

Prayers for Dead Men

The man who just liked to read the newspaper quietly.
The man who loved to preserve tomatoes.
The man whose two-year-old son is mortally ill.
The man who slept with his two dogs.
The man who occasionally vacuumed his lawn.
The man who was building a dollhouse for his daughter.
The man who was assistant treasurer at his church.
The man who helped found a church in New Jersey.
The man who was the best probationary fireman ever.
The man who built tiny ceramic railroad towns for his daughters.
The man who built forty crossbows.
The fireman who died with his fireman son.
The fireman who died with his fireman brother.
The fireman who died with his policeman brother.
The fireman who ran in with his fireman brother who survived.
The fireman who hugged his fireman brother before entering the towers.
The man who had ten children, the youngest an infant.
The man who loved Cole Porter.
The man who loved Bruce Springsteen.
The man who loved Abba.
The man who loved The Who.
The man who was identified by his Grateful Dead tattoo.
The man who loved model trains.
The man who loved surfing.
The man who loved the Denver Broncos.
The man who loved the Detroit Lions.
The man who loved his racehorses.
The man who loved to run at night.
The man who loved to fish for striped bass.
The man who fished for bluefish from his lawn.
The man who loved his boxer dogs.
The man who loved fine red wine.
The man who loved Stolichnya vodka on the rocks.
The man who loved skyscrapers.
The man who loved birdhouses.
The man who loved Les Paul guitars.
The man who loved dominos.
The men who loved comic books.
The man who was rebuilding a 1967 Mustang.
The man who had rebuilt a 1967 Mustang.
The man who was rebuilding a 1948 Studebaker.
The man who was rebuilding an MG convertible.
The man who had restored an old hotel.
The man who started a ska band.
The man who built harpsichords.
The man who had been a model.
The man who could ski like the wind.
The man who drove a taxi as a hobby.
The man who drove blind women to church on Sunday.
The man who delivered papers every morning before going to work as a cook.
The man who meticulously rotated the socks in his drawer for even use.
The man who liked to handicap horse races.
The man who wasn't a saint by any means according to his mum.
The man who was the youngest county treasurer in Missouri history
The man who liked to cook kielbasa.

The man who liked to cook pinto beans.
The man who liked to cook meatloaf.
The man who liked to paint his daughters' fingernails.
The man who made a thousand paper cranes for his wife.
The man who made tea for his wife every day.
The man who had cooked for his blind mother as a child.
The man with his mum's name tattooed on his arm.
The man with a bulldog tattooed on his arm.
The man who had Death Before Shame tattooed on his arm in Gaelic.
The man who really wanted to go to Egypt.
The man who had been a boxer in Britain.
The man who had been a private detective.
The man who had been a cricket star in Guyana.
The man who had been a basketball star in the Army.
The man who had been a lacrosse star in Australia.
The man who had been a lacrosse star in America.
The man who had been a hockey star in Canada.
The man who had been a hockey star in America.
The man who was an expert surfer.
The man who carried a surfboard everywhere.
The man who was a quadriplegic and typed with his mouth.
The fireman who played the bagpipes.
The fireman who played the piccolo.
The fireman who played the pennywhistle.
The man who made tea and toast for his wife every morning.
The man who hung out the flag with his daughter every morning.
The man who made wine in his basement.
The man who knew everything about boats.
The man who fixed his son's toy boat in the basement the night before.
The man who liked to quote Federico Fellini about the passion of life.
The man who was slowly going blind.
The man who bought bagels for everyone all the time.
The man who tied flyfishing flies with his daughter.
The man who drew cartoons and caricatures of his friends.
The man who went to 35 Bruce Springsteen concerts.
The man who went to Mass every morning before boarding the train.
The man who cared for his kid sister with cerebral palsy.
The man who was a minister at House of God Church Number 1.
The man who was an elder at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.
The man who served two kinds of caviar at football tailgaters.
The man who mounted a telescope on a sewer pipe in his yard.
The man who was married in full Scottish regalia.
The man who spoke Portugese at home so his children would know the language.
The man who carried an old lifeguard from his wheelchair into the ocean for a last swim.
The man who carried a woman and her wheelchair fifty floors to the street.
The man who was deaf and had been a furrier in the old country.
The man who was deaf and knew everyone in town.
The man who sat with the girl no one liked in high school.
The man who invited a retarded girl to sit at the football players' table.
The man who flew small airplanes on Sunday morning.
The man whose first son was born the day after he died.
The man whose first son was born a week after he died.
The man whose first son was born two weeks after he died.
The man whose first son was born three weeks after he died.
The man whose daughter announced her engagement two days before.
The man who wrote a song about noodles with his daughter.
The man who cleaned his neighbors' gutters.

The man whose parents were deaf.
The man whose parents had survived the Holocaust.
The man whose identical twin survived.
The man who once painted his black dog white.
The man who was a professor of geography.
The man from Cut Bank, Montana.
The man who dressed up like Elvis for his daughters.
The man who wanted to coach high school basketball.
The man who wanted to be a fly-fishing guide in Montana.
The man who shoveled snow for his pregnant neighbor.
The man who shoveled snow for old neighbors.
The man who called his mother every morning at nine sharp.
The man who called his father every day after his mother died.
The man who called his wife three times a day.
The man who called his wife every day after lunch for fourteen years.
The man who left notes on the breakfast table every morning for his son.
The man who fixed a television transmitter with his shoelaces.
The man who coached every baseball player for ten years in his town.
The man who was working overtime to save money for his daughter's birthday.
The man who met his wife at a production of *Romeo and Juliet*.
The man whose wife found out she was pregnant after he died.
The man who helped his wife down 88 floors and then went back in.
The man who boated down the Mekong River.
The man who rescued children from a day-care center that morning.
The man who had rescued infant twins from a burning building.
The man who rescued an elderly couple from a burning building.
The man who carried a man from a burning building.
The man who had carried a woman down 70 flights of stairs in the 1993 bombing.
The fireman who carried a paralyzed child on a tour of the station house.
The man who had delivered a baby in an ambulance.
The man who carried toys with him for distraught children on his paramedic calls.
The man who carried dog biscuits in his pockets everywhere he went.
The man whose dog cried all night long for two weeks afterwards.
The man who mowed the Little League field with his own lawnmower.
The man who had just taught his son to whistle.
The man who had taught his pet bird to whistle.
The man who had just taught his daughter to dribble a basketball.
The man who had just signed up for his first college class.
The man who went to college classes every night.
The fireman who was also a substitute teacher at the junior high.
The fireman who accidentally burned down his own firehouse.
The man who wore photographs of his children on a necklace.
The man who still did cannonballs when he jumped in the pool.
The man who had been homeless for years but finally had a job.
The man whose job started the day before.
The man whose job started two days before.
The man who started his own carpet-cleaning company.
The man who grilled ribs in winter while wearing a parka.
The man who loved to catch crayfish in his creek.
The man who raised racing pigeons.
The man who carried his failing wife everywhere in his arms.
The man whose police shield is in President Bush's pocket.

Prayers for Dead Women

The woman who loved her two dogs.
The woman who loved her three dogs.

The woman who loved really strong coffee.
The woman who was a firefighter.
The woman who loved to ride her bike in the desert.
The woman whose job started the day before.
The woman whose name meant love and joy in Yoruban.
The woman whose sons were named Oz and Elvis.
The woman who raised llamas.
The woman who taught karate to deaf children.
The woman who taught every Sunday at Holy Rosary School.
The woman with piercing hazel eyes.
The woman with a famous giggle.
The woman who sang lead soprano at church.
The woman who played piano for opera troupes.
The woman who loved dancing to the Violent Femmes.
The woman who loved everything British.
The woman who fought the bully in school.
The woman you could count on for anything.
The woman who raised by missionaries in Japan.
The woman who prayed the rosary with the pope.
The woman whose son is autistic.
The woman whose identical twin survived.
The woman who had been homeless.
The woman who brought clothes to homeless mothers.
The woman who died with her nephew.
The woman who died with her brother.
The woman who died with her husband and brother.
The woman who toured the country singing with Duke Ellington.
The woman who wanted to open a flower shop.
The woman who collected angels.
The woman who listened with her fullest attention.
The woman who fed sparrows every morning in her back yard.
The woman who gave her place on the elevator away that morning.
The woman who was the craziest chocolate person ever.
The woman who called her dad every day.
The woman who loved pedicures on Saturday mornings.
The woman who had just quit smoking.
The woman who first kissed her husband under the twin towers.
The woman who died with her husband on the 104th floor.
The woman who had planned everything about her wedding except the invitations.
The woman who wrote 55-word short stories.
The woman who wrote her will the day before.
The woman who sketched commuters on the train every morning.
The woman who was seven months pregnant.
The woman who had discovered that morning that she was pregnant.

Prayers for Dead Boys and Girls

The boy who wanted to be an ambulance driver.
The girl, aged four, flying with her mother.
The boy, aged three, flying with his parents.
The child inside the woman who was seven months pregnant.
The children inside mothers who didn't know of them yet,
The children who would have been conceived in years to come,
Their children, and their children's children,
May they swim in the sea of Light forever.

-- *Brian Doyle*