

RENEE

For Aidan

Alison has asked me to say a few words about her beautiful boy Aidan. It is a terrible privilege for me to witness Aidan's crossing.

Forgive me also if I blur the line between friends and family - when you love people they become your family.

There are a few things that I wish to acknowledge. Those things that for me were evident in the day to day memories that make up a lifetime.

As a child Aidan was funny, always finding the delight and good and humour in situations. He was inquisitive and caring. He loved practical jokes, often making himself the butt of them to better enjoy everyone else's laughter. Even as a youngster Aidan had a love cooking. As a five year old he would take a plastic step and eagerly approach the stove with milk, eggs, mixing spoon and pan to make his own scrambled eggs. He became adept at producing interesting meals rather than wait for his mother to cook. I think he must have inherited his love of cooking from Leila Rip, Ali's mom. He was and remained a most intuitive person throughout his life. He loved and adored his mother. Being Alison's son brought him great joy. When Laila his baby sister was born the delight in loving her was always evident in his smile. When Laila crossed over Aidan's courage and love knew no bounds and he supported his Mum and the rest of his family throughout it all.

My twins have grown up in the warmth of his kindness, sense of humour and fun.

Aidan had always been determined to come to Australia and so after much manoeuvring of his mother, a feat that as you know is almost impossible to do; and getting her agreement, they came and settled here in Brisbane. They began a new life together and with you all as a part of it, created a new family to love and to live with. Aidan completed his schooling and qualified in his trade as a chef. He met, fell in love with, and married Aleisha. He was completely at home here and settled in as though he was a born Australian.

Aidan was not diminished or reduced in anyway by his illness. In his ever changing physical form he always showed great love and respect for those who cared for him. He created a space for his Mum, his Girl, family and friends and the team of hospital staff from the orderlies to the doctors to enjoy him, joke with him, he teased them, he was respectful and kind. In short he created a space within his illness that allowed us all to interact normally and to continue to love and enjoy him. Thank you Aidan for making it so easy for me to love you.

A&A

I want to acknowledge the deep friendship and love, the honesty, openness, strength, respect and courage that I witnessed between A&A. Its easy to talk about love because falling in love is what we human beings do. Its not so easy to take that moment and turn it into a lifetime, into a relationship that shows the deeper good in us all, that enlarges our lives when we are included. A loving that both humbles and uplifts us. Staying in love and dealing with Aidan's illness the way that they did is

the stuff that heroes are made of. These two amazing spirits have their mothers to thank for such values.

It was not by accident that Aidan and Aleisha fell in love or built this deep bond. This was not luck that kept them going. They were very clever in choosing the right mothers who would show them the way to each other. Alison and Jacqui have taught and shown Aidan and Aleisha how to love, to live, to be honest, to stand up for what is right, to have values, to believe, to dream, to laugh, to share. They have given them the foundation upon which this incredible relationship is built. In spite of what Life has dealt both Alison and Jaquie they have treasured their children, nurtured, tutored and moulded them into the adults they are today. I for one believe that no-one could have fulfilled these roles better..

Alison taught A to stand up for what he believed in. She gave him the courage and support to go for what he wanted. She understood his passion for life. He learnt early on in life that to have a friend, you have to be a friend.

As always it is an honour for to be part of the family occasions. Today is no different. An African farewell for an Australian Boy – Hamba Hlahle Aidan