



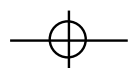
【文薈篇】海外來鴻

REMEMBRANCE

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The cruelty of logic is the knowledge that one day most children will have to say farewell to their parents. We know it, yet we don't like to think about it. Who would want to think about the day that they must say farewell to their father? When we looked at him lying in the hospital bed those last few days, we did not see a man who has suffered so much over the last few months. We didn't see a man who battled so bravely with his illness. What we saw was the man who laughed with us when we told him stories, even ones that wouldn't be funny to anyone else, except a father. We remember him as a man who could always find a way to get things done, no matter how difficult a project might seem. We remember him as a man who taught us to treat others with respect, how we would want to be treated. We saw the face of our father not as it looks today but how it is embedded in our hearts.

Many of you here today knew our father as a friend, a co-worker, an uncle, a brother, a grandfather, a Master of I-Kuan Tao or any of a dozen other things, but we were his children. We knew him as "Papa". We like to think that helped forge a unique bond, one of love, trust, and understanding. And of course, these developed as we grew older. We're sure that as children, our collective effect on Papa was to regularly drive him to distraction and make him wonder why he ever had children in the first place. Some of our fondest memories are of our father coming home after a very long working day (waking up at 3am), still having made time at the end of the



day to spend with us, sometimes having stopped by on the way home to pick up a big three foot long rectangular pizza. Much has changed since then, and in these last few months, our family has been drawn closer together as our father battled against the illness that would eventually take his life.

Our father was a man who was very familiar with the concept of sacrifice. Back in Vietnam, our father came from a very privileged family, and gave up that extravagant lifestyle so that his children could have greater opportunities here in the U.S. This wasn't the last time he gave up something for his family, either. Our father knew about his illness many years ago, back when we were much younger, and at that time our father made a decision. Once again, he put the needs of his family before his own well-being and continued to work endless hours to support us, his wife and his mother. He really gave our family the ultimate gift that anyone could offer, and for that we will be both eternally grateful and saddened. For many years, the disease remained dormant and he was able to continue living his life like nothing was wrong. Eventually, though, it caught up to him and took him much sooner than any of us would have expected.

Our father did not know failure. He was a man who was very determined to solve problems, wherever those problems might arise. His determined, strong-willed nature always was the pillar at the center of our family. In many ways, he was defined by his hopes for the future and his faith – and not only his faith in I-Kuan Tao, but his faith in hard work, his faith in being a righteous man, and his faith in the good nature of the human spirit.

Losing anybody in this life is devastating. We all know that well. But we must admit, there is something different about losing our father. The world has lost a good man, but through it, we have come to recognize friends we did not even realize we had. Life moves on; we all will. And we all will mourn and be sad. But when we find the sadness creeping up, remember this philosophy: Whenever something wonderful comes to an end, don't be sad for the ending... Rather be happy that it happened at all. That is how dad would want us to feel. We will not be saying goodbye to him today, because we truly know he is with us always.