

**"The Promise"**  
**Jim Valvano and Dick Vitale**

When Jim Valvano's ESPY speech was delivered, I remember like it was yesterday. Laying on my parent's bed watching with tears rolling down my cheeks, I knew I just witnessed a most beautiful piece of history that will not be forgotten, at least not by me. I was just a college kid who loved basketball and was sad to see a coach I admired suffering.

This piece is not a representation of the celebrity Jim Valvano or celebrity Dick Vitale. It is the celebration of friendship and brotherhood. Behind this one fleeting image captured is a story of two souls and a lifelong promise. The embrace they shared is a true reflection of the mutual respect they showed for each other, the joy they shared in their bond, and the pleasure they had in working together. One can see unspoken compassion depicted, evident through body language and expressed through their embrace.

Dick Vitale had Jim Valvano's back He got Jimmy V and the person he was. Dick Vitale understood Jim Valvano's sense of humor... the love he had for his family, his love of a great Italian meal shared with friends, stories and laughter, and most importantly his zest for life. Jimmy V was one of a kind.

I chose to render the image in black and white to hold true to light and darkness ... .Darkness which is imminent in the diagnosis of terminal cancer, but more importantly without darkness you cannot see light. The light that brings forth love. Our world was a little more fun when Jim Valvano was here. His soul was larger than life. He brought to us passion, meaning and purpose, through the sport of basketball. If he couldn't have another today, then he wanted EVERYONE to have a better tomorrow. That was Jim Valvano.

The raw emotion that holds true through the piece which is imminent on Dick Vitale's face is how proud he was of Jim Valvano. Proud of what he was going through and how he was handling it and most importantly what he was about to say.

I believe he knew the opportunity he had in the speech he delivered the night of the ESPY's. How those words would carry on as a life of their own. That is why I chose this image and this portion of the speech to depict in the art. The quote represents the gift he had on how to deliver a message. Those words ring true today...cancer could not break his spirit. His foundation continues to inspire us to be better people.

God does not make mistakes, Dick Vitale and Jim Valvano's friendship was created through divine purpose.

This piece was created in honor of a promise between friends. Dick Vitale promised he would carry on Jim Valvano's legacy through the Jimmy V Foundation. He loved his friend and knew there would not be another one like him. Some people may make a promise and hold true to the first few thousand dollars raised. However, would they actually go as far as to making it a life purpose? Dick Vitale is committed to the cause; clearly, Dick Vitale is a man of his word. Jim Valvano may be missed, but he has not left Dick Vitale in the quest to cure cancer. He has been right there, by his side, for every dollar raised and every life touched.

Written by Kristin Osterman- Portrait Artist