
Publications for 9 - 12

Brisson, Pat and Minor, Wendell. (1999) *Sky Memories*. Delacorte Pub. ★ Readers young and old will be touched and inspired by this honest story about love and loss: When Emily is 10-years-old, her mother is diagnosed with cancer. By the time Emily has turned 11, her mother will be gone. But in the last months of their life together, Emily and her mother find a way to celebrate and commemorate their relationship. Together, they gather, "sky memories," mental pictures of the sky in all of its beauty and diversity. Although she will lose her mother, Emily's memories of their life will be forever.

Carrick, Carol. (1999) *Upside-Down Cake*. Houghton Mifflin Co. ★ A young boy recounts the past year of his family's life in this carefully crafted and sensitively illustrated chapter book. Soon after the narrator's ninth birthday and his dad's fortieth birthday, celebrated together with a deliciously gooey pineapple upside-down cake, Dad becomes sick. Before long it's obvious he won't be getting better. As his father grows weaker, the narrator struggles with anger, guilt, fear, and grief-emotions that intensify when his father finally passes away. Ultimately the narrator realizes that all his feelings are normal. What's more, it's okay to be happy, even to celebrate his next birthday with another upside-down cake. Basing the story on the experiences of her own family, Carol Carrick has written a moving and restorative book for any child who must confront loss.

Caseley, Judith. (2000) *Praying to A.L.* Greenwillow. ★ People don't just up and die in the middle of the kitchen...in the middle of lunch...in the middle of their lives, do they? Sierra's father does, and suddenly life is blurred and unreal. Her five-year-old brother seems more concerned about what he's having for breakfast, and though Mama's trying hard, she's lost in her own sorrow. No amount of sympathy from Aunt Rose, Tia Claudia, or the rest of Sierra's well-meaning Jewish Cuban extended family can bring the focus back. But there is the junk-shop portrait of Abraham Lincoln--Sierra's historical idol--that had been one of Papa's "finds." With Abraham Lincoln's kind eyes and craggy, melancholy face staring out from the frame, it's as if he is Sierra's confidant, listening to what she longs to say so she can let Papa go and let her family back in.

Guthrie, Donna. (1986) *Grandpa doesn't know it's me*. New York: Human Sciences. ★ Helps young children understand and accept the changes that accompany Alzheimer's disease.

Harris, Laura, M-Div, MSW and Dawson, Steve, M-Div, LCSW. (1999) *Jack's Journey*. Words on the Wind Publishing Inc. ★ *Jack's Journey* is an innovative chapter book for young readers. It tells the story of a young boy who, after the death of his mother, finds himself lost in the woods. There he meets "Sojourner" who is a guide and teacher. He encounters a host of other characters who teach the reader about grief. The book is ideal for readers ten through teens. It can be read individually, as a family, or as a resource for a children's bereavement group. The book also provides questions for family or group discussions.

Lancaster, Matthew. (1985) *Hang Tough*. New York: Paulist Press. ★ The true words (and misspellings) and original drawings of Matthew, age 10, describing his life with fatal cancer. He asks his questions and expresses his courage and hope.

McDaniel, Lurlene. (1992) *When Happily Ever After Ends*. Bantam Starfire. ★ Shannon has always shared so much with her father, a Vietnam veteran, but when he commits suicide, she realizes that he may not have shared his pain with her and that she must go on with her life.

Palmer, Pat. (1994) *"I wish I could hold your hand...": A child's guide to grief and loss*. Impact Pub. Inc. ★ This warm, comforting book gently helps grieving children identify their feelings and learn to accept and deal with them. Wonderful heart-warming illustrations and simple, direct writing help children discover that it is normal and natural to feel the pain of loss.

Romain, Trevor and Verdick, Elizabeth. (1999) *What on earth do you do when someone dies?* Free Spirit Publishing. ★ Simple, insightful, and straight from the heart, this book is for any child who has lost a loved one. The author talks directly to kids about what death means and how to cope. He answers questions kids have about death in basic, straightforward terms.

Rylant, Cynthia. (1993) *Missing May*. Yearling Books. ★ Orphaned at six, raised by an elderly West Virginia aunt and uncle with more devotion than money, Summer is twelve years old when Aunt May dies. Summer's grief is profound, but Uncle Ob seems unable to go on living without his beloved companion. The final scene is a triumphant catharsis as they find consolation in their memories and in each other. A haunting first-person narrative.

Whelan, Gloria. (1998) *Forgive the River, Forgive the Sky*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. ★ When Lily Star's father dies while fishing on the river, her family is forced to move into town, abandoning their cabin in the woods. By turns poignant and funny, this beautifully told story introduces readers to a young girl with a tender heart who learns that loss is an inevitable part of love.

Wilson, Nancy Hope. (1998) *Flapjack Waltzes*. Farrar Straus & Giroux. ★ The young narrator tells about the year between his ninth and tenth birthdays--the year his father is diagnosed with cancer and dies. The message is the story here, with denial, sorrow, guilt, anger, uncertainty, awkwardness, and healing all making a perfunctory appearance. Pencil illustrations add a quiet dignity.