

## **Excerpt from Dry Your Tears**

Although every single visitor was greatly appreciated, we were relieved to finally be by ourselves. Our first day without Tim had passed. What had previously been unimaginable had been accomplished. Again, we slept in his bed, burrowing into his smell like a puppy in the bottom of a sleeping bag. We decided to leave his sheets unwashed for as long as possible. Laura curled up in Tim's favourite yellow t-shirt and I bundled his blue and white jacket close to my chest, savouring remnant smells of my son. They say smell is the last of our five senses to shut down.

That night I awoke within a vivid dream to see Tim as a toddler, standing next to my bed. It was so real that I reached out to touch him but found I couldn't move or make any sound. I was paralysed, suspended in a time warp - it wasn't frightening, just strange. As if captured by a sped-up camera I saw him morphing through his life, from curly-headed infancy to freckled boyhood, and onto teenhood. Then he matured into young adulthood, finally becoming a young man of around thirty years old. Captivated, hardly daring to breathe for fear of interrupting his magic, I watched as he shape-shifted into a magnificent White Owl towering over my bed. He slowly raised and lowered his wondrous wings several times, before spreading his feathers to fly upwards and away.

The dream had a profound impact; it activated a hazy, distant 'knowing', like a vague remembering I had known all along that Tim would leave early. I didn't understand how I could know this; it was not in the slightest bit logical or tangible. Yet the idea had been seeded, and I felt an inexplicable sense of relief flow through me.

Something had shifted deep within me, and the following days were trance-like. I felt supported by hundreds of pairs of hands,

lifting me up and taking me to a higher plane. Although I had never consciously thought about angels before, I wondered if they were present because I had never felt so loved. Their loving energy me was an intoxicating nectar that carried and supported me right up to the funeral. At the same time, the elusive memories of somehow knowing that had been previously agreed upon, quickened. I realised there was indeed a part of me that had always 'known' Tim would depart early. As this realisation took root I was able to accept Tim's departure almost with state of grace. I had no idea at the time how unusual this was.

Of course, none of this intrigue prevented deep grieving. But the budding promise of an understanding yet to come greatly helped me to support Laura in her grief. Two tentative versions of her mother now co-existed. One that was shrinking and dying, the other was quietly excited, sensing an awakening. My heart ached for Laura - she was only aware of the pain.