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# LONGINGS

JOHN W. DEKAY

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## Longings





# Longings

Being a few leaves out of the  
Book of Life and intended  
for the ones who understand

By

John W. de Kay

"



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gave



As I journey towards the strange gulf,  
where Life and Death clasp hands, and  
Man, as Man, has finished with the  
fitful round of dawns and sunsets in  
this world—I pray that something which  
is best in me may still survive to love  
and dream and hope in other of Thy  
worlds, where love and dreams are life.



## **A Morning Prayer**





## A Morning Prayer

O God, we thank Thee for another day and for our longing that it shall be better than our yesterday.

We thank Thee for all that Life has brought us through the years and grieve that we have given back to Life so little of our noblest selves. And whether life shall give to us to-day its best, or whether it withholds that gift, we pray that we may give to it our best and know that nothing lost to any noble soul is worthy to be treasured as a gift from Thee.

We pray that we may learn how sacred

## A Morning Prayer

is the gift of Life, and how sad it is to cast that gift away.

We pray that in the sunshine of another day the hours we spend may help some weary traveller from the path where shadows fall and where Life's way is given up or lost.

We pray that we may live to-day as we would live our last day in the world we love so well, and that wherever the shadows of the night-time find us we will have made progress on the way to other worlds where Life is Love and Thou art all in all.



## A Prayer



## A Prayer

O THOU, who sendest worlds on flights  
through trackless skies, we thank Thee  
that their course eludes the children of  
the earth.

As mortals we thank Thee for our  
longing to be immortal.

We thank Thee that out of the wounds  
of Life come its pearls.

We thank Thee for the mystery of  
Death which is mother of another Life.

We thank Thee for the things we never  
cease to want—and never have.

We thank Thee that up beyond the

## A Prayer

limitation of our lives, are peaks of longing which call to us and lose us in the skies.

We thank Thee for the restlessness of our world and for the day dreams which our fancy puts upon the scroll of time.

We thank Thee that there is in us that which responds to the roar of the distant city and to the eloquent silence of the unpeopled plain.

We thank Thee for the tender ministry of love and for our longing that it shall not pass away.

We thank and bless Thee for the priceless chance we have to serve our world

## A Prayer

and for Thy message that the smallest task in Life is biggest, that is noblest done.

We thank Thee for the courage given man to sow his seeds on desert ground and for the miracle which changes the waste places of the world into spots where roses bloom and happy childhood's laugh salutes the day.

We thank Thee for our castles builded in the air and that out across the mists of life they send strange beckoning gleams from torches lighted by the hand of love which never comes.

We hail and thank and bless Thee, O Thou who givest life and taketh it away

## A Prayer

that we may have it changed for other  
life which will abide.

O Lover of the world, we thank and  
bless Thee.

**A Prayer for the Marriage  
Ceremony**





## A Prayer for the Marriage Ceremony

WE are here to record that vows have been made by this couple—each to the other, and to pray that those vows may be the beginning of a relation that is beautiful, sacred and enduring.

We pray that all that is worthy and noble and unselfish may be made more and more real to both and that all that is selfish and out of the picture of Life may pass away.

We pray for these young people the blessing of companionship, the joy of

## A Prayer for the

industry, the virtue of forgiving, and the bliss which only lovers know.

We pray for them for strength in the days when trouble comes, and in the name of the God of Love commend them to the tender memory of this hour.

Upon this altar of their faith, we lay their precious wreath, woven of the golden thread of dreams, and in Thy name, who art the lover of the world, we pray that none of the winding paths of life may ever lead them out beyond the vision of the sacred shrine they now erect to Love and to the God of all the lovers of the world.

We pray that this man may never

## Marriage Ceremony

forget the nameless charm, the unspeakable confidence and the innocent joy of this hour, and that by the tenderness and by the devotion which have endeared him to this companion he may ever have from her the sweetest gift of earth to man—a woman's love.

We pray that the gentle and unselfish love which she now bears this man, and the incentive which she has given him to do and be his best may mark their hours from now until the end.

We pray that this couple may realize that by words we cannot consecrate, we cannot sanctify the union of these lives but that it must be consecrated by them, through their devotion to and emphasis

## Marriage Ceremony

of that which is best in each other, and through mutual affection and unselfish love it must come to be as sacred as the tie which binds their souls to Thee.

And now to the flood tide of the sea of Life we commit the craft which bears away these lovers and we bid them God-speed to the soft, sweet music of their dreams. And we pray that wherever the time and the tides may bear them, they may leave some token of their love for lives which have no love; that they may leave some gentle prints upon the path which leads us to the realm where Love is all in all.

## A Prayer





## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O God, for the chances we have had to be worthy of the gift of Life and for the times we have been faithful to that gift.

We thank Thee that within us there is something which is satisfied only with our best and which is ever longing for the things beyond its call.

We thank Thee for the messengers from the other worlds which are companions to our dreams, and for

## A Prayer

their care for us, and pray that what is best in Life we may treasure well and never lose.



## A Prayer



## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O God, that everywhere in Thy world, we are reminded that the things we build with patient hands must pass away, as autumn leaves in the wild night wind, and that nothing that we have can last.

We thank Thee, that on earth man can make nothing that is big or that endures except himself.

We thank Thee for the things we cannot buy or sell or lose.

We thank Thee for the values not listed in the books of men ; but counted

## A Prayer

as the only things that matter in a world of gods.

We thank Thee for the priceless gift of woman's love, whether we are worthy or unworthy to be loved, and we thank Thee for our friendships in the world of men.

We pray that we may be better lovers and truer friends and that these treasured ties may never be unloosed.

## A Prayer



## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O Thou unseen spirit of the world for the beauty of earth's sunshine and the miracle of its storms.

We thank Thee for the little flowers and for the symphony of the night wind in the forests.

We thank Thee for the silence of the plain and for the solitary grandeur of the mountain tops.

We thank Thee for the ceaseless music of the changeless sea.

We thank Thee for the longings of our better selves and for the faith we have

## A Prayer

that Life is endless for the ones who love and give.

We thank Thee for the never-ending hope that somewhere through the ages we may change our days, filled with limitations, into better days in which there are no limitations.

We thank Thee for the gift of Life here and long to be worthy of it hereafter.

We thank Thee for the holiness of Love.

We thank Thee for our friends and for the wondrous companionships which understand.

We thank Thee that there is no abiding place for hatred in Thy world.

We thank Thee for the times in which



## A Prayer

we sow, knowing we shall not reap—for the planting done in the belief that when the harvest time shall come we will be far away and others who have not sown will reap.

We thank Thee, O Nameless Giver of all Good, for the vastness of Thy Universe and for the unbounded longings of mankind.



**An Evening Prayer**



## An Evening Prayer

THOU, who art God of the sunset and the dawn, we thank Thee for the chances we have had to-day to love Thy world and to be kind, and we pray that the chances we have lost to-day may not be lost to-morrow.

We thank Thee for the ceaseless calls which Love sends to us across the spaces of the world, and for the noble hours in which we answer back those calls.

We thank and bless Thee for our longing to undo the tangled skein of life

## An Evening Prayer

and stretch its golden threads from earth to Thee.

We thank Thee that whether we look up from the mountain tops in the gleam of the wondrous Northern Light, or downward through the strange twilight of the sea, Thou art there, and that the divine within us calls to Thee with ceaseless longings that it may come to understand.

We lament that to-day we received so much that was good from the world and gave so little back.

We commit to Thee, O God, the dreams of beauty which our souls have cherished for earth's friendships and its love, and pray that they may never pass away.

## A Funeral Prayer





## A Funeral Prayer

BACK into the arms of earth, O Mother of us all, we lay our brother and our friend. In Thy eternal embrace are all the poets and philosophers and heroes of the ages—for thou dost come at last to be the bosom for mankind.

This torch of life, no longer casting its gleams under the moonlight here, is added to the endless march of man over the Hills of Time.

We are committing to silence and the dust, the body of our loved and lost, and we implore the speechless watchers in

## A Funeral Prayer

this lonely spot to drape their lovely mantle o'er our dead.

We leave him here to the darkness and the dawn.

Here will come the Springtimes with their flowers; here in the Summer sun will float the butterfly, emerged with wings beyond the mystic trance of death. Here, in the Autumn-time, dead leaves will cover what we loved so well.

Here, through the long, long Winter nights, the winding sheets of snow will wrap this treasured spot, and here the pale moon will lay its shadows through the never-ending years.

And we pray that the ones who loved

## A Funeral Prayer

him may hear the sweet and nameless requiem of the night-winds for him and them across the tides of time. We offer up our prayers of gratitude and love to Thee, O God, who hast blessed us with the gift of life, and taken back that gift from us—giving to our well-loved friend the boon of ampler life.

We thank Thee that the noblest and best in him will never die.

We thank Thee for the golden cords which bind us when the skein of life is loosed.

We thank Thee with all our hearts for the abiding faith that life is endless for the children of the earth, and we pray

## A Funeral Prayer

that the paths which lead us away from this spot, out into Thy world, may lead us to another of Thy worlds, where we shall find the noblest in our brother and the truest in ourselves serene above the chill and shock of death.

We thank Thee that at this hour there stand beside us shadowed figures from another world, whispering strangely that to-day is the day to be gentle and kind, that to-day is the day to be noble and generous and to forgive.

And we pray Thee we may so live our days that bye and bye some gentle soul may stand where we now stand and say—"Here lies my noble dead who

## A Funeral Prayer

loved the world and had no hatred in his heart for any man."

And now, Farewell, O body that is dead, and Hail forever, O Spirit that will never die.



**A Prayer for the Boy who  
Works**







## A Prayer for the Boy who Works

I THANK Thee, O God, that with my longing to play, I am able to work, since it is my lot to work.

I pray that some day, boys and girls may play and gather wild flowers, and that men who are strong may sometime realize how dear freedom is to childhood, and how sad it is for children to be hungry in the streets.

I pray for hope and cheerfulness for the children who are ill and always unable to work, or to play.

I pray that I may learn the worth of

## Prayer for the Boy Who Works

kindness and how good it is to never be unkind.

I lay my tired hands and head to rest  
and pray for strength and cheerfulness  
to live my life and do my little work and  
serve Thy world.

## **A Thanksgiving Prayer**



## A Thanksgiving Prayer

WE thank Thee, O Universal God, for what we love and lose.

We thank Thee for all we have that makes us free.

We thank Thee for all that is noblest and best in our lives and for the gentleness which wills the world its good.

We thank Thee for the lights which beckon and elude us in the march of time.

We thank Thee that the ebb tide of the days has carried out to sea some things

## A Thanksgiving Prayer

that made us less than men and left us with some things that make us more like gods.

We thank Thee for our ships that never come.

We thank Thee for the never-ending hope that out beyond the line where the blue of the sea is mingled with the blue of the sky, our treasure craft is real.

We thank Thee for the will to do our work in life because it is right to do it, and for the strength to give the world our best no matter what the world may give or fail to give us in return.

We thank Thee for our belief that judgment by results is wrong, and for the faith

## A Thanksgiving Prayer

which leads us to a higher judgment that is right.

We thank Thee that love alone can stand against the storm, and we pray that we may come to know the priceless worth of Life and the little worth of other things.

We pray that every day may come to be a day of Thanksgiving, not for grain garnered or for jewels we have wrested from Thy earth, but for the longings we have had to be better than our best, and for our will to do no wrong.

We thank Thee for the noble time when man is to be more precious to man than gold, or nations or flags, and when the

## A Thanksgiving Prayer

tragedy of war has ceased to rob Earth's mothers of the children they love so dearly and so well.

We pray that we may know the real from the unreal, and may learn how few are the things needed in the pilgrimage of life on earth where man has come to measure worth by gold and what is best is lost in struggling for results, according to the judgment of a world, in which we ever seek and lose the gem called Life.

We thank Thee for the gift of song and the spirit of prayer, and for our faith which makes us feel that somewhere Thou dost hear our call.



## **A Prayer**



## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O God, for the notes of the night wind and the murmur of the stream that hastens to the boundless sea.

We thank Thee for the flight of the spirit through the realm where the soul is ever longing for its own and where its own is never found.

We pray that the echo of the restless sea upon the distant shore will bring its message that the soul of man may live beyond the line where the waves and the sky have met and dashed the mortal craft to wreck upon the rocks.

O Thou whose restless tide is moving

## A Prayer

round the world of man, we pray that it may bear us out beyond these islands where the little things seem big and where the beautiful is lost in quest of that which fades away and dies.

Guardian of the restless sea, we pray for rest that leaves us only at our best, and for the larger, truer love of only that which never dies.

## A Prayer

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## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O Thou Eternal God, for the hours when we have been our best and for the nameless beauty of the times when we have been better than our best.

We thank Thee for the insistent messages coming to us out of other worlds, reminding us that immortality may become the heritage of the one whose body is to mingle with the dust of the earth, but whose other self may have fellowship with all that lasts beyond the spaces of the world.

We thank Thee for the precious music

## A Prayer

made upon the chords of life by gentle hands and for our longing that these notes may never die away.

We thank Thee for the tenderness and for the never-ending love implanted in the mothers of the world.

We thank Thee for the patient hands which guide the ways of childhood through the tangled paths of life and lead the weary steps of man to Thee.

We pray that through the nameless silence of the endless years, in realms where shadowed forms are guides to Thee—these treasured souls may know us and be near.



## **A Child's Evening Prayer**



## A Child's Evening Prayer

WE thank Thee, O God, for the sweet gift of Love, and that Thou who hast made the earth and the stars, should care for us—feeble as we are.

We thank Thee that no harm can come to us because Thy love is everywhere.

We thank Thee for the mother-hands that guide us on the way of Life.

We thank Thee for a father's love which sows in order that we who do not sow may reap.

We are sleeping to-night under Thy sky

## A Child's Evening Prayer

and in the shelter of Thy love—and all is well.

Goodnight, O God, to Thy world and our thanks and our love to Thee.



## A Prayer



## A Prayer

WE thank Thee, O God, that we are able to trust all that we are into the keeping of the endless days to come, with the faith that all that belongs to eternity will endure forever, and that nothing real can pass away.

We thank Thee, that for the soul of man nothing is too early or too late in the long long way over the hills of time.

We thank Thee for the things we learn to do without.

We pray that we may not be slave or master of any man.

We pray that we may do well the work

## A Prayer

of life ; that we may never be disturbed, and that we may come to accept as best only that which for us is most truly real —and unattached to time, or place, or man.

We are Thy children, O God, of the time and tide, and are on our way to Thee, and to Thy other realms where Thou and we are one.



## A Prayer



## A Prayer

WE are thankful to Thee, O God, that we sow our best seeds under the illusion that bye and bye, in some good time, the harvest hour will come, and that we never realize that we are burying golden grain in desert sands where waving fields can never come to greet the dawn.

We are thankful for the hopes which ever beckon and elude us in the round of life.

We thank Thee for the strange far country which sends its ceaseless calls across the world, and pray that what was

## A Prayer

done in hope and constant faith may never pass away.

We pray for the safety of those ships that were to take us to the promised land, but left us stranded on the rocks, out in a troubled sea.

We pray that they may never share our shipwreck and that the treasured prizes trusted to their care may not be lost.

We pray that we may accept with patient faith the ills of life, the doubts of men—the loss of things we counted real, and come to learn that what we prized was what the world has always prized, and that the judgment of the world is wrong.

We pray that we may learn how little

## A Prayer

is the worth of things; how weak the praise of man and how precious were the gleams we followed when the way was hard, and we pray that we may never lose our faith in them or Thee, or in our power to come at last to what is best for us and highest in this and other of Thy worlds.

We pray for courage in our defeat and for the never-ending hope which bids us rise again.



**Prayer for a Little Child**





## Prayer for a Little Child

I PRAY Thee, God, Lover of Earth's children, that my little life may come to bless Thy world.

I thank Thee for the sweet boon of sleep and for the dreams of the night.

I thank Thee for my chance to live and grow.

I thank Thee for the ones who help me in my weakness.

I thank Thee for the gift of life and pray that I may be kind and love all that Thou hast made.

I pray that I may learn by being tired

## Prayer for a Little Child

how to lighten Life's load for the children  
of toil.

I pray I may be faithful to the little  
work I do, and that I may be worthy to  
be given greater work to do.

O God, I commit myself and my little  
Life to Thee.

## **A Prayer**



## A Prayer

O THOU whose sunshine is for the waste places of earth, as much as for the garden spots where perfume greets the dawn, I pray Thee for more of the days in which I give back kindness for unkindness and good for the ills of Life.





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