

number of decisions and amount of mental coordination it takes to serve the simplest meal. Spaghetti cooking, people interacting, distractions, pressures. I can't handle this stress. Someone else must decide how long the spaghetti will cook. I don't know why, but I just can't do it.

More difficult even than cooking is grocery shopping. Only quick trips for one item or two are managed well. Early in grief, I ventured out for weekly shopping with three children in tow. Ten minutes later I had to make a quick exit. Literally thousands of choices await me inside the grocery store. I don't know what we need, or what we have at home. Children chatter, "Buy this . . . Look at that, Mom." I experience a nightmare of sensory overload and panic, thinking insanity is going to become a way of life.

The high point of my day is when the mail arrives. Sympathy cards and letters arrive, dozens upon dozens, and I devour them all — each one special, each one important to me. People care and I need so much to have them care. But it's interesting how diverse the messages and attitudes surrounding our tragedy. Incredible how many feel that they have all the answers. Yet the answers are all different. I marvel at the irony. I, too, used to have all the answers . . . before Alexander died.

There is that special bond now, an invisible forever tie with others who have lost children, and from these people, many of whom we barely know, the heartfelt messages come. These messages are from those who know. They send love, comfort and also hope . . . but only in its own good time. These people have no answers for they know there are none. We've joined a unique, extremely elite group, one whose dues demand the highest price life can ask.

The dreams are with me, merely dreams, not nightmares. Dreams of Alex, each and every night. All are different, but all are the same. Alex here one minute, now gone. Alex here, then kidnapped. Alex here, then somehow lost. Alex close enough to touch, but somehow always out of my reach. Haunting dreams. Shock still — Alex was alive, now he's dead. Still unbelievable, my mind seeking resolution. The thoughts, the feelings bouncing around in my head in no definable pattern. I begin to write to set some order to my confusion. Instantly the dreams stop, my need for expression satisfied. The writing has become an obsession, a focus in my life, a vehicle for my grief. •



STRAWBERRY CUSTOM KITCHEN CABINETS

3755 E. 82nd St.
845-5925

Ron Jordan



AFAS

NO POINTE TO FOOT PAIN

The Academy of Foot and Ankle Specialists is the official podiatry group for The Indianapolis Ballet Theatre. Healthy feet and ankles are key to every dancer's success. They trust their care to the skilled podiatrists of AFAS. So can you. Call today for a professional examination and evaluation.

Academy of Foot and Ankle Specialists

Indianapolis: 927-3885
Statewide: 1-800-228-AFAS

Affiliated with the American Surgery Centers of Indianapolis