

Book - Kisses From Heaven Writer's Guidelines

This page can be found at http://www.creativesculpture.com/kisses_from_heaven.html

There are special cherished moments after the death of a loved one. Some call them coincidences, others a message from beyond. In this Case, we are calling them Kisses from Heaven. They are simple things that happen that remind us of our deceased loved one. Some seem so bazaar we are not sure how they could happen. They may be snuggling in a dream, or perhaps having a symbol of a loved one continue to appear over and over, smelling the perfume of a deceased mother or cigar of a father who passed away. These moments, however strange, comfort us. It is my personal opinion that God gives these moments to the bereaved as a way to say, "I know your pain, and I'm still here."

As a sculptor who specializes in sculpting the deceased for the homes of individuals, prayer gardens, and cemeteries, I have heard of these incidents over and over again. It is the desire of my heart and my co-author Zanna Mangini's to collect these unusual stories into a book. We would love for you to be a part. Please send us stories about your Kisses from Heaven.

Thank you in advance,
Sculptor- Bridgette Mongeon

Writer's Guidelines for the book Kisses from Heaven

1. Give us a brief description of your loved one and the time frame between passing on and the occurrence. Tell us the unusual occurrence that gave you peace and that was a reminder of your loved one, and "I love you" message from beyond.
2. Think about how you felt. As you write about it, try to make us cry, laugh, or get goose bumps.
3. Have you named these occurrences? What do you call them?
4. Most importantly, let it come from your HEART! Your story is important!

Story Specifications

1. It is preferred that all submissions are sent via the creative sculpture website contact form. Located at <http://www.creativesculpture.com/contact>. In the category menu please drop down to - **Kisses From Heaven** category.
2. If you don't have access to the Internet, please submit your stories typed on plain white 8 1/2" x 11" paper, in 12-point Times New Roman font-double spaced.

Send it to:
Sculptor- Bridgette Mongeon
PO BOX 10562
Houston, Texas 77092

- * Please be sure to type the author's name and contact information on the first page of each and every story.
- * Stories should be non-fiction, ranging in length between 500-1000 words.
- * Mail your submissions in a flat, 9x12 envelope if possible.
- * No anonymous or author unknown submissions please.
- * Send only one copy of each submission.

- * We do not return submissions, so please don't send the original.
- * If the story you wrote is published, we will notify you. Please note there is no monetary compensation.
- * Writers will be required to sign a release form.
- * Feel free to submit more than one story.

Samples from Kisses from Heaven

My First Kiss

Shortly after my beautiful infant daughter, Jenna, passed away due to complications from leukemia, I had the most wonderful dream. You see, I was frantic, afraid I would forget the way she felt in my arms, our cuddles, and her touch. My arms felt so empty and as the weeks passed, I remember praying so hard for some sign, any sign that she was okay. I even had other people praying for this too. It was one of the darkest points of my life. I was literally sinking inside of my despair. It was at this time that I had a dream that seemed so real. I was sitting in a rocking chair and someone, just out of my sight, placed Jenna gently into my arms once more. I remember the most comforting snuggle as she curled right into me while I rocked her, cuddled, and held her once more. I was "awake" in my dream knowing that this was an incredibly special moment with my little girl. The first feeling I remember was one of relief, as Jenna "felt" just as I remembered. The second was one of complete love, both given and received. A cherished connection, between a Mom and her infant daughter, together once more. I woke up overwhelmed with feelings of love, comfort, and peace. It was as if Jenna just embraced me through my pain, letting me know that she was okay, still with me, loving and comforting me in a way that only she could. She provided the first glimpse of light in the darkness of grief. It truly was the sweetest Kiss from Heaven.

Zanna Mangini

Feather Moments

It was in college as I was studying the process and unusual occurrences of creating posthumous sculpture when I met Helen. She was at a residency, even though her mother passed away a few days before. I was excited about my research and talked about death and dying not knowing of her pain and sorrow. When I heard what had happened, I apologized. Helen, through her tears, chokes out an assurance that it is all right and proceeded to tell me a story about her mother. "Last semester I had a wonderful study on Native American Indians." I noticed that her recounting the story seemed to bring her comfort. "Within this study I discovered the strong symbolism that a feather has to the Native American Indian culture. So while my mom was in the hospital, I brought a feather to her bedside [delete comma] and told her of the symbolism." We all listened intently to the story. She told us how unsure she was about coming to residency, but she knew that her mother would want her to come, so she packed her suitcases. She left the room, her bags sitting by the door, still unsure that she could make it through a Residency. Upon returning to the room she found a feather on top of her bags. She quickly stated that she collects feathers and has cats and maybe one of the cats could have gotten into her feathers and brought one to the suitcase. All three of her classmates, who listened in awe, concurred it did not matter how the feather got there, it meant something to her and so we believed it was from her mom.

That evening I took a contemplative break and a long walk. Upon arriving back to the dorm I began to walk in the dorm building and looking down I said, "Oh there is a feather." Then I stopped and realized the symbol, snatched up the feather, and ran to present it to my friend. That residency she received many feathers all found in various places. Perhaps that is why I refer to these moments also as "feather moments. "

Bridgette Mongeon

A Gift from Heaven

Each semester at college residency, they have an auction. Before coming to the college, I decided to bring one of my God's Word Collectible sculptures for the auction. This is a gift line that I have created over the years. It is a way to share my faith and to create what I want to create instead of working only from commissions. The closer it got to the time of the auction, the less comfortable I felt about putting the sculpture in the auction; in fact, I was beginning to feel sick to my stomach. Prior to coming to the residency, I walked into my stockroom of inventory. Knowing there would be a graduation at the residency, I had in mind to bring one sculpture with a graduation figure on it and the scripture that reads, "In all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your path." but as hard as I looked, there was not one in inventory. I needed a small sculpture, so I picked one of the smaller boxes, and said to myself and to God, "Whenever this happens, you always match up the correct sculpture with the correct person, so I trust in You." I tucked the sculpture in my suitcase.

While at dinner the night of the auction, I found myself sitting with Helen, a young woman who had just lost her mother. I had my own inner battle going on because of the auction and my discomfort. Then I thought, "Maybe this sculpture is not for the auction at all." I asked Helen to watch my tray and I ran up to my room, tore open my suitcase, and unwrapped the sculpture. Each sculpture comes with a card with a scripture and a personal letter from me. Anxiously I opened up the card and personal letter that I had written many years before when I first created this piece. Its creation was so long ago; I had forgotten what it said. I did know the gist of the sculpture's meaning, for it was of a little girl nursing her sick teddy bear. Gently she holds his paw. I looked at the card that held the inscription of the Bible passage...

*Be sympathetic and compassionate...
Finally, all of you,
Live in harmony with one another;
Be sympathetic,
Love as brothers,
Be compassionate and humble.*

1 Peter 3: 8

I began to remember why I created this sculpture, why this scripture was important to me, and as I did I started crying, and I marveled at the wonderful coincidence. Part of me was shocked that this was the sculpture I had chosen, another part of me said, "Of course, I had, after all, prayed." Now I knew what I was supposed to do with the sculpture that was originally intended for the auction. I began to read my letter and prayer that I wrote so many years earlier.

My Kind and Caring Friend,

The sculpture 1 Peter 3:8 came about a bit differently than the rest in the God's Word series so far, I knew what I wanted to sculpt, I knew the meaning of the piece, but I had to search for the scripture. So this scripture is now added to my list of favorites.

I sometimes wonder why sculptures come out in the order that they do. Some sit inside of me ripening for a long time. Others are just there.

Be compassionate, sympathetic, humble, love... I can say that personally I have experienced the wonderful compassionate nature of God through others. I have had trials and tribulations in my life.

I thank God for them because they have helped me grow and become the person that I am. But if there were no other reason to have trials and tribulation but to experience the incredible sweetness of compassion, caring and love in a time of need, it would be worth it.

To have the experience of seeing God's love for me, through the actions of others, is nothing less than awesome.

I am sure this piece is also inspired by my most recent experience with my mother's illness. With her on her deathbed, the doctors and my siblings sent for me. I rushed to her side to say goodbye, yet miraculously, with mercy, and grace, God healed her. Her testimony is incredible, but what also is profound to me was to watch those who rallied at her bedside, who lifted her in prayer, took care of daily things, and nursed her spirit into health. Like the friends in Mark 2:3-5, who carried the bed of an ill friend through the crowds, tearing up the roof and lowering him down in hopes that Jesus would heal him, these caring siblings, in the Lord, were strong, carrying my mother's burden when she could not.

I am sure this sculpture will go out to one who is just like those who have assisted my mom through her illness or me in my time of need. Your gift, your place in the body of Christ is an important one. I join the giver of this gift in celebration of your selfless, caring spirit. May the Lord return that unto you again and again.

My giving God,

Thank you so much for this giving person. Their love will be felt in our hearts for a very long time. Please bless them in return. In your "Daddy" like way, let them know just how proud you are to call them sons and daughters.

In Jesus name I pray,
Amen

I was halfway through the letter when I remembered how it felt to experience my mom dying, and I knew how Helen was feeling. I was almost blubbering as I wrapped the sculpture back in its bubble wrap and then in its plastic bag, and hurried to the dining hall feeling much better about bringing this sculpture to the campus.

As I sat down next to Helen I waited for her attention, tried not to cry and said, "If you studied Native American Indians then you probably know about 'gifting.'" I am going to give you something. You are welcome to keep it, or if you come across someone that you would like to give it to, you can "gift it on." I handed her the package and tried to eat my dinner. She looked at the sculpture and then proceeded with the card and letter. When she was done she turned to me and very pragmatically asked, "Did you know my mother?" Helen and I had just met and I was surprised by her comment. She continued, "My mom was a Christian, so to have something with scripture on it would mean a lot to her, to me." She finished reading the letter, touched the sculpture gingerly, and said; "My mom was also a quilter." Her hand ran over the little bear that was covered with a patchwork quilt. I included the quilt in the sculpture because to me quilts are a very strong symbol of family bonds and history. Helen ended her dinner conversation feeling the connection with her mom and feeling like she received a gift from Heaven.

Bridgette Mongeon

About the authors

Bridgette Mongeon has been a writer for over 15 years writing numerous articles for magazines and newspapers, and is presently a regular contributing writer for Best of Artist and Artists online magazine and Sculptural Pursuit. She is also a contributing book author.

In her portrait sculptures, she specializes in capturing the essence of not only those loved ones who are alive, but also those who are deceased. She spends hours and days trying to find the essence of a loved one and capturing it

in clay. Through her creativity she helps families heal and enjoys listening to the stories of feather moments and kisses from heaven.

Rosanna Mangini is a former educator with over 10 years of teaching experience, a partner in an organization providing educational training and workshops for early childhood educators, but most importantly a parent to two beautiful children. She has a son, Jordan and a daughter, Jenna, who succumbed to leukemia at only 15 months of age. Throughout Jenna's short life, Rosanna was quick to notice "signs" of a higher power, God, letting her know through other people and situations that He was there and that she and her family weren't alone. These were referred to as *God Stops* at the time. After Jenna's death, the signs continued, an abundance of pink butterflies and hearts started appearing together in unexpected places, sweet dreams of her baby comforting her through the storm of grieving, an abundance of coincidences, too many to be ignored, all Kisses From Heaven. Her hope is that through this joint collaboration with Bridgette, others will see how God and their loved ones who have passed are active in their lives too. Rosanna lives in South Portland, Maine, with her husband James, her son Jordan, and her cat Tommy. She carries the love and memories of her vibrant daughter, Jenna, forever in her heart.