

## **There are Seasons of Grief**

**The first Winter** – Desolate and cruel. Seemingly unending. Life is frozen in the moment you said good-bye. Everything is grey, turned to ash. Food has no taste. Blooms no scent. There is a hollowness that echoes through every moment. The weight of a missing baby heavy against you. Absence, weighing more than presence. Crippling. It is impossible to concentrate, to still your mind long enough. There are words, and they fall, softly as snow, around you. You know they mean well but the words don't bring summer back. And the void the baby who left made is so vast that you could fall into it at any moment.

**Then, gradually, the Spring.** Hope shooting like new grass. The color starts to return to a faded world. You hear an unfamiliar sound and realize it's your own laughter. You hold a newborn baby and instead of it ripping you apart, you think about a promise for your future. Life beckons and, with hesitation, you respond. You wonder if it's okay – to let this in. Whether you are betraying your baby by smiling again. And then you catch glimpses of him – when the light hits a certain way, when a butterfly floats near, an unexpected tiny white feather settling on your hand. If you listen very carefully you can hear him. And he wants you to be happy. You open the window and you let hope in.

**Against all odds, Summer enters your life.** There is joy again. There is sunshine and there is life. There is beauty and purpose. There are so many things you once never thought possible. And against this brilliant blue sky, the knowledge that you lost a baby feels uncomfortable. How could you have lost someone so precious and be happy? How is it possible that a life full of love and laughter can also accommodate such enormous loss? You once thought that you could never be happy again – that life could be bearable at best. Yet, here you are, filled with contentment. The photos that once could only illicit tears now bring a melancholy smile and there is gratitude for being part of a precious life, no matter how short. You have come to some sort of peace. Not an acceptance, or even an understanding, but a life that can accommodate loss and still be beautiful. You feel him in that sunshine and it warms your heart.

**Autumn falls.** Little reminders. The tug of winter. Things that were once easy, become less so. An anniversary approaches, a birthday, Christmas, Mothers Day, Fathers Day. Days that remind you of the great hole in your life. Or perhaps it is a word, a memory, a song that cuts at the wound not quite healed. A chill enters. You try to shut the door, to close it out, but winter is insistent and sometimes grief has its own agenda.

And then Winter can come again. Never as long or as cruel as the first, but the sadness creeps back.

**But no season lasts forever and love lasts through them all.**

<http://chasinghissunshine.wordpress.com>, 9/23/14