



Embracing Grief
Transforming Life

For All Souls' Day

Cover image
“Angel of Mercy”
by Iris Sullivan
www.movingthesoulwithcolor.com

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With gratitude to all who have crossed my path, both here and there, who have inspired and encouraged me on my way.

With gratitude to my dear husband Rob for your infinite patience and ongoing support.

To my son Simon, 16 December 1981 - 14 October 2006:
Thank you for continuing to inspire me through your love and compassionate wisdom on my journey of healing, becoming and awakening.

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Yet mystery and manifestations arise from the same source.
This source is called darkness. Darkness within darkness, the
gateway to all understanding.

Lao-Tzu

Death invites us to enter the darkness, to embrace the great mystery,
to trust in forces that are beyond the comprehension of our human
mind. It teaches us that ultimately we must be able to let go and
trust in the great richness, fertility and transformation that lies in
the darkness.

Prema Sheerin

We need to be aware of the suffering, but retain our clarity, calmness
and strength so we can help transform the situation.

Thich Nhat Hanh

There is no such thing as chance; and what seem to us merest
accident springs from the deepest source of destiny.

Friedrich von Schiller

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Introduction

Death touches us all. As human beings, we are always in the process of dying whether we are young or old, little children or elders, at birth or even before we are born. Each of us also knows grief, ranging from the momentary grief of losing a valued belonging to the deep grief experienced through the death of those we love. Each grief we experience involves a unique inner journey with that particular loss. Every story is precious and sacred.

My life has brought losses and the death of loved ones but nothing compares to the grief I met when my eldest son, Simon, died in 2006. With this life-changing event, I started on a transformative inner journey. As well as a deep encounter with grief, this experience also gave me the opportunity to discover my own life purpose, something very different from anything I had ever imagined. I began to understand what life offers us through our challenges and darkest moments. I felt called to serve in the world to inspire others to shine their own light, find their unique purpose and most importantly, to know that we are all deeply loved by the Divine.

My deep love for my son inspired me to walk the path offered by my grief and allowed me to discover its blessings. This journey into the interior of my heart and my deepest self gave me the possibility of being in the world in an entirely new way. I felt as though I had awakened from a deep slumber. Through this ongoing journey, Divine Love or God, and the spiritual beings who accompany us every moment of each day, became a reality for me.

Sharing from the Heart

Simon was someone whose light shone very brightly. At a personal level, he inspired me and I always felt his love for me just as I was. I felt incredibly safe with him, and often had the thought, *“If something happens and Simon is with me, I will be OK”*.

When I received the news of Simon’s death in a kayaking accident, my pain was overwhelming. Although I immediately collapsed inwardly, my first words to my husband were full of acceptance, *“Simon has completed what he came here to do”*. Part of a hard shell of ‘unknowing’ cracked, and my own life and the miracle of Simon’s life suddenly made sense.

I felt the loss of the remarkable young man who was my son. I felt deep respect and admiration for the true human qualities that I sensed in Simon. I had always thought of him as an old soul. In parallel with this deep sense of loss, a higher perspective filled my thoughts. His death appeared to be part of the divine plan for our lives, something that had been waiting for me. Yet it all seemed far too big.

Themes and threads in my own life from long ago seemed to weave together with recent shifts in understanding. The death of a young man I knew earlier that year led me to a deeper understanding in my heart about the death of younger people.

These beautiful and terrifying thoughts felt like too much to digest and they also felt too intimate and sacred to reveal to anyone else. I experienced my inner world completely differently.

When walking in the forest environment which Simon loved, I felt myself experiencing how *he* related to that environment. I would read what someone had written about him in letters and emails, repeating the words over and over. I could feel his gratitude and love for the person who expressed those words. I also knew what he wanted to convey to that person and my writing flowed.

I was immersed in a flow of gratitude. *“Thank you Simon, you loved me unconditionally. You never judged or criticised me. You inspire me, you only brought joy and peace, and passion for life and living. Thank you for being my son. For some great reason, you died.”*

I also had questions. *“Why was I your mother?”* I asked. *“Who are you? Why did you come to me as my son?”*

My gratitude also continued. *“Simon, I love you so much. Thank you for being you, for always being there for me, for your passion and enthusiasm for life, for bringing joy to us and to so many.”* It was a soul song of love. Nothing could stop that song.

Messages, instructions and guidance came to me intuitively like instructions on a blank slate in my mind.

“Walk through the door, go where your grief takes you. Behind this tragedy lies a great gift.”

“You and Simon have work to do together.”

“Find the same joy and peace that you had when Simon was with you in his physical body.”

“Go where the pain is. Don’t shy away from pain or sadness or anything that comes up.”

“Live with joy”.

Throughout these months, I continued to communicate with Simon. “*You are with me. You are alive. You’ll be there for me as you always were.*” This huge event had happened yet Simon was with me and as I had known, in his presence I was OK. As I held him in love, I knew that he was with me but I also knew that he was not trapped. He was with me and at the same time free to embark on his own new journey in the spiritual realm.

There was no choice for me. I had to walk through the door of grief into unknown territory. I had no idea of the destination but I had to follow this call. I wanted to fully experience everything that was happening for me no matter how painful it was. I wouldn’t stop myself from going to his bedroom where I could smell Simon’s shirts or see his hiking gear. Every corner of our home held a memory of him. His touch was everywhere. I would cry and cry. Out of my weeping, gratitude and love would emerge. I felt whole and complete.

I answered the call of grief with deep thankfulness. It was effortless. I couldn’t do anything else. Responding to my grief became a path of love and devotion for my son, and a way to honour an agreement we seemed to have made long ago.

Some part of me knew that this pain could be transformed and I would find my own path through it with Simon’s help. I also knew that there was a way to live in this physical world, whilst at the same time living with the spiritual world, *with* Simon, and I would find out how to do this. All I needed to do was let go and trust.

A feeling of Simon’s loving embrace provided continual comfort. His love was no longer constrained by the limits of his physical body and our exchange brought joy. Just as I knew the agony of pain, I also discovered the ecstasy of pure joy and boundless love. Again, I was filled with gratitude. “*Thank you Simon, thank you to ‘the ALL’ – the ground of our very existence.*”

A significant and transformative part of my life had begun. By following this path, I would come to understand unconditional love, to know God as I had not known God before. It was a shift from head-knowing to heart-knowing. It led me to serve the Divine in my own humble way as a vessel through which Divine Love could work.

Simon spoke to me often, not in words but as an experience. It sounded like:

*Don't cry, mother dear,
I'll be with you all the way.
Give your message of Love.
I love you.
I am with you.
I'll be with you.
Give your message of Love.*

I have learned a great deal on this journey. Every moment provided me with an opportunity for soul work and soul exercises. I trusted, I walked forward, I fell down, I picked myself up. I never tried to escape the pain. I listened to the inner directives given to me. Life became richer and more beautiful. I experienced greater freedom and joy through life's challenges. I began this work out of my love for Simon and I also offered it for the world. The world needed me to shine my light and bring love and to do this, I had to be who I truly was. This led me to ask, Who *am* I? and I began to explore my response.

I continue to wonder about many aspects of this extraordinary experience. I now feel deeply connected to our dead, not just to Simon but to all those who have died. I am also in awe of the courage of human beings when we meet our deepest challenges. I feel passionate about what is possible for each one of us, no matter what has happened to us on our journeys through life.

In going through the portal of darkness, not once but many, many times on grief's journey, I have discovered some of the gifts that are there for all of us. As the phoenix rises from the ashes, so can we ... again and again and again.

These words from a journal entry at the time continue to inspire me:

“Guided. Bravely do I step forward. No fear. I do this with you, with others, out of my love for you, my love for what life is really about. It’s about love. It’s about learning. It’s about suffering. And through this suffering we can grow, we can find the Divine ... Here we find it, deep, deep within us ...” (16 December 2007)

*You speak to me through the sun,
the wind and the rain
You speak to me through the moon,
stars and the black of night.
You speak to me through the
rustling leaves, the bird song
You speak to me through all
that lives, great and small
You speak to me in the
activities of my daily life
You speak to me when I
humbly take my steps
in gratitude for life
You speak to me through
the Divine Love
which lives in my heart.
So I can always smile
and be grateful
when the tears flow
they are ones of love
and devotion
of love ...
for the miracle of being.*

(2008)

On suffering

cemetery

i stand guard
before
the empty gate
envious
of Sisyphus*
his stone

Jeffrey Kane

The Existence of Love

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 your life again
Instead of at your death and your departing.

Marjorie Pizer

You will suffer

You will suffer. I shall look as if I were dead; and that will not be true ... You understand ... I cannot carry this body with me. It is too heavy ... But it will be like an old abandoned shell. There is nothing sad about old shells ...

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

**In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was condemned to an eternity of rolling a boulder uphill and then watching it roll back down again.*

... opportunities ...

Our suffering and despair are disguises for opportunities for enormous spiritual growth - as if a gateway is opened for spirit to work through us.

Eve Thomas

From The Prophet

And a woman spoke, saying, "Tell us of Pain."

And he said:

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

Even as the stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.

And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life, your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy;

And you would accept the seasons of your heart, even as you have always accepted the seasons that pass over your fields.

And you would watch with serenity through the winters of your grief.

Much of your pain is self-chosen.

It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.

Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquillity:

For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen,

And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.

Kahlil Gibran

from Fierce Grace

Steve and Anita

Rachel finished her brief work on earth and left the stage in a manner that leaves those of us left behind with a cry of agony in our hearts, as the fragile threads of faith are dealt with so violently.

Is anyone strong enough to stay conscious through such teachings as you are receiving? Probably very few and even they would only have a whisper of equanimity and spacious peace midst the screaming trumpets of their rage, grief, horror and desolation.

I cannot assuage your pain with any words nor should I. For the pain is Rachel's legacy to you. Not that she or I would inflict such pain by choice. But there it is and must it burn its purifying way to completion. You may emerge from this ordeal more dead than alive; for something within you dies when you bear the unbearable and it is only that dark night of the soul that you are prepared to see as God sees and to love as God loves.

Now is the time to let your grief find expression, no false strength. Now is the time to sit quietly and speak to Rachel and thank her for being with you these few years and encourage her to go on with her work, knowing that you will grow in compassion and wisdom from this experience. In my heart I know that you and she will meet again and again, and recognise the many ways in which you have known each other. And when you meet you will, in a flash, know what now it is not given to you to know; why this had to be the way it was.

Your rational mind can never understand what has happened, but your hearts, if you can keep them open to God, will find their own intuitive way.

Rachel came through you to do her work on earth which included the manner of her death. Now her soul is free and the love that you can share with her is invulnerable to the winds of changing time and space. In that deep love include me too.

So much love

Ram Dass

Contemplations on death

This Body is Not Me

This body is not me.
I am not limited by this body.
I am life without boundaries.
I have never been born,
and I have never died.

Look at the ocean and the sky filled with stars,
manifestations from my wondrous true mind.

Since before time, I have been free.
Birth and death are only doors through which we pass,
sacred thresholds on our journey.
Birth and death are a game of hide-and-seek.

So laugh with me,
hold my hand,
let us say good-bye,
say good-bye,
to meet again soon.

We meet today.
We will meet again tomorrow.
We will meet at the source every moment.
We meet each other in all forms of life.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Strangers in the world

It is sometimes said that we are born as strangers in the world and that we leave it when we die. But in all probability we do not come into the world at all. Rather we come out of it, in the same way that a leaf comes out of the tree or a baby from its mother's body. We emerge from deep within its range of possibilities, and when we die we do not so much stop living as take on a different form. So the leaf does not fall out of the world when it leaves the tree. It has a different way and place to be in it.

Barbara Hollerorth

from Benedictus

When the soul leaves the body, it is no longer under the burden and control of space and time. The soul is free; distance and separation hinder it no more. The dead are our nearest neighbours; they are all around us. Meister Eckhart was once asked, Where does the soul of a person go when the person dies? He said, no place. Where else would the soul be going? Where else is the eternal world? It can be nowhere other than here. We have falsely spatialized the eternal world. We have driven the eternal out into some kind of distant galaxy. Yet the eternal world does not seem to be a place but rather a different state of being. The soul of the person goes no place because there is no place else to go. This suggests that the dead are here with us, in the air that we are moving through all the time. The only difference between us and the dead is that they are now in an invisible form. You cannot see them with the human eye. But you can sense the presence of those you love who have died. With the refinement of your soul, you can sense them. You feel that they are near.

John O'Donohue

The moment of death

On earth, death has a terrifying aspect only because we look upon it as a kind of dissolution, as an end. But when we look back upon the moment of death from the other side, from the spiritual side, then death continually appears to us as a victory of the spirit that is extricating itself from the physical. It then appears as the greatest, most beautiful and significant event.

Rudolf Steiner

The clothing of the human

The human being is a being of spirit and soul, and has a body. The body is not the human; it is only the clothing of the human. What we call death is the laying aside of a worn-out garment, and it is no more the end of the person than it is the end of us when we remove our overcoats. Therefore, we have not lost our “dead” friends; we have only lost sight of the cloak in which we were accustomed to see them. The cloak is gone, but the person who wore it is not; surely it is the person that we love, and not the garment.

Charles W. Leadbeater

Death as an invitation to freedom ...

If you really live your life to the full, death will never have power over you. It will never seem like a destructive, negative event. It can become, for you, the moment of release into the deepest treasures of your own nature; it can be your full entry into the temple of your soul. If you are able let go of things, you learn to die spiritually in little ways during your life. When you learn to let go of things, a greater generosity, openness, and breath comes into your life. Imagine this letting go multiplied a thousand times at the moment of your death. That release can bring you a completely new divine belonging.

John O'Donohue

from The Prophet

Then Almitra spoke, saying,
We would ask now of death.
And he said:

You would know the secret of death. But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life? The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the mystery of light. If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life. For life and death are one, even as the river and sea are one.

In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond; and like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring. Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity.

Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands before the king whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour. Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the mark of the king? Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?

For what is it 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 God 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 claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.

Kahlil Gibran

Learning to Fly

The walls of birth and death
were too high for me to see over,
and I didn't know that my heart had wings.
As I hammered on those walls,
demanding to know their meaning,
I was aware that there was something inside me
cramped up, waiting to be unfurled,
and I could feel against my heart,
a need that was deeper than instinct,
to fly above my own questions.
But my wings were well hidden.
They needed love to release them,
the breath of Love to shake them free of fear,
and that took time.

Knowledge of those wings came slowly.
Taught by Love and held by Love,
my heart began to fly a little at a time,
just enough to know that flying was possible,
and that a higher vision did exist
somewhere beyond me.

Then came the day of Love's surprise.
Love swept my heart up and away,
far above the walls of birth and death,
to a point that was beyond time.
And from that distance I discovered,
that birth and death were not walls at all,
but little ripples coming and going,
on an eternal sea that has
neither beginning nor end.

In that moment I saw
that the meaning of birth is forgetting,
the meaning of death is remembering,
the meaning of life is growth,
and the meaning of the eternal sea
which holds everything in its embrace,
is Love.

Joy Cowley

For parents



Angel of Mercy

This study in magenta (deep purplish red) is connected to God's mercy and hope. Magenta is a colour so close to the pure human soul that when a young person dies, the pure love is released as this rosy magenta colour. It is the colour that flows between human hearts beyond the threshold. Magenta is the heavenly part of us that receives us every night and when we die young. A young death is a trial to those living, but a great blessing for the whole world.

Iris Sullivan

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

Kahlil Gibran

... the butterfly ...

When we have done all the work we were sent to Earth to do, we are allowed to shed our body, which imprisons our soul like a cocoon encloses the future butterfly. And when the time is right, we can let go of it and we will be free of pain, free of fears and worries - free as a very beautiful butterfly, returning home to God ...

*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, from a letter
she wrote to a child with cancer*



Mother to a Stillborn Child

Budtight I held you
closer than a lover
small blood-of my-blood soul
with wings as wide as an
opening morning

and the thought of you
was a warming I sailed to
rounded and shining

Hard to the threshold
my body drove you
but your coming foundered
at the crossing point
at the difficult gate of flesh

But strange
how you open me inwards
now
and it is I
through the sharp shoals of loss
who am born into you
umbilically light linked
heart to heart with you

You hold me
closer than a lover
and suddenly
I feel small feathers
unfolding at my back

Jehanne Mehta



birthday

in the stillness
of meditation
we celebrate
together
on opposite shores
the days
of your birth

father to son

when i saw you
come into the world
it seemed that no
greater miracle
had ever occurred

you were the first
child ever born
Adam

when i watched you
leave this world
no greater tragedy
had ever been

with you the world ended
and all that remained
was darkness

son to father

on the day of my death
the world was born
how could it have been
that i so unaware
i know peace
i know joy
i know love
i know light

you walk in darkness
where many wander
lost for a lifetime
but there is a path through
to the world that you
barely remember
even with my death

darkness means nothing
your task is to listen
and you will find
your way

Jeffrey Kane



Our Inner Sanctuary

My inner sanctuary is the part of myself that no-one else enters except me. There *are* others, invisible to us, who know our inner struggles, who are present for us in our darkest moments, who celebrate and rejoice in our progress and share our joys. For them, we are an open book.

In the silence of our inner sanctuary, our loved ones who have died can visit and share with us. We may not see them, we may not hear them, we may not even be aware of them. But they are here with us only a thought away, so very, very close, and our love-filled heart is our meeting place. As the departed Frances conveys to her friend, Helen:

*... Now I dwelt in the realm of Thought; and such thought
Power, when rightly implemented, can penetrate the dense plane
which is the world of human habitation. I did not feel that I had
gone into a far country ... I could still keep in touch ...*

Testimony of Light

A heart filled with love for these unseen others and gratitude to them and for life creates an open heart - a heart that welcomes Divine Love and our loved ones who have died. They can be with us any time, any place, anywhere.

*Every thought that concerns me penetrates to me. This is so
beautiful! Even when I am far away, suddenly such a thought wings
itself to me as a tender, lovely greeting from the physical world.*

The Bridge over the River

Grief softens the boundaries of separation; it is one of the gifts of grief. We can cut off our dead or we can invite them in. We can be in agony, feel so desperately sad, alone, angry or desolate when they die. Can we, in our deep sadness open our hearts to their presence, consider their wishes for us and possible needs? It means so much to them. Can we be there for them as they are here for us?

*The bond that unites us is more than during my lifetime because I
can be within you. I am surrounding you with my help and love ...*

The Bridge over the River

An open welcoming heart is a heart filled with gratitude. Can we raise ourselves step by step out of our grief into gratitude? The unseen spiritual world which is both within and all around us is a place of unconditional love; it is the place of knowing; it is only our consciousness that separates us from it. Our “eternal self”, our “I”, our own wise love-imbued observer-self knows this.

If we have lost someone we love, we must be able to raise ourselves to a feeling of thankfulness that we have had them with us; we must be able to think selflessly of what they were to us until their death, and not upon what we feel, now they are no longer with us.

Rudolf Steiner

Expressing thankfulness for the gifts of life and cultivating an attitude of gratitude is one of the most powerful ways we can change our experience of living. It brings us into alignment with the Eternal Self – that part of us which exists beyond the realm of the physical. Our Eternal Self is able to express gratitude for all that life brings – its joys and pleasures, its trials and hardships. An attitude of gratitude leads to a new way of being in the world, creating the richest possibilities for existence.

Gratitude is priceless.

It cannot be bought or sold.

It is the doorway into the spirit.

Too often you want to "get through" things.

To what?

Attempt to give thanks for where you are

IN THIS VERY MOMENT.

It will help recollect you,

open you to little things you are missing.

It will be food for those on the other side,

many of whom suffer because they rushed through their earthly lives.

When you do what they did not do,

it is balm for them.

Claire Blatchford ~ words heard within

In the silence of our inner sanctuary, we can receive answers to our questions, inspirations, messages of hope, love, joy and wisdom. We learn to be still. We learn to listen.

Be silent, for your silence is akin to outspread wings, under whose protection I scatter shining blossoms into your hands.

The Bridge over the River

Yet how do we achieve this kind of silence when our modern world provides so many sources of distractions, noises and a barrage of information which seem to draw us away from being with our own selves in silence, peace and tranquility?

What does it mean to listen? How do our dead speak to us? How do they speak if they have no body, no mouth, no vocal cords? What language do they use?

We find our way into a language that is not at all formed according to earthly conditions, but is rather a language arising from feelings, from the heart. It is a kind of language of the heart.

Rudolf Steiner

Here are some helpful thoughts from someone who has been able to distill and describe this tender and sacred subject of the language of the heart.

There is a fundamental difference between this language of the heart and language as we know it here in everyday life. On this side we normally think of language as meaning words, and we often use words without being fully in them. Spoken or written, we use words as symbols, signposts, indicators, and means to an end. This doesn't work for the language of the heart. This language has to be alive, has to be active, has to be fully and truly meant if it is to be heard and shared. It has to be created anew, out of feelings, thoughts, and impulses, every time it is used. The language of the heart also encompasses far more than words. It can be heard in music or other sounds, read in pictures or colours, clothed in scent.

I've sensed dead souls expressing gladness for being with their living friends during moments of prayer through the delicate aroma of cooking bread, when no baking was occurring on the physical plane. I believe this is similar to Mary making her presence known to her followers through the scent of roses. Furthermore, I believe there are no limits to the possible expressiveness of this language. The joy of it is in the aliveness with which it moves among and between souls, and that need not necessarily mean it only occurs between two at a time.

The language of the heart can be extremely sensuous in that the receptivity of the physical senses may be heightened when one is using it. The world can look brighter. Every object and person can seem to shine. Yet the language of the heart can be felt to be quite apart from the ordinary workings of the physical senses because it is understood and responded to almost entirely within. For example, when I hear words within, thoughts often form within me in response to them, and replies to these thoughts can come even as the thoughts are forming! It could be said that the language of the heart is the language of love, but that really means nothing unless you are experiencing it. When you're using it you're in it, in the same way that one can know oneself to be in love with another person. (In this instance I mean the term to encompass far more than purely romantic involvement.) One may also tend to regard love as an emotion devoid of thought, and this language of the heart is certainly not devoid of thought. The exchange of thoughts can be so close and immediate with the one who has passed over, it bypasses words. Yet still it is a language. We get a taste of it on this side when we are close to a person and simultaneously share the same thoughts and feelings.

Claire Blatchford

Inner questions

How can I tend to, nourish and nurture the garden of my inner sanctuary?

How do I honour my grief?

How do I respond to grief's beckoning?

What are my loved ones' wishes for me?

How do I create an open space for my loved ones to be with me?

How do I honour what my own soul deeply asks of me?

How do I live in alignment with my true self?

How might I live?

Is my soul asleep?

Is my soul asleep?

Have those beehives that labour
at night stopped? And the water-
wheel of thought, is it dry?

The cups empty, wheeling out,
carrying only shadows?

No! My soul is not asleep!

It is awake, wide awake.

It neither sleeps nor dreams,
but watches,

its clear eyes open,

far-off things, and listens

at the shores of the great silence.

Antonio Machado

Meditative Verses

How you shine

How you shine with jubilation,
you, my soul,
with such holy joy!
You lived on earth,
in your earthly being.
You went through death,
and death became a bridge for you
to higher being,
to heavenly existence.

Gerhard Reisch

Divinity in my soul

Divinity in my soul
I will give you space
In my conscious being;
You connect me to all
That the power of destiny brings me,
You never set me apart
From that what you have given me
To love:
Your spirit guards mine
For it is yours also:
So will I guard with you,
Through you, in you,
What you have agreed
With those who are yours-
I will be strong, and know
That it is wisdom.

*Rudolf Steiner (given to a mother after
the death of her son)*

Seven red roses

Seven red roses
I lay on your grave,
seven pure, red roses.
May their pure fragrance
reach through with love to you,
who now has your being
in the brightness of the spirit.

Gerhard Reisch

Let heart love ...

Let heart love press its way through
to soul love,
Let love warmth pour through
to spirit light;
So I approach you,
thinking with you spirit thoughts,
feeling in you world love,
willing spirit through you,
weaving oneness being.

Rudolf Steiner

I was united with you

I was united with you;
stay now united in me.
So shall we speak together
in the language of eternal Being.
So shall we work together
where deeds find their fulfilment.
So shall we weave in the Spirit
where human thoughts are woven
in the Word of eternal thought.

Rudolf Steiner

May my heart's power of love

May my heart's power of love
stream to you,
dear souls of friends
in the spirit worlds,
and also the light filled cosmic thoughts
of my I,
so that the paths on which you travel
through the worlds
may be full of light,
so that you may feel:
we have not been forgotten.

Bonds of love are woven
indestructibly through the spheres.

Gerhard Reisch

O do not seek me here

O do not seek me here.
You will find me within yourself,
in the warmth of being,
in the beat of heart and lung,
in the sacrificial deed of love,
there is my true existence,
in and through you.

Hear my being
by listening inwards
in the stillness of existence.

I am the cosmos
I am the star
I am the light
I live within:

beholding being countenance.

Gerhard Reisch

Dwell my soul

Dwell my soul
in light-filled heights
where sun-glitter dragonflies
flutter, flit; wed
beams of warmth to living space:
remembering me they weave
strength from grief;
I sense already
how they sense me;
how they penetrate and warm me,
streaming through me.

In the weave of worlds
spirit melts
earthly weight
to future light.

Rudolf Steiner

My eyes be unto you

My eyes be unto you, beloved soul, as windows,
that through them you may see the earthly beauty
My ears be unto you, beloved soul, as doorways,
that through them in hearing you may enter Ether's weaving realm,
When you behold through my eyes the earthly beings
through you I listen upward to the starry ways
When you through my listening enter into the weaving Ether light –
then I behold, through the mirror of your soul
with mine inner eye the realm of angels
And the here and the yonder,
Find themselves in loving harmony
If the sun is in the middle
If the flame of love glows full of sacrifice.

Maria Reimann

Further poems and contemplations

The Company

So many gathered in my room last night.
I felt them close all round me, existences,
Living presences, invisible essences,
Each centred in its own peculiar secret joy,
Each joy given being by a peculiar wisdom
Pertaining to its nature like a dimension,
Or like a world, enclosed within a spirit,
But none a spirit enclosed within a world.

Not in the world, and yet they gathered in my room;
Some stood still, inside the door, some
Thronged the firelight and the shadows; some hung
Like resting birds, in the curtains, perched high
On the bookshelves, poised on the opening flowers
Of a hyacinth, others hid in their own fiery darkness.

Where had they come from?
Out of my joy, out of my sorrow,
Living entities sprung into life from the dust
Of my existence, taking wing, making song?
Or were they there already before I came
Alone into my room, waiting
Until my joy should open eyes to see them,
Until my sorrow should reach down
Into the depths of being, and there find them,
Find such a company of living multitude?

Kathleen Raine

Old Friends

Old friends
Companions of the heart
Are present with us
Long after their earthly frame
Returned to ashes.
Time and space
Lose all meaning
When hearts are really united
In the nameless, formless
Love.

True friendship
Revealed in names and forms
Is the most exquisite gift
Life
Bestows upon us
In its boundless, benevolent
Grace.

Yosy Flug

Softly

Softly on delicate feet it approaches,
Before sleep like a fluttering:
Listen, oh soul, to my counsel,
Let luck and comfort smile on you -:
Those bound to you in love,
Will always remain near you,
Truly entwined with you they will
Encircle you with small and large orbits.
They will rely on you
Unrelated, like you to them,
And awakened to beholding
You will in emulation serve them!

Christian Morgenstern

It is not for the first time that you live

It is not for the first time that you live,
Garbed in this human form;
Again you will be born, again you will meet death,
With each passing period becoming more enlightened.
Finally, because of these transitions
You will attain the ultimate perfection of human nature;
Now, as a mature soul you will rise
Suddenly as a new star appears
High above us all,
Among the stars in rank with gods.

Apollon N. Mayhov

The soul of man ...

The soul of man is like to water;
From Heaven it cometh
To heaven it riseth
And, then returneth to earth.....

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Opening the mind

Sometimes I tease people and ask: “What makes you so adamant that there’s no life after death? What proof do you have? What if you found there was a life after this one, having died denying its existence?” Those of us who undertake a spiritual discipline—of meditation, for example—come to discover many things about our own minds that we did not know before. For as our minds open more and more to the extraordinary, vast, and hitherto unsuspected existence of the nature of mind, we begin to glimpse a completely different dimension, one in which all of our assumptions about our identity and reality, which we thought we knew so well, start to dissolve, and in which the possibility of lives other than this one becomes at least likely. We begin to understand that everything we are being told by the masters about life and death, and life after death, is real.

Sogyal Rinpoche

I died

I died as a mineral and became a plant,
I died as plant and rose to animal,
I died as animal and I was Man.
Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?
Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar
With angels bless'd; but even from angelhood
I must pass on: all except God doth perish.
When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,
I shall become what no mind e'er conceived.
Oh, let me not exist! for Non-existence
Proclaims in organ tones,
To Him we shall return.

Jalal al-Din Rumi

The Swan

This clumsy living that moves lumbering
as if in ropes through what is not done
reminds us of the awkward way the swan walks.

And to die, which is a letting go
of the ground we stand on and cling to every day,
is like the swan when he nervously lets himself down
into the water, which receives him gaily
and which flows joyfully under
and after him, wave after wave,
while the swan, unmoving and marvellously calm,
is pleased to be carried, each minute more fully grown,
more like a king, composed, farther and farther on.

Rainer Maria Rilke

Death Transfigures our Separation . . .

It is a strange and magical fact to be here, walking around in a body, to have a whole world within you and a world at your fingertips outside you. It is an immense privilege, and it is incredible that humans manage to forget the miracle of being here. Rilke said, "Being here is so much". It is uncanny how social reality can deaden and numb us so that the mystical wonder of our lives goes totally unnoticed. We are here. We are wildly and dangerously free. The more lonely side of being here is our separation in the world. When you live in a body you are separate from every other object and person. Many of our attempts to pray, to love, and to create are secret attempts at transfiguring that separation in order to build bridges outward so that others can reach us and we can reach them. At death, this physical separation is broken. The soul is released from its particular and exclusive location in this body. The soul then comes in to a free and fluent universe of spiritual belonging.

John O'Donohue

The love that connects us ...

Life on earth is misunderstood when we view it in terms of objects and events, things with clear edges and borders in time and space. Each of us, for example, is nothing by ourselves. Only as we live in loving connection with others do we learn what incarnation uniquely offers. It is in this fluid, weaving sea of loving relation that we become ourselves. It is easier to stay in the fixed world of physical objects and focus on all manner of material priorities. There is security in the small view, but we lose so much. In the end, the only thing that remains is the love that connects us, connects us all.

Jeffrey Kane

Peace my heart

Peace, my heart, let the time for the parting be sweet.

Let it not be a death but completeness.

Let love melt into memory and pain into songs.

Let the flight through the sky end in the folding of the wings over the nest.

Let the last touch of your hands be gentle like the flower of the night.

Stand still, O Beautiful End, for a moment, and say your last words in silence.

I bow to you and hold up my lamp to light you on your way.

Rabindranath Tagore

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God has laid you see.
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, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found that peace at the close of day.

If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss
Oh 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 one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts and peace to thee
God wanted me now; He set me free.

Anon

If I be the first of us to die

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 a change but not a leaving.
For just as death is part of life,
The dead live on forever in the living.
And all the gathered riches of our journey,
The moments shared, the mysteries explored,
The steady layering 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.
Close your eyes,
Breathe.
Listen for my footfall in your heart.
I am not gone but merely walk within you.

Nicholas Evans

Though I am Dead

Though I am dead
Grieve not for me with tears
Think not of death
With sorrowing and fears;
I am so near that
Every tear you shed
Touches me although
You think me dead
But when you laugh
And sing in glad delight,
My soul is lifted
Upwards to the light
Laugh and be glad
For all that life is giving,
And I, though dead,
Will share your joy in living.

Anon

The dead and the living need one another

The dead and the living need one another
as day needs night and night needs day.
Beyond all comings and goings,
the dead and the living are one.
Both must work together for the whole of humanity,
your Earth cannot exist without this.
When those in heaven and those on earth are brought
together
in my name and my light,
real work can be done.

Claire Blatchford - words heard within



May we all feel the guiding hand of Divine Love.

May we honour ourselves, our grief and find the way to grieve in our own way.

May we all recognise the love, encouragement and patience of the spiritual beings who accompany us through our lives.

May we all come to recognise the presence of our loved ones who have died.

May our hearts listen to them.

May we be there for them on their journeys in the higher planes of existence.

May we all find the light in the darkness.

May peace, love and joy permeate our being.

May we all shine our lights in the world.

May we all know the light of our own "I".



Our inner work is a service which we offer to the whole world,
the visible physical and the invisible spiritual world
- not two worlds, but one.



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