

Saying Goodbye

On Father's Day, June 15, I lost my dad. Though he had endured a three and a half year battle with cancer, he died unexpectedly and suddenly that morning. Death had been foreign to me. I had not lost a parent or a sibling in my 47 years, though I had lost a dear friend two years ago. I was blessed to be in the house the morning my father passed, and to have spent the prior three days visiting with him. Those who have lost someone they love know that the days that followed his death are a blur, surreal in so many ways. The finality of his death was crushing. As my wife said so eloquently, "The sorrow of death is truly left for the living." For a while I felt numb. I had no desire to do much of anything. I found concentration elusive. Each morning I awoke. Each night I slept. What occurred in between seemed largely irrelevant. Several weeks passed before I sat down again at this computer, fingers poised on the keyboard, and decided it was time to get back to living, to do what I love, to write. I never truly realized how much I love what I do until those days following my father's death. The ability to express my emotions in words, to unburden my pain and sense of loss on my characters was cathartic, and gradually allowed me to begin the process of healing. In life, my father gave my nine brothers and sisters and I the gift of opportunity, opportunity to pursue our dreams. In death, he gave me another gift, the perspective to realize how lucky I am to have been given that first gift.