### **Non-religious wedding readings**

### **1.**[***Tiny Beautiful Things***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307949338?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0307949338&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Cheryl Strayed**

"My mother’s last word to me clanks inside me like an iron bell that someone beats at dinnertime: *love, love, love, love, love. …*Be brave. Be authentic. Practice saying the word ‘love’ to the people you love so when it matters most to say it, you will.

We’re all going to die, Johnny. Hit the iron bell like it’s dinnertime."

### **2.**[***Every Day***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307931897?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0307931897&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by David Levithan**

"This is what love does: It makes you want to rewrite the world. It makes you want to choose the characters, build the scenery, guide the plot. The person you love sits across from you, and you want to do everything in your power to make it possible, endlessly possible. And when it’s just the two of you, alone in a room, you can pretend that this is how it is, this is how it will be."

### **3.**[***Jasper Jones***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0375866272?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0375866272&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**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."

### **4.**[***Delirium***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0061726834?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0061726834&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Lauren Oliver**

"Love: a single word, a wispy thing, a word no bigger or longer than an edge. That’s what it is: an edge; a razor. It draws up through the center of your life, cutting everything in two. Before and after. The rest of the world falls away on either side."

### **5.**[***A Farewell to Arms***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007CKXYM2?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=B007CKXYM2&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Ernest Hemingway**

"At night, there was the feeling that we had come home, feeling no longer alone, waking in the night to find the other one there, and not gone away; all other things were unreal. We slept when we were tired and if we woke the other one woke too so one was not alone. Often a man wishes to be alone and a woman wishes to be alone too and if they love each other they are jealous of that in each other, but I can truly say we never felt that. We could feel alone when we were together, alone against the others. We were never lonely and never afraid when we were together."

### **6.**[***A History of Love***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0393328627?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0393328627&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Nicole Krauss**

"Once upon a time, there was a boy. He lived in a village that no longer exists, in a house that no longer exists, on the edge of a field that no longer exists, where everything was discovered, and everything was possible. A stick could be a sword, a pebble could be a diamond, a tree, a castle. Once upon a time, there was a boy who lived in a house across the field, from a girl who no longer exists. They made up a thousand games. She was queen and he was king. In the autumn light her hair shone like a crown. They collected the world in small handfuls, and when the sky grew dark, and they parted with leaves in their hair.

Once upon a time there was a boy who loved a girl, and her laughter was a question he wanted to spend his whole life answering."

### **7.**[***The Fault in Our Stars***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/014242417X?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=014242417X&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by John Green**

"‘I am,’ he said. He was staring at me, and I could see the corners of his eyes crinkling. 'I'm in love with you, and I’m not in the business of denying myself the simple pleasure of saying true things. I’m in love with you, and I know that love is just a shout into the void, and that oblivion is inevitable, and that we’re all doomed and that there will come a day when all our labor has been returned to dust, and I know the sun will swallow the only earth we’ll ever have, and I am in love with you.’"

### **8.**[***Blue-Eyed Devil***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1250070694?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=1250070694&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Lisa Kleypas**

"I no longer believed in the idea of soul mates, or love at first sight. But I was beginning to believe that a very few times in your life, if you were lucky, you might meet someone who was exactly right for you. Not because he was perfect, or because you were, but because your combined flaws were arranged in a way that allowed two separate beings to hinge together."

### **9.**[***Lament: The Faerie Queen's Deception***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0738713708?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0738713708&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Maggie Stiefvater**

"You’re like a song that I heard when I was a little kid but forgot I knew until I heard it again."

### **10.**[***Wild Awake***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0062184695?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0062184695&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**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 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."

### **11.**[***This is the best book I've ever written, and it still sucks***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00773SUV4?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=B00773SUV4&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Jarod Kintz**

"With my last breath, I’ll exhale my love for you. I hope it’s a cold day, so you can see what you meant to me. "

### **12.**[***Allegiant***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0062024078?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0062024078&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Veronica Roth**

"I fell in love with him. But I don’t just stay with him by default as if there’s no one else available to me. I stay with him because I choose to, every day that I wake up, every day that we fight or lie to each other or disappoint each other. I choose him over and over again, and he chooses me."

### **13.**[***South of the Border, West of the Sun***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0679767398?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0679767398&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Haruki Murakami**

"Sometimes when I look at you, I feel I’m gazing at a distant star.It’s dazzling, but the light is from tens of thousands of years ago.Maybe the star doesn’t even exist any more. Yet sometimes that light seems more real to me than anything."

### **14.**[***This Lullaby***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0142501557?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0142501557&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Sarah Dessen**

"No relationship is perfect, ever. There are always some ways you have to bend, to compromise, to give something up in order to gain something greater … The love we have for each other is bigger than these small differences. And that’s the key. It’s like a big pie chart, and the love in a relationship has to be the biggest piece. Love can make up for a lot."

### **15.**[***Doctor Zhivago***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000NI8F4W?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=B000NI8F4W&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Boris Pasternak**

"Oh, what a love it was, utterly free, unique, like nothing else on earth! Their thoughts were like other people’s songs.

They loved each other, not driven by necessity, by the ‘blaze of passion’ often falsely ascribed to love. They loved each other because everything around them willed it, the trees and the clouds and the sky over their heads and the earth under their feet. Perhaps their surrounding world, the strangers they met in the street, the wide expanses they saw on their walks, the rooms in which they lived or met, took more delight in their love than they themselves did."

### **16.**[***Jazz***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1400076218?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=1400076218&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Toni Morrison**

"It’s nice when grown people whisper to each other under the covers. Their ecstasy is more leaf-sigh than bray and the body is the vehicle, not the point. They reach, grown people, for something beyond, way beyond and way, way down underneath tissue. They are remembering while they whisper the carnival dolls they won and the Baltimore boats they never sailed on. The pears they let hang on the limb because if they plucked them, they would be gone from there and who else would see that ripeness if they took it away for themselves? How could anybody passing by see them and imagine for themselves what the flavor would be like? Breathing and murmuring under covers both of them have washed and hung out on the line, in a bed they chose together and kept together nevermind one leg was propped on a 1916 dictionary, and the mattress, curved like a preacher’s palm asking for witnesses in His name’s sake, enclosed them each and every night and muffled their whispering, old-time love."

### **17.**[***Les Misérables***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008HS0HVE?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=B008HS0HVE&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Victor Hugo**

"The future belongs to hearts even more than it does to minds. Love, that is the only thing that can occupy and fill eternity. In the infinite, the inexhaustible is requisite.

Love participates of the soul itself. It is of the same nature. Like it, it is the divine spark; like it, it is incorruptible, indivisible, imperishable. It is a point of fire that exists within us, which is immortal and infinite, which nothing can confine, and which nothing can extinguish. We feel it burning even to the very marrow of our bones, and we see it beaming in the very depths of heaven."

### **18.**[***The Amber Spyglass***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0440418569?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0440418569&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**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."

### **19.**[***Dangerous Liaisons***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0140449574?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0140449574&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos**

"Now, I’m not going to deny that I was aware of your beauty. But the point is, this has nothing to do with your beauty. As I got to know you, I began to realise that beauty was the least of your qualities. I became fascinated by your goodness. I was drawn in by it. I didn’t understand what was happening to me. And it was only when I began to feel actual, physical pain every time you left the room that it finally dawned on me: I was in love, for the first time in my life. I knew it was hopeless, but that didn’t matter to me. And it’s not that I want to have you. All I want is to deserve you. Tell me what to do. Show me how to behave. I’ll do anything you say."

### **20.**[***The Road***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307387895?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0307387895&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Cormac McCarthy**

“Lying under such a myriad of stars. The sea’s black horizon. He rose and walked out and stood barefoot in the sand and watched the pale surf appear all down the shore and roll and crash and darken again. When he went back to the fire he knelt and smoothed her hair as she slept and he said if he were God he would have made the world just so and no different.”

### **21.**[***Your Personal Penguin***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0761143726?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0761143726&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Sandra Boynton**

"I like you a lot. You’re funny and kind. So let me explain What I have in mind.I want to be your personal penguin. I want to walk right by your side.I want to be your personal penguin.I want to travel with you far and wide."

### **22.**[***Just Kids***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0060936223?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0060936223&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Patti Smith**

"Where does it all lead? What will become of us? These were our young questions, and young answers were revealed. It leads to each other. We become ourselves … 'What will happen to us?' I asked. 'There will always be us,' he answered."

### **23.**[***The Portrait of a Lady***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0141441267?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0141441267&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**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."

### **24.**[***The Sandman, Vol. 9: The Kindly Ones***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/140123545X?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=140123545X&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Neil Gaiman**

"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 defenses, you build up a whole suit of armor, 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. Love takes hostages. It gets inside you. "

### **25.**[***The Princess Bride***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/034525483X?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=034525483X&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by William Goldman**

"Do I love you? My God, if your love were a grain of sand, mine would be a universe of beaches… I have stayed these years in my hovel because of you. I have taught myself languages because of you. I have made my body strong because I thought you might be pleased by a strong body. I have lived my life with only the prayer that some sudden dawn you might glance in my direction. I have not known a moment in years when the sight of you did not send my heart careening against my rib cage. I have not known a night when your visage did not accompany me to sleep. There has not been a morning when you did not flutter behind my waking eyelids…

I love you. Okay? Want it louder? I love you. Spell it out, should I? I ell-oh-vee-ee why-oh-you. Want it backward? You love I."

### **26.**[***Eleanor and Park***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/034525483X?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=034525483X&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Rainbow Rowell**

"Holding Eleanor’s hand was like holding a butterfly. Or a heartbeat. Like holding something complete, and completely alive."

### **27.**[***Everything is Illuminated***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0060529709?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0060529709&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Jonathan Safran Foer**

“I love you also means I love you more than anyone loves you, or has loved you, or will love you, and also, I love you in a way that no one loves you, or has loved you, or will love you, and also, I love you in a way that I love no one else, and never have loved anyone else, and never will love anyone else.”

### **28.**[***Anna and the French Kiss***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0142419400?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0142419400&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Stephanie Perkins**

"For the two of us, home isn’t a place. It is a person. And we are finally home.

### **29.**[***One Hundred Years of Solitude***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0060883286?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0060883286&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Gabriel Garcí­a Márquez**

"He dug so deeply into her sentiments that in search of interest he found love, because by trying to make her love him he ended up falling in love with her. Petra Cotes, for her part, loved him more and more as she felt his love increasing, and that was how in the ripeness of autumn she began to believe once more in the youthful superstition that poverty was the servitude of love. Both looked back then on the wild revelry, the gaudy wealth, and the unbridled fornication as an annoyance and they lamented that it had cost them so much of their lives to find the paradise of shared solitude. Madly in love after so many years of sterile complicity, they enjoyed the miracle of living each other as much at the table as in bed, and they grew to be so happy that even when they were two worn-out people they kept on blooming like little children and playing together like dogs."

### **30.**[***This is Water***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0316068225?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0316068225&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by David Foster Wallace**

"The really important kind of freedom involves attention, and awareness, and discipline, and effort, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them, over and over, in myriad petty little unsexy ways, every day."

### **31.**[***How to be Good***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1573229326?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=1573229326&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Nick Hornby**

"The plain state of being human is dramatic enough for anyone; you don’t need to be a heroin addict or a performance poet to experience extremity. You just have to love someone."

### **32.**[***Wuthering Heights***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/150531349X?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=150531349X&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Emily Brontë**

"If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger."

### **33.**[***Jane Eyre***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0141441143?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0141441143&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Charlotte Brontë**

"I have for the first time found what I can truly love–I have found you. You are my sympathy — my better self — my good angel — I am bound to you with a strong attachment. I think you good, gifted, lovely: a fervent, a solemn passion is conceived in my heart; it leans to you, draws you to my centre and spring of life, wrap my existence about you — and, kindling in pure, powerful flame, fuses you and me in one."

### **34.**[***The Unabridged Journals of Sylvia Plath***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0385720254?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0385720254&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Sylvia Plath**

"I feel good with my husband: I like his warmth and his bigness and his being-there and his making and his jokes and stories and what he reads and how he likes fishing and walks and pigs and foxes and little animals and is honest and not vain or fame-crazy and how he shows his gladness for what I cook him and joy for when I make him something, a poem or a cake, and how he is troubled when I am unhappy and wants to do anything so I can fight out my soul-battles and grow up with courage and a philosophical ease. I love his good smell and his body that fits with mine as if they were made in the same body-shop to do just that. What is only pieces, doled out here and there to this boy and that boy, that made me like pieces of them, is all jammed together in my husband. So I don’t want to look around any more: I don’t need to look around for anything."

### **35.**[***The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0385341008?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0385341008&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Mary Ann Shaffer**

"All my life I thought that the story was over when the hero and heroine were safely engaged — after all, what’s good enough for Jane Austen ought to be good enough for anyone. But it’s a lie. The story is about to begin, and every day will be a new piece of the plot."

### **36.**[***The One***](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0062060007?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0062060007&linkCode=xm2&tag=bustle185-20)**by Kiera Cass**

"My love, you are sunlight falling through trees. You are laughter that breaks through my sadness. You are the breeze on a too-warm day. You are clarity in the midst of confusion.

You are not the world, but you are everything that makes the world good. Without you, my life would still exist, but that’s all it would manage to do."