

1st August 2020

Mother

“Can you hear me, mother?”

Sandy Powell, The title of a movie from 1935, and a regular catchphrase

I only discovered the poetry of A A Milne when I was in my 30s, but, since then, his work has always been a favourite. The poems in *When we were very young* and *Now we are six*, from 1924 and 1927 respectively, aren't everyone's cup of tea. But they continue to be a delight for me, and I'm not embarrassed to say that if there are no children around to read them to, I read them aloud to myself – always a therapy!

One of A A Milne's poems called *Disobedience* tells us of a mother who was disobedient to her son's warnings and had to suffer the consequences. It begins with this verse:

*James James Morrison Morrison
Weatherby George Dupree
Took great care of his Mother,
Though he was only three.
James James Said to his Mother,
"Mother," he said, said he;
"You must never go down
to the end of the town,
if you don't go down with me."*

I can recall numerous occasions when I was disobedient to my mother and almost as many when she was disobedient to me. We didn't always get on perfectly – especially when I was a nippy teenager. I let her down sometimes, and, thankfully, made her happy and proud at other times. She got on my nerves too, as I did with her. Disobedience? Of course, because we wanted our own way and sought to mould the other into what we believed was right. But loving deeply and forgiving always? Oh yes!

I'm now thirteen years older than my mother was when she died. I miss her every day. “Can you hear me, mother? Of course you can! And, despite our times of disobedience, I love you more than ever before.”

A prayer for today

*Loving God, I thank you for the continuing bond of love I have with my mother,
and all those who have gone before me, and love me still. Amen.*

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