

Love and Inspiration



Artwork created by Jessica McCall



LOVE

Love is gentle,
Love is kind.
Love is giving-
all the time.

Love is patient,
Love is caring.
Love is truth
and love is sharing.

Love is hope.
Love is pain.
Love urges you
to try again.

Love is gracious,
Love is glad.
Love keeps on going
though you are sad.

Love is honest,
Love is fair.
Love is a prayer
by those who care.

Love is diamonds,
Love is jade.
Love is silver
that will not fade.

Love can't be bought.
Love can't be sold.
Love comes from God
"a gift from God."

Kim Matthews

IN MY EYES

When I look at your face, I don't see wrinkles. I see the remainders of the laughter we've shared.

When you forget things, I don't see a fading mind. I see a mind that's filled with priceless stories and memories.

When I see the cane you walk with, I don't see an invalid. I see someone I can finally keep up with.

When I look at your hands, I don't see shaking. I see the help and guidance they've given me.

And when I look into your eyes through the glasses you wear, I see what I always have -- unconditional love.

Karol Kubasek

TWO LOVERS IN LOVE

Do you love me?
Do you love me, or do you not?
You told me once before; I forgot.
I do believe God above
Created you for me to love.
I have a heart so tender and true,
But know it's gone from me to you,
And when we die we'll go in pairs.
I'll meet you at those heavenly stairs,
And if you're not there on Judgment Day,
I'll know you went the other way.
And just to prove my love is true,
I'll go to hell to be with you.

Angela Hamilton

A WOMAN WHO MADE ME THINK

I once worked in a nursing home where I met a positively wonderful woman named Elsie Barnhart. Elsie had cancer in her throat, and it spread throughout her body. Now, you would think that Elsie would be mean and nasty, but she always had a smile on her face and showed concern for everybody but herself. She never complained as long as I knew her.

Once, I was having a really bad day. I went into her room, and Elsie knew there was something wrong. Elsie said, "What's wrong dear? Are you having a bad day?" as pleasant as usual. I couldn't take it anymore! I said, "How can you be so pleasant all the time? I've never seen you sad or anything."

Elsie then said to me, "Honey, I don't have very much longer to live, so I try to enjoy what little time I have left."

That comment really touched me. Here is this woman who is bed-bound, and you think has nothing good going on, and she taught me something a lot of people never figure out. It doesn't matter if you're healthy or not; be grateful for what you do have.

Misty Shook

I IDOLIZE

*I idolize the fallen soldiers, whose blood is on our flag,
For they gave the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we all have.
I idolize the rippling sound of a clear mountain stream.
I idolize the individuality of everyone's American dream.
I idolize any human being, who runs head on into a fire,
Who doesn't even know the person, fueled only by desire.
I idolize the vibrant colors of the sun's nightly descent.
I idolize the authority of our president.
I idolize a person, who knows they may get shot at any time,
They risk their life everyday to rid my neighborhood of crime.
I idolize the grace of the soaring eagle.
I idolize the cuteness of a baby beagle.
I idolize a person, who is willing to be a volunteer,
They don't get any money, but they give a lot of tears.
I idolize the patience of a mother.
I idolize the unpredictability of the weather.
I idolize the people I have asked to give me advice;
Although I may not always have used it, the gestures sure were
nice.
I idolize the evolution of watching your own baby grow.
I idolize the distinct, blanketing change of winter's first snow.
I idolize the courage and fortitude of the terminally ill,
Who are forced to trust their shortened lives to a doctor or a pill.
I idolize the uncertain infinity of time.
I idolize the love of the woman who chose to be mine.
I idolize my friends and my family,
For they all have had a part in influencing me.
I idolize the man, who gave his only son so he can continually
forgive.
I idolize that man because I cannot see or touch him, but I
know he lives.
I idolize the spirited freedom of animals in the wild.
I idolize the innocence I can see in the eyes of a child.*

Michael Ballentine

MY TEACHERS

I have always been told that there are few people in your life that you can really depend on or look up to.

I have had the opportunity to meet and come to know two ladies that I truly care about. These two ladies are my teachers, Karen and Mary Jane.

Both ladies are wonderful at their professions. While one works hard at keeping up with the paper work, the other is busy coming up with new ideas to help all the students pass their GED.

These two ladies have completely different personalities. One is very good at being neat, while the other one is not so neat – but they always manage to get the job done for all their students.

I wrote this essay to inspire and encourage my two teachers for all that they do and for all their hard work. I am truly thankful for all they do for me and others. They are truly a blessing.

Although there are not many people in this world that I can depend on and look up to, I am so glad that I can personally say that I can depend on my two teachers, Karen and Mary Jane. One of my prayers as I grow in my life is to be a little more like them – someone who is dependable and cares about other people and their needs.

Lisa Wright

A WOMAN WITH A VOICE FOR CHILDREN

I want to tell you about a remarkable woman for whom I have the utmost respect. Her name is Cathy Crawford. If you're from Fairfield County, Ohio, and you have children, chances are you've met Cathy, or at least have heard of her name.

I first met Cathy at a Fairfield Association for the Education of Young Children meeting. Later, at an Even Start Task Force meeting where I was the parent representative, I saw Cathy again. After our meeting, Cathy wanted to talk to me to see how I liked being a student in the Even Start Program. While we were talking, someone whom I thought was more important than I was, wanted to talk with Cathy. She politely asked the woman to wait since she was having a conversation with me. That made me feel like I was the most important person in the world. I'm a student in one of Cathy's programs, and she told a colleague to wait! That was when I realized that she not only cares about our children, but also about adults. Cathy has a genuine interest in anything you say, no matter how silly it may seem.

The more early education activities that I go to, the more I see Cathy. At every early childhood program that I have attended, Cathy is there. She has been working with children since 1970. She has been a teacher, a substitute teacher, director/teacher at the YMCA, a kindergarten teacher for seven years, and since then, a coordinator for Lancaster pre-schools and Title I.

Cathy is a member of numerous organizations representing children. She is a member of the Fairfield Association for the Education of Young Children and the Children's Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Fairfield Family, Adult, and Children First Council. Cathy is also on the Fairfield Health Advisory Council, the Safe Kids Coalition, the Family Festival Committee, and the Even Start Task Force. Cathy teaches a class every winter quarter at

Ohio University-Lancaster on administration of early childhood programs. She is also on the Ohio University-Lancaster Advisory Board and The Ohio State University Extension Advisory Board for Families.

Cathy is truly a strong voice for children in our community. Cathy is committed to making Fairfield County a better place for children. I really think that it is time that Cathy Crawford gets the respect and recognition that she has worked hard for, but also deserves.

Misty Shook

RACISM

Although many might think that Dr. Martin Luther King's dream has come true, I have to disagree with this. In our nation, there is still a lot of racism, hatred, and discrimination. Also, there is much stereotyping in the world. I also feel some people have not accepted equal rights.

In my heart I don't think this nation has lived up to its creed. Racism and hatred is still big in a lot of states. African-Americans have still been beaten, hung from trees, and dragged by cars. Many other races have been rejected and ridiculed in a lot of different ways.

Then there's still the subject of stereotyping. Stereotyping is just as awful as racism. People should not stereotype others. The way a person talks, dresses, wears his hair, or the color of his skin should not define that person. I have learned over the years that if people stop this behavior, they might learn something from other races.

Finally, I don't think that a lot of people feel equal whether they're white, black, yellow, blue, or green. This goes for men, women, and children alike. Some people are being mistreated at home, in the work place, in school, in sports, or just walking down the street in their own town.

So in closing, I think Dr. King's dream has not come true. A man had a dream that one day everyone would be equal and love one another as a nation. A man died for that dream. With all the racism, hatred, and unfairness in the world, I think that some are still waiting for it to come true. It almost makes me wonder if a good life was wasted.

Tonya Dukes

MY TESTIMONY IN RHYME

There are many loves that come and go
But there is one for sure, I know.

I love the Lord with all my heart
And from Him I will never part.

He found me when I was broken and bad
And this made Him very sad.

I searched for fifteen years for something to ease my fears
And then one day my fears turned to tears.

I had found something (not in drink, drugs, or smoke)
But in something solid and full of hope.

My Lord had found me. My tears He did dry
And promised He'd always be nearby.

He's just a prayer away and that's why I love Him.
He saved me from my sin,
Now my future is bright and not so grim.

Tammie Boling

HE WAS HER ANGEL

She saw him standing across the street with the light of the sunset just barely kissing the outline of his body. His dark hair glistened in the light. It looked like droplets of dew on a web. He looked at total ease with dark and warm eyes. She wondered if maybe, just maybe, he could be an angel or a guiding spirit.

She stood just watching him for a few seconds. It seemed like forever. It was almost like they were frozen in time. He smiled at her, and she grinned back. His face beamed when he smiled. Surely he had to be some higher being. She felt weak just looking at him.

Then suddenly he started to cross the street towards her. She just about passed out. She thought, "Oh my lord, is my time up? What do I say to him? Maybe he's not coming for me."

Out of nowhere came a white van. She tried to yell, "Watch out," but it was too late. Her higher being was hit and thrown 3 feet. She couldn't believe what she was witnessing. How could this be happening to an angel or higher being?

She ran to him. He lay there twisted and bloody. She thought higher beings did not bleed. She knelt down beside him with tears running down her face. He reached up with his right hand and said, "I knew you were an angel. That's why I crossed the street to talk with you."

She couldn't believe what she was hearing. "An angel, me? But you're supposed to be my angel."

She looked down at him with tearful stinging eyes. Then he asked, "Are you here to take me where I need to be?"

She sat there for a moment and gently shook her head and said, "Yes, I'm here to take you home." While silently choking on the words as she spoke them. She sweetly smiled at him as he told her he was glad she was there. Then she watched him draw his last breath. She still couldn't believe what she was watching. Was she in a movie or a book? She sat crying and feeling at ease. He did turn out to be her angel. He helped her gain her faith again. The person she saw that day reminded her that there are angels in everyone.

Gabrielle Doherty