

Andrea

I wondered if I need to write to you or about you because this needs to be done properly and up to your standards but I found that to talk about you means that I accept the fact that I will never see you again in the flesh and I am not ready to admit the finality of the situation.

You and I first became acquainted on the long road to Oranim. Four years twice a day on roads that were not roads and squashed in the back of cars that were not cars. Still the memory of your enthusiasm for learning is strong in my mind.

We have been in the same group of friends for many years. Eating meals together in the dining room, celebrating birthdays together, supporting each other during the good times and the bad. Since the privatization of the kibbutz, people have found it more difficult to get together and unfortunately connections have been harder to keep up. I am sure that there are many people here today that were thinking of you and meant to pick up the phone and call. Ask how you are doing, what's up? But thought that tomorrow is time enough. Little did we know.

But I know you from yet another group. For almost 30 years we have been playing scrabble together once a week. You, me, Miriam, and Chava have been playing all these years. We had some guest players like Shelli, Tova or even Ruth but the four of us have continued all these years, as your brother says, "cheating at the game". Our weekly meetings are more than playing scrabble. It is a social meeting and we have been together all these years through the good times and the bad times but we have all been here for each other.

We started before Adam became a member of your family and the family has always been so important to you. Then Talia joined the team and later Adi. You and Jackie finally had the family that you dreamed of! Later, when your parents made aliyah and moved to Herziliya, you were surrounded by your family and you were devoted to them. Even the latest addition, LuLu, received tons of affection and daily walks.

The years that Jackie worked abroad were difficult for you, making our weekly meetings even more important to you. We gave you as much support as we could.

We looked forward to the game with you because you are one of the best story tellers I have ever met. You really missed your calling and should have been an actress. You tell us things that have happened during the week, always with dramatic humor and we always have a good laugh. I am sure this talent made you the excellent teacher that you are.

This last year has been so difficult for you. Starting with your mom's death and then injuring your shoulder. You kept up your spirits and were always positive. You were so scared before your operation but it went smoothly, or so you thought, and you bounced back so quickly we were amazed; but then the complications started. Even though it was obvious that you were really suffering, I personally was extremely impressed by the positive attitude you kept up all these months.

Thank God Jackie was home during this difficult time and he took such good care of you and even made us coffee on scrabble nights.

Over the years, we discussed the deterioration of the education system and you were planning to start a new career next year. Going out on pension, finally, every teacher's dream. So many plans! Translating movies, editing papers, remodeling your home. But the best laid plans..... still there is a big difference between going astray and being snuffed out. The unfairness in all of this is enormous.

We played scrabble on Monday night. You won! You even said that you hadn't won for awhile and we decided together that your luck is changing. Miriam got us the tickets for the show on Monday next. We planned that I would broadcast it through my cell phone and you could sing along. You love to sing and you know every song and are a walking book of facts about the entertainment business.

So Andrea! We are not going to cancel our tickets in deference to your death but we are going to go to the show in order to celebrate your life because you had a wonderful life surrounded by family and friends. You always had a smile and a question about a loved one. With this attention to details, you made a lasting impression on people you worked with, the children you taught, and others you came in contact with. You will be sorely missed, leaving a vacant hole that will be very hard to fill.

Thank you for being my friend and touching all our lives.