

# How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 1806 - 1861

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.

# Love in a Life

Robert Browning, 1812 - 1889

Room after room,  
I hunt the house through  
We inhabit together.  
Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her,  
Next time, herself!—not the trouble behind her  
Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!  
As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew,—  
Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

Yet the day wears,  
And door succeeds door;  
I try the fresh fortune—  
Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.  
Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter.  
Spend my whole day in the quest,—who cares?  
But 'tis twilight, you see,—with such suites to explore,  
Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!