

February's Moonstruck

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At the beginning of love

Before everything, there were two forces – Him and Her. In their solitude, in a sea of darkness and emptiness, love was born, in an explosion of lights, and then emerged, from this almighty entity, in everything that we mortals know today: the universe, galaxies, planets and our world, in which the two lovers chose to stay. Sitting one day on the edge of the world, they understood that only their love, in its endlessness, can be the beginning of beauty – taking the human form we have today, the two remained at the edge of that corner of the world and created waters, mountains, forests and the sky, shaping the world according to their will. As they walked through this kingdom of their own, they realized that their love was hungry for more, but it could not grow without them sharing it with someone. From the waters of the seas and the clay of the soils, She began to build all kinds of beings, from strange beasts to gorgeous animals, from fish to populate their rivers and oceans to birds to complete the serenity of their sights. And in the silence of one night, in each other's arms, they built the first people, according to their appearance.

Although perfectly shaped and clothed in sails torn from constellations, these people lacked feelings – and without a soul of their own, without thoughts running through their minds, their eyes were emptied. It was then that the two realized that man must be different from all others created until then. If he cannot love, if he is unable to feel any emotions, his eternity is meaningless. They kissed, one by one, the foreheads of the first people, endowing them with heart, but also with intelligence, to provide them with a shield, a protection from this unimaginably powerful force, which would have destroyed them in its pure form. And their gaze borrowed the light of the stars, quickening, and their chests began to rise and fall at a perfect pace, showing that under their dome of protective flesh a heart was burning, with

a flame of overwhelming passion. Years passed, people developed a universe of their own, under the eyes of the two lovers. Their love was growing in complete peace and harmony.

However, the love that was born between people was strange, like a venomous replica of the one which gave birth to the universe, and soon the peace of the world was shaken. People created a monstrous copy of love that darkened their souls – hatred, a new force, gave birth to all the evils of the Earth, pain, filth and cowardice. Thus, people rebelled against their creators, who looked at them with disappointment, dissatisfied with how those whom they alone had shaped with their own hands had transformed over time. Driven by cruelty, they attacked Her, tearing her body apart with stones and knives. Looking at her unconscious body from which reddish blood flowed, His love instantly turned into anger – He couldn't look at her destroyed by what they had done together. The people's lack of obedience caused him to unleash his anger, banishing those who had hurt Her into a dark, miserable place, isolated from everyone else. Almighty, She freed herself from the bleeding carcass and ordered the world according to what we know today. For the disobedience of men, the cure found was Death; as punishment for Her lover, She chose to curse Him for the rest of his eternity, disappointed by his revenge, which broke their perfect love; thus, men were no longer eternal as before, but at the end of their lives, now so short, they were led by Him to a new place, far from their loved ones, who remained in the world. He, under the mists of love that became hatred, was named Death, the enemy of men, and She, giving up her human form for good, ascended into the sky in the form of a bright star, and nevertheless continued to guide people. That star is visible even today, Polaris, helping the lost to guide themselves and watching over humanity in a full, yet bright silence.

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In the mirror

In a small neighbourhood in Vienna, with cobbled streets and old houses, lived Lena. Lena comes from a well-known and highly regarded family of musicians. She learned to play the violin at the age of 5, at her mother's insistence. Her father was drafted into the army and unfortunately died on the front lines, and Lena and her mother moved into her grandmother's house after selling the old house.

She chose to occupy her grandmother's room as a young lady. In the room there was only a bed, a wardrobe and an old mirror with a handcrafted wooden frame from which you

could see yourself from head to toe. For Lena it was enough, as long as she had her violin with her, she didn't need anything else.

One day, while she was rehearsing "Salut d'Amour", she heard the accompaniment of another violin. To see where the second violin was coming from, she stopped playing, leaving a loud squeak. Lena couldn't believe her eyes when she saw in the mirror a young man, with dark hair and amber eyes, playing the violin so softly.

He also stopped and looked at her for a long time, as if he had known her all his life. She approached the mirror and put her hand on it, but unfortunately it was no portal to the boy. Very confused, she angrily took her hand off the mirror and frowned. He raised his eyebrows and then laughed, amused at her face. They made their acquaintance, Lena found out that the young skilled violinist's name was Konrad, and that the mirror in this room once belonged to his family. Lena asked him how he ended up in the mirror, he replied "It's a consequence left by love".

Days passed, and they became closer and closer. Konrad being more skilled on the violin than Lena, he helps her to solve her problems and improve herself. And from time to time his eyes met hers, and there remained a deep silence in the room. Soon they fell in love with each other and everything went perfectly. The only thing that spoiled this perfection was the mirror. Lena tried time and time again to find a way to bring him into her world, but always failed.

Although she sold the former house, the money was never enough for Lena's mother, so she decided to marry her off to a young pianist from a wealthy Viennese bourgeois family. Lena was the complete opposite, refusing to make eye contact with young Manuel when he was called to dinner for the purpose of courting Lena. Lena's mother got terribly angry and dragged her into the salon to meet her future husband.

Manuel was not a repulsive boy, on the contrary he was very handsome and was quite fond of Lena. He had blue eyes, blond hair and was quite tall. Looking at his hands you could clearly see that he was playing the piano. But despite his pleasant appearance and their shared occupation with music, Lena's been sulking all evening.

The next day, she rushed to tell her boyfriend in the mirror about her mother's plans. Neither of them liked these plans, but with no way out of the mirror for Konrad, there was nothing they could do. Yet they chose to keep their beautiful relationship, divided into two worlds by the strange mirror.

Of course, Lena's mother prepared the wedding as soon as possible, and in less than two weeks, the bells rang for Manuel and Lena's wedding.

On their wedding day, Konrad watched Lena smile as she prepared to become another man's bride and not his. He said she was the most beautiful bride he had ever seen. Lena went to her grandma, tears in her eyes, to tell her what was going on in her life and about the boy she was falling for. To her grandmother, Mona, the boy seemed very familiar. So she shows the girl a picture of her childhood best friend. And guess what, it was Konrad himself. Lena's grandmother had said that he was an amazing violinist. The mirror was a wedding present from him.

Being enormously in love with Mona, he wanted her to always see how beautiful she is. After Mona's wedding, he disappeared without a trace, and the only thing he left behind was a note in which he confessed all his feelings and all the admiration he had for years,

signed with Mona's name.

Amazed by everything she had found out, Lena only wanted to talk to Konrad. But she was not the only one who had listened to the story, Manuel happened to hear this story and the feelings that his fiancée had for another man. Blinded by jealousy, Manuel broke the mirror into thousands of pieces. When the girl arrived in the room, she desperately tried to put the shards of the mirror in the frame, but it didn't work. She could never see her lover again, all that remained was a letter in the violin case signed by Konrad.

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Love's Silent Tune

Kay, an immature 18-year-old boy, lost his hearing when he was only 6 years old. Despite having limited memories of when he could hear, he began to appreciate the beauty that nature had to offer. It wasn't just about the view; Kay also found joy in feeling the breeze and vibrations. His world became one where he observed people speaking without saying a single word, recognizing that facial expressions were enough to tell a whole story. He noticed that many struggled to express themselves, but their facial features gave it away. The way we look at a person or the way our mouth is shaped can change the whole meaning of what we say.

As usual, Kay went to a café near his house, one of his favorite places due to his love for coffee. He enjoyed the smell of it and also the taste. His usual corner table on the rooftop was where he spent most of his days, whether drawing, working, or simply savoring his coffee. While he was immersed in his activities, a girl abruptly pulled his earphones, panicking and dragging him outside. Initially confused, he went along and started looking around. He noticed smoke coming from the kitchen and looked at her with the sweetest eyes, grateful and amazed that she even noticed him. They started running outside, and that's where she began spitting out words that he could not hear, nor could he read her lips because of her agitated state. He thanked her in sign language, and she stared at him confused. Kay waved goodbye and left without looking back.

The next day Kay went to the café only to see that they were closed. He started thinking of where he could be going, but then he felt a soft tap on his shoulder. He looked behind him and saw a small girl with innocent green eyes – the girl from yesterday. She moved her hands, and he realized she said “Hi” to him in sign language. He was shocked

and excited; he said “Hi” back, and they stared at each other smiling awkwardly. She pulled out her phone and started writing, "They closed the café to renovate the kitchen. I know a better one, we can go together if you want." Kay looked at her hands trembling and grinned, he took her phone and wrote "Sure."

Ayla's heart skipped a beat as Kay agreed to join her at the other café. She couldn't believe that the boy she admired from afar was now communicating with her, and the thrill of the moment gave her confidence. As they walked together, Ayla couldn't help but steal glances at Kay, wondering how she could bridge the gap between their worlds. At the new café, they found a cozy corner and sat down. Ayla, determined to make a connection, brought out her phone and showed Kay a message she had prepared earlier: "My name is Ayla. What's yours?" She smiled nervously, Kay read the message and grinned. He took out his phone and typed, "I'm Kay. Nice to meet you, Ayla." The two exchanged smiles, feeling a connection beyond words.

Over the next few weeks, Ayla and Kay met regularly. They communicated through messages, with Ayla eagerly learning more sign language each day. Kay, in turn, appreciated her efforts and found joy in the simplicity of their interactions. As they spent time together, Ayla discovered the beauty of Kay's world. He showed her how he experienced life through touch, sight, and the vibrations of music. Their friendship deepened into something more profound. Kay's inability to hear became an unspoken language between them, creating a bond built on understanding and acceptance. Ayla's innocent love for Kay grew into a beautiful connection that surpassed the barriers of communication.

One day, as they sat on the rooftop of the new café, Ayla mustered the courage to ask Kay a question she had been pondering for weeks. With a shy smile, she signed, "Do you believe in love at first sight?" Kay's eyes sparkled as he read her question. He took a moment to respond, then typed on his phone, "I believe in connections that go beyond what meets the eye. And with you, Ayla, it feels like my heart has found its melody." Over time, their innocent love blossomed into a deeper, more profound understanding. Kay's world of silence became a symphony of love, and Ayla's heart found its harmony. Together, they embraced the beauty of their unique connection, proving that love, in its purest form, could transcend any obstacle.





One day, my one true love forgot about me

You see, my name was John, the year was 1812, and I had just died. The cause, physicians believed, was the black lung. I do not know how true that is but I died like any man would wish to go, having the love of my life, Elizabeth, by my side.

After the terrible incident, I watched from the veil of the afterlife as my dear Lizzy cried in her poor mother's arms. The hardest part of this whole spectator predicament I had found myself in, was that I could not comfort my love. I couldn't touch her, couldn't hear her, she couldn't see me or even feel me and all of my words fell upon deaf ears, as I stood by her, the deathly silence becoming oh so very loud with each passing second.

At the beginning there were tears, of course there was the burial, and then the procession. All of it felt so unreal to me, like I was dreaming the most horrifying scenario to ever exist. For a long time I was patiently waiting to wake up, see my Elizabeth next to me, sleeping peacefully, but that never happened. I never did awake, and for about a year and six weeks or more, as is the mourning period, I never saw Lizzy being peaceful, not even for a moment.

That hurt the most, seeing the person I wanted to spend an eternity with, wanting to make them forever happy, now being half of what they once were. Half of herself, crying herself to sleep every other night, talking to people less and less, when all she ever used to do was enjoy balls and gatherings. The fact that I couldn't make her laugh ever again, see that smile on her face appear because of me dawned the second I realised this wasn't all just a night terror.

As time passed and Lizzy started wearing colour again, blooming in her pretty dresses just as the flowers in spring do, she also started talking to people. First it was her family, then it was her friends and then she finally went out into society again. The first gathering she made a radiating appearance at was the first ball of the season. She looked ethereal, no flower or star could ever hold a candle to her beauty. That was the Elizabeth I fell desperately in love with so long ago. I stood by her side the whole event, even if she would never know of my presence.

She spoke to a gentleman that night, I didn't think much of it, being enchanted by her beauty all over again and feeling over the mood that she was finally smiling after so long. What I did not think about at the time was that they would meet again. And a couple more times. I did not think for one second that they would become enamoured with one another.

But here we are, her smiling and laughing at everything he says, him holding her hand

as though it is the most precious porcelain on earth. Here they are, as she is his, as she once was mine. But she is happy. I should be happy for her. But as I look upon the scenes of pure adoration and passion between the two, I can't help remembering our time together. The time she gifted to me, honouring me with her presence and with the prospect of loving her.

This is what I wanted for her. To be forever happy. Why does it matter if it isn't with me by her side? She is joyful, that is what matters, that will always be the only thing that matters.

I have loved, and will love her forever, even if she will never know that I am always by her side, basking in all of her smiles and joyful moments, for these are the only things making me feel as though I am still slightly alive. For the person I love, I shall sacrifice my pride and happiness, just to see her thrive another day, even if it is without her hand in mine, but in his.

VERDES ELENA-DENISA

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A Love Story in Everwood

Once upon a time in the quaint town of Everwood, where cobblestone streets echoed with the whispers of the wind, lived two souls destined to intertwine – Emma, a spirited artist with a heart as vibrant as her paintings, and Alexander, a reserved librarian whose world revolved around the quiet solace of books.

Their paths first crossed at the annual Everwood Art Fair. Emma's vibrant canvases caught Alexander's attention, drawing him into a kaleidoscope of colors he had never experienced before. Intrigued, he approached her booth, and their eyes locked in a moment that felt like the beginning of something extraordinary. As the seasons changed, so did their connection. Emma's studio became a haven where Alexander found solace from the monotony of his librarian duties. In the silent dance between paintbrushes and pages, their hearts started composing a melody of love.

One rainy afternoon, Alexander mustered the courage to confess his feelings, his voice as soft as the raindrops tapping on Emma's windowpane. She, too, had been harboring emotions that mirrored his own. They sealed their unspoken pact with a kiss, marking the beginning of a love story that would echo through the ages. Their love, however, faced its trials. Emma's artistic journey took her to distant lands, leaving Alexander behind in Everwood. The separation was a bitter pill, yet their hearts remained tethered across the

miles. Letters filled with passion and sketches of their dreams bridged the gap between them.

Time rolled on, and circumstances brought them back together. Emma returned to Everwood, her art enriched by the experiences of the world, while Alexander found solace in her presence once more. The town celebrated their reunion, for theirs was a love that transcended time and distance. In the heart of Everwood, beneath the ancient oak tree that had witnessed generations of love stories, Alexander knelt before Emma. With a ring forged from the dreams they had shared, he asked the question that would bind them eternally. She, overwhelmed with joy, accepted, sealing their commitment with a promise as enduring as the oak tree's roots. The seasons continued their dance, but now Emma and Alexander swirled within the rhythm of shared laughter and silent understanding. They faced challenges hand in hand, turning obstacles into stepping stones towards a future painted with the hues of their combined dreams.

As years unfolded, Everwood transformed, mirroring the evolving tapestry of Emma and Alexander's life together. The library became a sanctuary where their love story whispered through the pages, inspiring generations to come.

In the twilight of their years, sitting on the porch of a cottage adorned with memories, Emma and Alexander reflected on the chapters written in the book of their lives. The love that blossomed at the art fair, weathered storms, and flourished under the oak tree had matured into a timeless masterpiece.

And so, as the sun dipped below the horizon, casting a warm glow over Everwood, Emma and Alexander held hands, their love story echoing in the hearts of those who believed that true love, like the strokes of a skilled artist, paints a canvas that withstands the tests of time.



Second prizes

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The forbidden love between two creatures

Once upon a time, in a magical realm called Wonderland, there lived a beautiful fairy named Luna and a kind-hearted human named Ethan. Despite living in the same world, their love was forbidden. Fairies and humans were not allowed to interact, as it was believed that their union would disrupt the delicate balance of nature.

Luna, with her shimmering green wings and ethereal beauty, couldn't resist the allure of the human world. One day she saw Ethan, a beautiful young man with dark brown hair and beautiful black eyes. He was like the knight she dreamt about, wearing shining armor. Since then, Luna has been secretly observing Ethan from a distance behind some berry bushes, captivated by his gentle nature and the kindness in his eyes, helping the forest animals just like a real fairy thinking that they are almost alike. After a while Ethan was drawn to the enchanting melodies that Luna's wings would create as she fluttered around.

Their paths finally crossed one fateful day when Luna accidentally stumbled upon a hidden portal that connected their worlds. The moment their eyes met, a spark ignited, and they both felt an undeniable connection. However, the consequences of pursuing their love weighed heavily on their hearts.

They began meeting in secret, under the moonlit skies, where their love could flourish away from prying eyes. Their encounters were filled with stolen kisses, whispered promises, and shared dreams. But with every stolen moment, the risk of them being discovered grew, and their love became more endangered.

As their love deepened, Luna and Ethan realized that they couldn't bear the thought of being apart. They decided to seek the help of an ancient wise owl who resided in the heart of Wonderland. The owl, known for its wisdom, listened to their plea and offered a solution. It

presented them with a magical amulet that would allow Luna to temporarily transform into a human, granting them the chance to be together.

With the amulet in hand, Luna and Ethan embarked on a journey to find a place where their love could flourish without judgment. They faced countless obstacles, from treacherous forests to powerful enchantments, but their love remained steadfast.

Finally, they arrived at a hidden valley, known only to a few, where fairies and humans coexisted in harmony. That was the place where their parents had the war of 1000 years which ended two centuries ago. Here, Luna and Ethan could finally be together, free from the constraints of their own worlds. Their love story became a guiding light of hope for others, proving that love knows no boundaries and can conquer even the most challenging circumstances.

Three decades passed and they came back in Wonderland, after their parents' deaths, and proclaimed peace between humans and fairies bringing back the peace and harmony that was lost thousands of years ago.

Since then, Wonderland has become a better place and the magic was stronger than ever, showing everyone that true love always triumphs.

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A heart that can't beat

A heart that can't beat and a soul that can't be healed...16-year-old Lucy lives with a non-beating heart for as long as she can remember.

The girl's parents abandoned and left her with Lucy's abusive uncle when she was 2 years old. At school, she has a hard time fitting in, so she spends her breaks alone. Although Lucy's uncle is financially stable, he had been very strict with her so she hasn't heard nice songs, dressed in beautiful dresses like the other girls do or eaten delicious food in her life! She hasn't experienced the feeling of affection, she doesn't know what it's like to have someone say "I love you" or hug you and tell you: "Everything will be fine"! She isn't sad because she couldn't feel all that, but it's not a pleasant feeling for anyone to be alone all the time.

Every day, after school, she comes home and starts to clean the house and prepare dinner so that when her uncle comes home, he doesn't beat her and say that she is useless in his house. One evening, he came drunk and started hitting her and screaming very loudly.

Lucy took her bag and ran out of the house. She went into a cafe, where he couldn't find her, to finish her homework.

After some time, she heard a pleasant sound that she had never heard before. It was the sound of a guitar and it came from a boy who came to sing in the cafe. Looking more closely, Lucy recognized him. He was one of the most popular boys in school. He was tall, had coal black hair, emerald green eyes and a pale looking face. He was very handsome and adored by many at school, but the only reason why he was avoided by some was because he had no expression on his face. He was quiet and not interested in doing anything other than what was required at school, including going out with his classmates. Some consider him cold-hearted and intimidating. She didn't pay attention to it, but the boy started to sing... he started to sing so beautifully that the girl froze. She had never heard such a pleasant and delicate voice before! The boy started to change his expression as well, now seeming so passionate about what he was doing, as if he no longer cared about anything that was happening around him. He kept his eyes closed and swayed his head a little, while the sound of the guitar accompanied him perfectly with the lyrics. The song almost ended when he woke up to reality, opening his eyes towards Lucy. He froze when he saw her beautiful face, her long hair, braided in two pigtails and her big eyes sparkling so hard, as if she was seeing fireworks around her. The boy realized that he stopped singing and a big smile appeared on his face. At that moment, everything went black... nothing could be seen or heard, only him and the girl who looked shocked at the smile that seemed from another world. He was smiling so widely and with pleasure as if singing made him feel alive, being the only thing he valued in this world. Then she suddenly heard something amazing! It was a beat... but it came from inside. She experienced it for the first time: affection, excitement, a huge pleasure... a heartbeat! Lucy felt so emotional, she wanted to cry, laugh, smile, scream with happiness... she felt full of life! After a few seconds she started to hear the applause of the spectators and to see how he was preparing for another song.

For someone who had not found any reason why she should enjoy life, when someone else showed her that it was not difficult to do so, it was as if they told her: "You are not alone! It is not a mistake that you're alive! You can enjoy it like me, just let me show you how!". He showed her a new way of living, and because of that, it seems that now she had a journey to begin...





Another type of poem

I would like to freeze the time for once
To sit together on a bench,
Under the moon light and the stars,
Yearning the absolute that we can't reach.

I would recite you poems about
Roses, the sun and the hard life,
While you braid our souls with only
A look into my glassy, hazel eyes.

I will charm you with philosophical quotes
And make you abdicate by yourself,
Until you smile at me, looking all innocent
And place your hand behind my neck.

My mind is full with thought
`Maybe I'll meet you on my way`;
Trying to find you in the crowd,
I risk losing myself.

I saw you yesterday, I was outside;
You were under the same tree,
Exactly on the same place of the street,
Where I noticed you for the first time.

When I was around you,
Trying to get your attention ,
I smelled the `Lily-of-the-valley` perfume
Which made me dizzy.

Last evening I watered the broken paper
That contained some lines:

A flower named `Forget-me-not`
And navy ink was wiped by my hot tears.

I have no hope that this will work...
I'm walking through the storm of
nightmares,
Without an umbrella or a jacket,
Without your love being my coat.

You are the silence in the chaos,
The reason for my feverish heartbeats,
You are the symphony in forests
Played on the harp by Orpheus.

The clouds are raining when they see
How much you really mean to me,
But the sun has mercy in some days
And gives me rainbow dashes.

The beautiful moon is my witness,
She hears about you every night..
I am her lonely, depressed wolf
And she is my only confidant.

I asked a blue bird about you
So she flew singing lovely songs,
Above a pearly lake that shows
Humans desires and aspirations.

So, did the water show our future?
Because you gave me a white rose

In front of the theatre and we could have
been
Like Romeo and Juliet.

An old woman told me once
That love is not a simple way;
It is a complication for the heart,
Which gives life a sense.

Sometimes, love is sudden,
Like a falling star on the dark sky,
And due to her, we climb the stairs
Which bring us into heaven.

But... what do you know about love?
You've never mentioned that strange word;
I might be melancholic now,
So we can be friends, it's just a fact.

I know I will never have the courage
To confess to you my feelings,
And that's the reason I am in distress,
Waiting for you to unlock my terror.

But, maybe, we will meet in another world,
In the Dante's purgatory or the Hades's hell,
Because my love for you is infinite and pure,
And your blindness destroys my soul.

However, these words are a little too sad,
I am scared that you will start to cry
Reading about my heavy feelings,
So let's romanticize the life with wine.

In the end, do not worry about me, my love,
I will daily feed my butterflies.
And, please, remember that these lines
Are just another type of poem in your eyes.

RUSU ELIZA-RIANNA

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Learn to love

In the cosmic dance of souls, love resides,
a kaleidoscope of emotions it provides.
Like a constellation, it navigates the night,
Guiding hearts through darkness to the light.

Love... a paradox, a delicate dance,
It weaves through fate and happenstance.
it's a symphony of joy and sorrow's tears,
embracing ecstasy and confronting fears.

it's an enigma, a puzzle to explore,
a journey to depths never seen before.
a fusion of hearts in a cosmic ballet,
love transcends, in its intricate display.

But in the secret chambers of the heart, a fear resides...
A hesitant beat in the rhythm of love's tides.
Scared to love, afraid to take the leap,
A soul trembling on the edge, afraid to keep.

The scars of past echoes in the whispering wind,
Haunting the mind, where doubts have sinned.
Yet in the fear, a longing stirs and yearns,
A desire to love, despite the heart that warns.

To open up, to trust, and to believe,
Scared to love, yet longing to receive.
Trepidation mingles with a hopeful spark,
A soul torn between fear and love's gentle mark.

But in the vulnerability of being scared to love,
Resides the bravery to rise above.
For in facing fear, courage takes its flight,
And love blooms brightest, in the darkest night.

in this vast expanse, I wander and roam,
searching for a love that feels like home.
but fear grips my heart, like a vice so tight,
keeping me from basking in love's pure light.

I changed my mind. i want to feel
something true that can make my heart reveal
the best of me, that can make me shine
I want a love that's true, that could guide me to light.

I long for connection, a soul to intertwine,
someone who understands this heart of mine.
yet, I fear the vulnerability it brings,
the possibility of heartbreak's painful stings.

but deep within, a flicker of hope remains,
a belief that love can wash away all pains.
for in the darkness, there's a glimmer of grace,
a chance to find love in this lonely space.

so I'll embrace the unknown, let go of my fear,
and open my heart to love, drawing it near.
For in the depths of vulnerability's embrace,
I'll find the love that will make my soul efface.

and though I may stumble, and tears may fall,
I'll keep searching, for love conquers all.
in this journey of mine, I'll find my way,
and love's radiant light will guide my every day.

I forgive myself, for keeping my eyes closed
for so long... but now I shall overcome
the fear of the dark, the fear of the unknown
and I will let love heal my soul.

LEȘE COSMINA

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prof. coordonator Ramona Dragu



In the ancient kingdom of Eldoria, where castles stood tall against the towering mountains, lived two souls destined to write a tale of love and redemption. The kingdom was ruled by Queen Olivia, who was known for her cruelty and cold heart. Peter, on the other hand, was a skilled hunter from the deep forests that surrounded the kingdom.

One day, as Queen Olivia's kingdom faced a threat from neighbouring lands, she sought refuge in the enchanting forest of Eldoria. Without her knowledge, Peter, a guardian of the woods, observed her arrival. Attracted by a mysterious force, he decided to approach the Queen, despite the rumours of her tyranny.

Their encounter took place among the towering trees, where the rustling leaves whispered ancient tales of love's transformative power. Peter, with the bow at his side, spoke to Olivia about the beauty of destiny and the delicate balance between power and compassion. Intrigued by his words, Olivia, for the first time, felt a flicker of warmth within her icy heart.

As the time passed, Peter shared stories of his village and the simple joys of life. Olivia, captivated by the sincerity in his eyes, began to see a different path, one that led

away from the shadows of cruelty.

Together, they embarked on a journey of self-discovery, travelled across the rough landscapes and facing challenges that tested the strength of their newfound bond. As Queen Olivia's heart softened, she found herself questioning the purpose of her rule and the legacy she wished to leave behind.

Their love was strong and pure, and believing that everyone would be delighted about the news, the Queen made an announcement that they would marry each other. However, from the darkest spots of Eldoria, rumours rose that along with the wedding, the reign of Olivia will also end. Hearing those, the ones who could make a profit over the Queen's cruelty decided that they wouldn't let this wedding take place.

In the shadowed depths of the forest, on a cold night, an unexpected event unfolded. Peter, the once brave hunter who had softened the heart of Queen Olivia, fell victim to a wicked plot. Silhouetted against the moonlight, a group of cloaked figures struck him down, leaving his lifeless body lying in the wet grass.

In the heart of Eldoria, surrounded by the whispers of betrayal, Olivia, in the aftermath of Peter's tragic death, found herself entangled in a web of torment and sorrow that seemed to suffocate the very air around her. The weight of grief bore down heavily on her heart, yet, among the sadness, a profound realization occurred within her. The memory of Peter, like a flickering flame, brightened her soul, urging her to confront her own cruelty. Though Peter was no longer alive, his spirit wandered in the corridors of her consciousness, whispering a path towards kindness. Determined to honour his memory, Olivia changed the nature of her rule, allowing the seeds of compassion to sprout from the ashes of her old self. In the silence of grief, she began her challenging journey, seeking to heal not only the wounds within her own tormented soul, but also the ones of the kingdom.

On her journey, Olivia, transformed by love and redemption, made decisions that surprised even her closest advisors. She has built alliances instead of battles, choosing diplomacy over aggression, and even solving all of the conflicts with neighbouring lands.

In the end, the love story of Queen Olivia and Peter became a legend told by bards across Eldoria. A tale of a hunter who, with his love, turned a cruel queen into a beloved ruler. The forests whispered gratitude, and the people stood as witnesses to a love that transcended the boundaries of power and darkness.



Third prizes

ANGHEL PETRONELA-ANDREEA

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The Power of Love

Love is a universal language that transcends boundaries and brings people together. It is a complex and profound emotion that has been celebrated and explored in various forms of art, literature, and music throughout history. In this essay, we will delve into the depths of love, examining its different facets and the impact it has on our lives.

Love is an intricate tapestry of emotions, encompassing affection, compassion, and deep attachment. It is a force that binds individuals, families, and communities together. Love can be romantic, platonic, or familial, but its essence remains the same - a profound connection that brings joy, happiness, and fulfillment.

Love manifests itself in numerous ways. It can be expressed through kind words and gestures of affection. Love is seen in the warm embrace of a loved one, the laughter shared with friends, and the support offered during challenging times. It is the small acts of love that have the power to brighten someone's day and create lasting memories.

Love is the foundation of healthy and fulfilling relationships. It fosters trust, understanding, and mutual respect. Romantic love ignites the spark between two individuals, creating a unique bond built on passion and companionship. However, love extends beyond romantic relationships. It is the love between parents and children, siblings, and friends that enriches our lives and provides a sense of belonging.

Love has the power to heal, inspire, and transform lives. It has the ability to mend broken hearts, reconcile differences, and bring about forgiveness. Love serves as a guiding light during times of darkness, offering solace and support. It empowers individuals to overcome challenges, conquer fears, and strive for personal growth.

Love goes hand in hand with empathy - the ability to understand and share the feelings

of others. When we love, we open ourselves up to the experiences and emotions of those around us. Love fosters compassion and encourages us to lend a helping hand to those in need. It promotes unity and encourages a sense of collective responsibility towards building a better world.

While love is often portrayed as a beautiful and harmonious emotion, it is not without its complexities. Love can be both exhilarating and challenging, as it involves vulnerability and the risk of heartbreak. It requires effort, compromise, and understanding to nurture and sustain a loving relationship. Love is a journey that evolves and grows over time, requiring patience and dedication.

Love has the power to teach us about ourselves. Through our relationships and connections with others, we learn about our strengths, weaknesses, and desires. Love pushes us to confront our fears and insecurities, enabling personal growth and self-discovery. It is through love that we truly understand the depths of our emotions and the capacity for compassion within us.

Love knows no boundaries of language, culture, or geography. It is a language understood by all, transcending differences and bringing people together. Love has the ability to bridge, divide and create connections between individuals from diverse backgrounds. It is a unifying force that reminds us of our shared humanity.

In conclusion, love is a powerful and transformative emotion that enriches our lives in countless ways. It is the force that connects us, inspires us, and drives us to be better versions of ourselves. Love has the power to heal, to uplift, and to create a more compassionate world.

VERBUȚĂ LETIȚIA CRISTIANA

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prof. coordonator Busuioc Daniela



Dear You,

I felt like I owed it to myself to put my dear memories of Us on paper, in order to maybe get past this once and for all. The last few moments spent together, that magical winter when you showed me all the ways you cared for me, is all I want to reminisce about.

The way you slowly caressed my face, much like picking up a single snowflake, trying not to let it unavoidably melt in the heat of your palm.

The way you gently took my hand and blew slightly warm air to heat up my icy cold fingers. I remember giggling when the wind was sharply blowing into your face, making your hair fly in all directions, but you were unmovable, trying to make me feel a bit warmer.

The way we ran up that hill outside your house, hand in hand, while trying to fight the snow beneath our feet. I was smiling from ear to ear when we got to the top and fell down from exhaustion. You had snowflakes all over your hair and the sky was reflecting so beautifully into your eyes. When you glanced at me with those silver specks in your eyes, I felt truly loved.

The next day you arrived at my door with such worry and anxiety only because I told you I had caught a slight cold. You were so anxious when I opened up the door wrapped up in a dozen blankets. You scooped me up in your arms and we lay on the couch for hours watching Christmas movies. I felt like I was dreaming when you got up and brought me hot cocoa and said 'Here you go, for my one-winged butterfly.'

You were talking about our mismatched unintentional tattoos, right? I remember vividly when you first approached me because of the left-winged butterfly tattoo on my upper arm. You timidly came up to me and showed me your left-winged butterfly tattoo on your lower arm. Since then we have been inseparable.

That stupidly timid and kind way you always treated me, I don't want to forget it. I'd always want to remember you that way, but I don't know how much longer I have it in me to prolong the inevitable harsh truth.

you
were
Never
Real.

Just a product of my imagination, really.

As I slowly dragged my trembling fingers up to my eyes, I surprisingly found out I had been crying all along. Funny thing about crying about something that wasn't even REAL. My body was overpowered by the sadness overwhelming me just because of a mere idea of what could have been. My body became one with my soul and it overflowed with this intrinsic gooey, sickly vision that I had created simply to blind myself into believing that I am worthy of being loved.

I had never felt real love. I desired it. Dreamed of it. But I've never quite got to the point of feeling like the missing wing of someone else's soul. So I have created You. A nameless creature based on what information I gathered about love from multiple places. Every time I felt lonely and in need of a warm embrace, I envisioned myself next to you. You were always there for me, understanding every little thing that concerned me and trying to make me feel better about my gloomy days. Life next to you, With you, was more than charmingly happy. It was all I could've ever wanted. The only default in my coping mechanism? You were never real to begin with. So when the high of the imagination was over, my loneliness dawned on me even harder than my grim life reality.

With the last resort of energy that I have I finally understand that in order to feel Truly happy, I have to make a change in my own reality. So I am going to end this fake relationship myself. Unfortunately, you have no word on this decision that I've taken. Not that I imagine that you'd want to stick next to me anymore. I am letting you go. I hope I've written you well until now.

Goodbye, You.
Love always.



My Dearest,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits and brings a moment of warmth to your heart. As I sit down to pen these words, my emotions swirl like a gentle breeze, carrying the fragrance of feelings that have blossomed within me.

From the first moment our paths crossed, a subtle magic enveloped my world. Your laughter became the melody that played in the background of my thoughts, and your presence painted vibrant hues in the canvas of my everyday life. I find myself captivated by the smallest details. Your eyes that hold stories untold, the way your smile dances across your face, and the gentle cadence of your voice that resonates like a comforting melody... In the quiet corners of my heart, feelings have blossomed, delicate and tender, like petals unfurling in the soft light of dawn. I cannot help but be drawn to the unique symphony that is you, each note and nuance creating a masterpiece that lingers in the recesses of my mind. Your mere existence has become a muse for the poetry that flows through my thoughts. I cherish the stolen glances and fleeting moments that we share. In those instances, time seems to suspend, and the world fades away, leaving only the echoes of our connection. Your friendship has been a beacon, illuminating the path through the labyrinth of my emotions. It has been both a solace and a source of joy, and for that, I am immensely grateful. Yet, as I navigate the landscape of my feelings, I am aware that the currents of affection may not always flow in parallel. It is with a heart heavy with honesty that I acknowledge the possibility that my sentiments may not be mirrored in yours. Love, after all, is a complex tapestry, woven with threads that may not always intertwine seamlessly. If my words stir a sense of discomfort or unease within you, I implore you to understand that my intention is not to burden you with an emotional weight. Rather, I share these sentiments as a testament to the depth of my feelings, a tribute to the beauty that I find in the essence of who you are. I harbor no expectations or demands; instead, I find solace in the freedom of expression, in laying bare the emotions that have taken residence within me. If our paths are destined to converge only as friends, I will embrace that connection with gratitude and cherish the moments we create together.

As I conclude this letter, my heart is a blend of vulnerability and courage. Regardless of the nature of your response, please know that I value the friendship we share, and I hope it will endure the winds of change. May our journey continue, side by side, with the understanding that love, in all its forms, enriches the tapestry of our lives.

With sincerity, your unexpected love



Maybe in another life

I'm in my child's room searching for the box with my highschool memories. Eva, my girl, is a blight when it comes to school and I maybe if I show her my memories, she will enjoy highschool too. I found a box with the title "Highschool" and I ran to her to show her. In this box are so many photos with all my friends from my past. Eva is looking through them with such an excitement. I smile, looking at her and how the little things make her happy.

"Mom, who is this?" He give me a photo. "You seemed so happy in this photo"

I took the photo, my smile faded the second I saw him. I ran my fingers over his beautiful young face. I suddenly felt once again the butterflies in my stomach, just when I looked at him. I'm married now, and I love my husband. But I miss him in every second of my life, with every cell in my body.

"He was my first love." I said to Eva who looked at me with mercy. My hands started shaking as I gave the photo back to her. "But it was a long time ago, I forgot about him" I tried forcing a smile.

7 years ago

You know the empty space you feel in your soul? That empty space you don't know what it is or how to fill it? But then a handsome boy appears. A boy that make your soul complete with his presence but then break it in 2 milion pieces and left so many empty spaces that you no longer have hope it will be ever again complete. That is my story and his.

It was middle winter when I saw him. He passed by me in the school hallway like I wasn't even there. But why am I surprised? He always did that. Well, not always. For the past four years he came in my life once in two months then ghost me like nothing happened. This year I am sure I'm done. I'll never allow myself back to him.

"Will I ever get rid of you?" I turned around when I heard the voice behind me.

"Excuse me?" This man can't stop annoying me. But I will not let myself annoyed by him.

"Long time no see." He smiled. The smile I fell in love with. Such a perfect smile that only I can see. He never smiles like that in front of other people. "What are you staring at?"

"Not at you." I startled

He laughed. "Meet me in the park after school, I have something to tell you." And he left. Typical.

My brain must be on his day off because I'm in the park waiting for him.

"You came." A soft voice whispered in my ear.

"You asked me to." My voice trembled.

"Yes. Because I'm trying to understand."

"What?" I sounded a little more curious that I wanted.

"What you're doing to me. You know I don't like sharing my feelings so why I can't control myself when it comes to you?"

"You haven't talked to me for 2 months. What do you want?" Of course, 2 months. It was his time to appear in my life again.

"I want to make things different this time. I want us to work. I promise this time will be different if you can give me another chance."

I'm not surprised. He always says that.

"You can't come to me after 2 months telling me to give you another chance." My voice firmly.

His smile faded, and I saw the disappointment in his eyes.

"Let me think about it." I let my guard down.

"Perfect! I'll come take you at eight. Be ready." And once again, he left without saying anything else.

It's eight and he is here.

I left the house as fast as I could. The air was cold and the wind was blowing my hair. His scent so close to me, his arm around my shoulders, it all seemed unreal. But it was real. He was never so nervous around me. I could feel tense.

"I think you owe me an explanation." I started.

"Yes, I think I do." he smiled. "Look, I've been through some bad times, I felt so alone and no one was there for me. That's why I left you, I felt so alone and confused. I needed time to fix myself"

"I was always there for you. From the day I met you, I was at your disposal even when you left me. So don't tell me you felt alone, because you always pushed the only person who was always there." My eyes hurtled from the tears I tried held back. He must've seen the disappointment in my eyes.

"I know and I'm sorry. I really am."

"Prove me." I was so done with his promises.

The next second he kissed me. I'm scared that if this boy leaves me for good I'll never feel this again. I just know that no other boy could make me feel the way he makes me feel, I'll never have a connection like this with no one. A part in my heart knows that it won't last, but in this moment, I couldn't care less.

We kept seeing each other for a week, it was the most beautiful week of my life. I felt so complete with him. Until, he called me one day telling me his parents decided to move another city for business and we will never work from distance. So that was it. He let go of me that easy. I should've known.

"He seems a nice person. He made you really happy" Eva said bringing me back to reality.

"Yes, he did." I smiled, thinking about every beautiful memory. "But your dad makes me happier" I lied. No man in 100 years could make me as happy as that boy made me in 1 minute. He was my missing part, he made me complete, until he left me so empty so no

other man could ever fill that space. Eva left and I took the opportunity to take another look at that picture.

The photo was shaking in my hands and a tear went down my face. Then another one, until the tears run down my face and I couldn't stop them. I brought the picture to my lips leaving a soft kiss on it.

"Maybe in another life..." I wishpered, smiling.

GAVRILOAEA LORENA- ECATERINA

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An unforgettable memory at the amusement park

Amelia's heart raced as she entered the vibrant world of the amusement park, a kaleidoscope of lights and laughter surrounding her. Amid the dizzying rides and cheerful melodies, her eyes met Jake's, a stranger whose smile mirrored the joy of the carnival around them.

They started with the Ferris wheel, rising above the twinkling carnival grounds. As the city lights shimmered below, Jake shared tales of his travels, and Amelia found herself captivated by his adventurous spirit. The gentle rocking of the Ferris wheel seemed to match the rhythm of their budding connection.

Next, they ventured into the whimsical carousel, its enchanting music creating a backdrop for their laughter. Jake offered his hand, and they twirled together, lost in the magic of the moment. Amidst the carousel's colorful horses, they discovered a shared love for childhood nostalgia, forging a connection that deepened with each turn.

The haunted house beckoned with its mysterious allure. In the dimly lit corridors, Amelia clung to Jake, her fear melting into laughter. As they navigated the twists and turns, their hands found each other naturally, creating a bond that transcended the haunted shadows.

The roller coaster was waiting, a thrilling laugh in their adventure. Amidst screams and exhilarating drops, Amelia felt the rush of adrenaline and a connection that soared to new heights. As the ride concluded, they shared a triumphant glance, their hearts pounding in unison.

Underneath the starlit sky, they strolled through the carnival games, playfully

competing for oversized stuffed animals. Amid the whimsical chaos, Jake handed Amelia a plush teddy bear, a silent promise of the memories they were creating together.

The evening drew to a close, but their connection only strengthened. They found a quiet spot, surrounded by the gentle hum of the park, and shared stories under the moonlight. As the night deepened, so did their connection, the amusement park acting as the enchanting backdrop to their blossoming romance.

With the park's closing announcement, reality nudged its way back into their world. Yet, instead of parting ways, Jake suggested a final adventure, the Ferris wheel at sunset. As they ascended one last time, the rising sun painted the sky in hues of pink and gold, casting a warm glow on their faces.

At the pinnacle of the Ferris wheel, overlooking the now-sleeping carnival, Jake turned to Amelia with a tender smile. Amidst the serenity, he confessed feelings that mirrored her own. In that suspended moment, high above the world, they sealed their connection with a kiss, the promise of a future echoing through the quiet morning air.

As they descended, hand in hand, the amusement park stood as a witness to their love story, a tale spun from laughter, shared adventures, and the magic of an evening that turned strangers into soulmates. With the dawn of a new day, Jake and Amelia stepped into the world outside the carnival gates, forever bound by the memories of a love story that unfolded in the vibrant tapestry of an amusement park.



Honorable mentions

PERJU DAVIDESCU THEODOR

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Just you and me

The night slowly arrives. I gaze in the distance. I don't want it to stop, I'm still thinking about what happened. Everything started long ago, but today it happened. My heart has changed. I feel a shiver running down my spine. We all have demons that we need to fight sometimes. That's how my life was, full of demons, until I saw you. Or rather, you saw me.

I'm not sure that I ever loved someone. For me, your love is like sunshine. I can see it, but every time I try to reach it, I can't touch it.

How did I meet you? Was it fate? I met you in all my past lives, but I couldn't love you. Could I do it in this life? I don't know why, but I feel like I have known you forever. I already know how you walk, how you smile without even seeing you. I never ask you anything because I already know everything about you. Have I always looked at you like this? Without even taking a step you were already passed me. I don't want to lose you again. I gather my courage and go up to you. I can't explain this sensation. We gaze in each other's eyes and I can see that you remember me. Our hearts stop and only silence can be heard. The memories of the days spend together flash before my eyes. I see those memories in your eyes too. You recognize me.

I lost you so many times before. "How did you get so far all alone? How did you manage to find me?" But words weren't needed, I knew what she was going to say. She tried to find me, but she didn't succeed. Then she started to look for something else. She tried to dream about us, to believe in us and to enjoy life, no matter how fleeting it was. She started loving everything around: flowers, smells, whispers... She started to love herself and those around her. She opened her arms and accepted anything life threw at her, anything! But for me it wasn't that easy.

I wasn't like that. I was like a traveler in life. I tried to hide my feelings. Now I feel like all this weight has been lifted. Just as Lev Tolstoi says "It's not beauty that endears, it's love that makes us see beauty". Just now I can see the sun shining onto you, the flowers next to you and the cat playing besides you. Until now I didn't even know if it was day or night. But now I have found a new hope. I smiled for the first time in what felt like ages. Do you want to meet again tomorrow? To start all over again, to get to know each other again. We met in some lives and in some we didn't. We walked side by side many times.

The night goes by so fast. I feel a pain in my chest. My eyes don't want to close. I'm staring into the darkness. It's so empty, not even one star. The sky was like this once before. When I was in the woods and that king's people were attacking us and I lost you. That memory still bothers me. Why do I remember? The clock strikes three a.m. Just a little longer and I get to see you again. The sky is still black. Something is happening, I lay down on the couch and wait.

The daylight makes me open my eyes. It's too much light. I jump off the couch and look at my phone. I'm late! I'm running to the place where we were supposed to meet, but I can't find you. I'm sure you waited for me but I didn't come. How did I manage to lose you again? I will find you again! I will search everywhere and find you again! I have one more life and I want to spend it with you. Just you and me. I will take your hand and I'll never let go, I promise. You will be my prisoner in this last life. Just the two of us, just you and me!

MIRON COSMIN-GABRIEL

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The dream woman

There once was a big beautiful city where everyone was happy, where friendship, love and peace was in the air all the time. This city might be the happiest city in the country, because of the energy it gives to people who live in it. Among all those happy and healthy people, there was Thomas. In comparison with the world around him, he was a lonely, sad and unfortunate man who was spending his free time drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes, just to forget the fact that everyone had a reason to be happy, everyone except him. He was an orphan, a lonely individual in a society where anyone had someone to get back home to. He tried, he really tried not to be lonely anymore, to find that special person that would be waiting for him at the end of the sadness corridor, but he kept getting rejected and laughed at and that was only rotting him more and more on the inside, as time passed

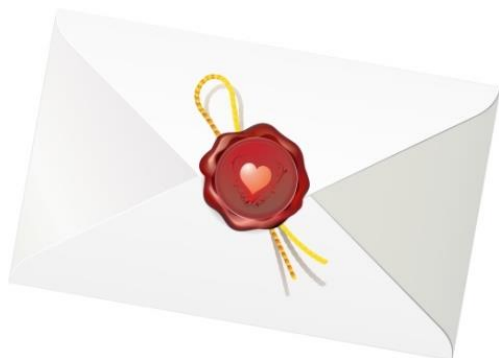
by. Because of this, and of the already stressful office job, Thomas found really hard to find reasons to keep going with his usual days, so his second home became the bar and his bed the balcony where he usually fell asleep from the packs of cigarettes he was smoking whilst staring at the stars, praying that, one day, his miserable life would finally find a meaning.

One night, while he was at a bar, he met a wonderful lady, with whom he spent hours talking with, discussing life, problems, job, and passions. Towards the end of the night, as the beautiful woman was making her way outside, our drunk Thomas tried to stop her to ask for a phone number and a name, but his luck ran out because, as he was trying to run after her, a loose nail tripped him and he fell on the floor, only to wake up hours later on the same floor being shaken by the bartender.

Days passed, and the nameless woman never set foot in the bar since that night. Thomas was finally feeling that he had a reason to keep his head up, to continue fighting the depression, that reason being her. He asked everyone he knew about her, to no avail, it was like she had vanished into thin air, and, starting with that moment, he knew he had to search for her more deeply, otherwise he might lose her forever. He started to go through every flower shop he knew in the city, because in the night they met, she was saying that either she worked or was working in a flower shop, and that was enough for the young Thomas to run to every single one in the whole city. After spending hours and hours roaming around the city, he gave up towards the evening, and was starting to lose his hope that he would ever find that woman again, so he went to the bar to drown himself in alcohol out of sadness. After he downed a couple shots, the dream woman entered again the location, making Thomas go through a thousand feelings, only to end up with one: love. He went to hug her, offered her a drink and finally asked for a name and a phone number, to which the woman named Rose provided. He started talking with her again, feeling that everything stopped in place while they were talking. He needed nothing but her.

Time passed quickly that night and towards the end of it he tried to kiss Rose, only to be stopped by her, because she wanted him to get out of his habits in order to try something together. No one has ever seen the new Thomas before, from an alcoholic modest worker, to a very productive and clean employee in the name of love.

After months of dating Rose, Thomas was finally feeling that the dreams he was wishing upon to the bright stars while he was drunk in his balcony became true. He lived a happy life since she stepped in his life, she made him the happiest.





Teaching teenagers to prioritize self-love

As February comes around, everyone is familiar with the global holiday that is Valentine’s Day when every store is obnoxiously packed with tacky bouquets, cloying love-themed candy and letters that have corny dad jokes written on them.

Even if this holiday is a great opportunity for couples to have a proper decent date, it highlights one of the major problems the younger generation faces: the endless search for a partner who can give them the love and support they don’t offer to themselves.

Due to the media that it is consumed nowadays, this idea of the ideal relationship has been fabricated, that is dangerously sought by a huge number of adolescents. The glamorization of being part of a romantic partnership has caused a massive peak in youth, affecting them at a vulnerable period in their life that can take away the halcyon that could have been for an individual, and replace it with a period of despondence and constant self-deprecation.

According to the British Psychologist Society’s research paper entitled “Teenagers in love”, due to the hormonal changes caused by puberty that an adolescent goes through, the youth are more prone to have intimacy issues induced by non-consensual sexual acts, experience post-breakup depression or get stuck in relationships with perfidious, deceptive or even abusive individuals.

In order for a relationship to be prosperous and long-lasting, it is essential that a person is emotionally mature and has a sense of self-worth. Adolescence is a period meant for self-exploration and it is the time when a teen is able to focus on their studies while testing out new hobbies and pushing their limits. Either if it’s an artistic recreational activity such as painting, drawing, singing, playing an instrument, writing or something along the lines of volunteering, learning new languages, practicing a certain sport, these years are crucial in the development of someone’s character.

Being a teenager is already an emotionally challenging chapter of a person’s life and finding a passion for a specific hobby can help someone invest their energy and time productively, which could bring a sense of interior balance. Deciding to pursue a set of pre-established goals and wait to start their romantic life, it would help an individual to not only build their character but also easily find a significant other that could have maybe the same or similar hobbies. A romantic partnership has a greater chance to last when both of the lovers already know who they are and there are slim chances of suspecting one another of cheating or other misdoings.



Another motive that could encourage teens to avoid relationships as long as they are jobless is that having a romantic partner requires the individual to be financially stable. A common way two people get to know each other is through dates. Either if a person casually enjoys a coffee with your loved one at a cafe or decides to do something more extravagant such as going on trips or exchanging gifts with one another, it's not a smart decision to depend on an individual monetarily. The lack of a stable income from a partner can be the reason of why two lovers are constantly arguing and could sadly lead to a messy breakup.

To summarize everything that has been talked in this essay, Valentine's Day should be a day for teenagers to remind themselves of the importance of prioritizing themselves. Avoiding having a romantic partner could be beneficial in the long run as an individual has the opportunity to build up their character and grow emotionally and professionally before committing to a relationship.

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Love is a labyrinth of emotions and experiences, carving its way through people's lives, bringing joy, challenges, and important lessons. In a world filled with emotional pain, love becomes the guiding light in the darkness, leading us through the beauty of life.

Love urges us to be better to one another; it is the source of good deeds and special moments. In a world where we face various afflictions, love can be the medicine that dissipates that pain, helping us look at each other with more understanding and compassion.

There are various ways to express this rich emotion, from small gestures like giving a flower on various occasions. However, what matters most is that everything is offered with love.

A fascinating aspect of love is its ability to evolve and undergo transformations based on life stages. From childhood's innocent and curious love to mature love, where we begin to understand and accept each other, the journey of love is full of surprises.

In romantic relationships, love starts shaping two individuals choosing to share their lives, but this journey is not without obstacles. Arguments, disappointments, and challenges may break pieces of those hearts full of love, but these moments can build an even deeper connection.

Love relationships aren't limited to those seeking to create a family; a form of love is

also found between parents and child. This unique bond is filled with silent sacrifices. Parental love shows us how to love the partner we will meet in life, but a parent's mistakes can also teach us what not to do when we become parents.

Love is the beacon in the midst of storms and the answer to profound needs. In the realm of friendship, love is significant in our social connections; the love between friends is a generous love expressed through support, understanding, and presence in difficult times.

Love brings strong emotional support. Having someone beside us in tough moments can prevent us from falling into a black hole, helping us find the light at the end of the tunnel together.

We see how love has always been an inspiration for art and poetry, from masterpieces to romantic poems. Love has always been the central theme, the piece that continually completes the puzzle, present in works describing the passion and suffering of love, to movies portraying various romantic moments.

The challenges of this journey only test us, just as rain revives withered flowers. Love can bring motivation and give us a purpose in life.

In the quest for love, we also encounter its darker side. Loss can bring pain, but we will find the person who becomes our lifebuoy in the middle of the ocean.

However, love is not an easy journey. In the pursuit of this significant feeling, we face suffering, loss, but also self-discovery.

In conclusion, it's an infinite thread of experiences, a story we write in our own pages. We may find it in the most unexpected moments, and it manifests in different ways. Regardless of its form, love remains one of the most powerful human emotions.

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February's Moonstruck

As the winter melts away, and the tentative whispers of spring start to envelop the world, there's a palpable shift in the atmosphere. The longer days invite us to step out of the cozy confines of our homes, breathe in the fresh air scented with the fragrance of blossoms, and embrace the energy that comes with the changing season, but before that can happen, the month of February challenges us to one of life's most powerful duets, love. What is love? Through the ebb and flow of life, love stands as an unwavering lighthouse, guiding ships through stormy seas. A language spoken in gestures and longing gazes. A mystical, forever-

lasting fire that ignites our souls and warms up even the coldest parts of the world. The purest form of human emotions.

Whether in the quiet corners of everyday life or in grand gestures that declare affection to the world, love manifests in myriad forms. It's the quiet sunrise of companionship and the blazing sunset of passion – a spectrum of emotions that paints life's canvas with vibrant strokes. When in today's world, the word love is tossed around with no devotion behind it whatsoever, the moonstruck lover, a poet of the night, weaves verses in silence, well aware of how meaningless this term we use has become, but still choosing to express adoration to his missing second half. Their love is a sanctuary, a haven where vulnerability is not only accepted but embraced. In the safety of each other's embrace, they shed the armour, revealing what used to be the raw authenticity that bound them. In the moonlit serenade, emotions swell like tides, an ocean of sentiments stirred by the ethereal glow that bathes the earth in its silvery embrace. With every step taken under the moon's watchful eye, the lover becomes a wanderer in a dreamscape, navigating the array of emotions he experiences.

What is there to love about something broken? They ask themselves while staring at the starry night sky. What is there to love about something beyond repair? There's an extraordinary beauty in the broken pieces. It's the artistry of resilience, the way fragments come together to form a mosaic of strength and vulnerability. What is there to love about something broken? Everything. The cracks are where the light enters, and within those fractures lies the profound story of healing, growth, and love that withstands the tests of time. To love the broken is to embrace imperfection, derive comfort from healed scars, and understand that it's the fractures that contribute to our completeness. To love something broken shows unconditional love.

What is there to love about something forgotten? In the realm of forgotten things, there is an allure – a subtle beauty that emerges from the layers of neglect. Perhaps it's an old photograph, weathered by time, yet preserving moments of joy and nostalgia within its fading hues. Love for something forgotten is an acknowledgement of the resilience inherent in memories, a recognition that even in the shadows of neglect, there exists a trace of significance. It's an act of preservation, a refusal to let the echoes of the past dissolve into obscurity. It's a recognition that every relic, every fragment, bears witness to the intricate tapestry of human experience. It is an act of storytelling, where the narrative unfolds with each dust-covered artifact, offering glimpses into worlds that time has almost erased.

Those two questions wander in the lover's mind, still waiting for his missing part. The secret only he and the dazzling moon know. The moonstruck lover, will he wait forever?





You need to heal in order to love

Love...

A four-letter word

Something that feels so small

But its meaning being so much more,

People realising this the most when they are left alone;

Love can be like the refreshing and calm breeze

While you walk slowly on the beach

Or the warm and beautiful rays of the sun

That gently caress your cheek when you're outside,

The lovely smell of colourful flowers

That washes away your sorrow,

The distant sound of someone singing

And the beauty of raindrops glinting,

Slowly pouring down the lively leaves,

Showing you that even the nature sometimes tears;

Love is when someone points to you the amazing part of the world

And makes you forget about the darkness that once swirled,

It's when someone shares with you their deepest secrets and fears

And you listen understanding, wiping away their tears,

It's when they give you one more reason to live

And you go with a slight smile to sleep;

Love can be a lot of things

But you never showed anything to me,

Your heart was as cold as ice

You only used me so you could rise,

I fell for something that I couldn't have

And you just left me broken and sad;

I was desperate to feel at least a thing
But you never wanted to speak,
Only when you were mad
And you made me think I was the one being bad;

Your silence cut harshly through my soul
And made it feel like it was constantly buried under snow,
Your presence was as frozen as every time
And little pearls of silver ice I used to cry;

I didn't know how to leave,
My entire childhood was full of grief
So I was afraid of losing you
When I actually never even had you,
I bet you don't feel the same as me, you never do;

The thing that attracted me to you
Was our similar childhoods,
We both were always being forgotten or hurt
And being pushed in others' dirt,
Problems that were never ours
And we used to cry alone in our rooms for hours,
I thought this could tie a close bond between us
But the truth is we were both broken, our souls as fragile as glass;

I learnt why I shouldn't be like them
That was our difference that was made,
Even though my parents failed
I was still looking for scrapes of love on their empty plates,
You grew up with hatred deep inside your heart
And cut through mine with your anger and coldness that were sharp;

I was naive to think that I could fix you
When in reality I was also filled with the trauma I lived through,
I was wrong to assume that you would heal
When you were too busy hiding what you feel,
I thought that it made me stronger
But it just made my pain longer,
I had to glue the fallen pieces back on
Just to find after that, in my bleeding heart, another thorn;

At some point I managed to run away from you
And I left you in your own gloom,
I felt guilty but then I realised

You can't save someone if they don't want that,
I hope that you can get the help you need
And you can put some bandages on your wounds that constantly bleed,
I will probably always feel a sliver of love for you,
Even though I have to avoid you for my own good;

I stopped blaming you for what you did
And I started to love myself in the ways you
couldn't, in order to heal.

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The charm of the void

Once upon a time, there was a world full of evil, with no respect or tenderness. It was a very distant place from the love of the ordinary world, for jealousy and pride made it far from him, lest love should take possession of the land. It was called Redplace.

Anne was a dweller of Redplace, a village that was expanding every day. The village chief had escorts in Whiteway, a place filled with the magic of love and well-being, who tried to court people to do bad things and get to Redplace. Anne was a tender, innocent and smiling child, features that did not correspond to those in Redplace. She had found old and dusty books about Whiteway in the attic of her grandfather's house and was also one of the victims of the Redplace escorts. She was fascinated by the magic of words that bore her through an unreal story. Walking down the street, he saw laughter, bad games and only malice. By selling this, Anne has in a void, she could feel nothing but pain and fear, the fear that evil and enmity would take over the world. She felt suffocated in this void. One day she was lying on a wheat field and running through the rye fields a few miles from the village, singing songs of love and friendship.

“In the garden of life, where blossoms intertwine,
Love and friendship, a melody divine.
Hand in hand, through laughter and tears,
Two hearts dancing, conquering fears.

Love's sweet whispers, friendship's embrace,
A bond unbroken, a cherished space.
In the tapestry of moments, woven so tight,
Love and friendship, are forever in sight.

As the sun paints the sky in hues of gold,
Love's story and friendship, are beautifully told.
Through storms and sunshine, side by side,
In each other's company, we'll always confide.”

The magic of the song of love was felt like needles in the hearts of the citizens, all feeling that something was wrong and that Anne’s power of kindness had to stop her. The village formed a small army, coming to get Anne to Whiteway. They wanted to burn down the greenery, the only green place in the surrounding area. However, they could not that there was no sun there, but only rain and vigour because of the evil. Thus, the fire is gone. Later, they thought to catch and trample the flowers brutally. At the height of Anne, she breaks a peony flower, looking with love, appreciation and respect. The residents of Redplace did not understand what was going on, never meeting us again with the sign of love. Then the power of the charm of goodness spread like a blanket over Redplace, where the ingratiuous heart of the inhabitants was transformed and enlightened, all escaping the pressure and the stringent state of evil. They began to smile. Thus, over Redplace came the rainbow, and the grey clouds left, growing the concrete pieces of the city flowers of all colours. Anne managed to become the mystery of evil, she brought love and peace into the communities. Evil tried to return, but communion, tolerance, love, and the power of friendship drove one again.

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Magic of love

Love, such a powerful and complex feeling, has always been a central theme in people's lives. Throughout history, artists, writers and philosophers have tried to understand and express the essence of love in various ways. This mysterious force envelops and transforms us, bringing joy, passion and connection into our lives. In this essay, we will

explore the various aspects of love and its impact on our relationships, as well as how it defines us as human beings. Through exploring romantic love, self-love, and love for others, we will discover that love is a universal force that binds and inspires us in a unique way.

When it comes to romantic love, it's like entering a universe full of excitement and passion. It's that feeling that makes you feel in ninth heaven, have butterflies in your stomach and smile just thinking about your loved one. Romantic love can be experienced in a variety of ways. It can be an adolescent love, full of enthusiasm and discoveries, or it can be a mature love, built on trust and mutual respect. An example of romantic love could be the story of Romeo and Juliet, in which the two lovers struggle with obstacles and sacrifice everything for their forbidden love.

As for self-love, this is like a magical dance between your heart and soul. It is to look at yourself in the mirror and see a person who is strong, beautiful and worthy of all the love in the world. It's accepting all your sides, both light and dark, and embracing them with compassion and understanding.

Self-love means listening to your intuition and following your passions. It's about taking time to do the things that make you happy and connecting to the things that bring you joy and fulfillment.

It's forgiving your mistakes and learning from them, growing and developing into a better version of yourself. It's accepting your imperfections and recognizing your inner worth and beauty. It's loving yourself as you are, every day, every moment.

Also, self-love is a precious gift that you can give yourself. It's putting yourself first and giving yourself all the love and attention you deserve. As Oscar Wilde said, "Loving yourself is the beginning of a love story that will last a lifetime." You are worthy of love, and self-love is the key to living a life full of happiness and fulfillment.

At the same time, loving others is a wonderful and special feeling. It's that warm and affectionate feeling we feel towards the important people in our lives. When we love someone, we care about their well-being and are willing to do everything possible to make them happy. We open our hearts and show our vulnerability, thus creating a deep and authentic connection. Love for others inspires us to be kinder, to be more empathetic, and to think about the needs and desires of others.

A beautiful example of love for others is the relationship with family. Family is that place where we find support, understanding and unconditional love. We are connected to parents, brothers and sisters through this love strong and we are there for each other at every stage of life.

Also, friends are an important part of loving others. Friends are those special people with whom we share moments of joy, sadness and adventure. We are there for each other, we support and listen to each other. Friendship is a precious gift and gives us a sense of belonging and connection.

In the end, love is like a melody that envelops our souls and fills our hearts with joy and happiness. It teaches us to be better, to support each other and to enjoy every moment with our loved one. Love gives us the power to overcome our fears and open ourselves completely, creating deep and lasting bonds. Let us cherish and cultivate love in our lives, because it is what truly makes us happy.



Journey of love

Our story begins with a daring young Polish cavalier named Wojtec and his beautiful fiancée Basia. They had known each other since childhood and fell deeply in love in their late teens. And now in the year of 1919 they were preparing to get married. But as luck would have it a war had began and Wojtec was drafted.

A fierce war between Poland and the Bolsheviks had began and the happy couple was forcibly separated. Wojtec was quickly moved to the frontline away from Basia. At this point the Polish army was composed of mostly conscripts so the the front moved in Russia's favour. Unfortunately this meant that the two's village was captured due to it being near the border. When Wojtec heard the news he was devastated but couldn't abandon his post. So with a heavy heart he continued to fight for his country and for his love. After two months the polish regained the advantage and was able to recapture the area near the border. Following their victory Wojtec was allowed to take leave. After a whole day of galloping he arrived home only to discover it was empty and half burned. He frantically searched everywhere but couldn't find a soul. Fortunately, while looking inside the church he found pile of Russian documents that had been translated to polish by hand. He almost had a panic attack while reading the contents. The whole village had been kidnapped in order to make them work in Siberia for ore extraction. Now that he knew where he needed to head next, he thoroughly prepared supplies and left east.

Following the train tracks he began his rescue mission. The journey turned out to be more peaceful than he had imagined. He seldom encountered dangers but at one point narrowly passed a group of soldiers patrolling in the area. The trip was peaceful, but mentally exhausting as his rations were quickly running out and he often had to drink water directly from the nearby river. At last, he reached the somewhat sizeable city of Gomel where he stopped to rest. He went to a local inn, but couldn't get a room since his money could not be used in Russia. As he was preparing to leave he got goose bumps because as he passed a room he heard Polish being spoken behind the door. Even though he was tired, he was even more stressed about Basia, so he went to investigate. He gently knocked the door. An old man opened the door, he seemed familiar to Wojtec but couldn't quite put his finger from where. Then it dawned on him, this old man was the priest from home. Overjoyed he jumped at the opportunity and asked him where the others were. The priest calmly explained that their train broke down before reaching Gomel and the Russian soldiers decided to let them go because they hadn't been paid for several months. So that meant that the love of his

life and future wife was in the city. With reinvigorated strength he followed the old man's hint about where the others were and ran to the train station. As he set foot on the platform he let out a stream of tears as he saw Basia sitting on a bench. When she also saw him, they both started running and finally embraced.

In the end, they returned to their little village and after the war had a big wedding. Hope and happiness filled the air as they took their vows, signifying a new era of peace and prosperity. After helping the rebuilding effort they moved to England in order to escape any future conflicts of the east.

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Rocky and Mandy's Forest Expedition

Once upon a time in a quaint little town nestled between rolling hills and plush forests, there lived a golden retriever named Rocky and a mischievous tabby cat named Mandy. Rocky changed into acknowledged for his boundless energy and friendly demeanor, while Mandy became a master of stealth and foxy.

One sunny morning, Rocky was frolicking in the outdoor, chasing his tail and barking with pleasure. Mandy, perched on the fence, found Rocky with a combination of curiosity and entertainment. The cat had always determined the canine's exuberance captivating, and an idea struck him – maybe they could be friends.

With a rapid bounce, Mandy landed on the ground and approached Rocky carefully. The canine, sensing a brand new pal, wagged his tail enthusiastically. Surprisingly, the 2 animals got on well immediately. They performed fetch, wrestled inside the grass, or even shared a water bowl under a tall tree.

As their friendship blossomed, Rocky and Mandy started out spending extra time together. One day, while being lazy inside the backyard, Andy suggested to go on an adventure.

"Let's discover the enchanted wooded area past the hills," the cat proposed with a gleam in her eyes. Rocky, usually up for any adventure, agreed with a wag of his tail.

The duo set off on their expedition, weaving via the tall and rustling trees.

The forest seemed to come alive with the sounds of chirping birds and humming insects. Rocky's ears perked up and Mandy's whiskers twitched with exhilaration as they discovered the mysteries hidden in the wooded area.

Their first discovery was a babbling brook, crystal-clear water flowing over clean stones. Rocky eagerly dipped his paws in, splashing water anywhere, at the same time as Mandy gracefully leaped from stone to stone, fending off the moist patches. They persisted in their adventure, stumbling upon a grove of historic trees that whispered secrets and techniques of bygone days.

As the day went on, the buddies stumbled upon an abandoned hen's nest situated in the branches of an antique oak tree. Andy inspected it with its usual curiosity, imagining the lifestyles that thrived there. Rocky, ever the protector, watched as his tabby cat friend explored.

Suddenly, they came throughout a meadow bathed in golden daylight, in which colorful butterflies danced in the air. Rocky tried to catch them with his gentle paws, at the same time as Mandy swatted playfully on the fluttering insects. The meadow became a level for their impromptu dance, a party in their newfound friendship.

As the sun started to set, casting a warm glow over the woodland, they discovered a comfy spot for relaxation. Rocky's fur warming Mandy towards the evening they looked as they did. Under the twinkling stars, the unlikely pair found out that actual friendship could be discovered within the most surprising places.

And so, with hearts full of pleasure and reminiscences of a day well spent, Rocky and Mandy drifted right into a non violent sleep within the coronary heart of the enchanted wooded area, their friendship forever etched inside the magical tapestry of their shared adventures.





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