



In Loving Memory of Justin Carr, by Susan and Darrell Carr

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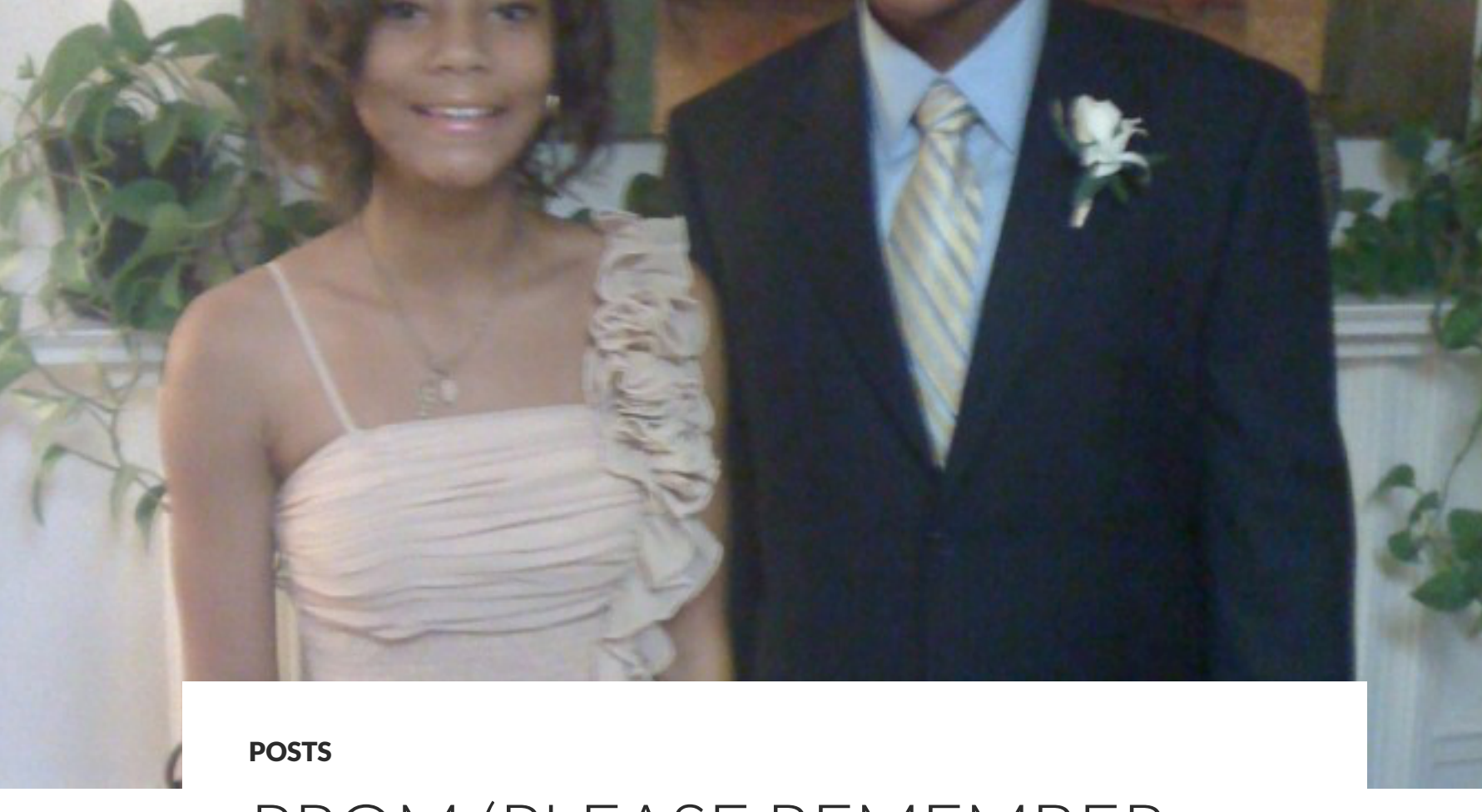
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PROM (PLEASE REMEMBER OUR MAN)

MAY 17, 2014 SUSAN TOLER-CARR 1 COMMENT



Oh the Fun they had this dashing young couple



Lunchtime in Kindergarten

PROM (Please Remember Our Man)

I can't help it tonight... It's in the air it is everywhere PROM, Graduation, futures. Internal thoughts are coming through me.

There was a reason that I was thought to get up and move today. We were invited to attend an Inner City High School Film Festival by a friend. She told me that Justin's Story and life had inspired her family to give back their filmmaking industry talents to the underserved. They have mentally, physically and emotionally adopted these kids from the other side of their usual city limits. They have also realized that their small gestures to work with these kids weekly and guide, nurture and just listen to them can be the difference needed that could change their lives in a BIG way.

As we pulled up to the historical campus in South Central LA, I realized that when I was just starting my Engineering career, over 20 years ago, I would come to this same campus and speak with the students annually at their Career Day. The school was hardly recognizable. Before, you could see the beautiful landscape surrounding this massive historical campus. However, it is apparent with the high metal fences that surround every inch of the property (to protect the innocent and keep out the undesirables out) that the times have changed. The fabric of the student body was no longer as varied, the colors were the just the blended hues of browns and black that seemed evenly split depicting the Hispanic and African American population of kids. The campus walls buzzed hot with the sounds of the children moving, eating, yelling, whispering, feeling, growing, becoming.

As soon as we got inside the reception area, we were introduced to some of the students who were being honored in the festival for their works of art. A tall, beautiful ebony girl sat down at our table and extended her hand and introduced herself by saying, " Hi my name is Ashley". My friend came over and said " Ashley is going to go to college up in the Bay Area. When she told me which campus, I told her that my older sister lives a mile from there and I subsequently, gave her my sisters number. I then asked Ashley what was her major was going to be and she said " Nursing". I immediately exclaimed that nursing was my sister's profession for 24 years! When my friend asked her " Are you going to the PROM?" Ashley put her head down, tried to hold back her tears and mumbled something. When asked again, she said, " No, my mom used the money to fix her car". I looked over at the hidden pain that this promising young woman was trying to hide and the question came out of me without thinking otherwise " How much does it cost? She said, "\$95.00." I quickly reached for my purse, pulled out my checkbook and wrote a check out to the school so she could get her ticket. She was shocked and really tried to hold back her feelings. She did not know what to say, but the first words were THANK YOU! I told her that I'm sure she could wear something that she already has in her closet and she smiled and agreed. I also asked her if she had siblings, she said yes, there are nine of us and I am the oldest, I am 17 years old. Darrell told her that when she is able she will be able to help someone one day and "Pay it Forward" He also told her that she needs to take advantage of all of the offerings that this world has to offer, and not to take "No you can't "for any answer.

The films were incredible and depicted life as they know it from tales of gangs, social injustice, Sexually Transmitted Disease, friendship, bullying, romance, gender association, diversity and education. They depicted their life, as they know it in these shorts on the big screen. Amazing. Kudos to my friends who have put their thoughts into production and not just talking about it. The enduring love for you and your work with these kids was evident.

I could not help but think about witnessing Justin bustling around his high school campus in days before he is set to graduate. He would be so happy to pick his date, plan for the events of PROM night and just have a good time celebrating his accomplishments with his fellow seniors. There is nothing wrong with that.

Honestly, I get sad thinking about how Justin will not experience going to his Sr. PROM. At the same time, I have to admit that we did witness him having so much fun in the 9th grade when he went to the school Semi Formal with his good friend Kelly. They had been friends since Kindergarten. After Justin passed, she told us " I guess Justin and I did get to go to our PROM". I must now accept that in my heart and mind he actually did. That night he was so happy, and proud. He enjoyed all the attention he got from his peers who admired his date. He introduced her to all of his friends. He said some people were surprised that he even had a date! Ha!! They had fun at the Wax Museum, meeting friends and enjoying the overall event. They also always had a mutual respect for each other and their friendship was always special. That in itself is worth the price of gold.

So, today I told Ashley, what I would have told Justin if he was still here, and going to his Senior prom tomorrow night, and that is to be safe, look out for each other, have fun, and don't find any trouble and send me a picture. I then gave her one of the pocket cards with Justin's art and website. She looked in awe and asked me "Who is this?" At that juncture I solemnly said, (now fighting back my tears) "That is our son Justin, who passed away last year. "She looked up in amazement and said: "He drew this artwork? Is this him flipping a perfect cartwheel? I said yes! She said "OMG". I told her to visit the website that was set up on his behalf and asked her to spend some time seeing who Justin was. Then I said to her, "and one more thing honey, as you move forward in your life:

"Please Remember Our young Man Justin" and have an amazing time at your PROM honey. She smiled and said " I sure will, thank you."

***To all of Justin's friends, this message is for you too as you venture out to your PROM tomorrow night. Be safe, look out for each other, have fun, and don't find any trouble and send me pictures and SMILE for Justin!!



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PREVIOUS POST Every Day is Mother's Day for Me Turquoise, Butterflies, Random Acts of Kindness, are all that I See

NEXT POST Justin, The Actor

ONE THOUGHT ON "PROM (PLEASE REMEMBER OUR MAN)"

Mary Holland
MAY 17, 2014 AT 2:33 PM
Thank you for sharing this beautiful story and your wonderful writing Susan. You have an amazing gift. Not just in your writing talents, but your amazing heart as well. It seems you are entering the 'being of service' phase, that Rick Warren talks about in his Six Stages Of Grief. You are going to touch so many "Ashleys" lives in you future. Maybe that is your purpose. I don't know. But when you let that love flow to other people like you did for her, that is really all that we can do to find peace in our lives. I love you Miss Susan.

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Ellen Garrett on a tree of life (For two Justin's MOMS) WAS IT A COINCIDENCE?

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www.justincarr-wantsworldpeace.org

NOVEMBER 2021

Calendar for November 2021 showing days of the week and dates.

* Sep

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