

Three Little Boxes

by Pati Rader 2023

Three little boxes are all that remain,
A lifetime of plans and memories made.
Each little box has a story to tell, open them up, fall into a well,
where sadness and loss cause your eyes to swell.
As thoughts and tears fall from your eyes,
with rich reminders of a loved one's life.
Welcome the contents and all that they cost,
to the life once lived and battles fought.
Peek into the struggles, the joys, and charades,
accomplishments, plans and a life once paved.
And pause for a moment to enjoy what was saved,
A lifetime of plans and memories made.



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The first box is tattered, love-worn from the years,
with pictures and treasures bringing smiles, some tears.
Celebrations, accomplishments, proud moments and events,
much too precious to simply forget.
A Bible with notes and highlighted scripture,
reminders of a life that had trust in the future.
Hand-drawn pictures from children and letters,
journals of struggles and hopes for life better.
Promises of love never-ending, precious cards and notes,
jewelry, wedding bands, and heirlooms of stories to be told.
Many photos tossed or passed on through the years,
but this box contains ones held so dear.
Pause for a moment to catch what a memory gave
as your face breaks in smiles across your face.
And oh the stories and laughter to share,
as you sort through this first box of love and care.
A lifetime of plans and memories made.



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The second box is a tidy file box containing all the important documents.
From birth and marriage certificates to educational achievements.
Life's important papers from IDs and financial holdings,
to health records and retirement plans that are now unfolding.
All the documents, records, and more no longer needed now scattered on the floor,
being sorted and filed or waiting to be destroyed.
That final death certificate now added to this box,
will never be seen by the owner of this vital records lot.
However a life once lived with purpose and intent,
now being remembered in this archival moment.
A lifetime of plans and memories made.



Photo by Secret Garden on [Pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

The third box contains the life once lived,
the essence of life now stilled.
The ashes of what was once vibrant and breathing,
now just a memory for those of us living.
Some boxes are tucked away out of sight,
others in a container on a shelf at eyes height.
While other boxes allow time and space
of scattering ones ashes in a memorable place.
What is clearly evident in this last box of the three,
it marks a life once lived, gone, finality.
A lifetime of plans and memories made.

What I have learned from these three little boxes.

When life is over and our lives packed away
our impact and presence may fade away.
But the life once lived with promise and hope
beyond this life is a truth to behold.
A life that is eagerly waiting to save
for life forever beyond the grave.
So I try not to focus on what my boxes will hold,
but share the story so often told.
That life goes on beyond the grave,
because of the love that Jesus gave.
It's ours for the asking, so simple and pure
there can be life everlasting in our future.
Trusting Jesus with my journey at hand,
knowing that he loves me and understands.
That I am living and growing in this time,
hoping to share his love divine.
My boxes will be left behind when I am gone.
But my love for Jesus will live on and on!

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

[John 3:16 \(NIV\)](#)

A lifetime of plans and memories made.

When I began managing my mother's care in 2007, we shifted her from an apartment to a smaller senior apartment, to assisted living sharing a room, and then her final home at a long-term skilled nursing facility. Through those five years, I took part in reducing her home of furniture, treasured items, and more, all the while compiling and organizing her important documents. And then the final execution of her plan for her final resting place (a box of ashes that she hoped would be planted under a peach tree). At the end of her life, she had three little boxes remaining, which is where this thought and story about Three Little Boxes came from.

Little did I know that just a few years later in 2021 I would once again be narrowing down a life once lived into Three Little Boxes with the passing of my beloved husband Ken and becoming a widow. Although most of that first box is still being sorted and lived in by me. I am eternally grateful for the love and provision of God through my life story and as I contribute to my own Three Little Boxes.

I hope you have been encouraged today. May God Bless you.

Pati

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