

I really did not know how to start this. This was definitely not part of the plan. A little over two years ago, in this very church, I married the most amazing man in the world. The Luke we all knew was smart, kind, funny – a great dancer – or at least an entertaining one... He had so many great qualities and so many different sides to him. There was the Championship Fencer... the all night party guy... the wanna be NASCAR driver... the businessman... and for the last two years, there was also Luke the husband and Luke the father.

Luke, my Lukie, is my best friend and love of my life. I say is, because even though he is no longer here with us in body, he is still here in our minds and hearts ... and he is still my best friend... and he is still the love of my life. When we got married, we were ready to start our perfect life together; a life full of vacations and nights out, children, and growing old together.

When Luke was diagnosed with cancer only 4 months after we got married, our lives were thrown upside down. Why Luke? Why us? Why now? But Luke, incredible, positive, Luke, he'd say 'You know what, Jen, God gave this to us for a reason – and we will beat it.' And no matter how bad things were, he would always remind me that someone out there had it even worse and to just take things one day at a time.

Having to deal with cancer, especially at such a young age, is hard, and not fair, but Luke fought it with everything he had up until the very end. And no matter how hard things got, Luke was always able to pull the best out of the situation. He never lost faith or hope. He never gave up – he fought till the end.

We always knew that we had strong families, and good friends, but the strength and love and help that we received after Luke was diagnosed went above and beyond.

From day one, the doctors and nurses at Memorial Sloan Kettering loved Luke – we used to joke that he was VIP there – always getting the corner suite, always walking in with his entourage of his mom and dad, my dad, friends and then Abby. Everyone always made Luke feel so special, and you have no idea what a sense of safety and relief you gave him – just knowing that at any moment we could call or email, and in the end, have people come over to check on him and his medicines. I know Luke would have wanted me to especially thank Dr. Riely, Dr. Foley, and Dr. Coyle... as well as Kim, and Patty.... You all made such a difficult time in our lives so much easier. When he went to the hospitals or chemo suites, he really felt how much you all cared... he felt like he was with family. A special thank

you from me goes to my aunt Eileen.... Thank you for preparing me for the end, and for taking care of Luke when he left us.

Our families remained our rocks of strength from the very beginning. Luke was able to go to work for as long as he did, because of his amazing mother, Nancy, who dropped everything at a moment's notice to be with him.

In the last few weeks he seriously considered looking into getting a two bedroom apartment, not for our daughter, but for Anna – who came over every single day after school to help out in anyway she could... Luke even called her his roomie.

Dave and Mike were there for Luke – providing mental, emotional and physical support – at the time we needed them the most.

My parents would stop by with groceries or to help with laundry – or just to sit and watch a Rangers game.

Lizzy and John were constantly bringing over meals - and maybe a bottle of wine or two – and providing company, especially on some of the rougher nights.

And Big Luke...my Luke and I were never worried that a stone would be left unturned because we knew that you were reaching out to every possible person you knew to help your son... and both of us appreciated that more than you will ever know.

Some couples live a life time together, without having even close to the amount of love that Luke and I had for each other. We were soulmates. I could not have asked for a better friend and husband. And though this cancer did cut our time together short, it also brought us closer than I ever thought we could be. In the past two years, we were able to cram a lifetime of experiences and love into our time together.

When Luke became a dad, I saw a new side of him... He absolutely adored Abby – calling her his “Abby-Girl” - that was his name for her, and he did not want anyone else to call her that. He would sit and hold her in the morning and watch CNBC – and explain the Nasdaq and Dow... and of course, Abby was not even 3 hours old before he had her watching college football in the hospital room. Luke's absolute favorite time with her was in the morning, when we would take Abby into bed with us, and he would hold her hands. Luke always said that Abby was better than any pain killer.

Abby has some big shoes to fill... Luke had her life planned out already, and was very specific in what he wanted done for her.... First the AC morning program, Lake George and Remsenburg for the summers, then St. Ignatius, Dominican – and of course, Notre Dame. He did say that she could go wherever she wanted, but while saying that, he was putting her

ND booties on her, singing the Fight Song, and explaining how Weiss was just having another rough season – But at least they won a Bowl Game.

I said earlier, that we started our marriage with the hope of a perfect life – and we really did have it. We went on vacations to Long Island, and Lake George, and Disney World.... We had a beautiful baby girl, our Abby Rose.... And we grew old together and did things that old couples do – like finish each other's sentences, tivo SNL because we could not stay up past midnight on Saturdays, and watch Jeopardy and Wheel together and compete to see who was smarter. I always thought it was a draw.. .but I know Luke thought otherwise.

There is a poem... What Cancer Can Not Do. It says that cancer can not shatter hope or cripple love, it can't kill friendship or shut out memories. But I want to end by telling you all what cancer can do.

Cancer can bring people from across the country together to run around central park, celebrate in Wicker Park, and raise thousands of dollars for research.

Cancer can build a lifetime of memories in a twenty month stretch of time.

Cancer can make you appreciate every miniscule moment of the day – like when you brush your teeth together when you wake up, or fall asleep holding hands.

Cancer can bring a beautiful child into the world a lot sooner than you thought it would... and I thank God for that.

Cancer can make you realize how deeply you love someone – enough to do anything in the world to help them.

Cancer can make you so close to and so much more in love with someone than ever you thought imaginable.... So much that it doesn't make you feel like you've been married for only 25 months, but more like twenty five years.

And finally, cancer can bring hundreds of people together this past weekend to celebrate the life of an amazing man... a man who died too young... a man who did more in 30 years than most people do in a lifetime.... a Superman.