

A Place in the Sun

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A young girl with a neurodegenerative disease experienced an acute deterioration and unrecoverable respiratory failure. In her last moments, her father quickly decided to take her outside to a small garden that was immediately accessible from her hospital room. Supporting both her parents in their brave and loving care through these most difficult of circumstances made profound impressions on her neurocritical care team. This included one pediatric neurologist whose own young child had a favorite book about a monster.¹

A monster wrote me a letter today
That said he was coming to take away
Our one true thing and surely may
Find my heart in pieces lay.

His vicious task would swallow whole
Yours and my collective soul
A vacant, bottomless, blackest hole
Heartless, he my sweetness stole.

His sick intent clearly to impale
My chest upon the bluntest nail
With all my being, resist and rail
Against the hurt and without fail.

An impossible choice was ours to make
To risk and fear the highest stake
My core to the coals he did rake
Relentless, firm, he came to take.

Not a sound came from your lips
Into the dark you quickly slipped
Nothing known could ever outstrip
Our love but hopeless, unequipped.

How could I sit and merely wait
For time to pass and make me late
To recognize your impending fate
And delay my action to later hate.

So I carried you into the sun
Wanting to walk, forced to run
To where we might find just one
Moment before your time was done.

You left me there, not far behind
Empty. Crushed. Shattered. Blind.
Our love the strangest kind of kind
The best for you that I could find.

Acknowledgment

To all the parents who have lost a child.

Publication History

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Reference

1. "A Monster Wrote Me A Letter" by Nick Bland. Text copyright © Nick Bland, 2005. First published by Scholastic Australia Pty Ltd, 2005.

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