



## THE READINGS

A reading is usually a poem or short text read by a family member or close friend and is always a moving, thoughtful and often funny contribution to proceedings. Please note: readings are not essential or obligatory, but they can be a really emotive way to further personalise your ceremony. Very occasionally someone will even give a reading specially written for the big day and dedicated to the couple.

In my experience, most couples have tended to include one or two readings (and very occasionally, four), but some couples have chosen to have none. Again, including a reading is absolutely optional and, like everything to do with your ceremony, it is totally up to you!

Below is a collection of around 50 readings I have heard at weddings over the years; from the philosophical to the feel-good and from the savvy to the sweet. The selection is divided into three (loose-ish) categories: **WISE WORDS**, **FUNNY & SWEET WORDS** and **MOVING WORDS**. Hopefully, you will find these examples helpful and maybe a reading or two that resonate/s with you!

*NB: reading length 1 - 3 minutes. Readings not to be confused with speeches which are more suitable for the reception/dinner.*

### :: :: :: **WISE WORDS** :: :: ::

#### Friendship by Judy Bielicki

It is often said that it is love that makes the world go round. However, without doubt, it is friendship that keeps our spinning existence on an even keel. True friendship provides so many of the essentials for a happy life - it is the strong 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. Name and Name come 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.

—

**Blessing of the Apaches** (*The Apaches* are in fact made up of different native American tribes such as the Chiricahua, Jicarilla, Mescalero and the Salinero)

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other. Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other. Now there will be no loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other. Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you. May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead and through all the years. May happiness be your companion and your days together be good and long upon the earth.

—

### **On Marriage by Kahlil Gibran**

You were born to be together, and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when the wings of death scatter your days.  
Ay, you shall be together even in your silent memory.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
and let the winds of the heaven dance between you.  
Love one another, but make not bondage 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 of the same loaf  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each of you be alone,  
Even as the strings of a 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.

—

### (excerpt from) **Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

A good relationship has a pattern like a dance and is built on some of the same rules. The partners do not need to hold on tightly, because they move confidently in the same pattern, intricate but gay and swift and free, like a country-dance of Mozart's. To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern and freeze the movement, to check the endlessly changing beauty of its unfolding. There is no place here for the possessive clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand; only the barest touch in passing. Now arm in arm, now face to face, now back to back-it does not matter which. Because they know

they are partners moving to the same rhythm, creating a pattern together, and being invisibly nourished by it.

—

### **The Art of Marriage by Wilferd Arlan Peterson**

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

A good marriage must be created.

In marriage 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 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 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 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 old.

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.

This is The Art of Marriage.

—

### **To Love is Not to Possess by James Kavanaugh**

To love is not to possess,

To own or imprison,

Nor to lose one's self in another.

Love is to join and separate,

To walk alone and together,

To find a laughing freedom

That lonely isolation does not permit.

It is finally to be able  
To be who we really are  
No longer clinging in childish dependency  
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence.  
It is to be perfectly one's self  
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment  
To another - and to one's inner self.  
Love only endures when it moves like waves,  
Receding and returning gently or passionately,  
Or moving lovingly like the tide  
In the moon's own predictable harmony,  
Because finally, despite a child's scars  
Or an adult's deepest wounds,  
They are openly free to be  
Who they really are - and always secretly were,  
In the very core of their being  
Where true and lasting love can alone abide.

---

### **He's/She's/They're Not perfect by Bob Marley** (originally "He's Not Perfect" - adapted)

He's/She's/They're not perfect. You aren't either, and the two of you will never be perfect. But if he/she/they can make you laugh at least once, cause/s you to think twice, and if he/she/they admit/s to being human and making mistakes, hold onto him/her/them and give him/her/them the most you can. He/she/they isn't/aren't going to quote poetry, He/she/they isn't/aren't thinking about you every moment, but he/she/they will give you a part of him/her/them that he/she/they know/s you could break. Don't hurt him/her/them, don't change him/her/them, and don't expect for more than he/she/they can give. Don't analyze. Smile when he/she/they make/s you happy, yell when he/she/they make/s you mad, and miss him/her/them when he/she/they is/are not there. Love hard when there is love to be had. Because perfect people don't exist, but there's always one person that is perfect for you.

---

### **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/wife, this - is my wife/husband.

—

(extract from) **Captain Corelli's Mandolin** by Louis de Bernières

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 blossom have fallen from their branches,  
They find that they are one tree and not two.

—

### **Blessing for a Marriage by 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 to 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 embrace one another, but not out encircle 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.

—

### **What is a friend? by C. Raymond Beran**

What is a friend? I will tell you. It is a person with whom you dare to be yourself. Your soul can be naked with them. They seem to ask of you to put on nothing, only to be what you are. They do not want you to be better, or worse. When you are with them, you feel as a prisoner feels who has been declared innocent. You do not have to be on your guard. You can say what you think, so long as it is genuinely you. They understand those contradictions in your nature that lead others to misjudge you. With

them you breathe freely. You can avow your little vanities and envies and hates and vicious sparks, your meannesses and absurdities and, in opening these up to them, they are lost, dissolved on the white ocean of their loyalty. They understand. You do not have to be careful. You can abuse them, neglect them, tolerate them. Best of all, you can keep still with them. It makes no matter. They like you. They are like fire that purges to the bone. They understand. hey understand. You can weep with them, sin with them, laugh with them, pray with them. Through it all – and underneath – they see, know and love you. A friend? What is a friend? Just one, I repeat, with whom you dare to be yourself.

—

### **Desiderata by Max Ehrmann**

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

## :: :: :: **FUNNY & SWEET WORDS** :: :: ::

### **The Future By Emma Salmon**

In my future I see you and me,  
And a house and garden filled with trees.  
I see dinner parties surrounded by friends,  
And a vegetable patch we love to tend.  
I see cosy nights in front of the fire,  
And a four-poster bed for when we tire.  
I see our kitchen which will be the heart of the home,  
And a Victorian bath brimming with foam.  
I see muddy wellies by the front door,  
And the kids eating cookies and asking for more.  
I see nights in the garden camping under the stars,  
And shelves full of mismatching local jam jars.  
I see family picnics outside with the dog,  
And a little blue shed containing the logs.  
I see us sat by the window watching the snow,  
And reading the papers and learning to grow.  
I see pictures of family in quirky frames,  
And letters on the kids' doors spelling out their names.  
I see laughter, pain, kisses and tears,  
And helping each other to confront our fears.  
I see you as my friend and also my lover,  
Your confidant and your children's mother.  
I see a wonderful future for you and I,  
And it's cloaked in love until we die.

—

### **What It Is by Erich Fried**

It is nonsense



says reason  
It is what it is  
says love

It is calamity  
says calculation  
It is nothing but pain  
says fear  
It is hopeless  
says insight  
It is what it is  
says love

It is ludicrous  
says pride  
It is foolish  
says caution  
It is impossible  
says experience  
It is what it is  
says love

—

### **Love me when I'm old by Bee Rawlinson**

Love me when I'm old and shocking  
Peel off my elastic stockings  
Swing me from the chandeliers  
Let's be randy bad old dears.

Push around my chromed Bath Chair  
Let me tease your white chest hair  
Scaring children, swapping dentures  
Let us have some great adventures

Take me to the Dogs and Bingo  
Teach me how to speak the lingo  
Bone my eels and bring me tea  
Show me how it's meant to be

Take me to your special places

Watching all the puzzled faces  
You in shorts and socks and sandals  
Me with warts and huge love-handles

As the need for love enthralls  
Wrestle with my damp proof smells  
Make me laugh without constraint  
Buy me chocolate body paint

Hold me safe throughout the night  
When my hair has turned to white  
Believe me when I say it's true  
I've waited all my life for you

—

### **A Lovely Love Story by 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 characterized individual.

I will forgive her skipping mind and her fondness for shopping, thought the Dinosaur. For she fills our life with beautiful thought 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...

—

### **Through the Years by Audrey Heller**

Through the years, with laughter and tears, somehow we managed to hold on. Even though there were rough times, we held fast, before it was gone. Nothing comes easy in life unless you happen to be born, with a silver spoon. We must learn to appreciate what we have, for it's taken away, all too soon. There are wonderful memories to cherish. Look back, remember them all. There were days filled with sunshine, not rain. Days when we, had ourselves a ball. Whomever said, life is a bed of roses? Of course, we know that's not always so. Whatever is supposed to be your fate, believe me, you will know. Just take each day as it comes, be happy, make the best of it. Don't tie yourself into a knot. You have but only, one life to live, so give it all that you've got!

—

## **Penguin Love by Keli Mims**

Male penguins scour the Earth for one little pebble,  
A perfect one, for someone special.  
Giving the pebble as a sign of love,  
Something useless to us, for them is enough.  
With the little rock, it's up to fate,  
If she accepts they're forever mates.  
For the rest of their lives they're together,  
A love that as time goes, grows better.  
It's simple, strange, yet it's enough,  
Isn't it beautiful, penguin love?

---

## **The Giraffe and the Monkey by Daniel Thompson**

Wherever we go  
Whatever we do  
Whenever there's me  
I hope that there's you.

Now Money is Funny, it can make people odd.  
You forget to be happy, and you live for your job  
And fashion, is a passion, beset with a flaw  
You can dress to excess, but you'll always need more

And a muscle toned body, may sound like a dream  
But no body is better, than chocolate ice cream  
What I'm trying to say, is that happiness grows  
Not through your wages, or body or clothes

But in laughter and love, and in sharing your life.  
In the arms of another as husband and wife.  
So when you find someone who's weird just like you  
Who laughs when you're stupid and who makes you laugh too.

When you sit on the sofa, not hiding your flaws.  
As imperfectly perfect, as the hand that holds yours.  
When the fortune of kings, or purse of a beggar.  
Won't change how it feels, just being together.

When a cuddle and cuppa is all that you need....

Well then...  
you've found something quite special indeed.

Wherever we go  
Whatever we do  
Whenever there's me  
I hope that there's you.

—

### **I'll Still Be Loving You by C. David Hay**

When your hair has turned to winter  
and your teeth are in a plate,  
when your get up and go  
has gone to stop and wait—  
I'll still be loving you.

When your attributes have shifted  
beyond the bounds of grace,  
I'll count your many blessings,  
not the wrinkles in your face—  
I'll still be loving you.

When the crackle in your voice  
matches that within your knee  
and the times are getting frequent  
that you don't remember me—  
I'll still be loving you.

Growing old is not a sin,  
it's something we all do.  
I hope you'll always understand - I'll still be loving you.

—

### **No Mistake by Martha Sims**

I know that you were made for me

And I was made for you  
A wise old owl up in a tree  
Told me this was true  
I asked him only yesterday  
If I should marry you  
He answered – I can safely say  
You're not a twit to woo.

---

### **Falling In love Is Like Owning A Dog by Taylor Mali**

First of all, it's a big responsibility,  
especially in a city like New York.  
So think long and hard before deciding on love.  
On the other hand, love gives you a sense of security:  
when you're walking down the street late at night  
and you have a leash on love  
ain't no one going to mess with you.  
Because crooks and muggers think love is unpredictable.  
Who knows what love could do in its own defense?

On cold winter nights, love is warm.  
It lies between you and lives and breathes  
and makes funny noises.  
Love wakes you up all hours of the night with its needs.  
It needs to be fed so it will grow and stay healthy.

Love doesn't like being left alone for long.  
But come home and love is always happy to see you.  
It may break a few things accidentally in its passion for life,  
but you can never be mad at love for long.

Is love good all the time? No! No!  
Love can be bad. Bad, love, bad! Very bad love.

Love makes messes.  
Love leaves you little surprises here and there.  
Love needs lots of cleaning up after.  
Sometimes you just want to get love fixed.  
Sometimes you want to roll up a piece of newspaper  
and swat love on the nose,

not so much to cause pain,  
just to let love know Don't you ever do that again!

Sometimes love just wants to go out for a nice long walk.  
Because love loves exercise. It will run you around the block  
and leave you panting, breathless. Pull you in different directions  
at once, or wind itself around and around you  
until you're all wound up and you cannot move.

But love makes you meet people wherever you go.  
People who have nothing in common but love  
stop and talk to each other on the street.

Throw things away and love will bring them back,  
again, and again, and again.  
But most of all, love needs love, lots of it.  
And in return, love loves you and never stops.

—

### **I'll Be There For You by 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 around 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.

—

### **I Like You by Sandol Stoddard**

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  
You know how to be silly  
That's why I like you  
If I am getting ready to pop a paper bag,  
then you are getting ready to jump  
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 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  
I can't remember when I didn't like you  
It must have been lonesome then  
Even if it was the 999th of July  
Even if it was August  
Even if it was way down at the bottom of November  
I would go on choosing you  
And you would go on choosing me  
Over and over again



And that's how it would happen every time.

—

**What is love? by Lara G. (a Bride) - NB: you could customise this to your own story...**

Love is many things to many people but to me, Love is in all the small details that tangle up together, like spaghetti, and make up the bigger picture.

Love is both quiet and loud, messy and neat, kind and complicated.

It's the quiet nights in on the sofa eating pizza,  
It's coming to the rescue when a snake slithers into your hotel room.

Love is understanding that maths isn't everyone's strong point and it's being patient when someone chips the brand new alloys on your brand new car.

Love is putting the other person before you.

It's cooking for them every night, making the first morning coffee and picking up the hundreds of dirty socks left lying around.

Love is looking for lost house keys on a daily basis. It's washing the dog together on a Sunday night and It's paying for a parking ticket you see left on the counter.

Love is sitting in comfortable silence and laughing until you pee.  
It's pretending that it was a brilliant idea to Veet your entire body.

Love is helping each other out, having each others backs and never giving up.

Love is letting wild ideas float into existence and supporting them along the way.  
It's being the head chef on a film making venture,  
It's packing up thousands of Christmas pyjamas in a freezing warehouse.  
It's posing naked because someone wants to brush up on their nude painting skills

Love is laughing at each other when we're being grumpy and telling each other when we're wrong.

Love is flying 40 people out to Ibiza as a surprise 30th birthday.  
It's explaining why your business can't ignore the tax man

Love is getting engaged outside the front door next to the rubbish bins.

It's loving each-others families as we love our own and Its rushing to be by each-others sides when we lose very special people along the way.

Love is holding back hair when too much has been drunk.  
It's skinny dipping at midnight and arguing over the sat nav.  
It's dancing on tables, traveling the world and cleaning out the fridge.

It's in the big romantic gestures but also hidden in the subtle hum of the day.  
Love is both fierce and delicate, harmonious and hectic, mundane and engaging,  
serious and silly.  
Love is marrying your best friend after 11 years of being together.

Love is many wild and wonderful things to many people but above all,  
Love to me, is you.

—

### **The Orange by Wendy Cope**

At lunchtime I bought a huge orange—  
The size of it made us all laugh.  
I peeled it and shared it with Robert and Dave—  
They got quarters and I got a half.

And that orange, it made me so happy,  
As ordinary things often do  
Just lately. The shopping. A walk in the park.  
This is peace and contentment. It's new.

The rest of the day was quite easy.  
I did all the jobs on my list  
And enjoyed them and had some time over.  
I love you. I'm glad I exist.

—

### **The Adventure Is You by Marge Redelicia**

The adventure is you  
We could scale  
snow capped mountains

or tiled rooftops  
We could stroll  
the halls of grand art galleries  
or the city's graffiti stained alleys  
We could sip  
wine from elegant glass goblets  
or instant coffee from chipped cups  
We could watch  
gala operas and musicals at the amphitheater  
or puffy clouds as they float by in the sky  
We could look  
up to the vast galaxy and its starlight  
or down to the metro's sleepless city lights  
We could listen  
to loud pulsing rhythms at a concert  
or to the steady beats of each others hearts  
We could go  
and roam the world all day  
or just stay in each others arms all night.  
I can't care less  
on what we could do.  
Every moment would be  
Fun,  
Adventurous,  
Exciting,  
Marvelous  
Grand, and  
Breathtaking  
As long as you are with me  
and I am with you.

—

### **I Wanna Be Yours by John Cooper Clarke**

I wanna be your vacuum cleaner  
breathing in your dust  
I wanna be your Ford Cortina  
I will never rust  
If you like your coffee hot  
let me be your coffee pot  
You call the shots

I wanna be yours  
I wanna be your raincoat  
for those frequent rainy days  
I wanna be your dreamboat  
when you want to sail away  
Let me be your teddy bear  
take me with you anywhere  
I don't care  
I wanna be yours  
I wanna be your electric meter  
I will not run out  
I wanna be the electric heater  
you'll get cold without  
I wanna be your setting lotion  
hold your hair in deep devotion  
Deep as the deep Atlantic ocean  
that's how deep is my devotion.

:: :: :: **MOVING WORDS** :: :: ::

**Love by Roy Croft**

I love you,  
Not only for what you are  
But for what I am  
When I am with you.

I love you,  
Not only for what  
You have made of yourself  
But for what  
You are making of me.

I love you  
For the part of me  
That you bring out;  
I love you,  
For putting your hand  
Into my . . . heart  
And passing over

All the foolish, weak things  
That you can't help  
Dimly seeing there,  
And for drawing out  
Into the light  
All the beautiful belongings  
That no one else had looked  
Quite far enough to find.

I love you because you  
Are helping me to make  
Of the lumber of my life  
Not a tavern  
But a temple;  
Out of works  
Of my every day

Not a reproach  
But a song.

—

### **Invisible Kisses by Lemn Sissay**

If there was ever one  
Whom when you were sleeping  
Would wipe your tears  
When in dreams you were weeping;  
Who would offer you time  
When others demand;  
Whose love lay more infinite  
Than grains of sand.

If there was ever one  
To whom you could cry;  
Who would gather each tear  
And blow it dry;  
Who would offer help  
On the mountains of time;  
Who would stop to let each sunset  
Soothe the jaded mind.

If there was ever one  
To whom when you run  
Will push back the clouds  
So you are bathed in sun;  
Who would open arms  
If you would fall;  
Who would show you everything  
If you lost it all.

If there was ever one  
Who when you achieve  
Was there before the dream  
And even then believed;  
Who would clear the air  
When it's full of loss;  
Who would count love  
Before the cost.

If there was ever one  
Who when you are cold  
Will summon warm air  
For your hands to hold;  
Who would make peace  
In pouring pain,  
Make laughter fall  
In falling rain.

If there was ever one  
Who can offer you this and more;  
Who in keyless rooms  
Can open doors;  
Who in open doors  
Can see open fields  
And in open fields  
See harvests yield.

Then see only my face  
In reflection of these tides  
Through the clear water  
Beyond the river side.  
All I can send is love  
In all that this is

A poem and a necklace  
Of invisible kisses.

---

### **Sonnet 43 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning**

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of everyday's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candle light.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old grief's, and with my childhood's faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose .  
With my lost saints, I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life! and if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.

---

### **Somewhere I Have Never Travelled by E. E. Cummings**

somewhere I have never traveled, 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 skillfully, 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 color 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

—

### **Variation On The Word Sleep by Margaret Atwood**

I would like to watch you sleeping,  
which may not happen.  
I would like to watch you, sleeping.  
I would like to sleep with you,  
to enter your sleep as its smooth dark wave  
slides over my head.  
and walk with you through that lucent  
wavering forest of blue green leaves  
with its watery sun & three moons  
towards the cave where you must descend,  
towards your worst fear

I would like to give you the silver branch,  
the small white flower, the one word  
that will protect you  
from the grief at the center  
of your dream, from the grief  
at the center. I would like to follow  
you up the long stairway  
again & become  
the boat that would row you back  
carefully, a flame  
in two cupped hands  
to where your body lies  
beside me, and you enter  
it as easily as breathing in

I would like to be the air  
that inhabits you for a moment



only. I would like to be that unnoticed  
& that necessary.

---

### **Hour by Carol Anne Duffy**

Love's time's beggar, but even a single hour,  
bright as a dropped coin, makes love rich.  
We find an hour together, spend it not on flowers  
or wine, but the whole of the summer sky and a grass ditch.  
For thousands of seconds we kiss; your hair  
like treasure on the ground; the Midas light  
turning your limbs to gold. Time slows, for here  
we are millionaires, backhanding the night  
so nothing dark will end our shining hour,  
no jewel hold a candle to the cuckoo spit  
hung from the blade of grass at your ear,  
no chandelier or spotlight see you better lit  
than here. Now. Time hates love, wants love poor,  
but love spins gold, gold, gold from straw.

---

### **Love Is Friendship Caught Fire by 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.

---

### **Maybe by Unknown**

Maybe we are supposed to meet the wrong people before we meet the right one so when they finally arrive we are truly grateful for the gift we have been given. Maybe it's true that we don't know what we have lost until we lose it but it is also true that we don't know what we're missing until it arrives.

Maybe the happiest of people don't have the best of everything, but make the best of everything that comes their way.

Maybe the best kind of love is the kind where you sit on the sofa together, not saying a word, and walk away feeling like it was the best conversation you ever had.

Maybe once in a lifetime, you find someone who not only touches your heart but also your soul, someone who loves you for who you are and not what you could be.

Maybe the art of true love is not about finding the perfect person, but about seeing an imperfect person perfectly.

—

### **So Much Happiness Naomi Shihab Nye**

It is difficult to know what to do with so much happiness. With sadness there is something to rub against, a wound to tend with lotion and cloth. When the world falls in around you, you have pieces to pick up, something to hold in your hands, like ticket stubs or change. But happiness floats. It doesn't need you to hold it down. It doesn't need anything. Happiness lands on the roof of the next house, singing, and disappears when it wants to. You are happy either way. Even the fact that you once lived in a peaceful tree house and now live over a quarry of noise and dust cannot make you unhappy. Everything has a life of its own, it too could wake up filled with possibilities of coffee cake and ripe peaches, and love even the floor which needs to be swept, the soiled linens and scratched records. Since there is no place large enough to contain so much happiness, you shrug, you raise your hands, and it flows out of you into everything you touch. You are not responsible. You take no credit, as the night sky takes no credit for the moon, but continues to hold it, and share it, and in that way, be known.

—

### **The Gift by Pam Brown**

In you are flowers and firelight,  
stars and songbirds,  
the scent of summer,  
the stillness just before dawn.

I love you today,  
dressed in glory.

I will love you always-  
dancing, singing, reading, making, planning, arguing.

I will love you cantankerous, and tired,  
courageous and in terror,

joyful, fearful and triumphant.  
I will love you through all weathers and all change.  
For all you are is precious to me.  
And every day I live with you  
and share your love  
is a gift to me.

---

### **The Alchemist by Paulo Coehlo**

When he looked into her eyes, he learned the most important part of the language that all the world spoke — the language that everyone on earth was capable of understanding in their heart. It was love. Something older than humanity, more ancient than the desert. What the boy felt at that moment was that he was in the presence of the only woman in his life, and that, with no need for words, she recognized the same thing. Because when you know the language, it's easy to understand that someone in the world awaits you, whether it's in the middle of the desert or in some great city. And when two such people encounter each other, the past and the future become unimportant. There is only that moment, and the incredible certainty that everything under the sun has been written by one hand only. It is the hand that evokes love, and creates a twin soul for every person in the world. Without such love, one's dreams would have no meaning.

---

### **In My Life by Lennon-McCartney (lyrics by Lennon)**

There are places I'll remember  
All my life though some have changed  
Some forever, not for better  
Some have gone and some remain  
All these places have their moments  
With lovers and friends I still can recall  
Some are dead and some are living  
In my life I've loved them all  
But of all these friends and lovers  
There is no one compares with you  
And these memories lose their meaning  
When I think of love as something new  
Though I know I'll never lose affection  
For people and things that went before

I know I'll often stop and think about them  
In my life I love you more  
Though I know I'll never lose affection  
For people and things that went before  
I know I'll often stop and think about them  
In my life I love you more  
In my life I love you more.

—

### **What is a Soulmate? by Emily Matthews**

If you have found a smile that is the sweetest one you've known.  
If you have heard, within a voice, the echoes of your own.

If you have felt a touch that stirs the longing of your heart,  
And still can feel that closeness in the moment you're apart.

If you are filled with wonder at the way two lives can blend,  
To weave a perfect pattern that is seamless end to end.

If you believe some things in life are simply meant to be,  
Then you have found your soulmate, your hearts own destiny.

If you can always be as close and happy as today,  
Yet be secure enough to grow and change along the way.

If you can keep for you alone your love as man and wife,  
Yet find the time to share your joy with others in your life.

If you can be as one and walk through marriage hand in hand,  
Yet still support the goals and dreams that each of you have planned.

If you can dare to always go your separate ways together,  
Then all the wonders of today will stay with you forever.

—

### **Blessing of the Hands by Rev. Daniel L. Harris**

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.

—

### **All I Know About Love by Neil Gaiman**

This is everything I have to tell you about love: nothing.

This is everything I've learned about marriage: nothing.

Only that the world out there is complicated,  
and there are beasts in the night, and delight and pain,  
and the only thing that makes it okay, sometimes,  
is to reach out a hand in the darkness and find another hand to squeeze,  
and not to be alone.

It's not the kisses, or never just the kisses: it's what they mean.

Somebody's got your back.

Somebody knows your worst self and somehow doesn't want to rescue you  
or send for the army to rescue them.

It's not two broken halves becoming one.

It's the light from a distant lighthouse bringing you both safely home  
because home is wherever you are both together.

So this is everything I have to tell you about love and marriage: nothing,  
like a book without pages or a forest without trees.

Because there are things you cannot know before you experience them.  
Because no study can prepare you for the joys or the trials.  
Because nobody else's love, nobody else's marriage, is like yours,  
and it's a road you can only learn by walking it,  
a dance you cannot be taught,  
a song that did not exist before you began, together, to sing.

And because in the darkness you will reach out a hand,  
not knowing for certain if someone else is even there.  
And your hands will meet,  
and then neither of you will ever need to be alone again.

And that's all I know about love.

—

### **Scaffolding by Seamus Heaney**

Masons, when they start upon a building,  
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;  
Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,  
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.  
And yet all this comes down when the job's done  
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.  
So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be  
Old bridges breaking between you and me  
Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall  
Confident that we have built our wall.

—

### **I Will Love You Forever by Phillip Pullman**

I will love you forever; whatever happens. Till I die and after I die, and when I find my  
way out of the land of the dead, I'll drift about forever, all my atoms, till I find you  
again... I'll be looking for you, every moment, every single moment. And when we do

find each other again, we'll cling together so tight that nothing and no one'll ever tear us apart. Every atom of me and every atom of you... We'll live in birds and flowers and dragonflies and pine trees and in clouds and in those little specks of light you see floating in sunbeams... And when they use our atoms to make new lives, they won't just be able to take one, they'll have to take two, one of you and one of me.

—

### **I Will Be Here by Steven Curtis Chapman**

If in the morning when you wake, if the sun does not appear,  
I will be here.  
If in the dark we lose sight of love, hold my hand and have no fear,  
I will be here.

I will be here,  
When you feel like being quiet,  
When you need to speak your mind I will listen.  
Through the winning, losing, and trying we'll be together,  
And I will be here.

If in the morning when you wake, if the future is unclear,  
I will be here.  
As sure as seasons were made for change,  
Our lifetimes were made for years,  
I will be here.

I will be here,  
And you can cry on my shoulder,  
When the mirror tells us we're older.  
I will hold you, to watch you grow in beauty,  
And tell you all the things you are to me.

We'll be together and I will be here.  
I will be true to the promises I've made,  
To you and to the one who gave you to me.  
I will be here.

—

### **Here's To Right Now by Ms Moem**

You're surrounded by your loved ones  
And all are wishing you well,  
As you create a brand new chapter  
In the story that's yours to tell.

We talk about the memories  
You have yet to make together  
And the moments you've already shared  
To be carried with you forever.

But take the time to live today  
As your marriage begins,  
Look around and soak it up;  
the moment we are in.

For this is where the magic starts  
When you both say your vows.  
You pledge to spend your lives as one  
Because of the love you feel now.

So yes, here's to a future  
that is bright and warm and clear.  
But more than that, here's to right now  
And what it means to be here.

—

### **These I Can Promise by Mark Twain**

I cannot promise you a life of sunshine;  
I cannot promise riches, wealth, or gold;  
I cannot promise you an easy pathway  
That leads away from change or growing old.  
But I can promise all my heart's devotion;  
A smile to chase away your tears of sorrow;  
A love that's ever true and ever growing;  
A hand to hold in yours through each tomorrow.

—

### **At Last by Lang Leav**



Love looks pretty on you. Makes you soft, tender, proud. Makes you sit up and take notice. Gives you a home to set down your things. What a blessing it is, to have music and dancing and poetry. What a gift it is, to look at someone and say, I am so happy to have found you. At last, at last, at long, long last... you're here.

---

### **Title and Author unknown**

How will you know when you've found a soulmate? Will you recognize them immediately? Perhaps. Or maybe one day you wake up and watch the shallow ebb and flow of your partner's breath and realize that this person, more than anyone else, makes you want to be the best version of yourself. Not because you have to be. No, you're already enough. You felt it while you were sleeping, the peace of being loved entirely for who and what you are. Still you awoke wanting to be better. Not for you, but for them.

---

### **Touched by an Angel by Maya Angelou**

We, unaccustomed to courage  
exiles from delight  
live coiled in shells of loneliness  
until love leaves its high holy temple  
and comes into our sight  
to liberate us into life.  
Love arrives  
and in its train come ecstasies  
old memories of pleasure  
ancient histories of pain.  
Yet if we are bold,  
love strikes away the chains of fear  
from our souls.  
We are weaned from our timidity  
In the flush of love's light  
we dare be brave  
And suddenly we see  
that love costs all we are  
and will ever be.  
Yet it is only love  
which sets us free.

—

## I Love You - (*Te Quiero*) by Mario Benedetti

Your hands are my caress  
my daily reminders  
I love you because your hands  
work hard for justice

if I love you, it's because you are  
my love my accomplice my all  
and out in the street arm in arm  
we are much more than two

Your eyes are my lucky charm  
against the bad days  
I love you for your gaze  
that watches and seeds the future

Your mouth that's yours and mine  
Your mouth that's never wrong  
I love you because your mouth  
knows how to yell like a rebel

If I love you it's because you are  
my love my accomplice my all  
and out in the street arm in arm  
we are much more than two

And for your honest face  
and your vagabond step  
and your weeping for the world  
because you're one of the people, I love you

And because love is not a halo  
or an innocent fairytale  
and because we are a couple  
that knows we're not alone

I love you in my paradise  
by which I mean my country

where the people live happily  
even if they have no time off

If I love you it's because you are  
my love my accomplice my all  
and out in the street arm in arm  
we are much more than two

---

### **Hymn to Lota by Elizabeth Bishop**

Close, close all night the lovers keep. They turn together, in their sleep, close as two pages in a book that read each other in the dark. Each knows all the other knows, learned by heart from head to toes.

---

### **That Still and Settled Place by Edward Monkton**

In that still and settled place  
There's nobody but you  
You're where I breathe my oxygen  
You're where I see my view  
And when the world feels full of noise  
My heart knows what to do  
It finds that still and settled place  
And dances there with you

---

### **Wild Awake by Hilary T. Smith**

People are like cities: We all have alleys and gardens and secret rooftops and places where daisies sprout between the sidewalk cracks, but most of the time all we let each other see is a postcard glimpse of a skyline or a polished square. Love lets you find those hidden places in another person, even the ones they didn't know were there, even the ones they wouldn't have thought to call beautiful themselves.

---

(excerpt from) **The Bridge Across Forever by Richard Bach**

A soul mate 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 soul mate 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 soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.

—

### **Distant Shores by Carol Shivers**

Before we met, you and I were halves,  
unjoined except in the wide rivers of our minds.  
We were each other's distant shore,  
the opposite wings of birds,  
the other half of a shell...

We did not know each other then,  
did not know our determination to keep alive  
the cry of one riverbank to the other.  
We were apart, yet connected  
in our ignorance of each other,  
like two apples sharing a common tree.....

I knew you existed  
long before you understood my desire  
to join my loneliness to yours.  
Our paths collided long enough  
for our indecision to be swallowed up  
by the greater needs of love. ...

Then you came to me..  
The sun surged towards the earth  
and the moon escaped from darkness,  
to bless the union of two spirits

so alike that your pain became my discomfort.  
In the hour when I stood naked,  
you were there to play the drums of life for us....

Beloved partner, keeper of my heart's darkest secrets,  
clothed in summer blossoms  
so the icy hands of winter  
never touches us,  
I thank you for your patient love....

We are the reason the world can laugh  
on it's battlefields,  
and rise from the ashes  
of it's selfishness, to hear me say,  
In this time, this place, this way,  
I love you the best of all...

—

### **Love by Elizabeth Barrett Browning**

I love you,  
Not only for what you are  
But for what I am  
When I am with you.

I love you,  
Not only for what  
You have made of yourself  
But for what  
You are making of me.

I love you  
For the part of me  
That you bring out;  
I love you,  
For putting your hand  
Into my . . . heart  
And passing over  
All the foolish, weak things  
That you can't help  
Dimly seeing there,

And for drawing out  
Into the light  
All the beautiful belongings  
That no one else had looked  
Quite far enough to find.

I love you because you  
Are helping me to make  
Of the lumber of my life  
Not a tavern  
But a temple;  
Out of works  
Of my every day

Not a reproach  
But a song.