

Love and Pet Me Now

On Mother's Day in 2014, Kathleen Preston – wife of Life Care Chairman Forrest Preston and a lady who loved to visit and encourage our residents and associates – asked me to share in a *Perspective* a poem that she found.

Kathleen passed away on Jan. 21 of this year at her home. She was a woman who embraced the role of motherhood. The *Perspective* that follows is reprinted in her memory:

A proverb accompanying Life Care's *Faces of Aging* image instructs: *The sun setting is no less beautiful than the sun rising.*

Such truth is reiterated in a poem befitting Mother's Day. Entitled *Love and Pet Me Now*, the verse was written by T.B. Larimore, a renowned preacher of his day, born on a farm in East Tennessee in 1843.



The poem was given to me by Kathleen Preston. It follows:

*Take my withered hands in yours,
Children of my soul;
Mother's heart is craving love;
Mother's growing old.
See, the snows of many years
Crown my furrowed brow;
As I've loved and petted you,
Love and pet me now.
Take my withered hands in yours,
Hold them close and strong;
Cheer me with a fond caress,
'Twill not be for long;
Youth immortal soon will crown
With its wreath my brow.
As I've loved and petted you,
Love and pet me now.*

T.B. Larimore had a special insight. We who work in Life Care and Century Park know that what he has penned is the desire of those we serve. And in many instances, absent the presence of children, we assume that role.

– Beecher Hunter