

BLESSED ARE THE FATHERS

By Steph Van Rossen

Blessed are all the Fathers
Whose heart grew two sizes
Who came apart and
Completely undone
Who felt the planets shift
In the most beautiful thing
They have ever seen
Placed, safely, in their hands
Thrust in their chest
Skin to Skin
Heart to Heart
And were suddenly,
Formed anew.

Blessed are the Fathers
Who have taken up the mantle
Of 'Father Figure'
In ways planned
And in the other,
The messy tangle of humanity.
Blessed are they who have worn it with humour,
With grace,
With love.

Blessed are the Fathers
Who, caught unawares,
Have become a new person –
With terrible jokes
Khaki shorts
And Reeboks.
Who never liked gardening
But now Instagram their lawn
And another Bunnings run
To hang up shelves
That could collapse
At any moment.

Blessed are all the Fathers
Building presents
Within their skill set
(and far beyond)
In the dead of night
While their children dream
For the double blessing
Of Joy and Surprise.

Blessed are the Fathers
Who feel the weight of the world
On their shoulders.
Which is, really, far too much,
They have a bad back already.

May we be bold enough
To love them well
To express our gratitude
To hold them
As they carry it all.

Blessed are the Fathers
Tasked with the impossible
(A task that never stops)
Even when children are fully grown)
To build a world
For a small child's dream
And not let it tumble
When 'real life' breathes on it.
Who clean up the messes,
Each tiny speck of glass,
Every invisible thread,
And somehow,
Bring it back to fullness.

Blessed are the Fathers
Who hold hope
And the whole world
For their children
In their hands.
And who love their children
Simply, for being who *they* are.

May we remember that God
Is not formed
In the images
Of our earthly fathers.
These fathers who have
Loved and disappointed us
Who have held us
And those we have lost.

It is God
Who whispers
In our grief
Our brokenness –
I am with you
I am your Father
I am all that you need.

It is God
Who holds us, each one,
Tenderly
In the palm of His hand
– His beloved.

Blessed are the Fathers
Who are
Humbly, Imperfectly, Lovingly,
Made in *His* image.
Amen.