

Dear Dave,

*This summer it will be 3 years that you've been gone, and I still miss you. Sometimes you seem close, almost in the room, and today, when I washed the windows and cleaned the sun room, you seemed to be nearby.*

*A few weeks back I had Lasik eye surgery to correct my vision, but it got much worse before it got better. It was scary to live 25 miles away from anything and not be able to see well enough to drive. I am relieved to say that no one got hurt while I was getting myself back and forth, but it was more luck than anything else. I imagined how living alone might be when I get weak, and tried not to worry about it, but I was only partially successful in that effort.*

*But back to today ... I woke up with much improved vision, so clear that I noticed how dirty the windows were. When you were around, the dirt always bothered you before it bothered me. If you insisted that something needed to be cleaned, it wasn't worth my effort to object. It was easier to grab the bucket and get to work with you. You always liked projects when we worked together, and I admit you were a good partner even though I didn't always make the same list of chores that you did. You'd take the job, break it down, and finish every little step before doing anything else. I both loved and hated your thoroughness. On the one hand, everything was organized and that had its benefits, but on the other hand, we couldn't deviate from the task...EVER. Things are not the same around here anymore, for better and for worse.*

*Today I enjoyed the window washing, however. The bright, focused vision overloaded my senses and I paused to savor the view after each pane, repeating a silent "thank you" like a mantra. As I worked, I started thinking of you, knowing that you'd be glad I was cleaning and enjoying our place at Beaver Lake. When I started on the outsides of the windows, I needed the extension for the squeegee. You might not have been surprised that I had misplaced it. I could sense the eye roll, and your voice reminding me about "a place for every thing, and every thing in its place." I know you would have gone to Menard's for a replacement tool to do things right, but I wonder if you were pleased with my resourcefulness with duct tape and a wooden spoon.*

*Speaking of Menard's, do you remember how you loved shopping there, and that together was better than going alone? Remember whenever we shopped there on Saturday nights, you tried to count it as a date? It was not your most romantic quality, but somehow it was endearing. You were so proud to know where to find everything by aisle number and how to use it when we came home.*

*When I finished scrubbing today, I dumped the bucket of soapy water, remembering that this was your favorite part of any cleaning job. I understood your feelings as I watched the dirt wash down the drain.*

*Oh, about the window in the middle that I washed only on the inside ... no doubt it's bugging you. It was hard to reach, but that's not the reason I skipped it. I left it alone because it will remind me to be grateful that I can see, and I will think of you when I look at it.*

*I miss you today!*

*Love, Linda*