

Mutual aid and Solidarity AF447

Introductory by Jean d'Ormesson

There is something stronger than death, it is the presence of the absent in the memory of the living.

Text by Yves Duteil:

Our absent loved ones accompany us

Where do they go, the loved ones we miss? We accompany their bodies to the ground, but after that?

We cherish their memory, we talk to them as if they were still there, somewhere, inaccessible but present, benevolent and wise. What would we give for an answer, some advice, a word to say "I'm watching over you"?

And we need only speak of them for them to smile at us as we remember them so fondly, with their brightest face. Our absent loved ones accompany us. We can hide nothing from them as they look at us with our own eyes. It is a strange and intimate conviction that we can share only with those we love, in the knowledge that we are not being mocked, but, on the contrary, comforted.

Those we miss fill the emptiness of their absence with a silent and tender presence. Always available, they are near us, behind our closed eyelids, in times of doubt or fear, as in deep joy.

In the pain of losing them, we were powerless to keep them here, to help them, to accompany them. In the sorrow of their absence, we have the feeling of being guided by them, of giving them a role that they have never lost.

By closing their eyes, they leave us their eyes, like a compass. Perhaps they also need our thoughts, our lights, to light their way? Grief is only the reverse side of love. But it's still love. It would be so "sad not to be sad anymore without them".