

Murray Peter Spencer Briggs

By Merle Briggs, in memory of her son

A MOTHER'S JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF (THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS)

The colour purple envelops me carrying me away to this desolate place where the winds blow stinging sand and debris, cutting my flesh, clouding my mind, sapping my strength until I falter and fall lower and lower from reality.

Sanity fades until my purple turns to black.

The smell rallies me. My nostrils quiver and flare.

Where is it coming from, this fetid rank odour of death?

I am running, my lungs near to bursting.

I stumble, grazing my knees on the rough concrete of the platform.

A hand appears. I reach out. Our fingertips touch. I strain forward. It fades away, beyond my reach.

I hear a clap of thunder, the shrill whistle of a train.

A flash of lightning illuminating the sky as it spears towards a solitary tree.

A phone rings, that fatal shaft hits. Those words "he's gone" explode my brain.

My tears fall with the flying bark, together heart and tree trunk bust open.

Its sap and my life's blood seep out staining my world forever.

As the days pass the withered leaves fall with my tears and mix together forming a pattern of butterflies in my mind.

My tree stands solitary, stark, lost, hollow, a monument to my lost spirit that flutters skyward in a myriad of colours signifying eternal life.

Could my grief be a challenge? A challenge to do what? Recover, survive, carry on—regardless, laugh again, live again?

Maybe it's just wait.

Having no choice my boy left early. Having no choice I wait until he holds out his hand again and I take it.

Merle's Cookie, Tania's Muzz. Debbie's brother. She never realised how much she loved him until it was too late.

Murray Senior. When he left my boy took two lives with him — his own and his father's.

Murray Peter Spencer Briggs. 30/4/66 to 6/7/2005 at 10.59am on a Wednesday

At Auchenflower Railway Station, Brisbane.

My tree still stands and so do I. I will survive and recover. Fight the good fight.