

## Wombat's Wish - "Letting Go"

### **An Impregnable Illness**

**Corrin Demeo, Year 8, Sacred Heart College**

You never ruminate the illness. It is an unspoken nightmare, concealed only for a short while. No matter how much you say it won't appear or exist, there is no use of denying the facts. Still, we turn a blind eye to the lump, the mole - the tumour.

One in two men are struck by the evil, sometimes impregnable disease, though we are all still so supercilious to its menace. Cancer won't triumph over you, nor your friend or even your uncle. We are all too young and indestructible. Who are we kidding? We're rather just complacent.

Of course it is an instantaneous shock when you are proved wrong. It is almost incomprehensible. A loved one has been clenched by the nightmarish disease. You feel sick and turn ghostly white. At first you remain incredulous until your whole demeanour begins to crumble. Your life begins to crumble knowing someone - someone very special - may never be the same again.

As time drifts forever slowly by what was once my uncle becomes a man with pale skin barely covering the bones jerking out in places, never noticed before. It is hard to recognise the man who lightened my days and told me stories I still remember as clear as day. He now has dishevelled hair and his once twinkling eyes have lost nearly all their warmth. Cancer is a journey you must undertake alone. It doesn't matter if you are strong or weak, wealthy or poor - no one can defy the illness, only luck can.

The disease eats away at your loved ones. It may change their appearance and their energy, but it will never change their souls. My uncle welcomed death like an acquaintance he had been yet to meet. He believed God guided him through life and the same could be said through death. Though as terrifying as dying may seem, my uncle held strong until his last moments on earth. Despite the knowledge he did not conquer the illness, the uncle I will always cherish led a brave fight right up until the end.

When it finally dawned on me that I would never again visit my uncle or see his exuberant and smiling face I didn't crumble down once again. Instead I relinquished my mourning and decided that I could only relive memories that would never fade, like a tree that never lost its leaves. My uncle had already given me his own life and experiences and taught me how to believe in myself and how to defeat my own worries and troubles. He was a role model that I will forever thank and miss.

From this life changing experience I learnt that death is only the beginning. A beginning continued with God and the loved ones you have already lost. We cannot let death defeat us just as my uncle never truly let cancer defeat him. Although he will be sorely missed, I live in the knowledge that my uncle never really passed on - his soul still lives inside me.