

SELECTED READINGS

for funeral services



 hopes

THE LAST CALL

Sometime for us the clock must strike,
Some night the hour must come,
When we shall hear the quiet call,
The voice that calls us home.

But when for me the time has come,
and you and I must part,
Don't grieve for me for I'll be alright,
Just keep me in your heart,

And think about the joys we shared,
The good times and the bad,
The happy years, the tender times,
The fun we often had.

We know that we shall surely meet,
Where grief is known no more.
For none can guess the peace and joy,
Our Father has in store

IN OUR HEARTS

We thought of you with love today.
But that is nothing new.
We thought about you yesterday.
And days before that too.
We think of you in silence.
We often speak your name.
Now all we have is memories.
And your picture in a frame.
Your memory is our keepsake.
With which we'll never part.
God has you in his keeping.
We have you in our heart.

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 like me
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 we all must take
And each must go alone
For it is 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 we know
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds
Miss me --- but let me go.

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 refrain.
For every joy that passes
Something beautiful remains

—M D Hughes

TO THOSE WHOM I LOVE AND THOSE WHO LOVE ME

When I am gone, release me, let me go - I have so many things to see and do.
You must not tie yourself to me with tears, be happy that we had so many years.

I gave you my love, you can only guess how much you gave me in happiness.
I thank you for the love each have shown, but now it is time I travelled alone.

So grieve a while for me, if grieve you must - then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It is only for a while we must part so bless the memories within your heart.

I will not be far away, for life goes on - so if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you cannot see or touch me, I will be near, and if you listen with your heart,
you will hear all of my love around you soft and clear.

Then when you must come this way alone, I will greet you with a smile
and a "Welcome Home".

— **Mary Alice Ramish**

We thought that you were happy,
we must have all been blind,
we didn't know your suffering
we didn't know your mind,
you have left all our hearts aching
and we are not sure how we'll cope
if only you had talked it over
we may have found you hope....

We thought that you were happy
but yours was a troubled mind
hardly a hint, hardly a clue
how could we be so blind ?
You chose to go from this place
and onto somewhere new
may you find peace at last,
our love goes with you too....

A MOTHER'S BEAUTY

God took the fragrance of a flower,
The majesty of a tree,
The gentleness of morning dew,
The calm of quiet sea,
The beauty of the twilight hour,
The soul of a starry night,
The laughter of a rippling brook,
The grace of a bird in flight,
The tender care of an angel,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family's need,
Then God fashioned from these things
a creation like no other,
And when His masterpiece was through,
He simply called it Mother

DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE AND WEEP

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 the snow.
I am the sunlight on the ripened grain.
I am the gentle Autumn's rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush of
quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft star that shines at night.
Do not stand at my grave and weep.
I am not there, I do not sleep.

A MAN WE LOVE

A man we love is missing,
A voice we love is still.
A place is vacant in our hearts
That no one else can fill.

No matter how our life may change
Or whatever we might do,
We will always cherish the memories,
Of the years we spent with you.

Forever in our hearts.

ONE 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 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.

The answer to life's riddle in life I never knew,
I go with hope that now I will and even so will you.
Oh, foolish, foolish me that was, I who was so small,
To have wondered even worried at the mystery of it 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.

I'M FREE

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid for me
I took his hand when I heard him call
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day
to laugh, to love, to work or play
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found that place at the close of day.

If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with a remembered 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's been full, I savoured much –
Good friends, good times, a loved ones 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 wanted me now, he set me free.

BECAUSE I HAVE LOVED LIFE

I shall have no sorrow to die
I have played my music and raised my voice to the sky.
I've moved my paint brush and created a beauty to last
I've grieved my garden when the time for planting had past
I've had my moments when things were passing me by
Because I've loved life
I shall have no sorrow to die.

HYMN TO CELEBRATE A LONG LIFE

Sing no sad songs today:
bring gratitude, not grieving!
This life we celebrate
and honour at the leaving.
For ripeness of her years,
for richness of her days,
for gifts unique and dear
we give God thanks and praise.

Now death itself is past,
the deep we cannot measure,
and nothing good is lost
that from her life we treasure:
her image and her thought,
the ways we knew her best,
like flowers are gathered up
in memory's bequest.

O God, who gave us breath,
our end is our beginning.
You cradle us in death,
our sorrow underpinning,
and as our bodies die,
as dust returns to dust,
so may our spirits rise,
on wings of hope and trust.

– Shirley Murray

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"

– Gaynor Llewellyn

HE WHO KNOWS NOTHING, LOVES NOTHING

He who knows nothing, loves nothing.
He who can do nothing understands nothing.
He who understands nothing is worthless.
But he who understands also notices, loves, sees...
The more knowledge is inherent in a thing, the greater the love...
Anyone who imagines that all fruits ripen
at the same time as the strawberries
knows nothing about grapes.

– Paracelsus

THOSE WHO LOVE

It's always those who love the most
who most miss one they love,
When comes the parting of the ways,
And clouds loom dark above;
But tears will pass, your skies will clear
Then will you smile again,
And comfort find in memories,
Which now bring bitter pain.

A SUCCESSFUL MAN

That man is a success -
who has lived well,
laughed often and loved much;
who has gained the respect of
intelligent people and the love of children;
who has filled his niche
and accomplished his task;
who leaves the world better
than he found it;
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.

HE IS MADE ONE

He/she is made one with Nature.
There is heard His/her voice in all
Earth's music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet
bird;
He/she is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light,
from herb and stone:
He/she is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he/she made more lovely.

IMMORTALITY

For me - to have made one soul
the better for my birth;
To have added but one flower
to the garden of the earth;
To have struck one blow for truth
in the daily fight with lies;
To have done one deed of right
in the face of calumnies;
To have sown in the souls of men
one thought that will not die;
To have been a link in the chain of life -
Shall be immortality.

— E Hatch

THE DAY YOU LEFT

With tears we saw you suffer
As we watched you fade away,
Our hearts were almost broken,
As you fought so hard to stay,
We knew you had to leave us,
But you never went alone,
For part of us went with you
The day you left your home.

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, laughing times, and bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve to dry before the sun
of happy memories that I leave when my life is done.

THE LAST FAREWELL

Dear friends I go, but do not weep,
I've lived my life so full, so deep,
Throughout my life, I gave my best,
I earned my keep, I've earned my rest.

I never tried to be great or grand,
I tried to be a helping hand.
If I helped in a team, If I helped on my own,
I was more than repaid,
by good friends I have known.

And if I went the extra mile,
I did it with pleasure,
It was all worth while.
If I brightened your path,
then let it be a small contribution,
From my loved ones and me.

But mostly I cherished the family I knew,
In a bond never ending, so precious, so true.
Now sadly I leave you and travel alone,
Through the mystic veil, to the great unknown.
With such beautiful memories that forever will be,
The way that I hope you'll remember me

ON THIS DAY

Mend a quarrel. Search out a forgotten friend.
Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust.
Write a love letter. Share some treasure.
Give a soft answer. Encourage youth.
Manifest your loyalty in a word or deed.
Keep a promise. Find the time.
Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen.
Apologise if you were wrong.
Try to understand. Flout envy.
Examine your demands on others.
Think first of someone else.
Appreciate, be kind, be gentle,
Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence.
Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency.
Express your gratitude. Worship your God.
Gladden the heart of a child.
Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth.
Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still again.
Speak it still once again.

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 a 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 ever ready with a word of good cheer
To bring back a smile or banish a tear.

Not what was his church or what was his creed.
But had he befriended those really in need.
Not what did the words in the newspaper say,
But how many were sorry when he passed away

SEA FEVER

I must go 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 go 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 go 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 dram when the long trick's over.

– John Masefield

SONG OF THE DRIFTER

I've cut me load and that's me song, it's time I hit the track
I've been round here for far too long and now I'm headin' back
I'm splittin' from this worn out scene, I'm packin' up me gear
I'm takin' off for pastures green, I'm snatchin' it from here.

I've heard the things they said to me, I've bogged meself in stuff
I've took responsibility and now I've had enough
So good luck, mate, I'm movin' on, I'll leave the place to you
And if they ask you where I've gone, just tell them I shot through.

And if we meet some other place, no stranger will you be
I'll remember name and face, you've all been good to me
I'll greet you like a brother, I'll make you laugh somehow
And then one day I'll drift away just like I'm doin' now.

– Barry Crump

INSTRUCTION

When I have moved beyond you in the adventure of life
gather in some pleasant place
and there remember me
with spoken words, old and new.
Let a tear fall if you will
but let a smile come quickly
for I have loved the laughter of life.

Do not linger too long with your solemnities,
go and eat and drink and talk
and when you can –
follow a woodland trail
climb a high mountain
sleep beneath the stars
swim in a cold river
chew the thoughts of some book which challenges your soul
use your hands some bright day
to make a thing of beauty
or to lift someone's heavy load.

Though you mention not my name
though no thought of me crosses your mind –
I shall be with you
for these have been the realities of life to me.

When you face some crisis with anguish
when you walk alone with courage
when you choose the path of right
when you give yourself in love
I shall be very close to you.
I have followed the valleys
I have climbed the heights of life.

– Arnold Crompton

THE ROSE BEYOND THE WALL

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

As it grew and blossomed fair and tall,
Slowly rising to loftier height,
It came to a crevice in the wall
Through which there shone a beam of light.

Onward it crept with added strength,
With never a thought of fear or pride;
It followed the light through the crevice's length
And unfolded itself on the other side.

The light, the dew, the broadening view
Were found the same as they were before;
And it lost itself in beauties new,
Breathing its fragrance more and more.

Shall claim of death cause us to grieve
And make our courage faint and fall?
Nay! let us faith and hope receive;
The rose still grows beyond the wall;

Scattering fragrance far and wide,
Just as it did in days of yore,
Just as it did on the other side,
Just as it will forevermore.

—A L Frink

DEATH IS NOTHING

Death is nothing at all:
I have just 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 you always used.
Put no difference in your tone;
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as you always laughed.
At little jokes we shared together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be the household word it always was.
Let it be spoken without an effort,
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 death but a passage of life?
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.
Nothing is past
Nothing is lost
One brief moment and all will be as it was before.

– Henry Scott Holland

*The life of one we love
is never lost ...
its influence goes on
through all the lives
it ever touched.*

– Christopher Halloway

*Thoughts today,
Memories forever.*

*Grieve not, nor speak
of me with tears,
but laugh and talk of me
as if I were beside you there.*

*We come to love not by
finding a perfect person,
but by learning to see
an imperfect person perfectly.*

– Sam Keen

*The most beautiful things
in the world
are not seen nor touched.
They are felt with the heart.*

– Helen Keller

*Love doesn't end with dying,
Or leave in the last breath.
For someone you've loved deeply,
Love doesn't end with death.*

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