

Daniel Kenneth Thomas Leahy. I do so love his full name...I don't know if I ever told his mom that...so Barbara...thanks for the fantastic name and for being his mom and...well...bringing him into this world! I'm so grateful.

And while on the topic of gratitude--I have to publicly thank a few people for their love and listening ears--my mom, Diane and Dan's sister, Sarah---thank you both so much. And last but not least---Alex's mom--Trisha. She has been a wonderful and unexpected source of comfort and support to me during this time of unfathomable loss and sadness. I am deeply thankful for our special and unique friendship and connection. Thank you, Trisha.

To be honest these last two months have been quite a blur. As I took time to reflect on what I wanted to say about my fella Dan, I found myself reading various quotes from movies and shows that he liked or that we liked. I would like to share two quotes and my subsequent thoughts.

The first one is from Deep Space Nine Season 2 Episode 13-titled: Armageddon: Chief O'Brien said to Doctor Bashir: "...marriage is the greatest adventure of them all. It's filled with pitfalls and setbacks and mistakes... But it's a journey worth taking... 'cause you take it together. " Now to give a little context on the quote--bear with me while I provide a short synopsis of the episode because yes-I had to watch it as I was super curious on context---So...Chief O'Brien was accidentally exposed to a biological weapon during a fight. To escape the fight Bashir and O'Brien transported themselves to the closest planet and had been trying to use old/abandoned equipment to contact their crew. Unfortunately, O'Brien is seemingly dying from this accidental exposure, so O'Brien and Bashir have a heart-to-heart conversation about life, love, and marriage...hence the quote. Meanwhile--there is an altered recording of the fight sent to senior staff of DSN that makes it appear O'Brien and Bashir actually died in the conflict. Upon reviewing the recording, O'Brien's wife (Keiko) says it must be altered because her husband doesn't drink coffee in the afternoon. She is extremely adamant this could mean her husband is actually alive. Based on this observation and her conviction--the DSN crew decides to investigate the scene of the fight...and ultimately, they rescue Bashir and O'Brien in time to save O'Brien from death. The episode ends with O'Brien telling Keiko that he actually does drink coffee in the afternoon, therefore making the entire rescue...well...unexpectedly magical.

As I sat with the quote and the episode I felt a deep connection to it--marriage is not about major gestures-it is about the small, quiet, tender moments of togetherness. For example, I loved that Dan and I often held hands at night in bed and he would gently rub my wrist until we fell asleep...and yet I also know that marriage isn't all roses and sunshine. Even in the midst of all the togetherness...it is still not possible to know everything about your spouse. We are ultimately responsible for our own choices in life and yet when married we are fortunate that we don't have to face life or consequences alone. True connection, deep love, continued forgiveness, and caring support can transcend understanding. And just as in this episode of DSN...sometimes all it takes is a concerned, loving, and hopeful partner to save you. I know that Dan and I have saved each other in a lot of ways. All the hard things in life felt manageable because we were together. Marriage is an adventure, and I am happy that I got to be in it with him and show him daily how much I loved him...even if it was much shorter than I wanted and even though it ended in such a sad and unpredictable way.

The second quote is from the most recent version of the movie--The Secret Life of Walter Mitty which by the way is the movie after which we saw in the movie theatre-I asked Dan to go steady with me because really, I am an old soul and I am a sucker for dreamy fellas who have big dreams. Anyway, the quote is short--"Life is about courage and going into the unknown" This quote initially made me think of star trek and Dan's love of space travel...but after sitting with the words for a while...it mostly made me think of Alex and Ben.

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First--to Ben--Due to circumstances beyond your control your closer relationship with your dad was relatively new. It is very important for me to tell you that your Dad always spoke about you with curiosity and with love. He truly believed that he wouldn't get to know you until you were an adult. But he was very happy that he was actually starting to get to know you now and love you close up and not just from afar. He had the picture of you, him, and Alex in front of the Bay Bridge on his phone as his background. He told me that he really liked the picture because when the Bay Bridge was being considered back in the 1920s a lot of people didn't think it would be possible and that it was kind of a miracle it actually came together...and well... that is how he felt about having both of you together with him...that it was a wonderful miracle. I am so thankful that you were willing to come to our home and be a part of our life for a few days this summer. You are courageous and I know your dad was proud that you are his son. I am so thankful to your dad that I got to meet you and that I get to love you.

To Alex--When I married your Dad--you two came as a package--and for that I am so lucky. I made vows to you at our wedding. I promised to:

- listen to you with my head and my heart.
- to help take care of you and your dad.
- to be fair to you and your dad.
- share my "phonie" with you (not relevant anymore!)
- and lastly, I promised to love you as long as I am. No matter where life takes us...and even when we have kids or babies...you would always be the first most important little lady in my life and that would never change.
- And well...all these are still true.

Your dad loved you deep and true my darling girl. He loved trying to make you laugh and he loved laughing at your jokes. He enjoyed all your cuddles and snuggles and most of all he appreciated your kind heart and generous spirit. You are courageous and I know your dad was proud that you are his daughter. I am so thankful to your dad that I got to meet you and that I get to love you.

And now I would like to close with a quote from the movie/book titled Cloud Atlas--"My life amounts to no more than one drop in a limitless ocean. Yet what is any ocean, but a multitude of drops?" We may feel small and minor sometimes...and really, we all are just one drop...so why not take our one life and pursue passion, love, and kindness...and why not do it now?! As I reflect on Dan's life...it is very clear that moment matters, so dream big, love hard, and pursue passion because together we can make waves in this ocean, we call life.

Thank you.