

"Death is not the enemy, doctor, inhumanity is"

My aunt died recently and I went to her funeral last week. It was a sad occasion but we celebrated the successes she'd had, especially in her younger years. Latterly, she'd suffered from dementia and cancer and was in a nursing home for 5 years. She had a 'good death' : she was peaceful and painfree at the end and well cared for and passed away with her daughter present.

In contrast, I heard today about a young man of 23 , usually hale and hearty, but had a 'flu like illness and was diagnosed with leukaemia. He died a day later: a terrible shock for family and friends. He'd just finished University and seemed to have a long life ahead of him: but it was not to be. He had enjoyed a wonderful post-Uni summer holiday with his friends. At least he was spared a long and devastating illness with difficult treatments.

Two deaths, one most untimely, the other a happy release...