

# Who's the nerd over there?



No one as far as I know asked the question posed in the title, but today I certainly felt that way, as the nerd that is, not the one asking the question. I suspect my brother felt the same way. You see, we went to the funeral of someone we have never met. As such, we never met her family either so I am certain more than one person was wondering, "Who are they?"

Let me start at the beginning. About twenty years ago my uncle met a woman and her family. Eleven years ago they started seeing each other. They never did get married, so I can't call her my aunt, but they were close just the same. In all that time none of us were ever introduced to his girlfriend; I'm not sure why. A couple of months ago she was diagnosed with brain cancer, apparently inoperable, and was given a prognosis of just several months. Then, the cancer showed itself to be extremely aggressive and about about a week ago I learned her prognosis was downgraded to just a couple of weeks. Less than a week later she was gone.

I suppose the wake yesterday would have been a more appropriate time for near strangers like us, but we didn't make it so we went to the funeral today instead. I pretty much went just to support my uncle and my mother as again I never met his girlfriend or her family. She did leave behind several grievers though including children and grandchildren, so my uncle wouldn't have been her first husband had they gotten married. I must have looked like robotman at this funeral. How can one be sad and grieved when he doesn't even know the subject of the funeral? Truthfully, as far as sadness goes I do tend to be kind of a robot at times. Even at my father's funeral I never broke down, and you can't get much closer to someone to be grieved over than a parent (or child to put the bond in the other perspective), with the

exception of a spouse. Needless to say my uncle was very grieved and like my mother with her spouse, JustJ with his, and countless others who have lost the one closest to them, he will not soon get over this (nor should he, if anyone thinks I am suggesting this).

The funeral was a three part affair. We met at the funeral home and any who wished to were able to make last respects at this time. Though I had never met her and thus didn't need to see her body I nonetheless joined the line as we processed past her and out the door to the vehicular procession, the part that drivers everywhere are always thrilled about □ . We headed to part two- the church where the funeral would be held. It was a Catholic service, so I found much of the ritual unfamiliar and I found I could not join in many of the prayers. Those prayers were either to Mary, to the Saints, or just prayers for the deceased. As a Protestant I do not believe in any of those. I pray to God the Father directly with Jesus as my only intercessor, and I believe once dead a person is judged immediately and then goes on to one of two places so therefore prayers for them are useless. Prayers for the family and others still living on the other hand are more than welcome and I either joined in at these points or prayed in this fashion during the other prayers.

Part three of the service was the long procession to the cemetery. It was at this point we made our departure and headed home. My other uncle was also there and chose to stay so at least there was someone still there for my one uncle from his own family. I do hope everything went well with it. I expect we will be seeing my uncle and my grandmother soon. My mother is very close to them both even if I don't get close to my extended family. She tells me there is a lunch planned for the near future. Perhaps I'll pay for it if my uncle will let me. He always covers these things and it would only be right if he didn't have to this time.