

Poems and Readings for Italian Weddings

Old Wedding Blessing

May God be with you and bless you.
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward.

An Irish Blessing for Weddings

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon the fields.
May the light of friendship guide your paths together.
May the laughter of children grace the halls of your home.
May the joy of living for one another trip a smile from your lips,
A twinkle from your eye.
And when eternity beckons,
at the end of a life heaped high with love,
May the good Lord embrace you
with the arms that have nurtured you
the whole length of your joy-filled days.
May the gracious God hold you both
in the palm of His hands.
And, today, may the Spirit of Love
find a dwelling place in your hearts. Amen.

Blessing of the Apache

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other.
Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there will be no loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you.
May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead and through all the years,
May happiness be your companion and your days together be good and long upon the earth.

Navajo Wedding Blessing

Now you have lit a fire and that fire should not go out.
The two of you now have a fire that represents love,
understanding and a philosophy of life.
It will give you heat, food, warmth and happiness.
The new fire represents a new beginning—a new life and a new family.
The fire should keep burning; you should stay together.
You have lit the fire for life, until old age separates you.

Cherokee Prayer

“God in heaven above please protect the ones we love.
We honour all you created as we pledge our hearts and lives together.
We honour mother earth—and ask for our marriage to be abundant and grow stronger through
the seasons;
We honour fire—and ask that our union be warm and glowing with love in our hearts;
We honour wind—and ask we sail though life safe and calm as in our father’s arms;
We honour water—to clean and soothe our relationship—that it may never thirst for love;
With all the forces of the universe you created,
we pray for harmony and true happiness as we forever grow young together. Amen.”

Saigyō Japanese Poet

You left impressions unforgettable
and when I view our moon
your image surfaces
and that love seems forever.

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.

Sonnet 18 – 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 dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of the 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.

Sonnet 116 – 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 wandering 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 proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

A red, red rose – Robert Burns

O My Luv'e's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
O My Luv'e's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
O I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.
And fare thee well, my only luve.
And fare thee well awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Stanzas for Music – Lord Byron

There be none of Beauty's daughters
with a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
the waves lie still and gleaming,
and the lulled winds seem dreaming.
And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep.
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Love's Philosophy – Percy Bysshe Shelley

The Fountains mingle with the River
And the Rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine? -
See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother,
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What is all this sweet work worth
If thou kiss not me?

I Love Thee – Thomas Hood

I love thee—I love thee!
'Tis all that I can say;—
It is my vision in the night,
My dreaming in the day;
The very echo of my heart,
The blessing when I pray:
I love thee—I love thee!
Is all that I can say.
I love thee—I love thee!
Is ever on my tongue;
In all my proudest poesy
That chorus still is sung;
It is the verdict of my eyes,
Amidst the gay and young:
I love thee- I love thee!
A thousand maids among.
I love thee—I love thee!
Thy bright and hazel glance,
The mellow lute upon those lips,
Whose tender tones entrance;
But most, dear heart of hearts, they proofs
That still these words enhance.
I love thee—I love thee!
Whatever be thy chance.

Sonnet 43 – 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 grief, 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.

Sonnet 14 – Elizabeth Barrett Browning

If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought

That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day”–
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee–and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity’s wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and love thy love thereby!
But love me for love’s sake, that ever more
Though mayst love on, through love’s eternity.

Sound of Silence – Raymond J. Baughan

Here in the space between us and the world
lies human meaning.
Into the vast uncertainty we call.
The echoes make our music,
sharp equations which can hold the stars,
and marvellous mythologies we trust.
This may be all we need
to lift our love against indifference and pain.
Here in the space between us and each other
lies all the future
of the fragment of the universe
which is our own.

Keys of Love – Robert M. Millay

The key to love is understanding... the ability to comprehend not only the spoken word, but those unspoken gestures, the little things that say so much by themselves.
The key to love is forgiveness... to accept each other’s faults and pardon mistakes, without forgetting-but with remembering what you learn from them...
The key to love is trust... though dark doubts lay in hollowed thoughts, it must shine brightly on with reassuring radiance that suppresses fear with faith.
The key to love is sharing... facing your good fortunes as well as the bad, together; both conquering problems-forever searching for ways to intensify your happiness.
The key to love is giving... without thought of return, but with the hope of just a simple smile and by giving-in, but never up.
The key to love is respect... realizing that you are two separate people with different ideas; that you don’t belong to each other, but that you belong with each other and share a mutual bond.
The key to love is inside us all... it takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients that will take you to its threshold; it is a continual learning process that demands a lot of work...but the rewards are more than worth the effort...

Marriage – Kahlil Gibran

Then Almitra spoke again and said, “And what of Marriage, master?” And he answered saying: You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, 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 bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill 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.

i carry your heart with me – 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)

Art of Marriage – Wilferd A. Peterson

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 a 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 all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in 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 expecting the husband to wear a halo or the wife to have wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humour.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.
It is finding room for the things of the spirit.
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.

Touched by An Angel – Maya Angelou

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.
Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

Two – Erri De Luca

When we'll be two, we'll be like sleep and
watch,
we'll sink in the same flesh, like the milk tooth
and its successor,
we'll be two like the waters, the fresh and the
salt one,
like the skies, nocturnal and diurnal,
two like the feet, the eyes, the kidneys,
like the heart beat times and the breath blows.

When we'll be two, we'll have no halves,
we'll be a two that nothing can divide.

When we'll be two, nobody will be one,
one will be the equal of no one,
the unity will consist of the two.

When we'll be two
we'll change the name even the UNIVERSE,
it will become TWOVERSE.

Due – Erri De Luca

*Quando saremo due saremo veglia e sonno,
affonderemo nella stessa polpa
come il dente di latte e il suo secondo,
saremo due come sono le acque, le dolci e le
salate,
come i cieli, del giorno e della notte,
due come sono i piedi, gli occhi, i reni,
come i tempi del battito
i colpi del respiro.*

*Quando saremo due non avremo metà
saremo un due che non si può dividere con
niente.*

*Quando saremo due, nessuno sarà uno,
uno sarà l'uguale di nessuno
e l'unità consisterà nel due.*

*Quando saremo due
cambierà nome pure l'universo
diventerà diverso.*