

THE BIBLE WITH LINES DRAWN IN

Lauren's grandma sat in a lavender room
Old and withered and gray
Her faded eyes would see no more
Lauren's grandma had passed away
In her lap, there lay a Bible
That she'd had for many years
The spine was worn black leather
Stained by an old woman's tears
In her hand, the nurse found a scribbled note
Inscribed "to Lauren, with love"
And told of her last wishes
To be fulfilled from above
The note gave Lauren the Bible
And ended with a kiss
I happened to see the letter
It went on something like this:

"Dear Lauren, I think tonight that I shall die
Old people can tell these things
But do not grieve for me, my dear
For soon I shall have wings
And I thought before I take my leave
I'd put our dispute away
And remind you of the Bible you gave me
For my 75th birthday
I know it made you hurt and mad
When I put it up high on a shelf
And said that my old Bible would do
For an old fool like myself
The words sounded worse than I'd meant them to
Especially to a ten-year-old child
I'm writing this note to try to explain
It's been due for quite a while

You thought my old Bible was too far gone
For the cover was cracked and stained
And if you opened it up too fast
It cracked as if in pain
And you'd seen the inner pages
From when I read the stories to you
How the words of each page were underlined
With colors of every hue
And you'd saved so much allowance
That it seemed like an awful sin

To put your gift aside in favor of
The Bible with Lines Drawn In

You see, Lauren, some folks think Bibles
Are too holy to really be used
Heaven forbid the cover should fade
Or the pages come unglued
And because they are so worried about
The way that their Bible looks
They keep it safe up on a shelf
With all their other books
If it's used, it might get damaged
And lose its divinity
So it never tells them the story
Of the sermon at Galilee
They don't read the Ten Commandments
Lest the Bibles pages be torn
They don't read of the crucifixion
As the pages might be worn
But I always kept my Bible near
And many years it's been
That I've for strength and comfort leaned
On the Bible with Lines Drawn In

And over the years, I've filled each page
With felt-tip-marker lines
Under the things which mean so much
To this tired old heart of mine
The prophet's words are lined in green
For the hope and faith they give
I used gold to line the Heavenly rules
That we all need to live
The miracles are rimmed in blue
Which helps to remind me
Of the miracle of loaves and fishes
And the parting of the sea
Black marks off the devil's words
When he tried, the Son, to tempt
And brown for the Birth of Bethlehem
(It's the color of Frankincense)
And with the pen of purple
I put in bold, proud rings
Each gentle word that left the tongue
Of the Holy Kings of Kings
So though the words have faded some
And the paper's worn a bit thin

I still can read with my weary old eyes
From The Bible with Lines Drawn In

And written inside it there are things
Like the date when you were born
And the day that God chased the locusts
Out of your Grandfather's corn
And when he and I were married
We wrote down the vows we took
And the wedding wasn't official
'Till it was registered in that book
We wrote down your Father's birth
And after he was grown
Our praises that God kept him safe in the war
And finally brought him home
And the day your Grandpa closed his eyes
And gently passed away
I cried awhile, then found a pen
And dutifully marked the day
So many memories in this book
I hardly know where to begin
It's been my friend and confidant
The Bible with Lines Drawn In

So Lauren, please forgive me
For what I'm going to do
On my shelf, you'll find your Bible
I'm giving it back to you
And bury me with the old one
When they pack my body away
I want to share it with Grandpa
When we meet on Judgment Day
But on your Bible, you'll find some pens
Purple, red, and blue
Use them to make this Bible
One that is special to you
Use the pens, and sign your name
Then write this date within
And someday, perhaps, you too will have
A Bible with Lines Drawn In

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