

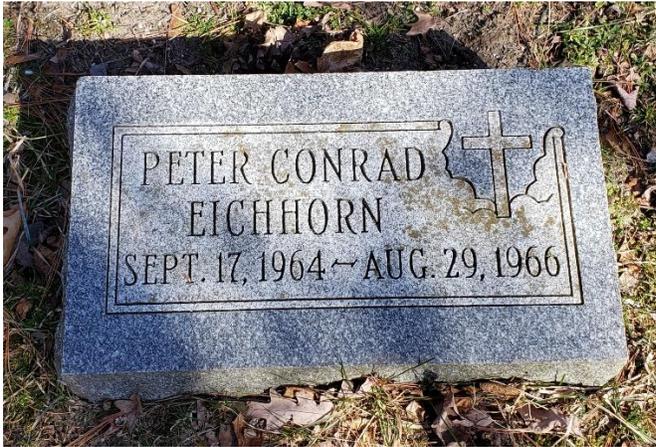
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# Invisible Brother



My mother's 87-year-old hands scrub the headstone in a ritualistic act of love. No matter the intensity of the scrubbing, the words do not change.

Peter Conrad Eichhorn Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1964 – Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1966.



The Midland, Michigan cemetery is beautiful with tall pines, maples and oaks providing a peaceful canopy over the lush green lawns and acres of manicured grounds. The beauty partners with a quiet sadness. A section of the cemetery is dedicated to the graves of children under two years of age. Small boys and girls who barely lived, their time measured by hours and days or weeks and months. Many headstones read simply ‘Infant Son’ or ‘Baby Daughter’. Some of the graves sit manicured and planted with relatively new shrubs and flowers, while other graves, those of babies and tiny children who would now be in their 40s or 50s or more, often sit with worn markers and no flowers. For 56 years this has been my little brother Peter’s place of rest, deep in the quiet woods. Alone most of the time, interrupted by visits from my aging mother. She makes a special visit each May when his headstone is cleaned, and flowers planted. Marigolds are the flower of choice, the heartier the better against the fickle Michigan weather. My mother carries buckets of water from the old pump faucet and trickles it onto the flowers.

Peter died when I was three and a half years old. I wasn't old enough to understand everything, but I was aware that something very dark encompassed me. Almost every year as children, my brother and I accompanied my parents for the annual flower planting in May. I wandered the children's cemetery, my eyes measuring the likely location of the bodies and carefully walking between and around them. As I roamed, I read names, sometimes recognizing a brother or sister of someone I knew, returning to my mother to ask how they died. Sometimes the answer was clear but sometimes the person wasn't familiar and other times it was a soft 'they aren't sure'. The May planting was the one day each year that I connected to Peter and until the following year, he was almost never spoken of around me. The only pictures of Peter in the house were two small ones on the dresser in my parent's bedroom. There was no recognition of his birthday or the day he died and there were never any prayers or memorials.

As years passed, Peter remained darkness for me because he was defined by his death. When I returned home for visits, my connection to Peter remained through trips to the cemetery to see his grave. Without stories or pictures or refreshed memories of activities and happy things, he remained my brother in death, but almost nothing in life.

My older brother, Kurt, and I were told that Peter died of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). It was explained that my mother found him lifeless in his crib at night and he was rushed to the hospital where he was declared dead. I have never lost a child and I can understand that sometimes a simple explanation works best for young siblings. As a boy, on the very rare occasions when I needed to share the information, I was prepared with SIDS. It was readily accepted, and no one seemed that concerned with how Peter died. In college, however, I was drinking with my medical student roommate who bluntly told me that given Peter's age, he was too old to die from SIDS. A sentiment shared by my girlfriend at the time who wondered why I

would even believe such a thing. For me, apprehension overcame the interest or curiosity to learn more. I preferred not to go near the darkness. SIDS seemed fine.

Midland, Michigan does indeed lie very close to the middle of Michigan. If you raise your left hand and extend your thumb you can create the lower peninsula of the state of Michigan. Move straight left from the intersection of thumb and hand and land directly under the forefinger. You are now in Midland. Or perhaps, more accurately, you are in Midland Dow Chemical. Midland is a company town, meaning most of the important town structures bear the founding families' names. Midland has lots of parks, outstanding athletic facilities, and seemingly endless churches. It was big enough to have multiple things to do but small enough to know someone who knew someone.

During Peter's brief life, Midland was in a boom, with the population increasing 37.4% from 1960 to 1970. A new high school was built (Herbert Henry Dow High School), a new library (Grace A. Dow), and the Dow Gardens were formalized. When McDonald's opened a restaurant, there was a prominent article in the Midland Daily News. As the paper noted, McDonald's was part of a national chain of 175 restaurants in 29 states. Much like the town of Midland, my family grew in the 1960s. My parents were married in 1959 and proceeded to have my brother, Kurt, in 1961, me in 1963, and Peter in 1964. A few years after the death of Peter, my sister Karen was born. At the time of Peter's death, an architect was putting the finishing touches on the design of a new house that we hoped to occupy in 1967.



Midland is very much a midwestern town and privacy is valued. Your business is your business and grief and memories can be put away. When a death occurs, the church rallies, food and comfort are provided for the family, and services are held. This response soon becomes hushed conversations and quiet empathy. Growing up, I was almost never asked about Peter. I just assumed that most people didn't even know I had another brother. As an adult, I have known people for years and never felt compelled to acknowledge Peter. 'I never knew you had another brother' is commonly heard when the discovery is made. It is easy for me to forget since he wasn't really a memory.

My limited narrative about Peter remained in place, but it occasionally occurred to me to learn more and possibly fill in some of the gaps. Any interest was usually generated to better understand my darkness and depression. It felt at times like Peter might be a missing part of my life, however, I felt obligated to respect my parent's privacy and any lingering grief. Likely,

with over fifty years passed since Peter's death, my narrative may never have changed, and Peter would have become more invisible as the years went by and the few remaining people with memories passed on.

In November 2019, I traveled from my home outside of New York City to Midland. My father had become too dependent on my mother for care, and we needed to place him in an assisted living facility. Mentally he was fine, however, his limited mobility exceeded my mother's support capacity. As we worked through the process, my mother and I were home having dinner one night and I remarked how exhausted she must be with the months of caring for my father and now moving him into a new facility. She admitted some fatigue but mentioned that it was not the most exhausted she had ever been.

"What could have been more exhausting," I asked.

She replied, "When Peter died."

"I can understand that with all of the grief and still having to take care of Kurt and me."

My mother seemed puzzled. "The hardest thing was having to get up every night for eight months after he died."

I nodded. "I'm sure it was incredibly hard with the loss of Peter."

She shook her head. "I got up for you. You woke up every night for eight months. It was right around 1:30 in the morning."

"Oh. What would happen?"

“I don’t remember exactly. I suppose you would call out or after a while, I just knew that you would be up, and I went into your room.”

I paused to consider the new information. “What was I doing?”

“You were just sitting there thinking. You weren’t crying or talking. I would rub your back and then you would eventually lie down and go back to sleep.”

“Why was it always at the same time?”

“Maybe because the ambulances had come for Peter around that time.”

I would later learn that the firetrucks arrived at 1:12 am and Peter was declared dead at the hospital at 1:45 am on August 29<sup>th</sup>. The night after Peter’s death, I began to wake up in a ritual so precise, that months later my parents left ‘prepare to wake up at 1:30’ instructions for the babysitter when they went on a trip.

After the conversation, I felt stunned but also regretted that I wasn’t told years earlier. Perhaps it could have been my Rosetta Stone to unlock my life’s journey and my challenges with darkness and close personal connections. I had lived with an undercurrent of fear that bad things were about to happen. In possession of the facts, I would continue to learn from my mother, I understood that bad things had happened and did cause some of my feelings.

For months after, I thought about my conversation with my mother and shared it with close friends, including therapists. Most of their thoughts confirmed a likely interpretation of my waking up for months. Very simply, I missed Peter because he was my little brother and playmate. There was likely a sense of responsibility for him and fear over his sudden

disappearance, and perhaps I was hoping that the next night things might be different.

Unfortunately, it was a loop that kept playing until one night I slept without waking my mother.

Despite this new information, I remained hesitant to learn more and didn't pursue the topic for over a year. I understood that Peter's death had impacted me greatly and maybe that was enough to know. I eventually decided to learn more about who he was to me and understand why I needed to wake up for months to observe his time of death. He obviously had been important to me, and I needed to find him again and understand our connection. In March of 2021, I called my mother.

"Would you be ok if I asked you questions about Peter?", I asked.

She replied, "Yes. But I'm not sure how much I can help you."

That meant no one remembered Peter with complete clarity. I scheduled a visit for the Mother's Day weekend.



Prior to my visit, I requested a death certificate to confirm the facts of Peter's death and possibly learn details that may have been forgotten. The process to request a death certificate is surprisingly easy. I called the Midland County Clerk's office with low expectations of success, knowing I was seeking information from nearly 55 years ago. In less than a minute, however, including the obligatory respelling of Eichhorn, the assistant had found it and was asking how many certificates I needed. I hadn't considered what the ideal number of death certificates would be, so I chose two, assuming one would likely disappear. Three days later, they arrived in the mail and for a week sat on the table, unopened. I had only seen death certificates of relatives that were needed for estate purposes.

There was something that felt invasive about reading the certificate of someone I didn't really know. I finally got the resolve to open it and my eyes gravitated to the names on the paper. Peter, my parents, the presiding doctor, and the medical examiner were listed. The time of death was 1:15 am. (After my visit, I obtained the autopsy report that indicates 1:45 am as the time of death). The place was Midland Hospital, but the indication was that Peter was dead on arrival. Handwritten in the medical certification section were various observations on causes and conditions. Peter was in good health and had passive congestion and slight indications of other minor things. Cerebral Edema was listed as a 'condition contributing to the death but not related to the disease or condition causing death'. Next to the 'Disease or condition directly leading to death' line, it read 'Unknown' in a clunky script. No SIDS. Nothing.



In May, I drove to Michigan for a visit with my mother at our family home. I asked a few questions over the phone in the prior weeks and I planned to spend several days asking more questions and looking through whatever photographs and slides and information existed. I googled important events of August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1966 and learned that the Beatles had played a show in San Francisco. The weather in Midland the entire week had been sunny and in the 80s with low humidity. Perfect August weather in Michigan. Before I left, a friend suggested there must be some collection of Peter's things. Perhaps a chest or a box. I had never been aware of anything like that, but it made sense to at least ask. I arrived in Midland late on Saturday night and went to bed. The next day was Mother's Day. As we drank coffee the following morning, I asked questions about Peter.

“What was his favorite food?”

“Ate everything, used silverware”.

“What was his disposition?”

“Very happy”.

“Did I play with him?”

“Yes, he liked to follow you”.

After a pause, I asked if there was a collection of any of his things. My mother nodded. Ironically, she led me to my old bedroom and opened a closet. I stood on tiptoe and grabbed a mid-sized box, something in which a large sweater could be gifted. I was amazed at the amount of dust on the box, like a thin coating of lint. With the dust blown off, I looked at the box top. In the corner was the Dow Chemical logo and above the logo, ‘Peter’ was written in red marker. I recognized my mother’s handwriting. I’m sure it was the box that was handy when this grim task of gathering mementos of Peter took place. I felt the permanence of the box and held it like a fragile ornament as we returned to the kitchen. My mother said she wasn’t quite sure what it contained after all of these years and so I had no clear understanding of what I was opening. I removed the lid slowly and began to see the neatly organized contents. I stared in amazed silence. In the silence, I heard my mother crying softly. I immediately asked if I should stop and she shook her head.

It was Peter’s teddy bear that grabbed me. His eyes were fixated on me as they looked past his missing nose. His facial expression indicated he was surprised to see me. On top of the collection were Peter’s little shirts and shorts. They were soft and smooth to my touch. My mother said she had taken a few things out of his closet that he wore often. He was buried in his signature outfit, blue knit pants with a white knit shirt. That was something I remembered from seeing him at the funeral home. On the morning of August 30<sup>th</sup>, we visited the funeral home before the scheduled viewing. It was a beautiful day. I recall doing whatever possible to not look towards the front of the room. The room was sad and silent as we walked up to Peter. I

imagine that my recollection of his outfit is vivid because I didn't want to look at his face. That is my first clear memory in life.

Big Helpers had been his favorite book and was tucked neatly into a corner of the box. I smiled at the sight of his little red shoes that looked so small and stylish. He had liked them because they were well scuffed. I'm sure my mother had spent a great deal of time tying them. The last spot on the top was taken by a stack of sympathy cards. I glanced at them and handed them to my mother. I would read them later because I was more interested in the newspaper clippings below.

There were many things I hadn't considered, including the fact that a child's death would attract attention in the community and be newsworthy. 'Midland child dies' headlined the Midland Daily News article from August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1966. The first part was just factual. Peter Conrad Eichhorn, 23 months old, 1511 Clay Street, emergency call at 1:19 am, oxygen given at home and en route, dead on arrival. The next sentences caught my attention. The first one read 'The child had reportedly fallen from his bed, firemen and police were advised'. The second one upset me. 'Dr. R.J. Harvey, Midland County medical examiner, ordered an autopsy'. I understood that an unexplained death at home would lead to an autopsy, I was just very uncomfortable with the sentiment as it related to my parents. Dr. Harvey was quoted as saying that initial x-rays showed no fractures, and the tentative cause was listed as acute cerebral edema and pneumonitis. We were a long way from SIDS. I was mentioned as a surviving brother, Eric,

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I glanced at my mother who was immersed in the sympathy cards. She read the cards and reminisced about the people, a few that she was still in touch with. The notes of condolence were of a wide variety. Some cards had a quick mention of Peter, followed by paragraphs about their own young sons and how they appreciated what they had even more because Peter had died. As if my parents should grieve less because they could still hug and love their son. Others could not imagine how my parents felt. That was correct. They couldn't. Several extended condolences and promised to be there if anything were needed. Peter was needed.

We reviewed the funeral home visitors' book and my mother expressed surprise at some of the names that had attended. 116 people signed the guest book, and 31 flower arrangements were sent. She explained to me who the people were and how they connected to my parents.

Dow Chemical friends and social friends, college friends, babysitters, and friends from our neighborhood. I could see gratitude and appreciation in her face fifty-five years later.



With the shock of trauma, it is common for people to dissociate both during and after the event, causing them to forget details about what happened. My mother acknowledged that much of those few days are a blank. As I read more, I realized that Peter was pronounced dead at 1:45 am on Tuesday the 29th and by 7:00 pm the same day, my parents were at the funeral home greeting people who had come to pay their respects. During the day she purchased Peter's funeral outfit at the Emily Gibbs store. How could she remember anything in the aftermath?

On the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>, my father had taken on the grim task of speaking to my brother and me. We were seated on the living room couch, and he spoke very softly. As he spoke, my brother led the questioning. My father began by letting us know Peter wasn't coming home.

“Why not?”

“He went to a different place.”

“Why?”

“He’s happy there.”

“Where?”

He finally said Peter was in heaven because he died. End of conversation.

After I finished the newspaper article and my mother paused in her reading, I asked about the mention of a fall and an autopsy. I told her it felt like there was an inference of something wrong and asked if she had ever felt that people were suspicious. She took the article and looked at it and shook her head. I asked her if she would tell me about the events of that night.

She said that she and my father were in bed when they heard a crash and a thud from Peter’s room. In a conversation later with my father, he described it as a ‘terrifying sound’. My parents rushed in to get him. My mother’s recollection is that Peter was totally limp when she lifted him off the floor and rushed to put him on their bed and attempt resuscitation. An emergency call was made, and firemen arrived, followed shortly after by police and an ambulance. My brother and I remember the reflections of flashing red and blue lights on our ceiling and my brother recalls being in awe of the size of the firemen with all their equipment. My mother doesn’t remember how much we watched as the events unfolded.

After attempts at resuscitation, Peter was rushed to the hospital with my father in the ambulance and my mother following in a police car. A neighbor came over to watch my brother and me. At the hospital, Peter was taken into the emergency room and after a few minutes the doctor appeared and said, “I don’t know why, but he is dead”. My father remembers pounding

on the hospital wall and yelling. As my mother described being at the hospital, I asked her how long they had stayed.

“Not long,” she said. “There was no reason to stay, and we needed to return home to take care of you boys.”

The whole process sounded like a horrible daycare drop-off that didn't have pickup time. It was barely more than an hour total between calling for help, going to the hospital, and being driven back to the house. Upon returning home, she and my father went to bed and held each other and cried. She said she remembered that my father had played with us that night and then she put Peter to bed. Almost as an afterthought, she expressed uncertainty about whether she had put the crib bars up. My heart sank at the implications. It felt like a good time for us to take a break and go outside.

Being the parent or sibling of a child who dies is a relatively unique and tragic fraternity. In 2019, roughly 10,000 children under the age of 14 died in the United States. The death rate for children 1-4 was about 23 per 100,000. It was 13 per 100,000 for children 5-14. So much of what I resented about my parents' need to tightly control our activities in the years that followed Peter's death, became clearer as I became a parent and understood the fears that come with the job. Built-in fears that didn't account for the fact that my parents lost a child and were part of that fraternity.

When I was a teenager, our family was on a vacation in Colorado, and my brother and I were canoeing on a lake. My father watched diligently from shore as we canoed into the middle of the lake and panicked as my brother made the fundamental error of standing in the canoe, causing it to rock. We were out of earshot of my father, and nothing happened as the canoe

stayed upright. When we returned to shore, however, my father met us at the edge of the water and angrily spoke to my brother. I was scared as he barked that he had lost one child and would not lose another. My brother also recently jarred my memory of my father coming into our bedroom late at night with a flashlight in the period after Peter died. Not to wake us, but just checking to be sure we were safe. Alive and breathing.

After my mother and I worked in the yard and had lunch, we returned to the box. This time, I handed her a stack of cards celebrating Peter's birth. It was a welcome change of pace and a nice experience to read them. September 17, 1964 had been a wonderful day. I found a selection of fairy tale pictures that had been pinned on his wall. Little Bo Peep, Old Mother Hubbard, and Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater were a little worn and tattered.

After the pictures, the only thing remaining in the box was a large manilla envelope that felt full of letters or documents. I picked it up and unwound the sealing string, pulling the mass of paper from the envelope. The contents were a mix of magazine and newspaper articles. As I quickly leafed through them, I could see that they were well organized and spanned from 1966 to 1987. When I studied the articles more closely, I realized they were all related to SIDS. From Life Magazine to the Wall Street Journal to the Midland Daily News, there were dozens of articles about SIDS. I asked my mother why all of these articles were in the box. She said that she and my father had clipped them to learn more. I could see that there was consistency in the SIDS age target even in 1966. It was roughly two months to six months and the baby was found dead, usually in a crib. Despite the lack of a connection between Peter's death and SIDS, my parents continued to clip the articles.

I paused and gently asked my mother, “Who told you that it might be SIDS?”.

Her best recollection was that it was the pediatrician. She said that the hospital had promised more tests as did the pediatrician. Nothing ever happened and they never pursued it. I understood why the clipping started in 1966, but I asked why it stopped in 1987. My mother wasn't certain why it stopped, perhaps because it didn't seem to matter anymore. I didn't ask any more questions and began to put Peter's things back into the box. There was something very touching about the idea that she and my father had shared that clipping journey. A journey that had no logic but provided some relief or belief. She was right, it didn't matter anymore. That had been our family story. One that allowed my parents some refuge.

Many years ago, my wife and I were looking to purchase a house. As we toured one that we were particularly interested in and eventually bought, we came across an organized display of photos and framed articles. The young man featured was in high school and clearly was an amazing athlete. There were many pictures and articles touting his success. As we started to leave the room, I noticed an article that was headlined ‘Memorial Scholarship to be Established’. In the hallway, I asked the realtor who the boy was. She told me his name and said that he had died almost twenty years earlier, killed in a car accident in his freshman year of college. The photos and articles were a shrine to remember him. It was a reminder that the grieving process has no right or wrong. No rules or ironclad methods, just individual survival, and treading life until the heart and mind find just a little safe ground.

As my mother and I looked through slides and pictures the next day, I realized she hadn't talked about Peter in a very long time. Certainly, the dusty box was some evidence, but it was also her emotions and contemplative pauses to recall facts as I asked questions. I finally asked who she had talked to after Peter died. I anticipated her answer.

“No one, really,” she said. She thought for a moment. “Several months after Peter’s death we joined the church.”

A few months after that, the congregation was praying for a child about Peter’s age who had died, and tears began streaming down my face and I had to leave. The minister saw me leave, and, realizing that I was alone while your father was at Harvard, he stopped by that afternoon to check on me. That was pretty much it. My friends would occasionally reach out to see how I was doing.”

I asked if she and my father had talked much about Peter.

“Not really,” she said.

I wasn’t surprised that my mother had carried her burden pretty much alone. Her own mother died when she was four while giving birth to her brother. Her father remarried a woman with a four-year-old daughter and my mother basically became Cinderella before the slipper. Any acknowledgment or remembrance of her mother was discouraged. She became estranged from her father and stepmother and had no family support.

A few days after Peter died in 1966, my brother started Kindergarten, leaving my mother and I together at home until I went to school two years later. In the span of a few days, we went from a crew of four down to my mother and me. She and I continued to meet every night at 1:30 am. I would wake and sort things out and she would reassure me that she was there, stroke my back, and tell me everything was ok. In the morning we would meet again and then spend the day together. I suppose we were like therapy dogs for each other. We are both quiet and supportive, so we were made for the role. We were about to start construction on our new house,

so my mother and I spent a great deal of time as a team, looking at wallpaper, tile and paint. My reward was getting to pick my bathroom wallpaper in the new house. I chose a design of fish swimming aimlessly. My mother said shopping was our best distraction during the day. She had to cope, raising my brother and me, but there were times when she would slip away in the house and cry.



Going through the slides and photos, we saw Peter as a baby, at his 1<sup>st</sup> birthday party, at Christmas, and doing all of the other things toddlers do. There were many photos of our vacation in August 1966 to Higgins Lake in Michigan. It was a wonderful time and looking back, certainly a high point for my family. When we arrived at Higgins Lake that August, I looked out at the enormous lake and announced, “Too much water”. Pictures of my mother show her looking as happy as I’ve ever seen her. I mentioned that to her and she said, “I was very happy and just loved being a mother with you three boys around.” When I showed a vacation photo to my father at his assisted living facility, he was lost in thought and softly said, “It was a happy time.”

On the night of Peter’s death, my father recalls that he had a wonderful time playing with all three of us in the living room. We played and horsed around, and he remembers it as a very happy evening. I have held a vague memory of us playing with my father and using his extended leg as a slide. My father was reserved, worked a great deal, and traveled for business, and an evening like that would have been a special occasion. It was a fond memory of being with my father. I hadn’t realized it was the night before Peter died.

One of the pictures of Peter shows him with a joyful smile running towards the end of the dock on Higgins Lake. He is facing the photographer, my father, and in the background, my mother and I are walking away from him and onto the shore. It was one of the last pictures of Peter.



When I obtained the autopsy report after my visit, it confirmed that the crib side was lowered. Of much more interest was the statement that Peter had gotten up from his fall and was on his knees when my parents went into the room. He then immediately collapsed and fell on his face. The source of that information could only have been my parents. I called and asked my mother if she remembered that happening. My mother did remember. Peter fought to get up and then collapsed. Cause of death unknown.

Many years after Peter's death, I was playing with my sister, Karen. I was probably 8 or 9 and she was close to Peter's age when he died. I was on my knees, lifting Karen over my shoulder and sliding her headfirst down my back. After several slides, I lifted her again. This time she cried when she landed. She rose to her feet and took a few steps, then fell to her knees and collapsed face-first on the carpet, unconscious. I yelled for my mother, and she came running. Karen was not breathing and beginning to turn blue. My mother pried her mouth open, and after a period, managed to get Karen breathing again and she survived. Doctors could not explain what might have happened.

While I was in Midland for Mother's Day, there was still frost in the forecast and my mother preferred to wait a few weeks to do the flower planting. When we visited Peter's grave, I offered to scrub the headstone. Again, she wanted to wait, and do it when she planted. As I left Midland and drove south through Michigan and across Ohio, I thought about our days together talking about Peter. We saw and spoke of things that had not been seen or spoken of in decades. I was taking pictures back with me to frame and I had encouraged my mother to also frame some of the pictures we found of Peter and put them in the family display. I visualized her going to the cemetery in a few weeks to plant flowers and scrub the headstone. Many years earlier, my parents purchased six plots in the Midland Cemetery. The allotment is two for my grandparents, two for my parents, and one for my beloved Aunt Irma. The sixth plot has no firm plan but moving Peter fifty yards from the children's cemetery to be with his family is what I would like.

In retrospect, I think some part of my mother and I remained on that bed where we sat night after night after Peter died. My mother quietly and bravely carried forth her feelings of guilt and grief. My feelings were manifested in a sadness that I couldn't understand, contributing to battles with depression and alcohol. After I returned to New York, my mother remarked in one of our phone calls that our conversations had been new and different for us and she felt truly connected with me. Our reality was that we shared a need to find Peter again and put back some pieces. It would be wonderful for us to have Peter, but that's not how things worked out. The pain of the loss wasn't diminished by trying to make it disappear, it merely created a hidden impact. Before my trip to see my mother, I had asked if she still thought about Peter. She said she did and still cried.

## Epilogue:

A few months after my initial visit, I returned with a draft of this article. My mother and I spent a few days in discussion, and she helped clarify facts and add new detail. She was curious about the tests from the autopsy, and I confirmed that there were no conclusions about the cause of death. She informed me she was fully intending to frame her pictures of Peter and add them to the family display but was intimidated by the technology of resizing the pictures. I smiled and assured her that there was a myriad of places that could accomplish the task. She told me she preferred to wait to do it until my sister visited in a few weeks. We talked about the possible connection of Peter's death and Karen's near tragedy. My mother sadly said, "One died, and one lived." She had thought more about the setting of the crib sidebars the night of Peter's death and concluded that she probably had them in a lowered position in anticipation of transitioning Peter to a bed.

On the last day of my visit, we went to the cemetery. It was hot and humid, just a few days before the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peter's death. As we stood at the family plot of six, I asked if she would like Peter moved from his current grave to the open plot. She looked down at the ground and thought. After a pause, she said yes, but wanted to also get my father's approval. When I asked if she would like to have Peter moved over while she was alive, she nodded and said yes.

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