



# Good Timber

The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light,  
But stood out in the open plain  
And always got its share of rain,  
Never became a forest king  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil  
To gain and farm his patch of soil,  
Who never had to win his share  
Of sun and sky and light and air,  
Never became a manly man  
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow with ease,  
The stronger wind, the stronger trees,  
The further sky, the greater length,  
The more the storm the more the strength.  
By sun and cold, by rain and snow,  
In trees and men good timbers grow.  
Where thickest lies the forest growth  
We find the patriarchs of both.  
And they hold counsel with the stars  
Whose broken branches show the scars  
Of many winds and much of strife.  
This is the common law of life.

By Douglas Malloch

## A Father's Grief: To Brett

It must be very difficult to be as man in grief,  
Since "men don't cry" and "men are strong" no tears can bring relief.

It must be very difficult to stand up to the test  
And field calls and visitors so she can get some rest.

They always ask if she's all right and what she's going through,  
But seldom take his hand and ask, "My friend, but how are you?"

He hears her crying in the night and thinks his heart will break.  
He dries her tears and comforts her, but "stays strong" for her sake.

It must very difficult to start each day anew  
And try to be so very brave – He lost his baby too.



This poem was written by a compassionate woman, Eileen Knight Hagemester, who saw the difficult issues regarding men and grief. She wrote this poem to her son-in-law after his baby girl was stillborn. In parallel, fathers that are told that their beloved child is diagnosed with a disability, also have to cope with the tremendous loss of expectations and dreams he once held. May we encourage all readers to offer your support to these fathers.