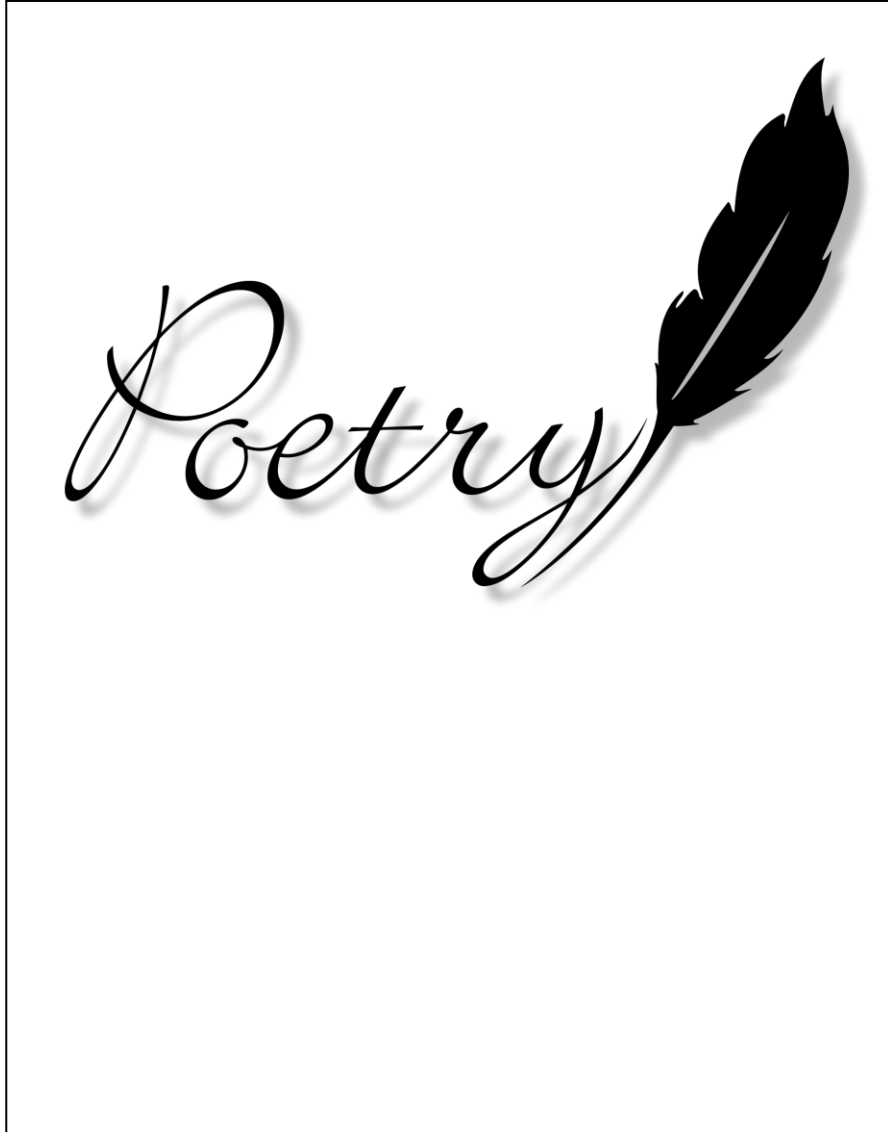


Poems



TO THE LIVING, I AM GONE

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 the shore
Gazing at the beautiful sea,
Remember me as you look in awe at a mighty forest
And its grand majesty, remember me
Remember me in your hearts,
In your thoughts, and the memories
Of the times we loved, the times we cried,
The battle we fought and the times we laughed
For if you always think of me,
I will have never gone.

Anonymous

I Am There

Look for me when the tide is high,
And the gulls are wheeling overhead.

When the autumn wind sweeps the cloudy sky
And one by one the leaves are shed.

Look for me when the trees are bare
And the stars are bright in the frosty sky.
When the morning mist hangs on the air
And the shorter darker days pass by.

I am there, where the river flows
And the salmon leap to a silver moon.
Where the insects hum and the tall grass grows
And the sunlight warms the afternoon
I am there in the busy street
I take your hand in the city square
In the market place where people meet,
In your quiet room - I am there.

I am the love you cannot see
And all I ask is - look for me.

Iris Hesselden

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping
slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket
sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear the water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

By William Butler Yeats

God's Garden Poem

God looked around his garden
And found an empty place
He looked down upon his earth
And saw your loving face

He put his arms around you
And lifted you to rest
His 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 your path was difficult
He closed your tired eyes
He whispered to you "Peace be thine"
And gave you wings to fly.

When we saw you sleeping
So calm and free of pain
We would not wish you back on earth
To suffer once again

You've left us precious memories
Your love will be our guide
You live on through our memories
You're always by our side

It broke our hearts to lose you
But you did not go alone
For a part of us went with you
On the day that God called you home

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even to the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons;
they are vexatious to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love,
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labours and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann, 1927

I'm Free Now

I could not stay another day
to laugh, to live, to work or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way.
I've found my peace at the close of the day.

If parting has left a void
Then fill it with memories of joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
ah yes, these things I too will miss.
Be not burdened with times of sorrow
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.

My life has 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 hearts and share with me,
God wanted me now, he set me free.

I'm free now.

Not, How Did He Die, But How Did He Live?

Not how did he die? But how did he live?

Not what did he gain? But what did he give?

These are the units to measure the worth
of this man as a man regardless of birth.

Not what was his station? But had he a heart?

How did he play his God-given part?

Was he at hand with a word of good cheer
to bring back a smile or banish a fear?

Not what was his church or what was his creed?

But had he befriended those really in need?

Not how did the formal obituary run?

But how many grieved when his life's work was done?

Rabindranath Tagore.

We Seem To Give Them Back To Thee

We seem to give him back to Thee, O God,
who gavest him to us.
Yet as Thou didst not lose him in giving,
so do we not lose him by his return.
Not as the world giveth, givest Thou, O Lover of souls.
What Thou givest, Thou takest not away,
for what is thine is ours also if we are Thine.
And life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is
only an horizon, and an horizon is nothing,
save the limit of our sight.
Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further;
cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly;
draw us closer to Thyself that we may know ourselves to
be nearer to our loved ones who are with Thee.
And while Thou dost prepare a place for us, prepare us
also for that happy place,
that where Thou art we may be also for evermore.

Fr Bede Jarrett O.P

I Said to the Man who Stood at the Gate of the Year

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

'Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the
unknown'

And the man replied:

'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the
hand of God. That shall be unto you better than a light,
and safer than a known way'.

So I went into the darkness, and taking the hand of God,
trod gladly into the night. And he led me towards the
hills, and the breaking of the day in the lone East.

May that almighty hand guide you and uphold us all.

Minnie Louise Haskins

Journey & Journey's End

O Father, give the spirit power to climb
To the fountain of all light, and be purified.
Break through the mists of earth, the weight of the clod,
Shine forth in splendour, you that are calm weather,
And quiet resting place for souls.
To see you is the end and the beginning,
You carry us, and you go before,
You are the journey, and the journey's end.

Boethius

Prayer Of An Unknown Soldier

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve . . .
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do great things . . .
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy...
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men...
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life . . .
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing I asked for, but everything I hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were
answered.

I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Anon.

They Softly Walk

They are not gone who pass
Beyond the clasp of hand,
Out from the strong embrace.
They are but come so close
We need not grope with hands,
Nor look to see, nor try
To catch the sound of feet.
They have put off their shoes
Softly to walk by day
Within our thoughts, to tread
At night our dream-led paths
Of sleep.

They are not lost who find
The sunset gate, the goal
Of all their faithful years.
Not lost are they who reach
The summit of their climb,
The peak above the clouds
And storms. They are not lost
Who find the light of sun
And stars and God.
They are not dead who live
In hearts they leave behind.
In those whom they have blessed
They live a life again,
And shall live through the years
Eternal life, and grow
Each day more beautiful
As time declares their good,
Forgets the rest, and proves
Their immortality.

Hugh Robert Off

I thank thee God, that I have lived

I thank thee God, that I have lived
In this great world and know its many joys;
The song birds, the strong sweet scent of hay
And cooling breezes in the secret dusk,
The flaming sunsets at the close of day,
Hills, and the lonely, heather-covered moors,
Music at night and moonlight on the sea,
The beat of waves upon the rocky shore
And wild white spray, flung high in ecstasy:
The faithful eyes of dogs, and treasured books,
The love of kin and fellowship of friends,
And all that makes life dear and beautiful. .
I thank thee too, that there has come to me
A little sorrow and sometimes defeat,
A little heartache and the loneliness
That comes with parting and the word
'Goodbye',
Dawn breaking after weary hours of pain,
When I discovered that night's gloom must
yield
And morning light break through to me again.
Because of these and other blessings poured
Unasked upon my wondering head,
Because I know that there is yet to come
An even richer and more glorious life,
And most of all, because thine only Son
Once sacrificed life's loveliness for me –
I thank thee God, that I have lived

Elizabeth Craven

Death Is Nothing At All

Death is nothing at all; I have only slipped away
into 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 always used. Put no
difference into your tone; wear no forced air of
solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together. Play, smile,
think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever
the household word that it always was, let it be
spoken without effect, without the ghost of a
shadow on it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is
the same as it ever was; there is absolutely
unbroken continuity. What is this death but a
negligible accident? Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight? I am but waiting for
you, for an interval, somewhere very near just
around the corner . .

All is well.

Canon Henry Scott Holland, 1847 — 1918

Footprints In The Sand

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to him, the other the Lord.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at his footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times across the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest parts of his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me".

The Lord replied, "My precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you".

I am not there

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 rain.

When you are awakened 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.

(Anonymous)

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 tears in a gloom-filled room.
Why cry for a soul set free?

Miss me little, but not too much
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 we all must take
And each must go alone;
It is all part of the Master's plan
A step on the Road to home.

When you are lonely and sick of heart
Go to the friends that we know
And busy your sorrows in doing good

Miss me, but let me go.

GO SILENT FRIEND

Go, silent friend, your life has found its ending;
To dust returns your weary mortal frame,
God, who before your birth called you into being,
Now calls you hence, his accent still the same.
Go, silent friend, your life in Christ is buried;
For you he lived and died and rose again.
Close by his side your promised place is waiting
Where, fully known, you shall with God remain.

Go, silent friend, forgive us if we grieved you;
Safe now in heaven, kindly say our name.
Your life touched us, that is why we mourn you;
Our lives without you cannot be the same
Go, silent friend, we do not grudge your glory;
Sing, sing with joy deep praises to your Lord.
You, who believed that Christ would come back for
you,
Now celebrate that Jesus keeps his word.

John L. Bell

THE SHIP

What is dying?

I am standing on the sea shore.

A ship sails to the morning breeze and starts for the ocean.

She is an object of beauty and I shall stand watching her till at last she fades on the horizon and someone at my side says;

"She is gone"

Gone? Where?

Gone from my sight—that is all.

She is just as large in the masts, hull and spars as she was when I saw her, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to its destination. The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her;

and just at the moment when someone at my side says;

"She is gone". There are others who are watching her coming, and other voices take up a glad shout

"There she comes!"

--and that is dying".

How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, - I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! - and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

I have joined old friends in a golden light

I have joined old friends in a golden light
Beyond yon horizon 'as wondrous bright
It is heavenly bliss without bodily pain
So keep faith and keep strong until we meet again.

Anon.

Heaven's not a rest;

Heaven's not a rest;
No! but a battle with new zest,
untired, with warrior joy, the sharp keen spirit to employ
on life's new enterprise.
It's the surprise
of keen delighted mind
that wakes, to find
old fetters gone, shining immortality put on.

Anon.

An Irish Airman foresees his Death

"Nor law, nor duty bade me fight
nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
a lonely impulse of delight
drove to this tumult in the clouds;
I balanced all, brought all to mind,
the years to come seem waste of breath,
a waste of breath of years behind
in balance with this life, this death."

William Butler Yeats

Extract from The last letter of Sir Thomas More

Pray for me as I will for thee
and all my friends
that we may meet merrily in heaven

St. Thomas More

If Tears Could Build A Stairway

If tears could build a stairway,
And memories were a lane,
We would walk right up to heaven
To bring you down again.

No farewell words were spoken,
No time to say good-bye.
You were gone before we knew it,
And only God knows why.

Our hearts still ache in sadness
And secret tears still flow,
What it meant to lose you,
No one will ever know.

When we are sad and lonely,
And everything goes wrong,
We seem to hear you whisper
"Cheer up and carry on."

Each time we look at your pictures,
You seem to smile and say,
"Don't cry, I'm only sleeping,
We'll meet again someday."