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The Hero in My Pocket

Marsha D. Broadway

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Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway
Reading Level: Preschool, Primary, Intermediate
Rating: Excellent
Genre: N/A;
Subject: Bereavement in children--Juvenile literature; Children and death--Juvenile literature; Military service--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Through a combination of a fictional story and activity pages, this blended book attempts to help children who have lost a love one serving in the military. In a composite story of bereavement, two children, Greg, age 10, and Grace, age 7, struggle with the grief, anger, and life changes that accompany the death of their Special Hero, their father. Written with sensitivity and realism, chapters deal with aspects of grief and healing. Each chapter ends with an invitation from Greg and Grace for readers to remember their own special heroes.

Author Lee was a Red Cross volunteer who worked with military families awaiting the arrival of wounded and dying soldiers. Her experiences led her to graduate studies in thanatology (the study of death, dying and bereavement) and the writing of this book. The "Note to Adult Caregivers" indicates that the goal of the book "is to facilitate understanding, communication, and interaction with a child following the death" of a special hero. The random illustrations, which are done by children, encourage the reader to add his own art and words to this book intended for individual use. Even though the book is consumable, public and school libraries and school counselors should consider making this book available for the young people they serve.