SPECIAL HANDLING, PLEASE

I was handed a package the other day. It was wrapped securely to be mailed away. Attached to the outside as plain as could be was a simple note for all to see:

Please rush through the holiday season; Too painful to open for any reason!

Contained within, find one bereaved heart - Fragile, broken, falling apart.

Tried to go shopping the other day; The hype of the season blew me away.

Sat down to write cards, that was insane. Couldn't find the list or think of my name.

People say, "Come over," "Be of good cheer. "Celebrate the holidays,” "Prepare a New Year."

But my grief overwhelms me like waves in the sea. Can they cope with my crying; an unsettled me?

I don't have any holiday cheer, Decorations, traditions, big family meal, I can't do it this year. Do you know how I feel?

Guilty and frustrated! I've let everyone down! Our holiday celebrations used to be the best in town!

So just ship me away; address unknown When my grief is over, I might fly home.

Signed, Bereaved Heart.

I just couldn't send Bereaved Heart away, so I jotted a note and left it that day.

Dear Bereaved Heart:

The death of your loved one has forced you to start A new type of living that's hard on the heart.

Undecorating your life of its angers and fears Is not easy to do without shedding tears.

And untying your guilt can release a bundle of strife. Questions are stirred up about living and life.

Don't be concerned now with invitations, big meals See how the little stuff handles and feels.

Let the love of your family, neighbors and friends Uphold and sustain you when you're at loose ends.

Most are eager to be there, willing to share. Tell them your needs, and they'll show you they care

They'll take you shopping, write cards, even cook. Let that stuff go now. Get yourself off the hook.

You need time for healing. You've much work to do. Your heart needs mending - Give that gift to YOU.

Take a walk, read a book. Try something your style Make sure it's relaxing, makes you pause, rest awhile.

When holiday invitations knock at your door, Don't say "yes" to five when you only want four.

If you wish to remember your loved one who dies, Plant a tree, give a gift. Let your heart be your guide.

This season of wonder can bring you relief If you're willing to unwrap your tears and your grief.

Please listen, Bereaved Heart, stay close & please dare To open your package and let others care.

Signed, Your Friend

Written by Mary J. Pinkava from CHANGES, Nov/Dec. Issue 1991