last breath. I jumped up and pushed mom out of the way. I saw that he was dying. I stepped back and stuck my head into the living room. “Josh get in here. Now.” He jumped up.

I went back by his bedside and held his other hand, the one mom didn't already have in hers. Josh stood at the foot to the bed. We were all around him, watching the light fade from his eyes.

[alert type=alert-white]Please consider making a tax-deductible donation now so we can keep publishing strong creative voices.[/alert]

This entry was posted on Wednesday, August 8th, 2018 at 1:12 pm and is filed under [Essay](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.