

Feelings



A Best Friend...

Someone who is concerned with everything
you do

Someone to call upon during good and
bad time

Someone who understands whatever you
do

Someone who tells you the truth about
yourself

Someone who knows what you are going
through at all times

Someone who does not compete with
you

Someone who is genuinely happy for you
when things go well

Someone who tries to cheer you up when
things don't go well

Someone who is an extension of yourself
without which you are not complete

MY BEST FRIEND IS YOU.

-- *Sarah Vinion*

Seek God in Troubled Times

Have you ever come down life's highway
And not known which way to go?
And it seemed hard to just carry out the day?
All you have to do is take time out to pray.

It doesn't take much to seek God.
Just go within your soul, where it's quiet in your heart, and start.
It doesn't matter what you say
Because God listens in every way.

The Lord is your friend and will guide you in troubled times until the
end.
So remember going down life's highway,
There's always someone who cares,
Who will hold your hand, help you stand,
And never leave you alone.
Just seek God in troubled times.

-- Sandra Al-Deen

Happiness

I like to be happy.
When I'm happy, I feel good inside.
Happiness makes me feel that I've done something right.
Happiness makes me laugh and enjoy the things I do.
Happiness can take away pain and sadness.
Happiness can make a loved one's sadness turn into happiness.
I'm so happy when my loved ones are happy.
There is no pain in happiness.

-- *Bart Rethmeier (dedicated to his wife)*

Santa's Wife a Missing

'Twas Christmas day and all through the land
"My wife is a missing!" Santa exclaimed as he ran.
The reindeer came home. My sleigh is a fright.
Not a toy to be seen on this cold arctic night.
You see I was too sick on Christmas Eve Night,
So my wife did my job this past Christmas Night.
So off I go, to retrace her steps to learn of her plight
With hopes of her return from this ill-fated flight.

Over rooftops and mountains, Santa did roar.
Down drain spouts and chimneys, through back yards galore.
To Cleveland, he went to check every door.
Then he hit Painesville -- need I say more?
Then I heard Santa loudly proclaim, "I am not leaving 'til I check every
house,
For someone out there knows of my spouse."
The children were screaming with cheers of delight.
"Mom, I see Santa! Oh, isn't he a sight!"

A little girl he spied. She knew of his plight.
"Santa," she said, "may I tell you of your wife and of last night?"
As Santa looked down at the little girl's poor face, there was a tear.
A mouse did appear with squeaks of good cheer.
The little girl scooped up the tiny church mouse,
"Here is a cracker for you and your spouse."
The mouse then quickly scampered away.
For he did not want to be the cat's Christmas dinner that day.

Then the little girl spoke of Christmas Eve Night.
"Mrs. Claus did not have an ill-fated flight.
To Australia she went this bright Christmas day.
Your wife ran off with my Aunt May!"
As the look of dread left Santa's face,
He scooped up the girl in a giant embrace.
"You'll not be poor, not one more day.
A higher education will change your way."

Santa was off leaving behind him the promise that he had made,
There would be enough money for the little girl's coldest of days.
To Australia, he went. Down under I hear.
To check all the cities and small little towns, so I hear.
Santa looked sad, as he slowly sat down.
"I've checked every city and every small town.

I've even checked the sheep farms, not once but twice.
There is not even a trace of my loving wife."

As Santa slowly rose up, a loud crowd he did hear.
"Could it be my wife? Who's singing?" He did hear.
As he looked around Don's Bar he did spy.
"Could it really be the apple of my eye?"
As he stepped inside the hall,
His wife is the party; she's the belle of the ball!
As he stood there with a frown on his face,
Quiet took over the entire place.

"Santa," said she, "you got my note.
Along with the map and directions I wrote."
"What," said Santa, "a note that you wrote?"
There was not even a scrap of paper. Not even a word to be spoke."
"Santa," she said, "it's on the computer.
E-mail is flashing, or can't you read? Do you need a tutor?"
On that sour note, Santa looked down.
In a little boy's voice, he said with a frown.

"I am sorry on the computer I forgot to look.
A little girl told me where to look."
On that note, the band began to play.
The party rolled on until the next day.
Santa said he, "It is time to go.
For I can't dance and I might stub my toe!
The music was great, the food out of sight.
May we meet again on a Christmas night."

With good-byes all said, Santa and wife in a loving embrace,
She asked him, "Why the long face?
Our party is just getting started." Disappearing from sight, I heard
Santa say.
"Ho! Ho! Ho! Up, up and away. With you at my side it's Christmas
every day."
In a loving embrace with a warm tender kiss,
Santa did say, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a good day."

-- Karen Safewright

I Was

A whore
A thief
A liar
Abusive
A sinner
Manipulative
Ignorant
Abused
Skinny

I Am

Sober
A child of good
Blessed
A mother
Free
A sister
A friend
Respectful
Healthy
Me!!

-- *Michelle Spencer*

Fighting

Some fight to get along...
Some fight for freedom...
Some fight for peace...
Some fight for their faith...
Some fight to live...
Some fights are worth fighting for...

Me, I'm tired of all the fighting:
The kicking, biting, hitting, and the name-calling.
What in the Hell am I fighting for?

If I'm not fighting for a good cause, why am I fighting?

I'm not going to stop fighting because now I have something worth fighting for.

I'm going to have to fight for my freedom...

I'm going to have to fight for the right to be with my children.

I'm going to fight. I cannot give up.

Some things are worth fighting for.

My children, my freedom, and the right to live in peace.

-- *Cicely Mason*

Angel of the Lake

Dear Peter,

I know you will be truly surprised in receiving this letter. It has been several years, and we always had an uneasy sense of communication. From that day we met, both seeking summer jobs at the Island House, I knew it would be difficult for me to let go at season's end. Who knows, maybe there were higher forces at work. What caused us both to quit good jobs and head to the lake that summer? It seemed, at that particular point in time, we were both taking unusual directions in our lives.

I still recall that day when you so boldly told me that if I stepped your way, you would take me to the heavens. I realized it was a special time in our lives. Besides being together, we both found, if only for a brief summer, a total peace within ourselves. I so fondly remember those warm moonlit nights on the lake as we used Otto's boat to sail to the Island. How majestically we waltzed under the stars together at the Colonial. How we always savored that last dance of the night, staying later each night hoping to catch the late breeze back to Port Clinton. Navigating only by shadows, with the wind racing through my hair, I will never forget the tranquillity that overcame me. A sensation I had not felt before.

That summer I fell in love twice, once with you and once with the lake. It was a time and place that engulfed us into rapture. Those lazy Sunday afternoons we spent at Sandy Beach. Lying in the warm sun, reading paperbacks, we fell asleep in each other's arms only to be awakened hours later by the cry of the gulls. The late afternoon sun danced on the breakers. As autumn leaves began to appear, we both knew it would be difficult to accept the end of summer as real. It was as though the lake would not release us. Yet somehow, we both sensed a life together was always just beyond our grasp.

There is something I must share with you. If you are reading this letter, it is because I lost my fight against a disease known as spinal meningitis. I tried but I could do no more. Understanding why truly eludes me. Several months ago, the doctors told me it was a path I would be taking. I have tried to close my mind against the inevitable. Before goodbye is said, I must comfort my mind. The summer we shared I now realize has rewarded me with the necessity of my existence. I would now like to introduce you to Ashley, a child as beautiful as heaven could devise who will steal your heart as she stole mine. She is the love we orchestrated that summer. Now three years old, I refer to her as my "Angel of the Lake." She has your moods and my emotions.

Attempting to consider all of my future unknowns, I want you to know that the love I felt for you has never left me. Even as the summer we spent together still stirs within my soul, the angels stand vigil over me. I spend my final days wandering in a place I can only visit in my mind. Please, in the greatest depths of your faith, hold my promise that you will always remember I lived; forget I died.

Love, Laura

P.S. If you should ever return to the lake, this is where you will find me.

The above letter and a photo were left aboard the "Erie Isle" on a late night return trip from Put-in-Bay in the summer of 1936. It was never claimed.

-- *Phil Edwards*

Drifting

I can't tell
What you're thinking.
But I can feel
Our hearts unlinking.

The warmth you filled my
Heart with
When I was feeling cold,
Is no longer inside of me
And things
Are getting old.

I wish you'd loved me as I
Love you.
But now it is too late
To offer a solution
For our hearts are filled
With hate.

A part of me is dying,
The part that loved you.
But it will
Be reborn again
When I
Find someone new.

Love was
What it was about,
But now it's disappeared.
Remember all
The fun we had;
Forget the pain and tears.

For sometime
In the future
When I see
You once again,
I will think of all the
Things we shared
And how
I loved you then.

-- *Tiffney McNicol*

**Maybe Tomorrow I'll Find What I'm After
(A Man In Search of A Love)**

I was young, but now I'm old.
Only half my story has ever been told.
I remember my childhood. I loved this girl
who in many ways rocked my world.
My dream is to find that four leaf clover,
to bear the pain while I pass over.
I asked all the stars in heaven above,
which is the way to my true love?
Through all the suffering, pain, and laughter
maybe tomorrow I'll find what I'm after.

-- Lonnie Littleton

Tranquility Corner

There is a place in my home that I have made my "me space." I call it Tranquility Corner. The change was gradual but not complete. The once bouncy, noisy television audience is on the other side of the room. The traffic from bedrooms, bathroom, and kitchen are all on that side of the house. A huge stone fireplace splits the room, which has given me the privilege of making this once populated corner my very own.

I plop down on my old loveseat-sized sofa. My crochet-looped blankets, sweaters, and pillows are always there to cuddle under and sleep if I choose, or I just sit and look around at my things that surround me. On the back of the sofa sits my stuffed doll; a teddy bear, which, when hugged, vibrates with a comforting heartbeat; Rudolph, whose nose lights up and mouth moves as he sings "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"; and Taz, whose tongue spins as he gurgles.

In front of me stands the table I made myself. Under it is a rocking horse, and on top are musical carousels that turn while they play a tune. On that table, propped up against the wall, is a picture of three little boys leaning against a solid wooden fence with such carefree attitudes that I had to have it as soon as I saw it. It reminds me of my three boys when they were younger. All three wear caps and have rolled-up pant legs. Each one has just flipped a coin and is holding it to the back of his hand, waiting to see who will reveal his heads or tails first. Above this picture on the wall hang red shelves that hold little angels from my collection. A group picture of all five of my children sits there beside a round framed picture plate with a litter of collie pups playing in what once was a basketful of carefully wound yarn. Each pup wears a red kerchief around its neck, and their joy is evident by their perky ears, airborne tails, and the twinkle in their eyes. Next to that cheerful scene is a picture of a little girl standing in the center, her forehead resting against her arm as she leans on the wall. Her baby-doll is on the floor, dropped from her limp hand. Behind her stands her loyal collie. He stands uncertain, with one paw slightly raised, his face turned looking towards the person who has put them in the corner. I can almost hear him asking, "What did we do wrong?"

To my right against the brick wall stand wooden shelves that hold the books I've read and our VCR tapes. On the top of these shelves is a beautiful all-glass carousel my son, Billy, gave to me last year for Christmas. Six horses, each a different color, hang from hooks under the awning. The hooks match the color of the horse suspended from them. I have two lighted figurines that I leave out all year long. They are Christmas decorations, but the soft glow that

comes from Mary, baby Jesus, and the angel are soothing to me. Leaning against the wall stands a picture my mother gave to me. A pink border surrounds a young girl with long blond hair. She wears a blue printed dress with a modest lace bib under her chin. I don't have to see it, but I know there is a big bow tied at the small of her back. She sits on a faded rose sofa edged with wooden arches. She is holding an open book with both hands resting on her knees. A pink ribbon bookmark dangles from the book's crease. An oval frame picture that has to be a portrait of her grandmother smiles down at her from the wall behind the sofa. She is so content and peaceful reading from her book. My mother had this picture for years before giving it to me. She never told me this, my sister did, but Mom says the picture reminds her of me. I'll keep it forever.

I write this sitting at the kitchen table. I keep glancing up to stare longingly toward my corner. I'm ending my long day of house cleaning, chauffeuring, cooking, baking, and washing dishes. When did they promote me to head dishwasher? Within the next few minutes, I shall be in the place that gives me the peace and comfort I so rightfully deserve. Tranquility Corner, here I come!

-- Pam Fiore

Always on My Mind

When you stand looking at the sky of blue,
Think of me, looking at that same sky too.

Even though we are miles apart,
We'll always be together in our hearts.

I don't get to see you as often as I'd like,
But I think about you in the stillness of the night.

You are my sister and my best friend,
And you're always there to lend a hand.

When I'm unhappy, sad, or alone,
You are always there to help me along.

When I see a flower, I think of you.
Its radiance and beauty are so much like you.

So sister of mine, so gentle and kind,
Remember I love you and you're always on my mind.

*-- Mary L. Garrison
This is dedicated to my sister Judy,
who lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee.*

Died for Love

At a park where I dwell, I met a boy I loved so well.
He came and stole my heart from me.
Now this boy hath set me free.
He sat a strange girl on his knee
and told her things he'd never told me.
Now I know the reason why—
because this girl was much prettier than I.
I ran straight home to my bed.
To another not a word I said.
My father came home late that night
and searched for me from left to right.
Then to my door in which he broke,
only to find me hanging from a rope.
He says, "Oh, daughter dear, what have you done?
You've killed yourself for another man's son."
With a knife he cut me down,
and on the dresser a note he found.
"Dig a grave, dig it deep,
marble stone from head to feet,
On this grave please place a dove,
to show the world I died for love."

-- Tavia Lorenzoni