

For the Dying by John O'Donohue - excerpted

May your leave-taking be gracious,
Enabling you to hold dignity
Through awkwardness and illness.

May you see the reflection
Of your life's kindness and beauty
In all the tears that fall for you.

As your eyes focus on each face,
May your soul take its imprint
Drawing each image within
As companions for the journey.

May you find for each one you love
A different locket of jewelled words
To be worn around the heart
To warm your absence.

May someone who knows and loves
The complex village of your heart
Be there to echo you back to yourself
And create a sure word-raft
To carry you to the further shore.

May your spirit feel
The surge of true delight
When the veil of the visible
Is raised, and you glimpse again
The living faces
Of departed family and friends.

May there be some beautiful surprise
Waiting for you inside death,
Something you never knew or felt,
Which with one simple touch
Absolves you of all loneliness and loss,
As you quicken within the embrace

For which your soul was eternally made.

May your heart be speechless
At the sight of the truth
Of all your belief had hoped,
Your heart breathless
In the light and lightness
Where each and every thing
Is at last its true self
Within that serene belonging
That dwells beside us
On the other side
Of what we see.