

Wedding Poems & Readings

*The words are as special as your love story.
Choose the words that fit your vibe and
make you say, "This is so us!"
Which ones do you want to include in your
ceremony?*





AFTER TODAY YOU BECOME HUSBAND & WIFE

unknown

The symbolic vows that you are about to make to each other today 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.”

Take a moment and look at one another. Before this moment, you have been many things to one another – an acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner and even teacher, for you have learned so much from one another throughout your journey already.

Soon you will say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you.

For after today, you will become husband and wife.





2

1 CORINTHIANS: 4 - 8, 13

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.

But the greatest of these is love.





3



THE ART OF MARRIAGE

Wilfred A. 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 each 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 objectives.

It is standing together and 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 humor.

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.

4

MAYBE

Unknown Author

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.

5

RIDE THE STORM

Apache Wedding Blessing

**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.**



6



A TIME TO LAUGH

Sister Joan Chittister
from her book, *There is a Season*

1. Laugh when people tell a joke. Otherwise you might make them feel bad.
2. Laugh when you look into a mirror. Otherwise you might feel bad.
3. Laugh when you make a mistake. If you don't, you're liable to forget how ultimately unimportant the whole thing really is, whatever it is.
4. Laugh with small children. They laugh at mashed bananas on their faces, mud in their hair, a dog nuzzling their ears, the sight of their bottoms as bare as silk. It renews your perspective. Clearly nothing is as bad as it could be.
5. Laugh at situations that are out of your control. When the best man comes to the altar without the wedding ring, laugh. When the dog jumps through the window screen at the dinner guests on your doorstep, sit down and laugh awhile.
6. When you find yourself in public in mismatched shoes, laugh—as loudly as you can. Why collapse in mortal agony? There's nothing you can do to change things right now. Besides, it is funny.
7. Laugh at anything pompous. At anything that needs to puff its way through life in robes and titles. Will Rogers laughed at all the public institutions of life. For instance, "You can't say civilization isn't advancing," he wrote. "In every war they kill you in a new way."
8. Finally, laugh when all your carefully laid plans get changed; when the plane is late and the restaurant is closed and the last day's screening of the movie of the year was yesterday. You're free now to do something else, to be spontaneous... to take a piece of life and treat it with outrageous abandon.



7

JACK AND SALLY'S SONG

The Nightmare Before
Christmas

My dearest friend, if you don't mind,
I'd like to join you by your side,
Where we can gaze into the stars,
And sit together,
Now and forever,
For it is plain as anyone can see,
We're simply meant to be.



8

ON YOUR WEDDING DAY

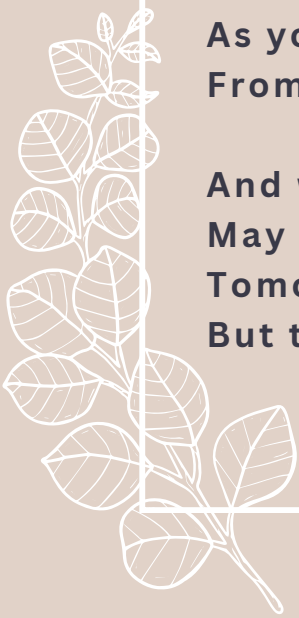
Today is a day you will always remember
The greatest in anyone's life
You'll start off the day just two people in love
And end it as Husband and Wife

It's a brand new beginning the start of a journey
With moments to cherish and treasure
And although there'll be times when you both disagree
These will surely be outweighed by pleasure

You'll have heard many words of advice in the past
When the secrets of marriage were spoken
But you know that the answers lie hidden inside
Where the bond of true love lies unbroken

So live happy forever as lovers and friends
It's the dawn of a new life for you
As you stand there together with love in your eyes
From the moment you whisper 'I do'

And with luck, all your hopes, and your dreams can be real
May success find its way to your heart
Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys
But today is the day it all starts!



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ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

Robert Fulghum

All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten.

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat. Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life- learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. Be aware of wonder.

Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup:

The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that. Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup- they all die. So do we.

And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned- the biggest word of all- LOOK.

Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and equality and sane living.

Take any of those items and extrapolate it into sophisticated adult terms and apply it to your family life or your work or your government or your world and it holds true and clear and firm. Think what a better world it would be if all- the whole world- had cookies and milk about three o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankies for a nap. Or if all governments had a basic policy to always put things back where they found them and to clean up their own mess.

And it is still true, no matter how old you are- when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

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10

**ECCLESIASTES 4:
9-12**

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken

1 1

APACHE WEDDING PRAYER

Short Version

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter to the other.

Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.

Now you are two bodies, but there is one life before you.

Go now to your dwelling place to enter into the days of your togetherness.

And may your days be good and long upon the Earth



12



OH, CALL IT BY SOME BETTER NAME

Thomas Moore, Irish Poet

Oh, call it by some better name,
For Friendship sounds too cold,
While Love is now a worldly flame,
Whose shrine must be of gold:
And Passion, like the sun at noon,
That burns o'er all he sees,
Awhile as warm will set as soon--
Then call it none of these.
Imagine something purer far,
More free from stain of clay
Than Friendship, Love, or Passion are,
Yet human, still as they:
And if thy lip, for love like this,
No mortal word can frame,
Go, ask of angels what it is,
And call it by that name!

13

APACHE WEDDING PRAYER Long Version

Now you will feel no storms,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no loneliness,
For each of you is companion to the other.
You are two persons,
But there is one life before you, and one home.
Turn together to look at the road you traveled,
To reach this- the hour of your happiness.
It stretches behind you into the past.
Look to the future that lies ahead.
A long and winding, adventure-filled road, whose every
turn means discovery,
New hopes, new joys, new laughter, and a few shared tears.
May happiness be your companion, May beauty surround
you both in the
journey ahead; and through all the years to come.
Go this day to your dwelling place and enter into your days
together.
May your days be good and long upon the earth.
Your adventure has just begun!

14

**LOVE IS FRIENDSHIP
CAUGHT FIRE**

Laura Hendricks

Love is friendship caught fire; it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times.

It settles for less than perfection, and makes allowances for human weaknesses. Love is content with the present, hopes for the future, and does not brood over the past.

It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories, and working toward common goals. If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack.

If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough.



15

ON YOUR WEDDING DAY

unknown

Today is a day you will always remember
The greatest in anyone's life
You'll start off the day just two people in love
And end it as Husband and Wife

It's a brand new beginning the start of a journey
With moments to cherish and treasure
And although there'll be times when you both disagree
These will surely be outweighed by pleasure

You'll have heard many words of advice in the past
When the secrets of marriage were spoken
But you know that the answers lie hidden inside
Where the bond of true love lies unbroken

So live happy forever as lovers and friends
It's the dawn of a new life for you
As you stand there together with love in your eyes
From the moment you whisper 'I do'

And with luck, all your hopes, and your dreams can be real
May success find its way to your heart
Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys
But today is the day it all starts!

16

IRISH BLESSING

May your mornings bring joy and your
evenings bring peace.

May your troubles grow few as your
blessings increase.

May the saddest day of your future
Be no worse than the happiest day of
your past.

May your hands be forever clasped in
friendship

And your hearts joined forever in love.

Your lives are very special,

God has touched you in many ways.

May his blessings rest upon you

And fill all your coming days.

17

**MY FIRST
LOVE STORY**

Rumi

The minute I heard my first love story

I started looking for you,

not knowing how blind that was.

Lovers don't finally meet somewhere.

They're in each other all along.



18



**EXTRACT FROM
STILL LIFE WITH
WOODPECKER**

Tom Robbins

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 honor 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.

My love for you has no strings attached.

I love you for free.

19

THE RECIPE FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE

Combine two caring hearts

Melt into one

Add a lot of love

Mix well with respect and trust

Add gentleness, laughter, faith, hope,
and joy

Pour in lots of understanding (don't
forget patience)

Sprinkle with kisses and a dash of
hugs

Bake for a lifetime

Result: One Happy Couple

20

**CAPTAIN CORELLI'S
MANDOLIN**

Louis de Bernieres

Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your root was 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, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.



21



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.



22

THE BEAUTY OF LOVE

anon

The question is asked: “Is there anything more beautiful in life than a young couple clasping hands and pure hearts in the path of marriage? Can there be anything more beautiful than young love?”

And the answer is given: “Yes, there is a more beautiful thing. It is the spectacle of an old man and an old woman finishing their journey together on that path. Their hands are gnarled but still clasped; their faces are seamed but still radiant; their hearts are physically bowed and tired but still strong with love and devotion.

Yes, there is a more beautiful thing than young love. Old love.”

23

THE AMBER SPYGLASS

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'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, we'll be joined so tight...



24

A VOW

Wendy Cope

I cannot promise never to be angry;

I cannot promise always to be kind.

You know what you're taking on, my darling
It's only at the start that love is blind.

And yet I'm still the one you want to be with
And you're the one for me – of that I'm sure.

You're my closest friend, my favorite person,
The lover and the home I've waited for.

I cannot promise that I will deserve you
From this day on. I hope to pass that test.

I love you, and I want to make you happy.
I promise I will do my very best.

25

A BLESSING FOR THE JOURNEY (BUDDHIST PRAYER)

Sensei Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Let us vow to bear witness to the wholeness of life, realizing the completeness of each and every thing. Embracing our differences, I shall know myself as you, and you as myself. May we serve each other for all our days, here, there, and everywhere. Let us vow to open ourselves to the abundance of life. Freely giving and receiving, I shall care for you, for the trees and stars, as treasures of my very own. May we be grateful for all our days, here, there, and everywhere. Let us vow to forgive all hurt, caused by ourselves and others, and to never condone hurtful ways. Being responsible for my actions, I shall free myself and you. Will you free me, too? May we be kind for all our days, here, there, and everywhere. Let us vow to remember that all that appears will disappear. In the midst of uncertainty, I shall sow love. Here! Now! I call to you: Let us together live The Great Peace that we are. May we give no fear for all our days, here, there, and everywhere.

26

JOHN 15:9-17

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.'



27



THE ENT AND THE ENT WIFE

J.R.R. Tolkien, *Lord of The Rings*

When Winter comes, and singing ends; when
darkness falls at last;

When broken is the barren bough, and light and
labour past;

I'll look for thee, and wait for thee, until we meet
again:

Together we will take the road beneath the bitter
rain!

Together we will take the road that leads into the
West,

And far away will find a land where both our hearts
may rest.

28

**WHAT I LEARNED
ABOUT LOVE, I LEARNED
FROM MY DOG**

Never pass up the opportunity to go on a joyride together. Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.

When you want treats, practice obedience.

Let others know when they have invaded your territory.

Take naps together and stretch before rising.

Run, romp, and play daily.

Be loyal.

If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.

When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by, and nuzzle them.

Thrive on attention and let people touch you.

Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.

No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout.

Run right back and make friends.

Delight in the simple joy of a long walk together.

Love each other unconditionally.

29

IF

Larry S Chengges

If you can always be as close
And as 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 had planned
If you can dare to always go
Your separate ways together
Then all the wonder of today
Will stay with you forever.



30



EXTRACT FROM THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

Margery Williams

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

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

“Does it hurt?” asked the Rabbit.

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

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

“It doesn’t happen all at once,” said the Skin Horse. “You become. It takes a long time. That’s why it doesn’t happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. But these things don’t matter at all, because once you are Real you can’t be ugly, except to people who don’t understand.”

31

LES MISERABLES

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 ... What a grand thing it is to be loved! What a far grander thing it is to love! The heart becomes heroic, by dint of passion. It is no longer composed of anything but what is pure; it no longer rests on anything that is not elevated and great. An unworthy thought can no more germinate in it, than a nettle on a glacier.



3 2

YOU ARE THE BUBBLES

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 favorite 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.





3 3



BLESSINGS FOR A MARRIAGE

James Billet 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 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.



3 4

**A BRIDGE ACROSS
FOREVER**

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.

35

**THESE I CAN
PROMISE**

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.



36



TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Judy Bielicki

It is often said that it is love that makes the world go round. However, without doubt, it is friendship which keeps our spinning existence on an even keel.

True friendship provides so many of the essentials for a happy life – it is the foundation on which to build an enduring relationship, it is the mortar which bonds us together in harmony, and it is the calm, warm protection we sometimes need when the world outside seems cold and chaotic.

True friendship holds a mirror to our foibles and failings, without destroying our sense of worthiness. True friendship nurtures our hopes, supports us in our disappointments, and encourages us to grow to our best potential.

Bride and Groom came together as friends. Today, they pledge to each other not only their love, but also the strength, warmth and, most importantly, the fun of true friendship.

37

UNKNOWN

Regina Hill

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

Upon this act of faith these two people will build a life. And as long as their determination stays with them, this life will always be their hope, their dreams, their truth, their being, their inspiration, and their source of strength.

Through their life together, they will hurt and laugh. Together they will feel all of life's up and downs. They will learn and grow through trial and error. The lessons will show them the meaning of true love And the difference between a love that lasts and one that just gives up.

These two people will face each failure together and discover the strength to go on. They will encourage each other's dreams and forgive each other's faults.

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

38

RELATIVITY

Albert Einstein

Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love. How on Earth can you explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as love?

Put your hand on a stove for a minute and it seems like an hour. Sit with that special person for an hour and it seems like a minute.

That's relativity.



39



ANCIENT HAWAIIAN MARRIAGE PRAYER

a n o n

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 a bird, the other half of a seashell. We did not know the 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. Remember?

I knew you existed long before you understood my desire to join my freedom to yours. Our paths collided long enough for our indecision to be swallowed up by the greater need of love. When you came to me, the sun surged towards the earth and moon escaped from darkness to bless the union of two spirits, so alike that the creator had designed them for life's endless circle.

Beloved partner, keeper of my heart's odd secrets, clothed in summer blossoms so the icy hand of winter never touches us. I thank your patience. Our joining is like a tree to earth, a cloud to sky and even more. We are the reason the world can laugh on its battlefields and rise from the ashes of its selfishness to hear me say, in this time, this place, this way – I loved you best of all.

40

UNTITLED

R.M. Drake

You will be the clouds
and I will be the sky.

You will be the ocean
and I will be the shore.

You will be the trees
and I will be the wind.

Whatever we are, you and I
will always collide.

41

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

Sam Keen

When we approach marriage and family life as a sacrament, we encounter the great mystery that is the heart of both love and faith. As a man and woman come to love each other unconditionally, after shattering habitual roles and abandoning masks, they become at once dearer and more mysterious to each other. Lovers, like true saints, have learned to cherish, trust, and embrace that mysterious other to whom they are joined but may never fully understand. Drinking from the fountain of the mysterious other – the Unknown God, the unfathomable soul, the lover who remains a familiar stranger – passion may be renewed daily.



42



I WILL BE HERE

Steven Curtis Chapman

Tomorrow morning if you wake up,
And the sun does not appear
I, I will be here.
If in the dark we lose sight of love,
Hold my hand, and have no fear
Cause I, I will be here.
I will be here when you feel like being quiet
When you need to speak your mind,
I will listen and
I will be here when the laughter turns to cryin'
Through the winning, losing and tryin'
We'll be together 'cause I will be here.
Tomorrow morning if you wake up,
And the future is unclear
I, I will be here.
As sure as seasons are made for change,
Our lifetime's are made for years
So, I, 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 and
I will be here to watch you grow in beauty
And tell you all the things you are to me
I will be here.
I will be true to the promise I have made
To you and to the One who gave you to me
I, I will be here.

43

EXTRACT FROM GIFT OF THE SEA

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

When you love someone; you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity – in freedom, in the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern. The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now.

Relationships must be like islands, one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits – islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides.

4 4

**EXTRACT FROM
DOCTOR ZHIVAGO**

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.



45



FROM BEGINNING TO END

Robert Fulghum

From that moment of yes until 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 on 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 wedding.

The symbolic vows 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.”

Catch hands now and face one another to make your vows. Look at one another—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 years. Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never be quite the same between you.