

Gone But Not Forgotten

Brother when you weep for me Remember that it was meant to be
Lay me down and when you leave Remember I'll be at your sleeve

In every dark and choking hall I'll be there as you slowly crawl
On every roof in driving snow I'll hold your coat and you will know

In cellars hot with searing heat At windows where a gate you meet
In closets where young children hide You know I'll be there at your side

The house from which I now respond Is overstaffed with heroes gone

Men who answered one last bell Did the job and did it well

As firemen we understand That death's a card dealt in our hand

A card we hope we never play But one we hold there anyway

That card is something we ignore As we crawl across a weakened floor

For we know that we're the only prayer For anyone that might be there

So remember as you wipe your tears The joy I knew throughout the years

As I did the job I loved to do I pray that thought will see you through.

The Dash

by Linda Ellis copyright 1996

I read of a man who stood to speak
at the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on the tombstone
from the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth
and spoke the following date with tears,
but he said what mattered most of all
was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time
that they spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved them
know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,
the cars...the house...the cash.
What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash.

So, think about this long and hard.
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
that can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough
to consider what's true and real
and always try to understand
the way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger
and show appreciation more
and love the people in our lives
like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect
and more often wear a smile,
remembering that this special dash
might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy is being read,
with your life's actions to rehash...
would you be proud of the things they say
about how you spent YOUR dash?