

I truly believe that once someone is gone, an entity of that individual will always survive.

This I have learned through experience and times of roughness in my life. In my instance, unfortunately I have had to say goodbye to some of the most important people in my life. The worst to see go was my father, but I always knew he would let us know that he was still here with us. Gentle reminders would appear in my family photographs as objects of light, especially during holidays, family gatherings or our family vacation to California; a place we were all supposed to go as a family of five.

In the last five years of my dad's life, he started to collect light houses. For every birthday and Father's Day he would receive a lighthouse statue from my two siblings and I. One Father's Day in particular, we gave him two, two-foot tall solar lighthouses for our back garden. In the summertime they would sit under our hanging plants against the shed, illuminating the plants and flowers. As time went on, the solar batteries slowly faded as the light at night dimmed and we never got around to replacing them. It wasn't until recently I repainted the black, white and red colors on the lighthouses to bring some life back into them, even though they still wouldn't light up at night. After we admired them and smiled at their brightness, my mom and I put them back where he always had them. A few days after, the night of Father's Day and coincidentally my parent's twenty ninth wedding anniversary, my mom woke me up at one in the morning. She takes my hand and tells me to look outside. The lighthouses both lit up for the first time in years, without replacing the batteries. It instantly brought tears to my eyes, tears of joy. Some might say this all a coincidence, but to me, I believe that it was a sign.

I believe that in the toughest of days, in the times of sadness and even times of occasion or happiness that a sign of their presence will appear. Rather it's a ladybug on the window or a gloss in a photograph, there is a part of me that believes that an imperfection in an object, an extra ray of sunshine or an intuition is a peaceful reminder that there is a part of them that has never left someone's side. Some people need to see to believe, but I truly believe that memories and such signs are reminders that those who are gone will always be with us.