



The White Carnation
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Sorrows have likely filled your soul
if you've ever mourned for your mom – if she was called to go
to the place that was not prepared by man
but by the Carpenter who has pierced hands.
The place which will boast a street of gold
pearly gates and love untold.
A place where you cannot now go. She's gone on.
Earthbound, you're left behind
to wear a white carnation.

On to where?
On to glory!
But only if she believed Jesus' story!
No one goes to the Father but by Him.
If she's gone to Heaven, you'll likely then
now wear a white carnation.

If you've buried her then you likely also feel
that Mother's Day will forever now ring empty and still,
especially the day that you are made to feel
it's time to put on a white carnation.

Mother's Day used to mean something else
brunches, lunches, lavish gifts and kisses
her guaranteed day free from the toils of a hot kitchen.
But now it's like one long hour,
a long day of wearing a colorless flower
the day for a white carnation.

They used to sell them on the sidewalk outside the church's door
some paper, some real, but you always knew the score.
Red was for the living and then there were always a few
that wore a white carnation – they looked sadder than you.
For they felt the piercing symbolism of that motionless flower,
they had gone through the time of "the family hour"
and the front pew at the church, the friends who stopped by,
tears swimming on pillows, and days when it was too
difficult to cry.

Through the anger, through the "whys?"
and the "I just can't go ons!"
flash backs to the burial, tributes written, resolutions,
and funeral poems.
To recalling the flowers on the casket, almost like the one now
worn –
the white carnation.

Why did they have to sell white?
Why were there so many?
Why didn't they sell purple? Or pink?
Either would have been more pretty!

I knew it then, but I understand it more now
white is for those whose moms would be sleeping for a long while
and left children behind to mourn
wearing a white carnation.

Funerals, cremations, memorials and long processions
all of that fanfare to say goodbye to the one,
hopefully bound for Heaven.
But only if the one that passed was born again,
will her flower again bloom my friend.
But either way,
you now qualify to wear a white carnation.

A new perspective is what you should now have
not tears, but happy reflections, not sadness. But how?
Understand that white is the color that adorns the Lord's Saints
the ones not in pain, the ones who laid down, that He did take.
The one in whose honor you now make
it a point to wear a white carnation.

Live again, laugh again and plan to be reunited again. But how?
Know the One who causes the white carnation to bloom.
He'll give eternal life to you.

But what if to your amazement, and even to your horror
while standing there adorned with your white flower
you can't say for sure, she'll bloom in the midst
of the Lord's honor?
Perhaps she never grasped the gift of eternal life.
What do you do?
Press on; accept for yourself Jesus, the Life.
Erase all doubt for those who will honor you,
while wearing a white carnation.

Knowing Jesus is not just fire insurance,
but means having a relationship with Him for life.
You need His fulfillment to be inserted along with the dash on
your tombstone that represents your life.
Details about which your kids can recall,
while wearing a white carnation.

Perhaps death's sting did not tap on the shoulder of your mother
but that dark angel came for your sister, an uncle, your husband,
a dad, perhaps a newborn child, or your brother.
Whether in-law, acquaintance, foe or friend
death catches up with most at the end, save those two taken,
and the others to be snatched away soon my friend.
Don't be left behind to wear a white carnation.

Rather live and give your flowers to her while she's still alive.
Or if it's too late, and you have tears in your eyes,
cause your soul to receive a surprise – open it up to Jesus,
the author of the white carnation.

Laugh again, love again, and know that like the snow
your season of mourning will melt and pass away,
the sadness will go
and the white carnation will take on a new meaning one day
– for you too so I pray.

In Honor of My Late Mother
Lena Melissa "Mae" Bradshaw Caro
November 17, 1918 – July 8, 2002