

Pink was her favorite color.  
Bright, happy, and stereotypically feminine.

The first morning after she passed, we awoke to this familiar color, but unfamiliar light, in the living area of the Airbnb.

We rented that three-bedroom apartment for her to return once more to Phoenix, Arizona, away from her home in New Hampshire—an unfortunately familiar journey she had hoped to never again take. Phoenix, you see, was where she received her alternative cancer treatments. Paradoxically, it was the source of her additional 14 years of life and also of painful, nauseating memories.

The plastic slats of the window hanging varied in shade. Some a dark mauve, others a pale rose. But all variations of pink. The soft wind generated by the air conditioner moved the slats in the rhythm of a wind chime. Dong, ding-dong, dong, ding, ding. Ordinarily, I would dismiss the window treatment as ugly, relegated to an office space in a dated strip mall. Yet, in this moment, the effect was . . . awe.

My immediate thought was of a movie—one of our favorites—Interstellar. Matthew McConaughey's character communicates from another dimension to his child through Morse code with books and a bookcase. He is simultaneously there and not there. He can communicate but only by limited means. His daughter "Murph" got the message, though she didn't know it was from him.

I want my darling mommy to know: message received. She is "here." She is with us.  
We are not alone. We are not forgotten. We are not lost.

I waffle and waiver on the sincerity of this sentiment incessantly. There are moments when I feel bathed in her essence, and I think "she is making her presence known."

On a single afternoon walk, I encounter five poodles, a heron, a morning dove, ducks, and geese—just a few of her favorite creatures. At my core, I believe it is her communicating to me. Overwhelming me with love. And in those moments, there is no room for doubt. Until there is.

The questions. The fear. The rage. Always lurking in the background and ready to flood. Of course they are present in the darkest of moments. But they are also there, when, for instance, I observe the color pink. Whether on a window treatment or spanning the sky. There's no statement of conviction, but a question: is it her?