



2025 Poetry Collection

*Thank you to everyone who
shared poems as a way to
remember a loved one.*



GO WITH GRACE

Poem

by Annie Meredith

In loving memory of her Mother-in-Law, Trudy Meredith

Let the lessons they taught you,
the example they led,
and the love they shared
be what pushes you forward.

Let your heart feel more gratitude
than sadness,
Make space for your grief,
honour,
pause and reflect.

but know that
love remains,

I loved you in life and
I love you in death.

In Memory of Trudy

13.03.1948 - 26.08.2024



Coffee and Tears

by Simon Starr

In loving memory of his Wife, Alison Starr



Can I hold your hand again and sit with you today
Always here to listen to what I have to say
I have a cup of coffee with me it's what I always do
But today you are my special date, so I picked one up for you.

I can't tell you what my future holds, but what I know for sure
You're the cause of my disease and I'm happy there's no cure

Yes there's pain, yes there's sorrow, But I'll tell you now, that come tomorrow
My love for you is so much more, than each and every day before.

I'll embrace today for what it is and never doubt the way
You held our hands and held our thoughts and kept our fears at bay.

But your worries never shut you down and you didn't let them win.
Such strength and inspiration and never giving in.

So, tonight I'll dream some crazy dreams and hope that they'll come true.
Just me and you and plans we'll make and the things that we will do.

I'll sit a while and remember your smile and all the golden years.
Please rest until we will meet again for coffee and some tears.



Dad the bird

by **Oliver Bruce**

In loving memory of his Dad, Nigel Bruce



"The kingfisher is dead," they say.
"He used to hang out on the balcony.
Hardly see them in downtown.
But it died last week and someone just took it away."

I'm in a white washed office interviewing for the dream
job at the dream company.
Every conscious indicator suggests I'd be stupid to not
take it.
And yet.

Kingfishers were dad's favourite bird.
He loved their cheek,
Their Song,
their defiantly bright colours.
Indeed, they nested in the cliff on his property, just above
where he died in our arms.

When he went, they started to show up everywhere.
At his memorial,
at the crematorium,
when his first grandchild was born.
Even yesterday, in a kayak in Fiordland far from where I
even knew they existed

Like he was giving me a gentle nudge
That maybe there's more to this life thing
Than what I was taught at school
That maybe, the arrogance to think that our
consciousness just ends when we go
Is so woefully, pitifully, unambitiously explanatory
For the true magnitude and glory of this existence

That maybe the stars radiate love as well as light
That the rocks hum with kindness

That maybe the sea pulsates with tenderness
And the deer and the birds and the fish are present to the
Great Thrum

That maybe, our functional brains are just foggy filters
And we're squinting with our crappy tools
confident that the myopic haze we see before us
Is as clear as mud

That maybe, the 19 grams of consciousness that left my
dads body when he took his last breath
Merged with all energy and light and love
And joined the Great Thrum

And he, with infinite love of a father to a son,
Continues to watch over me,
Nestling into birds as needed
Using them to remind me of what will truly serve my
growth towards the great merge

Back in that office in Auckland,
I took the job,
but like Dad had shown me with the dead bird gag,
it was shit
I found my essence dying on the vine
and quit six months later.

Sometimes courage is loud and strong
And sometimes courage is deep and quiet
Like trusting the universe
And the great thrum
That maybe the divine intelligence that keeps showing
itself,
If I'm still, and pay attention
Is my birthright in the family of things.



Poem

by Anne Curran

drifting grey cloud -
even in your absence
I feel you close
at my side
loving me



Poem

Poem by Michelle Zhao

In loving memory of her sister, Ping

When I saw it again, already over a decade
with joy,
with sorrow.
I stood outside
watched it dropping down in silence,
dampened my hair, blurred my eyes,
the world slowly changed to a fairyland.

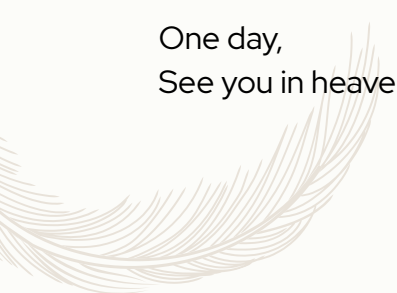
I stretched out my hands and tried to hold it,
but it melted in my palms,
became tears...

I was so lucky to see it,
the first snow of Y2019 in Beijing.
I was so unfortunate to lose you,
In that chilly spring of Y2019.

I will view snow in the future,
somewhere, someday.
But you will never be able to feel it again.

I only wish heaven
also has wind, flowers, snow and moon...
You could enjoy.

One day,
See you in heaven...





Goodbye Dad

Poem by Trish Warnes

In loving memory of her Dad

It's Goodbye Dad. You're leaving us.
Here on Earth we'll miss you. But I know
we'll meet again, and I can hold you again.
You'll be all that you were on Earth,
everything restored, but even better. I hold
that hope in my heart like a piece of you.

Goodbye dear Dad. Thank you for being
just exactly who you were. It's an honour to
have had you and known you. So much of
who I am today is because of what you put
into my life. My love of Maths, fixing things,
and of course, my creative side.

You were reliable Dad, and that helped me,
in the end, to know that God was reliable
too.

You loved babies. And you worked hard.
You made stuff for us. And for our children.
Always well-made and solid. And painted in
the same colours until that leftover paint
ran out!

You fixed our bikes and taught us to
nugget our shoes for school each day.
You grew wonderful vegetables, which we
helped ourselves to and stashed the
evidence down the Playhouse walls! You
tried to help us learn to grow things
ourselves, but they'd usually die through
neglect.

Dear Dad. I sure did irritate you at times.
I think you might have lost your temper
when you chased me down the drive for a
deserved hiding, calling out "You little
monkey!". You didn't catch me that time but
I'm sure I got it when I came back.

The memorable time I deserved a hiding
was when I persuaded M, then about 5
years old, that we needed to run away. It
was a fairly successful attempt if only we
hadn't been spotted by one of your
workmates. I think you and Mum were
pretty worried that time and about to call
the Police. That should have given you an
indication of my propensity for trouble.
But you loved me non-the-less.
Thank you Dad.

Poem

Poem by Vivienne Ball

In loving memory of her sister, Liz Meldrum

This is a poem about my sister Liz who died in October 2024. She was my older sister, and trained as a nurse in Christchurch in the 1960s. I remember her travels as a nurse, going overseas, her coming and going with friends and later many happy times at her home in Australia. I read this poem at her funeral in November 2024.

In the Stillness I think of You

In the late afternoon when the sky is a soft blue –
there's a wind in the air with clouds floating overhead,
and the birds of the air are singing.
It's then I remember those drives inland, over the Canterbury Plains,
towards the foothills and the mountains;
the mountains majestic with strength and beauty.
Then, in the quiet stillness I think of you.

As I look to the mountains I remember your smile,
your hospitality, your generosity;
your home a place of welcome, the door open, the table set,
the silver candelabra with candle lit, the family around,
And most of all the presence of love.

I think of farm, and you are there in my thoughts –
in the countryside, in the gatherings, of people together;
in the walk around a garden, in your love of family.
And in the stillness I think of you.

We miss you each in our own way –
we each feel a sadness,
but we each have hope as we go forward;
for we'll carry with us your smile.
We will live with bright splendour,
with gentle love,
thankful we have walked together; shared our journey.

We'll live our days, thoughtfully, remembering you –
as a young nurse, travelling with friends, as a wife, a mother, sister, a friend,
– as a special grandmother.
We'll remember the dance at a wedding;
the holidays, the exploring and the adventures; the discussions.
And in the stillness we'll think of you

We'll talk of you together, and we'll look back at the mountains with joy –
with new courage.
We will light a purple candle,
and you will be in our hearts always.
Then in the stillness we'll think of you.





Poem

Poem by Marama Diane Winder

Puawai Bay Companions

Dedicated to the memory of our daughter Lisa Marie Winder (1969 – 2020)

One early autumn morning on Puawai Bay,
wild winds thrust a squall onto steel roofs,
drowning out the sobs of a broken heart.

Waves rush toward the silent shore,
breaking the air with sound and rhythm,
bringing some small comfort of familiar
patterns.

I am called to walk the pre-dawn streets,
while trees bend their dark silhouettes
against a grey sky.

Once green and lush,
they are now laden with the crispness of
crimson and gold,
surprising gifts of the beauty of death.

A strong gust shakes them loose
and I am cocooned
in a rain of falling leaves.

Delighted by their gentle kisses and tender
touch,
I lift my hands as they make their way
to a wet ground of being eager for their
nourishing presence.

Wind. Wave. Leaf.

These are my ever-changing companions,
like this shifting grief buried deep within
the tall grass of my secret fortress.

In the distance, the horizon begins to blaze
in streaks of azure, coral and purple
the promise of the palette of a Great
Painter.

Hope rests beside despair.
Day breaks loose of night.
Joy sits alongside grief.

The glory of nature
carries soft clouds
of stillness and solace.

I bow deeply.

I Do Believe In Fairy Tales, I Do!

Poem by Gail Thomson

I'm not a fairy god mother
Not even a fairy
I just listen with my ears
Spot those a little teary

I have a story to share
About a real fairy princess
With rose coloured glasses
She was simply the best

As rumour does have it
This heavenly lady
Was from a leafy valley
In parts a bit shady

T'was said she sang like a bird
Played the piano beautifully
Stitched like a tailor
Painted nature and its serenity

She loved the birds
Put feeders in the trees
Was kind to all
She just liked to please

No, not Cinderella
Nor was she Snow White
She was Sheila, your grandmother
And an absolute delight

She raised a fine family
Worked in the milking shed
Shared her love generously
She really, truly cared

Fortunate were those
Who called upon thee
Oft treated to soup
Or a scone and cup of tea

Some lively discussions
Always on hand
As your Sheila and Jack
Shared their home and their land

They had a good brood
Who continue to multiply
They are talented and creative
One even learned to fly

For those who have inherited
This genetic prowess
Consider yourself fortunate
For you are well and truly blessed

Now in all fairy tales
Comes an end to the song
Sheila's peacefully in heaven
It's where she belongs

From the beauty in your voice
To the love in your soul
Sheila will always be with you
As you test your own goals

If there's a hole in your heart
That makes you feel blue
Best try the glass slipper
It's really Sheila's shoe

Grandroid



Poem by Gail Thomson

If I could build a Grandad
I'd call him Jack
He would be strong and handsome
And wear a woolly hat


He'd wear braces, atop
A flannel check shirt
And on his hands
A fair bit of dirt

I'd paint his hair white
And sweep it to the side
Add a generous grin
Then put dentures inside

He would need big hands
To work with and to hold
He'd be sensitive and caring
Yet brave and bold

He'd be kind and giving
And helpful to the end
And even if a bit grumpy
He could smile and pretend

I'd put fire in his soul
And his fire place too
Each day a new beginning
Another chance to melt the flu




Many foreign languages
He could learn and repeat
But some that I've heard
I may need to delete

A great sense of humour
And a love of rhyme
A sparkle in his eyes
And a disregard of time

A lover of people
A godly drone
He'd work really hard
An excellent clone

Every family needs a Jack
A wonderful patriarch
I'd promote him on You Tube
He'd sure make his mark



I bet he'd go viral
Within a few days
I'd be set to make millions
But not let anyone pay

For the world could be healed
Of its many ills
All we need is more Grandads'
Around our valleys and hills

Stephen, Sir



Poem by Gail Thomson

He is galloping free
The Knight in our dreams
Over the plains
And leaping ravines

Leaving a hole in our world
Of what ifs and sorrow
If only he had shared
Seen the sunshine of tomorrow

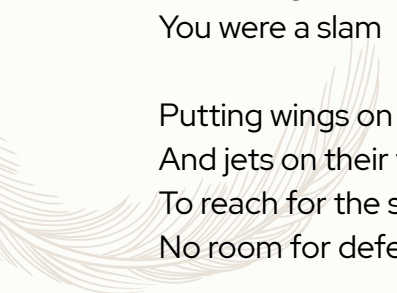
Remember Stephen
With gratitude and love
Be kind to yourselves
When times get tough

For everyone is valuable
Each one unique
Stephen brought out the best
If you hid then he'd seek

We will miss his humour
We will miss his laugh
We will miss his friendship
We will miss his love

Dear Stephen
You were such a great man
As a riding instructor
You were a slam

Putting wings on kids arms
And jets on their feet
To reach for the stars
No room for defeat




Loved by so many
A heart-warming soul
Making everyone feel special
No matter young or old

We shall miss you dearly
And all that you gave
A life coach, a mentor
Helping kids feel brave

We salute you Stephen
As you ride away
May you find your peace
Beyond life's frays

A special thank you to his family
For sharing his life
Oft hardest on himself
And those he loved the most



His spirit is with you
Right now he is here
He's the love in your hearts
And tenderness in your tears

We all have our gifts
To share on life's journey
Love the greatest of all
Surpassing eternity

Clementine



Poem by Gail Thomson

Clementine, Clementine
Where have you gone?
Are you in the trees?
Or perhaps the buzzing bees?
Do you stand upon a hillside looking out to sea?
Or will we find you in the garden with the lettuces and snails?
Perhaps we may find you amongst the wild flowers?
Smiling faces to the sunshine
God's artistic touch
We'll pick some as we think of you
Handle them with care
Respect your sensitivity
With love and with grace
You are everywhere you know
We are all a part of nature
The intuition and the vibes
Are the energy of life
We see you in ourselves
The vulnerabilities we hide
Yes, you are never gone
Just in a different form
Some may see you in the mirror
Others see you in the waves
Or a bird flying free
Your smile never fades
Your energy surrounds us
For we are a part of you
As you a part of we
Life for us, forever changed
Reflections on your journey
Marks left on hearts
Scars, we contemplate
Fly free dear Clementine
On your passage of light
We send our blessings
To guide you on your way



I am here

Poem by El Coloe

Why do you cry my sweet?
I am here
Present in your thoughts
Full of light.

Why do you sigh my dear?
I am here
Beside you in your dreams
Full of life.

Why do you say goodbye my gem?
I am here
Nestled in your heart
Full of love.

I rest inside each day
Tethered to you always.

