

Jim then told me to take the week and said they'd be okay without me for a few days and that all things were moving pretty slow so there shouldn't be any problem. He told me to check in every now and then just make sure. I told him OK and that I would keep him informed.

As I drove home, it occurred to me that you can move thousands of miles away from everybody and everything you know and still be just as close after a phone call. I couldn't stop thinking about him. Dad was sick and had been getting worse recently. I talked to Mom on Sunday, and she said he was bad. Martha, their Hospice nurse, had told her that it wouldn't be long. Mom was tough, and we'd all been expecting this for a while, but still nothing really ever prepares you for it. To me, it seemed so quick. I thought I would have more time to sit and talk, ask questions and generally have more time to share with him. Even though I knew it was a possibility, I still was not ready for the news.

I pulled into the driveway, and Grace was standing at the door. She hugged me as soon as I walked up the steps. After a moment, I went in, sat in the living room and called Mom. When the call was over, I just sat there, staring out the window with the phone still clenched in my hand. The only thing going through my mind as I watched the sun setting through the trees was the lyrics to an old Moody Blues song. You know the one, "Go Now". It just seemed, appropriate. Dad always liked the Moody Blues. In my mind's eye, I could see dad in his favorite chair listening to his music. Tears slid down my cheek, as I stared out the window into the field, I almost didn't notice the deer grazing out by the trees. Dad went fast, mom had said. She was relieved that his suffering was finally over.

Grace stood in the kitchen, and she could see it on my face. I realized that I needed to quickly go home to Florida and help with the funeral. She just said, "I dug your suitcase out of the closet. It's on the bed." With that, she came over and sat down beside me, put her arms around me, and just held on.