

A Creed To Live By

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others.

It is because we are different that each of us is special.

Don't set your goals by what other people deem important.

Only you know what is best for you.

Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart. Cling to them as you would your life, for without them life is meaningless.

Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or for the future.

By living your life one day at a time, you live all the days of your life.

Don't give up when you still have something to give. Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.

Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect. It is this fragile thread that binds us to each other.

Don't be afraid to encounter risks.

It is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave. Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find.

The quickest way to receive love is to give love, the fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly, and the best way to keep love is to give it wings.

Don't dismiss your dreams.

To be without dreams is to be without hope; to be without hope is to be without purpose.

Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you've been, but also where you're going.

Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way.

A Hundred Years From Now

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.

A Man

A man that made an impression on strangers and friends.

Quiet but firm and even more stern.

Strength and courage I have learned from you, but being without you is hard to do.

A man with pride in every step he made.

A man with vigor in every phrase.

The tears I've shed cannot surpass the smiles and the laughs we had with you.

To feel your pain I could not do, to feel your joy I cannot explain, but being without you is hard to do.

A man with pride in every step he made.

A man with vigor in every phrase.

A man that defined the word grand as only a real man can.

To know you're in a better place soothes my pain. Knowing you're watching over me makes me sane.

A man with pride in every step he made.

A man with vigor in every phrase.

A true story of a real man, who in the end held his family together as only a real man can.

A Mom Means...

When you need a patient listener
Who'll always take your part,
Who'll keep important secrets
Locked up tight within her heart.
When you need a friend to help you out
And cheer you if you're blue,
To understand those special things
That mean the most to you.
When you need someone to share your joys
And wish you many more,
You turn to Mom because she's shown
That's just what moms are for!

A Traveler Coming Home

A traveler
ventured forth one day
upon a long and winding road
with faith and trust to lead the way,
with strength and will to bear his load.
And at a slow but steady pace,
in cold of storm, in warmth of sun,
he journeyed on from place to place
and gained some value from each one.
Until at last one quiet night,
He climbed a hill's soft-rounding crest
and saw afar a single light
that seemed to promise peace and rest.
and following its glow, he came
upon the house in which it shone.
A voice inside called out his name
and told him he was truly home.

Now all of us
must travel, too—
like his, our paths wind slowly on,
and surely when
the course is through,
a welcome comfort waits beyond.
May we believe that sweet content
is earned by all those miles passed
and never doubt
each traveler's meant
to reach a loving home at last.

-Karen Ravn

A Treasure

It's more than a coverlet,
More than a spread,
This beautiful quilt
that graces my bed.

It's laughter and sorrow,
It's pleasure and pain,
It's small bits and pieces
of sunshine and rain.

It's a bright panorama
Scraps of my life-
It's moments of glory,
It's moments of strife.

It's a story I cherish
Of days that have been,
It's a door I can open
To live them again.

Yes, it's more than a cover,
This much-treasured quilt,
It's parts pieced together
Of the life I have built.

-By Mildred Hatfield

Afterglow

I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo whispering softly down the ways.
Of happy times and laughing times and bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve, to dry before the sun.
Of happy memories that I leave when life is done.

An Alzheimer's Patient Sad Goodbye

You can see I am slowly leaving you,
I may not know you anymore.
Although I have not left this life,
I've simply closed the door.

Though I might fight and swear and sometimes cry,
My tears are all in vain.
Please treat me kindly while I live,
I still can feel the pain.

I'm living in a foggy world,
I cannot clear my head.
And though my body is still alive,
I'm one of the living dead.

All of those whom I have loved,
Can't pierce the veil that fogs my mind.
No one knows how long I'll live,
It's just a long "Good Bye."

- Ada King

An Hour of Remembrance

Our Friends bring us warmth and understanding,
companionship, laughter and joy. They also enrich
our lives by opening doors.

The Friend from the world of music opens the door to
an appreciation of harmony, themes and motifs, and
the grandeur of sound.

The Friend who is the artist enlarges our vision by
widening our understanding of color and
composition, of pattern and perspective.

The Friend who is a writer or a reader of many books
shows us the satisfaction of the exact word, the
pleasure when form and content meet, the power of
the imagination.

The Friend who creates with thread or wood or clay
opens our minds to the value of patience and
craftsmanship.

The Friend from the field of law shows us the need
for order and discipline, freedom And justice, and the
quality of mercy.

The Friend who lives with nature opens up the world
of flowers and woodland, of creatures great and
small, and the miracle of life itself.

Our Best Friends open the portals of their hearts to
us. In all of life, there is no substitution for a good
friend.

-Written in 1992 for the Des Moines Women's Club,
"An Hour of Remembrance"

And That Is Life

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength, and I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says: "There! She's gone."

Gone where? Gone from my sight . . . that is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her; and just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There! She's gone," there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "There she comes!" And that is LIFE.

-James Buckham

Ascension

And if I go
While you're still here,
Know that I live on
Vibrating to a different measure
Behind a veil you cannot see through.
You will not see me,
So you must have faith.
I wait for the time when we can soar together again,
Both aware of each other.
Until then, live your life to the fullest . . .
And when you see me
Just whisper my name in your heart . . .
. . . I will be there.

Attitude

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on my life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company ... a church ... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past ... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that is our attitude ... I am convinced that life is ten percent what happens to me and ninety percent how I react to it. And so it is with you ... we are in charge of our attitudes."

-Charles Swindoll

Birth is a Beginning

Birth is a beginning
And death a destination.
But life is a journey.
A going - a growing.
From stage to stage.

From childhood to maturity
And youth to age.
From innocence to awareness
And ignorance to knowing.
From foolishness to discretion
And then perhaps to wisdom.

From weakness to strength
Or strength to weakness -
And back, we pray, to health again.

From offense to forgiveness.
From loneliness to love,
From joy to gratitude.
From pain to compassion,
And grief to understanding -
From fear to faith.

From defeat to defeat to defeat -
Until, looking backward or ahead,
We see that victory lies
Not at some high place along the way,
But in having made the journey,
stage by stage -
A sacred pilgrimage.

Birth is a beginning,
And death a destination;
But life is a journey,
A sacred pilgrimage
Made stage by stage -
From birth to death
To life everlasting.

Blessed Are They Who Are Pleasant

Blessed are they who are pleasant to live with.
Blessed are they who sing in the morning,
Whose faces have smiles for their early adorning.
Who come down to breakfast companioned with
cheer,
Who won't dwell on trouble or entertain fear,
Whose eyes smile so bravely, whose lips curve to
say,
"Life I salute you! Good morning, new day!"

Blessed are they who are pleasant to live with.
Blessed are they who treat one another,
Though whether a sister, a father, a brother,
With the very same courtesy they would extend
To a casual acquaintance or dearly loved friend,
Who choose for the telling, encouraging things,
And choke back the bitter, the sharp word that stings.

Blessed are they who are pleasant to live with.
Blessed are they who give of their best,
Who bring to the home bright laughter, gay jest,
Who make themselves charming for no other reason
Than charm is a blossom for home's every season,
Who bestow love on others through the long day~
Pleasant to live with and blessed are they.

Born to Fish

When I was born, I loved to fish
A trophy still my daily wish
I'd rather wet a hook than eat
I dream of fishing in my sleep

The water calls me every day
To lake or stream, I know the way
Fishing is my favorite fun
Night or day, rain or sun

Best of all the sports I know
I never miss a chance to go
If I had a truck, a car or boat
I'd choose the one that was made to float

Never far from rod or lure
I have a compulsion without cure
I live to find the perfect bait
I think this way of life is great

When I am gone, my stone should say
"Fishing always made his day"

-Richard Dunlap

Butterfly

Don't weep at my grave,
for I am not there,
I've a date with a butterfly
to dance in the air.
I'll be singing in the sunshine, wild and free,
Playing tag with the wind,
while I'm waiting for thee.

Crossing The Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.
-Alfred Tennyson

Do Not Stand by My Grave and Weep

Do not stand by my grave and weep.
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am a diamond glint on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awake in the morning hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight.
I am the soft starshine at night.
Do not stand by my grave and cry.
I am not there. I did not die.

Don't Think of Her as Gone Away

Don't think of her as gone away—
Her journey's just begun,
Life holds so many facets—
This earth is only one.

Just think of her as resting
From the sorrow and the tears
In a place of warmth and comfort
Where there are no days and years.
Think how she must be wishing
That we could know today
How nothing but our sadness
Can really pass away.

And think of her as living
In the hearts of those she touched...
For nothing loved is ever lost—
And she was loved so much.

-E. Brenneman

He is Not Dead

I cannot say, and I will not say
That he is dead. He is just away.
With a cheery smile, and a wave of the hand,
He has wandered into an unknown land
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be, since he lingers there.
And you--oh, you, who the wildest yearn
For an old-time step, and the glad return,
Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here.
Think of him still as the same. I say,
He is not dead--he is just away.

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-Written in 1992 for the Des Moines Women's Club, "An Hour of Remembrance"

House by the Side of the Road

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self-content;
There are souls like stars, that dwell apart,
In a fellowless firmament;
There are pioneer souls that blaze the paths
Where highways never ran-
But let me live by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by-
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat
Nor hurl the cynic's ban-
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife,
But I turn not away from their smiles and tears,
Both parts of an infinite plan-
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead,
And mountains of wearisome height;
That the road passes on through the long afternoon
And stretches away to the night.
And still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice
And weep with the strangers that moan,
Nor live in my house by the side of the road
Like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by-
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish - so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

-Samual Walter Foss

The Human Touch

'Tis the human touch
in this world that counts,
the touch of your hand and mine.
Which means far more
to the fainting heart
than shelter and bread and wine.
For shelter is gone
when the night is o'er,
and bread lasts only a day,
but the touch of the hand,
the sound of the voice,
sing on in the soul always.

- Spencer Michael Free

I Am Standing Upon The Seashore

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship, at my side,
spreads her white sails to the moving breeze and
starts
for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and
strength.
I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a
speck
of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to
mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone"

Gone where?

Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in
mast,
hull and spar as she was when she left my side.
And, she is just as able to bear her load of living
freight to her destined port.

Her diminished size is in me -- not in her.
And, just at the moment when someone says, "There,
she is gone,"
there are other eyes watching her coming, and other
voices
ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

And that is dying...

Death comes in its own time, in its own way.
Death is as unique as the individual experiencing it.

I Think Continually Of Those Who Were Truly Great

I think continually of those who were truly great.
Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's history
Through corridors of light where the hours are suns
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition
Was that their lips, still touched with fire,
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in
song.
And who hoarded from the Spring branches
The desires falling across their bodies like blossoms.

What is precious is never to forget
The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless
springs
Breaking through rocks in worlds before our earth.
Never to deny its pleasure in the morning simple light
Nor its grave evening demand for love.
Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields
See how these names are feted by the waving grass
And by the streamers of white cloud
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.
The names of those who in their lives fought for life
Who wore at their hearts the fire's center.
Born of the sun they traveled a short while towards
the sun,
And left the vivid air signed with their honor.

-Stephen Spender

I Tip My Hat To Say Goodbye

I Tip my hat to say goodbye
The light is near and I must fly
I leave behind so many friends
Whose selfless kindness never ends

You gave my time here so much meaning
I owe so many for my being
They always helped me find my way
My debt to them I can't repay

I need a new place now to live
A place to laugh and grow and give
Calmly now I face the sky
I tip my hat to say goodbye

If I Knew

If I knew it would be the last time
That I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly
and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.

If I knew it would be the last time
that I see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss
and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would video tape each action and word,
so I could play them back day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time,
I could spare an extra minute
to stop and say "I love you,"
instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time
I would be there to share your day,
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,
so I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow
to make up for an oversight,
and we always get a second chance
to make everything just right.

There will always be another day
to say "I love you,"
And certainly there's another chance
to say our "Anything I can do?"

But just in case I might be wrong,
and today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you
and I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,
young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance
you get to hold your loved one tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow,
why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes,
you'll surely regret the day,

That you didn't take that extra time
for a smile, a hug, or a kiss
and you were too busy to grant someone,
what turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,
and whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them
and that you'll always hold them dear

Take time to say "I'm sorry,"
"Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's okay."
And if tomorrow never comes,
you'll have no regrets about today.

I'll Miss You

There just doesn't seem to be
any easy way to to say goodbye.
We've shared so much life
and so much laughter
that it's really hard
to imagine what things
will be like without you.

Yet we're grateful for
the good times we've shared
For when we think of you,
as we often will,
it's the memories
of those times
that will bring you
right back to us.

And those times,
those thoughts of you,
will always stay in our minds
and in our hearts.

It Couldn't Be Done

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But, he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.
Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.
There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle it in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That "couldn't be done," and you'll do it.

-Edgar Guest, from *Collected Verse of Edgar Guest*.
NY: Buccaneer Books, 1976, pg. 285

Lecture To an Ailing Body

Shortly before his death,
Edward Madison Cameron delivered
A lecture to his ailing body:
“When you can go no further,
I shall leave you and be free...
When we separate I shall continue to exist...
A power greater than you and I started us on our
journey.
Your journey is approaching its end and you are
aware of it...
My journey has merely begun, and I know it because
I have never been more alive.
Our separation is therefore not one of sadness, but of
joy.
You are weary and want to stop.
I am looking to alight from this slowing vehicle and
go on without you.

Legacy of Love

A wife, a mother, a grandma, too;
This is the legacy we have from you:
You taught us love and how to fight,
You gave us strength, you gave us might.
A stronger person would be hard to find,
And in your heart, you were always kind.
You fought for us all in one way or another,
Not just as a wife not just as a mother.
For all of us you gave your best.
And now your time has come to rest.
So go in peace, you've earned your sleep.
Your love in our hearts, we'll eternally keep.

Life Is Eternal

Life is eternal; and love is immortal; and death is
only a horizon; and a horizon is nothing save the
limit of our sight.
-Rossiter Worthington Raymond (1840–1918)

Little Footprints

How very softly
You tiptoed
Into my world

Almost silently.
Only a moment
You stayed.

But what an imprint
Your footsteps have left
Upon my heart

-D. Ferguson

Love Lives On

Those we love
are never really lost to us –
we feel them
in so many special ways –
through friends
they always cared about
and dreams they left behind,
in beauty that they added to our days...
in words of wisdom
we still carry with us
and memories that never will be gone...
Those we love
are never really lost to us –
For everywhere their special love
Lives on.
- By Amanda Bradley

Memories

The tide recedes but leaves behind
bright seashells on the sand.
The sun goes down,
but gentle warmth
still lingers on the land.
The music stops and yet echoes
on in sweet refrain
For everything that passes,
something beautiful remains.

Memory

Midnight

Not a sound from the pavement
Has the moon lost her memory?
She is smiling alone
In the lamplight
The withered leaves collect at my feet
And the wind begins to moan

Memory

All alone in the moonlight
I can smile at the old days
I was beautiful then
I remember the time I knew what happiness was
Let the memory live again

Every streetlamp
Seems to beat a fatalistic warning
Someone mutters
And the streetlamp gutters
And soon it will be morning

Daylight
I must wait for the sunrise
I must think of a new life
And I musn't give in
When the dawn comes
Tonight will be a memory too
And a new day will begin

Burnt out ends of smoky days
The stale cold smell of morning
The streetlamp dies, another night is over
Another day is dawning

Touch me
It's so easy to leave me
All alone with the memory
Of my days in the sun
If you touch me
You'll understand what happiness is

Look
A new day has begun

-From *Cats*

Miss Me, But Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no rites in a gloom filled room
Why cry for a soul set free.

Miss me a little, but not too long
And not with your head bowed low
Remember the love that we once shared
Miss Me, But Let Me Go.

For this is a journey that we all must take
And each must go alone
It's all a part of the Master's plan
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick at heart
Go to the friends we know
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds
Miss Me, But Let Me Go.

Mother I Miss You

Is it me or have I deceived myself
I thought I heard you call my name
Out in the pouring rain
I really thought
I thought I saw your face
But after a second look
I saw I made a clear mistake

Mother I miss you
And nights I just wish you were here with me
So we can laugh and talk again
Mother I miss you
But I'll just kiss you and send it on the wind
Cause you know I plan to see you again

So much I wanted to show you
So much I wanted to give
I thought our time would be much longer
Missing my best friend

Mother I miss you
And nights I just wish you were here with me
So we can laugh and talk again
Mother I miss you, I miss you
But I'll just kiss you and send it on the wind
Cause you know I plan to see you again

My Beautiful Child

I will always remember
The joy you brought into my life,
The sound of your laughter,
The smell of your skin.

I will always cherish
The time spent with you.
You will forever remain
In my memories,
Forever dwell in my heart...
My Beautiful Child.

-Patty Bixler

My Dad, the Fisherman

“At last”, he thought
as he neared the lake,
boat in tow.
“It’s been a long week
but I’m glad to be back
To fish
To sit
To think
To dream.”

Sitting in the boat,
fishing rod in one hand,
bait in the other,
waves lapping at the side,
Pal John on the next seat.
Rarely do they speak
yet volumes are spoken
Silently.
He baits the hook and
skillfully casts it into the water.

Patience is a virtue
and they wait,
patiently,
for the fish to bite,
or nibble,
watching the float,
float.
Caught one!
Carefully,
and patiently,
he reels it in.
It’s a keeper!

For hours they sit,
and fish,
and wait,
catching more fish,
maybe.
Silently, rarely speaking
yet saying a lot.
Then they go home
Satisfied.
To wives and families
and jobs
and tomorrow.
It was a good day
They got to fish.

Darlene Shrader
September 2000

No Sad Tears For Me

Dear Loved Ones:

I hope by now that some of the initial shock of my departure has begun to wear away . . . and that the kind carpet of pleasant memories has started to unroll. I only ask one thing: no sad tears for me, please.

I’ve laughed a lot, cried a little . . . I’ve seen a thousand sunsets and a few fresh dawns, walked in April rain . . . and watched an ocean roll . . . Life was good . . . I saw robins in the spring . . . watched a shooting star or two . . . enjoyed the snows of winter, walked under a harvest moon . . . and stood a time or two on top of a high hill and watched the flickering lights of a town.

Someday you might be standing on a mountain top, looking across the sweep of a great plain . . . and if there is a sudden, gentle stirring among the trees . . . feel I am sharing the moment with you.

A woman never really dies while there are those on earth who love her . . . A woman is never gone as long as there are those who remember her with fondness . . . and as long as her memory evokes a wistful smile. All who have loved, and who have been loved have earned a piece of immortality . . . no sad tears for me, please . . .

O Danny Boy

O Danny boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen and down the mountainside
The summer's gone and all the roses falling
'Tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.
But come ye back when summer's in the meadow
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow
'Tis I'll be here in sunshine or in shadow
O Danny boy, O Danny boy, I love you so.
But if ye come and all the flowers are dying
If I am dead, as dead I well may be,
You'll come and find the place where I am lying
And kneel and say an Ave there for me.
And I shall hear, though soft, your tread above me
And all my grave shall warmer, sweeter be
For you will bend and tell me that you love me
And I will sleep in peace until you come to me.
- Fred E. Weatherley

Ode to the Champions

Who are these people—
These doers of deeds,
These dreamers of dreams
Who make us believe?

Who are these people
Who still win the day—
When the odds are against them
And strength fades away?

These people are champions,
For they never give in.
A heart beats within them
That is destined to win.

They follow their dreams
Though the journey seems far,
From the top of a mountain
They reach out to a star.

And when they have touched it—
When their journey is done—
They give to us hope
From the victories they won.

So here's to the champions—
To all their great deeds.
They follow their hearts
And become winners indeed.
-Tom Krause

One Song Can Spark A Moment

One song can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream.
One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald Spring.
One smile begins a friendship,
One handclasp lifts a soul.
One star can guide a ship at sea,
One word can frame the goal.
One vote can change a nation,
One sunbeam lights a room.
One candle wipes out darkness,
One laugh will conquer gloom.
One step must start a journey,
One word must start each prayer.
One hope will raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.
One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true.
One life can make a difference,
You see, it's up to you!
-Margaret Vaughn

Only Time

Who can say
where the road goes,
where the day flows
~ only time
And who can say
if your love grows,
as your heart chose?
~ only time...

Who can say
why your heart sighs,
As your love flies
~only time
And who can say
why your heart cries,
When your love lies
~ only time

Who can say
when the roads meet
That love might be
In your heart
And who can say
when the day sleeps
If the night keeps
all your heart

Night keeps all your heart

Who can say
if your love grows,
As your heart chose
~ only time
And who can say
where the road goes,
Where the day flows
~ only time...

Who knows ~ only time...

Who knows ~ only time...

Pal Of My Heart

True to me, kind to me,
Never deceiving;
Cheering me, helping me,
Ever believing;
Sad for me, glad for me,
Never apart;
Dear to me, near to me;
Pal of my Heart.
Clean-hearted, strong hearted,
All the way thru;
Uplifting and tender,
Wonderful you!
Fair to me, square to me,
Life's dearest part~
Best to me, blest to me,
Pal of my Heart.

Petals of Her Life

As beautiful as a rose to see,
Was her life she lived so gracefully.
She made things precious by her touch,
Her selfless love lives on in each of us.
The petals of her life fell one by one.
Each a gift of her heart,
'Til there were none.
Yet her radiance blooms once again
In fields of glory without end.

Poem For The Living

When I am dead,
Cry for me a little.
Think of me sometimes,
But not too much.
It is not good for you
Or your wife or your husband
Or your children
To allow your thoughts to dwell
Too long on the dead.
Think of me now and again
As I was in life
At some moment which it is pleasant to recall.
But not for too long.
Leave me in peace
As I shall leave you, too, in peace
While you live,
Let your thoughts be with the living.

-Theodora Kroeber

Remember Me

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.

Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

-Christiana Rossetti

That is Dying

I am standing on the seashore.
A ship spread her white sails
to the morning breeze
and starts for the ocean.
I stand watching her
until she fades on the horizon,
and someone at my side says,
"She is gone".

Gone where?
The loss of sight is in me, not in her.
Just at the moment when someone says,
"She is gone,"
There are others
who are watching her coming.
Other voices take up the glad shout,
"Here she comes,"
And that is dying.

-Henry Scott Holland

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence;
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

-Robert Frost

Scout Oath (or Promise)

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly,
courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty,
brave, clean, and reverent.

Sharing

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can share my bread with you...
and I can share my joy with you...
and sometimes share a sorrow, too...
as on our way we go.

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can sit an hour with you...
and I can share a joke with you...
and sometimes share reverses, too...
as on our way we go.

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can share my flowers with you...
and I can share my books with you...
and sometimes share your burdens, too...
as on our way we go.

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can share my songs with you...
and I can share my mirth with you...
and sometimes come and laugh with you...
as on our way we go.

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can share my hopes with you...
and I can share my fears with you...
and sometimes shed some tears with you...
as on our way we go.

There isn't much that I can do...
but I can share my friends with you...
and I can share my life with you...
and oftentimes share a prayer with you...
as on our way we go.

Solace

They are not gone –
these loved ones whom
we mourn,
We must not think of them
as far away.
Unto a fuller life have
they been born,
Laying aside the vesture
of this clay.
Yet near us still they
watch, and love and know;
We are the blind ones
who no longer see
Familiar forms that we
So dearly loved,
Waiting reunion in
Eternity.

It Has Always Been the Soldier

It is the soldier,
not the President,
who gives us democracy.
It is the soldier,
not the Congress,
who takes care of us.
It is the soldier,
not the reporter,
who has given us Freedom of Press.
It is the soldier,
not the poet,
who has given us Freedom of Speech.
It is the soldier,
not the campus organizer,
who has given us the Freedom to Demonstrate.
It is the soldier,
who salutes the flag,
who serves beneath the flag,
and whose coffin is draped by the flag
that allows the protester to burn the flag.

By Father Dennis O'Brien
Chaplain
United States Marines

Stay Young

Youth is not a time of life, it is a state of mind. It is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair, these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. Whether seventy or seventeen there is in every beings heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement of the stars and the starlight things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events and the childlike appetite for what's next, and the joy and the game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt, as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear. So long as your heart receives messages of beauty, cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from man, and from the infinite, so long you are young.

-Samuel Ullman

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Tear – A Grandfather Poem

Tears streamed down my face when I saw you that way.
I love you grandpa, I will love you everyday.
As my tears raced down my face;
I knew you'd soon be in a happier place.
My love will follow you wherever you go.
Oh how I loved you so.
Although I feel sorrow and hate.
You can't fight fate.
You told me everything as time passed by and by.
I never wanted you to die.
We did a lot together throughout the years.
It's time to wipe away the tears.
I want you to know;
I will never let you go.
I know you loved me too.
My heart will always be with you.
Now it's time to say goodbye.
Until I see you again someday when I die.

by Lauren from Family Friend Poems

The Bridge Builder

By Will Allen Dromgoole

An old man going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening cold and gray,
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.
Through which was flowing a sullen tide
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.

“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near,
“You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;
You've crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build this bridge at evening tide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head;
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,
“There followed after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been as naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

The Course of Life

Life isn't always fairway,
Life isn't always par;
It isn't always easy
To go from where you are.

The rough may oft' impede you
On the journey toward your goal,
Or an unexpected hazard
Might take a heavy toll.

Keep strong your faith and patience
Midst all life's ups and downs,
And trust your silent partner
Who guides you through life's rounds.

The Land of Nod

From breakfast on all through the day
At home among my friends I stay;
But every night I go abroad
Afar into the land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,
With none to tell me what to do—
All alone beside the streams
And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,
Both things to eat and things to see,
And many frightening sights abroad
Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,
I never can get back by day,
Nor can remember plain and clear
The curious music that I hear.

The Light on the Other Side

I can remember awhile ago,
I visited the other side.
I saw a beautiful light,
And there was peace that filled my inner soul.
I have never felt so content in all my life.
I saw the ones who had come before me,
Their open arms greeted me.
There was no sorrow only happiness.
Why I was here I do not know.
I only know they told me I could not stay.
I know when it is my time to go,
I shall not be sad for my loved ones are there.
And there is nothing to fear.
We all have our destined time on earth,
The clock of life is wound but once.
I know I shall feel not pain when life is over.
And I shall not be too far from everyone.
So don't be sad upon my passing,
For I shall be there to comfort you.
So I hope my life on this earth has been worthwhile.
I hope the ones I love know how much I care.
Please don't grieve for me,
Celebrate the things that I have done.
Laugh at the mistakes I have made.
For my spirit will be here,
as long as someone remembers.

The Little Leaves

“Come little leaves,” said the wind one day.
“Come over the meadow with me and play.
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
Summer has gone and the days grow cold.”

Soon the little leaves heard the wind's loud call.
Down they came fluttering one and all.
Over the brown fields they danced and flew,
Singing the soft little song they knew.

“Cricket, good-bye, we've been friends so long.
Little brook will sing you a farewell song.
Say you are sorry to see us go.
Oh, you are sorry, right well we know.

“Dear little lambs in your fleecy fold,
Mother will keep you from harm and cold.
Fondly we watch through vale and glade;
Say you will dream of our loving shade.”

So dancing and whirling the little leaves went,
Winter had called them and they were content.
Soon fast asleep in their heavenly beds
The snow laid a blanket over their heads.

The Old Woman

What do you see nurses, what do you see?
Are you thinking, when you look at me;
A crabbit old woman, not very wise
Uncertain of habit, with far away eyes,
Who dribbles her food, and makes no reply.
When you say in a loud voice 'I do wish you'd try,'
Who seems not to notice the things that you do,
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe,
Who, unresisting or not, lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill,
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes nurse, you're not looking at me.
As I'll tell you who I am, as I sit here so still,
As I rise at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten with a mother and father
Brothers and sisters, who love one another,
A young girl of sixteen, with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet;
A bride soon at twenty; my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep;
At twenty-five now I have young of my own,
Who need me to build a secure, happy home.
A young woman of thirty, my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last;
At forty, my young ones, now grown, will soon be
gone,
But my man stays beside me, to see I don't mourn.
At fifty once more, babies play round my knee.
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
For my young are all busy, rearing young of their
own,
And I think of the years and the love I have known.
I'm an old woman now, and nature is cruel.
'Tis her jest to make old age to look like a fool.
The body is crumbled, grace and vigour depart.
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.
But inside this old carcass, a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells.
I remember the joys, I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years, all too few, gone to fast,
and accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, nurses, open and see,
Not a crabbit old woman; look closer ... see ME.

The Oyster

There once was an oyster whose story I tell,
Who found that some sand had got into his shell.
It was only a grain but it gave him great pain,
For oysters have feelings although they're so plain.
Now, did he berate the harsh workings of fate
That had brought him to such a deplorable state?
Did he curse at the government, cry for election,
And claim that the sea should have given him
protection?
No--He said to himself as he lay on a shell,
Since I cannot remove it, I shall try to improve it.
Now the years have rolled around,
as the years always do,
And he came to his ultimate destiny--stew.
And the small grain of sand that had bothered him so
Was a beautiful pearl all richly aglow.
Now the tale has a moral;
For isn't it grand what an oyster can do
With a morsel of sand.
What couldn't we do
If we'd only begin
With some of the things
That get under our skin.

The Quality of a Man's Life

"The quality of a man's life is measured by how
deeply he has touched the lives of others."

The Rose Beyond the Wall

Near a shady wall a rose once grew,
Budded and blossomed in God's free light,
Watered and fed by the morning dew,
Shedding it's sweetness day and night.

As it grew and blossomed fair and tall,
Slowly rising to loftier height,
It came to a crevice in the wall
Through which there shone a beam of light.
Onward it crept with added strength
With never a thought of fear or pride,
It followed the light through the crevice's length
And unfolded itself on the other side.

The light, the dew, the broadening view
Were found the same as they were before,
And it lost itself in beauties new,
Breathing it's fragrance more and more.
Shall claim of death cause us to grieve
And make our courage faint and fall?
Nay! Let us faith and hope receive--
The rose still grows beyond the wall,
Scattering fragrance far and wide
Just as it did in days of yore,
Just as it did on the other side,
Just as it will forevermore.

-A. L. Frink

The Swan

Across the wide waters
Something comes
Floating- a slim
and delicate

ship, filled
with white flowers---
and it moves
on its miraculous muscles

as though time didn't exist,
as though bringing such gifts
to the dry shore
was a happiness

almost beyond bearing.
And now it turns its dark eyes,
it rearranges
the clouds of its wings,

it trails
an elaborate webbed foot,
the color of charcoal.
Soon it will be here.

Oh, what shall I do
when that poppy-colored beak
rests in my hand?
Said Mrs. Blake of the poet:

I miss my husband's company—
he is so often
in paradise.
Of course! the path to heaven

doesn't lie down in flat miles.
It's in the imagination
with which you perceive
this world,

and the gestures
with which you honor it.
Oh, what will I do, what will I say, when those
white wings
touch the shore?

The Victor

If you think you are beaten, you are.
If you think you dare not, you don't.
If you like to win but think you can't,
It's almost a cinch you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost.
For out in the world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will.
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are out classed, you are.
You've got to think high to rise.
You've got to be sure of your-self before
You can ever win the prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man.
But sooner or later, the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

-C. W. Longenecker

It's Hard to Understand

This is hard to understand.
I had so many dreams for you.
I've wondered how I'd feel
when you learned to say
my name and yours.
I've thought about the day
when you would start to school.

I guess I'll think about you
when the leaves begin to change
or when I see a snowflake land
on someone's stocking cap.
It's hard to know that it will never be.

I hurt inside.
I've missed you now, already.
It's hard to understand.

In fact, I don't.

Tis a Little Journey

'Tis a little journey
This we walk;
Hardly time for murmurs . . .
Time for talk.

Yet we learn to quarrel
And to hate;
Afterward regret it
When too late.

Now and then 'tis sunshine . . .
Sometimes dark;
Sometimes care and sorrow
Leave their mark.

Yet we walk the pathway
Side by side;
Where so many others
Lived and died.

To Laugh Often

To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people and the
affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure
the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others;
To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy
child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier because
you have lived.
This is to have succeeded.

To Those I Love And Those Who Love Me

When I am gone, release me, let me go –
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears,
Be thankful for our many beautiful years.

I gave to you my love. You can only guess
How much you gave to me in happiness.
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
But now it's time I traveled on alone.

So grieve a while for me, if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for a time that we must part
So bless the memories within your heart.

I won't be far away, for life goes on
So if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I'll be near
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All my love around you soft and clear.

And then, when you must come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile, and say –
“Welcome Home!”

Togetherness

Death is nothing at all. I have only slipped away into
the next room.

Whatever we were to each other, we still are. Call
me by my old familiar name. Speak to me in the
same easy way you always have. Laugh as we
always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed
together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.

Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it
always was. There is absolute unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of your mind because I am out
of your sight? I am but waiting for you, for an
interval, somewhere very near, just around the
corner.

All is well. Nothing is past. Nothing has been lost.
One brief moment and all will be as it was before –
only better. Infinitely happier. We will be one,
together forever.

Treasured Seasons

For everything there is
an appointed season,
And a time for everything
under heaven –
A time for sowing,
a time for reaping;
A time for sharing
a time for caring.
A time for loving,
a time for giving;
A time for remembering,
a time for parting.
You have made everything
beautiful in its time
For everything You do
remains forever.

Unconquered (Invictus)

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

-William Earnest Henley

Weep Not For Me

Weep not for me though I am gone into the gentle
night.

Grieve if you will, but not for long, upon my soul's
sweet flight.

I am at peace, my soul is at rest, there is no need for
tears.

For with your love I was so blessed, for all those
many years.

There is no pain, I suffer not, the fear now all is gone.

Put now these things out of your thoughts, in your
memory I live on.

Remember not my fight for breath, remember not the
strife.

Please do not dwell upon my death, but celebrate my
life.

By Constance Jenkins

When I Am Old

When I am old,
I shall wear diamonds
And a wide-brimmed straw hat
With silver and leather on it
And I shall spend my social security
On white wine and carrots
And sit in the alley of my barn
And listen to my horses breathe.

I will sneak out in the middle of a summer's night
And ride the sorrel colt
Across the moonstruck meadow
If my old bones will allow.
And when people come to call, I will smile and nod
As I walk them past the gardens to the barn
And show, instead, the beauty growing here
In stalls fresh lined with straw.
I will learn to shovel and sweat and
Wear hay in my hair as if it were a jewel.
And I will be an embarrassment to all
Who look down on me.
Who have not yet found the peace in being free
To love a horse as a friend,
A friend who waits at midnight hour
With muzzle and nicker and patient eyes
For the kind of woman I will be
When I am old.

When I Must Leave You

When I must leave you
For a little while,
Please do not grieve
And shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you
Through the years,
But start out bravely
With a smile.
And for my sake
And in my name,
Live on and do
All the things the same.
Feed not your loneliness
On empty days,
But fill each waking hour
In useful ways.
Reach out your hand in comfort
And in cheer,
And I, in turn, will comfort you
And hold you near.
And never, never
Be afraid to die,
For I am waiting for you
In the sky.
-Helen Steiner Rice

When I'm Gone

When to the end of my journey
And I travel my last weary mile,
Just forget if you can, that I ever frowned
And only remember the smile.
Forget unkind words I have spoken;
Remember some good I have done.
Forget that I ever had heartache
And remember I've had loads of fun.
Forget that I've stumbled and blundered
And sometimes fell by the way.
Remember I have fought some hard battles
And won, ere the close of the day.
Then forget to grieve for my going,
I would not have you sad for a day.
But in summer just gather some flowers
And remember the place where I lay,
And come in the shade of evening
When the sun paints the sky in the west.
Stand for a few moments beside me
And remember only my best.

Where Love Abounds

I never spoke, though I said so much,
to all the people Mom's words would touch.
I never saw, so I never missed,
But I felt each hand, and I felt each kiss.
I felt you stroke upon my face,
and I felt the touch of God's gentle grace.
"Life is so cure," so some would say,
but life to me was a gift each day.

I never walked, but I traveled vast,
in the hearts of friends where my memories last.
I never learned to read a book,
but I taught you love with just one look.
I taught you courage in a losing fight,
and in your darkness, helped you find the light.
Some felt such sorrow for the life I lead,
I wish they'd felt my joy instead.

Though I never understood the words I'd hear,
I did know love, and I held it dear.
Love is what gave me my strength and my life,
Love that helped conquer my pain and my strife.
I never felt suffering and never missed what I'd lost,
I never stumbled on bridges, for few bridges I
crossed.

You thought my tiny world was so limited to sound,
but what greater joy than to have lived in my world, a
world where love abounds!

Working Hands

My hands are not a pretty sight
They are neither soft nor lily white.
Washing dishes and clothes and such
Does not leave skin you love to touch!

They've handled a hoe on summer day,
They've shoveled snow and pitched the hay.
They've picked berries and beans and peas.
And gathered corn to blanch and freeze.

These hands are worn from years of toil
They know the feel of garden soil.
When friends reach out to shake my hand
Do they wonder why it feels like sand?

My hands make dough into loaves of bread
Because hungry folks have to be fed.
Many quilts have been sewn together
To snuggle under in winter weather.

My hands have served me well,
They need no words a tale to tell.
It matters more what hands can do-
To help someone- it could be you