



Little Eric,

It has been about a month since we saw the Marine Corp Officers standing at the door. I feel so helpless as I watch your father grieve, while my own grief overwhelms me. He sent his oldest son off to war, and only a folded flag came back to him. How can I comfort a man who has suffered such a loss? We are left with so much anger, and so much pain ... life will never be the same.

I was fond of you from the very moment I saw you; I remember that day very well. Your shy and gentle way, your smile and your charm. I treasure every memory I have of you, each a picture in my mind, forever ready for clear and instant recall. The one of you, laughing and playing games with us. The one of you happily eating some of the worst food I have ever made. The one of you playing catch with my little ones. The times when you would confide in me, and share a bit of your private thoughts. And the one of you saying our last goodbye. Did I tell you how much I love you, or how proud I was, or how desperately I wanted to be your stepmom? Or did you know just by the way I looked at you?

I met you at the point in your life when you were crossing over from boy to man, and I watched as you made this transition, seeming to be without fear. You made a choice and did not waiver, and you opened yourself up to a relationship with God, who would be with you as you answered the call to serve. You lived a life of consistent obedience, to your parents, to your superior officers, and to your Heavenly Father. You "walked the walk, without all the talk"...no, you were not one to complain. You are highly regarded by everyone who knew you, and both your friends and achievements are many. But above all, your heart was GOOD, and this I will remember the most.

You are a precious child of God, and I know you will live on with Him and take your place in Heaven. I figure if I follow your excellent example, and the Lord will have mercy on me, then I will see you again. Until then, your dad and I will visit you at Arlington, in our longing to be near you. All I ask of you, little Eric, is that you meet us there, and take your dad by the hand, and tell him that you love him.

Missing and loving you always,

Wendi