

Verses written by Vietnamese refugee, Le Con (b.1919). Le arrived in England in Nov 1979, aged 60 years old and was initially placed at the Ockenden reception centre at Sunshine House, Gosport.

"A huge bird stretched out his wings and with a loud noise flew up into the sky.

He travelled thousands of miles over mountains and seas to search...
And he was deeply glad when he was able to reunite with his closest relatives.

I, a tired and toiled traveller, no longer have any worries because of my joyful reunion.

It is not yet too late to begin a peaceful carefree life.

The universe is vast and it's beauty endless but now I can sing of the wind and toy with the moon and the night grows deeper and deeper imperceptibly.

Now, I am old but I have achieved my aims.

And my spirit is still strong like the green pines that cannot be attacked by the strong wind and the heavy snow.

I truly love England from my heart.

And now all my dreams have come true.

This house received me with open arms and endless love.

For my situation was so bad that God pitied me and opened the doors to my freedom.

The huge bird flapped quickly and flew away. Though his nest was demolished his eggs are safe and so all his travelling was not in vain.

Let everybody praise the Queen for her kindness and mercy towards the refugees.

Let's thank the Mayor and Mayoress and all the people in Gosport for all the helps they had given."

[Translated by Le Chan Vinh & Ian Stone]