

September Memories

Many of our new members have lost children of school age. Even for those whose children died before they could go to school or after they were finished with school, September often brings painful memories. Seeing children with brand new clothes and the latest craze in lunch boxes and book bags, line up for the bus brings back memories for all of us. For some, we see children our child's age, progressing to the next grade when he or she will never have that experience. For some, we remember putting our child on that bus, the last minute rush to replace outgrown clothes and buy school supplies. For some, the pain is from the dreams we had of seeing our child go to school, dreams that our child never lived long enough to bring to fruition.

Some of us have younger children who are now "passing" in age our dead child, who should have been the older brother or sister. In my case, I have one daughter left and I remember shopping for back-to-school clothes for two. I can't help but wonder what size Colleen would be wearing now. She'd be 12. Colleen rode in one of those little buses because she was handicapped. My mom used to hold her at the front door of her house, swaying back and forth, saying "Tick, tock, here comes the bus." I often think of that when I notice one of those little buses. Even after 5 years, I still look for #77, her bus.

I guess what I'm saying is two things. First, we're all in this together. We all have the same pains, just different variations. Second, we all have to expect that moments of nostalgia and longing will be with us ALWAYS. The pain does dull, somewhat, with the years, but tears will always spring to our eyes at certain moments. The special days will always tug at our heartstrings in a way that non-bereaved parents will never fully understand.

At least we have each other; people who know what we're feeling and who understand our pain. I'm glad we can be here for each other.

By Kathy Hahn, TCF Lower Bucks, PA
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Memento Mori

We hadn't any warning,
the night it all went mad.
We knew not yet of quicksand,
or lives like broken glass.

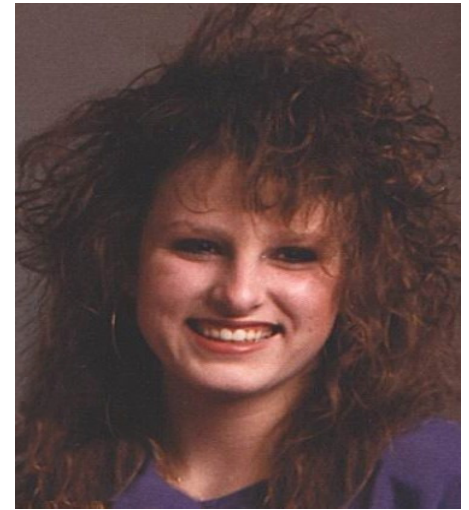
The day was drenched in beauty,
the mountain sky of blue.
Pine needles had been cleared
away,
cabin safe now summer through.

Good food and friends-shared
laughter,
planning for the evening's fun,
then officers in the doorway,
bringing news that took the sun.

Telephone calls to parents,
legs like rubber, shaking so,
"How do we tell her sister?
Fifteen, much too young to know."

The long drive down the mountain,
midnight knock in such distress.
When she saw us, she gasped,
"Lori?"
crying, hugged her, we said,
"Yes."

By Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
From "Stars in the Deepest Night – After
the Death of a Child"
<http://members.aol.com/gbgentry/index.html>



In Loving Memory of Carla Palomba

4/4/73 – 9/17/94

I need to say, "Hey, Carla...."
And hear an answer.

I need her to say, "hey, ma...
Whatcha doing?"

"Tell me what **you** are doing...
connecting stars?"

"Yeah, ma... I play with stars,
moons and raindrops,
angels, all wonderful things
you can just imagine about,
but it is beautiful and
I am at peace.

"That's all I needed to know,
I needed contact,
I needed to feel you again."

"Yes, ma, I am well,
I'm quite well.
I am at peace.
I love you and we will
be together again.
I promise."

"That's all I needed to know."

Always loving you &
Always missing you,
Love, ma

