

PRAYERS, POEMS & READINGS

Then Aslan turned to them and said:

"You do not yet look so happy as I mean you to be."

Lucy said, "We're so afraid of being sent away again, Aslan. And you have sent us back into our world so often."

"No fear of that" said Aslan. "Have you not guessed?"

Their hearts leaped and a wild hope rose within them.

"There was a real railway accident," said Aslan softly. "Your father and mother and all of you are, as you used to call it, in the Shadowland, dead. The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning."

And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in the world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of The Great Story which no one on earth has read; which goes on for ever; in which every chapter is better than the one before.

*C.S. Lewis, from **The Last Battle***

He said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not try to stop them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you, whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like a child, will never enter it." And he put his arms round them laid his hands upon them and blessed them.

Mark 10: verses 14-17 (*The New English Bible*)

They all felt awkward and unhappy suddenly because it was a sort of goodbye they were saying, and they didn't want to think about it. Then Christopher Robin called out, "Pooh!"

"Yes," said Pooh.

"When I'm ... when ... Pooh!"

"Yes, Christopher Robin?"

"I'm not going to do nothing any more."

"Never again?"

"Well, not so much. They don't let you."

Pooh waited for him to go on, but he was silent again.

"Yes, Christopher Robin?" said Pooh helpfully.

"Pooh, when I'm ... you know, when I'm not doing Nothing, will you come up here sometimes?"

"Just me?"

"Yes, Pooh."

"Will you be here too?"

"Yes Pooh, I will be really, I promise I will be, Pooh."

"That's good," said Pooh.

"Pooh, promise you won't forget about me, ever. Not even when I'm a hundred."

"I promise," he said.

"Pooh, whatever happens, you will understand, won't you?"

A.A. Milne, from *"The House at Pooh Corner"*

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?" He called a child, set him in front of them, and said, "I tell you this: unless you turn round and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven. Let a man humble himself till he is like this child, and he will be the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. "Never despise one of these little ones; I tell you, they have their guardian angels in Heaven, who look continually on the face of my heavenly Father."

Matthew 18: verses 1-5 and 10 (*The New English Bible*)

"He whom we love and lose is no longer where he was before; he is now wherever we are."

St John Chrysostom

If I should die and leave you here awhile,
Be not like others, sore undone, who keep
Long vigils by the silent dust, and weep.
For my sake, turn again to life and smile,
Nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do
Something to comfort weaker hearts than thine,
Complete those dear unfinished tasks of mine,
And I perchance may therein comfort you.

A. Price Hughes

Welcoming a Special Child

A meeting was held quite far from earth;
It's time again for another birth.
Said the angels to the Lord above,
"This special child will need much love.

He may not run or laugh or play;
His thoughts may seem quite far away,
In many ways he won't adapt,
And he'll be known as handicapped.

So let's be careful where he's sent;
We want his life to be content.
Please, Lord, find parents who
Will do a special job for you.

They will not realise right away
The leading role they're asked to play;
But with this child sent from above
Comes stronger faith and richer love.

And soon they'll know the privilege given
In caring for their gift from heaven;
Their precious charge, so meek and mild,
Is heaven's very special child.

Edna Massimilla

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, "Speak to us of Children."

And he said: "Your children are not your children,
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you,
Yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
Which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.
The Archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He
bends you with all His might, that His arrow may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
So He loves also the bow that is stable.

Then a woman said "Speak to us of Joy and Sorrow."

And he answers:

Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.

And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears.

And how else can it be?

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

And is not the lute that soothes your spirit the very wood that was hollowed by knives?

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you
sorrow that is giving you joy.

Kahlil Gibran, from *The Prophet*

I had thought that your death
Was a waste and a destruction,
A pain of grief hardly to be endured.
I am only beginning to learn
That your life was a gift and a growing
And a loving left with me.
The desperation of death
Destroyed the existence of love,
But the fact of death
Cannot destroy what has been given.
I am learning to look at life again
Instead of your death and your departing.

Marjorie Pizer, *The Existence of Love*

Mary Poppins had gone. Jane read the note she had left.
"Mrs Brill!" she called. "What does 'Au Revoir' mean?"
"I think, Miss Jane dear, it means 'To meet again'."
Jane and Michael looked at each other. Joy and understanding shone in their eyes. They knew what Mary Poppins meant.
Michael gave a long sigh of relief. "That's all right," he said shakily. "She always does what she says she will."
He turned away.
"Michael, are you crying?" Jane asked.
He twisted his head and tried to smile at her,
"No, I'm not," he said. "It is only my eyes."

P.L. Travers, from *Mary Poppins*

I was a little stranger, which, at my entrance into the world, was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. My knowledge was divine ... My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the Estate of Innocence. All things were spotless and pure and glorious: yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I knew not that there were any sins or complaints or laws. I dreamed not of poverties, contentions or vices. All tears and quarrels were hidden from my eyes. Everything was at rest, free and immortal. I knew nothing of sickness or death or rents or exaction, either for tribute or bread. In the absence of these I entertained like an angel with the work of God in their splendour and glory, I saw all in the peace of Eden; heaven and earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam than to me. All time was eternity and a perpetual Sabbath. Is it not strange that an infant should be heir of the whole world, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold?

Thomas Traherne

They are not lost, our dearest loves,
Nor have they travelled far,
Just stepped inside home's loveliest room,
And left the door ajar ...

Source unknown

We cannot judge a biography by its length, by the number of pages in it: we must judge by the richness of the contents ... Sometimes the 'unfinished' are among the most beautiful symphonies.

Viktor Frankl

Love to . . .

I lay you in my single arm.
You fit

I stroke your brow above those eyes
'll never see

And touch your eyelids with my lips
To bless them, closed

I pull you to my body
And shield you from the world with my hands

I clutch you to my breast,
Precious Treasure

Your parents love you
And hold you, forever, in their hearts.

Benediction

In that sacred place where you are,

Goodnight, dear child, sleep.
Sleep with the stars in the sky.
Sleep in the earth.
Sleep, dear child,
Sleep.

Brave Little Spirit

Brave Little Spirit
Dared to try
Before she was born,
She had to die.

Brave Little Spirit
Did not cry,
But put down her feet
To walk the sky.

Brave Little Spirit
For each eye
A daisy we give
To see on high.

Brave Little Spirit
Lullaby.
Hear our song, we pray
As we bid goodbye ...

*By Anne Struck
Stockton, California
Lovingly lifted from
Bereavement Magazine*

Love is this
That you lived amongst us these few years
And taught us love.

Love is this
That you died amongst us and helped us
To the source of life.

With all our love
We wish you bon voyage.

Love lives.

Lindy Hemmy

I dreamt that the time had come to carry back to my Father
The treasures I was sent to gather on earth.
So I held out my chalice to my brother angel to be filled with the values of my life.
I thought of bright achievement, of renown and success,
but they vanished in the emptiness of glamour.
When it was handed back to me,
I found my cup filled to the brim with what I thought were tiny things,
hardly noticed and long forgotten,
but now, sparkling with the inner light of the love they contained.
Then I walked holding tight the grail of my soul
and there was joy in heaven.

Fernand de Vinck

Life Is Like a Butterfly

*by Geraldine F Reeves
El Paso, Texas*

Life is like a butterfly.
Softly, softly
One never knows why
It touches your cheek, then says, "Goodbye".

Fragile and sweet, like blooming flowers
Life's loves and trials last only the hours
That they touch your heart, then say, "goodbye"
Life is like a butterfly.

Little Footprints

*How very softly
you tiptoed into our world.
Almost silently,
only a moment you stayed.*

*But what an imprint
your footsteps have left
upon our hearts.*

Dorothy Ferguson

A tiny angel face, two sparkling little eyes,
The cutest button nose,
Our precious sweet surprise,
Mummy loved you dearly,
You set Daddy's heart a whirl
The joy of all our family,
Our most darling little girl,
You closed your eyes so quickly,
You didn't stay for long,
Taken oh so tragically,
Sweet baby it seems so wrong,
Divided as we are,
We will never be apart
As you will always live
inside your parents hearts

Anon

A tiny little moonbeam, that danced inside our hearts
A little life has been taken
before it even starts.

Anon

You were taken away,
So tragically that horrible day.
Our deepest thoughts are hard to say,
But we love you in a special way.
Always remembered and sadly missed too,
Our lives will be different without you.

Anon

The Mystery of Life
So sacred and sweet,
The Giver of Joy
So deep and complete;
Precious and priceless,
So loveable, too,
The world's sweetest Miracle
Babyis you.

"Remembering with Love"
Helen Steiner-Rice
Courtesy of Random Century Limited

A Wee Bit of Heaven

A wee bit of heaven
Drifted down from above,
A handful of happiness,
A heart full of love;

Lent for a While

I'll lend you for a little while a child of mine He said;
For you to love the while she lives and mourn for when she's dead.
It may be six or seven years or twenty-two or three, but will
You, till I call her back, take care of her for me.

She'll bring the charms to gladden you and should her stay be brief,
You'll have her lovely memories as solace for your grief.
I cannot promise she will stay since all from earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there I wish this child to learn.

I've looked the wide world over in my search for teachers true,
And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes I have selected you.
Now will you give her all your love, nor think the labour vain,
Nor hate me when I come to call, to take her back again.

I fancy that I hear them say "Dear Lord thy will be done",
For all the joy thy child shall bring the risk of grief we'll run.
We'll shelter her with tenderness, we'll love her while we may,
And for the happiness we've known we'll forever grateful stay.
And should the Angels call for her much sooner than we've planned,
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes and try to understand.

In a baby castle, just beyond my eye,
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'll hear her tiny footsteps come running to my side,
Her little hands caress me so tenderly and sweet,
I'll breathe a prayer and close my eyes
And embrace her in my sleep.

Now I have a treasure
That I rate above all other,
I have known true glory
For I am still her Mother.

Fly

Celine Dion

Fly, fly little wing
Fly beyond imagining
The softest cloud, the whitest dove
Upon the wind of heaven's love
Past the planets and the stars
Leave this lonely world of ours
Escape the sorrow and the pain
And fly again.

Fly, fly precious one
Your endless journey has begun
Take your gentle happiness
Far too beautiful for this
Cross over to the other shore
There is peace forevermore.
But hold this mem'ry bittersweet
Until we meet.

Fly, fly do not fear
Don't waste a breath, don't shed a tear
Your heart is pure, your soul is free
Be on your way, don't wait for me
Above the universe you'll climb
On beyond the hands of time
The moon will rise, the sun will set
But I won't forget.

Fly, fly little wing
Fly where only angels sing
Fly away, the time is right
Go now, find the light.