

I Wish You Enough

At an airport I overheard a father and daughter in their last moments together. They had announced her plane's departure and standing near the door she said, "Our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Daddy."

They kissed good-bye and she left. The father walked over toward the window where I was standing. It seemed like he wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on his private thoughts, but he welcomed me in by asking, "Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?"

"Yes, I have," I replied. Saying that brought back memories I had of expressing my love and appreciation to my own dad for all he had done for me. Recognizing that his days were limited, I took the time to tell him face to face how much he meant to me. So I had a sense what this man was experiencing.

"Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever good-bye?" I asked.

"I'm old and she lives much too far away. I have challenges ahead and . . . the reality is, her next trip back will be for my funeral," he said.

I nodded, taking in this news. Then I asked, "When you were saying good-bye I heard you say, 'I wish you enough'. May I ask what that means?"

I saw the trace of a wistful smile appear as he answered: "Oh, that's a wish that's been handed down from past generations in our family. My parents used to say it to everyone." He paused a moment and looking up as if trying to remember it in detail, he smiled even more. "When we said 'I wish you enough', we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with enough good things to sustain them."

Then, turning toward me, he said, "My own father would tell me,

I wish you enough sun to keep your outlook bright . . .
I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sunny weather . . .
I wish you enough joy to charge your spirits . . .
I wish you enough pain so even the smallest blessings are magnified . . .
I wish you enough gain to satisfy your desires . . .
I wish you enough loss to appreciate what you possess . . .
I wish you enough embraces to get you through the last good-bye..."

By then his daughter's airliner had pulled away from the gate. He was crying as he nodded to me, then he walked away.