

### **Wild Geese by Mary Oliver**

You do not have to be good.  
You do not have to walk on your knees  
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.  
You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves.  
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.  
Meanwhile the world goes on.  
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain  
are moving across the landscapes,  
over the prairies and the deep trees,  
the mountains and the rivers.  
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,  
are heading home again.  
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things.

### **the sun is still a part of me by Jennifer Willoughby**

I am so busy. I am practicing  
my new hobby of watching me  
become someone else. There is  
so much violence in reconstruction.  
Each minute is grisly, but I have  
to participate. I am building  
what I cannot break.

### **The Patience of Ordinary Things by Pat Schneider**

It is a kind of love, is it not?  
How the cup holds the tea,  
How the chair stands sturdy and foursquare,  
How the floor receives the bottoms of shoes  
Or toes. How soles of feet know  
Where they're supposed to be.  
I've been thinking about the patience  
Of ordinary things, how clothes  
Wait respectfully in closets  
And soap dries quietly in the dish,  
And towels drink the wet  
From the skin of the back.  
And the lovely repetition of stairs.  
And what is more generous than a window?

### **Peonies by Mary Oliver**

This morning the green fists of the peonies are getting ready  
to break my heart  
as the sun rises,  
as the sun strokes them with his old, buttery fingers and they open —  
pools of lace,  
white and pink —

and all day the black ants climb over them, boring their deep and mysterious holes  
into the curls,  
craving the sweet sap,  
taking it away to their dark, underground cities —  
and all day  
under the shifty wind,  
as in a dance to the great wedding,

the flowers bend their bright bodies,  
and tip their fragrance to the air,  
and rise,  
their red stems holding

all that dampness and recklessness  
gladly and lightly,  
and there it is again —  
beauty the brave, the exemplary,

blazing open.

Do you love this world?  
Do you cherish your humble and silky life?  
Do you adore the green grass, with its terror beneath?

Do you also hurry, half-dressed and barefoot, into the garden,  
and softly,  
and exclaiming of their dearness,  
fill your arms with the white and pink flowers,

with their honeyed heaviness, their lush trembling,  
their eagerness  
to be wild and perfect for a moment, before they are  
nothing, forever?

### **THE GARDEN by ryebreadgf**

I DON'T THINK LOVE WILL FIX EVERYTHING,  
BUT SOMETIMES I WISH THERE WAS SOMEONE  
TO HOLD MY HAND WHILE I SIT IN MY SOUR  
LITTLE POOL OF MISERY, AND AFTER A  
WHILE SAY COME ON, YOU KNOW I WILL SIT  
WITH YOU FOREVER IF YOU WANT, BUT I CAN  
TELL YOU ABOUT A GARDEN WHERE SWEET  
THINGS GROW, HANGING LOW BECAUSE THE  
HAPPINESS IS SO HEAVY, REMEMBER SWEET  
THINGS, AND I WOULD SAY REMIND ME, AND  
HE WOULD, AGAIN, AND AGAIN, AND AGAIN,  
DESCRIBE ALL THE LOVELINESS STILL LEFT IN  
THE WORLD, UNTIL I FORGOT ABOUT WHERE  
I WAS SITTING, UNTIL THE GARDEN GREW  
AROUND US, SLOWLY, SO WHILE I WAS STILL  
SITTING IN MY SOUR LITTLE POOL OF MISERY,  
AT LEAST THE VIEW WAS LOVELY, AND AT  
LEAST SOMEONE WAS HOLDING MY HAND.

**[What is love if not the sharing] by heavensghost**

I show you my favourite books  
because I love you  
and I play for you my  
favourite music because I love you.  
What is love if not the sharing  
of something beautiful?  
Something that will make your life brighter?  
Love is your happiness being my happiness.  
I came into this world  
with only half a heart  
and I'll spend my whole life  
looking for my missing part.  
Is it you? Is it you? Is it you?

**Loving You by Nazim Hikmet (trans. by Randy Blasing and Mutlu Konuk)**

Loving you is like eating bread dipped in salt,  
like waking feverish at night  
and putting my mouth to the water faucet,  
like opening a heavy unlabeled parcel  
eagerly, happily, cautiously.  
Loving you is like flying over the sea  
for the first time, like feeling dusk settle  
softly over Istanbul.  
Loving you is like saying "I'm alive."

**Breakage by Mary Oliver**

I go down to the edge of the sea.  
How everything shines in the morning light!  
The cusp of the whelk,  
the broken cupboard of the clam,  
the opened, blue mussels,  
moon snails, pale pink and barnacle scarred—  
and nothing at all whole or shut, but tattered, split,  
dropped by the gulls onto the gray rocks and all the moisture gone.  
It's like a schoolhouse  
of little words,  
thousands of words.  
First you figure out what each one means by itself,  
the jingle, the periwinkle, the scallop  
    full of moonlight.

Then you begin, slowly, to read the whole story.