

## Some Days by Jodi Schneider Neelin

Some days the tears catch me off guard, roiling perilously between the point where I can hold them back, and the point where I am powerless to stop the torrent from flowing out of my eyes. Some days, when someone benignly asks how I am, their kind words somehow become the catalyst for the boulder lodging in my throat, the crushing squeeze of sadness in the pit of my stomach that snaps that early July morning back into focus. That morning when the birds chirped and the sun was already dazzling by a little after seven, that morning when our world ruptured and you quietly slipped through the crack.

I don't worry about you anymore; growing up, my biggest fear was always that something bad would happen to you. I couldn't even bring my mind to go head to head with the ultimate fear of all, that the worst would happen and you would die. I can no longer panic about the worst happening as it already has. You are no longer of my world and I am now on the other side of that terror.

Before, there was worry and a blissful unknowing. Now there is understanding and loss. Sometimes the heaviness feels ancient, as if we've lived with the weight of your absence forever, and sometimes it is still raw and so breathtakingly deep that there are times I feel I will never reach the bottom of it.

Before, I couldn't truly grasp the magnitude of physical death. While I got the surface gist of the permanence it brings, I was not really prepared for the profound ache of the passing of someone I love so much. I couldn't know that the sense of loss never goes away, it just hitches a ride alongside you: sometimes in the back seat, sometimes in the front, sometimes right in your face so you can't even see around it.

Yet, now on the other side of the worst thing that could have happened, I find there is still love. Now there is the dawning of understanding that despite its seemingly absent target, love is unending; it still continues to grow.

And when that love bubbles up and finally has nowhere to go but out, I will still send it to you in the ether, in the hopes that it will reach you wherever you are, that you will receive it and know we are still connected, and take solace as I have that while our bodies may die, our love for someone cannot.

I think of you every single day. All the kind words you uttered and the stories you told us are the quiet whispers of encouragement on the days when my spirit is tattered. All the lullabies you sang in soothing tones as I fought sleep to hear you sing them still dance in my heart. Sometimes I hear echoes of them in the stillness, their melodies gently woven into my soul, part of who I am.

You are gone but not forgotten, frozen in our earth time at the moment you left but now timeless as the stars. I am still, as always, your little girl, and you are still, and forever, my dad.

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**Written by Jodi Schneider Neelin**

#### **A Word about me:**

I am a creative soul masquerading as a manager in corporate America. I live in Portland, Oregon, with my husband, two children and silly goldendoodle, all of whom fill my heart with joy and my house with laughter.

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