I Did Not Die
_Arthor Unknown_
Do not stand at my grave and forever 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'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 stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and forever cry.  
I am not there. I did not die.

_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.
For part of us went with you  
The day you left your home.

**Her Old Bones Creaked**  
*Jamie Samms*

Her old bones creaked  
And her pace was slow,  
But her smile was blindingly bright.  
Her mind was sharp  
And her voice was kind,  
Her manner was a true delight.

The world had changed  
In the winters she'd known  
But she bore their weight with pride.  
She shared her wisdom  
And passed the goodness on,  
Using her love of life as her guide.

She did not bow to time,  
Using life as her stage,  
She sought each morning's joy  
And she was never defeated by age.

**Death is nothing at all**  
*Canon Henry Scott Holland*

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, we are still.  
Call me by my old familiar name,  
speak to me in the easy way which you have always used.  
Put no difference in your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.  
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together.  
Pray, 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 trace of shadow on it.  
Life means all that it ever meant, it is the same as it ever was; there is absolutely unbroken continuity.  
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.

**Memories and Peace**  
*Gloria Matthew*

Why smile in such sadness?  
It's because of the memories  
Of laughter shared in the past.  
The humour of life, the fun and the joy,  
The reminiscences certain to last.

Why relief in such sadness?  
It's because there is peace  
With no more chance of pain  
No one can hurt, nor take away  
There will never be fear again.

**The Tide Recedes**  
*M D Hughes*

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 lingers on  
In sweet refrain.  
For every joy that passes  
Something beautiful remains.

**Those Who Love**

It's always those who love the most  
Who most miss the 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.

**From Break, Break, Break**  
*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.
And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
and the sound of a voice that is still.

**It is right to weep**  
*Author Unknown*

It is right to weep and mourn  
but not for thyself -  
for they have gone to a better place.  
The tears release the tension:  
take courage - remember happy days  
you shared - and though you are sad  
carry on as they would have you,  
living, loving, laughing, caring,  
God is with you though you may not know it.  
He will help you through your lonely days;  
just open your heart and let Him come in.

**This Heritage**

They are not dead,  
Who leave us this great heritage  
Of remembered joy.  
They still live in our hearts,  
In the happiness we knew,  
In the dreams we shared.  
They still breathe,  
In the lingering fragrance windblown,  
From their favourite flowers.  
They still smile in the moonlight's silver  
And laugh in the sunlight's sparkling gold.

They still speak in the echoes of words  
We've heard them say again and again.  
They still move,  
In the rhythm of waving grasses,  
In the dance of the tossing branches.  
They are not dead;  
Their memory is warm in our hearts,  
Comfort in our sorrow.  
They are not apart from us,  
But a part of us  
For love is eternal,  
And those we love shall be with us  
Throughout all eternity.

**Funeral Blues**  
*W.H. Auden*

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,  
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,  
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum  
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.  
Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead  
Scribbling on the sky the message He is Dead.  
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,  
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.  
He was my North, my South, my East and West,  
My working week and my Sunday rest,  
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;  
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.  
The stars are not wanted now; put out every one,  
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun,  
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods;  
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

**from The Tempest**  
*William Shakespeare*

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

**What is Dying?**

A ship sails and I stand watching it till it fades on the horizon.  
Someone at my side says, "She is gone."  
Gone where?  
Gone from my sight. That is all.  
She is just as large as when I saw her.  
The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her.  
And just at that moment, when someone at your side says, "She is gone"  
There are others who are watching her coming.  
And other voices take up the glad shout.  
"Here she comes!"  
And that is dying.

**From Kahlil Gibran**

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 mountaintop, then you shall begin to climb.  
And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.
Live A Life That Matters

Author Unknown

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end.
There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours, days.
All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten,
will pass to someone else.
Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to
irrelevance.
It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.
Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will
finally disappear.
So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will
expire.
The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade
away.
It won't matter where you came from,
or on what side of the tracks you lived.
At the end, whether you were beautiful or brilliant, male or
female,
even your skin colour won't matter.
So what will matter?
How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built;
not what you got, but what you gave.
What will matter is not your success, but your significance.
What will matter is not what you learned, but what you taught.
What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage
or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged
others.
What will matter is not your competence, but your character.
What will matter is not how many people you knew,
but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone.
What will matter is not your memories,
between the memories that live in those who loved you.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.
It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice.
Choose to live a life that matters.

From The Book of the Dead

Ancient Egyptian (c. 4500 BC)

As each day ends may I have lived,
That I may truly say:
I did no harm to human kind,
From truth I did not stray;
I did no wrong with knowing mind,
From evil I did keep;
I turned no hungry person away,
I caused no one to weep.

When Death Knocks

Rabindranath Tagore

On the day when death will knock at thy door,
What wilt thou offer to him?
I will set before my guest the full vessel of my life.
I will never let him go with empty hands.
All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer
nights,
All the earnings and gleanings of my busy life
Will I place before him, at the close of my day.

The Tragedy of Life

Anonymous

Pray and thank God every day
Meditate
Smile
Laugh
Whistle
Dance
Sing
Look with fascination at everything. Fill your heart and lungs
with liberty.
Be yourself fully and immensely.
Feel God in your body, mind, heart and soul and be convinced
of eternal life.

The Wave

Unknown

A little wave, a he-wave, is bobbing along in the midst of the
ocean having a great time.
One day he sees that he's headed toward the shore and he
realizes that he'll soon be annihilated.
"My God, what's going to become of me?" he thinks, and he
falls into a deep depression.
Another wave, a she-wave comes bobbing along, having a fine
time.
She says to the he-wave, "Why are you looking so glum and
afraid?"
"Don't you know?" he says, "You're going to crash into that
shore and then you'll be nothing!"
"Don't you know?" she says, "You're not a wave; you're part of
the ocean."
When the House Doth Sigh  
Robert Herrick (1591 - 1674)

When the house doth sigh and weep  
and the world is drawn in sleep  
yet mine eyes the watch do keep;  
sweet Spirit, comfort me!  
When (God knows) I am tossed about  
either with despair or doubt;  
yet before the glass be out,  
sweet Spirit, comfort me.  
When the judgement is reveal'd  
and that open'd that was seal'd  
when to thee I have appeal'd  
sweet Spirit, comfort me!

Remember Me  
Christina Rossetti (1830 - 1895)

Remember me when I am gone away,  
gone far away into the silent land;  
when you can no more hold me by the hand,  
nor half turn to go yet turning stay.  
Remember me when no more day by day  
you tell me of our future that you planned;  
only remember me, you understand  
it will be late to counsel then or pray.

Yet if you should forget me for a while  
and afterwards remember, do not grieve;  
For if the darkness and corruption leave  
a vestige of the thoughts that once I had,  
better by far you should forget and smile  
than that you should remember and be sad.

For Everything There Is A Season  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season,  
and time for every matter under heaven:  
A time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and time for peace

How do we know  
Marjorie Pizer

How do we know who is to go,  
Who is to leave this world  
Suddenly, unexpectedly or in long pain?  
There is no saying who will be with us tomorrow  
Or who will be bowed in sorrow.  
O, while you are here,  
Grasp life with both hands  
And pour your passion into living,  
For who knows when you or yours  
May be snatched away,  
Out of the toil and the moil,  
Out of our present existence.

Hard to Remember  
Marjorie Pizer

It is so hard to remember that you are dead.  
At any moment you could walk into the house  
Just as if you had been up the street shopping,  
Or had just finished some writing.  
Despite the fact that I walked with you  
Every inch of the terrible path of your dying,  
Sometimes, still, I cannot remember that you are dead.

My healing  
Marjorie Pizer

I sat in my desolation  
Withdrawn from all around,  
Feeling my life was a ruin, a failure.  
I was empty inside  
With the utter collapse of my being.  
I did not care anymore  
For living or dying.  
I was alone  
In my distress and desolation.  
But as I sat sadly on the ground,  
The sun reached out his hand to me  
And touched my face.  
And so my healing began.

The Existence of Love  
Marjorie Pizer

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.

Coming Home
Marjorie Pizer

I must get used to coming home to an empty house,
To find no welcoming presence waiting for me,
No cosy lights and kettles boiling
For companionable cups of tea.
I loved coming home, knowing that you were there,
Working or writing and awaiting my return,
Both of us equally pleased to see one another.
Now I must become accustomed to coming home to an empty house.

To One Shortly To Die
Walt Whitman

From all the rest I single out you, having a message for you,
You are to die--let others tell you what they please, I cannot prevaricate,
I am exact and merciless, but I love you--there is no escape for you.
Softly I lay my right hand upon you, you just feel it,
I do not argue, I bend my head close and half envelop it,
I sit quietly by, I remain faithful,
I am more than nurse, more than parent or neighbor,
I absolve you from all except yourself spiritual bodily, that is eternal, you yourself will surely escape,
The corpse you will leave will be but excrementitious.
The sun burst through in unlooked for directions,
Strong thoughts fill you and confidence, you smile,
You forget you are sick, as I forget you are sick,
You do not see the medicines, you do not mind the weeping friends,
I am with you,
I exclude others from you, there is nothing to be commiserated,
I do not commiserate, I congratulate you.

Not In Vain
Emily Dickinson

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

You can shed tears...
Arthur Unknown

You can shed tears that she is gone
or you can smile because she has lived.
You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back
or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.
Your heart can be empty because you can't see her
or you can be full of the love you shared.
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.
You can remember her and only that she's gone
or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.
You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes,
love and go on.

Song of Myself
Walt Whitman, 1881

What do you think has become of the young and old men?
And what do you think has become of the women and children?
They are alive and well somewhere,
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,
And if ever there was, it led forward life, and does not wait at the end to arrest it,
And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.
All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.
Has any one supposed it lucky to be born?
I hasten to inform him or her it is just as lucky to die, and I know it.
I pass death with the dying and birth with the new-wash'd babe,
and am not contain'd between my hat and boots,
And peruse manifold objects, no two alike and every one good,
The earth good and the stars good, and their adjuncts all good.

When Death Comes
by Mary Oliver

When death comes like the hungry bear in autumn;
when death comes and takes all the bright coins from his purse to buy me, and snaps the purse shut;
when death comes like the measles-pox;
when death comes like an iceberg between the shoulder blades,
I want to step through the door full of curiosity, wondering:
what is it going to be like, that cottage of darkness?
And therefore I look upon everything as a brotherhood and a sisterhood,
and I look upon time as no more than an idea,
and I consider eternity as another possibility, and I think of each life as a flower, as common as a field daisy, and as singular, and each name a comfortable music in the mouth tending as all music does, toward silence, and each body a lion of courage, and something precious to the earth. When it's over, I want to say: all my life I was a bride married to amazement. I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms. When it is over, I don't want to wonder if I have made of my life something particular, and real. I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened, or full of argument. I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.

Contemporary Blessing  
Mark Frydenberg

May your eyes see the best in all people,  
May your mouth speak wisely,  
May your hands reach out to others,  
May your feet walk the path of your heart's desire.  
May you have the patience to learn, and the spirit to be playful.  
May you have the will to imagine, and the freedom to dream.  
May your life be long and happy,  
May your good name shine,  
May Tradition show you The Way,  
May you find your place in the world.  
May there be love in your heart, and a smile on your face.  
May your days be filled with promise and wonder.  
May God grant you peace.

Next time  
by Mary Oliver

Next time what I'd do is look at the earth before saying anything. I'd stop just before going into a house and be an emperor for a minute and listen better to the wind or to the air being still. When anyone talked to me, whether blame or praise or just passing time, I'd watch the face, how the mouth has to work, and see any strain, any sign of what lifted the voice. And for all, I'd know more -- the earth bracing itself and soaring, the air finding every leaf and feather over forest and water, and for every person the body glowing inside the clothes like a light.

Life goes on  
Author unknown

I won't be far away, for life goes on. Just listen with your heart and you'll hear all my love around you.

There will come a day  
Author unknown

There will come a day when the tears of sorrow will softly flow into tears of remembrance... and your heart will begin to heal itself...