

The Little Suitcase

by

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Illustrated for Maxine

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This story was written in loving memory of Dylan Thomas Oser. At the age of ten months, Dylan was diagnosed with a rare degenerative brain disorder called Canavan Disease.

After the devastating news, his parents embraced a "different kind of normal". With unconditional love they embarked on this journey with Dylan, and though they had no idea where it would lead them, they knew each day with him was a blessing.

Dylan lived a contented and brave ten years. Although he never walked or talked, he forever changed the lives of those who knew him, for the better.

On the eve of Dylan's memorial service, at a complete loss for words in which to comfort his grieving family with, this story was born - on the wings of a prayer. It was as if Dylan was saying...

"If you want to tell my story, then tell it like this..."





Once upon eternity a little angel
sat at the gates of Heaven.

He asked the Lord if he could do
some travelling and see the world.

Granting his wish, the Lord gave him the choice of a long and relaxing trip or a short and busy one.

"How much will each trip cost?" asked the little angel.

"The first is not expensive but you will experience little" replied the Lord.

"The second is costly but you will see the world and make a difference there."



The little angel was tiny, but his heart was great, so he chose a small suitcase.

Unsure of what to take, he asked the Lord to help him pack.

His heart and spirit took up most of the room in his bag but he managed to squeeze in a lifetime of lessons and his return ticket.

His little suitcase was packed so full of purpose, the Lord had to sit on it while the little angel zipped it up.



As the gates of Heaven closed
behind him, his wings were clipped.
"Don't worry" said the Lord,
"I will hold them close to my
heart and return them to you
when the time is right."

The little angel fell to earth
and began his journey.



It took him no time to learn his name and feel the love of his mother and father. He recognized their voices and touch immediately and loved the feel of their kisses and hugs.

His body was different from the one he had before and he couldn't do all the things he used to in Heaven, but he felt better when he realized none of the kids here could fly either.



If the cost of the journey was the use of his body, it was okay with him. He'd get by with what he packed for the trip.



The little angel felt just as blessed as any other child could feel. His life was full of love, laughter and music. When he cried his parents held him. When he felt pain they gave him comfort.

One day, the Lord spoke to the little angel and asked him when he wanted to return to Heaven.

"Not yet, please not yet,"
said the little angel,

"I want a little sister
to love too!"





And love her he did! And she adored him.
He loved the silly sounds of her playing with her
friends and how they included him in their
games and stories. He loved all the people that
gave him their hearts and he gave them his.

The Lord called on him many times during his trip and each time the little angel refused to go. His family needed him and he needed them too.

Eventually his suitcase was almost empty. The little angel had given all of his lessons, all of his heart and all of his spirit and left them as gifts for the people who gave him so much.



All that remained was his return ticket.



As he picked up his suitcase,
his wings returned.

The Lord was proudly waiting
for him at the gates of Heaven.

"I know it was hard for you to leave"
said the Lord,
"but you blessed their lives."

The little angel replied
with a smile...

"And they blessed mine."



Special Note



*This book was illustrated in loving memory
of Maxine Grist, by her mom.*

*A special thank you to Dylan's little sister, Madison
who patiently took the time to print out the text for this book.*

*All author's proceeds will go to
Sunny Hill Health Centre for children.*