

# This Marriage by 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 welcome  
as the moon in a clear blue sky.

I am out of words to describe  
how spirit mingles in this marriage.



**ZOLA**

# On Marriage From "The Prophet"



You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.  
Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.  
But 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 up 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.



# Always by Lang Leav



You were you,  
and I was I;  
we were two,  
before our time.

I was yours,  
before I knew;  
and you have always  
been mine too.



**ZOLA**

## Sonnet 116 by 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.



**ZOLA**

# Entering the Vow

## by Maureen Tolman Flannery



What is a vow,  
but an intention  
spoken out before the world  
so that the world, in hearing,  
might take part  
in aspirations  
of the willing heart?  
In our coming here today  
to join and bless  
the joy of your becoming wed,  
may we enter in  
the truth of the words you've said,  
"I do."



**ZOLA**

# An Uncommon Love by Terah Cox



May you have the love  
only two can know  
May you go where only  
two as one may go

May the sun rise and set  
in your bonded hearts  
and the moon never find you  
too long apart

May you cherish each other's  
dreams as your own  
and turn stumbling blocks  
into stepping stones

May you brave life's mountains  
and miles together  
May there be no storm  
your love cannot weather

May you always be lovers  
and allies and friends  
May your souls' conversations  
never end

May you capture on Earth  
what's in Heaven above  
May your hearts know the rapture  
of an uncommon love.



**ZOLA**

## Friendship by 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.



**ZOLA**

# To Love is Not to Possess

## by James Kavanaugh



To love is not to possess,  
To own or imprison,  
Nor to lose one's self in another.  
Love is to join and separate,  
To walk alone and together,  
To find a laughing freedom  
That lonely isolation does not permit.  
It is finally to be able  
To be who we really are  
No longer clinging in childish dependency  
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence,  
It is to be perfectly one's self  
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment  
To another—and to one's inner self.  
Love only endures when it moves like waves,  
Receding and returning gently or passionately,  
Or moving lovingly like the tide In the moon's own predictable harmony,  
Because finally, despite a child's scars  
Or an adult's deepest wounds,  
They are openly free to be  
Who they really are—and always secretly were,  
In the very core of their being  
Where true and lasting love can alone abide.





# **Blessings of the Hands**

## **by Rev. Daniel L. Harris**



These are the hands of your partner, young and strong and full of love, holding your hands 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 hold you and comfort you in grief and uncertainty. These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and joy. These are the hands that will hold your family as one. These are the hands that will give you strength. And 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.



# Union by Robert Fulghum



You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way. All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks, all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will and you will and we will," those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe," and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart. All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding.

The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed—well, I meant it all, every word."

Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another — acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years. Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this is my husband, this is my wife.



**ZOLA**

# How Do I Love Thee?

## by Elizabeth Barrett Browning



How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of being and ideal grace.  
I love thee to the level of every day's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.  
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 love thee better after death.

