

## READINGS & POEMS

Below are a selection of readings and poems from various authors, some have the authors name others don't. It is wise before using any of these to quote the author and it's origin.

### Unknown

When you love someone, you do not love them all the time in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility, it is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity, in freedom. In the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what it was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting as it is now. For relationships, too, must be like islands, one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits - islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides. One must accept the security of the winged life, of the ebb and flow of intermittency.

### "Union" by Robert Fulghum

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way. All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks - all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will and you will and we will" - those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe" - and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart. All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed - well, I meant it all, every word." Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another - acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years. Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this - is my husband, this - is my wife.

TIN WEDDING WHISTLE (Ogden Nash)

Though you know it anyhow

Listen to me, darling, now,

Proving what I need not prove

How I know I love you, love.

Near and far, near and far,

I am happy where you are;

Likewise I have never learnt

How to be it where you aren't.

Far and wide, far and wide,

I can walk with you beside;

Furthermore, I tell you what,

I sit and sulk where you are not.

Visitors remark my frown

Where you're upstairs and I am down,

Yes, and I'm afraid I pout

When I'm indoors and you are out;

But how contentedly I view  
Any room containing you.

In fact I care not where you be,  
Just as long as it's with me.

In all your absences I glimpse  
Fire and flood and trolls and imps.

Is your train a minute slothful?  
I goad the stationmaster wrathful.

When with friends to bridge you drive  
I never know if you're alive,

And when you linger late in shops  
I long to telephone the cops.

Yet how worth the waiting for,  
To see you coming through the door.

Somehow, I can be complacent  
Never but with you adjacent.

Near and far, near and far,  
I am happy where you are;

Likewise I have never larnt

How to be it where you aren't.

Then grudge me not my fond endeavor,

To hold you in my sight forever;

Let none, not even you, disparage

Such valid reason for a marriage.

Captain Corelli's Mandolin reading

A soulmate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out and we can be completely and honestly who we are; we can be loved for who we are and not for who we're pretending to be. Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person we're safe in our own paradise. Our soulmate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person. Our soulmate is the one who makes life come to life.

The Velveteen Rabbit or How Toys Become Real

By Margery Williams

"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit.

"Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand." "I suppose you are real?" said the Rabbit. And then he wished he had not said it, for he thought the Skin Horse might be sensitive. But the Skin Horse only smiled.

"Someone made me Real," he said. "That was a great many years ago; but once you are Real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

ee cummings

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in  
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere  
i go you go,my dear;and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing,my darling)  
i fear  
no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want  
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows  
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

the art of marriage" by Wilfred A. Peterson

The little things are the big things.

It is never being too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted;

the courtship should not end with the honeymoon,

it should continue through all the years.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating  
gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo or the wife to have wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is finding room for the things of the spirit.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal, dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.

It is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner

I Like You by Sandol Stoddard Warburg

I like you and I know why.

I like you because you are a good person to like,

I like you because when I tell you something special, you know it's special

And you remember it a long, long time.

You say, Remember when you told me something special

And both of us remember.

When I think something is important

You think it's important too.

We have good ideas.

When I say something funny, you laugh

I think I'm funny and you think I'm funny too

Ha ha!

That's because you really like me

You really like me, don't you

And I really like you back

And you like me back and I like you back

And that's the way we keep on going every day

If you go away, then I go away too,

Or if I stay home, you send me a postcard.

You don't just say Well see you around sometime, bye.

I like you a lot because of that.

If I go away, I send you a postcard too.

And I like you because if we go away together

And if we are in Grand Central Station

And if I get lost

Then you are the one who is yelling for me.

And I like you because when I am feeling sad

You don't always cheer me up right away

Sometimes it is better to be sad

You can't stand the others being so googly and gaggly every single minute

You want to think about things

It takes time.

I like you because if I am mad at you

Then you are mad at me too

It's awful when the other person isn't.

They are so nice and hoo-hoo you could just about punch them in the nose.

If you find two four-leaf clovers, you give me one.

If I find four, I give you two.

If we only find three, we keep on looking.

Sometimes we have good luck, and sometimes we don't.

I like you because I don't know why but

Everything that happens is nicer with you.

I can't remember when I didn't like you

It must have been lonesome then.

I like you because because because

I forget why I like you but I do.

So many reasons.

On the fourth of July I like you because it's the fourth of July.

On the fifth of July, I like you too.

Even if it was the 999th of July

Even if it was August

Even if it was way down at the bottom of November

Even if it was no place particular in January

I would go on choosing you

And you would go on choosing me

Over and over again.

That's how it would happen every time.

I guess I just like you because I like you.

\*\*\*This is really cute as well but I can't paste it so you'll have to type in this link:

<http://www.a-deep-place.com/pooh/pooh15.shtml>

The Master Speed

By Robert Frost

No speed of wind or water rushing by  
But you have speed far greater. You can climb  
Back up a stream of radiance to the sky,  
And back through history up the stream of time.  
And you were given this swiftness, not for haste,  
Nor chiefly that you may go where you will,  
But in the rush of everything to waste,  
That you may have the power of standing still ?  
Of any still or moving thing you say.  
Two such as you with such a master speed  
Cannot be parted nor be swept away  
From one another once you are agreed  
That life is only life forevermore  
Together wing to wing and oar to oar.

Hope Is The Thing With Feathers by Emily Dickinson

Hope is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul,  
And sings the tune without the words,  
And never stops at all,

And sweetest in the gale is heard;  
And sore must be the storm  
That could abash the little bird  
That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chilliest land,  
And on the strangest sea;  
Yet, never, in extremity  
It asked a crumb of me.

Somewhere I have never travelled

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond  
any experience, your eyes have their silence:  
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,  
or which i cannot touch because they are too near  
your slightest look easily will uncloset me  
though i have closed myself as fingers,

you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens  
(touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose  
or if your wish be to close me, I and  
my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,  
as when the heart of this flower imagines  
the snow carefully everywhere descending;  
nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals  
the power of your intense fragility: whose texture  
compels me with the colour of its countries,  
rendering death and forever with each breathing  
(I do not know what it is about you that closes  
and opens; only something in me understands  
the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)  
nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

To My Valentine, Ogden Nash

More than a catbird hates a cat,  
Or a criminal hates a clue,  
Or the Axis hates the United States,  
That's how much I love you.

I love you more than a duck can swim,  
And more than a grapefruit squirts,  
I love you more than a gin rummy is a bore,  
And more than a toothache hurts.

As a shipwrecked sailor hates the sea,  
Or a juggler hates a shove,  
As a hostess detests unexpected guests,

That's how much you I love.

I love you more than a wasp can sting,  
And more than the subway jerks,  
I love you as much as a beggar needs a crutch,  
And more than a hangnail irks.

I swear to you by the stars above,  
And below, if such there be,  
As the High Court loathes perjurious oaths,  
That's how you're loved by me.

Vincent Van Gogh

It may well seem to you that the sun is shining more brightly and that everything has taken on a new charm. That, at any rate, is the inevitable consequence of true love, I believe, and it is a wonderful thing. And I also believe that those who hold that no one thinks clearly when in love are wrong, for it is at just that time that one thinks very clearly indeed and is more energetic than one was before. And love is something eternal, it may change in aspect but not in essence. And there is the same difference between someone who is in love and what he was like before as there is between a lamp that is lit and one that is not. The lamp was there all the time and it was a good lamp, but now it is giving light as well and that is its true function. And one has more peace of mind about many things and so is more likely to do better work . . .

. . . So I am always between two currents of thought, first the material difficulties, turning round and round to make a living; and second, the study of colour. I am always in hope of making a discovery there, to express the love of two lovers by a marriage of two complementary colours, their mingling and their opposition, the mysterious vibrations of kindred tones. To express the thought of a brow by the radiance of a light tone against a sombre background . . .

. . . The sky is aquamarine, the water is royal blue, the ground is mauve. The town is blue and purple. The gas is yellow and the reflections are russet gold descending down to green-bronze. On the aquamarine field of the sky the Great Bear is a sparkling green and pink, whose discreet paleness contrasts with the brutal gold of the gas. Two colourful figurines of lovers in the foreground . . .

. . . And how important it is to know how to mix on the palette those colours which have no name, and yet are the real foundation of everything.

One is The Owl & the Pussycat by Edward Lear

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea green boat,  
They took some honey, and plenty of money,  
Wrapped up in a five pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
You are,  
You are!  
What a beautiful Pussy you are!

Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?'  
They sailed away, for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-tree grows  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose,  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

'Dear pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.

They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon.

"May your feet tread the roads of a long delight,  
May your eyes see beauty,  
and your soul see light  
May your lips know a smile,  
and your heart a song  
and love go with you your whole life long."

The Promise  
Eileen Rafter

The sun danced on the snow with a sparkling smile,  
As two lovers sat quietly, alone for a while.  
Then he turned and said, with a casual air  
(Though he blushed from his chin to the tips of his hair),  
"I think I might like to get married to you"

"Well then, she said, "Well there's a thought,  
But what if we can't promise to be all that we ought,  
If I'm late yet again, when we plan to go out.  
For I know I can't promise, I'll learn to ignore  
Dirty socks and damp towels strewn all over the floor.

So if we can't vow to be all that we should  
I'm not sure what to do, though the idea's quite good".  
But he gently smiled and tilted his head  
Till his lips met her ear and softly he said

"I promise, to weave my dreams into your own,  
That wherever you breathe will be my hearts home.  
I promise, that whether with rags or with gold I am blessed  
Your smile is the jewel I will treasure the best.

Do you think then, my love, we should marry - do you?"  
"Yes" she said smiling "I do".

Oh, the places you will go

Congratulations!  
Today is your day.  
You're off to Great Places!  
You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes  
You can steer yourself  
any direction you choose.  
You're on your own. And you know what you know.  
And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.

About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there."

With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet,  
you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.

And you may not find any  
you'll want to go down.

In that case, of course,  
you'll head straight out of town.

It's opener there  
in the wide open air.

Out there things can happen  
and frequently do  
to people as brainy  
and footsy as you.

And when things start to happen,  
don't worry. Don't stew.  
Just go right along.  
You'll start happening too.

OH!  
THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

You'll be on your way up!  
You'll be seeing great sights!  
You'll join the high fliers  
who soar to high heights.

You won't lag behind, because you'll have the speed.

You'll pass the whole gang and you'll soon take the lead.

Wherever you fly, you'll be the best of the best.

Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.

Except when you don't

Because, sometimes, you won't.

I'm sorry to say so

but, sadly, it's true

and Hang-ups

can happen to you.

You can get all hung up

in a prickly perch.

And your gang will fly on.

You'll be left in a Lurch.

You'll come down from the Lurch

with an unpleasant bump.

And the chances are, then,

that you'll be in a Slump.

And when you're in a Slump,

you're not in for much fun.

Un-slumping yourself

is not easily done.

You will come to a place where the streets are not marked.

Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked.

A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin!

Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in?

How much can you lose? How much can you win?

And IF you go in, should you turn left or right...

or right-and-three-quarters? Or, maybe, not quite?

Or go around back and sneak in from behind?

Simple it's not, I'm afraid you will find,

for a mind-maker-upper to make up his mind.

You can get so confused

that you'll start in to race

down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace

and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space,

headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.

The Waiting Place...

...for people just waiting.

Waiting for a train to go

or a bus to come, or a plane to go

or the mail to come, or the rain to go

or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow

or waiting around for a Yes or a No

or waiting for their hair to grow.

Everyone is just waiting.

Waiting for the fish to bite

or waiting for wind to fly a kite

or waiting around for Friday night

or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake  
or a pot to boil, or a Better Break  
or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants  
or a wig with curls, or Another Chance.  
Everyone is just waiting.

NO!  
That's not for you!

Somehow you'll escape  
all that waiting and staying.  
You'll find the bright places  
where Boom Bands are playing.

With banner flip-flapping,  
once more you'll ride high!  
Ready for anything under the sky.  
Ready because you're that kind of a guy!

Oh, the places you'll go! There is fun to be done!  
There are points to be scored. there are games to be won.  
And the magical things you can do with that ball  
will make you the winning-est winner of all.  
Fame! You'll be famous as famous can be,  
with the whole wide world watching you win on TV.

Except when they don't.  
Because, sometimes, they won't.

I'm afraid that some times

you'll play lonely games too.  
Games you can't win  
'cause you'll play against you.

All Alone!

Whether you like it or not,  
Alone will be something  
you'll be quite a lot.

And when you're alone, there's a very good chance  
you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants.  
There are some, down the road between hither and yon,  
that can scare you so much you won't want to go on.

But on you will go  
though the weather be foul  
On you will go  
though your enemies prowl  
On you will go  
though the Hakken-Kraks howl  
Onward up many  
a frightening creek,  
though your arms may get sore  
and your sneakers may leak.

On and on you will hike  
and I know you'll hike far  
and face up to your problems  
whatever they are.

You'll get mixed up, of course,  
as you already know.

You'll get mixed up  
with many strange birds as you go.

So be sure when you step.

Step with care and great tact

and remember that Life's

a Great Balancing Act.

Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.

And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And will you succeed?

Yes! You will, indeed!

(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)

KID, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!

So...

be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray

or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea,

you're off to Great Places!

Today is your day!

Your mountain is waiting.

So...get on your way!

I Do I Will I Have, Ogden Nash

How wise I am to have instructed the butler

to instruct the first footman

to instruct the second footman

to instruct the doorman to order my carriage;

I am about to volunteer a definition of marriage.

Just as I know that there are two Hagens,

Walter and Copen,

I know that marriage is a legal and religious alliance entered

into by a man who can't sleep with the window shut

and a woman who can't sleep with the window open.

Moreover, just as I am unsure of the difference between

flora and fauna and flotsam and jetsam,

I am quite sure that marriage is the alliance of two people

one of whom never remembers birthdays and the other

never forgets,

And he refuses to believe there is a leak in the water pipe or

the gas pipe

and she is convinced she is about to asphyxiate or drown,

And she says Quick get up and get my hairbrushes off the

windowsill, it's raining in,

and he replies Oh they're all right, it's only raining straight down.

That is why marriage is so much more interesting than divorce,

Because it's the only known example of the happy meeting of

the immovable object and the irresistible force.

So I hope husbands and wives will continue to debate and

combat over everything debatable and combatable,

Because I believe a little incompatibility is the spice of life,

particularly if he has income and she is patable.

