

EVER SINCE YOU'VE LEFT

“Ever Since You’ve Left”—The person that I had once loved had left me, and my life seemed all turned upside down. Daily tasks of life were almost too hard to accomplish. Nightly tasks, like sleep, were just as hard. What an awesome power there is in love. It can make a violent man calm, an angry man happy, shy person confident, a confident person fearful and, when lost, make any man lonely and sad.

**Ever since you’ve left,
my world has been upside down.
I’ve been telling myself it will soon get better,
but what is better than having you around?**

**I can’t sleep at night,
and I can’t wait for each day to end.
My dreams are becoming shorter,
and loneliness is my only friend.**

**Your picture on the wall haunts me,
and sometimes I can feel its stare.
The memories in each room are overwhelming,
almost too much to bear.**

**Sometimes, at night, I reach to hold your body,
but there is only the empty space that I’ve saved for you.
Who would have ever thought that holding nothing
would be such a hard thing to do?**

“Don’t Tell Me”—When I wrote this poem, I was going through something that no one around me had gone through. Today, I am unable to remember what exactly that thing I was going through was. All that I knew was that I was growing increasingly tired of people trying to console me by telling me that they understand my pain. I didn’t hate them for trying. I just wanted them to stop trying to comfort me by trying to become a partner with me in my pain. It was my pain alone, and I didn’t need anyone trying to minimize that fact.

DON'T TELL ME

**Don't tell me about the joy of winning
until you've felt what it's like to lose.
Don't tell me that you understand
until you've walked a day in my shoes.**

**Don't tell me that you love me.
Don't tell me that you care.
Don't tell me about friendship
if I need you and you're never there.**

**Don't tell me about desperation
until you are stripped of everything you need.
Don't tell me about pain
until you've been stabbed and left to bleed.**

**Don't tell me about fear
until you've slept on the streets at night.
Don't tell me that you understand violence
if you've never been in a fight.**

**Don't tell me about sorrow
until you've watched a loved one die.
Don't tell me about anything.
I don't care to hear you lie.**

“My First Father’s Day”—My wife, Patricia, and I weren’t sure if we would ever have children of our own. I was in my early forties, and she was in her late thirties, and as most would sadly agree, our bodies were getting closer to the years when child birth is no longer an option or, at least, not something considered worth undertaking. Because of complications with both of us we had to see a fertility specialist to get help with conception. Actually, the conception part was already in God’s hands, and he was well under control with that part of the process; we just needed assistance getting the sperm and the egg to meet. The process was long for me and even longer for Patricia as she so much wanted to be a mother. Me, of course, I wanted to be a father. By the title of this poem, you know that Patricia became pregnant and that we both waited the nine months of pregnancy which seemed to take well over a year, at least in our minds.

Charlie Lux Meier was born on March 30 of 2011. He was so small and so beautiful. The first time that I held him, I was speechless except for saying, “Hi, Charlie” and “I love you” and “I’m your daddy” over and over again. Those three phrases seemed to be all that would come out of my mouth for at least ten minutes. I drove home from that hospital both quickly and as safe as any one person possibly could. I drove quickly because I couldn’t wait to get our baby boy home to be able to look at him and talk to him and kiss him. I drove safely because I had a precious cargo worth more than all the gold and precious jewels the world could provide.

Needless to say to any of you parents, the first months were some of the most joyous and tiring months of our entire lives. Charlie just kept getting more and more adorable as the months went by. I couldn’t wait for Father’s Day to come because I knew that it would be my first. When Father’s Day did finally arrive, Charlie was only just turning three months old. He was unable to speak or even crawl. I changed his diapers that morning, and I dressed him in his yellow pajamas with the duck on the left breast and the duck faces on each of the feet. He loved to suck on the back of his little baby fist rather than to suck his thumb. Thus, I was constantly wiping slobber from his face and his fist. I did, however, leave the slobber from daddy’s kisses on his cheek! I love my son so much and I am, and will always be, proud to be his father.

MY FIRST FATHER’S DAY

“Happy Father’s Day”

**He didn’t say it, he just swung his arms and kicked his feet.
I rubbed his tummy, closed my eyes,
and thought to myself, “Isn’t this neat?”**

**My son, Charlie, in his little ducky pajamas
lying on my lap and sucking on the back of his little baby fist.
I smile as I wipe the moisture
off of the cute chubby cheek that I just kissed.**

**It is my first Father’s Day, and I have all that I could ever want.
I have all of that and more.
And here she comes walking down the hall,
my wife of three years, whom I love and adore.**

**Three months ago I looked forward to this moment.
A little over a year ago, I didn’t know if it would ever be.
Here... Right now... At this time...
No one is as lucky as me.**

“Death Has No Victory Over Me”—One of my best friends, Frank Ashley, passed away. Frank died of cancer. I was one of the lucky people who had the privilege of studying the Bible with Frank to help him become a disciple. Frank was so grateful to God to have his sins forgiven, and he was so in love with God that rather than let cancer discourage him he took the hard times with a smile, looking forward to better days ahead. Frank suffered much pain from cancer before it finally took his life, but no matter how much pain was caused, Frank Ashley was victorious!



Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)

DEATH HAS NO VICTORY OVER ME

**I am hurting but I am happy,
for each hurt makes me enjoy each moment that I am well.
My terminal illness has given me a gift
that I would never ever sell.**

**It is the gift of contentment.
It is the ability to smile at the world while it cries back at you.
It is knowing that no matter how rough it gets
that the story that God has written is the best one for you.**

**These cloudy and rainy days
just make me more eager to feel the warmth of the sun.
The daily pains of my sickness don't make me sad
but, rather, bring me encouragement for my days to be done.**

**If I were given blindness, it would be just a small complication
and only for a moment because someday I would see.
This cancer's sting is but a little prick from a needle
for the death it will bring has no victory over me.**

* In memory of Frank Orr Ashley