

**[i carry your heart with me(i carry it in]**

e.e. Cummings

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in  
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere  
i go you go,my dear;and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing,my darling)

i fear

no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want  
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows  
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

**A Blessing for Wedding**

~Jane Hirshfield~

Today when persimmons ripen  
Today when fox-kits come out of their den into snow  
Today when the spotted egg releases its wren song  
Today when the maple sets down its red leaves  
Today when windows keep their promise to open  
Today when fire keeps its promise to warm  
Today when someone you love has died  
    or someone you never met has died  
Today when someone you love has been born  
    or someone you will not meet has been born  
Today when rain leaps to the waiting of roots in their dryness  
Today when starlight bends to the roofs of the hungry and tired  
Today when someone sits long inside his last sorrow  
Today when someone steps into the heat of her first embrace  
Today, let this light bless you  
With these friends let it bless you  
With snow-scent and lavender bless you  
Let the vow of this day keep itself wildly and wholly  
Spoken and silent, surprise you inside your ears  
Sleeping and waking, unfold itself inside your eyes  
Let its fierceness and tenderness hold you  
Let its vastness be undisguised in all your days

*Jane Hirshfield, "A Blessing for Wedding" from Tricycle magazine.*

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## **For a New Beginning**

*~John O'Donohue~*

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,  
Where your thoughts never think to wander,  
This beginning has been quietly forming,  
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

For a long time it has watched your desire,  
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,  
Noticing how you willed yourself on,  
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety  
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,  
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,  
Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled,  
And out you stepped onto new ground,  
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,  
A path of plenitude opening before you.

Though your destination is not yet clear  
You can trust the promise of this opening;  
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning  
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;  
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;  
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,  
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

*from To Bless the Space Between Us*  
*John O'Donohue (1956 – 2008) was an Irish poet, author, priest, and Hegelian*  
*philosopher. He was a native Irish speaker, and as an author is best known for*  
*popularizing Celtic spirituality.*

## Odes

~Ricardo Reis (Fernando Pessoa)

Translated by Edouard Roditi~

1.

Of the gardens of Adonis, Lydia, I love  
Most of all those fugitive roses  
    That on the day they are born,  
    That very day, must also die.  
Eternal, for them, the light of day:  
They're born when the sun is already high  
    And die before Apollo's course

    Across the visible sky is run.  
We too, of our lives, must make one day:  
We never know, my Lydia, nor want  
    To know of nights before or after  
    The little while that we may last.

2.

To be great, be whole: nothing that's you  
    Should you exaggerate or exclude.  
In each thing, be all. Give all you are  
    In the least you ever do.  
The whole moon, because it rides so high,  
    Is reflected in each pool.

## **Invitation to Love**

~Paul Laurence Dunbar~

Come when the nights are bright with stars  
Or come when the moon is mellow;  
Come when the sun his golden bars  
Drops on the hay-field yellow.  
Come in the twilight soft and gray,  
Come in the night or come in the day,  
Come, O love, whene'er you may,  
And you are welcome, welcome.

You are sweet, O Love, dear Love,  
You are soft as the nesting dove.  
Come to my heart and bring it to rest  
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.

Come when my heart is full of grief  
Or when my heart is merry;  
Come with the falling of the leaf  
Or with the redd'ning cherry.  
Come when the year's first blossom blows,  
Come when the summer gleams and glows,  
Come with the winter's drifting snows,  
And you are welcome, welcome.

### **Sonnet 116: Let me not to the marriage of true minds**

~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-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring 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 prov'd,  
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

### **Sonnets from the Portuguese 43: How do I love thee? Let me count the ways**

~Elizabeth Barrett Browning~

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

## **To My Dear and Loving Husband**

~Anne Bradstreet~

If ever two were one, then surely we.  
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee.  
If ever wife was happy in a man,  
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.  
I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,  
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.  
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,  
Nor ought but love from thee give recompense.  
Thy love is such I can no way repay;  
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.  
Then while we live, in love let's so persever,  
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

## **The Passionate Shepherd to His Love**

~Christopher Marlowe~

Come live with me and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove,  
That Valleys, groves, hills, and fields,  
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the Rocks,  
Seeing the Shepherds feed their flocks,  
By shallow Rivers to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing Madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of Roses  
And a thousand fragrant posies,  
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle  
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool  
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;  
Fair lined slippers for the cold,  
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and Ivy buds,  
With Coral clasps and Amber studs:  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Come live with me, and be my love.

The Shepherds' Swains shall dance and sing  
For thy delight each May-morning:  
If these delights thy mind may move,  
Then live with me, and be my love.

## **A Birthday**

~Christina Rossetti~

My heart is like a singing bird  
    Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;  
My heart is like an apple-tree  
    Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;  
My heart is like a rainbow shell  
    That paddles in a halcyon sea;  
My heart is gladder than all these  
    Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;  
    Hang it with vair and purple dyes;  
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,  
    And peacocks with a hundred eyes;  
Work it in gold and silver grapes,  
    In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;  
Because the birthday of my life  
    Is come, my love is come to me.

## **Wedding Hymn**

~Sidney Lanier~

Thou God, whose high, eternal Love  
Is the only blue sky of our life,  
Clear all the Heaven that bends above  
The life-road of this man and wife.  
May these two lives be but one note  
In the world's strange-sounding harmony,  
Whose sacred music e'er shall float  
Through every discord up to Thee.  
As when from separate stars two beams  
Unite to form one tender ray:  
As when two sweet but shadowy dreams  
Explain each other in the day:  
So may these two dear hearts one light  
Emit, and each interpret each.  
Let an angel come and dwell tonight  
In this dear double-heart, and teach.

### **Sonnet 18: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?**

~William Shakespeare~

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
    So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

### **Marriage Morning**

~Alfred, Lord Tennyson~

Light, so low upon earth,  
    You send a flash to the sun.  
Here is the golden close of love,  
    All my wooing is done.  
Oh, all the woods and the meadows,  
    Woods, where we hid from the wet,  
Stiles where we stayed to be kind,  
    Meadows in which we met!  
Light, so low in the vale  
    You flash and lighten afar,  
For this is the golden morning of love,  
    And you are his morning star.  
Flash, I am coming, I come,  
    By meadow and stile and wood,  
Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,  
    Into my heart and my blood!  
Heart, are you great enough  
    For a love that never tires?  
O heart, are you great enough for love?  
    I have heard of thorns and briers.  
Over the thorns and briers,  
    Over the meadows and stiles,  
Over the world to the end of it  
    Flash of a million miles.



## **Colors passing through us**

~Marge Piercy~

Purple as tulips in May, mauve  
into lush velvet, purple  
as the stain blackberries leave  
on the lips, on the hands,  
the purple of ripe grapes  
sunlit and warm as flesh.

Every day I will give you a color,  
like a new flower in a bud vase  
on your desk. Every day  
I will paint you, as women  
color each other with henna  
on hands and on feet.

Red as henna, as cinnamon,  
as coals after the fire is banked,  
the cardinal in the feeder,  
the roses tumbling on the arbor  
their weight bending the wood  
the red of the syrup I make from petals.

Orange as the perfumed fruit  
hanging their globes on the glossy tree,  
orange as pumpkins in the field,  
orange as butterflyweed and the monarchs  
who come to eat it, orange as my  
cat running lithe through the high grass.

Yellow as a goat's wise and wicked eyes,  
yellow as a hill of daffodils,  
yellow as dandelions by the highway,  
yellow as butter and egg yolks,  
yellow as a school bus stopping you,  
yellow as a slicker in a downpour.

Here is my bouquet, here is a sing  
song of all the things you make  
me think of, here is oblique  
praise for the height and depth  
of you and the width too.  
Here is my box of new crayons at your feet.

Green as mint jelly, green  
as a frog on a lily pad twanging,  
the green of cos lettuce upright  
about to bolt into opulent towers,  
green as Grand Chartreuse in a clear  
glass, green as wine bottles.

Blue as cornflowers, delphiniums,  
bachelors' buttons. Blue as Roquefort,  
blue as Saga. Blue as still water.  
Blue as the eyes of a Siamese cat.  
Blue as shadows on new snow, as a spring  
azure sipping from a puddle on the blacktop.

Cobalt as the midnight sky  
when day has gone without a trace  
and we lie in each other's arms  
eyes shut and fingers open  
and all the colors of the world  
pass through our bodies like strings of fire.

*Marge Piercy, "Colors passing through us" from Colors Passing Through Us (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003). First appeared in The Southern California Anthology 16 (Fall 1999). Copyright © 1999, 2003 by Marge Piercy and Middlemarsh, Inc.*

**[love is more thicker than forget]**

~ee cummings~

love is more thicker than forget  
more thinner than recall  
more seldom than a wave is wet  
more frequent than to fail

it is most mad and moonly  
and less it shall unbecome  
than all the sea which only  
is deeper than the sea

love is less always than to win  
less never than alive  
less bigger than the least begin  
less littler than forgive

it is most sane and sunly  
and more it cannot die  
than all the sky which only  
is higher than the sky

*E.E. Cummings, "[love is more thicker than forget]" from Complete Poems 1904-1962, edited by George J. Firmage. Copyright 1926, 1954, 1991 by the Trustees for the E.E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1985 by George James Firmage.*

## **To You**

~By Kenneth Koch~

I love you as a sheriff searches for a walnut  
That will solve a murder case unsolved for years  
Because the murderer left it in the snow beside a window  
Through which he saw her head, connecting with  
Her shoulders by a neck, and laid a red  
Roof in her heart. For this we live a thousand years;  
For this we love, and we live because we love, we are not  
Inside a bottle, thank goodness! I love you as a  
Kid searches for a goat; I am crazier than shirttails  
In the wind, when you're near, a wind that blows from  
The big blue sea, so shiny so deep and so unlike us;  
I think I am bicycling across an Africa of green and white fields  
Always, to be near you, even in my heart  
When I'm awake, which swims, and also I believe that you  
Are trustworthy as the sidewalk which leads me to  
The place where I again think of you, a new  
Harmony of thoughts! I love you as the sunlight leads the prow  
Of a ship which sails  
From Hartford to Miami, and I love you  
Best at dawn, when even before I am awake the sun  
Receives me in the questions which you always pose.

*Kenneth Koch, "To You" from The Collected Poems of Kenneth Koch, published by  
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 2006 by Kenneth Koch.*

## **Your laughter**

*~Pablo Neruda~*

Your Laughter

Take bread away from me, if you wish,  
take air away, but  
do not take from me your laughter.

Do not take away the rose,  
the lance flower that you pluck,  
the water that suddenly  
bursts forth in joy,  
the sudden wave  
of silver born in you.

My struggle is harsh and I come back  
with eyes tired  
at times from having seen  
the unchanging earth,  
but when your laughter enters  
it rises to the sky seeking me  
and it opens for me all  
the doors of life.

My love, in the darkest  
hour your laughter  
opens, and if suddenly  
you see my blood staining  
the stones of the street,

laugh, because your laughter  
will be for my hands  
like a fresh sword.

Next to the sea in the autumn,  
your laughter must raise  
its foamy cascade,  
and in the spring, love,  
I want your laughter like  
the flower I was waiting for,  
the blue flower, the rose  
of my echoing country.

Laugh at the night,  
at the day, at the moon,  
laugh at the twisted  
streets of the island,  
laugh at this clumsy  
boy [girl] who loves you,  
but when I open  
my eyes and close them,  
when my steps go,  
when my steps return,  
deny me bread, air,  
light, spring,  
but never your laughter  
for I would die.

## **most this amazing day**

*~e.e. cummings~*

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and love and wings; and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any - lifted from the no  
of all nothing - human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

## **Marriage**

~Lawrence Raab~

Years later they find themselves talking  
about chances, moments when their lives  
might have swerved off  
for the smallest reason.

What if  
I hadn't phoned, he says, that morning?  
What if you'd been out,  
as you were when I tried three times  
the night before?

Then she tells him a secret.  
She'd been there all evening, and she knew  
he was the one calling, which was why  
she hadn't answered.

Because she felt—  
because she was certain—her life would change  
if she picked up the phone, said hello,  
said, I was just thinking  
of you.

I was afraid,  
she tells him. And in the morning  
I also knew it was you, but I just  
answered the phone  
the way anyone  
answers a phone when it starts to ring,  
not thinking you have a choice.

## **Most Like an Arch This Marriage**

~John Ciardi~

Most like an arch—an entrance which upholds  
and shores the stone-crush up the air like lace.  
Mass made idea, and idea held in place.  
A lock in time. Inside half-heaven unfolds.

Most like an arch—two weaknesses that lean  
into a strength. Two fallings become firm.  
Two joined abeyances become a term  
naming the fact that teaches fact to mean.

Not quite that? Not much less. World as it is,  
what's strong and separate falters. All I do  
at piling stone on stone apart from you  
is roofless around nothing. Till we kiss

I am no more than upright and unset.  
It is by falling in and in we make  
the all-bearing point, for one another's sake,  
in faultless failing, raised by our own weight.

## **Upon Time and Eternity**

~John Bunyan~

Eternity is like unto a Ring.  
Time, like to Measure, doth it self extend;  
Measure commences, is a finite thing.  
The Ring has no beginning, middle, end.

## **Superbly Situated**

~Robert Herson~

you politely ask me not to die and i promise not to  
right from the beginning—a relationship based on  
good sense and thoughtfulness in little things

i would like to be loved for such simple attainments  
as breathing regularly and not falling down too often  
or because my eyes are brown or my father left-handed

and to be on the safe side i wouldn't mind if somehow  
i became entangled in your perception of admirable objects  
so you might say to yourself: i have recently noticed

how superbly situated the empire state building is  
how it looms up suddenly behind cemeteries and rivers  
so far away you could touch it—therefore i love you

part of me fears that some moron is already plotting  
to tear down the empire state building and replace it  
with a block of staten island mother/daughter houses

just as part of me fears that if you love me for my cleanliness  
i will grow filthy if you admire my elegant clothes  
i'll start wearing shirts with sailboats on them

but i have decided to become a public beach an opera house  
a regularly scheduled flight—something that can't help being  
in the right place at the right time—come take your seat

we'll raise the curtain fill the house start the engines  
fly off into the sunrise, the spire of the empire state  
the last sight on the horizon as the earth begins to curve

*Robert Herson, "Superbly Situated" from How to Ride on the Woodlawn  
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## Lovers' Infiniteness

~John Donne~

If yet I have not all thy love,  
Dear, I shall never have it all;  
I cannot breathe one other sigh, to move,  
Nor can intreat one other tear to fall;  
And all my treasure, which should purchase thee—  
Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letters—I have spent.  
Yet no more can be due to me,  
Than at the bargain made was meant;  
If then thy gift of love were partial,  
That some to me, some should to others fall,  
Dear, I shall never have thee all.

Or if then thou gavest me all,  
All was but all, which thou hadst then;  
But if in thy heart, since, there be or shall  
New love created be, by other men,  
Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,  
In sighs, in oaths, and letters, outbid me,  
This new love may beget new fears,  
For this love was not vow'd by thee.  
And yet it was, thy gift being general;  
The ground, thy heart, is mine; whatever shall  
Grow there, dear, I should have it all.

Yet I would not have all yet,  
He that hath all can have no more;  
And since my love doth every day admit  
New growth, thou shouldst have new rewards in store;  
Thou canst not every day give me thy heart,  
If thou canst give it, then thou never gavest it;  
Love's riddles are, that though thy heart depart,  
It stays at home, and thou with losing savest it;  
But we will have a way more liberal,  
Than changing hearts, to join them; so we shall  
Be one, and one another's all.