

The friends and the traveller

The long and winding road stretched out, all hazy in the heat.
Two friends sat down with weary frowns and dusty, tired feet.
They quenched their thirst, let out a sigh, and shared the food they had
They couldn't hide that deep inside they both felt very sad.

Just days before, a man they loved was led away to die.
The priests had schemed, the crowds had screamed: "He's guilty!
Crucify!"
They killed the one who healed the sick, who cured the lame and blind.
The friends had never seen a man so powerful and kind.

With joy they gladly followed him in answer to his call
Now all was lost. That brutal cross - it made no sense at all!
Fresh tears rolled down each weary face, still etched with disbelief.
They couldn't hide that deep inside, they both felt numb with grief.

Another traveller joined them as they both got up to go.
"A lovely day! Is all OK? You both seem very low."
"What's this? You haven't heard? The prophet Jesus, crucified!"
"The one we thought was Christ the Lord - the one we loved - has died!"

"We'd hoped he was the king, who turned the darkness into light."
"Alas, it seems all our dreams were buried too that night."
"We've spent the last three days in utter hopelessness and gloom,
but now they say that just today they've found an empty tomb!"

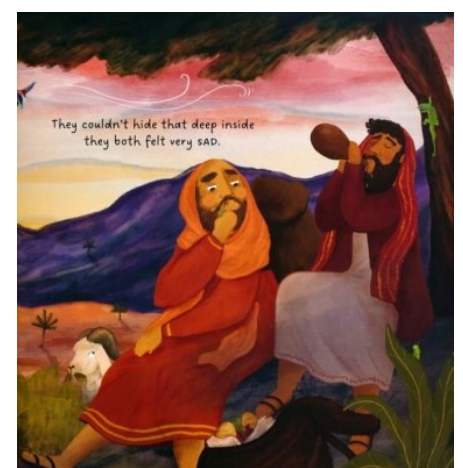
"At crack of dawn some women came - the stone was flung aside."
"An angel said 'He isn't dead! Fear not! He is alive!'"
The friends both shook their heads: "how can we know if this is true?"
They couldn't hide that deep inside they both felt so confused.

The friends set off, the traveller walking with them on the way.
They walked and talked and talked and walked throughout the ebbing day.
He may have been a stranger, but his words left them amazed,
"You haven't read? The Christ", he said, "must suffer then be raised."

He quoted from the prophets as they wound between the hills,
He showed them both, that what they wrote, how Jesus had fulfilled.
The one to crush the serpent's head, the ram in Isaac's place,
the lamb whose blood would be enough to rescue helpless slaves.

The suffering servant of the Lord and David's promised king,
who'd give his life, a sacrifice, to take away our sin.
The living Lord who'd rise again with power to make us new.
"How very slow you are to know that all of this is true!"

Our friends looked stunned. How had they failed to see all this before?
They couldn't hide that deep inside they both felt full of awe.
At last they reached Emmaus - the place the friends were heading.



The day was old, the air was cold, the sun was nearly setting.
The traveler made to leave - "Don't go! Please stay! The two friends said.
And as the three sat down to eat, the traveller broke bread.
Thunderstruck, at last they saw! But then the man was gone!
Their traveller friend who'd walked with them was Jesus all along!

They laughed and danced, they punched the air, they both made quite a noise.
They couldn't hide that deep inside they both felt overjoyed!
They grabbed their things, "Let's leave at once! The others need to know!"
The moonlight shone that night upon the travellers down below.

Both out of breath but full of joy they burst into the room.
"You'll never guess" the travellers said "the news we have for you!"
But what a buzz and babble filled the air as they arrived.
"The Lord appeared to Simon here! He really is alive!"

"Us too!" the friends replied. We also saw him! What a day!"
The friends sat down and told them how they'd met him on the way.
"He showed us from the Scriptures God's amazing rescue plan:
God's saving king who conquers sin. Yes! Jesus is the man!"

Happy but exhausted (for the night was nearly through),
they yawned and stretched and thought of bed - but heard a voice they knew.
"Peace be with you!"
Was it him? They looked around the see
Here I am! It's not a scam! I'm Jesus - yes! It's me!

They ate with him, they touched him, and they sat as he began
to show that he had always been the centre of God's plan.
The Psalms, the Law, the Prophets - he was everywhere they looked.
Jesus Christ! The risen Lord! The Hero of God's book.

The friends had been so very sad, but now that they believe
they couldn't hide that deep inside they felt a mighty peace.
The story doesn't end with them - for Jesus lives today.
He walks with us through downs and ups along life's winding way.

Our living Saviour promises to be our closest friend,
and in his Word, his voice is heard until our journey's end.
This living Word of Jesus, yes it really is enough.
He leads us and he feeds us and he shows us his great love.

Yes Jesus shines on every page and calls us all to start
a life with him, our risen King, by giving him our heart.
He's coming back to usher in a world of love and grace
and then we'll walk and then we'll talk with Jesus face to face.

But now remember these two friends who met him on the way.
How sadness turned to gladness when they talked with him that day.
And so for you, when you believe in Jesus Lord and King...
you'll surely find that deep inside, your greatest joy is him.