

***The Pillowcase***, from Midge L.

After Tom passed away, there were an immense range of emotions that I felt. I was hurting, physically and mentally. I was having dreams, the most vivid being following his body bag, which was an American flag, out of the hospice unit while taps were being played. His nurses stood in the hallway as I continued to follow him out to the waiting car that would take him for cremation. I had this same dream so many nights.

I felt so vulnerable, lonely, lost and naïve. How I missed him! I missed being held and I missed feeling his breath on my neck and a soothing hand rubbing my back telling me everything was OK and not to worry.

I slept in our king size bed and sometimes felt like the tiniest fish lost in this big sea of foam. There was no longer anyone to reach for or to have talks with before sleep. There was no one to kiss good night, wish Sweet dreams and say I love you. The only thing I had left was his pillow that he had taken into hospice, which I treasured and slept with every night.

It had been about six months since He passed away. I had never removed his pillowcase. I know it sounds totally disgusting, but I just wasn't ready to do that, not yet. In my mind it just seem to keep him there with me, just a bit longer. I began to look at that pillowcase almost as symbolic and felt and knew in my mind, that it was time. I knew that in order to start my healing process, I would have to let go. I would always have our memories and special moments tucked away in my heart forever. I arose early the next morning, took his pillow, hugged it tight, And while tears rolled down my face, I delicately removed his pillowcase. It was now time for me to move to the next phase of my life which God had already planned and I would gladly accept.

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