

LILY A. BEAR

DADDY are you sad?

*A shattering health diagnosis
and haunting questions.
Where would this journey
lead the young family?*



DADDY
are you sad?

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Dedicated to
Dallas and Dustin
whose father left them a legacy of faith in God.

Preface

In this heartrending, yet uplifting, story, Donny and Nicole Good fulfill the mission God calls them to. As Donny battles leukemia, they face fear, anger, and discouragement, but are repeatedly drawn back to the love of their heavenly Father.

Donny kept a personal journal and also corresponded extensively by email with his wide circle of friends. Praise God for nudging him to do so! These meticulous writings provide a clear picture of his journey, both physically and spiritually. Much of the text of this book comes directly from his writings.

During his battle with leukemia, Donny interacted with many people, both in America and Mexico. In faithful obedience to his heavenly Father, Donny utilized every opportunity to serve his fellowmen. He offered friendship while sharing the good news of God's love and salvation. Forgetting his own problems, he showed others where to find peace in the midst of their suffering.

As I became involved in this project, I faced this question: *Would I be able to surrender to God if He asked me to*

go through something as hard as what Donny did? I shrank at the implications.

I faced another question as well. *How could I write about Donny's incredible witness for God without Satan attacking me?* Then it became clear to me. God is omnipresent and omnipotent. God's mercy and grace are always available, and His presence is constant. God is always good!

But He asks for surrender. He wants everything: our hearts, our minds, and our bodies. We find rest as we put our lives in God's keeping. Donny did, and we can too. I don't know my future. You don't know yours. But God does. May each of us submit our lives to God and allow them to have an impact for Him.

I have been touched by Donny's life of faithfulness, his strength, and his courage in the midst of affliction. May Donny's story also touch your life and inspire you to a closer walk with God.

—Lily A. Bear

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Introduction

As I walk through our clinic, the Hope4Cancer Institute in Tijuana, Mexico, I come to the newly constructed wing. On the wall I see imprinted in big, bold letters the words “Donny B. Good Wing.” My heart wells up with emotion. Memories come flooding back of a young man, his wife, and their two young children. To this day, their fervent plea resounds in my heart, “We are in the midst of a living nightmare. Will you please help us?”

As I pause, I think of the significance of this new wing. Our biggest construction project in over a decade doubles our capacity and amplifies our ability to serve patients. You may wonder why I chose to name such an important part of the cancer clinic after one of its patients. Read on, and I hope you will understand why.

Many of God’s children come to us, stay with us for a few weeks, and leave our clinic with a renewed sense of hope. Many of them experience miraculous recoveries after long and steady battles. These victories do not happen without God’s divine grace and the relentless work of a committed and dedicated staff. However, in our defeats

we are also reminded every day, very often in harsh terms, about the destructive reality of cancer. The complexity and aggressiveness of some cases leave us with seemingly unbeatable odds despite our best efforts.

Hope4Cancer Institute, in many ways, is a place where hope and despair clash in a relentless war against attrition. Standing in the maelstrom of it all over the past twenty-three years, I can tell you that the crisis of this disease can rip open a person as nothing else can, revealing the human spirit within. When you squeeze an orange, all you get is orange juice. What is inside is revealed.

A few patients and their devoted companions left indelible marks on my life. They demonstrated to me the power of their spirit in the way they bravely faced their trials and tribulations. They showed unshakable faith against insurmountable odds. Even as I attempted to bring healing to them, they in turn strengthened my spirit. They blessed me in many ways and became a part of my life.

A shining star among these was my remarkable patient and friend, Donny B. Good. Frankly, I could not think of anybody better who would honor Hope4Cancer Institute with his name imprinted on its walls.

Donny was a mere twenty-five years old when he was diagnosed with acute myelogenous leukemia. The disease was presented to him as a death sentence. The negative side effects of chemotherapy worsened his condition to the point where he was given only weeks to live. Donny came to us weak, tired, and, without a doubt, gravely ill. Unlike most

patients who typically stay with us for two to three weeks and continue their therapy at home, Donny stayed with us for over five months, since he required constant monitoring. But while he was physically and probably mentally fragile, he was spiritually strong and in tune with the Holy Spirit. In the face of his challenges, we saw revealed before us the Spirit-led person that he truly was.

Think about it. Donny had everything to lose. He faced the prospect of leaving behind his young wife and children, aged two and four, and the prospect of his family unit being derailed before it had even gotten very far on the tracks! Donny faced these realities daily along with the fear, despair, and pain that they brought.

Yet Donny tried to replace his fears with his undying faith in his one, true God. Easier said than done, even for all of us healthier ones, isn't it? The guiding principle that allowed him to do this was his understanding of the God-given purpose for his life. Putting God first gave him the ability to see past his circumstances and focus on what was important.

Donny fought for his family with tremendous passion. He wanted to continue living, to be there for them, to serve them. He wanted to be the devoted husband, the caring father, the dutiful son. To win the battle, he took on the most rigorous of our therapies with a level of gusto that I had never seen before in any of my patients. For example, he is the only patient who ever consumed a daily dose of seventy-two enzyme pills—the maximum possible

dose that an individual can tolerate.

Donny lived almost another six months after making the courageous choice to embrace our natural therapies at Hope4Cancer Institute. He experienced a much better-than-expected quality of life before he finally left us to be with the Lord. Those six months were well beyond even my medical expectations, given the seriousness of his condition.

Donny was not merely a patient or a friend; he was far more than that. In many ways, he uplifted me even as I tried to do the same for him. This others-focused nature of his behavior extended to his fellow patients. In the moments of camaraderie during breaks between therapies or in the evenings, he would minister to them in a loving, non-intrusive way. This beautiful balance in his personality is something I remember vividly every time I think of him.

You may wonder, “What does the B stand for in Donny’s name?” Because Donny could not use his middle initial, H, in his email address, he chose to use B as a reminder to himself to be good—to embrace to the fullest each day of life granted to him. It also became a pet name between us. When he would leave after an appointment, I would remind him, “Donny, now be good!”

In many ways, Donny connected to my soul from the very first day I met him, reminding me of all the values I personally hold dear in my life. I can only wish he were still with us today, but God’s plans for him were different. He will live on with us through this amazing chronicle,

a project his wife Nicole has undertaken. Instead of wallowing in the pain of his loss, Nicole has chosen to celebrate his life in a truly significant way.

His spirit undoubtedly lives on in the family he has left behind. Nicole has made the decision to grow stronger in his physical absence by remembering his spiritual strength. I hope and pray every person suffering from cancer takes the time to read this chronicle and be uplifted by it. Although this is not the typical “success” story of life overcoming death, I personally believe that in his passing, Donny has achieved a victory of the spirit that is a lesson for every person reading this book, whether or not he is fighting cancer.

—Antonio Jimenez, M.D. (Dr. Tony)

