
Beta Sigma Phi

IN MEMORIAM

Instructions: A single yellow rose in a black bud vase, and a single black candle, burning in a black holder should be the only articles on the Ritual Table. A black cover may be used, instead of the usual white, if desired.

“Song of Beta Sigma Phi” may be sung at the beginning and close of the ceremony, or played very softly, preferably by a violin or harp, during the reading of the memorial service. Members should stand in a horseshoe, holding lighted candles. The chapter President, Sponsor or Director reads:

Dearly Beloved: We are gathered together tonight in sorrowing sisterhood to consecrate in our hearts and memory the life and virtues of a dearly departed member (give name, chapter affiliation, date of membership in sorority, offices held and services rendered to sorority. This should be a brief, concise record, the ovation confined to the statements following.)

As she stood before in Darkness as an initiate, so stands she now as an initiate to the mystery of Death, and we in the somber shadows of our grief.

The glowing torch of her bright self must be henceforward absent from us here, but the clear light of her spirit shall remain, undimmed, to guide and strengthen us whom she preceded.

In life she was devoted to the good, the true, the beautiful, and was by color, form and music touched to tears. With loyal heart and with unflagging effort she faithfully fulfilled her duties here. Then, being weary for a moment, she lay down to rest, using her

burden for a pillow, and fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down her eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world she passed to timeless silence and to formless space.

So, every life, no matter if its every hour be rich with love and every moment jewelled with joy, must, at its close become to those who stay, a tragedy as sad and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

But in this night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustling of a wing.

She was a faithful and true friend, a treasure inestimable in possession, and deeply lamented in the loss. If we in her lifetime were not always worthy of her love, let us now in her death resolve to be more worthy of the love of all other members of our sisterhood. Nothing is more common than to talk of a friend, nothing more difficult than to find one, nothing more rare than to improve by one as we ought. She has taught us it is best to live in time as friends to those with whom we would be to all eternity, for true friendship is infinite and immortal.

The record of generous life runs like a vine around her memory and her every sweet, unselfish act is now a perfumed flower. Were every one to whom she did a service to bring a blossom to her grave she would sleep tonight beneath a wilderness of flowers.

Life is a narrow vale between two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. But through the mist of our tears the light of love beholds a rainbow, the rainbow of her virtues; the red of her courage, the orange of her loyalty, the yellow of her vision, the green of her fellowship, the blue of her humility, and the violet of her service.

Character survives, goodness lives, love is immortal.

The torch of our sisterhood lighted her way on earth, but she hath now no need for sun or moon. But we have need to keep forever bright within our hearts the memory of her living presence.

Speech cannot contain our Love. She was, she is, our sister.

Closing Ritual