

1

Day's ending

I look towards the silent hills
At closing of the day,
As vaporous veils of silver mist
Descend upon the bay.
Through moving clouds, the pearly moon
Shines from a distant place,
Reflecting in the water's depths
Her opalescent face.
The flowers close their petalled cups,
The wind is just a sigh,
A lonesome bird on homeward flight
Lets out a plaintive cry.
Trees stand out in silhouette
Against the fading light,
As dusk gives way to evening shadows,
Merging into night.
Everything seems hushed and still,
Bathed in afterglow.
Then one by one, the stars appear,
And gaze on earth below.
A time to quietly reflect,
To meditate or pray,
As calming peace steals on my soul,
And daylight slips away.

Kathleen Gillum

2

From The Tempest

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and are
Melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep

William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616)

3

At rest

Think of me as one at rest,
For me you should not weep
I have no pain no troubled thoughts
For I am just asleep
The living, thinking me that was,
Is now forever still
And life goes on without me now,
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
Those of you who liked me,
I sincerely thank you all
And those of you who loved me,
I thank you most of all.

And in my fleeting lifespan,
As time went rushing by
I found some time to hesitate,
To laugh, to love, to cry
Matters it now if time began
If time will ever cease?
I was here, I used it all,
And now I am at peace.

Anon

4

Word

There is a word, of grief the sounding token.
There is a word bejewelled with bright tears.
The saddest word fond lips have ever spoken,
A little word that breaks the chain of years.
It's utterance must ever bring emotion,
The memories it crystals cannot die.
'Tis known in every land, on every ocean,
It is
Goodbye

Anon

5

The ship

I am standing upon that foreshore.

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 down like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down and mingle at the horizon.

Then someone at my side says: 'There! She's gone!

'Gone where?'

'Gone from my sight, that's all.'

She is just as large in mast and spar and hull as ever she was when she left my side;

just as able to bear her load of living freight to her place of destination.

Her diminished size is in me, not in her.

And just at that 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

'Here she comes!'

And that is dying.

Charles Henry Brent (1862 – 1929)

6

The plan of the Master Weaver

My life is but a weaving between the Lord and me;

I may not choose the colours,

He knows what they should be

for He can view the pattern upon the upper side,

while I can see it only on this, the under side....

Sometimes He weaveth sorrow, which seemeth strange to me,

but I will trust His judgement, and work on faithfully,

'tis He who fills the shuttle, and He knows what is best,

so I shall weave in earnest, leaving to Him the rest....

Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly

shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why –

the dark threads are as needed in the Weaver's skilful hand

as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

Benjamin Malachi Franklin (1882 – 1965)

Adieu and au revoir

As you love me, let there be
 No mourning when I go,-
 No tearful eyes, no hopeless sighs,
 No woe, nor even sadness.
 Indeed I would not have you sad,
 For I myself shall be full of glad,
 With the high triumphant gladness
 Of a soul made free.
 Of Gods sweet liberty

No windows darkened for my own
 Will be flung wide as ne'er before,
 To catch the radiant in pour
 Of love that shall in full atone
 For all the ills that I have done.
 And the good things left undone
 No voices hushed: my own, full flushed
 With an immortal hope, will rise
 In ecstasies of new born bliss
 And joyful melodies.

Rather, or your sweet courtesy,
 Rejoice with me
 At my soul's losing from captivity.

Wish me 'Bon Voyage' as you do a friend
 Whose joyous visit finds it's happy end
 And bid me both 'Adieu' and 'Au revoir'
 Since, though I come no more
 I shall be waiting there to greet you
 At His Door.

And, as the feet of the bearers tread
 The ways I trod,
 Think not of me as dead, but rather –
 Happy, thrice happy, she whose course is sped!
 He has gone home.

John Oxenham (1852 – 1941)

8

Regret not me

Regret not me;
Beneath the sunny tree
I lie uncaring, sleeping peacefully.
Swift as the light
I flew my faery flight;
Ecstatically I moved, and feared no night.
I did not know
That heydays fade and go,
But deemed that what was would be
always so.

I skipped at morn
Between the yellowing corn,
Thinking it good and glorious to be born.
I ran at eves
Among the piled-up sheaves,
Dreaming, "I grieve not, therefore nothing grieves."
Now soon will come
The apple, pear, and plum
And hinds will sing, and autumn insects hum.

Again you will fare
To cider-makings rare,
And junketings; but I shall not be there.
Yet gaily sing
Until the pewter ring
These songs we sang when we went gipsying.
And lightly dance
Some triple-timed romance
In coupled figures, and forget mischance;

And mourn not me
Beneath the yellowing tree;
For I shall mind not, slumbering peacefully

Thomas Hardy (1840 – 1928)

9

I'm free

Don't grieve for me now that I'm free,
I'm following paths God made for me.
I took His hand, I heard Him call,
Then turned and bid farewell to all

I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to sing, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I found my peace at close of day.

If my parting left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy,
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Yes, these things I too will miss.

Be not burdened deep with sorrow,
I wish you sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I've savoured much.
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me,
God wants me now
He set me free.

Anon

10

Farewell to Thee!

Farewell to Thee! But not farewell
To all my fondest thoughts of thee;
Within my heart they still shall dwell:
And they shall cheer and comfort me.

Life seems more sweet that Thou didst live
And men more true Thou wert one;
Nothing is lost that Thou didst give,
Nothing destroyed that Thou hast done.

Anne Bronte (1820 – 1849)

The unknown shore

Sometime at Eve when the tide is low
I shall slip my moorings and sail away
With no response to a friendly hail
In the silent hush of the twilight pale
When the night stoops down to embrace the day
And the voices call in the water's flow

Sometime at Eve when the water is low
I shall slip my moorings and sail away.
Through purple shadows
That darkly trail o'er the ebbing tide
And the Unknown Sea,
And a ripple of waters to tell the tale
Of a lonely voyager sailing away
To mystic isles
Where at anchor lay
The craft of those who had sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea
To the Unknown Shore

A few who watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay
Some friendly barques were anchored near
Some loving souls my heart held dear
In silent sorrow will drop a tear
But I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In mooring sheltered from the storm and gale
And greeted friends who had sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea
To the Unknown Shore

Elizabeth Clark Hardy (1794 – 1854)

12

Traditional Indian prayer

When I am dead
Cry for me a little
Think of me sometimes
But not too much.

Think of me now and again
As I was in life
At some moments it's pleasant to recall
But not for too long.

Leave me in peace
And I shall leave you in peace
And while you live
Let your thoughts be with the living.

Anon

13

For whom the bell tolls

No man is an island,
Entire of itself.
Each is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thine own
Or of thine friend's were.
Each man's death diminishes me,
For I am involved in mankind.
Therefore, send not to know
For whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.

John Donne (1572 – 1631)

14

As the mist leaves no scar

As the mist leaves no scar
On the dark green hill,
So my body leaves no scar
On you, nor ever will.

When wind and hawk encounter,
What remains to keep?
So you and I encounter
Then turn, then fall to sleep.

As many nights endure
Without a moon or star,
So will we endure
When one is gone and far.

Leonard Cohen

15

The definitive journey

...and I will leave,
But the birds will stay, singing:
and my garden will stay, with its green tree,
with its water well.
Many afternoons the sky will be blue and placid,
and the bells in the belfry, will chime,
as they are chiming this very afternoon,

The people who have loved me will pass away,
and the town will burst anew every year
But my spirit will always wander, nostalgic,
in the same peaceful corner of my garden

Juan Ramon Jimenez (1881 – 1958)

16

Requiem

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you 'grave for me:
Here he lies where he long'd to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850 – 1894)

17

The tide recedes

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 it echoes on
In sweet refrains
For every joy that passes
Something beautiful remains

Ursula (Pankow) Delfs

18

Feel no guilt in laughter

Feel no guilt in laughter, he'd know how much you care.
Feel no sorrow in a smile that he is not here to share.
You cannot grieve forever; he would not want you to.
He'd hope that you could carry on the way you always do.
So, talk about the good times and the way you showed you cared,
The days you spent together, all the happiness you shared.

Let memories surround you. A word someone may say
Will suddenly recapture a time, an hour, a day,
That brings him back as clearly as though he were still here,
And fills you with the feeling that he is always near.
For if you keep those moments, you will never be apart
And he will live forever locked safely within your heart.

Anon

19

Death is nothing at all

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away to the next room.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other,
That, we are still.

Call me by my old familiar name.
Speak to me in the easy way
which you have always used.
Put no difference in your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Let my name be ever the household word
that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effect.
Without a trace of a shadow in it.

Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was;
There is unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind
Because I am out of sight?

I am waiting for you, for an interval,
Somewhere very near, just around the corner.

All is well.

Henry Scott Holland (1847 – 1918)

20

I was loved, therefore I am

I was loved, therefore I am;
And in being loved, I am treasured.
When I peeled away my layers,
And all that was left was my essence,
The bareness of me,
I was still loved.

I was loved, therefore I am;
And in being loved, I was able to grow.
In my mistakes held,
In my successes celebrated,
I was always loved.

I was loved, therefore I am;
And in being loved, I learned to love.
In the sun filled day,
In the ecstasy of the night,
I was loved and loved others.

To be loved is all you need:
I was loved...and so, I will always be.

Ana Draper

21

From Adonais

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822)

22

Not in vain

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain:
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886)

23

The way of love

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

If I give away all that I have and deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

As for prophecies, they will pass away;

As for tongues, they will cease,

As for knowledge, it will pass away.

For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will fade away.

When I was a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.

So faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13

24

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.

Anon

25

Still there

A whisper in the wind,
A shadow on the wall,
The feeling that someone is there
But no answer to your call.

A kind of warmth when days are cold,
A hand held out to guide,
A glow that lights the darkest night,
A presence by your side.

If these things happen, curb your fears
Just smile a knowing smile
It's me, you see, watching over you
Across the coming years.

Anon

26

If I should go

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.

Joyce Grenfell (1910 – 1979)

27

Do not stand

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 glint on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain
I am in gentle autumn rain,

When you awaken in the morning hush
I am swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight
I am the star-shine at night

Do not stand at my grave and cry
I do not die

Mary Elizabeth Frye (1905 – 2004)

28

The fallen limb

A limb has fallen
from the family tree.
I keep hearing a voice that says,
"Grieve not for me.
Remember the best times,
The laughter, the song.
The good life I lived
While I was strong.
Continue my heritage,
I'm counting on you.
Keep smiling and surely
The sun will shine through.
My mind is at ease,
My soul is at rest.
Remembering all,
How I truly was blessed.
Continue traditions,
No matter how small.
Go on with your life,
Don't worry about falls
I miss you all dearly,
So keep up your chin.
Until the day comes
We're together again.'

Anon

29

I fall asleep

I fall asleep in the full and certain hope
That my slumber shall not be broken;
And that though I be all-forgetting,
Yet shall I not be forgotten,
But continue that life in the thoughts and
Deeds
Of those I loved...

Samuel Butler (1835 – 1902)

30

Thy will be done

You left quietly without a fuss
You always had a smile to share
A laugh, a joke
A time to care

A wonderful nature
Warm and true
These are the memories
I have of you

A beautiful life
Came to an end
You died as you lived
Everyone's friend

You gave me year's of happiness
Then sorrow came with tears
You left me lovely memories
I will treasure through the years

Dorothy Frances Gurney (1858 – 1932)

31

This heritage

They are not dead,
Who leave us this great heritage
Of remembering joy.

They still live in our hearts,
In the happiness we knew,
In the dreams we shared.

They still breathe,
In the lingering fragrance, windblown,
From their favourite flowers.

They still smile in the moonlight's silver,
And laugh in the sunlight's sparking gold.

They still speak in the echoes of the words
We've heard them say again and again.

They still move,
In the rhythm of waving grasses,
In the dance of the tossing branches.

They are not dead;
Their memory is warm in our hearts,
Comfort in our sorrow.

They are not apart from us,
But a part of us,

For love is eternal,
And those we love shall be with us
Throughout all eternity.

Anon

32

You can shed tears

You can shed tears that he is gone
or you can smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back
or you can open your eyes and see all he's left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him
or you can be full of the love 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 him and only that he's gone
or you can cherish his memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back,
or you can do what he'd want: smile: open your eyes, love and go on.

David Harkins

33

Remember me:

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 be seen, but I can be heard.
So as you stand upon a shore, gazing at a beautiful sea – remember me.
As you look in awe at a mighty forest and its grand majesty – remember me.
As you look upon a flower and admire its simplicity – remember me.
Remember me in your heart, your thoughts, 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 have never gone.

Anon

34

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 tears of those who grieve, to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave, when life is done.

Anon

35

Four candles

The first candle represents our grief.
The pain of losing you is intense
It reminds us of the depth of our love for you

The second candle represents our courage.
To confront our sorrow,
To comfort each other,
To change our lives.

The third candle we light in your memory.
For the times we laughed,
The times we cried,
The times we were angry with each other,
The silly things you did,
The caring and joy you gave us.

The fourth candle we light for our love.
We light this candle that your light will always shine,
As we enter this sad time and share this day of
remembrance with family and friends.
We cherish the special place in our hearts
That will always be reserved for you.
We thank you for the gift
Your living brought to each of us.

Anon

36

That man is a success

That man is a success
Who has lived well,
Laughed often and loved much;

Who has gained the respect of intelligent
men and the love of children;

Who has filled his niche and
accomplished his task;

Who leaves the world better than he found it,
Whether by an improved poppy,
A perfect poem, or a rescued soul;

Who has never lacked appreciation of
Earth's beauty or failed to express it;

Who looked for the best in others.
And gave the best he had.

Bessie Anderson Stanley (written 1904)

37

The true joy of life

This is the true joy of life,
The being used for a purpose
Recognised by yourself as a might one-
The being a force of nature instead of a feverish,
Selfish little clod of ailments and grievances
Complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community
And as long as I live it is my privilege to do it for whatever I can.

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die,
For the harder I work the more I live.
I rejoice in life for its own sake,
Life is no 'brief candle' to me; it is a sort of splendid torch
Which I have got hold of for the moment,
And I want to make it burn as brightly as possible
Before handing it on to future generations.

George Bernard Shaw (1856 – 1950)

38

The parting glass

Oh all the time that e'er I spent,
I spent it in good company;
And any harm that e'er I've done,
I trust it was to none but me;
May those I've loved through all the years
Have memories now they'll e'er recall.
So fill to me the parting glass,

Goodnight and joy be with you all.
Of all the comrades that e'er I had
Are sorry for my going away;
And all the loved ones that e'er I had
Would wish me one more day to stay,
But since it falls unto my lot
That I should leave and you should not
I'll gently rise and I'll softly call
Goodnight and joy be with you all.
Of all good times that e'er we shared,
I leave to you fond memory,
And for all the friendship that e'er we had
I ask you to remember me;
And when you sit and stories tell,
I'll be with you and help recall.
So fill to me the parting glass,
God bless and joy be with you all.

Traditional Irish Song

39

Success

To laugh often and love much;
To win the respect of intelligent persons
And the affection of children;
To earn the approbation of honest critics
And to endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;
To give of one's self;
To leave the world a bit better,
Whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch
Or a redeemed social condition;
To have played and laughed with enthusiasm
And sung with exultation;
To know even one life has breathed easier
Because you have lived -
This is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882)

40

When I am gone

When I come to the end of my journey
And I travel my last weary mile.
Just forget if you can, that I ever frowned
And remember only 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

Mrs. Lyman Hancock

41

If I had a voice

If I had a voice today, I'd say
Dear ones, please don't cry,
Still love me but don't grieve for me,
It's easy if you try

Don't think of all that I won't see
Just think of what I've seen
Think not of places I won't go
But remember where I've been

I've lived, I've loved, I've laughed, I've cried
I've worked hard, that's for sure
I've done my best, I'm satisfied
I couldn't ask for more

I know not what becomes of me
Nor what's beyond today
If I had a choice I'd use my voice
But alas I've gone away

You have memories of me to enjoy
Smile, laugh, be tough,
You have loved me and enriched my life
I was happy, that's enough!

Anon

42

On a friend

An honest man here lies at rest
As e'er God with his image blest;
The friend of man, the friend of truth,
The friend of age, and guide of youth:
Few hearts like this, with virtue warm'd
Few heads with knowledge so inform'd:
If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

Robert Burns (1759 – 1796)

43

Death is the most profound

Death is the most profound and significant fact of life: it lifts the very last of mortals above the greyness and banality of life. And only the fact of death puts the question of life's meaning in all its depth. Life in this world has meaning only because there is death: if there were no death in our world, life would be deprived of meaning.

Meaning is linked with ending. And if there were no end, if in our world there was evil and endlessness there would be no meaning to life whatsoever. The meaning of man's mortal experience throughout his whole life, lies in putting him into a position to comprehend death.

Nikolai Berdyaev (1784 – 1948)

44

Words from Bertrand Russell

An individual human existence should be like a river – small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past boulders and over waterfalls.

Gradually, the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and – in the end – without any visible break, they become merged in the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being.

The man or woman, who, in old age, can see his or her life in this way, will not suffer from the fear of death, since the things they care for will continue.

Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970)

45

For what it is to die

For what it is to die but to stand
naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?
And what is it to cease breathing but to free
the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise
and expand and seek through unencumbered?
Only when you drink from the river of
silence shall you indeed sing.
And when you have reached the mountain top,
then you shall begin to climb.
And when the earth shall reclaim your limbs,
then you shall truly dance.

Kahlil Gibran (1883 – 1931)

46

The death of each of us

The death of each of us is in the order of things; it follows life as surely as night follows day. We can take the tree of life as a symbol. The human race is the trunk and branches of this tree, and individual men and women are the leaves, which appear one season, flourish for a summer, and then die. I too am like a leaf of this tree, and one day I shall be torn off by a storm, or simply decay and fall and mingle with the earth at its roots. But, while I live, I am conscious of the tree's flowing sap and steadfast strength. When I die and fall the tree of life remains, nourished to some small degree by my life. Millions of leaves have preceded me and millions will follow me; but the tree itself grows and endures.

Sir Herbert Read (adapted) (1893 – 1968)

47

Music, when soft voice die

Music, when soft voice die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822)

48

There's a certain slant of light

There's a certain slant of light,
On winter afternoons,
That oppresses, like the weight
Of cathedral tunes.

Heavenly hurt it gives us;
We can find no scar,
But internal difference
Where the meanings are.

None may teach it anything,
'Tis the seal, despair,-
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the air.

When it comes, the landscape listens,
Shadows hold their breath;
When it goes, 't is like the distance
On the look of death.

Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886)

49

Death is not the end

Death is not the end
but the beginning
of a metamorphosis.
For matter is never destroyed,
only transformed
and rearranged –
often more perfectly.
Witness how in the moment of the caterpillar's death
the beauty of the butterfly is born
and released from the prison of the cocoon
it flies free.

Peter Tatchell

50

Life is but a stopping place

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

Anon

51

From the antique

The wind shall lull us yet,
The flowers shall spring above us:
And those who hate forget,
And those forgot who love us.

The pulse of hope shall cease,
Of joy and of regretting:
We twain shall sleep in peace,
Forgotten and forgetting.

For us no sun shall rise,
Nor wind rejoice, nor river,
Where we with fast-closed eyes
Shall sleep and sleep for ever.

Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894)

52

Uphill

Does the road wind up hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weary?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yes, beds for all who come.

Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894)

53

Clouds

Down the blue night the unending columns press
In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,
Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow
Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.

Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,
And turn with profound gesture vague and slow,
As who would pray good for the world, but know
Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.
I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as these,
In wise majestic melancholy train,
And watch the moon, and the still-raging seas,
And men, coming and going on the earth.

Rupert Brooke (1887 – 1915)

54

Extracts from the writings of Michel de Montaigne

One should always have one's boots on
and be ready to leave.

I want death to find me planting my
cabbages, but caring little for it, and much
more for my imperfect garden.

Wheresoever your life endeth, there is it all.

The profit of life consists not in the
space, but rather in the use. Some have
lived long who have lived but a short while.

Whether you have lived enough
depends upon yourself, not on the number
of your years. There is no road that doth
not have an end, and, if company is solace,
doth not the whole world go the same way?

Michel de Montaigne (1533 – 1592)

55

For Katrina's sun dial

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.

Henry Van Dyke (1852 – 1933)

56

A reflection on an autumn day

I took up a handful of grain and letting it slip flowing through my fingers,
and I said to myself, 'This is what it is all about'.

There is no longer any room for pretence.

At harvest time the essence is revealed
The straw and chaff are set aside, they have done their job.
The grain alone matters – sacks of pure gold.

So it is when a person dies the essence of their life is revealed.
At the moment of death a person's character stands out;
Happy for the person who has forged it well over the years.

Then it will not be the great achievement that will count, nor how
Much money or possessions a person has amassed.

These, like the straw and the chaff, will be left behind.
It is what they have made of themselves that will matter.

Death can take away from us what we have,
But it cannot rob us of who we are.

Anon

57

A time for everything

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NIV)

58

A parting guest

What delightful guests are they
Life and Love!
Lingering I turn away,
This late hour, yet glad enough
They have not withheld from me
Their high hospitality.
So with face lit with delight
And all gratitude, I stay
Yet to press their hands and say,
"Thanks. So fine a time! Goodnight."

James Whitcomb Riley (1849 – 1916)

59

Happy the man

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own.
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have lived today.

Be fair or foul or rain or shine
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine.
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

John Dryden (1631 – 1700)

60

Leisure

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.
No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

William Henry Davies (1871 – 1940)

61

High flight

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of -
wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air...

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

John Gillespie McGee Jr (1922 – 1941)

62

Gaily I lived

Gaily I lived as ease and nature taught,
And spent my little life without a thought,
And am amazed that Death, that tyrant grim,
Should think of me, who never thought of him.

René Francois Regnier (1794 – 1881)

63

Only we who grieve

Tis only we who grieve

They do not leave

They are not gone

They look upon us still

They walk among the valleys now

They stride upon the hill

Their smile is in the summer sky

Their grace is in the breeze

Their memories whisper in the grass

Their calm is in the trees

Their light is in the winter snow

Their tears are in the rain

Their merriment runs in the brook

Their laughter in the lane

Their gentleness is in the flowers

They sigh in autumn leaves

They do not leave

They are not gone

Tis only we who grieve

Anon

64

If I should go tomorrow

If I should go tomorrow

It would never be goodbye

For I have left my heart with you,

So don't you ever cry.

The love that's deep within me,

Shall reach you from the stars,

You'll feel it from the heavens,

And it will heal the scars.

Anon

65

His journey's just begun

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

Just think of him as resting
From the sorrows and the tears
In a place of warmth and comfort
Where there are no days and years.

Think how he must be wishing
That we could know today
How nothing but our sadness
Can really pass away.

And think of him as living
In the hearts of those he touched
For nothing loved is ever lost –
And he was loved so much

Ellen Brenneman

66

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 is all part of nature's plan,
A step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick of heart,
Go to the friends we know,
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds.
Miss me but let me go.

Glyn Shipton

67

Prayer of faith

We trust that beyond absence there is a presence.
That beyond the pain there can be healing.
That beyond the brokenness there can be wholeness.
That beyond the anger there may be peace.
That beyond the hurting there may be forgiveness
That beyond the silence there may be the word.
That beyond the word there may be understanding.
That through understanding there is love.

Anon

68

Death for one ought not mean death for two

Death for one ought not mean death for two.
We cannot die of grief unless we will.
Love requires us to love life still,
Lest love be less than life and death are due.
We cannot choose but choose for others, too,
For what we choose does what we are distill,
And open fields with inner sweetness fill,
That those who pass might hope or faith renew.

So may your love for loved ones that remain
Bring you through this season of despair
To some unquiet, sad, but gentle spring.
Emerging from your chrysalis of pain,
May you find a new world blossomed there
With new songs bittersweet that pleasure bring.

Nicholas Gordon

69

Acceptance

There is an end to grief
Suddenly there are no more tears to cry
No hurt nor break now
But mute acceptance of what will be
Knowing that each move for good or ill
Must fit the whole
Past comprehension
Yet trusted in the design
This way lies peace.

Brenda Lismer

70

No mourning by request

Come not to mourn for me with solemn tread
Clad in dull weeds of sad and sable hue,
Nor weep because of my tale of life's told through,
Casting light dust on my troubled head.
Nor linger near me while the sexton fills
My grave with earth – but so gay garlanded.
And in your halls a shining banquet spread
And gild your chambers o'er with daffodils.

Fill your tall goblets with white wine and red,
And sing brave songs of gallant love and true,
Wearing soft robes of emerald and blue,
And dance, as I your dances oft have led,
And laugh, as I have often laughed with you –
And be most merry – after I am dead.

Winifred Holtby (1898 – 1935)

71

Had I the heaven's embroidered cloths

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

W.B. Yeats (1865 – 1939)

72

The intention

Healing is both an exercise and an understanding,
and yet not of the will nor of the intention.
It is wisdom and a deeper knowledge of the daily swing
of life and death in all creation.

There is defeat to overcome and
acceptance of living to be established,
and always there must be hope.
Not hope of healing but the hope which
informs the coming moment and gives it's reason.
The hope which is each man's breath,
the certainty of love and of loving.

Death may live in the living
and healing rise in the dying,
for whom the natural end is part of the gathering,
and of the harvest to be expected.

To know healing is to know that all life is one,
and there is no beginning and no end,
and the intention is loving.

Margaret Torrie (1912 – 1999)

73

May time soften your pain

In times of darkness, love sees...
In time of silence, love hears...
In times of doubt, love hopes...
In times of sorrow, love heals...
And in all times, love remembers.
May time soften the pain
Until all that remains
Is the warmth of the memories
And the love.

Katrina Wood

74

Your grief

Your grief for what you've lost lifts a mirror
up to where you're bravely working.

Expecting the worst, you look and instead,
here's the joyful face you've been wanting to see.

Your hand opens and closes and opens and closes.
If it were always a fist or always stretched open,
you would be paralyzed.

Your deepest presence is in every small contracting
and expand the two as beautifully
balanced and coordinated as birdwings.

Jalaluddin Rumi (1207 – 1273)

75

Remember me

Do not shed tears when I have gone
but smile instead because I have lived.

Do not shut your eyes and pray to God that I'll come back
but open your eyes and see all that I have left behind.

I know your heart will be empty because you cannot see me
but still I want you to be full of the love we shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live only for yesterday
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of what happened
between us yesterday.

You can remember me and grieve that I have gone
or you can cherish my memory and let it live on.

You can cry and lose yourself, become distraught
and turn your back on the world
or you can do what I want - smile, wipe away the tears,
learn to love again and go on.

David Harkins

76

Weep not

So, weep not for me when I am gone,
For I have lived to see and feel
The sun rise brilliant yellow above the sea
And set in golden glory over distant fields.

And watched the angry sea lash with
Giant waves, the rocky cliffs,
And, in calmer mood, lap gently up
The sandy beach.

I have smelt the fragrant scent of rose and lilac,
Of honeysuckle and new mown grass,
The pungent smell of fresh sawn cedar wood and pine,
And the salty breeze, spume-blown and foam edged
North Sea breakers.

Then weep not for me,
No greater experience can be mine.

Anon

77

A silent tear

Just close your eyes and you will see
All the memories that you have of me
Just sit and relax and you will find
I'm really still there inside your mind

Don't cry for me now I'm gone
For I am in the land of song
There is no pain, there is no fear
So dry away that silent tear

Don't think of me in the dark and cold
For here I am, no longer old
I'm in that place that's filled with love
Known to you all, as "up above"

Anon

78

When at heart you should be sad

When at heart you should be sad,
Pondering the joys we had,
Listen and keep very still.
If the lowing from the hill
Or the tolling of a bell
Do not serve to break the spell,
Listen: you may be allowed
To hear my laughter from a cloud.

Sir Walter Raleigh, Explorer (1554 –1618)

79

The instinct of hope

Is there another world for this frail dust
To warm with life and be itself again?
Something about me daily speaks there must,
And why should instinct nourish hopes in vain?
'Tis nature's prophesy that such will be,
And everything seems struggling to explain
The close sealed volume of its mystery.
Time wandering onward keeps its usual pace
As seeming anxious of eternity,
To meet that calm and find a resting place.
E'en the small violet feels a future power
And waits each year renewing blooms to bring,
And surely man is no inferior flower
To die unworthy of a second spring?

John Clare (1793 – 1864)

80

For Winter's rain

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837 – 1909)
from Atlanta in Calyden (1865)

81

Don't make me a hero when I'm gone

I went to a funeral today.
Someone who obviously knew the family well
Stood to 'say a few words'.

Well, the lady in the coffin was hardly recognisable!
She'd been so unbelievably good at everything
It's a wonder anyone liked her at all.

So don't make me a hero when I'm gone.

There'll be good things about me to miss
And some not so good, which you'll be better off without
So keep things in balance.

Whatever you do, have a laugh.
I've loved tears of laughter rolling down my cheeks
Tummy aching with hilarity
Always made me feel better about things.

So have a good laugh
It'll do you good –
And don't make me a hero when I'm gone.

Anon

82

Turn again to life

If I should die and leave you here awhile,
be not like others, sore undone, who keep
long vigils by silent dust.

For my sake, turn again to life and smile,
nerving they heart and trembling hand to do
something to comfort weaker hearts than thine.
Complete these dear unfinished tasks of mine.
And I perchance may therein comfort you.

Mary Lee Hall (1843 – 1927)

83

For these once mine

With you a part of me hath passed away;
For in the peopled forest of my mind
A tree made leafless by this wintry wind
Shall never don again its green array.
Chapel and fireside, country road and bay,
Have something of their friendliness resigned;
Another, if I would, I could not find,
And I am grown much older in a day.
But yet I treasure in my memory
Your gift of charity, and mellow ease,
And the dear honour of your amity;
For these once mine, my life is rich with these.
And I scarce know which part may greater be,—
What I keep of you, or you rob of me.

George Santayana (1863 – 1952)

84

Remember

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 plann'd:
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.

Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894)

85

Our Mum/Nan

A special Mum/Nan is hard to find
For that we know is true,
You gave to us unselfishly
Every single part of you.

Your winning smile, those sparkling eyes,
The way you made us laugh,
We know you were so peaceful
As you travelled Heaven's path

Your memory is your inner strength,
Which lasts a whole life through,
God threw away the mould Mum/Nan
The day that he made you.

Whenever we are lonely
And need your loving hand
We know that you will guide us
In life, to understand.

That each day you'll walk beside us,
We will never be alone,
The only thing that's changed now Mum/Nan
Is that you are not at home.

Anon

86

Dad

A dad is a person who is loving and kind,
And often he knows what you have on your mind.
He's someone who listens, suggests and defends,
A dad can be one of your very best friends!

He's proud of your triumphs, but when things go wrong,
A dad can be patient and helpful and strong.
In all that you do a dad's love plays a part,
There's always a place for him in your heart.

And each year that passes, you're even more glad,
More grateful and proud just to call him your dad!
Thank you, dad... for listening and caring.
For giving and sharing, but, especially
For just being you!

M.K. Paul

Friendship IXX

And a youth said,
'Speak to us of Friendship!'
And he answered, saying:
Your friend is your needs answered.
He is your field which you sow with love
and reap with thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside.
For you come to him with your hunger,
and you seek him for peace.

When your friend speaks his mind you fear
not the "nay" in your own mind,
nor do you withhold the "ay".
And when he is silent your heart ceases
not to listen to his heart;
For without words, in friendship, all thoughts,
all desires, all expectations are born and shared,
with joy that is unacclaimed.
When you part from your friend, you grieve not;
For that which you love most
in him may be clearer in his absence,
as the mountain to the climber
is clearer from the plain.

And let there be no purpose in friendship
save the deepening of the spirit.
For love that seeks aught but the disclosure
of its own mystery is not love but a net cast forth:
and only the unprofitable is caught.

And let your best be for your friend
that you should seek him with hours to kill?
Seek him always with hours to live.
For it is his to fill your need,
but not your emptiness.
And in the sweetness of friendship
let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.
For in the dew of little things
the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.

Kahlil Gibran (1883 – 1931)

A Mother's parable

A young mother set her foot on the path of life.
"Is the way long?" she asked.

Her Guide said,
"Yes. and the way is hard, and you will be old before you reach the
end of it, but the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these
years.
So she played with her children and gathered flowers
for them along the way and bathed them in the clear streams;
and the sun shone on them, and life was good and the young mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier
than this."

Then night came, and a storm, and the path became dark and the children shook with fear and cold,
and the mother drew them close
and covered them with her mantle and the children said,
"Oh Mother we are not afraid for you are near, and no harm can come."
and the mother said, "this is better than the brightness of day,
for I have taught my children courage."

The morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children
climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary,
but at all times she said to the children,
"A little patience, and we are soon there."

So the children climbed, and when they reached the top they said,
"We could not have done it without you Mother."
And the mother, when she lay down that night,
looked up at the stars and said,
"This is better than the last day, for my children have learned
fortitude in the face of hardness. Yesterday I gave them courage,
Today I have given them strength."

The next day there came strange clouds which darkened the earth – clouds
of war and hate and evil - and the children groped and stumbled,
and the mother said, "Look up, lift your eyes to the light."
The children looked and saw above the clouds an Everlasting Glory,
and it guided them and brought them beyond the darkness.
"This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God.

And the days went on, and the weeks, and the months, and the years,
and the mother grew old, and she was little and bent.
But her children were tall and strong, and walked with courage.
And when the way was rough, they lifted her, for she was a light as a
feather; and at last they came to a hill, and beyond the hill they could
see a shining road and golden gates flung wide.

And the mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey.
And now I know that the end is
better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their
children after them."
And the children said,

"You will always walk with us, Mother,
even when you have gone through the gates."
And they stood and watched her as she went on alone.
and the gates closed after her, and they said,
"We cannot see her, but she is with us still.
A mother like ours is more than a memory.
She is a Living Presence."

Anon

89

We will always remember you

What he suffered, he told but few,
He did not deserve what he went through,
Tired and weary he made no fuss,
But tried so hard to stay with us.

Two tired eyes are sleeping,
Two willing hands are still;
The one who worked so hard for us,
Is resting at God's will.

Our lips cannot speak how we love him,
Our hearts cannot tell what to say,
But God only knows how we miss him,
In our home that is lonely today.

Your life was love and labour,
Your love for your family true,
You did your best for all of us,
We will always remember you.

Anon

90

Legacy of love

A husband, a father, a granddad too,
This 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 husband, not just as a father.
For all of us you gave your best,
Now the time has come for you to rest.
So go in peace, you've earned your sleep,
Your love in our hearts, we'll eternally keep

Anon

91

Farewell my friends

It was beautiful as long as it lasted.
The journey of my life.

I have no regrets whatsoever, save the pain
I'll leave behind.
Those dear hearts who love and care...

And the strings pulling at the heart and soul...
The strong arms that held me up
When my own strength let me down.

At every turning of my life
I came across good friends,
Friends who stood by me,
Even when the time raced me by.

Farewell, farewell my friends
I smile and bid you goodbye.
No, shed no tears for I need them not
All I need is your smile.

If you feel sad do think of me
For that's what I'll like
When you live in the hearts
of those you love, remember then
you never die.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941)

92

A Knight there was

A Knight there was, and that a worthy man,
Who, from the moment when he first began
To ride forth, loved the code of chivalry;
Honour and truth, freedom and courtesy:
Renowned he was; and worthy, he was wise –
Prudence with him was more than mere disguise;
He was meek in manner as a maid
Vileness he shunned, rudeness he never said
In all his life, respecting each man's right
He was a truly perfect, noble knight.
Geoffrey Chaucer (1343 – 1400)

From The Canterbury Tales

93

We've shared our lives

We've shared our lives these many years,
You've held my hand; you've held my heart.
So many blessings, so few tears,
Yet for a moment we must part.
The memories you've given me
Are times I've shared with my best friend.
I'll hold them, love, right here they'll be
Until we share our lives again.

T.C. Ring

94

I heard your voice in the wind today

I heard your voice in the wind today
and I turned to see your face;
The warmth of the wind caressed me
as I stood silently in place.

I felt your touch in the sun today
as its warmth filled the sky;
I closed my eyes for your embrace
and my spirit soared high.

I saw your eyes in the window pane
as I watched the falling rain;
It seemed as each raindrop fell
it quietly said your name.

I held you close in my heart today
it made me feel complete;
You may have died...but you are not gone
you will always be a part of me.

As long as the sun shines...
the wind blows...
the rain falls...
You will live on inside of me forever
for that is all my heart knows.

Anon

Reunited

Let us begin, dear love, where we left off;
Tie up the broken threads of that old dream;
And go on happy as before, and seem
Lovers again, though all the world may scoff.

Let us forget the graves, which lie between
Our parting and our meeting, and the tears
That rusted out the goldwork of the years;
The frosts that fell upon our gardens green.

Let us forget the cold, malicious Fate
Who made our loving hearts her idle toys,
And once more revel in the old sweet joys
Of happy love. Nay, it is not too late!

Forget the deep-ploughed furrows in my brow;
Forget the silver gleaming in my hair;
Look only in my eyes! Oh! darling, there
The old love shone no warmer then than now.

Down in the tender depths of thy dear eyes,
I find the lost sweet memory of my youth,
Bright with the holy radiance of thy truth,
And hallowed with the blue of summer skies.

Tie up the broken threads, and let us go,
Like reunited lovers, hand in hand,
Back, and yet onward, to the sunny land
Of our To Be, which was our Long Ago.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850 – 1919)

I walk within you

I walk within you
If I be the first of us to die,
Let grief not blacken long your sky.
Be bold yet modest in your grieving.
There is change but not a leaving.

For just as death is part of life,
The dead live on forever in the living.
For all the gathered riches of our journey,
The moments shared, the mysteries explored,
The steady layer of intimacy stored.

The things that made us laugh or weep or sing,
The joy of sunlit snow or first unfurling of the spring,
The wordless language of look and touch,
The knowing, each giving and each taking,
These are not flowers that fade,
Nor trees that fall and crumble.

Nor are they stone,
For even stone cannot the wind and rain withstand
And mighty mountain peaks in time reduce to sand.
What we were, we are.
What we had, we have.
A conjoined past imperishably present.

So when you walk the woods where once we walked together
And scan in vain the dappled bank beside you for my shadow,
Or pause where we always did upon the hill to gaze across the land,
And spotting something, reach by habit for my hand,
And finding none, feel sorrow start to steal upon you,
Be still.
Clear your eyes.
Breathe.
Listen for my footfall in your heart.
I am not gone but merely walk within you.

Nicholas Evans**An excerpt from 'The Smoke Jumper'**

97

The Widower

For a season there must be pain--
For a little, little space
I shall lose the sight of his face,
Take back the old life again
While he is at rest in his place.

For a season this pain must endure,
For a little, little while
I shall sigh more often than smile
Till time shall work me a cure,
And the pitiful days beguile.

For that season we must be apart,
For a little length of years,
Till my life's last hour nears,
And, above the beat of my heart,
I hear his voice in my ears.

But I shall not understand--
Being set on some later love,
Shall not know her for whom I strove,
Till he reach me forth his hand,
Saying, "Who but I have the right?"
And out of a troubled night
Shall draw me safe to the land.

Rudyard Kipling (1865 – 1936)

98

Little things

I'll miss you tomorrow
When the toothpaste cap is on
I'll miss you tomorrow
When I must unlock the front door
I'll miss you tomorrow
When mine is the only reflection in the mirror
But I will celebrate today
The memories of you

Claudet Monroe

99

From her voice

Look upward where the white gull screams,
What does it see that we do not see?
Is that a star? or the lamp that gleams
On some outward voyaging argosy,
Ah! can it be
We have lived our lives in a land of dreams!
How sad it seems.

Sweet, there is nothing left to say
But this, that love is never lost,
Keen winter stabs the breasts of May
Whose crimson roses burst his frost,
Ships tempest-tossed
Will find a harbour in some bay,
And so we may.

Oscar Wilde (1854 – 1900)

100

An epitaph upon husband and wife

An epitaph upon husband and wife
To these whom death again did wed
This grave's the second marriage-bed.
For though the hand of Fate could force
'Twixt soul and body a divorce,
It could not sever man and wife,
Because they both lived but one life.
Peace, good reader, do not weep;
Peace, the lovers are asleep.
They, sweet turtles, folded lie
In the last knot that love could tie.
Let them sleep, let them sleep on,
Till the stormy night be gone,
And the eternal morrow dawn;
Then the curtains will be drawn,
And they wake into a light
Whose day shall never die in night.

Richard Crashaw (1613 – 1649)

101

Too soon

This was a life that had hardly begun
No time to find your place in the Sun
No time to do all you could have done
But we loved you enough for a lifetime

No time to enjoy the world and it's wealth
No time to take life down off the shelf
No time to sing the songs of yourself
Though you had enough love for a lifetime

Those who live long endure sadness and tears
But you'll never suffer the sorrowing years
No betrayal, no anger, no hatred, no fears
Just love - Only love - In your lifetime.

Mary Yarnall

102

Light

My little man, down what centuries
of light did you travel
to reach us here,
your stay so short-lived;

In the twinkling of an eye
you were moving on,
bearing our name and a splinter
of the human cross we suffer;

flashed upon us like a beacon,
we wait in darkness for that light
to come round, knowing at heart
you shine forever for us.

Hugh O'Donnell

103

Angel

Tear drops, slow and steady,
The pain so real and true,
God took another angel,
And that angel, dear, was you.

Angel wings, upon the clouds,
Your body softly sleeps,
Hush now little angel,
No more tears you have to weep.

Little prayers are sent to you,
The short life you led;
Your family will never forget you,
So rest your little head.

I know God will look after you,
Now you are truly alive,
Your spirit soars beyond the moon,
Your legacy will survive.

You're beautiful, you're endless,
Now stretch your wings and fly,
You're loved by so many,
It will never be goodbye.

Close your pretty eyes,
No more tears, just go and rest,
Let your soul lie peacefully,
We know you did your best.

F. Kondis

104

Epitaph on a child

Here, freed from pain, secure from misery, lies
A child, the darling of his parents' eyes;
A gentler Lamb ne'er sported on the plain,
A fairer flower will never bloom again:
Few were the days allotted to his breath;
Now let him sleep in peace his night of death.

Thomas Gray (1716 – 1771)

105

Fairy castle

In a fairy castle, just beyond my eyes,
My baby plays with angel toys that money cannot buy.
Who am I, to wish her back into this world of strife?
No, play on my Baby you have eternal life.
At night, when all is silent and sleep forsakes my eyes
I hear her tiny footsteps come running to my side.
Her tiny hand caress me, so tenderly and sweet
I breathe a sigh and say a prayer embrace her in my sleep.
Now I have a treasure that I hold above all other
I have known true glory for I am still her mother.

Anon

106

My little angel

You've just walked on ahead of me
And I've got to understand
You must release the ones you love
And let go of their hand.
I try and cope the best I can
But I'm missing you so much
If I could only see you
And once more feel your touch.
Yes, you've just walked on ahead of me
Don't worry I'll be fine
But now and then I swear I feel
Your hand slip into mine.

Anon

107

My beloved babe

My endlessly sleeping baby, I would that you should know
That if it were for want of love that you should kick and grow
To cuddle with a teddy bear, to squirm and crawl and walk,
To look deep into my eyes, to gurgle, laugh and talk –
Then dream of playing with your toys, of rocking in your pram

For you are my beloved, death's sting is just a sham
For you are my beloved, though childhood years I'll miss
My love for you will still be strong; death cannot alter this.

So dream in peace beloved babe, when time has staunched the tears
My love for you will still be there, abiding all my years
So dream in peace beloved babe, death has no power to sever
Us from the love, which binds us together, sealed in my heart forever.

Anon

108

From XXV11. In Memoriam

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
Trode the flowery April blithely for a while,
Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,
Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to smile.

Came and stayed and went, and now when all is finished,
You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished
Undecaying gladness, undeparted dream.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850 – 1894)

109

His role down here is done

His little soul has touched us all,
He didn't need to stay:
His spirit touched each one of us
Before it sailed away

We all know souls arrive on earth
With special roles to fill,
And his has fully played its part,
His memory guides us still.

He had a very special soul
He stayed but just a while,
So if, or when, you're feeling sad
Recall him with a smile.

For then you'll know inside your heart
The reason why he's gone,
And never feel too empty that
His role down here is done.
His spirit touched each one of us,
No other ever could.
Forever will we cherish him
The way we know we should.

Anon

110

We are glad

We are glad that (name) lived
We are glad that we saw his face
and felt the touch of his hand.
We cherish the memory of his first smile,
His first tooth, his happy disposition.
We cherish the memory of the joy and beauty
he brought to us.

We grieve that he never reached his potential
We take joy in that he brought so much love
and meaning into our lives.
We will remember him for the rest of our lives
We sadly bid him farewell.

Anon

111

The unfinished

We cannot judge a biography by it's length,
Nor by the number of pages in it.
We must Judge it by the richness of it's contents
Sometimes those unfinished are among the most poignant.

We cannot judge a song by it's duration
Nor by the number of it's notes
We must judge it by the way it touches and lifts our souls
Sometimes those unfinished are among the most beautiful.

And when something has enriched your life
And when it's melody lingers on in your heart
Is it unfinished? Or is it endless?

Anon

112

A Mother's lament for her Son's death

Fate gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart;
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart

By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonour'd laid;
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.
The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravish'd young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.

Death, oft I've feared thy fatal blow.
Now, fond, I bare my breast;
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

Robert Burns (1759 – 1796)

113

Scatter my ashes to the wind

Scatter my ashes to the wind
To help the flowers grow.

If you must bury something,
Let it be my faults, my weaknesses
And all prejudices against my fellow men.

If you wish to remember me,
Do it with a kind word or deed
To someone who needs you,

Then I will live forever.

Anon

Farewell, sweet dust

Now I have lost you, I must scatter
All of you on the air henceforth;
Not that to me it can ever matter
But it's only fair to the rest of the earth.

Now especially, when it is winter
And the sun's not half so bright as he was,
Who wouldn't be glad to find a splinter
That once was you in the frozen grass?

Snowflakes, too, will be softer feathered,
Clouds, perhaps, will be whiter plumed;
Rain, whose brilliance you caught and gathered,
Purer silver have reassumed.

Farewell, sweet dust; I never was a miser:
Once, for a minute, I made you mine:
Now you are gone, I am none the wiser
But the leaves of the willow are as bright as wine.

Elinor Wyle (1885 – 1928)

115

Farewell

Farewell dear friends
I loved you so much
But now I must leave you
And spread over me the dust.

Fair life fare well
Fare never ill
Far I go now
And Say, Farewell.

Farewell dear world
With the waters around you curled
And the grass on your breast
I loved you best.

Farewell fish and insect
Bird, animal, swift mover
Grim reptile as well
I was your approver.

Wide sky, farewell,
Sun, moon, stars in places
Farewell all fair universes
In far places

Stevie Smith (1902 – 1971)

116

Warm Summer sun

Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind,
blow softly here.
Green sod above,
Lie light, lie light,
Good night, dear heart,
Good night good, night.

Mark Twain (1835 – 1910)

117

Sea fever

I must down to the seas again,
to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer
her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song
and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face,
and a grey dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again,
For the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call
That may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white
clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume,
And the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again,
to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way
where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a
laughing fellow-rover
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream
When the long trick's over.

John Masefield (1878 – 1967)

118

The full sea

The full sea rolls and thunders
In glory and in glee.
O, bury me not in the senseless earth
But in the living sea!

Ay, bury me where it surges
A thousand miles from shore,
And in its brotherly unrest
I'll range for evermore.

William Ernest Henley (1849 – 1903)

119

Alone I will not be

Alone I will not be
My comfort will come from the sea
The stillness of calm waves will gently drift by
I will be as one with the sea.
When the sun sets on the ocean blue,
Remember me as I will always remember you.
As the sun rises...go live life as full as can be
Apart...you and me... but at peace for I am free

Capt Chas Theesfeld

120

Part of time

Throw my ashes to the wind
And let them blow at will.
Twirling and whirling with each gust,
They never will be still.

Some fall upon a blade of grass
And some fall out to sea.
All the shackles of life will come and go,
I'm free, I'm free, I'm free.

See me on a spider's web
Blowing in the breeze,
See me on the church pews
When you are on your knees.

I'm here, I'm there, I'm all around.
Oh no, I'm not that shy,
It was a lovely, lovely life,
Now I'm halfway to the sky.

One speck may fall upon a rose.
Then mixed with dewdrops fine,
It's picked by you - and I shall say,
It's me - I'm part of time.

Anon

121

The joy of living

Farewell you northern hills, you mountains all goodbye
Moorland and stony ridges, crags and peaks goodbye
Glyder Fach farewell, Cul Beag, Scafell, cloud-bearing Suilven
Sun warmed rock and the cold of Bleaklow's frozen sea
The snow and the wind and the rain of hills and mountains
Days in the sun and the tempered wind and the air like wine
And you drink and you drink till you're drunk
On the joy of living

Farewell to you my love, my time is almost done
Lie in my arms once more until the darkness comes
You filled all my days, held the night at bay, dearest companion
Years pass by and they're gone with the speed of birds in flight
Our life like the verse of a song heard in the mountains
Give me your hand then love and join your voice with mine
We'll sing of the hurt and pain and the joy of living.

Farewell to you my chicks, soon you must fly alone,
Flesh of my flesh, my future life, bone of my bone
May your wings be strong, may your days be long, safe be your journey
Each of you bears inside of you the gift of love
May it bring you light and warmth and the pleasure of giving
Eagerly savour each new day and the taste of its mouth
Never lose sight of the thrill and the joy of living.

Take me to some high place of heather, rock and ling,
Scatter my dust and ashes, feed me to the wind
So that I will be part of the curlew's cry and the soaring hawk,
The blue milkwort and the sundew hung with diamonds
I'll be riding the gentle wind that blows through your hair
Reminding you how we shared in the joy of living

Ewan MacColl (1915 – 1989)

122

Woodland burial

Don't lay me in some gloomy churchyard shaded by a wall,
Where the dust of ancient bones has spread a dryness over all,
Lay me in some leafy loam where, sheltered from the cold
Little seeds investigate, and tender leaves unfold.
There kindly and affectionately, plant a native tree
To grow resplendent before God and hold some part of me.
The roots will not disturb me as they wend their peaceful way
To build the fine and bountiful, from closure and decay,
To seek their small requirements so that when their work is done
I'll be tall and standing strongly in the beauty of the sun.

Pam Ayres

123

For those laid to rest here

Under a soft blanket of fallen leaves,
safe in the hush of the whispering trees
I have come home.

My time here on earth is now done,
all the noise and the clamour, the joy and the pain,
the powerful life force that drove me onwards
has slipped away into the quiet of eternity,
and I am at peace.
From now on, I will dance through your memories
threading thoughts of love through your heart.
The pain of loss will gradually ease, and the sadness will lift.
the days will be lighter, and the nights not so long,
for I am still here.

When you walk through this place, you will feel me
in the gentle touch of the breeze on your face,
in the sunlight dappling the forest floor,
in the murmur of the branches high above you,
I am all around.

I have returned to the place from whence I came,
to the elements that created me.
The earth that gave me the life I so loved
has now welcomed me back to her,
to be at one with all her beauty.

Here, under my blanket of fallen leaves
I have found my resting place.
I have come home.

Fran Hall

124

Don't leave a wooden cross

Don't leave a wooden cross
Nor a carved marble stone
Under these branches
I will not be alone,

The ivy covered ground
Will be my blanket
The tree roots will be found
To be my pillow and my cover.

So not a stone and not a cross
Just a simple red poppy flower
To be covered with simple moss
To last for now and forever.

Roger Gale