

PROFESSOR BARBARA GREEN

LAWRENCE RAFUL†

The editors asked me to write an essay about Barbara Green. I thought that would be pretty easy, and then I sat down to type it out. It was only at this point—writing this sentence—that I finally realized what Barbara had been saying to me all these years. Because when I started to write about Barbara Green, I realized:

I don't know her favorite food.

I don't know her favorite TV show or movie.

I don't know her favorite kind of music.

I don't know her favorite book or author.

I don't know her favorite place to visit, or favorite type of vacation.

I don't know what she does on Saturdays and Sundays.

What's my point? Well, the one constant about Barbara, all the thirteen-plus years I have known her, is her unwavering concern for comradeship among the faculty, for caring and sharing among colleagues, for more than just chit-chat at the faculty coffee table about sports, the stock market, or the one student in class yesterday who missed the whole point of the case. Barbara wanted more out of her life as a faculty member, because it wasn't enough for her that she taught and wrote articles and served on committees. She wanted more—she wanted us to act like family, like friends.

And even though I thought I knew her so well, when I sit down to write this, the best I can tell you is that she was a terrific and gifted classroom teacher, a marvelous tax scholar, and a hard-working and dedicated colleague. Perhaps that should be sufficient, but I can't tell you what kind of ice cream she likes, or which baseball team she roots for. And maybe that's the point—if I would have listened more to Barbara these thirteen years, I could have written all about this wonderful person, who has been taken from our faculty by a toss of a coin, a roll of the dice, by the whim of a virus, by the oddity of a DNA strand. I could have written about Barbara Green as a faculty member, but I could have written in a way a relative would write, in the manner a close friend would write.

I wonder how Barbara feels as she looks back on her years at Creighton Law School. She should be immensely proud of the many

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years of dedicated and excellent classroom lectures; the many, many students who flocked to her door and sat in her office. She should feel satisfaction at mastering a truly difficult area of law, and she should draw comfort from the countless hours of free advice she gave to local lawyers, without regard to their status as past student or those who had never taken a course from her. She deserves accolades, for her contributions to Creighton students over the years were nothing short of enormous.

But if Barbara Green also feels a twinge of sorrow because we curmudgeons, we dinosaurs, we traditionalists on the faculty would not listen to her pleas for more caring of each other, then I would simply say, "Barbara, you were right. You have now left our building, and I realize, to my shame and disappointment, that I don't even know the 'whole you.' I promise to do better." Thank you, Barbara, for your gift as a teacher of tax, and as a teacher of soul.