

And Now, It's Spring Again!

*By Sheila Johnson*

It was June of 2008, when we first exchanged glances that were full of hope—a little over ten years ago now. I hoped for a long, bright future with him. His big brown eyes mirrored my silent, yet gleeful eyes. It was love at first sight for me. After all, I had waited and prayed for years that God would send him to me. But I had no idea that he would be so handsome! I had no clue that his voice would be so charming and soothing. I didn't know that his eyes would so generously lend insight as well as sight to those who had been blinded by fear and trauma. I had found my best bud!

Coinciding with our new friendship, 2008 bore a historic presidential victory for Barack Obama. My family rejoiced, cried, drank wine, and for a moment, we all sat still in quiet ecstasy. Had they been alive, my parents would have enjoyed knowing my new bud and gleaning wisdom from his persona.

We enjoyed life together. We loved the outdoors, testing nature at every turn. He imitated the sound of the birds, and was fascinated with their quick flight south and north! My bud and I went for long swims, and fast walks. And then long walks and fast swims. Like children, we laughed at Walt Disney films—especially the ones with monsters in them. It didn't matter that the popped corn left behind sharp little hulls that got stuck between our front teeth.

My bud made me happy. He lived out loud. He had no sad days, except when he was in pain from lack of oxygen in his blood stream. He knew no strangers, and insisted that I hang out with him while he placed puzzle pieces together and ate his favorite snacks.

Fall was his favorite season, because of all of the falling leaves that sat waiting to be captured by his small hands.

God called him home almost eleven years ago. The sun refused to shine in my world for a long time. It was difficult to visit the swimming pool without him. Barbeque and coleslaw lost their flavor without him around and his favorite little trucks are still in my toy box longing to be held.

And now, it's Spring. The buds on the trees remind me of my Bud. Soon they will open with bright colors that remind me of his smile. The birds in the trees mimic the songs that he used to sing when he saw them fly. The buds on the playground holding hands remind me of his joy and laughter. He will always be counted in the number with my other grandchildren.

And now, it's Spring again.