



Stumpy-Footed Pigeon

By Lucy Wall

It never ceases to amaze me how inspiration can appear from anywhere and at any time. My inspiration for "Stumpy-Footed Pigeon" was, as you may have already guessed: a stumpy-footed pigeon!

For anyone who has ever visited or lived in London, you'll know how many scruffy, scraggly looking pigeons there are around!

It was one very cold day on the platform of Hammersmith Tube Station while I was waiting for a train, that one of these poor little feathered creatures got my mind ticking.

The pigeon, looking rather worse for wear, hobbled past me on two stubby little legs with barely a toe in sight. My heart immediately went out to the sorry looking bird and I found myself thinking:

"Poor stumpy-footed pigeon."

I went on to think about how hard life is for a pigeon living in busy London town and how the effects of their difficult little lives can often be seen in their dirty, misshapen appearance. I concluded though, that as long as the pigeon had his wings, he was equipped with what he needed to survive and this brought a small smile to my face regarding the pigeon's welfare!

I then thought about how hostile London is towards anyone living in it (not just the pigeons!) and from some narrow corridor in my mind, I recalled that in the book of Isaiah, God is described as being our wings. The verse I was thinking of was Isaiah 40:31 which reads:

"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

I then began to use my initial thoughts towards the stumpy-footed pigeon to draw observations and parallels of my own life and daily situations I face as a resident of London. How the hardships and difficulties of life can take their toll, but how I know that as long as I have Jesus Christ lifting me up and giving me the strength to soar, just like the stumpy-footed pigeon- I'm equipped with all I need to survive!

Oh stumpy-footed pigeon, you hobble down the street.
I watch you struggle round a bench on stumpy little feet.
Your steps are small and awkward as you search for scraps of food.
Your day-long task looks tiresome, I'd help you if I could.

Poor stumpy-footed pigeon, you're the only one who knows
Where you left your pigeon claws and little pigeon toes.
Perhaps on wired fencing that caught you like a vice.
Or maybe in the dust and dirt beside the train track mice.

Oh stumpy-footed pigeon, your sorrow's clear to see.
To find a bird with all his toes is quite a rarity.
Your days are never easy. Your pigeon life looks tough.
The busy streets of London town will always treat you rough.



I cannot help but ponder as I watch you in your strife,
The toll the city takes no matter who you are in life.
I start to notice passers by who go about their day.
It seems that London life comes with a hefty price to pay.

I see a stressed-out businessman who rushes with his case.
He bustles past and hurries off as if he'll win the race.
He elbows people left and right to gain that step ahead.
He could slow down and show some care, but barges on instead.

I hear a crying baby as it's pushed along by mum.
The giant buggy weighs her down. That doesn't look like fun.
She hauls the hefty carrier inside a busy train.
Commuters blankly stare at her. From helping they refrain.

This thoughtless, selfish mindset I just cannot understand.
They'd rather watch her struggle than to lend a helping hand!
It seems the city numbs the mind to focus on one's self.
To climb the ladder, gain the lead! It's each man for him-self!

It's like a crazy rat race where it lacks a friendly tone.
Despite the crowds around me; I feel terribly alone.
Anonymous, it's easy for a person to feel lost.
For each pursues their own intent no matter of the cost.

I watch the weary masses as they trundle down the street.
I realize in London town; we all have "stumpy feet!"
The daily pressures people face can really take their toll.
They beat you down and wear you out or worse, destroy your soul.

I start reflecting on myself, on troubles in my life.
The worries that can plague my mind and cut me like a knife.
The cost of living, friendships lost, what's next in my career?
This panic starts to build like an impending wave of fear.

Concerns can grow gargantuan; I feel I cannot cope.
I know I cannot take this stress and start to lose all hope.
I feel my soul is plummeting into the darkest night,
But just as panic takes a hold, I'm rescued by God's light.

He sends His Holy Comforter. He hears my desperate plea.



He reaches in and grabs my fear and takes it far from me.
Aware the hands around my throat have lost their grip of death,
I feel God's reassurance now with each and every breath.

Reminding me He's in control despite life's dreadful pains.
With reverence and submission I will gladly pass the reins.
For Jesus is the rock on which my feet are firmly landing.
A quiet peace He gives me that transcends all understanding.

I dwell on words of Scripture and the praise Isaiah sings:
"I'll run and not grow weary," I have Jesus as my wings!
I focus on the promises I hadn't seen before:
He'll give me strength and raise me up. Like eagles we can soar!

So now within my circumstance my heart is overjoyed.
I feel elation lift my soul, although I'm unemployed!
Though changing aspects of my life can make me feel unsure,
I know unchanging love in Christ. With Jesus I'm secure.

This knowledge makes me slow things down, take each day at a time.
Just set my sights on Jesus Christ. I know I will be fine.
I know at times frustration has me pulling at my hair,
But worry's not a burden Christ intended me to bare.

The fear of the unknown can cause my mind to fuss and buzz.
I don't know where I'm going. But I know the One who does.
I re-think my priorities and once this is addressed,
I look at all He's given me and realize I'm blessed.

No matter how life cripples me and pins me to the ground,
I know with Jesus as my wings, there's freedom to be found.
So stumpy-footed pigeon; not so different now from me,
I smile and watch you spread your wings and fly away so free.