

# READINGS

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*Every effort has been made to identify and acknowledge the original authors of the material that follows:*

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## **The Keys to a Loving, Lasting Relationship**

**Casey Whilson**

Love one another with all your hearts;  
give more than you take;  
don't ever take your relationship for granted;  
have heart-to-heart talks and really communicate;  
be trusting, playful, intimate and kind;  
appreciate all the little, special things;  
recognise that time spent together is a treasure;  
make the most of what each day brings;  
know that nothing is sweeter than the warmth  
of one hand within another;  
walk together in the direction you want to go;  
be supportive and sharing and open to changes;  
always continue to grow;  
cherish this blessing which so few truly find;  
have dreams to reach out for through the years;  
share one another's smiles through the good times;  
be everything to one another through the tears;  
what your time together lacks in quantity,  
make up for in quality;  
call to say "I love you", in the middle of the day;  
keep your sense of humour and hold on to your hopes;  
don't let work or worries get in the way;  
make love a sanctuary and a celebration;  
make each moment more precious and each session  
more glad;  
realise how lucky you are to be two ... together;  
and make the best memories any two people ever had.

## **A Love That's Meant to Be**

**Ju.D.G.**

Love has led us here today  
Along a path – that was meant to be  
What started as a friendship  
Grew to love for you and me.

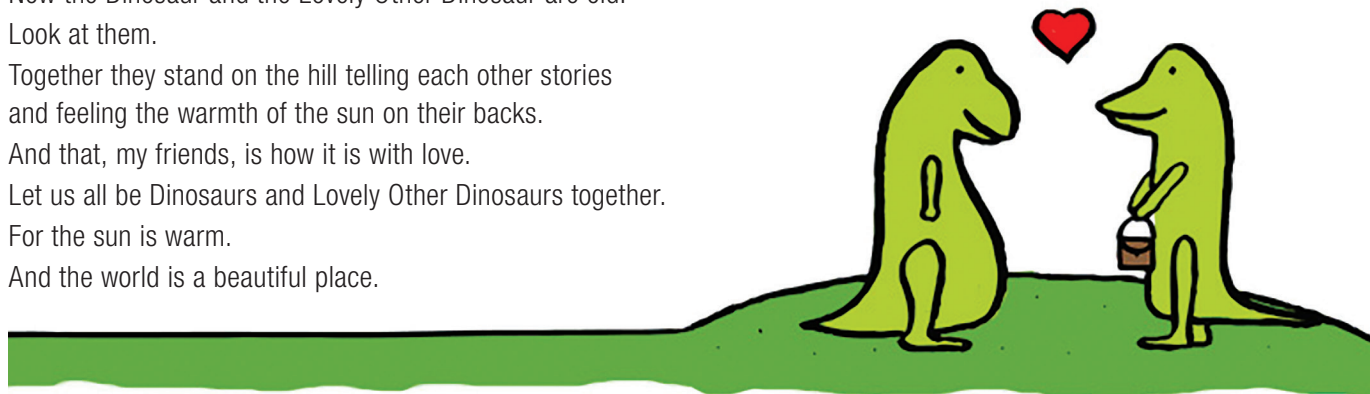
We bring together different worlds  
Where all around us see  
That we are one – upon this earth  
And our love was meant to be.

So on this day – each year from now  
With all – we'll share the key  
For with you my friend – my love one  
Our love was meant to be.

## A Lovely Love Story

*Edward Monkton*

The fierce Dinosaur was trapped inside his cage of ice.  
Although it was cold he was happy in there. It was, after all, his cage.  
Then along came the Lovely Other Dinosaur.  
The Lovely Other Dinosaur melted the Dinosaur's cage with kind words and loving thoughts.  
I like this Dinosaur thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.  
Although he is fierce he is also tender and he is funny.  
He is also quite clever though I will not tell him this for now.  
I like this Lovely Other Dinosaur, thought the Dinosaur.  
She is beautiful and she is different and she smells so nice.  
She is also a free spirit which is a quality I much admire in a dinosaur.  
But he can be so distant and so peculiar at times, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.  
He is also overly fond of things.  
Are all Dinosaurs so overly fond of things?  
But her mind skips from here to there so quickly thought the Dinosaur.  
She is also uncommonly keen on shopping.  
Are all Lovely Other Dinosaurs so uncommonly keen on shopping?  
I will forgive his peculiarity and his concern for things, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.  
For they are part of what makes him a richly charactered individual.  
I will forgive her skipping mind and her fondness for shopping, thought the Dinosaur.  
For she fills our life with beautiful thoughts and wonderful surprises.  
Besides, I am not unkeen on shopping either.  
Now the Dinosaur and the Lovely Other Dinosaur are old.  
Look at them.  
Together they stand on the hill telling each other stories  
and feeling the warmth of the sun on their backs.  
And that, my friends, is how it is with love.  
Let us all be Dinosaurs and Lovely Other Dinosaurs together.  
For the sun is warm.  
And the world is a beautiful place.



## Marriage Means Being In Love for the Rest of Your Life

*Chris Ardis*

Marriage is love walking hand in hand together. It's laughing with each other about silly little things, and learning to discuss big things with care and tenderness. In marriage, love is trusting each other when you're apart. It's getting over disappointments and hurts, knowing that these are present in all relationships. It's the realisation that there is no one else in this world that you'd rather be with than the one you're married to. It's thinking of new things to do together; it's growing old together. Marriage is being in love for the rest of your life.

## **The Day Has Arrived**

*Linda Footer*

The day has arrived  
We are now Groom and Bride  
Together before you we stand.  
We can hardly believe  
We are about to receive  
A ring placed on each other's hand.

We give thanks to our parents  
For all their hard work  
And the money they had to spend too.  
Not just for today  
But a lifetime away  
We thank you for all that you do.

For friends who have gathered  
To us you have mattered  
In each individual way.  
Thank you for coming  
Celebrate with us now  
This, our wonderful wedding day.

## **Wedding Day**

*Adrian Lomas*

This day of days  
Your separate ways  
Become one.

This ring, this vow,  
Tell you that now  
A new life's begun.

Two roads converging  
Then, finally merging  
Under the sun.

Good luck holding  
A future unfolding  
That can't be undone.

## **A Reading from 'The Notebook'**

*Nicholas Sparks*

I didn't plan on falling in love with you and I doubt you planned on falling in love with me.  
But once we fell, it was clear neither of us could control what was happening to us.  
We fell in love despite our differences and once we did, something rare and beautiful was created. For me, love like this has only happened once and that's why every minute we have spent together is seared in my memory. I'll never forget a single moment of it.

I love you, I am who I am because of you.  
You are my every reason, every hope and every dream I've ever had. And no matter what happens to us in the future, every day we are together is the greatest day of my life.  
I will always be yours.

The best kind of love is the kind that awakens the soul and makes us reach for more, that plants a fire in our hearts and brings peace to our minds. And that's what you've given me, that is what I hope to give you forever.  
I want you, I want all of you, you and me, every day.





## **The Art of Marriage**

*Wilferd Arlan Peterson*

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens. A good marriage must be created.

In the art of marriage, the little things are 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 never taking the other for granted; the courtship should not end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy.

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 cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humour.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

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.

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## **Marriage Joins Two People in the Circle of its Love**

*Edmund O'Neill*

Marriage is a commitment for life, the best that two people can find and bring out in each other.

It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime. Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener and critic. And there may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child. Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, commitment is stronger, even anger is felt more strongly and passes away more quickly. Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences and new ways of expressing a love that is deeper than life. When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique unto themselves which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential made in the hearts of two people who love each other and takes a lifetime to fulfil.



## True Friendship

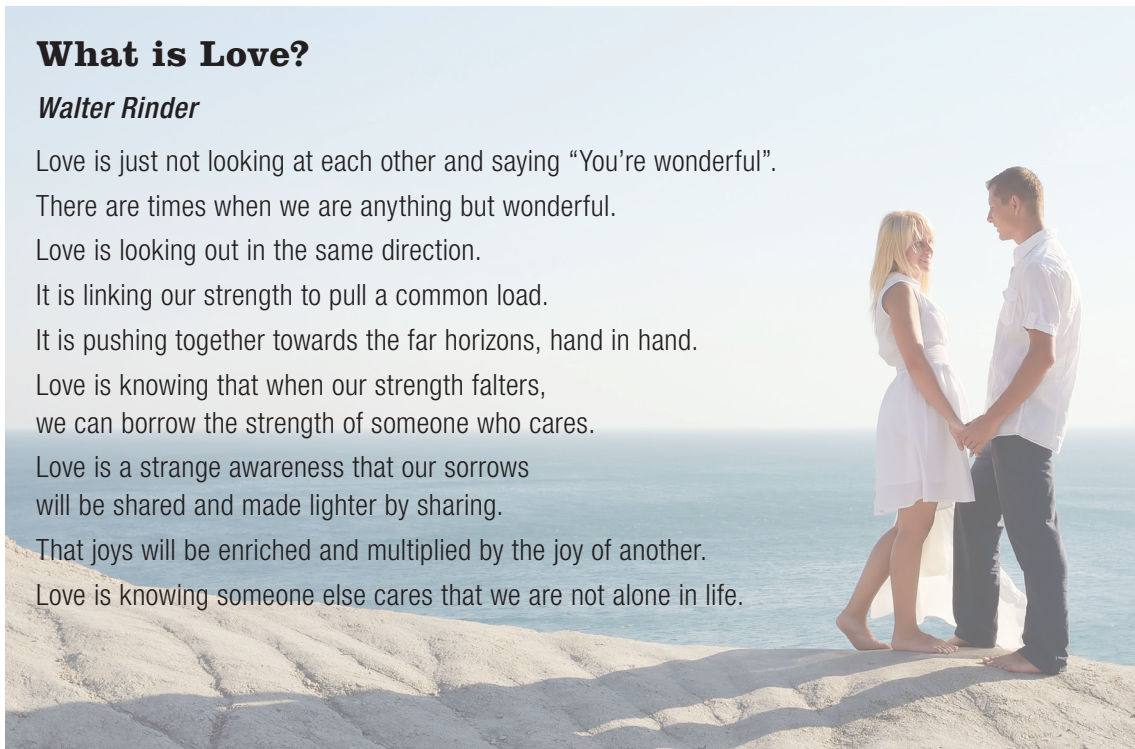
*Judy Bielicki*

It is often said that it is love that makes the world go round. However, without doubt, it is friendship which keeps our spinning existence on an even keel. True friendship provides so many of the essentials for a happy life – it is the foundation on which to build an enduring relationship; it is the mortar which bonds us together in harmony; and it is the calm, warm protection we sometimes need when the world outside seems cold and chaotic. True friendship holds a mirror to our foibles and failings, without destroying our sense of worthiness. True friendship nurtures our hopes, supports us in our disappointments and encourages us to grow to our best potential. Bride and Groom came together as friends. Today, they pledge to each other not only their love, but also the strength, warmth and most importantly, the fun of true friendship.

### What is Love?

*Walter Rinder*

Love is just not looking at each other and saying “You’re wonderful”.  
There are times when we are anything but wonderful.  
Love is looking out in the same direction.  
It is linking our strength to pull a common load.  
It is pushing together towards the far horizons, hand in hand.  
Love is knowing that when our strength falters,  
we can borrow the strength of someone who cares.  
Love is a strange awareness that our sorrows  
will be shared and made lighter by sharing.  
That joys will be enriched and multiplied by the joy of another.  
Love is knowing someone else cares that we are not alone in life.



## Blessing For a Marriage

*James Dillet Freeman*

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring and may life grant you also patience, tolerance and understanding. May you always need one another – not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete; the valley does not make the mountain less, but more; and the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it. So let it be with you and you. May you need one another, but not out of weakness. May you want one another, but not out of lack. May you entice one another, but not compel one another. May you succeed in all important ways with one another and not fail in the little graces. May you look for things to praise, often say, “I love you!” and take no notice of small faults. If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back. May you enter into the mystery which is the awareness of one another’s presence – no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities. May you have happiness and may you find it making one another happy. May you have love and may you find it loving one another!

## **The Union**

*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 commitments in an informal way. All of those conversations that were held in a car, or over a meal, or during long walks – all those conversations that began with, “When we’re married” and continued with “I will” and “you will” and “we will” – all 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 that we’ve promised, 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, even teacher, for you have learned much from one another these past few years. Shortly you shall say a few words that will take you across a threshold of life and things between you will never quite be the same.

For after today you shall say to the world – This is my husband. This is my wife.

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## **When Two People Join**

*Regina Hill*

When two people join together and bond their lives forever because they are certain they have something special that will make their commitment last...this is the first act of faith. Upon this act of faith these two people will build a life.

And as long as their determination stays with them this life will always be their hope, their dreams, their truth, their being, their inspiration and their source of strength.

Through their life together, they will hurt and laugh.

Together they will feel all of life’s up and downs.

They will learn and grow through trial and error.

The lessons will show them the meaning of true love.

And the difference between a love that lasts and one that just gives up.

These two people will face each failure together and discover the strength to go on.

They will encourage each other’s dreams and forgive each other’s faults.

Through a labour of love, these two will become as one, fighting against the odds and ultimately creating a commitment that will grow into an infinite love.

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## **Blessing of the Hands**

These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever.

These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years and with the slightest touch, will comfort you like no other. These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind. These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes; tears of sorrow, and tears of joy. These are the hands that will tenderly hold your children. These are the hands that will help you to hold your family as one. These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it. And lastly, these are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.



## Love

*Helen Steiner Rice*

Love is like magic and it always will be,  
For love still remains life's sweet mystery.  
Love works in ways that are wondrous and strange,  
And there's nothing in life that love cannot change!  
Love can transform the most commonplace  
Into beauty and splendor and sweetness and grace.  
Love is unselfish, understanding and kind,  
For it sees with its heart and not with its mind.  
Love is the answer that everyone seeks;  
Love is the language that every heart speaks.  
Love can't be bought, it is priceless and free.  
Love, like pure magic, is life's sweet mystery!

## He Never Leaves the Seat Up

*Pam Ayres*

He never leaves the seat up  
Or wet towels upon the floor  
The toothpaste has the lid on  
And he always shuts the door!

She's very clean and tidy  
Though she may sometimes delude  
Leave your things out at your peril  
In a second they'll have moved!

He's a very active person  
As are all his next of kin  
Whereas she likes lazy days  
He'll still drag her to the gym!

He romances her and dines her  
Home cooked dinners and the like  
He even knows her favourite food  
And spoils her day and night!

She's thoughtful when he looks at her  
A smile upon his face  
Will he look that good in 50 years?  
When his dentures aren't in place?!

He says he loves her figure  
And her mental prowess too  
But when gravity takes her over  
Will she charm with her IQ?

She says she loves his kindness  
And his patience is a must  
And of course she thinks he's handsome  
Which in her eyes is a plus!

They're both not wholly perfect  
But who are we to judge  
He can be pig headed  
Whereas she won't even budge!

All that said and done  
They love the time they spent together  
And I hope as I'm sure you do  
That this fine day will last forever.

He'll be more than just her husband  
He'll also be her friend  
And she'll be more than just his wife  
She'd be his soul mate – till the end.

## I Carry Your Heart

*E.E. 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 the 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).





## **I'll Be There For You**

*Louise Cuddon*

I'll be there my darling, through thick and through thin  
When your mind's in a mess and your head's in a spin  
When your plane's been delayed and you've missed the last train  
When life is just threatening to drive you insane  
When your thrilling whodunit has lost its last page  
When somebody tells you, you're looking your age  
When your coffee's too cool and your wine is too warm  
When the forecast said "Fine", but you're out in a storm  
When your quick break hotel, turns into a slum  
And your holiday photos show only your thumb  
When you park for five minutes in a resident's bay  
And return to discover you've been towed away  
When the jeans that you bought in hope or in haste  
Just stick on your hips and don't reach round your waist  
When the food you most like brings you out in red rashes  
When as soon as you boot up the bloody thing crashes  
So my darling, my sweetheart, my dear...  
When you break a rule, when you act the fool  
When you've got the flu, when you're in a stew  
When you're last in the queue, don't feel blue  
'cause I'm telling you, I'll be there.

## **Excerpt from Captain Corelli's Mandolin**

*Louis de Bernieres*

Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides.  
And when it subsides you have to make a decision.  
You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together  
that it is inconceivable that you should ever part.  
Because this is what love is.  
Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion.  
That is just being "in love", which any fool can do.  
Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away,  
and this is both an art and a fortunate accident.  
Those that truly love, have roots that grow towards each other underground,  
and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen from their branches,  
they find that they are one tree and not two.



## **Today I Marry My Friend**

*Bertrand Russell*

Today I marry my friend,  
The one I have laughed and cried with,  
The one I have learned from and shared with  
The one I have chosen to support and encourage,  
And give myself to, through all  
The days given us to share.  
Today I marry the one I love.

## **On Your Wedding Day**

*Nicholas Gordon*

On your wedding day, as you trade vows,  
No ordinary moment hurries by.  
You partake, as far as time allows,  
Of something more than time and Earth and sky:  
Unknowable, invisible, yet there;  
Resplendent to the heart if not the face;  
More than both of you, yet less than air;  
A transcendental act conferring grace.  
Reason might say, how can this be true?  
Return then to the heart, for this is love.  
In making vows, you make one out of two,  
A mystery beyond what words can prove.  
Go then as one flesh, one home, one heart:  
Each still a whole, yet also now a part.

## **Marriage Is Love**

*Gloria Matthew*

If two are caring as they are sharing life's hopes and fears.  
If the music of laughter outweighs sadness and tears. Marriage is togetherness.  
If both derive pleasure from the mere presence of each other, yet when parted  
no jealousies restrict, worry or smother. Marriage is freedom.  
If achievements mean more when they benefit two and consideration is shown  
with each point of view. Marriage is respect.  
And if togetherness, freedom and respect are combined with a joy that words  
can never fully define, then marriage is love.

## **A Marriage**

*Michael Blumenthal*

You are holding up a ceiling with both arms.

It is very heavy, but you must hold it up, or else it will fall down on you.

Your arms are tired, terribly tired, and, as the day goes on, it feels as if either your arms or the ceiling will soon collapse. But then, unexpectedly, something wonderful happens:

Someone, a man or a woman, walks into the room and holds their arms up to the ceiling beside you.

So you finally get to take down your arms.

You feel the relief of respite, the blood flowing back to your fingers and arms.

And when your partner's arms tire, you hold up your own to relieve them again.

And it can go on like this for many years without the house falling.

## **Excerpt from the Bridge Across Forever**

*Richard Bach*

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.

## **From A Natural History Of Love**

*Diane Ackerman*

Love. What a small word we use for an idea so immense and powerful. It has altered the flow of history, calmed monsters, kindled works of art, cheered the forlorn, turned tough guys to mush, consoled the enslaved, driven strong women mad, glorified the humble, fuelled national scandals, bankrupted robber barons and made mincemeat of kings. How can love's spaciousness be conveyed in the narrow confines of one syllable? Love is an ancient delirium, a desire older than civilization, with taproots spreading into deep and mysterious days. The heart is a living museum. In each of its galleries, no matter how narrow or dimly lit, preserved forever like wondrous diatoms, are our moments of loving and being loved.





## **The Promise**

*Heather Berry*

Within this blessed union of souls, where two hearts intertwine to become one, there lies a promise. Perfectly born, divinely created and intimately shared, it is a place where the hope and majesty of beginnings reside. Where all things are made possible by the astounding love shared by two spirits. As you hold each other's hands in this promise and eagerly look into the future in each other's eyes, may your unconditional love and devotion take you to places where you've both only dreamed. Where you'll dwell for a lifetime of happiness, sheltered in the warmth of each other's arms.

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## **Love Is Friendship Caught Fire**

*Laura Hendricks*

Love is friendship caught fire; it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses. Love is content with the present, hopes for the future and does not brood over the past. It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories and working toward common goals. If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough.

## Oh, the Places You'll Go

*Dr Seuss*

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 couple who'll decide where to go.

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

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

With your heads 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 great heights!

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

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

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

Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.

Except when you don't.

Because sometimes, you won't.

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

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

So be sure when you step.

Step with great 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  $\frac{3}{4}$  percent guaranteed.)

KIDS, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!

So, be your name Buxbaum or Dowrie

or Bass 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!





## The Prophet

*Kahlil Gibran*

You were born together and together you shall be for evermore.  
You shall be together when white wings of death scatter your days.  
Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.  
Love one another, but make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,  
Even as the strings of the lute are alone though they quiver with the same music  
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.  
And stand together, yet not too near together:  
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,  
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

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## Celebration

*The Rev. Carl Thitchener*

We celebrate the love that brought you to this day.  
With love that deepens through many years, may they know its meaning and its mystery – how we become truly one in sharing ourselves with one another and yet, remain truly two in our own uniqueness. May your house be a place of happiness for all who enter it, a place where the old and the young are renewed in each other's company, a place for growing, a place for music, a place for laughter. And when shadows and darkness fall within its rooms, may it still be a place of hope and strength for all who enter it, especially for those who may be entrusted in your care. May no person be alien to your compassion. May your larger family be the family of all humankind. And may those who are nearest to you and dearest to you constantly be enriched by the beauty and the energy of your love for each other.  
Amen.



## **I Promise**

*Dorothy R. Colgan*

I promise to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.

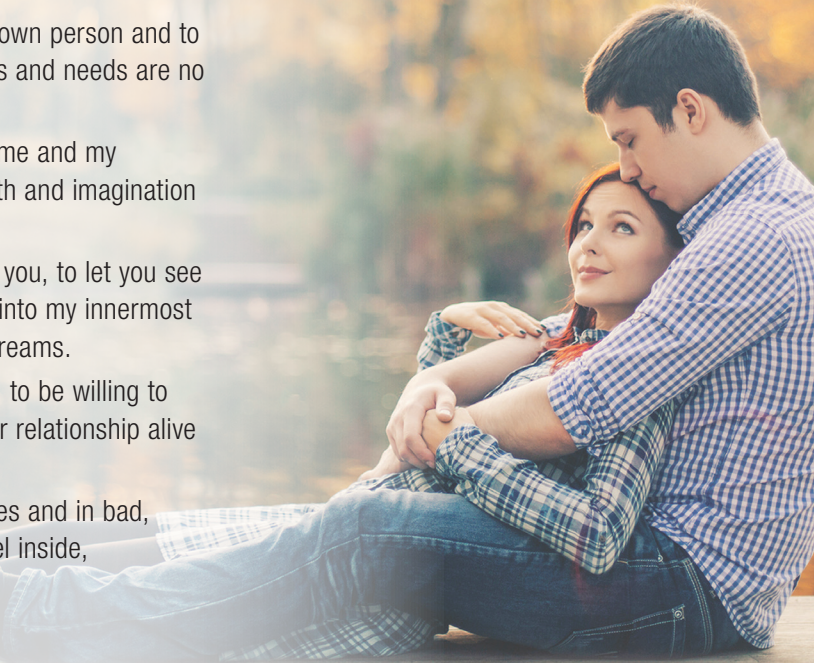
I promise to respect you as your own person and to realize that your interests, desires and needs are no less important than my own.

I promise to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.

I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.

I promise to grow along with you, to be willing to face changes in order to keep our relationship alive and exciting.

I promise to love you in good times and in bad, with all I have to give and all I feel inside, in the only way I know how.  
Completely and forever.



## **The Perfect Love, The Perfect Friend**

*Renee Duvall*

Because you are my love... I know the joy that comes from feeling closer to someone than I've ever felt before.

Because you are my love... I know the passion of wanting to share everything I have, everything I am with you and only you.

Because you are my friend... I know that I can count on you to hold my hand through the rough times and to be there to share the good times too.

Because you are my friend... I'll always have someone to make me smile just when I need it most and to encourage me when I'm feeling confused or doubtful.

I know that I must be one of the luckiest people in the world to have someone like you.

The perfect love, the perfect friend.

