

Winter Solstice 2024



Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Eric Idle

Some things in life are bad they can really make you mad
Other things just make you swear and curse
When you're chewing on life's gristle, Don't grumble give a whistle
And this'll help things turn out for the best

And always look on the bright side of life
Always look on the light side of life

If life seems jolly rotten there's something you've forgotten
and that's to laugh and smile and dance and sing.
When you've feeling in the dumps don't be silly chumps
Just purse your lips and whistle - that's the thing

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

And always look on the bright side of life

Come on always look on the bright side of life

For life is quite absurd and death's the final word
you must always face the curtain with a bow
Forget about your sin - give the audience a grin
Enjoy it - it's your last chance anyhow.

So always look on the bright side of death
just before you draw your terminal breath

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Life's a piece of spit when you look at it
Life's a laugh and death's a joke it's true
You'll see it's all a show - keep'em laughing as you go
just remember that the last laugh is on you

And always look on the bright side of life
Always look on the right side of life
And always look on the bright side of life
Always look on the right side of life

[We Are Gathered,
written by Daniel Speyer, adapted by Skyler Crossman]

Gather Round

Ray Arnold

Gather round, gather round, gather round my fire, stranger
Huddle up, and hunker down and pass that gourd around, yeah
Gather round, gather round, come gather found my fire, stranger
Huddle up, and hunker down and pass that gourd around

Out there we got hungry lions (Gather round, gather round)
Hundred other ways of dyin' (Gather round, gather round)
In here we got dinner fryin (Gather round, gather round)
Gather round, come gather round the fire

Gather Round

Now sing around, sing around, sing around the fire, neighbor
Breath in deep and feel the beat and make some bloody sound, yeah!
Sing around, sing around, sing around the fire, neighbor
Breath in deep and feel the beat, and make some bloody sound

You look like you been some places (Sing around, sing around)
Trouble's etched upon your face, oh (Sing around, sing around)
Take that trouble, shout it loud (Sing around, sing around)
Take that trouble, sing it round the fire

Gather Round

Now dance around, dance around, let's dance around the fire together
Stand up straight an gy-a-rate and shake your body round, yeah
Dance around, dance around let's dance around the fire together
Stand up straight an gy-a-rate and shake your body round

Out there we got winter going (Dance around, dance around)
Bones all soaked, the snow is blowin (Dance around, dance around)
But feel that heat and blood a-flowin (Dance around, dance around)
Feel it flowin', Dancin' round the fire

Gather Round

Now gather round, gather round, gather found our fire together,
Huddle up, and hunker down and pass that gourd around, yeah
Gather round, gather round come gather found our fire together....
Huddle up, and hunker down and pass that gourd aro -ound
Huddle up, and hunker down and pass that gourd around

[There Will Always be Darkness]

[There Will Always be Darkness,
My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic, 2019]

The Circle

Taylor Smith

Raise a song, and so commence
Circle, grow and grow.

in praise of all Benevolence!

Circle, grow and grow.

Once a cold and silent night
did the loveless stars pervade;
yet we here, of star-stuff made,
cast a circle of warmer Light!

Circle, circle grow and grow.

So will we bring our families in,
Circle, grow and grow.

those whom Nature made our kin?

Circle, grow and grow.

Countless likenesses we find,
by our common blood bestowed.

What a debt of care is owed;

what a blesséd tie that binds!

Circle, circle grow and grow.

The Circle

And will we bring our neighbors in,
Circle, grow and grow.

our expansion to begin?

Circle, grow and grow.

Bounty of the harvest sun,
shelter from all hazards dire,
share with each, as each require,
doing as you would be done.

Circle, circle grow and grow.

And will we bring the stranger in,
Circle, grow and grow.

every state and speech and skin?

Circle, grow and grow.

For the hands you'll never hold,
for the names you'll never learn,
for all far-off hearts that yearn,
let compassion boundless roll!

Circle, circle grow and grow.

The Circle

And will we bring all creatures in,
Circle, grow and grow.
feather, fur, or silicon?
Circle, grow and grow.
Though their unseen thought beguile —
strange the substrate they employ —
all who suffer or enjoy
are brother soul, in body wild.
 Circle, circle grow and grow.

And will we bring the future in?
Circle, grow and grow.
Every soul that might begin
Circle, grow and grow.
From Earth's cradle, shining bright
Spreading through the starry deep
Lights unborn, for you we keep
will and hope, though dark the night
 Circle, circle grow and grow.
 Circle, circle grow and grow.

[It Is a Common Misperception,
Eliezer Yudkowsky, Harry Potter and the Methods of Rationality, 2010]

You've Got A Friend In Me

Randy Newman

You've got a friend in me

You've got a friend in me

When the road looks rough ahead

And you're miles and miles from your nice warm bed

Just remember what your old pal said

Boy, you've got a friend in me

Yeah, you've got a friend in me

You've Got A Friend In Me

You've got a friend in me

You've got a friend in me

You've got troubles, I've got 'em too

There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you

We stick together, we can see it through

'Cause you've got a friend in me

Yeah, you've got a friend in me

You've Got A Friend In Me

And as the years go by
Our friendship will never die
You're gonna see, it's our destiny
You've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me

[Nerds Can Be Bees Too

Written by Scott Alexander, 2014. Abridged by Skyler Crossman]

Unison in Harmony

Jim Boyes

Soaring skywards, leaping sideways,

Do or die words cleave the air.

Joy and laughter, mornings after,

Raise the rafters we don't care,

If the roof's beyond repair.

Raise the rafters, raise the rafters,

Raise the rafters we don't care,

If the roof's beyond repair.

Unison in Harmony

Sisters brothers to all others,

Let this be our guiding star.

Hearts on fire but no messiah,

Hear the music from afar.

What we sing is what we are.

Hear the music, hear the music,

Hear the music from afar.

What we sing is what we are.

Unison in Harmony

Over hills and over valleys,
Over mountains, over seas.
Nations shouting unto nations
Until nations cease to be.
Unison in harmony.
 Until nations, until nations
 Until nations cease to be.
 Unison in harmony.

[Project Hufflepuff,

Written by Raymond Arnold, 2017. Abridged by Skyler Crossman]

Somebody Will

Ada Palmer

Our new world is so close.

Mars has treasures we're only just starting to find.

Frozen mountains and crimson dust

Waiting for footprints that will not be mine.

A hundred years to run the first tests

Another to raise the first dome.

The moon, then Mars, then Titan next,

A lifetime to touch each new home.

Somebody Will

And I want it so much.

Close my eyes, I can taste the Mars dust in the air.

In the darkness the space stations shimmer in orbits

That I will not share.

But I'll teach the student who'll manage the fact'ry

That tempers the steel that makes colonies strong.

And I'll write the program that runs the computer

That charts out the stars where our rockets belong.

Somebody Will

It will never get easy to wake from my dream
When the future I dream of is so far away.

But I am willing to sacrifice
Something I don't have for something I won't have
But somebody will someday.

Somebody Will

And it feels like a waste.

All this working and waiting and battling time,
And all for a kingdom that all of my efforts will
Never make mine,

But brick by brick the pyramids rose,
With most hidden under the sand,
So life by life the project grows
In ways I might not understand.

Somebody Will

I am voyaging too,
We will need the foundation as much as the dome
For those worlds to come true

And I'll clerk the office that handles the funding
That raises the tower that watches the sky.
And I'll staff the bookstore that carries the journal
That sparks the idea that makes solar sails fly.

Somebody Will

It takes so many sailors to conquer an ocean
And so many more when it's light-years away,

But I am willing to sacrifice
Something I don't have for something I won't have
But somebody will someday.

Somebody Will

It's so easy to run.

Hide away in my books, games and fantasy plans,
Let them call me a coward who can't face reality's
Grownup demands,

But if I love my fantasy worlds
It's not fantasy love that I feel.
And so much more I feel for this
The world that created them,
World we create with them,
One chance to make them all real.

Somebody Will

And I know we won't stop.

We've planned too many wonders for one little star.

Though often the present may seem too complacent to take us that far.

But I'll tell the story and I'll draw the picture

And I'll sing the anthem that banishes doubt,

And host the convention that summons the family

That carries the fire that never burns out

Somebody Will

There are so many chances to give up the journey,
Especially when it's so easy to stay,

But I am willing to sacrifice
Something I don't have for something I won't have
And not only me,

But we are willing to sacrifice
Something we don't have for something we won't have
So somebody will,
So somebody will someday.

[Well, Will Somebody?
Daniel Speyer, 2018]

Give My Children Wings

Kathy Mar

Give my children wings, but not the ghosts of wings

I have found in the words of the dreamers

Let them fly away to a world so far away

From the fools and the cruel and the schemers

Give them stars to juggle and comets for their toys

A new life to build from their sorrows and joys

Give my children wings, but not the ghosts of wings

I have found in the words of the dreamers

Give My Children Wings

Give my children suns, but not the songs of suns
That have nourished me all through my growing
Songs can give them hope, but they need more than hope
All their dreams are but seeds meant for sowing
 Give them the planets, a universe to share
 With all who are waiting to meet them out there
Give my children suns, but not the songs of suns
That have nourished me all through my growing

Give My Children Wings

Give my children life, a vast eternal life

And a universe teeming with wonder

Continents and skies, a million different skies

Full of rainbows and snowflakes and thunders

Give them bright tomorrows and not our dark todays

Realms of love and beauty to cherish all their days

Give my children life, a vast eternal life

And a universe teeming with wonder

Give my children life, a vast eternal life

And a universe teeming with wonder

Intermission



[Funeral Ritual

Written by Raymond Arnold, 2018. Abridged by Skyler Crossman.]

The Song of Dath Ilan

[Spoken, not sung.]

Even if the stars should die in heaven

Our sins can never be undone

No single death will be forgiven

When fades at last the last lit sun.

Then in the cold and silent black

As light and matter end

We'll have ourselves a last look back

And toast an absent friend.

[Funeral Ritual.]

We Will All Go Together When We Go

Tom Lehrer

When you attend a funeral,
It is sad to think that sooner or later
those you love will do the same for you.
And you may have thought it tragic,
Not to mention other adjectives,
to think of all the weeping they will do,
But don't you worry...

We Will All Go Together When We Go

No more ashes, no more sackcloth.
And an armband made of black cloth
Will someday never more adorn a sleeve,
For if the bomb that drops on you
Gets your friends and neighbors too,
There'll be nobody left behind to grieve.

We Will All Go Together When We Go

And we will all go together when we go.
What a comforting fact that is to know.
Universal bereavement,
An inspiring achievement,
Yes, we all will go together when we go.

Oh we will all char together when we char.
And let there be no moaning of the bar.
Just sing out a Te Deum
When you see that I. C. B. M.,
And the party will be "come as you are."

We Will All Go Together When We Go

Oh we will all burn together when we burn.

There'll be no need to stand and wait your turn.

When it's time for the fallout

And Saint Peter calls us all out,

We'll just drop our agendas and adjourn.

We will all go together when we go.

All suffuse with an incandescent glow.

No one will have the endurance

To collect on their insurance,

Lloyd's of London will be loaded when they go.

We Will All Go Together When We Go

And we will all go together when we go.

Every coffee shop and every Broadway show.

When the air becomes uranious,

We will all go simultaneous.

Yes we all will go together when we go

[How Will The Bomb Find You?
C.S. Lewis, 1948]

When I Die

Glen Rafael

They may bury my body when I die (when I die)

They may bury my body when I die (when I die)

Near some grave site I'd be found, simply rotting in the ground

If they bury my body when I die

They may burn my body when I die (when I die)

They may burn my body when I die (when I die)

When the fiery furnace flashes, I'll be nothing left but ashes

If they burn my body when I die

When I Die

They may use my body when I die (when I die)

They may use my body when I die (when I die)

As the doctors ply their arts, I'll be in a hundred parts

If they use my body when I die

They may freeze my body when I die (when I die)

They may freeze my body when I die (when I die)

Though I may well be mistaken I would hope to re-awaken

If they freeze my body when I die

When I Die

They may eat my body when I die (when I die)

They may eat my body when I die (when I die)

If a zombie horde re- mains, they'll be hankering for brains

If they eat my body when I die

There's a chance: I'll never die at all ...

There's a chance: I'll never die at all ...

Cheating death is such a rarity, it would take a singu- larity

To per- mit, I never die at all

When I Die

They may bury my body when I die (when I die)

They may bury my body when I die (when I die)

Near some grave site I'd be found, simply rotting in the ground

If they bury my body when I die

[How Can I Help?
Skyler Crossman, 2022]

When I'm Gone

Phil Ochs

There's no place in this world where I'll belong when I'm gone
And I won't know the right from the wrong when I'm gone
And you won't find me singing on this song when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

And I won't breathe the bracing air when I'm gone
And I can't even worry 'bout my cares when I'm gone
Won't be asked to do my share when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

When I'm Gone

And I won't be running from the rain when I'm gone
And I can't even suffer from the pain when I'm gone
Can't say who's to praise and who's to blame when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

Won't see the golden of the sun when I'm gone
And the evenings and the mornings will be one when I'm gone
Can't be singing louder than the guns when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

[Beyond the Reach of God

Written by Eliezer Yudkowsky, 2008 adapted by Raymond Arnold.]

No One Is Alone

adapted from Stephen Sondheim, *Into the Woods*

No one here to guide you
Now you're on your own
Only me beside you
Still you're not alone
No one is alone, truly
No one is alone

Sometimes people leave you
Halfway through the wood
Others may deceive you
Hard to tell what's good
You decide alone
But no one is alone

No One Is Alone

People make mistakes
Fathers, mothers
People make mistakes
Holding to their own
Thinking they're alone
Honor their mistakes
Everybody makes
One another's terrible mistakes

Just remember

Someone is on our side
Someone else is not
While we're seeing our side
Maybe we forgot
They are not alone
No one is alone

No One Is Alone

Hard to see the light now
Just don't let it go
Things can come out right now
We can make it so

Someone is on your side
No one is alone

[Defiance

Written by Jai Dhyani]

Speaker

The universe is vast, and dark, and cold.

The stars are silent, and ancient,
and impossibly far away.

The laws of physics are indifferent
to hope, or desperation, or love.

Does anything in the universe care?

Audience

But we are not.

But we are not.

But we are not!

Yes! We care! There is light
in the world, and it is us!

[Defiance

Written by Jai Dhyani]

Speaker

We are flawed.

We are fragile.

To the best of our knowledge,
we are alone in the universe.

Our history is littered with
tragedy and despair.

We visit countless cruelties and
injustices on each other to this day.

Audience

We're learning.

We're getting stronger.

But we have each other.

We can do better.

So we must do better.

Speaker

We lost five hundred million to Smallpox.

Hundreds of millions of us are still in poverty.

Hundreds of thousands are lost to Malaria.

Our problems are legion.

There is no destiny written for us.

We may lose.

Audience

So we destroyed Smallpox.

But fewer every year.

But fewer every year.

Then so will our
compassion, dedication,
and ingenuity.

Then we will write our own.

But we will try anyway,

because there isn't anyone else.

Brighter Than Today

Ray Arnold

Countless winter nights ago, a woman shivered in the cold,
Cursed the sky and wondered why the gods invented pain.

Aching angry flesh and bone, bitterly she struck the stones,
Until... she saw that spark of light and flame.

And though the others cried out heresy,
She defied them, proud and set afire history

Brighter Than Today

Tomorrow can be brighter than today
Although the night is cold
The stars may seem so very far away

But courage, hope, and reason burn
In every mind, each lesson learned,
Shining light to guide our way.
Make tomorrow brighter than today!

Oh, oh,
Brighter than today.

Brighter Than Today

Ages long forgotten now,
We built the wheel, and then the plow
Tilled the Earth and proved our worth
Against the drought and snow.

Soon, we had the time to fathom,
Mountain peaks and tiny atoms,
Beating hearts, electric sparks,
And so much more to know.

Brighter Than Today

Tomorrow can be brighter than today
Although the night is cold
The stars may seem so very far away

But courage, hope, and reason grow
With every passing season so we'll,
Drive the darkness far away.
Make tomorrow brighter than today!

Oh, oh,
Brighter than today.

Brighter Than Today

The universe may seem unfair
The laws of nature may not care
The storms and quakes, our own mistakes,
All nearly doused our flame.

But all these trials we've endured,
Moral progress, ailments cured,
Against our Herculean task,
We've risen to proclaim.

Brighter Than Today

Tomorrow can be brighter than today
Although the night is cold
The stars may seem so very far away

But courage, hope, and reason bloom
Across the world and one day soon,
Rise up to the stars and say:
Make tomorrow brighter than today!

Oh, oh,
Brighter than today.

[The Gift We Give Tomorrow

Written by Eliezer Yudkowsky, adapted by Raymond Arnold]

Endless Lights

Ray Arnold

Mama's been waiting, huddled outside.
Brother is quietly holding her tight
Hurrying home and I hope there's still time for
One... more... night...

Slowly she turns, opens her eyes
Struggles to stand point to the sky
Barely can breathe but she's telling the stories
One... last... time...

Endless Lights

And she whispers of hunters and dragons and gods
Wanderers roaming the stars up above
Holding her hand in that moment I wonder,
Can't help but wonder at all... those...

Endless lights, burning with
Untold stories, each of them
One more reason to wonder
Is anyone out there, anyone out there tonight

Endless Lights

Father is waiting for sister and me
Thousands of miles away, over the sea and we're
Flying as fast as the Boeing'll carry us
One last time

Thinking of stories he told from the war
Terrible jokes that he made us endure
Daylight is ending, the plane is descending
Just in time

Endless Lights

As the clouds part around us, a dazzling city
Appears like a jewel in the night
And I look at our home and its lights all aglow and I
Can't help but wonder at all those

Endless lights, burning with
Untold stories, reaching
Across the vastness
With beautiful stories, lasting as long as they can

Endless Lights

Grandma's been waiting for clues in the dark, and I'm
Journeying millions of miles to take part.
And finally I see her glint in the viewing port,
Right on time

Weightless embrace as the airlock reseals,
Space station turning and slowly reveals:
Rows upon rows of her telescopes listening
Deep through time

Endless Lights

And maybe there's some kind of somebody out there

Listening in on our radio calls

Or maybe there's not there's just one pale blue dot to give

Meaning and beauty and worth to it all.

But holding her hand in that moment I wonder,

Can't help but wonder at all wonder at all... those...

Endless Lights

End... less... lights, burning with
Un... told... sto-ries, each of them
One... more... reason to wonder
Is anyone out there... anyone out there?

End... less... night cradling
Count... less... voices, reaching
A cross... the vast-ness...
With beau-ti-ful stories, lasting as long as they can...

[RMS Carpathia

MyLordShesACactus.tumblr.com, 2018]

Mary Ellen Spider

Bob Blue / Stan Rogers

The itsy-bitsy spider went up the water spout

Down came the rain and washed the spider out

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain

And the itsy-bitsy spider climbed again

She wouldn't let the elements distract her from her goal;

The purpose of her struggle was embedded in her soul.

Now, see the sun shine down on beasts, on women and on men

And like the itsy-bitsy spider, rise again!

Rise again, rise again!

She will not let misfortune keep her from doing what she can,

So whether your legs number two, or four, or eight, or ten,

Be like that itsy-bitsy spider, rise again!

Mary Ellen Spider

This itsy bitsy metaphor's a lesson for us all -
We cannot be defeated if we rise each time we fall,
And if you think this story's one you learned too long ago,
Then think about some other ones you know.

You know the myth of Sisyphus, and you know Jack and Jill
It's such a potent image going up and down a hill,
So every time you fall, or lose a lover or a friend,
Be like that itsy-bitsy spider: Rise again!

Rise again, rise again!

She will not let misfortune keep her from doing what she can,
So whether your legs number two, or four, or eight, or ten,
Be like that itsy-bitsy spider, rise again!

Mary Ellen Spider

Perhaps you think this allegory goes a bit too far
Climbing up a pipe is not like reaching for a star
But whether its a water spout or mountain that you climb
You've come this far; indulge me one more time.

It could be said that each of us climbs up a water spout.
The downward pull of gravity is not what it's about:
The upward pull of hope is what will save us in the end.
Be like that itsy-bitsy spider: Rise again!

Rise again, rise again!

She will not let misfortune keep her from doing what she can,
So whether your legs number two, or four, or eight, or ten,
Be like that itsy-bitsy spider, rise again!

[Does Somebody Have To?
Skyler Crossman]

Battle Hymn of Truth

Scott Alexander / Julia Ward Howe

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the works of humankind
We have lifted up whole countries through the labors of the mind
Faiths and empires rise and crumble, in the end we always find
The truth is marching on!

Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
The truth is marching on!

Battle Hymn of Truth

They murdered Archimedes with his circles still undone
How much loftier now the circles where his children's children run
They arrested Galileo, but they couldn't arrest the Sun
The truth is marching on!

Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
The truth is marching on!

Battle Hymn of Truth

They tore down Alexandria, of libraries the first
And the Mongol hordes razed Baghdad, and its learning was dispersed
But now there's Wikipedia, so Genghis, do your worst!
The truth keeps marching on!

Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
Glory, glory aletheia!
The truth is marching on!

Battle Hymn of Truth

So despite the many setbacks we encounter on our way
We still believe tomorrow can be brighter than today
The quest is not forgotten, we continue, come what may
As truth goes marching on!

[The Martian
Andy Weir, 2011]

Old Devil Time

Pete Seeger

Old devil time, I'm gonna fool you now
Old devil time, you'd like to bring me down
But when I'm feeling low, my lovers gather round
And help me rise to fight you one more time

Old devil pain, you've often pinned me down
You thought I'd cry and beg you for the end
At that very time my lovers gathered round
And helped me rise to fight you one more time

Old Devil Time

Old devil fear, you with your icy hands
Old devil fear, you'd like to freeze me cold
But when I'm sore afraid, my lovers gather round
And help me rise to fight you one more time

Old devil hate, I knew you long ago
Before I learned the poison in your breath
Now when we hear your lies my lovers gather round
And help me rise to fight you one more time

Old Devil Time

No storm nor fire can ever beat us down
No wind that blows but carries us further on
And you who fear, oh lovers gather round
And we can rise to sing it more time
And we can rise to sing it one more time

[Thank You For Coming,
Skyler Crossman]

The End

