

OUR LAST GOODBYE ON THIS SIDE OF GOODBYE

By Jo Anne Ottosen

Together on this side, we said our last goodbyes
By his side, we revisited our lives before he died
We held each other's hands, together we cried
I've asked myself many times, "Why God, Why?"

From then on I had awakened early each dawn
Realizing I needed to find the way to move on
Acknowledging God's deep love comforting me
His guidance gave me strength in time of need

I found myself weeping in the shadows of night
Yet looking forward to joy found in the daylight
Knowing God's love and closeness was inside me
He calmed my soul and restored my faith in thee

Spring and Summer I never saw them come
Autumn and Winter I never even saw them go
As my life had moved forward and yet, not at all
The Lord held me close so that I wouldn't fall

We were fair with one another doing our share
I found it then hard to start with him not there
Where ever I went, or whatever I planned to do
The experience was very lonely and totally new

My old life was gone, my new life was to start
And where would I begin with my broken heart
No longer could I share with the one I so loved
Fifty-six years together he was my only true love

Our children came, giving me comfort and relief
Taking on his chores, as this was their firm belief
I, with my handicaps, I needed some assistance
Sharing family sorrows they didn't want distance

Between my children, they kept my home clean
They became creative fixing it up until it gleamed
Switching on and off they stayed close to a year
My sorrowful heart was leaving, give me a cheer!

What then happened next, as I was not prepared
My daughter's last moments together we shared
As I cried and was deeply grieved at her bedside
God had taken her to the other side of goodbye

My child's life was over, I then screamed at God
"Why is this all happening?" collapsing, I did sob
"She was your gift from me" God lovingly replied
"Her daddy greeted her from this side of goodbye"

God spoke to me, telling me I must now be strong
For my husband sings with angels, heavenly songs
Your child is also my child, she's where she belongs
You and your son still have time, so now be strong

My identical twin sister came from Tennessee
And she knew I needed someone to be with me
"Let's pray," she took my shaking hands to hold
She stayed until I had gotten myself in control

I love her so, we hugged and then we both cried
After our walk, we then looked upward to the sky
And there above my home, a beautiful rainbow!
It was a sign to us from the other side of goodbye!

I thought "We've had no rain, how can this be?"
My twin, she said, "It's God's gift to you I believe"
Now I know you won't believe this, and that's okay
The rainbow pulsed beautiful colors that day!

I then heard my husband and daughter laughing
From God's heavenly home far up above the sky
I must tell you I humbly thanked God and cried
He's giving me glimpses of His side of goodbye!

My twin, she stayed for two wonderful years
We laughed, we shopped, we met with friends
We quilted, we baked cakes, and played cards
We went to garage sales buying other's discards

The time had come for us to say our goodbyes
She shared with me her secret which was wise
“When I tear, and my tears drop to the ground
Look up to Heaven, a rainbow is to be found”

“Your loving memories are in all the rainbows
And will shine throughout your life,” I was told
“So be open and embrace them. Let them fly
And thank God from this side of goodbye!”

My son kept in touch, we laughed, and we cried
Like his father, he told me he’s right by my side
Never will I be alone and this I must believe is so
Our families love each other and this we all know

My son and his wife now needed some time alone
When ready to stay with them, he’d sell my home
The day arrived when I had my things packed to go
And we shared stories that took place here long ago

My husband and I chose our love to go on forever
“Our life” now is over, and yet were still together
I remember he told me he would be very close by
Not in front, nor in back, always right by my side

I thanked God for this opportunity to openly grieve
It helped bring closure to my inner self that I need
It helped me review our life on this side of goodbye
God shared, “Your Love is waiting for you on this side”

Once again let me express my sincerest gratitude
For this rare opportunity to share with all of you
When in deepest moments of your sorrowing soul
On both sides of goodbye God’s hand is near to hold