

A Crabby Old Man

When an old man died in the geriatric ward of a small hospital near Tampa Florida , it was believed that he had nothing left of any value.

Later, when the nurses were going through his meager possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital.

Remember this poem when you next meet an older person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within.....we will all, one day, be there, too!!!!

A Crabby Old Man

What do you see, nurses?
 What do you see?
What are you thinking?
 When you're looking at me?
A crabby old man.
 Not very wise,
Uncertain of habit.
 With faraway eyes.
Who dribbles his food
 And makes no reply.
When you say in a loud voice,
 "I do wish you'd try!"
Who seems not to notice
 The things that you do,
And forever is losing
 A sock or shoe?
Who, resisting or not,
 Lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding,
 The long day to fill?
Is that what you're thinking?
 Is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, nurse,
 You're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am
 As I sit here so still,
As I do at your bidding,
 As I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of ten
 With a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters
 Who love one another.
A young boy of sixteen
 With wings on his feet
Dreaming that soon now
 A lover he'll meet.
A groom soon at twenty
 My heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows,
 That I promised to keep.
At twenty-five now,
 I have young of my own,
Who need me to guide them

 And a secure happy home.
A man of thirty,
 My young now grown fast,
Bound to each other
 With ties that should last.
At forty, my young sons
 Have grown and are gone,
But my woman's beside me,
 To see I don't mourn
At fifty once more,
 Babies play 'round my knee,
Again we know children,
 My loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me,
 My wife is dead,
I look at the future,
 I shudder with dread.
For my young are all rearing.
 Young of their own ,
And I think of the years
 And the love that I've known.
I'm now an old man
 And nature is cruel;
Tis jest to make old age
 Look like a fool.
The body, it crumbles,
 Grace and vigor depart,
There is now a stone.
 Where I once had a heart.

But inside this old carcass
 A young guy still dwells,
And now and again,
 My battered heart swells.
I remember the joys,
 I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living
 Life over again.
I think of the years
 All too few, gone too fast,
And accept the stark fact.
 That nothing can last.
So open your eyes, people,
 Open and see,
Not a crabby old man
 Look closer.... see, ME!!