



# **Jamie Innes**

## **Humanist Celebrant**



## **Poetry and Prose**

### **Examples for Weddings**



**Love.** *From the book A Natural History of Love by Diane Ackerman.*

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 stretching deep into dark 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 American writer Tim Robbins wrote:**

"Love is the ultimate outlaw. It just won't adhere to any rules. The most any of us can do is to sign on as its accomplice. Instead of vowing to honour and obey, maybe we should swear to aid and abet. That would mean that security is out of the question. The words "make" and "stay" become inappropriate. The love they have for each other has no strings attached. This love is for free."

**Prose - "A Marriage" by Mark Twain**

A marriage...makes of two fractional lives a whole; it gives to two purposeless lives a work, and doubles the strength of each to perform it; it gives two



questioning natures a reason for living, and something to live for; it will give a new gladness to the sunshine, a new fragrance to the flowers, a new beauty to the earth, and a new mystery to life.

**George Eliot wrote:**

What greater thing is there for two human hearts than to feel that they are joined together to strengthen each other in all labor, to minister to each other in all sorrow, to share with each other in all gladness, to be one with each other in the silent unspoken memories?

**Love (William Penn)**

Never marry but for love; but see that thou lovest what is lovely. He that minds a body and not a soul has not the better part of that relation, and will consequently want the noblest comfort of a married life.

Between a man and his wife nothing ought to rule but love... As love ought to bring them together, so it is the best way to keep them well together.....

Nothing can be more entire and without reserve; nothing more zealous, affectionate and sincere; nothing more contented and constant than such a couple.

**Author Unknown. love is blind**

They say love is blind. I disagree. Infatuation is blind, love is all-seeing and



accepting. Love is seeing all the flaws and blemishes and accepting them. Love is accepting the bad habits and mannerisms, and working around them. Love is recognizing all the fears and insecurities, and knowing your role is to comfort. Love is working through all the challenges and painful times. Infatuation is fragile and will shatter when life is not perfect. Love is strong and strengthens because it is real.

### **Positive, Mahatma Gandhi**

The Indian philosopher, pacifist and social leader Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

Keep your thoughts positive, because your thoughts become your words.  
Keep your words positive, because your words become your behaviour  
Keep your behaviour positive because your behaviour becomes your habits  
Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values  
Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny

...and we are here today to see our bride and groom bring their thoughts, words, behaviour, habits, and values together, to begin to find their destiny, as they pledge themselves – each to the other, joining in marriage before this gathering of their friends and family..

### **Victor Hugo**

You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving. The great acts of love are done by those who are habitually performing small acts of kindness. We pardon to the extent we love. Love is knowing that even when you are alone you will never be lonely again, and the greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved, loved for ourselves and



even loved in spite of ourselves.

### **Finally. Author Unknown**

Finally, I have found a place into which I fit, Perfectly, safely and securely, with no doubts, no fears, no sadness, no tears. This place is filled with happiness and laughter, Yet it is spacious enough to allow me to move around, To live life and to be myself. This wonderful place, which I never believed really existed, I have found. Finally - in your arms, in your heart, in your love.

### **From '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"

### **From 'Sandman' Neil Gaimans**

Have you ever been in love? Horrible, isn't it? It makes you so vulnerable. It opens your chest and it opens up your heart **and** it means that someone can get inside you and mess you up.

You build up all these defences, you build up a whole suit of armour, so that nothing can hurt you,  
then one stupid person, no different from



any other stupid person, wanders into your  
stupid life... .

You give them a piece of you. They didn't ask for it. They did  
something dumb one day, like kiss you or smile at you, and then  
your life isn't your own anymore.

### **Silent Noon Dante Gabriel Rossetti (12 May 1828 – 9 April 1882)**

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, The finger-  
points look through like rosy blooms: Your eyes smile  
peace. The pasture gleams and glooms 'Neath billowing  
skies that scatter and amass. All round our nest, far as the  
eye can pass, Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge  
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge. 'Tis  
visible silence, still as the hour-glass. Deep in the sun-  
searched growths the dragon-fly Hangs like a blue thread  
loosened from the sky: - So this wing'd hour is dropt to us  
from above. Oh! Clasp we to our hearts, for deathless  
dower, This close-companioned inarticulate hour When  
twofold silence was the song of love.

### **Spike Milligan**

The summer was in our hands we lay  
like fallen apples in the grass, and as  
we lay intertwined, it seemed we were  
endless, we were drowning in each  
other, yet neither called for help,  
somehow we had reached Camelot,



the stars came out and blessed us, we  
could hear the sea we searched each  
other and  
found ourselves, call it love yet it was  
better than that, we made each other  
happen.

### **James Clark Maxwell's "Valentine by a Telegraph Clerk"**

A love poem written by a physicist... a man who Einstein described as  
the greatest physicist ever ....who worked at Edinburgh Uni.

The tendrils of my soul are twined With  
thine, though many a mile apart. And  
thine in close coiled circuits wind Around  
the needle of my heart.

Constant as Daniel, strong as Grove.  
Ebullient throughout its depths like Smee,  
My heart puts forth its tide of love, And all  
its circuits close in thee.

O tell me, when along the line From my  
full heart the message flows, What  
currents are induced in thine? One click  
from thee will end my woes.

Through many a volt the weber flew,  
And clicked this answer back to me; I  
am thy farad staunch and true, Charged



to a volt with love for thee.

### **Epithalamium by Liz Lochhead**

For Marriage, love and love alone's the argument. Sweet ceremony, then hand in hand we go Taking to our changed, still dangerous, days our Complement. We think we know ourselves, but all we know Is: love surprises us. It's like when sunlight flings A sudden shaft that lights up glamorous the rain Across a city street -- or when unexpected Spring's First crisp, dry breath turns the air champagne. Delight's infectious -- your quotidian friends Put on, with gladrag finery today, your joy, Renew in themselves the right true ends They won't let old grief's, old lives, destroy. When at our lover's feet our opened selves we've laid We find ourselves, and all the world, remade.

### **By Nexhat Hakiu (1917-78) translated from Albanian**

The happy or the bored may ask what love is - but it doesn't have descriptiveness Its qualities are wordless.

You feel it secretly and slowly. It's there and you don't realise it's living in your heart.





A flower may be plucked, a  
pearl or cloth of gold be  
snatched and fought over.

The caged bird sings its heart out and  
if you freed it, it would also sing far  
from you and everyone.

Love is not flower nor pearl nor caged  
bird but a formless dweller in the  
heart.

### **Nuptials by John Agard**

River, be their teacher That  
together they may turn Their  
future highs and lows Into one  
hopeful flow. Two opposite  
shores  
Feeding from a single source.

Mountain. Be their milestone That  
hand in hand they rise above  
Familiarity's worn tracks Into  
horizons of their own Two separate  
footpaths Dreaming of a common  
peak.

Birdsong, be their mantra That down the



frail aisles of their days, Their twilight  
hearts twitter morning And their dreams  
prove branch enough.

### **What goes with what - "Appetite" by Nigel Slater (great for foodies!)**

"Some flavours work together. Others don't. You can't really argue with the theory that if you like something then it works, but to experiment with marrying flavours, in a trial and error situation like a mad scientist, will not only take forever but will probably lead to some really horrid meals. The easy way is to respect a few basic principles about flavours that work especially well together - what belongs with what - which will at least give you the chance of a decent supper. You can then experiment as and when you feel like it. To put it another way, someone has done some of the work for you. Be thankful. You didn't really want to be the one to find out that anchovies are disgusting with bacon, did you?"

Some flavours have a natural affinity for each other. In other words, they flatter each other and make for better eating. Much of what is accepted as being a sound partnership makes good sense but there is also a lot of rubbish talked about what goes with what. I have never agreed, for instance, with the well-known accompaniment for oysters, which some foodies reckon is Tabasco sauce. To my taste buds this is an abomination. The chilli sauce does nothing for the pure intense seawater flavour of the shellfish. Yet I am convinced that lemon really brings out the flavour of steak, with which many would just as fiercely disagree. Likewise I put Dijon mustard on my lamb yet fail to be moved by the age- old marriage of cherries with duck.



Yet there are certain combinations of ingredients that seem as if they were made for one another. Think tomato and basil, think sausage and mustard, think Parma ham and melon. There are logical explanations for some of these natural pairings, such as the salt in the ham intensifying the flavour of the melon, but others are beyond analysis. It is simply that there is something intrinsically right about them, and there are some flavours and textures that work together so naturally that they defy the meddlings of any creative cook. There are flavours and textures that work together in perfect harmony. A roll-call of all that is good about eating: beef and mustard; lamb and garlic; liver and onions; toast and Marmite; steak and bearnaise sauce; duck and five-spice; chicken and tarragon; strawberries and cream. Then there are those successful contrasts of textures that seem like gifts from God - gravy and mashed potato; egg and chips; ripe Brie and crisp white bread; cold vanilla ice-cream and hot chocolate sauce. Some things are simply meant to be.”

**“The Day the Saucers Came” by Neil Gaiman.** That Day, the saucers landed. Hundreds of them, golden,

Silent, coming down from the sky like great snowflakes, And the people of Earth stood and stared as they descended, Waiting, dry-mouthed, to find out what waited inside for us And none of us knowing if we would be here tomorrow But you didn’t notice because

That day, the day the saucers came, by some coincidence, Was the day that the graves gave up their dead And the zombies pushed up through soft earth or erupted, shambling and dull-eyed, unstoppable, Came towards us, the living, and we screamed and ran, But you did not notice



this because

On the saucer day, which was zombie day, it was Ragnarok  
also, and the television screens showed us A ship built of  
dead-men's nails, a serpent, a wolf, All bigger than the  
mind could hold, and the cameraman could Not get far  
enough away, and then the Gods came out But you did  
not see them coming because

On the saucer-zombie-battling-gods day  
the floodgates broke  
And each of us was engulfed by genies and sprites  
Offering us wishes and wonders and eternities And  
charm and cleverness and true brave hearts and  
pots of gold While giants feefofummed across the  
land and killer bees, But you had no idea of any of  
this because

That day, the saucer day, the zombie day The Ragnarok  
and fairies day, the day the great winds came And  
snows and the cities turned to crystal, the day All  
plants died, plastics dissolved, the day the Computers  
turned, the screens telling us we would obey, the day  
Angels, drunk and muddled, stumbled from the bars,  
And all the bells of London were sounded, the day  
Animals spoke to us in Assyrian, the Yeti day, The  
fluttering capes and arrival of the Time Machine day,

You didn't notice any of this because



you were sitting in your room, not doing anything not even reading, not really, just looking at your telephone, wondering if I was going to call.

**Falling in love is like owning a dog  
an epithalamion 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 for a nice long walk. Because love loves exercise. It runs you around the block and



leaves you panting. It pulls you in several different directions at once, or winds around and around you until you're all wound up and can't 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.

### **Bidie-in by Diana Hendry & Hamish Whyte (a pair of poems)**

#### **1 - Application**

O let me be your bidie-in And keep  
you close within As dearest kith  
and kin I promise I'd be tidy in  
Whatever bed or bunk you're in  
I'd never ever drink your gin I'd be  
your multi-vitamin I'd wear my  
sexy tiger-skin And play my love-  
sick mandolin It cannot be a  
mortal sin To be in such a dizzy  
spin I'd like to get inside your skin  
I'd even be your concubine I hope  
you know I'm genuine O let me be  
your bidie-in

#### **2 - Appointment**



Of course, you may be my bidie-in, You didn't need to apply within. A braw new world's about to begin, We'll gang together through thick and thin, We'll walk unscathed through burr and whin. If you're to be my procupin I'll just have to bear it and grin. I'll be your sheik, your djinn, I'll be yang to your yin. You'll be my kitten, my mitten, my terrapin. All night long we'll make love's sweet din And never mind the wheelie-bin. In our romantic cinema there'll be no FIN. And so I say again – you're in - You've got the job of bidie-in!

**Maybe:**

Maybe .... We are supposed to meet the wrong people before meeting the right one so that, when we finally meet the right person, we will know how to be grateful for that gift

Maybe .... it is true that we don't know what we have got until we lose it, but it is also true that we don't know what we have been missing until it arrives

Maybe ... the happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way

Maybe ...the best kind of love is the kind you can sit on the sofa together and never say a word, and then walk away feeling like it was the best



conversation you've ever had

Maybe ... you shouldn't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth; even that fades away. Go for someone who makes you smile, because it only takes a smile to make a dark day seem bright.

Maybe ... you should hope for enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorry to keep you human, and enough hope to make you happy

Maybe ... Love is not about finding the perfect person, it's about learning to see an imperfect person perfectly.

**DIY!** *One of my Couple's wanted fresh material for a definition of love...so they asked all their guests (20) to send them a line with their thoughts...this was the result! A great way of making everyone feel part of the ceremony I thought.*

We'll start today with a reading from Zoe and Emily compiled from comments received from you all. See if you can spot your own...

(AA Milnes) "How do you spell 'love'?" "You don't spell it, you feel it."  
Love is the hardest word to define! Is love like a box of chocolates, or is that life? Is it "a four letter word", "priceless" or "blind"? Love is caring, sharing and being there for each other. It is unassuming, unconditional & forever after, Made from compromise and consideration, Love is a bond between two people that is only for them. It is putting other's interests before your own. And it is being stupid together, Be happy, have fun.





Be kind to each other, put each other first and don't sweat the small stuff!  
But remember, whatever the debate or argument *Groom, Bride* will always  
be right. Make time for each other and for your friends. Beyond that, I'm  
still clueless. Always live in the moment. Life is what you make of it. Each  
morning we are born again, what happens that day is the most important.  
Enjoy your lives together. And be happy As Homer Simpson said "[AHHH,]  
Space aliens! Don't eat me! I have a wife and kids – EAT THEM instead"

### **Don't Squeeze My Shoes: Rachel Fox**

A love, like shoes, must feel just right Not  
too loose and not too tight Not too high  
or far too low And if you're young have  
room to grow It must look good with any  
clothes It must be kind, not pinch your  
toes It must last well and not wear  
through It must be just the thing for you  
The style you choose, however strange  
Must show ability to change To cope with  
rains and frosty morns To help you dodge  
bunions and corns Your love must fit and  
not break banks It must not always  
expect thanks It should be happy being  
there The chosen one, the happy pair

### **Diving: Rachel Fox**

Enjoy love You are worth  
it Fall down deep Don't



try to surf it Swim in the  
happiness It's all for you  
Soak long and leisurely Get  
drenched, wet through

**One Cigarette" by Edwin Morgan.**

One Cigarette No smoke without  
you, my fire.

After you left, your cigarette glowed on in my  
ashtray and sent up a long thread of such  
quiet grey

I smiled to wonder who would believe its signal of  
so much love. One cigarette in the non-smoker's  
tray.

As the last spire trembles up, a sudden draught blows it  
winding into my face. Is it smell, is it taste? You are here  
again, and I am drunk on your tobacco lips.

Out with the light. Let the smoke lie back in the  
dark. Till I hear the very ash sigh down among the  
flowers of brass I'll breathe, and long past midnight,  
your last kiss.

**SONNET 116 (William Shakespeare)**



Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit  
impediments. Love is not love Which alters when it  
alteration finds, Or bends with the remover to remove: O,  
no! it is an ever-fixèd mark, That looks on tempests and is  
not shaken; It is the star to every wandering bark, Whose  
worth's unknown, although his height be taken. Love's  
not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come; Love  
alters not with his brief hours and weeks, But  
bears it out even to the edge of doom, If this be  
error, and upon me proved, I never writ, nor no  
man ever loved.

**'You are the bubbles' by Rachel Bright.**

“Together, you are the bubbles in one  
another's champagne, the morning sun  
through the window, the breaking of a  
smile.

Together, you are the one doughnut in the bag with more jam than  
any of the others, that photo where everyone looks great, the know-  
it-all-sing-out-of-tune-at-the-top-of-your-voice chorus of a favourite  
song.

Together you are the beginnings of a big idea, the twinkly bits that  
hang in the sky after the firework goes bang, the cold thin air at the  
top of a mountain, the only two people in a crowded room.

Together you are that unforgettable day of a holiday, an accidental



adventure, a chocolate chip, pages ninety-eight to ninety-nine of a well-thumbed Mills & Boon, a bbq with friends, the spray of the sea, the nose of the cheese, a hug, a kiss, a hold-my-hand, a decision which, looking back, will seem to be the most excellent you ever made.

Together you are bubbles, the unburstable bubbles of the very best things in life, the only things any of us ever need.”

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.

### **Excerpts from ‘Song of the Open Road’ by Walt Whitman**

I do not offer the old smooth prizes, But offer rough new prizes.  
These are the days that must happen to you: You shall not heap up what is called riches, You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve. However sweet the laid-up stores, However convenient the dwellings, You shall not remain there. However sheltered the port, And however calm the waters, You shall not anchor there. However welcome the hospitality that



welcomes you You are permitted to receive it but a little while.  
Afoot and light-hearted, take to the open road, Healthy, free,  
the world before you, The long brown path before you, Leading  
wherever you choose. Say only to one another: Friend, I give  
you my hand! I give you my love, more precious than money, I  
give you myself before preaching or law. Will you give me  
yourself? Will you come travel with me? Shall we stick by each  
other as long as we live?

**I rely on you** by H. Presley

*(Could possibly adapt to alternate 'She/he relies on you')*

I rely on you, Like a Skoda needs suspension Like the  
aged need a pension Like a trampoline needs  
tension like a bungee jump needs apprehension.

I rely on you, Like a camera needs a shutter  
Like a gambler needs a flutter Like a golfer  
needs a putter Like a buttered scone involves  
some butter.

I rely on you, Like an acrobat needs ice cool  
nerve Like a hairpin needs a drastic curve  
Like an HGV needs derv Like an outside left  
needs a body swerve.

I rely on you, Like a water vole needs  
water Like a brick outhouse needs  
mortar Like a lemming to the slaughter



Ryan's just Ryan without his daughter, I  
rely on you.

### **A Lang Promise by Jackie Kay,**

Whether the weather be dreich or fair, my luvie, if guid times  
greet us, or we hae tae face the wurst, ahint and afore whit  
will happen tae us: blind in the present, eyes open to the  
furore, unkempt or sharply dressed, suddenly puir or poorly,  
peelie-wally or in fine feckle, beld or frosty, calm as a ghoull or  
in a feery-farry, in dork December or in springy Spring  
weather, doon by the Barrows; on the banks o' the Champs  
d'Elysees, at mid-nicht, first licht, whether the mune  
be roond or crescent, and ye be o' soond mind or absent,  
I'll tak your trusty haund and lead you over the haw –  
hame, ma darlin. I'll carry ma lantern and daur defend ye  
agin ony enemy; and whilst there is breath in me, I'll blaw  
it intae ye. Fir ye are ma true luvie, the bonnie face I see  
afore me; nichts I fall intae slumber, it's ye I see  
swimmingly – all yer guidness and blytheness, yer passion.  
You'll be mine, noo, an' till the end o' time, ma bonnie  
lassie, I'll tak the full guid o' ye' and gie it back, and gie it  
back tae ye: a furst kiss, a lang promise: time's gowden  
ring.

### **GATHERING (William H Matchett)**

Here, in our best bib and tucker we flock, Drawn from all



the hell over, iron filings to love's magnet, An intricate  
pattern, a one-time convergence Of friends and relations, a  
living mandala;

Young and old, nephews and nieces, Sisters, brothers,  
parents, grandfather, And all those others you got to  
choose for yourselves, Agglomerating to hold you in the  
center.

Slow in coming, swift in passing, this day, Slow but  
long-lasting the major choice confirmed, Hardly  
inevitable, yet falling into place As though it were  
just what we always expected.

So, \*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\* , we join as you join In celebrating  
love – yours for each other, of course, Ours, as you  
must know, for you – circling, Cherishing, blessing,  
releasing, Love, the core of all.

### **What is love** Author unknown

Sooner or later we begin to understand that love is more than verses or  
valentines and romance in the movies.

We begin to know that love is here and now, real and true, the most  
important thing in our lives. For love is the creator of our favourite  
memories and the foundation of our fondest dreams. Love is a promise  
that is always kept, a fortune that can never be spent, a seed that can  
flourish in even the most unlikely of places. And this radiance that never  
fades, this mysterious and magical joy, is the greatest treasure of all - one



known only by those who love.

**I LOVE YOU....**(Author unknown)

I love you For the kindness in your eyes And the warmth in your voice, For the honesty of your words And the silence of your smile; For the ways in which we're similar, And those in which we're worlds apart. For the openness of your understanding And the acceptance of your heart; For the tenderness of your touch And the strength of your commitment, For your sense of humour And your seriousness of purpose; For a thousand small reasons, And one most important of all: Simply because you are you. In all of creation you are the one whom I cherish most, The one with whom I hope to share my life – Its joys, its sorrows, its accomplishments, its challenges – While building our dreams together and growing everyday In the love that makes us one.

**SCAFFOLDING** (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 seems to  
be Old bridges breaking between you and me Never  
fear. We may let the scaffolds fall Confident that we





have built our wall.

**THE ORANGE** (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 had 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.

**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 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 a 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 much you're  
 loved by me.

**William Butler Yeats - 'The Indian To His Love',**

The island dreams under the dawn And great  
 boughs drop tranquility; The peahens dance on  
 a smooth lawn, A parrot sways upon a tree,  
 Raging at his own image in the enameled sea.

Here we will moor our lonely ship And wander  
 ever with woven hands, Murmuring softly lip to  
 lip, Along the grass, along the sands, Murmuring  
 how far away are the unquiet lands:



How we alone of mortals are Hid under quiet boughs apart,  
While our love grows an Indian star, A meteor of the burning  
heart, One with the tide that gleams, the wings that gleam and  
dart,

The heavy boughs, the burnished dove That  
moans and sighs a hundred days: How when  
we die our shades will rove, When eve has  
hushed the feathered ways,  
With vapoury footsole by the water's drowsy blaze.

**'To Wed or Not to Wed' By Una Marson, with apologies to Shakespeare**

To wed, or not to wed: that is the question: Whether 'tis  
nobler in the mind to suffer The fret and loneliness of  
spinsterhood Or to take arms against the single state And  
by marrying, end it? To wed: to match, No more; yet by  
this match to say we end The heartache and the  
thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to; 'tis a  
consummation Devoutly to be wish'd. To wed, to match;  
To match, perchance to mismatch: aye there's the rub;  
For in that match what dread mishaps may come, When  
we have shuffled off this single state For wedded bliss:  
there's the respect That makes singleness of so long a  
life, For who'd forgo the joys of wife and mother, The  
pleasures of devotion, of sacrifice and love, The blessings  
of a home and all home means, The restful sympathy of  
soul to soul, The loving ones circling round at eventide  
When she herself might gain all these With a marriage



vow? ....

### **The Marriage of Psyche. By Kathleen Raine**

He has married me with a ring, a ring of bright water  
Whose ripples travel from the heart of the sea, He has  
married me with a ring of light, the glitter Broadcast on  
the swift river. He has married me with the sun's circle  
Too dazzling to see, traced in summer sky. He has  
crowned me with the wreath of white cloud That  
gathers on the snowy summit of the mountain, Ringed  
me round with the world-circling wind, Bound me to  
the whirlwind's centre. He has married me with the  
orbit of the moon And with the boundless circle of  
stars,  
With the orbits that measure years, months, days, and nights,  
Set the tides flowing, Command the winds to travel or be at  
rest.

At the ring's centre, Spirit, or angel troubling the pool,  
Causality not in nature, Finger's touch that summons at a  
point, a moment Stars and planets, life and light Or gathers  
cloud about an apex of cold, Transcendent touch of love  
summons my world into being.

### **An Excerpt from the Amber Spyglass by Philip 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 will 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, we'll be joined so tight.

**From THE IRRATIONAL SEASON (Madeleine L'Engle)**

Ultimately there comes a time when a decision must be made. Ultimately two people who love each other must ask themselves how much they hope for as their love grows and deepens, and how much risk they are willing to take. It is indeed a fearful gamble. Because it is the nature of love to create, a marriage itself is something which has to be created.

To marry is the biggest risk in human relations that a person can take. If we commit ourselves to one person for life, this is not, as many people think, a rejection of freedom; rather it demands the courage to move into all the risks of freedom and the risk of love which is permanent; into that love which is not possession but participation. It takes a lifetime to learn another person.

When love is not possession, but participation, then it is part of that co-creation which is our human calling.

**Get Married, Get Married, Chris Gordon**



Some of us are cynics And then the penny drops  
and we get it We become like evangelists Get  
Married, Get Married, It's bloody marvellous

You know, It's not what you  
think it is. You won't own him  
He won't own you

You'll hold hands in this sea that you've created. A sea of friends and  
foes and families. Places you've been and places you imagine you might  
be.

You'll hold hands and the waves will push you very close sometimes, so  
you're pretty much one person. Thinking and feeling the same way. And  
sometimes the waves will pull you apart until you have to crane your  
necks to see each other. Just let one drop of forgiveness or good humour  
change the tide and you'll be even closer than before.

It changes. Every day it changes.

Einstein said "Women marry men hoping they will change and men marry  
women hoping they will not. So each is inevitably disappointed"  
Well I hope you revel in the changes you bring about in each other.

I hope you treasure each others eccentricities and embrace all the  
weirdness and wonder of each others humanity. I hope you fight, I am sure  
you will, it shows great passion to hold a point of view even when you start  
to doubt it. I hope you argue, it's almost inevitable, but make up and do it  
before you turn out the lights, then breakfast will taste better. I hope you



dream and that often your dreams collide and they take you to far away and wonderful places. And I hope you love and that the love you have for each other pushes out into the world around you. To your friends and to your foes and to your families.

**'a weather forecast' by Judy Corbett**

there was a light drizzle when they came together the two of them, not young, or freshly minted, rather more 'mature' carrying rucksacks full of incidents and accidents, hints and allegations

there was a storm when they arrived in the midst of lives  
- the known, their own, the others but souls met, smiles met, bodies met, new coin was forged and bartered

there was a rainbow when they reached their new future a mixed-up, heads-up, what's-up future a true future.

and then the sun was shining when they promised  
before us the vow, the pledge, the pushing-on of rings

we welcomed this meteorological shift the  
herald of new beginnings casting anabatic winds  
their way to take them onwards to their highest  
hopes and dreams

**From "A Song for Hyawatha" by Henry Longfellow** (great to end outdoor ceremonies)



"Come join us in celebration, those who love sunshine on meadow Who love shadow of the forest, love the wind among the branches and the palisades of pine trees, and the thunder in the mountains whose innumerable echoes flap like eagles in their eries. Listen to this song of marriage. How, from another tribe and country came a young man saying, "give me as my wife this maiden, and our hands be clasped more closely, and our hearts be more united." Thus it is, our daughters leave us, those we love and those who love us. When a youth with flaunting feathers beckons to the fairest maiden.

From the sky the sun benignant looked upon them through the branches, Saying to them, "oh, my children life is chequered shade and sunshine." The two figures man and woman Standing hand in hand together, with their hands so clasped together that they seem in one united. And the words thus represented are, "I see your heart within you." Sing them songs of love and longing Now, let's feast and be more joyous."

**Adapted from CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN (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 promises 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.....roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossom had fallen from your branches you find that you are one tree and not two.





## Readings on Humanist Marriage

### Albert Schweitzer

We are each a secret to the other. To know one another cannot mean to know everything about each other, it means to feel mutual affection and confidence and to believe in one another. We must not try to force our way into the personality of another. To analyse others is a rude commencement, for there is a modesty of the soul which we must recognise just as we do that of the body. No-one has a right to say to another: "Because we belong to each as we do, I have a right to know all your thoughts". Not even a mother may treat her child in that way. All demands of this sort are foolish and unwholesome. In this matter giving is the only valuable process; it is only giving that stimulates. Impart as much as you can of your kindness and spiritual being to those who are on the road with you & accept as something precious what comes back to you from them.

### The Mayonnaise Jar and the Two Beers

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the 2 Beers. A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls.. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full.

They agreed it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once



more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous 'yes.' The professor then produced two Beers from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand.

The students laughed.. 'Now,' said the professor as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.. The golf balls are the important things---your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favorite passions---and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else--the small stuff . 'If you put the sand into the jar first,' he continued, 'there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your children. Spend time with your parents. Visit with grandparents. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first---the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand. One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the Beer represented. The professor smiled and said, 'I'm glad you asked.' The Beer just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of Beers with a friend.

### **'Advice on Marriage' Poems**

**(Mary Williams)**

In other times On parchment  
fragments, Incised in stones,



Illuminated in the margins,  
Celebrations were performed, In  
poetry and song.

In vast halls to the sounds of trumpets,  
On plains in the open, In tiny rooms,  
promises were made. It is a thread that  
joins us.

In the modern cacophony, love is a constant refrain, A joyful  
exclamation that shows us the essence, the centre, That  
cannot be ignored.

Now on this day, in this place these two take their turn in This long  
tradition and unite us here in this memorable moment.

**(Author unknown)** Let the rebuke be preceded by a kiss. Do not  
require a request to be repeated. Never should both be angry at the  
same time. Never neglect the other, for all the world beside. Let the  
angry word be answered only with a kiss. Bestow your warmest  
sympathies in each other's trials. Never make a remark calculated to  
bring ridicule upon the other. Make your criticism in the most loving  
manner possible. Make no display of the sacrifices you make for each  
other. Never reproach the other for an error which was done with a  
good motive and with the best judgement at the time. Always leave  
home with a tender good-bye and loving words.



## **LOOK TO THIS DAY (From Ancient Sanscrit)**

Look to this day for it is life  
the very life of life. In its  
brief course lie all the  
realities and truths of  
existence, the joy of  
growth, the splendour of  
action, the glory of power.  
For yesterday is  
but a memory. And  
tomorrow is only a vision.  
But today well lived  
makes every yesterday a  
memory of happiness and  
every tomorrow a vision  
of hope. Look well,  
therefore, To this day.

## **From THE PROPHET Khalil Gibran**

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 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.

### **IF (Author unknown)**

If you treat each other kindly with compassion and with trust  
And always let your feelings show, If you laugh together often  
and enjoy the time you share, But give each other space to  
learn and grow, If you understand your differences, respecting  
who you are, And put each other first in all you do- Your  
marriage will be wonderful, a reason to feel proud,  
And a special source of love, your whole lives through.

### **THE ART OF A GOOD MARRIAGE (Wilfred Arlan Peterson)**

A good marriage must be created. In the 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 each day. It is never going to sleep angry. It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives. It is standing together and facing the world. It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family. It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways. It is having the capacity to forgive and forget. It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow. It is a common search



for the good and the beautiful. It is not only marrying the right person, it is being the right partner.

***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 Hah-hah!

...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... 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 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.



## **EPITHALAMIUM (Aonghas MacNeacail)**

this is your new garden, a whole wide world  
of it, so green and songbird fresh, all yours  
to map and fill with luminous constellations  
of fruit and berry blossoms

this is your new garden, tend it as if all  
the young shoots that promise a  
succulent harvest of root and ear will  
be young and tender for all time

this is your garden, there will always be  
much hoeing and raking, the clearing of  
weeds and sowing of seeds will ask  
patience, attention, forgiving laughter

this is the garden you want to live in, it's not all  
sunshine – there's moonshine too, all earth  
needs storms, but when dark clouds peel back,  
see your garden bloom into a universe of stars

## **Madness of Marriage**

Marriage is about giving and taking And forging  
and forsaking Kissing and loving and pushing and  
shoving Caring and Sharing and screaming and  
swearing About being together whatever the  
weather About being driven to the end of your



tether

About Sweetness and kindness

And wisdom and blindness

It's about being strong when you're feeling quite weak It's about saying nothing when you're dying to speak It's about being wrong when you know you are right It's about giving in, before there's a fight It's about you two living as cheaply as one (you can give us a call if you know how that's done!)

Never heeding advice that was always well meant Never counting the cost until it's all spent And for you two today it's about to begin And for all that the two of you had to put in Some days filled with joy, and some days with sadness Too late you'll discover that marriage is madness.

### **Handfasting poem (Author unknown)**

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.

**Marriage: A Joining Of Hands by Wayne Visser**

Marriage is like the joining of hands ...  
Each enfolding the other A comfortable  
fit A voluntary embrace Yet always two  
hands Free to let go Able to individually  
express

When two hands touch ... Each  
senses the needs of the other And  
responds To affirm To compensate To  
share:

The firm handshake of agreement The  
gentle squeeze of endorsement The  
steady grip of assurance The uplifting  
gesture of support

The clenched fists of anger The  
desperate claws of pain The  
wringing clasp of anxiety, The  
sweaty palms of guilt

The loving caress of contentment The erotic  
brush of passion The mutual wave of  
recognition The silent fingertip touch of deep  
connection



Marriage is like the joining of hands ...  
Each enfolding the other A comfortable  
fit A voluntary embrace Yet always two  
hands Free to let go Able to individually  
express

### **Blessings Poems**

..... I leave you with a quote from ‘Walden’ written by one of Bride and Groom's favourites writers and fellow lover of the outdoors Henry David Thoreau .....

“You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment. Fools stand on their island of opportunities and look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other life but this.”

### **From A NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN MARRIAGE CEREMONY (Author unknown)**

May the sun bring you new energies by day, May the moon softly restore you by night. May the rain wash away any worries you may have And the breeze blow new strength into your being. And then, all the days of your life, May you walk gently through the world And know its beauty.

Now you will feel not the rain, for each will shelter the other. Now you will feel not cold, for each will warm the other. Now you will



feel not solitude, for each will company the other. Now you are two persons, but both will lead one life. Go now to your dwelling to enter into the days of your life, And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

**APACHE BLESSING** (Author unknown)

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. Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves. When frustration, difficulties and fear assail your relationship, as they threaten all relationships at one time or another, remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part which seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the storms when clouds hide the face of the sun in your lives remembering that even if you lose sight of it, for a moment the sun is still there. And if each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.



**(Author unknown)** Now we feel no rain, for each of us will be shelter for each other. Now we feel no cold. for each of us will be warmth to the other. Now there will be no loneliness, for each of us will be companion to the other. We are two bodies, but there are three lives before us; My life, your life and our lives together.

When evening falls, I will look up and there you'll be. I will take your hand and we will turn together to look at the road we travelled to reach, this , the hour of our happiness. It stretches behind us and the future lies ahead, A long, winding road, whose every turning means discovery. Old hopes, new laughter and shared tears. The adventure has just begun.

**Rumi.** May these vows and this marriage be blessed.

May it be sweet milk, this marriage, like wine and halvah. May this marriage offer fruit and shade like the date palm. May this marriage be full of laughter, our every day a day in paradise. May this marriage be a sign of compassion, a seal of happiness here and hereafter. May this marriage have a fair face and a good name, an omen as welcomes the moon in a clear blue sky. I am out of words to describe how spirit mingles in this marriage.

**(Traditional Irish blessing, author unknown)**

From this day forward. May the road rise to meet you  
May the wind be always at your back  
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home  
And



may the hand of a friend always be near. May  
green be the grass you walk on, May blue be the  
skies above you, May pure be the joys that  
surround you, May true be the hearts that love  
you.

**(Traditional Irish blessing, author unknown)**

May the road rise up to meet you, May the  
wind always be at your back, May the sun shine  
warm upon your faces And the rain fall soft  
upon your feet. And may a slow wind work  
These words of love around you An invisible  
cloak to mind your life.

**(Traditional Irish blessing, author unknown)**

May the road rise up to meet you, May the  
wind be always at your back, May the sun shine  
warm upon your face, The rains fall soft upon  
your fields.  
And until we meet again, May your days be good  
and long upon the earth.

May you live to see your children's children.  
May you be poor in misfortune, Rich in  
blessings, May you know nothing but  
happiness From this day forward.



**(Celtic blessing, author unknown)** May the raindrops fall gently on your brow, May the soft winds freshen your spring, May the sunshine brighten your hearts, May the burdens of the day rest lightly upon you And may you each enfold the other in the mantle of your love

**(Celtic blessing, author unknown)** The peace of running water to you. The peace of the flowing air to you, The peace of the quiet earth to you, The peace of the shining stars to you, And the love and the care of us all to you.

**Celtic Blessing From CARMINA GADELICA (Author unknown)**

Each day be joyous to you No day  
be grievous to you Love of each  
face be yours A bright flame before  
thee A guiding star above thee A  
smooth path below thee Today,  
tonight and for evermore

**A CELTIC INVOCATION (Author unknown)**

A shade art thou in the heat, A  
shelter art thou in the cold,  
Eyes art thou to the blind,  
A staff art thou to the pilgrim,



An island art thou at sea, A well  
art thou in the desert, Health art  
thou to the ailing.

Thou art the joy of all joyous things Thou art  
the light of the beam of the sun Thou art the  
door of the chief of hospitality Thou art the  
surpassing star of guidance Thou art the step  
of the deer of the hill Thou art the step of the  
steed of the plain Thou art the grace of the  
swan of swimming Thou art the loveliness of  
all lovely desires.

**(Author unknown)** May your home be a place of happiness for all who  
enter it; a place where the old and young are renewed in each other's  
company, a place for growing and a place for sharing, a place for music, a  
place for laughter and a place for love. May those who are nearest to you  
be constantly enriched by the beauty and the bounty of your love for one  
another. And may your days be good and long upon the Earth.

**"Wedding Day"** - Adrian Lomas

This is your 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 Word to Husbands** by Ogden Nash

To keep your marriage brimming,  
With love in the loving cup,  
Whenever you're wrong admit it;  
Whenever you're right, shut up

**Autumn, by Gawain Douglas ( for wiser/older couples, or for renewal of  
vows)**

O Love we see our very Autumn now, But in our  
fall we hold each season's prime. My youth,  
manhood and age rest on your brow; Engraved  
deep, your womanhood on mine. My March, your  
April frosts, swift, foolish May, Our June's richest  
laughter we hold in store, For when our darker  
season comes; then say Those words of





candlelight once said before. Then Love you are  
the window to my days And I your glass to  
memory's green hour; So I in you and you in I find  
ways To slip the hand of Time's inquisitor.  
Reflection then shall fill our wintertime And faces.  
I in yours, and yours in mine.

### **For a Renewal of vows.**

*When evening falls, I look up and there you are. I take your  
hand and we turn together to look at the road  
we have travelled to reach this milestone. It  
stretches behind us and it stretches ahead,  
a long, winding road, whose every turning means  
discovery, old hopes, new laughter and shared tears. The  
adventure has hardly begun.*

### **From Books:**

#### ***The Portrait of a Lady by Henry James***

“It has made me better loving you... it has made me wiser, and easier,  
and - I won't pretend to deny - brighter and nicer and even stronger. I  
used to want a great many things before, and to be angry that I didn't  
have them. Theoretically I was satisfied, as I once told you. I flattered  
myself I had limited my wants. But I was subject to irritation; I used to  
have morbid, sterile, hateful fits of hunger, of desire. Now I really am  
satisfied, because I can't think of anything better.”



### ***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.”

### ***Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey**

“What I’m feeling, I think, is joy. And it’s been some time since I’ve felt that blinkered rush of happiness. This might be one of those rare events that lasts, one that’ll be remembered and recalled as months and years wind and ravel. One of those sweet, significant moments that leaves a footprint in your mind. A photograph couldn’t ever tell its story. It’s like something you have to live to understand. One of those freak collisions of fizzing meteors and looming celestial bodies and floating debris and one single beautiful red ball that bursts into your life and through your body like an enormous firework. Where things shift into focus for a moment, and everything makes sense. And it becomes one of those things inside you, a pearl among sludge, one of those big exaggerated memories you can invoke at any moment to peel away a little layer of how you felt, like a lick of ice cream. The flavour of grace.”



**“He’s Not Perfect” by Bob Marley.** He’s not perfect. You aren’t either, and the two of you will never be perfect. But if he can make you laugh at least once, causes you to think twice, and if he admits to being human and making mistakes, hold on to him and give him the most you can. He isn’t going to quote poetry, he’s not thinking about you every moment, but he will give you a part of him that he knows you could break. Don’t hurt him, don’t change him, and don’t expect for more than he can give. Don’t analyze. Smile when he makes you happy, yell when he makes you mad, and miss him when he’s not there. Love hard when there is love to be had, because perfect guys don’t exist, but there’s always one guy that is perfect for you.

## **Chapter One of One Thousand**

**By O.J. Preston**

For two people this dawn brought on a magical day  
Now husband and wife they head on their way  
As a boat setting sail may their journey begin  
With calmest of waters, most helpful of wind  
And if they should stumble upon turbulent sea  
May it pass them unharmed – leave them be.  
For here are two people whom love has well bitten  
Here opens their book which has yet to be written  
As the first page unfolds and their life inks its path  
May it write a true story where forever love lasts  
Let their journey be happy till death do they part  
Of one thousand chapters may this be the start.

