

Ring Around the Poesy

A Cycle of Children's
Poems & Illustrations

*Written & Illustrated
by Gerhild Krapf*

*Book Design
by Nicole Bruse*

*Printed by CreateSpace
an Amazon.com Company*



Iowa City

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ISBN-13: 978-1499581362

This book is available for purchase at the following url:
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Dedications

In loving memory of my father, Gerhard Krapf, who gilded my childhood with his fantastical, fairy tale poems; and to my mother, Gertrud Krapf, from whom I learned how to spin straw into gold, in honor of her 90th Birthday.

Special thanks to my daughter, Nicole Bruse, for the exquisite thoughtful design, for the book title idea, and for countless and varied wise insights and contributions to this little book project.

Finally, deepest thanks to my husband, Michael Brau, for his endless patience and support in all things. He makes my life possible.

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Volume I



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Fairy Children's Land



In the Fairy Children's Land

Do my friends walk hand in hand? Maybe he and Tinker Bell
Do the Seven Dwarfs have tea Pull the Wolf out of the well?
With the Princess and the Pea? Yes, in Fairy Children's Land
Does Little Red Riding Hood All are friends and life is grand.
Walk the woods and share her food We can learn this from our friends:
With Three Bears & Goldilocks? How to come to happy ends.
Maybe Snow White's darning socks Holding hands and helping out—
For the Beanstalk's little Jack; That's what life is all about.
And when Peter Pan gets back

Our A, B, C's



A, B, C, and one, two, three,

Stars are shining down on me; Yet God knows well who they are;
Four, five, six, and D, E, F, *Sixteen and S, T, and U,*
Countless stars the heavens have; Just as He knows me and you;
Ten, eleven, J, K, L, *Sev'nteen, V, X, Y, and Z,*
More than we can grasp or tell; All things the Divine does see;
Twelve and thirteen, M, N, O, *Eighteen, nineteen and twenty,*
More than we can ever know; And He shelters *you* and me.
Fourteen, fifteen, P, Q, R,

Rain



Oh, how lovely is the drumming

That accompanies my humming, Knowing everything is right.
As we sit here warm and cozy, Like this earth-renewing rain,
With a fire burning rosy, Flowing from the skies again,
In the fireplace at home. We are blessed with boundless Love
As it crackles like a poem, Show'ring down from God above.
And the sky outside is grey, We are sheltered, in God's sight,
On this dark and rainy day, Every day and every night.
We're contented, feeling light,

Bouquet



Roses, daisies, daffodils!

Summer flowers give us thrills!

Red and yellow, purple, pink—

Lovely colors, don't you think?

Cobalt larkspur happens, too—

Such a stunning shade of blue.

Mauve and violet, orange, green—

Blossoms, all, that must be seen.

Dandelions, trillium,

Asters and delphinium,

Sweet pea, poppies, peonies—

We love seeing all of these!

Moon and Sun



Long the night, and dark it was.

Now, the dawn will come, because
Father Moon has shut his eyes,
And silent on his pillow lies.

Mother Sun wakes up and blinks
Yawning, stretching then, she thinks
“It is time to start the day.

I must hurry on my way!”
Clamping glasses on her nose—
A final ending to repose—
Curtain clouds pushed to the side,
She’ll soon over day preside.

Time to waken sleepyheads

Who are lying in their beds.
Mother Sun sends golden rays—
Always at the dawn of days—

Warming, gently, all God’s creatures—
Lighting up their precious features,
Telling them that day’s begun

And that there’s much to be done!
Then, when day comes to an end,
Father Moon presides instead.

Thank you, God, for Moon and Sun!
Thank you, God, for Everyone!

The Mouse



Sat a Mouse

By his house	And did hide.
On the ground.	Now inside,
And the sound	In his house,
From his munching	Sat the mouse,
And his crunching	On the floor,
Of his food	Like before.
That was good	And his munching
Filled the air	And his crunching
Everywhere.	Of his food
Came a cat,	That was good
Saw the rat,	Made a sound
Tried to pounce,	All around
But the mouse	In the air
Fled the paw	Everywhere.
That he saw	

A Riddle



High and pointy is this thing—

Wiry, bouncing like a spring.

First a *whack* right in your face,

From this thing, at quite a pace!

Then a turn and *whoop* it goes—

This one landing on your nose!

Now the coffee cup is near.

It is treasured, old and dear,

Sitting on the coffee table.

Please protect it, if you're able!

No, the scythe—it marches on—

With a *whoosh* the cup is gone—

To the floor, and smashed to bits.

My, oh my, this gives us fits!

What is it that's so destructive—

And so often interruptive?

Side to side that thing does flail—

You are right—it's doggy's tail!

Another Riddle



On his back he holds his home,

Green and rounded like a dome.
It's his shelter from the rain
Right until there's sun again.
He can stop and rest, you see,
And bring his feet for company
When there's nothing else to do,
And his head can join them, too—

In his happy little home,
Green and rounded like a dome.
What is it that moves so slow?
Surely one of you must know.
Bravo! You have jumped the hurdle.
Yes, indeed, he is a turtle!

Who?



Who is calling you?

Who, who, who?	“And you’ll help me, too?”
“I am in a stew,”	Who, who, who?
Who, who, who?	“Yes, it’s truly true!”
“I have lost my shoe,”	Who, who, who?
Who, who, who?	“Thank you for my shoe!”
“Yes, it’s really true,”	You, you, you!”
Who, who, who?	Who, who, who?
“What am I to do?”	“Owl is thanking you!”
Who, who, who?	Who, who, who?
“Is it really you?”	“You, you, you!”
Who, who, who?	

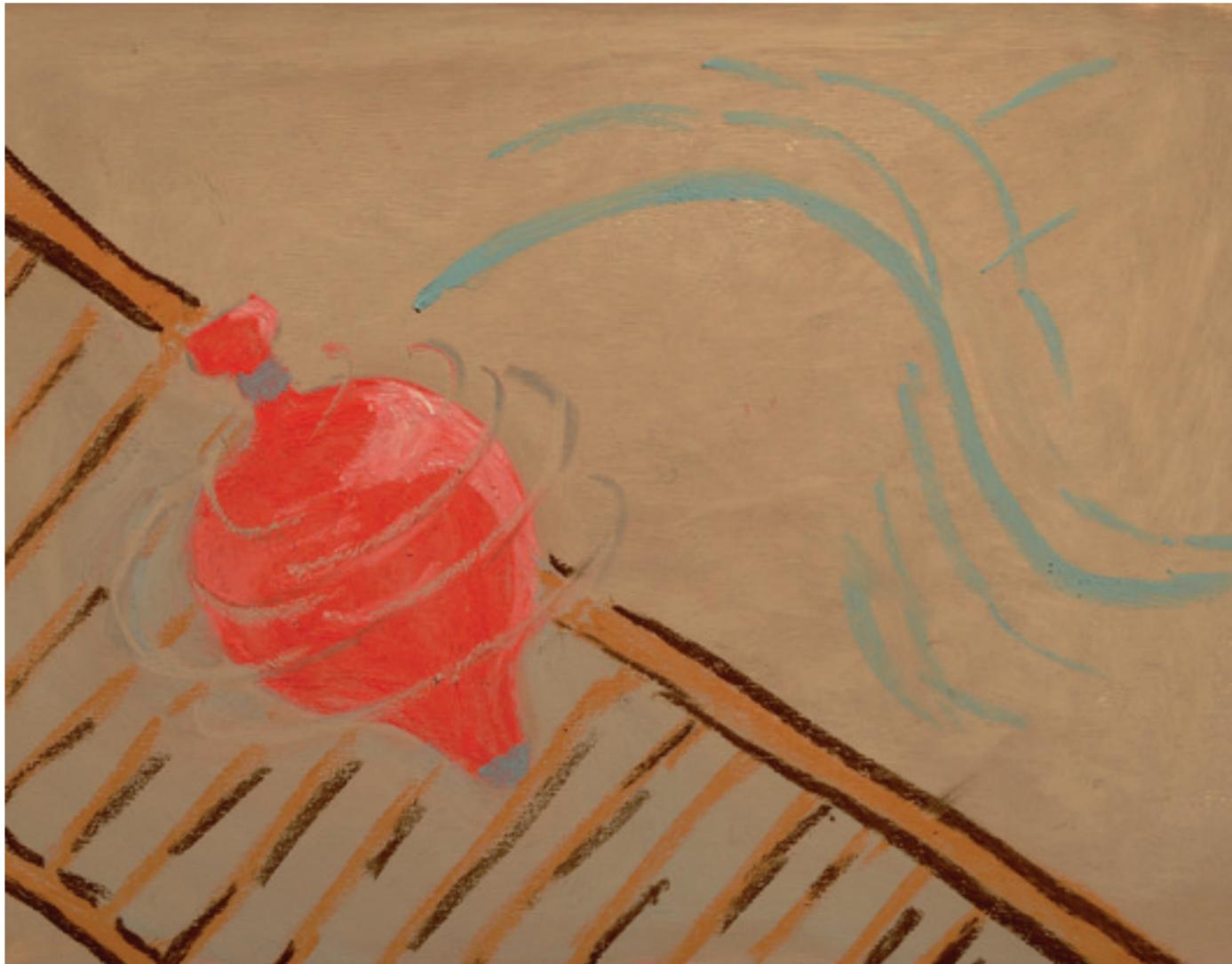
All Things



Tell me why the sun is round?

Why the grass is on the ground?	All these things and much, much more—
Why it is the sky is blue?	The sun, the earth with ocean floor,
Why I'm me and you are you?	The birds, the bees and trees and flowers,
Why the fish can swim with fins?	Wind and snow and summer showers—
Why the happy baby grins?	This world, for Infinity,
Why the eagle soars in flight?	Is cared for by Divinity.
Why left is left and right is right?	Let's give thanks for all Creation,
Oh, my dear, now listen well	And always live in Celebration!
To the story I will tell:	

Whirring



Flashing, gleaming, oh what fun!

A delight for everyone!

Whirling, whirring with such grace—

Almost flying into space.

Red and bold it shows its color—

It's superb—it's like no other!

Pull the string and there it goes,

Writhing in ecstatic throes,

Spinning down the merry lane

Faster than a speeding train.

Oh, my gorgeous little top,

Please don't ever, ever stop!

Sick Day



“My poor little doll is sick!

Come and help, and please be quick!”

Doctor hurries to the bed,

Takes the pulse, and feels the head

Of the sickened little doll.

“It is good that you did call.

First a shot into her arm.

Now your doll won't come to harm.

Then, these pills to give tonight,

And by noon she'll be alright.”

“Thank you Doctor. I'm impressed!

Now we all can get some rest.

We're so grateful. Thanks once more!

Let me walk you to the door.”

Noontime comes like Doctor said:

Doll is well, and out of bed!

Young Artist



It is time to go to bed?

Oh, is that what Mama said?

But, I need to work instead.

See, my drawing needs more red.

Earnestly, with serious eyes

Our little darling tries

To deflect the conversation

To her fabulous creation.

“See, I drew this just for you.

Aren't you proud of what I do?

I think this is drawn so well

That the viewer now can tell

What my efforts rendered here.

Don't you think it's good and clear?”

This, the art of re-direction

Needs from Mama some correction.

But, before that, she first tries,

Squinting, with her big brown eyes,

To determine what's been drawn:

“Honey, it's a big red dawn?

Or a rooster that is red?”

“No, it's neither thing you said.

This is what is on a farm

That keeps all the creatures warm—

See, it is a big red barn!”

When I Grow Up



Firewoman, Fireman,

Writer, Poet, Artisan,

Nurse, or maybe Heart Surgeon,

Tailor, or Musician,

Teacher, Preacher, Plumber, too—

Oh, so many things to do!

Not to worry, dearest soul—

You will choose and reach your goal.

Make the most of education

And you'll find the right vocation!

I Don't Want...



Oh, the day, it's oh so boring!

Why is it that I'm not soaring?

I don't like my building blocks,

Or the color of my socks.

And my drawing turned out wrong.

I don't want to sing a song,

Or take a ride, or go and swing.

I am bored with everything!

Honey, come, let's take a rest,

Like the birdie in its nest.

I will tuck you warm and deep

Under covers, and you'll sleep.

When you wake, transformed you'll be—

You'll feel great—just wait and see!

An Indian Adventure



Loosely translated
from a German
poem by my great
grandfather, Johannes
Krapf, who was a
missionary in India.

Once upon long times ago,

In a country you might know
An adventure did occur.
Certain facts remain a blur,
Yet the substance of this tale
I'll recite here without fail.
But, I warn you as I start
That a very largish part
Tells some pretty scary stuff,
So I hope you're good and tough!
Are you ready, do you think,

To be pushed right to the brink
Of anxiety and horror,
Disbelief, and fright and terror?
Raise your hand, to go ahead,
Or, do leave it down, instead,
If you want to stop right now
And forego the tale of how
In the jungle, one hot night,
Several people came to fright.

An Indian Adventure



Sometime, around 1810

This fine story got its start,

With a woman and three men,

Rolling out a horse-drawn cart—

Packing it with food and water,

Then a son and one small daughter;

Laying pillows all around;

Then departing all together—

Horses' hooves the clicking sound,

As they pulled a harness tethered

To the cart, now moving fast

Towards the jungle lands so vast,

And their hut, for holiday—

Where the family all would stay.

Do you know the country, pray,

Where this family was that day?

Yes, in India they dwelt—

You would guess right, I just felt!

An Indian Adventure



Now, our story may commence:

Horses pulled through foliage dense,
Over trails too overgrown,
Working muscles to the bone,
Pulling cart and family—
Destination: *Holiday!*
As the jungle plants got thicker
Horses could not go more quicker.
Not a thing was there to hear
But the hooves—not clicking clear.

They were muffled by the green—
Dull in sound is what I mean.
Silently the cart moved on
With the village view now gone.
Ever denser, things were now,
And much darker. Yet, somehow,
Horses managed without sight.
The path chosen—it was right.

An Indian Adventure



As they rode, the air got close—

Hotness in a triple-dose!

Hours passed in silence weary.

Children, hungry, now were teary.

“Not much longer,” said their dad.

“Soon you won’t be quite so sad.”

And, indeed, just moments more

And the hut came to the fore,

Shining bright against the dark—

Silv’ry, gleaming, like birch bark—

There it stood in jungle green.

Joy filled all, when it was seen!

An Indian Adventure

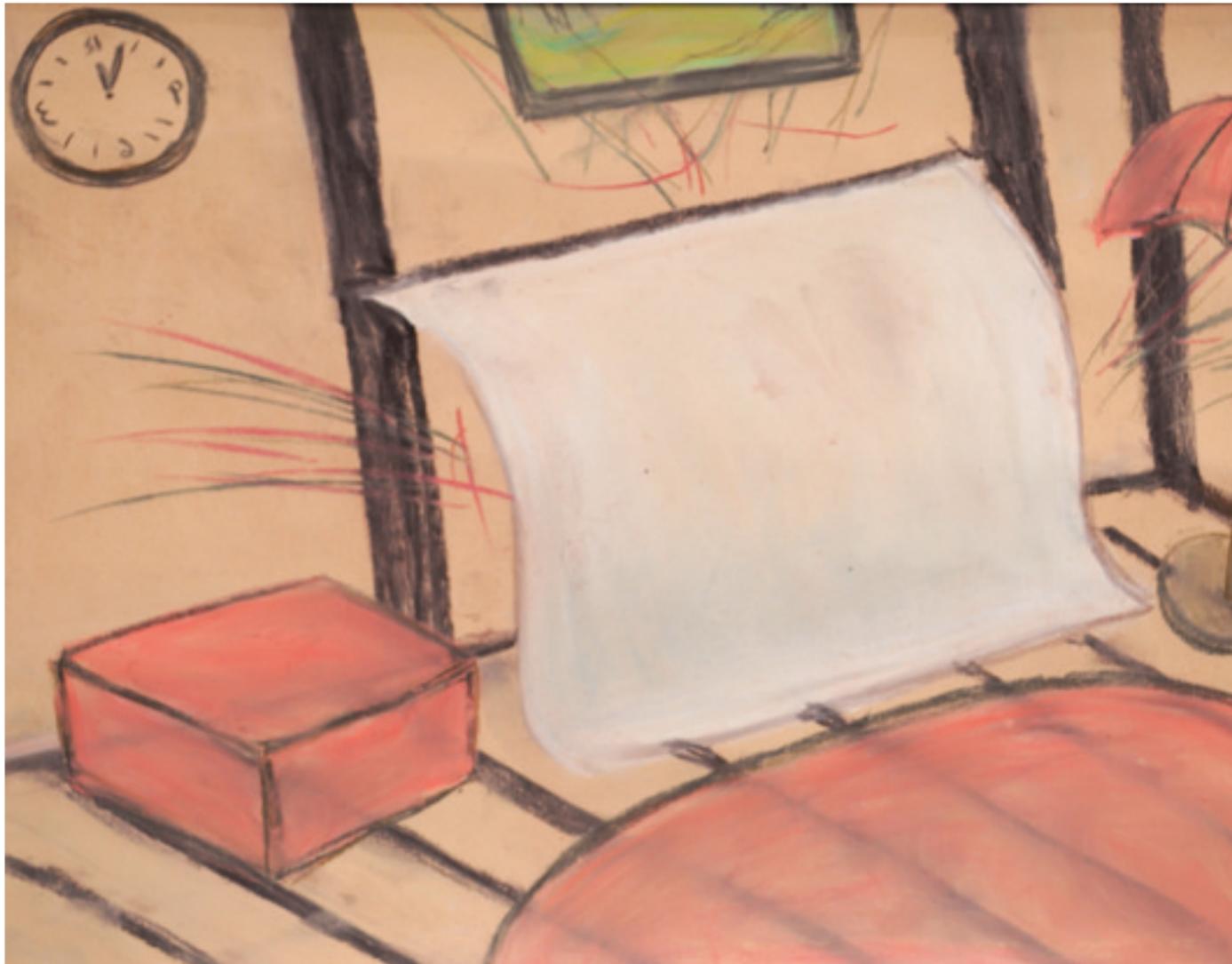


Not a moment now was lost.

All their worldly goods were tossed
To the wooden-covered floor,
Through the linen-covered door
(Which on days as hot as this
Could be rolled up in a whizz
To let circulation flow,
And cool air rise from below).

Then, the table, it was set,
And the food the Mom did get
To distribute at the table,
Just as fast as she was able.
Hunger growled in everyone
'Til the meal at last was done.

An Indian Adventure



Once again, the silence reigned,

And contentment was regained.

Tired heads were hanging low

When all hearts were dealt a blow:

Through the linen-covered door

Came a sound that struck their core—

Not a gentle gurgling growling,

But a snorting and a howling!

And, a gnashing then of fangs,

Leaving all with terror pangs!

For, the linen door alone

Was between them and this moan

That belonged undoubtedly

To a creature most hungry,

With an appetite for flesh

That is human and is fresh!

An Indian Adventure



Hes, they feared this was a lion,

And that soon they would be dyin',
Or, perhaps a tiger there,
Who had wandered from his lair.
What a sorry end there'd be
If they couldn't now break free.
Maybe running out the back
Would ward off certain attack?

As they shuddered in great fear
They considered all their gear:
Was there anything they had
That could be a weapon "bad"?
That could blunt the fierce attack
And could drive the monster back?

An Indian Adventure



As they pondered all of this,

Facing all that was amiss,

Eyes glued to the waving sheet

That hid what they feared to meet,

There arrived a blast of air—

Out of nowhere it was there.

As the wind played with the sheet,

Snorting warned they yet would meet

This ferocious creature bold,

Standing just beyond the fold

Of the flapping linen door.

They could hardly take much more!

Terror had them in its grip:

Sweat was flowing: drip, drip drip;

Knees were knocking: clack, clack, clack;

Hearts were pounding:

Thwack, thwack, thwack!

An Indian Adventure



Then the fiercest gust of all

Flung the linen up the wall!

There, the monster, in plain sight!

Framed in technicolor, now:

That which gave them such a fright—

Was...A...Snorting...Baby...

COW!

Seasons



Brilliant hues have come with fall.

Trees are decked in jewels, all.

Topaz, rubies, emeralds—

Blazing greens and reds and golds—

Cluster now on outstretched limbs.

But the wind has spied this treasure

Which she covets without measure.

Just one blast and limbs are bare.

Jew'ls are blowing everywhere.

Seasons



Father Winter is aghast!

He will have to help out fast.

Quick, his featherbed he shakes

And the down—it falls in flakes,

Cov'ring limbs that were so bare—

Gently, softly, with great care,

Fashioning a silken gown,

Pure and white, of snowy down.

Trees in beauty stand, and warm,

Now protected from all harm.

Seasons



Til Ms. Spring brings lighter clothes.

“Here,” she says, “Why not try those?”

Sun, who’s watching carefully,

Melts the white gowns instantly,

And Spring adorns the trees again.

Seasons



Clad in buds they stand, and then

Summer brings them lush green dresses

And bright ribbons for their tresses.

Now we wait a bit, and then,

Mr. Fall comes back again.

Thus, we celebrate the seasons,

Loving each for different reasons.

An Evening Prayer



Flowers close their petaled eyes;

Father Rabbit turns and sighs,

Snoring on his pillow soon.

As the silver-golden moon

Floods the land in shimm'ring glow

All the creatures far below—

Birds and bees and cows and cats,

Turtles, squirrels, and even rats—

Know it's time to find their beds,

And stretch out to rest their heads.

Flowers on their stems are nodding

Without any further prodding.

An Evening Prayer



Let the Sandman's on his way

To make sure, asleep they'll stay. Hives, and holes and nests in grasses—
With his velvet shoes and cap Gentle fingers of his hand
And his pouch with satin flap, Find his pouch and grasp the sand,
Filled with shining crystal sand, Sprinkling it on creatures sleeping,
Sandman glides across the land. Bringing slumber softly creeping,
Silently, as homes he passes— That will last the whole night through.

An Evening Prayer



Soon he'll come and visit you!

Feel the yawn that's rising up?

Somehow it is hard to stop.

Heavy eyelids want to close.

Slower breathing through your nose

Signals Sandman's entrance here.

Time to say our prayer(s), my dear(s):

Thank you, God, for all your Love;

For the earth and skies above;

For the shining golden ball

That awakes and warms us all;

For the clouds and for the rains

And the food that us sustains;

For the whole world and its creatures,

So magnificent in features

That are suited to each one—

So they fly, or swim, or run.

An Evening Prayer



All of this and much, much more

This is what I'm (we're) thankful for. Such that we may hear and see
Countless blessings flow from You— Your Divine and loving Will,
Every day in all we do. And with joy let us fulfill
Teach us how to love all others— That which falls to us to do—
Mother, Father, Sister, Brother— All that's loving, good and true.
And all beings of this earth Please be with us this night, too,
Which your Hand has given birth. 'Til the sun's rays come to view.
Let us worthy vessels be,

An Evening Prayer



Then, as is their playful habit,

They will tickle Father Rabbit
On the nose and on the chin,
'Til their efforts show a win.
Rabbit then will rouse from sleep
That was very, very deep.
As he'll blink, a padded paw
Will rub eyes and cheeks and jaw.
Then he'll clean his whiskers smooth
And begin to brush his tooth.

Soon the flowers' eyelids flutter
And "Good morning!" they do utter,
As the sun's rays kiss their faces
On the nose and other places.
When our flowers greet the sun,
It is clear that day's begun:
Bees are buzzing; birds are singing,
And in minutes they'll be winging
Over field, and lake and stream.

An Evening Prayer



But it's still just like a dream:

As we come to break of day
And the world gets on its way,
We are shrouded in the Love
That flows down from God above.
God is here and every place—
For all time and throughout space.

We are blessed in every way.
God is with us night and day.
So, in trust, we go to sleep,
Knowing our God will keep
All of us in tender care—
Day and night and everywhere!

The End