

S.O.A.L.
Stories of A Lifetime

Funeral

Poems & Readings

Words are powerful and can be filled with emotion, memories, and love. Choose the words that bring comfort to your heart and peace to your soul.

Which one do you want to include in your loved one's service?





1

JOHN 14:1-3

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

SHE IS GONE

BY DAVID HARKINS

You can shed tears that she is gone

Or you can smile because she has lived

You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back

Or you can open your eyes and see all that she has left

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her

Or you can be full of the love that you shared

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday

Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday

You can remember her and only that she is gone

Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your
back

Or you can do what she would want: smile, open your
eyes, love and go on.



DEATH IS NOTHING AT ALL

Henry Scott-Holland

Death is nothing at all.

I have only slipped away into the next room.

Whatever we were to each other, we still are.

Please, call me by my old familiar name.

Speak of me in the same easy way you always did.

Laugh, as we always laughed, at the little jokes we shared together.

Think of me and smile.

Let my name be the household name it always was,

Spoken without the shadow of a ghost in it.

Life means all it ever meant.

It is the same as it ever was.

Death is inevitable, so why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you- for an interval very near.

Nothing is past or lost.

One brief moment and all will be as it was before,

Only better and happier.

Together forever.

All is well.



4

GONE FROM MY SIGHT

Attributed to Henry Van Dyke

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...



IRISH BLESSING

May the roads rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
May the rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

LET ME GO

Christina Rossetti

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 for long
And not with your head bowed low
Remember the love that once we shared
Miss me, but let me go.
For this is a journey we all must take
And each must go alone.
It's all part of the master plan
A step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick at heart
Go to the friends we know.
Laugh at all the things we used to do
Miss me, but let me go.



7

THE DASH

Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend
He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning...to the end.
He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke the following date with
tears,
but he said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.
For that dash represents all the time that they spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth.
For it matters not, how much we own— the cars...the house...the cash.
What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash.
So, think about this long and hard. Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left that can still be rearranged.
If we could just slow down enough to consider what's true and real, and
always try to understand the way other people feel.
And be less quick to anger and show appreciation more,
and love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.
If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a smile,
remembering this special dash might only last a little while.
So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash,
would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent YOUR
dash?

8

DEATH (IF I SHOULD GO)

JOYCE GRENFELL

If I should go before the rest of you
Break not a flower nor inscribe a stone
Nor when I'm gone speak in a Sunday voice
But be the usual selves that I have known
Weep if you must
Parting is Hell
But life goes on
So sing as well.



AFTERFLOW

Unknown

I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.

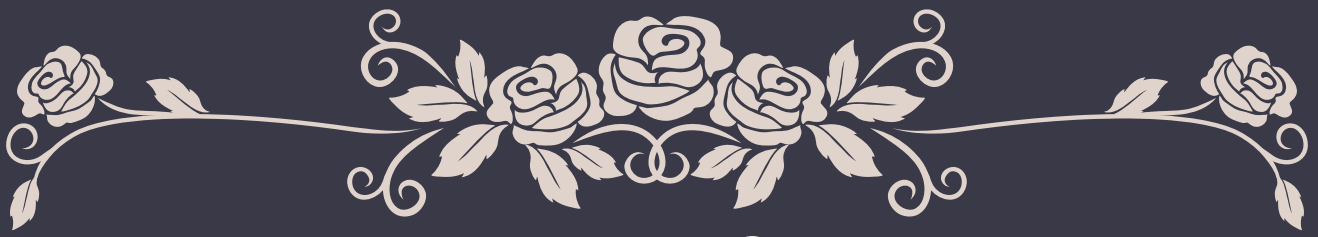
I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.

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.



10

ROADS GO EVER ON

J. R. R. Tolkien

Roads go ever ever on,
Over rock and under tree,
By caves where never sun has shone,
By streams that never find the sea;
Over snow by winter sown,
And through the merry flowers of June,
Over grass and over stone,
And under mountains in the moon.
Roads go ever ever on
Under cloud and under star,
Yet feet that wandering have gone
Turn at last to home afar.
Eyes that fire and sword have seen
And horror in the halls of stone
Look at last on meadows green
And trees and hills they long have known.
Roads go ever on and on
Out from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
Let others follow it who can!
Let them a journey new begin,
But I at last with weary feet
Will turn towards the lighted inn,
My evening-rest and sleep to meet.

1 1

DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE AND WEEP

MARY ELIZABETH FRYE

Do not stand at my grave and weep

I am not there. I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.

I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain.

I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

I am the swift uplifting rush

Of quiet birds in circled flight.

I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry;

I am not there. I did not die.



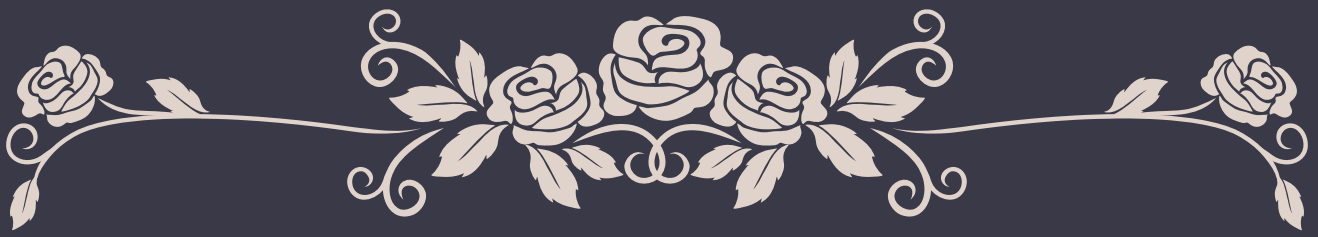


1 2

ROSE GARDEN

Liz Newman

But loved ones, remember:
For all the roses that grew
She tended and planted
Whole gardens in you.
Her heart warm and nurturing,
Her love strong and deep
Resilient and rooted
Yours to tend and to keep.
Her humor a harvest
Her love gently blooms
Her comforting presence
Still fills up a room.
For now we're her roses.
Her legacy
of light and care.
The whole world will marvel
and know that she was there.



13

A SONNET FOR MY INCOMPARABLE MOTHER

Joanna Fuchs

I often contemplate my childhood, Mom.
I am a mother now, and so I know
Hard work is mixed together with the fun;
You learned that when you raised me long ago.

I think of all the things you gave to me:
Sacrifice, devotion, love and tears,
Your heart, your mind, your energy and soul—
All these you spent on me throughout the years.

You loved me with a never-failing love
You gave me strength and sweet security,
And then you did the hardest thing of all:
You let me separate and set me free.

Every day, I try my best to be
A mother like the mom you were to me.

WHAT IS A MOM?

UNKNOWN

A mom is one of life's best gifts,
Someone to treasure all life through,
She's caring and loving,
Thoughtful and true,
Someone who is always a special part of your life,
Someone who holds a prime place in your heart,
She's a mentor, a confidant and also a friend,
Someone on whose love you can depend.
A mom always has your best interests at heart,
She's someone so dear and so good,
She's a blessing, she's a gift,
She's a treasure like no other,
She's someone that is truly wonderful.
Wherever you go, and whatever you do,
A mom's love will always see you through,
A mom is truly invaluable,
Indispensable and unforgettable.
I wouldn't want anyone but you,
And that's why I'm so grateful,
that life picked you for me.



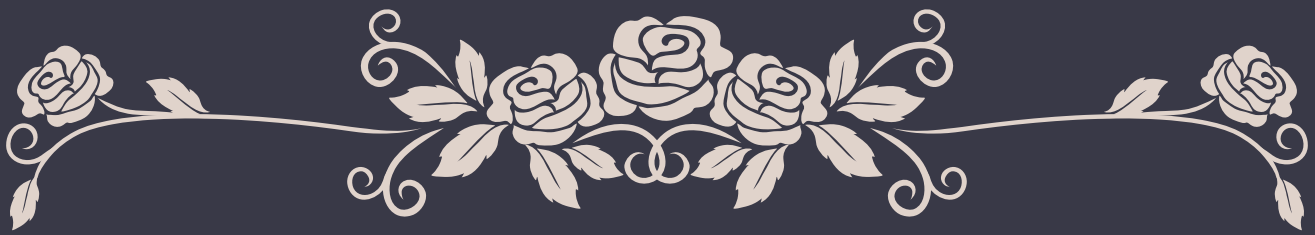


15

AT REST

Unknown

Think of me as one at rest,
For me, no need to weep,
I have no pain, no troubled thoughts,
For I am just at peace.
The living, thinking me that was,
is now forever still,
And life goes on without me,
as time forever will.
If your heart is heavy now,
because I've gone away,
Dwell not long upon it friend,
for none of us can stay.
To those friends who liked me,
I sincerely thank you all,
and those of you that loved me,
well, I thank you most of all.
For in my fleeting lifespan,
as time went rushing by
I found some time to hesitate,
to laugh, to love, to cry.
It matters not when time began,
or if time will ever cease
For I was here, I used it all
and now I am at peace.



16

LEGACY OF LOVE

Unknown

A wife, a mother, a grandma too,
This legacy we have from you,
You gave 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,
Now the time has come for you to rest.
So go in peace, you earned your sleep,
Your love in our hearts, we'll eternally keep.

20

LIFE

UNKNOWN

Life is but a stopping place,
A pause in what's to be,
A resting place along the road,
to sweet eternity.

We all have different journeys,
Different paths along the way,
We all were meant to learn some things,
but never meant to stay...

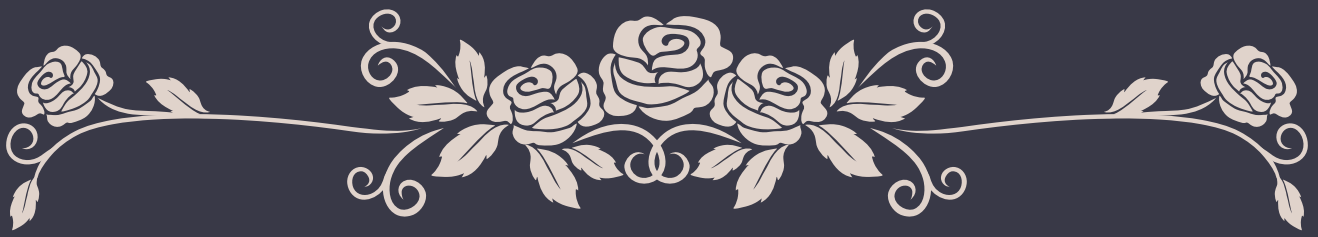
Our destination is a place,
Far greater than we know.
For some the journey's quicker,
For some the journey's slow.
And when the journey finally ends,
We'll claim a great reward,
And find an everlasting peace,
Together with the Lord.



LOOKING BACK

Edgar A. Guest

I haven't built much of a fortune to leave
to those who shall carry my name,
And nothing I've done shall entitle me now
to a place on the tablets of fame.
But I've loved the great sky and its spaces of blue;
I've lived with the birds and the trees;
I've turned from the splendor of silver and gold
to share in such pleasures as these.
I've given my time to the children who came;
together we've romped and we've played,
And I wouldn't exchange the glad hours spent
with them for the money that I might have made.
I chose to be known and be loved by the few,
and was deaf to the plaudits of men;
And I'd make the same choice should the chance
come to me to live my life over again.
I've lived with my friends and I've shared in their joys,
known sorrow with all of its tears;
I have harvested much from my acres of life,
though some say I've squandered my years.
For much that is fine has been mine to enjoy,
and I think I have lived to my best,
And I have no regret, as I'm nearing the end,
for the gold that I might have possessed.



22

REMEMBER ME

Margaret Bird

To the living, I am gone,
To the sorrowful, I will never return,
To the angry, I was cheated,
But to the happy, I am at peace,
And to the faithful, I have never left.
I cannot speak, but I can listen.
I cannot be seen, but I can be heard.
So as you stand upon a shore gazing at a beautiful sea,
As you look upon a flower and admire its simplicity,
Remember me.
Remember me in your heart:
Your thoughts, and your memories,
Of the times we loved,
The times we cried,
The times we fought,
The times we laughed.
For if you always think of me, I will never have gone.

23

**FOR KATRINA'S
SUN DIAL**

HENRY VAN DYKE
(1852 – 1933)

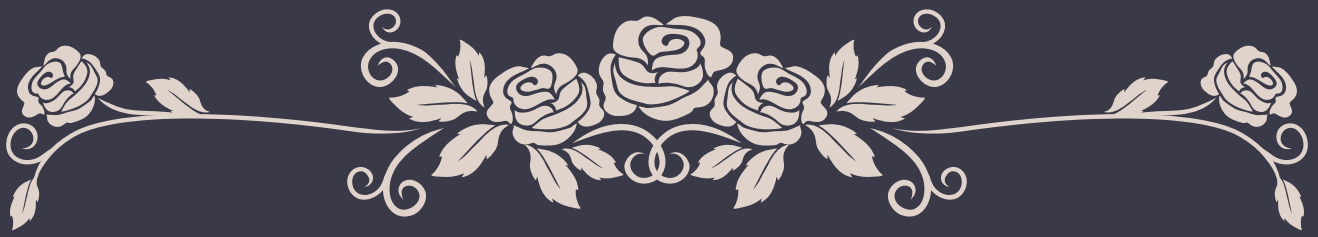
**Time is too slow for those who wait,
Too swift for those who fear,
Too long for those who grieve,
Too short for those who rejoice,
But for those who love, time is
Eternity.**



I'M IN THE RAIN

Donna Ashworth

I'm in the rain
I'm in the pain
I'm in the blood within your veins
I'm in the air
My favourite chair
I'm in the soulful way you care
I'm in the night
I'm in your sight
I'm in your heart and holding tight
I'm in the skies
The children's eyes
I'm in your sobs and in your sighs
I'm in your life
The cause of strife
And that thought cuts me like a knife
My darling one
My moon, my sun
Please don't let all I was become
Your daily sadness
Source of madness
I used to be a font of gladness
If you can hear
When I am near
Please let me take away the fear
And bring back love
I'm not above
I'm close around you like a glove
So breathe me in
Let life begin
Loss will fade but love will win



25

THE PLACE WHERE LOST THINGS GO

(adapted) by unknown from Mary Poppins

Do you ever lie awake at night?
Just between the dark and the morning light
Searching for the things you used to know
Looking for the place where the lost things go
Do you ever dream or reminisce?
Wondering where to find what you truly miss
Well maybe all those things that you love so
Are waiting in the place where the lost things go
Time to close your eyes so sleep can come around
For when you dream you'll find all that's lost is found
Maybe on the moon or maybe somewhere new
Maybe all you're missing lives inside of you
So when you need his touch and loving gaze
Gone but not forgotten is the perfect phrase
Smiling from a star that he makes glow
Trust he's always there watching as you grow
Find him in the place where the lost things go



THE LOSS OF A FATHER

DONNA ASHWORTH

The loss of a father is the anchor pulled from the seabed, the steering wheel unhinged,
The mast spilt by lightning and the bow broken by storm.

The ship you sail now feels unsafe, no longer weatherproof, without direction or brave heart to speed its way.

Perhaps you did not even know that he was your compass, that you gazed upon his lead like a north star in the night.

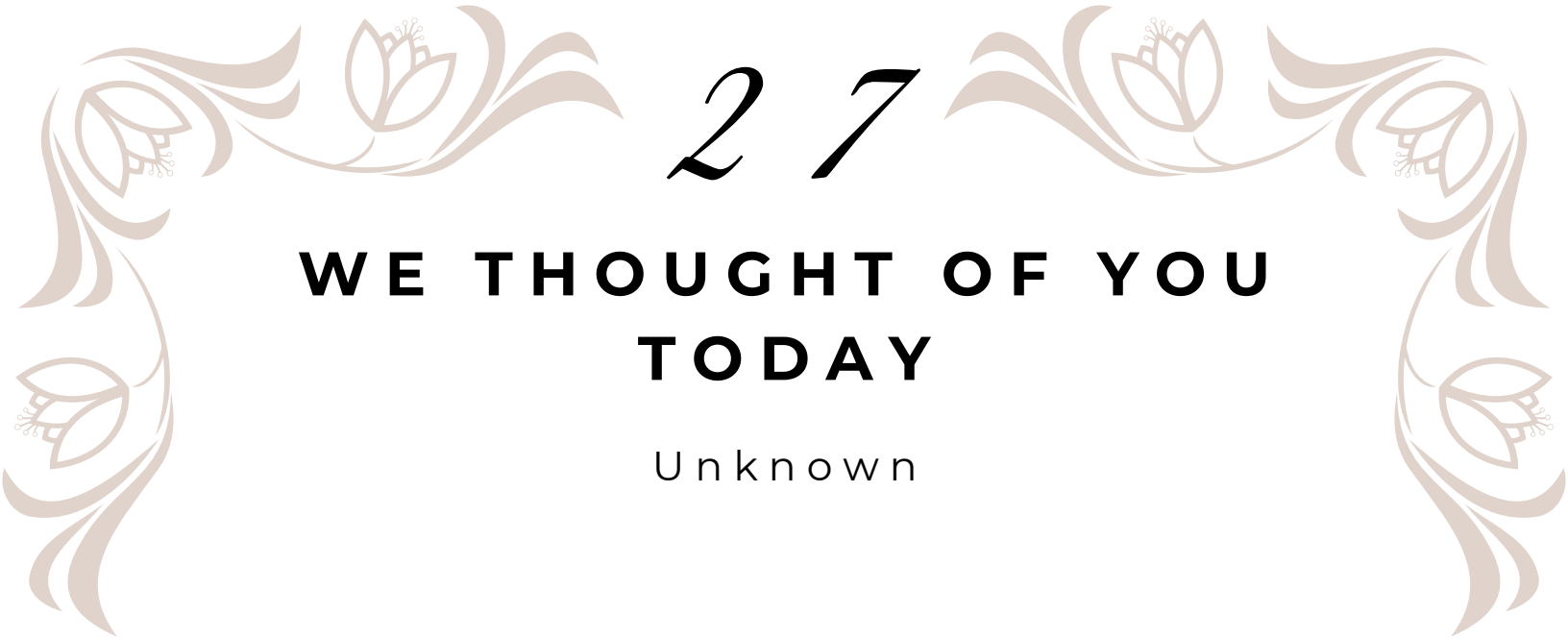
He gave you all of this you see without notice or congratulation.

Diligently, consistently, continuously guiding always showing the way in the way he knew how.

And whilst you are cast adrift, know this to be true. You will anchor yourself once more when you realise that his voice still speaks, still guides, still brings a brave heart your way in the roughest of storms.

And the answers you seek, he already planned deep for he knew one day.

So he buried little pieces of himself within your heart, your mind, your spirit, and your soul; little breadcrumbs of love to show the way home.

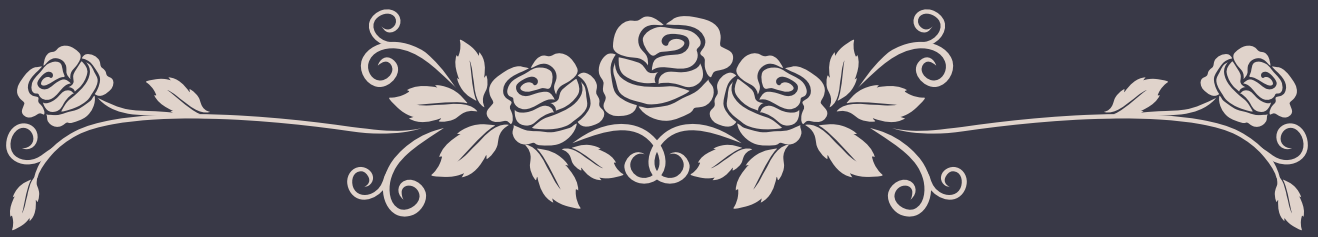
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27

**WE THOUGHT OF YOU
TODAY**

Unknown

We thought of you today,
But that is nothing new
We thought of you yesterday
And will tomorrow, too
We think of you in silence
And make no outward show
For what it meant to lose you
Only those who love you know
Remembering you is easy
We do it every day
It's the heartache of losing you
That will never go away.



28

GONE FISHING

Dalmar Pepper

I've finished life's chores assigned to me,
So put me on a boat headed out to sea.
Please send along my fishing pole
For I've been invited to the fishin' hole.
Where every day is a day to fish,
To fill your heart with every wish.
Don't worry, or feel sad for me,
I'm fishin' with the Master of the sea.
We will miss each other for awhile,
But you will come and bring your smile.
That won't be long you will see,
Till we're together you and me.
To all of those that think of me,
Be happy as I go out to sea.
If others wonder why I'm missin'
Just tell 'em I've gone fishin'

A GRIEF BLESSING

NATIVE APACHE BLESSING

May the sun bring you new energy every day,
bringing light into the darkness of your soul.

May the moon softly restore you by night,
bathing you in the glow of restful sleep and
peaceful dreams.

May the rain wash away your worries and
cleanse the hurt that sits in your heart.

May the breeze blow new strength into your
being, and may you believe in the courage of
yourself.

May you walk gently through the world,
keeping your loved one with you always -
knowing that you are never parted in the
beating of your heart.

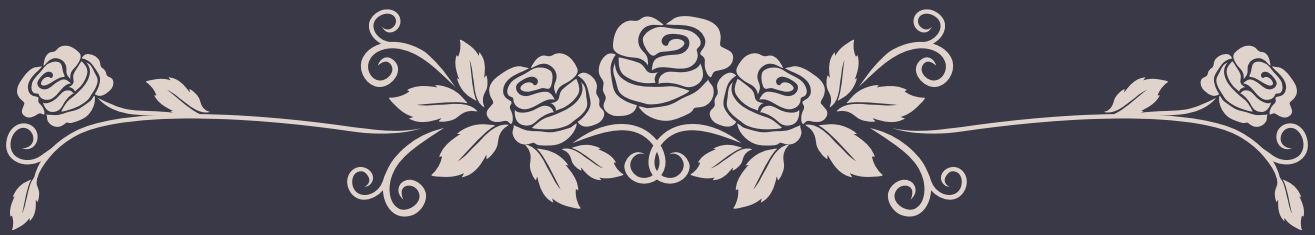


30

WALKING WITH GRIEF

Celtic Prayer

Do not hurry
As you walk with grief;
It does not help the journey
Walk slowly,
Pausing often:
Do not hurry
As you walk with grief
Be not disturbed
By memories that come unbidden.
Swiftly forgive;
And let Christ speak for you
Unspoken words.
Unfinished conversation
Will be resolved in Him.
Be not disturbed.
Be gentle with the one
Who walks with grief.
If it is you, be gentle with yourself.
Swiftly forgive;
Walk slowly,
Pausing often.
Take time, be gentle
As you walk with grief.



31

GOD'S GARDEN

Unknown

God looked around his garden
And found an empty place,
He then looked down upon the earth
And saw your tired face.
He put his arms around you
And lifted you to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful
He always takes the best.
He knew that you were suffering
He knew you were in pain.
He knew that you would never
Get well on earth again.
He saw the road was getting rough
And the hills were hard to climb.
So he closed your weary eyelids
And whispered, 'Peace be thine.'
It broke our hearts to lose you
But you didn't go alone,
For part of us went with you
The day God called you home.

3 2

SONGBIRD

GEORGIA LOUND

Every songbird has its own unique song
And yours is my favourite.
Would my first steps be as hasty if not for its
tempo?
Would my spirits be as high if not for its key?
Your song walked with me as I grew up
Like an underscore, lifting me.
And I have always listened, and I always will.
For no matter how quiet your tune gets,
As the years go on and time passes,
Even if it fades out to a gentle hum,
The echo of your melody will continue to guide me
And shape me into the woman that I will become.
So, although you aren't here to sing it,
The beat of your song will continue in our hearts.
Its steady rhythm will keep us on track.
And now every time I hear a songbird's song,
I will think of you, and I will sing back.



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3 3

**PARDON ME FOR
NOT GETTING UP**

Kelly Roper

Oh dear, if you're reading this right now,
I must have given up the ghost.

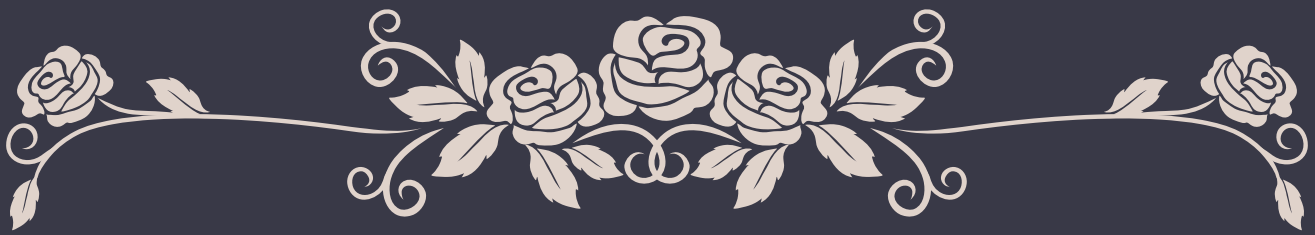
I hope you can forgive me for being
Such a stiff and unwelcoming host.

Just talk amongst yourself my friends,
And share a toast or two.

For I am sure you will remember well
How I loved to drink with you.

Don't worry about mourning me,
I was never easy to offend.

Feel free to share a story at my expense
And we'll have a good laugh at the end.



3 4

WHEN TOMORROW STARTS WITHOUT ME

David M Romano

When tomorrow starts without me
And I'm not there to see
If the sun should rise and find your eyes
All filled with tears for me.
I wish so much you wouldn't cry
The way you do today
While thinking of the many things
We didn't get to say.
I know how much you love me
As much I love you
And each time that you think of me
I know you miss me too.
But when tomorrow starts without me
Please try to understand
That an Angel came and called my name
And took me by the hand.
And said my place was ready
In heaven far above
And that I'd have to leave behind
All those I dearly love.
So when tomorrow starts without me
Don't think we're far apart
For every time you think of me
I'm right there in your heart.

35

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

UNKNOWN

YESTERDAY

You were in our midst - a loving, caring person.
A pillar; a rock; a devoted and adored friend.
Without our knowledge, you brought closure to your
darkness. How we wish we could have looked deep into
your eyes and willed you to stay; cemented your soul to
ours; saved you from torment.

TODAY

There is a void. Disbelief. An absence.
Gone from our lives, is what we cherished the most.
Empty, puzzled and bereft, we suffer our loss together.
Your burden of sadness has shifted to us.
We search for answers in the hope that by sharing and
understanding, we can somehow retrospectively lessen
your anguish. Rest now, released from your pain.

TOMORROW

We will trudge on carefully and slowly, negotiating a safe
route through an unknown path.
We will try to let go of our anger, and any regrets; we will
try not to lose our way.
We will accept what we cannot change.
We will be calm.
We will hope for happiness.
We will remember you, with love.



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36

TO MY FATHER

Georgia Harkness

A giant pine, magnificent and old
Stood staunch against the sky and all around
Shed beauty, grace and power.
Within its fold birds safely reared their young.
The velvet ground beneath was gentle,
and the cooling shade gave cheer to passers by.
Its towering arms a landmark stood, erect and unafraid,
As if to say, "Fear naught from life's alarms."
It fell one day.
Where it had dauntless stood was loneliness and void.
But men who passed paid tribute- and said,
"To know this life was good,
It left its mark on me. Its work stands fast."
And so it lives. Such life no bonds can hold-
This giant pine, magnificent and old.