OBITUARY JEAN YVES VIOLETTE

Jean Yves in no more. He passed away yesterday, missing Christmas by two weeks.

Jean Yves had been struggling against cancer for the past three years. He went to Switzerland for treatment and returned with a promise of plenty of good years ahead. But cancer being cancer, it reappeared after a short pause, this time to see the end of its victim

This Senior Manager at Swan had a rich life in many respects. He had a lovely and caring wife in the person of Danny, two lovely daughters, Anne Lise and Sophie Claire and an [adopted] son, Ashwin whom he brought home from a convent and who would proudly declare that he is Ashwin Violette. The Violette family treated all three children alike and never tried to impose their Catholic belief on Ashwin.

The Violettes formed a close knit relationship with relatives. During his illness, Jean Yves’s in-laws nursed the son- in-law in the most dedicated manner until their deaths. Danny’s niece left her ailing father in France to support Jean Yves during his last days and insisted on staying in Mauritius until she saw the patient come home from Wellkin hospital. But cancer seems to need more than a caring environment to be cured.

I had lost personal contact with Jean Yves because of Covid but gradually my phone calls changed to messages for correspondence. In my WhatsApp messages, I would suggest traditional medicine which had successfully worked on a few cancer patients. I understand that in the final stages, it was not Jean Yves, but her daughter Anne Lise who was replying to my suggestions.

Jean Yves was that kind of person to whom people would get attached because of his warmth, empathy and understanding. He was that person one would like to turn to for advice because he would listen, ponder and give a response that would alleviate one’s worries. I suppose this is one reason why people came to see him during a time of distress to form the Front Commun Contre l’Injustice and he obliged. He was convinced that his interlocutors needed hope, that essential ingredient of life that makes people tick and breathe. He had been able to rally a massive crowd in front of Port Louis Cathedral to voice the grievances of the downtrodden. Why this movement did not last will be an exercise for posterity to look at.

My dear Jean Yves, you are sorely missed by a multitude of Mauritians and by your friends at Alif Society. May I wish you a “blessed journey into the infinite.”

Dawood Auleear

9 December 2021

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