

ON SATURDAY MORNING A CHILD STAYS IN BED

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There was a moocow coming down the road.
And this moocow that was coming down the
road...
was beautiful.

It was all red with white stripes and a pink
bow tie. "Stranger things have happened," I
heard my mother say from the kitchen window.

I was upstairs, still in bed, gazing out the
far window. It was Saturday morning, and I
always stayed in bed awhile on Saturday morning.

"Will you be rising today?" my mother
called up from the stairwell. She didn't wait for
an answer. She was used to my habit by now.

After the cow had passed my window, I
heard a wonderful chorus of tiny-lipped redtails
singing in the tree next door. So sweetly did
they sing I thought the angels had come to visit
me.

My attention soon turned to the grain on the wooden door near my bed. There in the stain of the varnish I saw an image of Jesus rising. His arms were spread outward and upward with his palms facing up toward the heavens. His thin, rising body was white, and his white robes were like light at his sides.

Sometimes when I look at the stain it looks like Jesus hanging on the cross, the reddish-brown wood like his blood. Other times, or sometimes the same time, it looks like Jesus rising from the dead.

It is a wonderful gift from my Lord.

Then I look at the flowers on my sheet, all shapes and sizes and blooming... In the yellow and orange I feel the newness of the day. I thank the Lord for the gift of life, and I pray he will always watch over me.

What more could a child ask for. Nothing more could a child need. And the angels are singing in heaven.

Saturday morning! What a wonderful time!
Nothing to do. Nowhere to go. Just relax and
think and pray.

O Lord, I wish life were one long Saturday
morning. I'd never need to worry anymore. I'd
never need to fret. O to bask in the reverie of
an endless Saturday morning!

I've always prayed for peace. Always
wanted the world and all people to live in peace.
And here in my room on a Saturday I can almost
believe it is so. Even now.

The sound of bustling downstairs could not
intrude on the blessed peace and wonder I felt
as I lay in my bed this Saturday morning. All I
could hear was the voice of the angels and the
Lord.

Then, as I turned and propped my head
upon the pillow, something new appeared before
my eyes.

Through the window the light was cast upon the carpet in the shape of a large heart. The wind had drawn the edge of the curtains up onto the sill, and the sun was so positioned that it shone through the bunched curtains as a radiant heart.

The light of the heart bled out beyond its edges so that the heart itself seemed to shine out like the sun. The rays would touch the edge of my bed as the wind lightly moved the curtains back and forth...

I crawled out of my bed and lay myself down at the center of the heart with my arms spread out and the sun shining on my body and face. The wind lightly caressed me as I lay on the floor... Then a redtail swooped down and landed on the sill, chirping a song which seemed intended only for me.

As the shadow of his form passed my face I looked up and saw him land at the edge of the curtain. He looked at me and sang with an innocent joy that seemed to reach to the heavens.

This was a special day!

"O the Lord wants you so much. He offers so much, wants to give you so much. If only you would open your eyes, open your ears, open your hands and take what the Lord offers."

This is what the bird said to me in his song. And as he sang I felt a lightness overtake me... and I felt as if I was in the hands of the Lord, as if God were holding me in his own arms and carrying me away to the clouds in the sky...

I opened my eyes and I was lying on the carpet. There was a commotion in the hallway as my brother and sister laughed and ran from room to room, singing songs and sliding across the floor.

Their fun was infectious, and I found myself smiling and laughing lightly as they passed through the house in a whirl. These two were like twins.

Mom called the "twins" to come outside and help to wash the dog, so silence soon returned to the house. As wonderful as their noise had been, the quiet now seemed even more marvelous. It was a beautiful audible silence that filled my room - a silence I could taste.

I rose up from the floor and began to lightly spin in circles with my arms spread out and my head bowed. I felt as if I could fly. I felt as if I were rising. I felt wonderful.

I listened to the silence and the little noises I made as I spun, and I thought of course of Jesus - and I smiled. I thought of a crown of thorns upon my head, and I could feel only love... love in my heart, love in my legs, love in my smile... and I spun in circles, lightly in circles, with my arms spread out and reaching to the sky.

O such blessing! Such wonderful blessing!
Such perfection in God! Such perfection in being
with God!

I began spinning faster and faster, and soon I found myself lying on my back on my bed, a little dizzy but filled with joy, and smiling.

I lay still for a moment, to catch my breath, then I reached over to my night table for the book I was reading. The book began, "There was a moocow coming down the road..."* I loved the way the author called the cow a "moocow". And I began to think of "baasheep" and "meowcats" and "hooowls"... And my mind became quite dreamy.

And I found myself on a farm with red-and-white cows and blue sheep and yellow cats and birds that sang with human words. I walked around and looked at all the wondrous animals, and trees in the shapes of buildings, and I couldn't imagine where I was.

I walked toward a lake with the greenest water and as I dipped my foot into it, it turned the brightest orange. And I had orange hands to go with my orange feet. Wow!

* Inexact quote from James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

I began to run and splash the water, and everywhere were rainbows of color swishing by. I paused for a family of pink ducks to pass by... then I began again - running faster and splashing rainbows around more quickly.

I fell into the multicolored water and began to swim toward the bottom. Fish with big cheeks and bodies made of cheese passed by and rolled their eyes at the silly sight of me, but I continued to swim toward the bottom of the lake.

When I got to the bottom I came up on top - I must have swum to the other side of the world!

I stood near the shore of a sea. Waves were lapping up against my calves, and there was a boat some distance away. People were boarding the boat and I called to a man to ask him where they were going. "To the other side," he said without hesitation.

Suddenly, a spray of water splashed across my face. "Hey!", I cried as I jumped from my bed. Apparently instead of spraying the dog, one of the 'twins' had been washing the house with the hose and some of the water mysteriously found its way into my room.

Mom quickly grabbed the hose from my darling brother and began spraying both twins. They shrieked and ran about the yard as the cold water wet their feet, their legs, then their backs and heads. Mom was laughing with glee and I rooted her on from the window.

Mom's attention soon returned to rinsing the dog, who had been chasing the twins around the yard, and I soon returned to my bed and wiped off my face. I set aside my book and picked up my little journal. I began to write about all the things that had happened already today, and about the marvelous dream I had had. There was so much to say I could hardly remember it all.

There was the cow, the door, the shining heart and the bird singing... and the day had hardly begun. What more, what more could the day hold in store, for a boy so ready for blessings? Just then I heard a soft, still whisper - a voice I had never heard before.

It spoke so sweetly and so clearly I couldn't imagine who it might be. It was like the voice of a dear friend. And it was speaking directly to me.

Suddenly I realized it was the Lord, it was the voice of the Lord speaking to me! His voice was soothing as running water or the sound of the rain. He spoke quietly in my ear, calling me as his own child.

I answered, "I am here, Lord."
And he said to me, "I am pleased."

I was overjoyed at this blessing of peace the Lord was giving me; I was so happy I started to laugh. The Lord turned not away from me, but smiled in approval of this.

O this was wondrous!

And then he said to me, "Listen for my voice in all you hear, in all you see and touch. Never will I be far from you; my blessings will be with you forever."

Then the pen in my hand began to glow, as did also my paper. And I realized the Lord was calling me to write down my wonderful visions. He was blessing me and the things I see and asking me to tell them to others.

O what a feeling of peace I received! O what a sense of joy! To know that the Lord wanted me and what he wanted me to do.

This was my soul I was receiving. This was my life and my joy. This was indeed a blessed calling, a special anointing by the Lord.

"Remember my words," he said to me as he left my presence this day. (But never did he really leave, for he remains with me always.)

I immediately sat up on the bed (for I had fallen to my knees upon hearing Christ's voice) and began to write all He said and that had happened. I could hardly write fast enough, lest I forget anything at all...

After a while I slowed down some, and began to think with more deliberation. I thought carefully through all I remembered and checked if anything was missing. But nothing more could I add, nothing more could I say - how else can one convey such a thing?

Soon I was satisfied with all I had written, and I lay back on my bed - my book and pen set aside. The peace and comfort I felt could only have come from the Holy Spirit himself. Nowhere else does one derive such blessing.

So I lay as if floating on a cloud above myself, my body being blessed with truth and light. Nothing did I need, no pain could I feel; only the Lord's love and True Spirit were with me.

This must be what they mean in Church when they talk about your "soul". Because now I could feel the Spirit of Truth deep in my being, filling my lungs, filling my life with its warmth. At that moment I loved everything, I could touch everything, I could taste everything... in my soul.

The Lord had taken from me all judgment, all question, all doubt - and I was afraid of nothing. I yielded myself up to the Spirit and heeded His call to service in the Lord; I had found myself in God.

"Thank you, Jesus! Thank you, Jesus!" (And he smiles upon me as I thank him.) "Thank you for your love. Thank you for your life. Thank you for being here with me. And please never leave me alone."

And I know he'll always be here. I know he'll always watch over me. I know I never need to fear, I never need to doubt; His love will be upon me till the end of time.

(Thank you, Lord.)

Oh, what more could I say! What more could there be to tell? The Lord's true light blesses me in all I say, in all I write, here, on this page.

Praise the Lord, indeed! Praise all his mighty works, his mighty deeds! Praise all He is and all He does, now and forever! Till the end of time I shall praise the Lord with all my might.

I had almost forgotten where I was when a little knock came on the door. "Come in!" I said quickly, and I sat up in my bed.

My baby sister poked her head inside the room and said, in her best English, "Got get ready now."

"O.K.," I said, not knowing just what she meant as she left and closed the door. I was sure she meant something important, and I was sure I would find out soon enough what had led her to my door with such an intent look and purposeful message.

Indeed I did begin to move myself toward getting dressed and ready for the day. I went to my closet and opened the doors, intending to choose my clothes. But then through my window I heard music begin to play in the distance.

It sounded like many instruments in a very large band, and the sound was entirely new to me. I stepped to the window, knelt on the carpet, and rested my head on my hands on the sill, as I listened to the music play.

The music was happy and festive and very loud - it seemed to be coming from the park several blocks away. As I listened to it waft through the air, I looked around at the colors and shapes of the buildings and trees. The leaves of the trees were not only green, but yellow and blue and orange. In fact, in the sun and the shade they seemed to cover all the colors of the rainbow.

I had never noticed before all the different colors all around me. The colors themselves seemed to take on a life of their own.

As I gazed out the window I felt myself wanting to fly through the air around the trees. I could sense myself soaring freely through the breeze and gliding above the branches. I could taste in my mouth what it would be like to be in the sun amongst the color of the leaves.

The music began to grow and change, and I could start to hear voices also in the distance. What could it be that sounded so wonderful and so inviting?

Down the street I saw my friend and his family coming out of their house together and climbing into their car. The children all seemed especially happy as they scurried into the back seat and bounced up and down in glee.

Then another friend and his family came pouring out of their house and piled into their car. And other people from a block or two away I saw walking up my street in groups - all heading toward the music in the distance.

Whoosh! The wind kicked up and began blowing the curtains and my hair around. Some papers near the window were also being blown about, so I moved from the window to gather them up. As I went to place them under my book, I noticed some of the writing.

I sat on the bed and began to read the papers to myself. They were poems I'd written a while ago, and I smiled to myself as I remembered them.

There were my thoughts on love and images of heaven - what it would be like to live in the perfect place. Some were prayers, some were blessings, and some were questions about life. Of all the words that were scribbled there, these stood out to me the most:

"In the end,
When to heaven we go,
This will be needed no more...

All that will matter is the light of Christ,
The light of Christ is all we'll see -
And the Lord will dwell in me."

I placed the papers under my book and saw the light on my hands and felt the wind at my back. I knelt down by my bed and began to pray. As I prayed I felt the Lord's sincerity and humility. I prayed in earnest to the Lord, the Holy Spirit near me.

"O Lord, today I feel your calling. I feel you placing a pen in my hand and beckoning me to write. This I do with happiness, this I do with glee. Only, Lord, please remain ever near your servant, always guide my hand. Let all that is written be of you."

I bowed my head in silence for several moments, feeling the Spirit of Truth in my lungs. I tried to swallow and breathe deep the Holy Spirit's blessing...

As I raised my head my eyes fell upon a picture of Jesus on my wall. His eyes fixed upon me with the deepest love and the fondest expression. (Jesus is the shepherd of my soul.)

O Father, thank you for sending your Son to us; thank you for sending your Son to me. He is the true image and likeness of you - only He can lead us home.

And in heaven someday we will be. Someday we'll be living in perfection, in your presence forever. Father, let us be there soon, let us know Jesus brings us there now.

In the heavenly light of the Father, His name written in our souls, etched upon our hearts... in this kingdom there will be no end, to the joy it brings.

O LORD, O Heavenly Father and King, let us never fall short of you, let us never return from where we've come. For you have brought us out of darkness into light by the grace of your Son.

And now his face leads us forth, now his holiness shines before us, showing us the way to life. Praise you, God! Praise you, Father! Praise your Son!

Suddenly a cleansing rain began to fall in my room. The raindrops, the water, falling all around me were washing me cleaner than I'd ever been, cleaner than I'd ever known anyone could be.

And the rain was falling right through me, through my skin and through my bone... through my very being, into my heart and soul. And it was cleansing my lungs and cleansing my blood, cleansing my lips and my toes - and nothing else could quite compare to this marvelous shower.

What can I say? The rain continued to fall for what seemed some time, until all my being was pure. My body it felt like new by the time the rains had abated.

And I knew that the rain was the blood of Christ, filling up my room. And I was swimming in the ecstasy of Christ, in His holy flesh and blood, in His holy presence. And nothing in my room was wet, but I had been washed clean.

And so is God everywhere, in everything and everyone. God has ears to hear all that is spoken, all sound that is made; and God has eyes to see all that is done, all that is. God is everywhere, in everything and everyone.

God hears your heart beating, and your lungs breathing. God knows all your thoughts and intentions. God sees all you do, wherever you do it, for we are living in God.

And I heard the patter of the cat's feet, as she walked across the floor. I heard the clock ticking, and the pen writing upon the paper...

And I saw the graceful motions of the cat as she inspected the room. I saw the blue of my walls, and my hand moving across the page...

And I knew that all these things God did also see and hear, and also so much more. For God is everywhere, in everything and everyone; and everything he sees and hears, everything he knows.

Crash! Bam! Boom!

The sound of the music grew louder and louder. Trumpets were blaring. Cymbals were clashing. And the voices of people were rising.

I lay on my bed, listening to the sounds from out my window and thinking about how all things come to be. I thought of all the sights and sounds at any fair, the sights and sounds that are always around... and the quiet heart of me.

I could feel the stillness inside of me even as I listened, and looked around. What awesome wonder I knew as I lay and meditated on life.

God was speaking in my soul, the Word from which all comes, and his creation was surrounding me, in the sound of the trumpets and drums. Inside and out I felt complete, as I continued to lay in wonder.

To think of things is certainly marvelous to do. To look at your hands and look at your feet and see your fingers and toes. To see the sun rise over the sea, and go back down again. To know all of the things that are a blessing of God and wonder at His creation.

And all things have a purpose. There are three parts to my fingers, three parts to my arms and legs... and so I can move and do things. But there are no joints in my head, which leads me around, or in my torso - which holds me up and keeps me in place.

I thank God for all of these gifts given to me, and all that he has done. How could I write without my hands? I could not see without my eyes, nor hear without my ears. How could we live without the sun in the sky and the rain that grows the food from the earth. Not a breath could we take without our God to give it to us.

There was much rumbling coming from downstairs. Something was up with my family.

I thought I heard someone come to the door to deliver a message of some kind. Then I heard my mother tracking down the twins, trying to get them dressed. They hooted and hollered as they often do, but today they seemed in rare form.

The hustle and bustle of downstairs prompted me out of bed again and over to my closet. This time I managed to choose clothes for the day and spread them on my bed.

As I dressed I hummed a song to myself about the Lord's creation. I watched as my hands pulled on my pants and proceeded to button my shirt.

Everything seemed quite wonderful today, and in all I took great joy. Nothing was mundane, as even my socks were shining.

Once dressed I sat up on my bed and leaned against the headboard. I sat relaxed and at peace with all around me. Breathing quietly I looked around the room at all the things which surrounded me.

Everything there seemed to take on purpose and life. It all seemed to be a reflection of me - as if I were looking in a mirror. And of each and every thing a story could be told. Even seemingly discarded objects held special meaning to my life.

And the mirror told me who I was. And the mirror told me who had been there, what had gone before there.

And the mirror was a true mirror. The mirror held no lies. There was no pretension there. All that was had purpose and life, all that was told a tale, a tale of truth and life. From the rug on the floor to the cracks in the walls and the ceiling with its lines, all spoke a tale humble and true, a tale with no lies.

It seemed quite some time that I read the story of my room, though only a few moments went by. And as I sat I again felt my soul, at the heart and yet apart from my room. (The things that surround us are only our reflection - we go much deeper than that.)

And my soul began to float, as often it does when I'm in this reverie of mind. And inside I began to dance, with love filling my heart. And as I floated round the room, looking all about, I noticed much I'd never seen before.

The view from the ceiling, looking down at the floor, is one that is really quite breathtaking. And as I climbed onto my dresser to get this view from above, everything began to look quite new. (For I had never seen that before, certainly never that way.) And all my senses seemed quite refreshed to be looking from a new perspective.

Somewhat astounded I sat for awhile, poised upon the dresser. Then, after walking upon and around other pieces of furniture, I returned to lay in my bed.

I closed my eyes and relaxed all my muscles and felt a tingling in my spine. It went from the tips of my fingers to the tips of my toes, and coursed throughout my veins. The day, I'm afraid, had begun to quite overwhelm me.

I caught my breath and concentrated for a moment, till I could feel myself returning. I opened my eyes and looked at the ceiling, waiting for what would happen next. The Lord only knows what he could do for a boy so ready for blessings.

Finally, I was roused from my bed by another call from my mother. "C'mon, Lochlin, we're going to the circus. They've got rides and games, and a red cow with white stripes and a pink bow tie."