

# Readings and Additional Promises

(Ceremonies only)

@ - Suitable for marriage

& - Suitable for civil partnership

## A Walled Garden @

### Unknown

'Your marriage', he said, 'should have within it, a secret and protected place, open to you alone.

Imagine it to be a walled garden, entered by a door to which you only hold the key.

Within this garden you will cease to be a mother, father, employee, homemaker or any other of the roles which you fulfil in daily life.

Here you are yourselves, two people who love each other.

Here you can concentrate on one another's needs'. So take my hand and let us go back to our garden. The time we spend together is not wasted but invested.

Invested in our future and the nurture of our love.

## My True Love @ &

### Sir Philip Sidney

My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

By just exchange one for another given.

I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss:

There never was a better bargain driven.

My true love hath my heart and I have his.

His heart in me, keeps him and me in one,

My heart in him, his thoughts and senses guides:

He loves my heart, for once it was his own:

I cherish his, because in me it bides.

My true love hath my heart and I have his.

## I promise @ &

### Dorothy R Colgan

I promise to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.

I promise to respect you as your own person and to realise that your interests, desires and needs are no less important than my own.

I promise to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.

I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.

I promise to grow along with you, to be willing to face changes in order to keep our relationship alive and exciting.

I promise to love you in good times and in bad with all I have to give and all I feel inside in the only way I know how.

Completely and forever.

## 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 fixèd 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 within 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 Marriage @

##### **Mark Twain**

A marriage...  
Makes of two fractional lives a whole;  
it gives to two purposeless lives a work, and doubles the  
strength of each to perform it;  
it gives to two questioning natures a reason for living, and  
something to live for;  
it will give a new gladness to the sunshine, a new fragrance  
to the flowers, a new beauty to the earth, and a new  
mystery to life.

#### Yes I'll marry you @

##### **Pam Ayres**

Yes, I'll marry you, my dear,  
And here's the reason why;  
So I can push you out of bed when the baby starts to cry,  
And if we hear a knocking  
And it's creepy and it's late,  
I hand you the torch you see,  
And you investigate.  
Yes, I'll marry you, my dear,  
You may not apprehend it,  
But when the tumble-drier goes, It's you that has to mend it,  
You have to face the neighbour should our Labrador attack  
him,  
And if a drunkard fondles me It's you that has to whack  
him.  
Yes, I'll marry you, my dear  
You're virile and you're lean,  
My house is like a pigsty, you can help to keep it clean.  
That sexy little dinner, which you served by candlelight,  
As I do chipolatas,  
You can cook it every night!  
It's you who has to work the drill  
And put up curtain track,  
And when I've got PMT it's you who gets the flak, I do see  
great advantages,  
But none of them for you,  
And so before you see the light, I do, I do, I do!

#### Marriage is the greatest happiness of all @

##### **Michele Gallagher**

In a marriage, two people become as one, yet they are  
individuals, each with their own ideas and goals.  
In a marriage, two people share their thoughts, they give  
advice, sharing their feelings, being open and loving.  
They must trust each other and hold onto faith, while going  
through ups and downs.

They have their smiles, and they have their tears.  
When one is low, it is up to the other to support them, to  
get them back on the right track.  
Communication is the key.  
Two people united learn so much.  
They learn to depend yet be independent, sometimes  
letting each other have time to themselves.  
They care for each other and protect; they make a family  
and become a lifeline.  
They begin their dreams, their future, loving and growing  
together.  
With their commitment and true love, they find happiness.

### Reading @ &

#### Unknown

You share today the joy of a deep commitment  
And a sacred trust, and you have given each other  
The most precious gift of love  
Treasure it, nurture it and encourage it  
With all the honesty you used in creating it  
You are sharing something rare and beautiful  
Always speak the truth and listen attentively  
So that you may understand each other's thoughts  
and intentions  
Inspire each other by sharing your accomplishments  
Say I love you often to retain the warmth  
between you  
Laugh a lot too, even when you are angry  
Remember you are each other's best friend  
Stand together and for each other always  
May each day be a blessing  
And the fulfilment of your dreams.

### Look to this day @ &

#### Unknown

Look to this day for it is life the very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the realities and truths of  
existence; the joy of growth, the splendour of action, the  
glory of power.  
For yesterday is but a memory.  
And tomorrow is only a vision.  
But today well lived makes every yesterday a memory of  
happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.

### O tell me the truth about love @ &

#### W H Auden

Some say that love's a little boy, And some say it's a bird,  
Some say it makes the world go round,  
And some say that's absurd, And when I asked the man  
next door, Who looked as if he knew,  
His wife got very cross indeed, And said it wouldn't do.  
Does it look like a pair of pyjamas, Or the ham in a  
temperance hotel? Does its odour remind one of llamas, Or  
has it a comforting smell? Is it prickly to touch as a hedge  
is, Or soft as eiderdown fluff? Is it sharp or quite smooth at  
the edges? O tell me the truth about love.  
I looked into the summer-house; It wasn't ever there: I tried  
the Thames at Maidenhead, And Brighton's bracing air. I  
don't know what the blackbird sang, Or what the tulip said;

But it wasn't in the chicken-run, Or underneath the bed.  
Does it howl like a hungry Alsatian, Or boom like a military  
band? Could one give a first-rate imitation, On a saw or a  
Steinway Grand? Is its singing at parties a riot? Does it only  
like Classical stuff? Will it stop when one wants to be quiet?  
O tell me the truth about love.

When it comes, will it come without warning Just as I'm  
picking a rose? Will it knock on my door in the morning, Or  
tread in the bus on my toes? Will it come like a change in  
the weather? Will its greeting be courteous or rough? Will it  
alter my life altogether? O tell me the truth about love.

### Crazy with Love @ &

#### Charlotte Gray

I know every bump, every bulge, every wrinkle.  
Every sag, every bag, every scar, every flaw, every whisker.  
I know that you fleck the bathroom tiles with  
shaving foam,  
That you flood the floor with bath water,  
That you never take your plate out to the sink,  
That you strew your clothes,  
That you forget to change your socks,  
That you tell me the ending of detective novels,  
That you track mud through the house,  
That you never remember to pay the paper bill.  
I know your eccentricities, your prejudices, your moods.  
And somehow, for some reason I can never fully  
Understand, I am crazy with love for you.

### Marriage @

#### Unknown

A marriage is a promise that two hearts gladly make.  
A promise to be tender, to help, to give and take.  
A marriage is a promise to be kind and understanding  
To be thoughtful and considerate, fair and undemanding.  
A marriage is a promise to share one life together...  
A love-filled promise meant to be kept lovingly for ever.

### Always love each other @

#### Unknown

If you can always be as close  
And happy as today  
Yet be secure enough to grow  
And change along the way  
If you can keep for you alone  
your love as husband and wife  
Yet find the time to share your joy  
With others in your life  
If you can be as one and walk  
Through marriage hand in hand  
Yet still support the goals and dreams  
That each of you had planned  
If you can dare to always go  
Your separate ways together  
Then all the wonder of today  
Will stay with you forever

### Our Love @ &

#### Bruce B Wilmer

Our love is something we have built from passions, hopes

and dreams.

It's safe from any passing moods, secure from all extremes.  
It's something real and special, something solid, something pure.

It's something we can always count on, ringing sound and sure.

It's something grounded in the heart.

Emitting confidence.

It lives in our emotions;

It is something we can sense.

Our love remains a binding force, resistant to all strife.

Amidst the outer pressures, it's our anchor throughout life.

### Corelli's Mandolin @ &

#### Louis De Bernieres

(Dr Iannis counsels his daughter)

Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides.

And when it subsides you have to make a decision.

You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part.

Because that is what love is.

Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of promises of eternal passion.

That is just being "in love", which any fool can do.

Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and that is both an art and a fortunate accident.

Your mother and I had it, we had roots that grew towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossom had fallen from our branches we found that we were one tree and not two.

### Partners @

#### Patience Strong

The first dance of all when they danced heart to heart

They knew, they both knew, it was only the start

Of something more wonderful than a mere dance

More than a thrill of a passing romance.

They knew without saying that Love, the real thing had touched them that night with its shimmering wing.

No word had been spoken and yet they both knew

That suddenly all sorts of dreams had come true.

It's many a year since the night that they met

But that first dance they will never forget

Then a boy and a girl and now husband and wife

Still happy, still dancing and partners for life.

### My advice @

#### Unknown

Mum and Dad get married today

I'd like to help them on their way

So here's some special advice from me

To help them with our family

Keep our house filled with laughter

Let's have fun forever after

Keep the drawer filled up with sweets

And give us children lots of treats

Make sure you spend time together

To keep your happiness forever

Make sure you spend lots on us  
And then us kids won't make a fuss  
But the most important thing for you  
Is to show your love in all you do  
A caring word, a kiss, a touch  
And those family cuddles that mean so much

### Friendship @ &

#### Unknown

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.

This couple came together as friends, they pledge to each  
other not only their love but also the strength, warmth and,  
most importantly, the fun of true friendship.

### I will be here @ &

#### Curtis Chapman

If in the morning when you wake,  
If the sun does not appear,  
I will be here.

If in the dark we lose sight of love,  
Hold my hand and have no fear,  
I will be here,

I will be here,

When you feel like being quiet,  
When you need to speak your mind I will listen,  
Through the winning, losing and trying we'll be  
together,

And I will be here.

If in the morning when you wake,  
The future is unclear,

I will be here.

As sure as seasons were made for change,  
Our lifetimes were made for years,

I will be here.

I will be here,

And you can cry on my shoulder,  
When the mirror tells us we're older.

I will hold you, to watch you grow in beauty,  
And tell you all the things you are to me.

We'll be together, and I will be here.

I will be true to the promises I've made,

To you

And I will be here.

### Where there is love @ &

**Helen Steiner Rice**

Where there is love the heart is light,  
Where there is love the day is bright,  
Where there is love there is a song,  
To help when things are going wrong  
Where there is love there is a smile  
To make all things seem more worthwhile,  
Where there is love there's quiet peace,  
A tranquil place where turmoil's cease-  
Love changes darkness into light  
And makes the heart take "wingless flight".

**Extract from Les Miserables @ &****Victor Hugo**

You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving.

The great acts of love are done by those who are habitually performing small acts of kindness.

We pardon to the extent that we love.

Love is knowing that even when you are alone, you will never be lonely again.

And great happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved.

Loved for ourselves.

And even loved in spite of ourselves.

## Additional Promises

If you wish, you can personalise even further by including Additional Promises during your ceremony. Here are a few examples:

**Additional Promise - A @ &**

I promise to give you my love and friendship.

To support and comfort you through good times and through troubled times. I promise to care for you with love and with patience to respect and cherish you and to be faithful always. These promises I make to you sincerely and for the rest of my life.

**Additional Promise - B @ &**

I promise to care for you, to trust and confide in you and to be faithful to you always. I give you my love and friendship, my comfort and support and promise to respect and cherish you through all that life may bring. These promises I make to you sincerely for the rest of my life.

**Additional Promise - C @ &**

I promise to give you my love and friendship to support and comfort you through all that life may bring. I promise to care for you with love and with patience to respect and cherish you. I promise never to take you for granted and to be faithful to you always. These promises I make to you for the rest of my life.

**Additional Promise - D @ &**

I promise to care for you to remain true to you and above all to love and respect you always.

**Additional Promise - E @ &**

From this day on I look forward to sharing my life with you.

I will always be there for you.  
And will support you with love and friendship.  
These promises I make to you for the rest of our life  
together.

**Additional Promise – F - Personal choice @ &**

Personal choice of the couple. Any personal choices will  
need to be agreed with the Registrar to ensure they are in  
keeping with the solemnity of the ceremony.

**k** suitable for Civil Wedding services

**t** suitable for Civil Partnership services