

As read by George Sheanshang for  
Edward Strong

What do you say about a 28 year-old in the prime of his life tagged out of the blue by the most dreaded of medical diagnoses, conveying a likely death sentence that was to be imposed ultimately two years later?

You say that he faced the ordeal with his customary good nature, sense of humor and quiet determination, fortified by a full measure of courage. You say that he withstood surgery, radiation, an immunotherapy clinical trial and at least four types of chemotherapy without undue complaint, all the while charming doctors, nurses and technicians wherever he encountered them.

You recognize how all life is never far from sorrow, and you say that all of you here today helped him with your love and support as he lived out his relatively normal but astonishing life in the shadow of this monster disease.

When Owen finished his radiation treatment at Sloan Kettering, the technician urged him onward: "Don't ever lose that smile". It was coaching he took to heart, particularly in the company of his beautiful and compassionate girlfriend Stacia Smart, who stuck with him throughout, or goofing around as in the old days with his always attentive sister Leda.

I propose a Special Tony Award for my wife Laurel, who prepared hundreds of enticing family dinners for Team Owen over the course of Owen's treatment and was always there to shuttle him to the next appointment or laugh with him as Doc Martin bumbled through on Netflix.

Owen received exceptional medical care from Drs Adrienne Boire and Cameron Brennan at Memorial Sloan Kettering as well as Dr Henry Friedman of the Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University, who called to check on Owen every Saturday and was otherwise always there at all hours of the day or night to answer innumerable calls and text messages. Boundless and abiding thanks to the doctors and their respective teams.

When the ending overtook us more swiftly than we expected, we came to realize that as throughout his ordeal, Owen was masking how he really felt; one of the doctors allowed as how her team reviewing his MRIs and test results were surprised Owen was still able to walk at all or speak coherently while we witnessed him still socializing and joking with his friends.

That was just Owen's way: he wanted to be there for all of you- the self-described "stringbean" had a core of steel. I'm happy to say that we will play three tracks for you

featuring Owen on lead vocal of songs composed with his Evening Fools colleagues Frank DeSalvo and Patrick McKelvy. The finale "Stay the Night", was finished up just before Owen was admitted to the final hospital visit; Owen was determined to get it done- you may imagine flights of angels joining in now on the chorus.

Peace to you all; thank you for contributing your presence to this memorial today.

And to you Owen, my beautiful, my beloved son, the blessing of your life abides with me for all time; my love for you will never die and will never yield.