ALL THOSE YEARS

by Eric Boyd

Joseph and his little brother, Kevin, were there again. Kevin was too small to understand what had happened yet. He would usually just go off, running around the statues and playing with the wreaths; the last time they'd visited he climbed a tree and broke one of the branches. This time, Joseph gave Kevin an old science book to look at.

Standing over the grave, Joseph started up with the same old questions. He couldn't wrap his head around how a man younger than fifty would go that way. It was so long, painful. A part of Joseph smiled inside. That's what the fucker deserved, he'd think to himself. All those years. All of the belittling and ignorance and hurt. Yes, this is what he had coming. Until a year ago. After the diagnosis, he really turned around. Joseph and he became closer than they ever had in the past. It was difficult to cope with. Even before the death. He had chosen to just forget everything and start fresh, leave with a clean slate. Joseph wasn't sure if he could allow that, but then, if he didn't, that really made him the asshole.

“Joey, Joey!” Kevin ran up.

“What's going on, Kev?”

“Look what I read!” He said, holding up the science book.

“Sure, lemme look— what's it say?”

“Here it says, uh, that stars—you know, in the sky—we can still see them after they're gone. Like, stars give off light even after they're dead.”

“Yeah, I believe it,” Joseph nodded.

“But,” Kevin paused, a troubled look on his young face, “sometimes, dead stars can turn into black holes…”

Joseph asked, “What happens after that?”

“Nobody knows, I think.”

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