



Obituaries Of and By



Dan Pitts

Walter Palmer
- 63 -
High School Counselor

So many things to say and so little space in which to say them. Thank you Louise, for staying with me. Not just at the end when things got tough, but through all the years that we shared. I couldn't have spent my life with anyone else. We had so many memories that I fear I've lost a good deal of them throughout the years. But instead of recalling the perfect days, I want you to remember the simplest ones, because they were perfect in their own way - though we may not have been aware at the time. The days spent on the lawn, or at the grocery store, or sharing the newspaper over breakfast. Those are the moments when life was fullest. I have no regrets about the life I lived with you, only that I could not have lived it longer.

Barry Crompton
- 42 -
Computer Technician

If my wife is reading this, then that means you made it out of the house, and for that I'm glad. I'm sorry I couldn't be with you. There's nothing I want more than to be there right now, but I guess I'll have to wait. I only ask that you live well, and enjoy the rest of your days. I'll see you again, hopefully later rather than sooner.

Patrick Jennings
- 28 -
Entertainer

I took the BMW for a spin on the freeway.
It took me for a flip instead.

Alfonso Hill

- 24 -

Butcher

My Pop always warned me about karma - said if I did bad things, bad things would happen in return. I thought he was just giving me some old-timer talk.

Till Lyssa's friend ratted me out as a cheat, and Lyssa went apeshit. Stabbed me 23 times with a carving knife while I was eatin dinner. Guess the bitch didn't tell Lyssa she was the one I was cheatin with.

Good luck dealin with that karma.

Kelly Price

- 17 -

Daughter

Derek gave me too much. I think I died next to a toilet...all because he wouldn't call an ambulance. You were right about him, right about everything.

Richard Rincon

- 19 -

Construction

I just wanted a ride to my uncle's. I didn't think Miguel was serious. Then he handed me a gun and told me to shoot the cholo on the corner. Kid in the back seat was scared too. But he was a different kind of scared - the kind of scared that made him unload a whole clip into the dude without flinching. It was something to see.

Tefari Okeke

- 67 -

Restaurant Owner

When I landed here forty six years ago, I had no idea the people I would come to meet, the good times I would have, and the love I would share.

Now I pass my life's work to my son Donald in that hope that he too will have a life of love, happiness, and purpose. Thank you all for the wonderful times.

Billy Gubrund

- 69 -

Truck Driver

Fella sits down next to me at a stop just as I'm finishing up. Orders decaf...black, sets his soaked red hat down on the table and wipes the hair from his forehead. "Nasty huh?"

He nods out the window where it's been pissing rain all night.

"I'll live."

I put the tip on the counter and get up to leave.

"Careful out there. It might get worse."

I'll be damned if he wasn't right.

Maria Gonzales

- 36 -

Nurse

If the kid who t-boned me with his truck and then left me for dead is reading this - I wasn't ready to go. If the police don't find you, I will.

Patty Chapman

- 59 -

Author

I was writing a novella. It was about a man who was so afraid of his own death, that he learned how to avoid it.

He wasn't invincible or immortal, but he was always one step ahead, even when death seemed intent on taking him. Eventually the man learned death's plan so well that he was able to sense it lurking in everyone around him.

He tried time after time to save those whose lives were about to end, but on every occasion, he found that he was too afraid of death to stand in its way.

He knew that every time he interrupted death's plan, it would want him even more.

He became helpless and delusional - to the point of believing that he was actually the one ending lives. Had I been able to end the story, I would have left him believing at the end, that he himself had become death.

Louis Thompson

- 68 -

Retail

I was born with nothing, and in the end I still have most of it.

Sheryl McDermott

- 89 -

Singer

I wasn't expected to survive the breast cancer. But I did, and lived thirty years longer than I was supposed to. I'm survived by no one, and I think that makes it easier. I've been waiting a long time. I've seen most all of what can be seen in this life. You could say this was long overdue.

Stanley Cochran
- 74 -
Accountant

I would've died alone in that hospital. It's what I'd always been afraid would happen.

But one night, as if my loneliness had been noted on my chart, a young man started visiting. Every time he came, he'd sit at the foot of my bed for a half-hour, sometimes more, and ask me about my life. I couldn't remember meeting this man before, so he must have been employed by the hospital. I saw him on occasion walking down the hallway - he'd always smile to me as he passed. On my last night, I asked him why he visited me.

His smile finally dimmed as he looked down. He scratched his fingernails across his forehead, tipped up his hat and told me he was just answering his calling.
what a nice young man.

If he's reading this, I'd like to thank him for being so kind to me, and wish him all the best in life.

Tonya James
- 22 -
College Student

He must have slipped something in my drink. I remember the cut on his forehead, though I don't know if I put it there. I was out of focus and could barely keep my eyes open. He took my hand, pulled me away.

Father Mark James
- 71 -
Priest/Retired

(Entry not recorded)

Todd Vanderhoff

- 62 -

Hotel Manager

They jumped from the bushes not twenty feet ahead. We were ready, but they weren't who we were expecting. They didn't even see us - had no idea we were huddled along the trail. They didn't have guns, grenades, not even shirts. But they surprised us - they surprised my trigger finger. Three Vietnamese boys dead in the mud. Just three more who weren't on the body count. Three who I could never bring myself to speak of until now.

Desirae Suarez

- 43 -

Produce Manager

It happened in aisle five, a heart attack at forty-three. The guy standing near me couldn't bear to look. He just staggered away.

Silvia Crompton

- 40 -

Food Caterer

The smoke was too much. I could hear you calling my name from down the hall, but I was choking. I couldn't yell back. You must have thought I was outside already. Know that I'll miss you, and I can't wait to see you again.

David Van Patten
- 66 -
Police Captain/Retired

I can leave you all now, proudly knowing that my life was one of service and honor. I hope I left my city - and the world, a better place than when I started.

Caitlyn Lyons
- 62 -
Hospital Receptionist

There is another sky,
Ever serene and fair,
And there is another sunshine,
Though it be darkness there;
Never mind faded forests, Austin,
Never mind silent fields-
Here is a little forest,
Whose leaf is ever green;
Here is a brighter garden,
Where not a frost has been;
In its unfading flowers
I hear the bright bee hum:
Prithee, my brother,
Into my garden come!

-Emily Dickinson

James Jenkins
- 68 -
Dentist/Retired

Three years swimming straight upstream through chemotherapy couldn't stop Leukemia. To my friends and family; I loved each and every one of you. Thank you for both your tears and your prayers over the past few years. But this old man is tired. It's time to rest at last.



Latoya Wallace
- 21 -
Adult Entertainer

That fucker from the club followed me home. I told Mitch that there was something about that guy. He just wasn't a pig you'd see at the club. He wasn't normal.

Natasha Taylor
- 25 -
Homemaker

Each time Rodney was deployed, I prepared myself for the worst. I knew that any day a car could arrive outside of my house, a man in a uniform would walk to my door, and in a moment the kids and I could be alone. It's the duty of an army wife to have her family ready.
But we never talked about this.

Jessica Forte
- 47 -
Dance Instructor

"DON'T DO IT!" I shrieked as the doctors filed into the room. Dad crawled into a fold of my step mom's cotton blouse as she huddled him close to stifle the tears. "You can stop this!" I pleaded with him - cried with him. "Oh God no- Don't. DON'T LISTEN TO THEM!" But it didn't matter. Nobody heard me. I didn't actually speak and I didn't actually cry. How were they to know I was still awake in there?

Eben Howser

- 45 -

Gambler

Most of you will never know what
it's like to lose that much money.
And I hope you never do.
So don't judge me when I tell you
that this was the only way out.

Michael Villalobos

- 24 -

Restaurant Dishwasher

As I walked home from work that night, I crossed paths with
some white guy headed the other direction. He dragged a
ripped up black coat at his side, and had a felt red hat
that was beat to shit. He pointed to me as the sidewalk
brought us close, and did nothing more. He didn't even make
eye contact with me, but as he passed I heard a loud crack
in my headphones. I thought one of em might have blown out...
but it kept getting closer. I stopped the song, and could
hear screeching tires coming up on the curb right next to
me. The cracking got so loud I couldn't hear anything else.

Mary Lou Gallo

- 58 -

Bakery Owner

Doctor said my cholesterol was too
high. Dangerously high. High enough
that I needed to swear off all fatty
foods immediately. So high I could
drop dead at any second kinda high.
Hope she finds out I choked to death
on a stick of celery.

Timothy Banks
- 103 -
Real Estate/Retired

It's a terrible thing - living long enough to attend your children's' funerals. Even more painful to see their children slow down. Not long ago I could carry them in my hands. But now their veins stick out from brittle bone and lazy skin just like mine. For so long I've felt like a ghost among my family as they all listened for a clock's ticking promise that someday - at last - it would be my turn.

Michael Boyer
- 6 -
Student

I climbed into the neighbor's yard to get the kickball. Bandit is always so friendly when my Dad takes me next door. He licks my chin and puts his nose in my hair. I don't understand why he doesn't like me anymore.

Miguel Herrera
- 24 -
Norteño Soldier

I tried to drive away as quick as I could. We laid out the scrappa we were looking for, but white dude walking near him saw it all. I couldn't let him see the plates too. I got going too fast though. Lost control of the car when I blew through the stop sign - clipped the rear end of a van and wrapped around a light pole not two blocks away. Manny and Ricky both flew out their open windows. White dude walked from where he saw us shoot the Sureño punk. He leaned in the window and looked around, nodded, then put his hat on and kept walking. Fuckin sicko.

Darcy Bollinger

- 72 -

Teacher/Retired

Susan, Mark, Tim, I'll miss all of you. Be sure to tell Chris, Todd, Patrick, Anna, Vivian, and Robbie (and all others to come) that grandma loves them and is in a better place. It'll be hard on the kids, but tell them I'm not sick anymore. See that they light a candle for me.

Janice Wickersham

- 88 -

Can't Remember

I had a visitor the other day - the first in years. He was a handsome, well dressed young man who I could've sworn looked just like Robert. I asked him if he'd heard any news from Korea...told him my Robert was there serving his country with all the other boys. The young man in the suit had the darndest look. Exasperated, he just closed his mouth, turned his eyes down, put his hat on, and walked away.

Tell ya the truth I can't even remember what he was selling.

Jarred Murphy

- 24 -

Mechanic

Imagine seeing yourself dead on your own couch, vomit draining from the corner of your lips and trickling down your cheek, down the couch pillow, down further still, to the moist floor where empty beer bottles still ring with the sucking sound of your binge. Shame we all can't see how it ends. Given that knowledge I don't think we'd ever stray.

John Doe
- 45 to 55 -
Undefined

They found me at the bottom of a lake, still floating within the clutch of my seatbelt after years of waiting. I would've told them who I was if I could. But truth is these things are hard to recall after a certain point.

Lucas Devine
- 84 -
Barber

I've always wanted to visit the moon. I knew it wouldn't ever be possible. For me it was enough to just see it on the television. But in death now I wonder...Is there anything to keep me away?

Rosalina Sanchez
- 73 -
Retail

Our Father, who art in heaven
Hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy red hat come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

Pamela Lewis

- 53 -

Bus Driver

I still don't think I understand. Septicemia - he called it. What a big word for such a little cut.

Emily Monroe

- 48 -

Waitress

I elected not to do the surgery. How was I going afford it? But still Dr. Channing followed me all the way to my car, begging me to let her operate. She said she didn't want to see this happen. Said that maybe she could call the insurance company, maybe the hospital would pay for it. Maybe this, maybe that.

Fact of the matter was a single mom with no child support can't pass a hospital bill down to her kid just to delay the inevitable one measly year.

I thanked her for her concern, and rolled up the window.

Michael Hoffman

- 52 -

Line Chef

I'm alone at home; face down on the kitchen floor, my hand still clutching the bottom rung of the barstool.

Nobody has called. Nobody has knocked. I don't know why, but I thought someone would notice I was missing.

Manny Gomez

- 16 -

High School Student

Mom said I was going to hell the way I was acting - Jesus wouldn't like the example I was setting for Ivan...I'd never shot a gun before. I didn't think it would be like that. I couldn't keep my body still after Miguel started yelling at me. My hand was shaking so bad I had to hold it against the car door to aim.

I don't even know if I pulled the trigger.

Shirley Heard

- 51 -

Attorney

well, this day was a total waste of makeup.

Maxwell Akins

- 83 -

Banker/Retired

I'm afraid that all I will carry with me into the afterlife is the stagnant smell of nursing home woven into my skin. A smell so putrid I'm afraid it may force even Peter to turn his head in disgust.

Lamar Figgins

- 39 -

Car Salesman

Joey wanted Christmas lights on the second story window this year. As soon as I connected the cords there was a loud crack. I seized up in pain, lost control and fell backwards off the ladder. Joey had gone into the house to get my cell, and came out to find his dad crushing the entire box of lights against the concrete.

Tori Grace

- 30 -

Marketing Agent

I could walk that trail in my sleep. It wasn't like I was unfamiliar or lost. I guess I just slipped. I don't know what I did to myself - all I know is when I whacked into that tree and came to a stop, I couldn't move. Hell I could barely breathe enough to call for help. At dusk, there was just enough light...I could've sworn I saw something red moving on the trail above. Whoever it was must not have heard me though. I was in too bad of shape to last the night.

Christian Velasquez

- 69 -

Handyman

where's Sandy? Marcus? I've been waiting ten years to see them...he told me they'd be here...he promised. So where are they?



Georgia Paulson

- 25 -

Magazine Intern

I went to school like I was supposed to. I always got the grades.

Always did the right thing too - never got in trouble.

I worked harder than anyone throughout college. I even took on a full-time job so I wouldn't be in too much debt when I got done with school. I clawed and scratched until I was headed in the right direction. Anyone will tell you I had a bright future.

But now...

Rudy Gibson

- 44 -

Limousine Driver

All these years and it never occurred to me that one day when I went too far, she could actually turn the tables. Well, she fucking did it.

Gerald Young

- 42 -

Homeless

What got me here? You don't want to know. It's really not worth repeating. Most things that happen under freeways aren't worth mentioning. Why would any of you start giving a fuck about me now anyways?

Kenny Trico
- 95 -
Stock Broker

I've spent most of my life wondering if murder is subject to
circumstance.

When I got back, first thing I did was ask my pastor. He told me I
did God's will over there - that God loved me for every Kraut I
killed. And I heard the same damn thing everywhere, until part of
me started to believe it. It helped me sleep.

But still it continued to drive me crazy - that nobody
realized the sons and husbands I killed were being told the same
damn thing. So, what am I to believe? That God loves our
countries more than our victims?

Taylor McInnis
- 31 -
Skyscraper Window Washer

You can probably guess. So I won't bother.

Thomas Claiborne

- 72 -

Inmate GB5800

It didn't take long for the room to get blurry once they started pumpin that shit into me. The priest went out of focus, so did the widow who watched me with one eye open from the viewing glass.

"Nice hat" was the last thing I muttered before losing control.

A curious thing it must have been to her. I wonder if she had seen him too.

Byron Lamont

- 76 -

Funeral Home General Manager

I've seen a lot of tears in my time. All sorts of flowers, plenty black veils giving cover to grey mascara droplets. White handkerchiefs, and black umbrellas. I already know what my funeral will look like, what casket I'll be buried in, and who will dress me. I know the men who will dig the trench, and some of the same who'll pile soft earth back on.

The thing I've never known, however, is what type of sky will be above the flowers I've picked.

I hope it's a beautiful day.

浪人小伝

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