

Love

&

Marriage

Poems

40 Poems, Long & Short
(Four Longer Poems and Three Dozen Sonnets)

Lovingly Gathered from:

Collected Poems
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[*See Publisher's Colophon on Last Page]

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Epithalamium

("Before the Nuptial Chamber")

A

Nuptial Ode

(or Ceremonial Wedding Hymn)

I.

I call not to the muses but to you,
Our loved ones here, to help me now to sing
My joy – to celebrate the feeling true
Devotion to another soul can bring.
Come friends, come family, come beloved all;
I summon you to witness with the stars above
The bounty that is ours at Cupids' call –
That endless banquet of fulfillment: Love.
Yes, come and help memorialize this rich new life
We find laid out before us now as man and wife.

I. Longer Poems, poem #1: *Epithalamium*, the first—continued

II.

We have been blessed with that most precious gift—
Unwavering joy in one another's arms,
In which embrace our nourished spirits lift
With ease and comfort past all earthly harms.
For in that rarified existence shared
By two devoted souls (who yet are born
Again each day into each other's care),
No truth need be avoided, none forsworn.
O come rejoice with us in this unfettered life
Revealed to us through honesty as man and wife.

III.

Yes, here within love's space— that Godly state
Of mindfulness (of keenest, merest being)—
We find ourselves without the need of hate
And its systemic darkening of seeing.
So clear becomes our vision of the good
In what we have that we can see beyond
Our want (where nothing's truly understood)
To the eternal in our lives: our bond.
Come, share with us the measureless, this vast new life
We now embark upon in love as man and wife.

I. Longer Poems, poem #1: *Epithalamium*, the first—continued

IV.

Ours is the greatest story ever told:
The truth of how the love two people feel
For one another can transmute to gold
The metal of mere bodily appeal,
Availing them to that more ardent lust
Which burns an incandescence clean and whole,
Sustained by that most pure of fuels, trust;
Two beings merged into one flame, one soul.
So come, partake of this bright love that lights our life;
Illuminate the world with us as man and wife.

V.

Our story tells how lovers can be friends
First—how a man and woman can so love
Each other for their person as transcends
Romantic appetites in bed—enough
To choose to wait until their lives allow,
To wait until they get to know their hearts
Before abandoning their worlds to plow
Right in and learn their other body parts.
Observe how half a decade's wait as friends for life
Matured profoundly into love of man and wife.

I. Longer Poems, poem #1: *Epithalamium*, the first—continued

VI.

Yes, recognize this light in which we bathe
Here, high upon our pinnacle of bliss,
And testify to those below (whose faith
In love has waned) the power in a kiss.
It is a force of lightning strength, we know
Who've felt it break to shards the gray routine
Of our unsavored days and make them glow
Like stars illuming worlds unforeseen.
O tell them come and leave behind that part of life
Which does not know this kiss we live as man and wife.

VII.

It is this very kiss you've come here now
To witness, this event momentous of
That reverent concord honored in our vow,
Which consecrates the greatest life force, love.
For in this union of our lips we taste
Creation's spark, the passion of the stars,
Connecting us to all in which is traced
The endless possibilities now ours.
Yes, save this kiss within your hearts; it is our life.
We bid you nurture it; embrace us, man and wife.

I. Longer Poems, poem #1: *Epithalamium*, the first—continued

VIII.

This blessed kiss is but the corner stone
Of a cathedral we aspire to raise,
A monument to that devotion shown
Each other through support, respect, and praise.
We'll work upon our temple every day,
Yes, make each word and action but a force
For love, for affirmation. And we pray
This love infect the world at its source.
O pray our work inspire others seeking life
To find it here where love transforms us, man and wife.

IX.

This synagogue, this mosque, this holy church
Of every faith we build each moment of
Our marriage, shall preserve our constant search
For peace—first in ourselves and then through love
For others—touching, moving fellow men.
For there's no limit to the love the heart
Can hold; the more we give the more again
We find instinct in us to re-impart.
I invite you all to rapture, yes, to life
Ecstatically embraced, as live this man and wife.

I. Longer Poems, poem #1: *Epithalamium*, the first – continued

X.

And I invite the world at large, all living
Things beneath the stars – the fish and birds
And beasts throughout the waters, skies, and echoing
Trees – to witness here these joy-warmed words
And the exalted temple they'd describe,
Where's kept the relics of discovered bliss
In every thing we do, each dignified
By its essential pleasure – by its kiss.
And let each kiss be like a prayer for deeper life.
We pray now, woman and her husband, man and wife.

XI.

Now let us all perform the muse's work –
Inspire one another to create
Our world anew – to dance in light where lurked
That darkness cast by all that we negate.
Come, let's partake of this fine food with verve;
Exalt in love and nothing will we miss.
Let's eat, drink, dance, sing – live right at the nerve.
Above all, let us worship with each kiss.
We press our lips together here in search of life
Itself – the infinite in us as man and wife.

Love's Banquet

(Second Epithalamium)

Love's Banquet

1.

The table has been laid with reverent care
Befitting this rich privilege we await:
To witness, honor and, yet more, to *share*
In that sublimity two souls create
When they step forward to entrust to each
The bounty of attention in love's reach.

2.

Bound in with this attention is that wealth
Of feeling for *another* in whose sphere
One can escape the fallacy of self
And its sufficiency – yes, volunteer
To live that larger life than can be found
Where our lone ego sits enthroned and crowned.

3.

For, we've evolved, developed, and survived
As *social* beings, not free-standing things,
And cannot even grow to health deprived
Of someone else to whom the child clings.
And thus, to flourish is to *interact* –
Co-ordinate with whom we would attract –

I. Longer Poems, poem #2: *Love's Banquet* (second Epithalamium) – continued

4.

Yes, find another who would yearn to live
Within *our* world and, with us, recreate
It, customized for two, with all the give
And take that's furnished by a willing mate,
And drawing each within *their* circle of
Shared comfort and support that we call LOVE.

5.

But let us pause a moment at this word
That we make commonplace throughout each day
And savor now that sense of how we're stirred
Alive by it each time it would convey
To us this feast held morning into night
By anyone possessed of appetite.

6.

This appetite for one another's life,
With all its cares, is central to that feast
We call a healthy marriage, where no strife
Seems too unseemly to be shared at least
As fully as each joy. And in pursuit
Of *this* we find revealed love's truest fruit.

I. Longer Poems, poem #2: *Love's Banquet* (second Epithalamium) – continued

7.

It offers up a nectar sweet *and* tart
Because it's drawn from that *entire* bond
Our lovers forge, not just the honeyed part
The magazines depict with magic wand-
Like airbrush tricks, obscuring what is real
Beneath the lure of fanciful ideal.

8.

But I digress. We're here to celebrate
That great abundance that is PARTNERSHIP,
Where contribution toward each other's fate
Provides the both with so much more to grip
Of one's existence than is ever caught
Within the ministries of higher thought.

9.

This copious variety of chance
Unveiled to us at love's great banquet leaves
Us giddy with the thrill of great expanse,
Like promise of the prospects one conceives
In the exhilaration of a dream
Where *and* is one with *or* in how things seem.

I. Longer Poems, poem #2: *Love's Banquet* (second Epithalamium) – continued

10.

And like this process of a dreaming brain,
These lovers standing here before us now
Can revel at love's great buffet contained
Within each willingness to share in vow
The truths of two transformed into one bliss,
And seal it with a most delicious kiss.

The Bougainvilleas of Sonora

I

Forget the rose, my love; for all its use
As symbol of romance, it can't seduce
From us that breathless shudder of deep thrill
The lusty bougainvillea can instill
Upon first sight – much like that sudden bliss
Enveloping our union in a kiss.
Why yes, despite those qualities that long
Have won the rose first place in song
And image as the emblem of all love –
That blossom representing, far above
All others, amorous intrigue – this might
Be less the depth of sensual delight
It draws than its antiquity among
Those cultures in which songs like this are sung.

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

II

For, this was all before that crucial year
Of seventeen and sixty-eight when, near
The town of Rio de Janeiro in
Brazil, one Jeanne Baret, who'd later win
Renown as but the first of her fair sex
To circumnavigate the globe (and vex
Male natives on the way), had here discovered
In a jungle what might help her lover's
Venous ulcer: that which kept him back
On board, unable to collect and track
Rare specimens along that two-year trip
Of Louis A. de Bougainville's two ships.
This Jeanne had found some bright red bracts, it's said,
She thought might soothe her botanist in bed.

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

III

And these same quasi leaves, quite paper-thin,
Surrounding three small flowers just within,
Would prove to be none other than what gave
Acclaim to Bougainville beyond the grave—
Way more than as first Frenchman round the world—
A plant with petal-looking bracts unfurled
In glorious profusion, like a spray
Of adoration in fierce disarray.
And though our botanist's bad leg grew worse,
Despite his lover's jungle trek as nurse,
This *otherwise*-medicinal vine shrub
Would spread around the earth's warm tropic hub
To ornament the terraces of kings
On down to lowly walls to which it clings.

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

IV

Which brings us back from my digression to
That point itself our poem should pursue:
The fact that even here, where we escape
The brutal northern gloom and cold to traipse
Along the tranquil sun-drenched beaches of
Sonora's desert coast; where we make love
In the abandon of all worldly cares,
Like hedonists let loose as millionaires
To frolic on our luck; yes, even here,
Where we pursue our creature pleasures, clear
Of clouds and chill, to soar on what unrolls
Into our sparkling Now, like breeze-borne gulls,
We sometimes turn a corner by some dune
And stop within a heartbeat of a swoon.

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

V

For, what we find before us, like some great
Volcano spewing forth its red-hot fate,
Is that forgotten bougainvillea, back
Beside some crumbling remnant of a shack,
Extravagantly blushing brilliant hues
Where few but its own pollinators cruise.
Yes here, where roving dogs might come and comb
A curb for some old long-discarded bone,
We turn and find a fabulous display
Of color blazoned bright against the gray,
Like an epiphany revealed to some
Unready prophet suddenly struck dumb.
And just like this, the two of us stop dead
Amidst our tracks, forgetting what we'd said

I. Longer Poems, poem #3 *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

VI

Just then, and clasp our hands when both our hearts
Squeeze bursts of sudden-risen blood that smarts
Like pricking needles at our scalps and ears
And stimulates our widened eyes with tears,
Which seem to well up blindly from some thrill
Our forebears must have felt when they'd fulfilled
Some basic craving or escaped sure death.
But though the world in which we catch *our* breath
We taste within a privileged paradise
Of wine-sipped sunsets without sacrifice,
The *feeling* we experience remains
As vivid as the ones rewarding brains
Of old that searched more fundamental needs
(Which leaves us riding joys of bygone deeds).

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

VII

All *this* amid some bare, dilapidated street
Ignored by all the affluent elite,
Who typically will allocate great sums
In chasing titillation that becomes
No more exhilarating in its rush
Than this most natural reflexive gush.
Indeed, our species' whole economy,
From hunter-gatherers to you and me,
With *all* our smart technologies, appear
To anthropologists as engineered
Around our brain's most basic appetite
For that rewarding feeling we excite
Engaged with anything that helped confer
Survival, *gene-wise*, of an ancestor.

II Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

VIII

And this, of course, included not just things
From which to jump and run, but those that bring
Us *closer* too, inviting us from out
The shadow of instinctive fear and doubt
To chance *connection* with some entity
Conferring pleasure on the conferee.
So, just as your own beauty strikes that chord
In my most primal feeling of reward,
Inviting me to seek within your being
Everything that now seems *worth* most seeing,
When the bougainvillea fills my view
I feel my lust for life itself renew
With value that transcends the merest fact
Of my existence (which soon grows abstract).

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

IX

Now, let's return to our forgotten street,
Well off the grid of luxury, and greet
Our lonely bougainvillea one more time.
Yes, let's just stand before this most sublime
Embodiment of vegetative life
And contemplate, without dissection knife
And microscope, the dazzling splendor of
Its quiet revelation far above
That unforgiving world through which it blooms,
Full nourished by what little it consumes.
Is there in all our floriography
A plant more emblematic of that tree
Of life through which connection springs from one
Vast beauty we can bask in like the sun?

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

x

And which among those memorable traits
Of this great tree-like vine-cum-shrub elates
Its viewer with the most immediacy?
Quite likely, it would be ABUNDANCE—key
To that subliminal aesthetic of
Survival, procreation and, yes, love.
Indeed, abundance, unlike sparseness, calls
Like some enticing siren's song to all
Of life within earth's harsh economy
(Where nothing ever really eats for free).
And so, it shouldn't be surprising that
Some symbol of it will, straight off the bat,
Elicit strong emotional response
In us down where our instincts are ensconced—

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

XI

Beneath, that is, mere tweaks to what we've learned.
And now, if we step back from where we turned
To find this brilliant vision in our sight
(In this anatomy of appetite
Our poem has become in its pursuit),
We'll see more clearly how this most astute
Progenitor of ours endeavors to
Sustain its future. In the end, it's through
Such lavish attributes that join to bait
Whatever life might come help pollinate
It, broadcasting its essence against death.
Perhaps it's *this* that makes us lose our breath:
This bold expense of resource spent to lure
Attention to it, so it may endure.

I. Longer Poems, poem #3: *The Bougainvilleas of Sonora*—continued

XII

And here we come full circle to the thrust
Of this, *our* expedition, which is just
That how we've come to share each other's joy
Is ever rooted in that force employed
By all the rest of evolution's fruit—
ATTRACTION: that which drives our keen pursuit
Of intimate connection with some sure
Safe otherness in which to feel secure.
And like the bounty of this greater wealth
Than can be found within the bounds of self,
Our bougainvillea brings to mind this bliss
I rediscover in our every kiss.
So, let us keep this gorgeous bloom, above
All else, the potent symbol of our love.

Ode to a Nightgown

I: Strophe

1

My art awakes and, rousing from my brain
A sense of wonder, shows how I am drunk
On life and you, my muse – as if cocaine
Were emptied in the veins of some old monk,
Inspiring him to see the stardust in
His hands and sing enraptured of those things
Celestial gleaned within his dim-lit cell –
All this evoked by art, which fashions wings
From out the plainest words in which we dwell.

2

But art alone can't satisfy my thirst
For your warm gorgeousness, and I am left
With deep, unquiet longing to be nursed
To nonsense in the bounty of your breasts,
Dissolved into the warm oblivion
Of your allure (from out the hubbub of
A world boggled by the brashest noise)
To fade into the current of your love,
Where I forget the ways that time destroys.

I. Longer Poems, poem #4: *Ode to a Nightgown*—continued

3

For, you've become, with me, that great event
No craft in words can more than celebrate,
As art can only strive to *represent*
Those feelings that our eager nerves create
(To translate life into experience).
Art measures *how it feels to be alive*
Within the presence of ideas and things
And not those things themselves we strive
To know. And it's from *this* our poem springs.

II: Antistrophe

4

Yes, as the object that this thirst observes
Cannot be apprehended *in itself*
(Since written in the language of live nerves),
I sing in order to explore the wealth
Discoverable through sounds shaped on the tongue.
And so, I'll choose a metaphor for you:
Some figure in our speech I'll use to show
How you're revealed to me, as if but through
Its medium alone you're mine to know.

I. Longer Poems, poem #4: *Ode to a Nightgown*—continued

5

And what might better serve me as this veil
Of revelation than that nightgown, sheer
As exhibitionism in detail,
You wear in my lust's eye whenever near?
As if reversing all that went before,
I now propose to sing the virtues of
That very obstacle inviting me
To violate its boundaries toward your love
And, through it, to exalt what I'd set free.

6

Now, to apostrophize some piece of gauze
In place of one who lends it life may seem
Absurd to those untutored in the laws
Of logic your philosophers esteem,
But I maintain this concept we call "cause,"
Seen independent of "effect," displays
To its inquisitor such truths as would
Lay bare the myths obscuring why we praise
Or damn the stuff we label "bad" or "good."

I. Longer Poems, poem #4: *Ode to a Nightgown*—continued

III: Epode

7

And so, I sing to *you*, my lover's gown,
Through which I glimpse my view of paradise:
That garden of delight in which no crown
Of emperor could ever more entice.
You were not made for reticence, my bodice
So diaphanously thin. No prim
And proper prig had ever tried *you* on
For fun to satisfy some vampish whim.
You're meant to lure an evening into dawn.

8

The magic casement of your plunging neck-
Line offers me a view of dazzling hills
Emerging from the valley of her beck
And call, whence I'm drawn down toward broad-
hipped thrills
Ecstatic as a foaming sea, until
I feel myself full powerless to rise
From out the heaving tide of our desire...
AND I COME WITHIN HER GRASP, where thighs
And cries discharge, then trickle, till expired....

I. Longer Poems, poem #4: *Ode to a Nightgown*—continued

9

I cannot see you, rumped at our feet,
Where I had tossed you in hot haste back then.
For you've become, once more, some indiscreet
Contrivance of a waking dream of men
That sees a woman as some tasty treat,
Forbidden till unwrapped in such a way.
And you remain, therefore, symbolic of
The stratagems smart lovers like to play
In order to keep sex the lure of love.

II. Three Dozen Love Sonnets

II. Love Sonnets, #1

Economics 101

In my economy, you are the gold:
You are that valued good round which is turned
The raw commodity of my most bold
Desire into satisfactions earned.
I set my currency with worldly things
To that high standard of your wisdom's range
That gleans the moral grain impatience flings
Aside in search of pleasure's pocket change.
You are reward supreme for time well spent
Appreciating what's most real and true.
And so, in practicing my best intent
I but accrue still deeper love for you.
For this there is no cost too high to pay;
I profit by your presence every day.

II. Love Sonnets, #2

Taking Inventory of My Love

I itemize the world to find my way:
To clear a path for recognition's light
Throughout the tangled, seeming disarray
Of boundless matter and event in sight.
Each day I live thus, with a list of things
Conceived articulate against the blind,
Rapacious din our earthly process sings.
(This way I glean what's me from all I find.)
But when I try to frame my love for you –
Yes, name into significance each part
Of how I crave you – I am lost. (Why do
We think the brain a measure of the heart?)
For, love is *felt* when known, not understood;
I feel your beauty like one knows the good.

II. Love Sonnets, #3

Our Life Together

When we're apart, the world makes little sense.
Its things impinge upon the nerve and prove
Existence in my brain, but as events
Unweighted by significance or truth.
I listen to the sounds the treetops make –
That clamor of community we've heard
As evolution's voice – and can't help take
It in as noise: loud bourse of bug and bird.
When we're together though, my love, instead
The world seems my mother tongue. I know
Its idiom like thirst knows drink. What's said
On every leaf I read in love, and own.
Life shared with you reveals my deepest dreams:
Those visions of fulfillment where life *means*.

II. Love Sonnets, #4

Your Body as My World

There is a landscape closer to my heart
Than any on this luscious earth – terrain
I yearn for like a nourishment, to start
My soul toward its most sensual domain.
It is a country ample of the lush
Enticement nature wears to urge her own
Replenishment – the ripe, ecstatic blush
Of springtide's sway – conceived as flesh and bone.
It is your body, love, I worship here;
Your substance *is* my world. Each gentle curve
Of you forms my horizon, bounds my sphere,
Wherein my deepest being is preserved.
Your body is the landscape of my lust;
In its soft warmth I come to find my trust.

II. Love Sonnets, #5

The Anatomy of Love

I love you with my body, dear, because
That's where my flesh resides – the *corporal* me
(The *only* one) – that place your being gnaws
At mine with physical intensity
And proves the source of everything I feel:
The all I see, hear, taste, smell, touch, am, know
As meat of my engagement in the real
Live world of what our nerve cells undergo.
Yes, this, *my body*, is the engine of
All predicates and subjects we construe –
The carnal truth of how I am and love –
The all I yearn to merge with what is you.
Your lover is no ghost in some machine
But that real corpus built of world and gene.

II. Love Sonnets, #6

Let Eros Make Our Bed

To sleep (perchance to *dream* of sleep at least)
Is deathly dull employment of a bed.
Let ours be first that sanctum where we feast
Life's deepest appetite aroused instead.
For sleep will come, eventually, to all,
While love's delights, deferred, are but bequeathed
Directly to oblivion. So, sprawl
Luxurious upon my love unsheathed,
My love! Let's leave this bed as evidence
Of life lived in exuberance, for two;
Of pleasure's evolutionary sense
In bringing flesh to thrill at rendezvous!
Let Eros make our bed for more than rest:
For waking us to life's profoundest zest!

II. Love Sonnets, #7

Pleasures of the Flesh

Upon your lips I find my paradise –
That earthly banquet of delight our flesh
Is heir to naturally: to best entice
Itself towards life against the blank of death.
Yes, in the luscious bounty of your kiss
I taste the sweet oblivion I crave
To sate, alive between love's thrill-clutched hips,
And savor its *free* bliss in which we bathe.
For, this rich hunger's *ours* and needn't wait
On superstitions of the starved, who're taught
To spurn all food that might but stimulate
Their appetite and lead them into thought.
Yes, we who think fear none of life's allure,
Which slakes that emptiness beyond death's door.

II. Love Sonnets, #8

Between the Sheets

We know each other best between the sheets
Of this choice volume of our life we share,
In which is bound with trust the fleshly treats
That reinforce through lust this love we bare.
Concupiscence regilds the dull routine
To which the binding of two lives submits,
Illuminating once again the keen
Cohesive pleasures chasteness soon unknits.
This gathering of leaves of love, fresh pledged,
Within the spine of ever-livened want,
Preserves for us attachment's precious edge,
Which negligent re-shelving would wear blunt.
The library of our connubial bliss
Holds as its greatest treasure our *next* kiss.

II. Love Sonnets, #9

Sleep & Love

Each night, as life's great bounty grows too much
And we lie down, unburdened of our hold,
To grasp at recollections of its touch,
We lose our selves together in love's fold.
Within this nestled warmth our snug embrace
Affords we drift away beyond the laws
That govern day to roam that inner space
Where things once lived appear without their cause.
But though this ghostly realm is each our own,
We find it nightly via one shared bed,
Which ferries us to folly and back home,
Restored, into each other's mind and stead.
And fresh from our re-membered lives we wake,
Emergent, into treasure to partake.

II. Love Sonnets, #10

Married Love

We married one another to lay claim
To that great bounty of attraction's force
That brought our boundaries to converge and frame
With meaning how lust's pleasures feed love's source.
The maps we used to find this place were those
Our ancestors had modified through their
Success, despite vast differences imposed
By new terrains. Yet, here we can forbear.
For, though our circuitries evolved to spur
Us on by way of novelty's ideal
Toward wider fields to sow, we who demur
Can stay and reap those satisfactions *real*.
Thus, innate cravings for the ever new
We've tamed into *attachment*, tried and true.

II. Love Sonnets, #11

The Magic of Your Voice

When through the rude, cold, brash, hard, mindless noise
The world's commerce makes, my tired ear
Perceives the love-warmed wisdom of your voice,
I feel my spirit glide into the clear.
At once, the strident uproar churned between
Antagonism's treacherous banks gives way
As I am carried safe to the serene
Unhurried confluence where trust holds sway.
And well behind me now the sirens' cries
Grow faint in their sensational appeals
Competing for consumers as I rise
Into the sensual splendor love reveals.
For here within the timbre of your care
I bask *companioned*, past temptation's snare.

II. Love Sonnets, #12

*Why This Day Is So Very Special,
Like All Others.*

This day, when birds come down to choose their mates
And humans pause to love amid their fuss
With lesser things, I once more celebrate
My constant joy: our *daily* choice of *us*.
We need no martyr's anniversary
To feel this exultative state of heart,
This flutter of soul's wings; the cursory
Can have no place where life is lived like art:
In mindfulness, that is, in slow, sure, prayer-
Like vividness of thought which consecrates
Each *moment's* grace, each life-rich breath of air,
Each taste of food that nourishes, not sates.
No calendar can keep such reverent sway;
My love, I choose you now *and every day*.

II. Love Sonnets, #13

Not in My Wildest Dreams

Of all my dreams, this one I live with you,
My love, eludes interpretation best.
It yields to all analyses no clue
Beyond its truth: that love wakes life to zest.
There is no sage on earth can come and read
In it but myths that rhyme with his beliefs,
As its most human logic will exceed
All numbers summed, like facts by joys and griefs.
It seems I'd slept till meeting you and lived
As large as this but only while I dreamt;
For here in love's embrace I wake to give
Sleep's madness chase, as if from death exempt.
Not in my wildest dreams had I foreseen
My life so wide, exuberant, and keen.

II. Love Sonnets, #14

Words, Words, Words

It's said that words cannot express the real
Experience of LOVE: those tongues of fire
Licking at our reason till we feel
Hot desperation for the one desired,
Or then, later, that more temperate kind
We wake to once these waxed psychotic thrills
Have ebbed and left us focused with near blind
Affection that attachment's sense instills....
It isn't true. These mere voiced signs, *once coined*,
Become the very currency that buys
Our visits *back* to these spent feelings, joined
Now with new *values* their belief implies.
So, when I say I love you, dear, I *feel*
How much I do, since words trace what seems real.

II. Love Sonnets, #15

The Magnificent Accident of Us

That you and I exist at all is rare
Beyond conception in a cosmos vast
As this, but that we'd come to meet and bare
Our lives to one another's love counts past
All odds of destined ends. For, these must heed
In their trajectory no compromise
With those diverse events that would impede
Their goal. And this ignores what underlies
Becoming: we're the level outcome of
Time's sands of interactive happenstance,
Which could have settled otherwise. Our love
Then is a process bodies make with chance.
This key to life dispels the myth of fate:
The accident of us we *help* create.

II. Love Sonnets, #16

Waking Up in Paradise

I woke this morning into paradise.
A flock of geese had called me from a dream
Of lives unlived, of joys long sacrificed,
To witness the eternal in a gleam.
For, past our nestled feet I saw the sun
Light up a sudden slope of brilliant pine
And stone arising from a surface spun
In sparkling calm. It shone outside all time.
And yet, our window opens on a splendor
Beyond *this* each day we wake up side
By side. It opens *inward* on what's rendered
Shimmering in the warmth our hearts confide.
O all creation's beauty's *here*, my dove;
Yes, all of Eden, *here*, where flows our love.

II. Love Sonnets, #17

At Home in Paradise

Four years ago I woke into a dream
Of life with you lived high upon the calm
Where sparkling water bound by soaring green
Would soothe our city nerves in cooling balm.
This dream was ours together, like the sky
We'd watch each night dissolve into our love.
To enter its rare light, we would belie
Our knowledge of unrealized hopes above.
Yet now I wake to find our vision real—
Perceived directly from the world below
Where diamonds dance on ripples to reveal
The paradise that stokes the fancy's glow.
We dare to dream because we dare to live;
Without our trust in love, what dare we give?

II. Love Sonnets, #18

Paradise Sustained

I, whose hair is tinged with gray, now sing
Once more of paradise: not his that's lost
And found contingent on an angel's wing,
But ours that's ever present without cost.
The morning star illuminating this,
Our bower of bliss, is *not* the one who fell,
Defiant, from the light, but *she* whose kiss
Engenders everything within earth's swell.
Yes, Venus and her Eros guide us here,
Inspiring our obedience to *life*,
Not Superstition, whose dim parents, Fear
And Ignorance, breed cruelty and strife.
Our Eden, love, is here on earth, our home,
Sustained in trust, not seized through war's hot foam.

II. Love Sonnets, #19

First Anniversary Sonnet

One year ago upon this sacred day
We changed the world forever with a kiss.
The ambient love released, just as we prayed,
Lit up a moment's dark to mystic bliss:
A shiver like a splinter of the sun
Singed quick each spine, yes woke each life, around
The epicenter, where we stood – where, one
With all abundance, our new life was crowned.
And now, this glorious day, we look back out
Across the year we've kindled with our love
And see it glowing still, beyond all doubt,
Where *now* is that eternity above.
Each blessed day this past year has unfurled
We've better served each other (and the world).

II. Love Sonnets, #20

Leaving Our Heart Upon Taishan

The millions who'll make pilgrimage to climb
Mt. Tai will gain upon its lucid peak
A vantage on a world unchanged by time:
That state of reverence brought by all who seek.
They'll feel what countless souls who came before
Had left of *their* enlightenment here: a sense
Of permanence in flux; the evermore
Within the ancient moment's present tense.
And higher yet than this, they'll find our love:
Bright joy in living in each other's eye
And earthly appetite. Who climbs above
These racing clouds tomorrow will espy
Upon a chain around a sacred rock
Our reverence, symbolized by a heart-shaped lock.

II. Love Sonnets, #21

Within Some Other Age

Had we encountered one another's love
Within the boundaries of some other age,
We might have passed it by, untasted of
This joy, between some drudgery and its wage.
We would, perhaps, have turned and looked, but then
Pressed on towards satisfactions safe (those far
Enough from what our smarting hearts could ken)
And missed *today*, where luck holds its bazaar.
For love first must be *possible* to thrive —
The consequence of physics, laws, and chance
No less than soul. (A body cannot strive
To love when dead in *best* of circumstance.)
So let us savor, dear, good fortune's role
In our great love, and keep it as our goal.

II. Love Sonnets, #22

Barcarolle

We wake to opalescent mornings high
Above the water's scintillating span
And feel within its gentle pulse the ply
Of time unweaving rock to windblown sand.
From out this measured current we can hear
The primal urge towards boundlessness take flight
And soar, transcendent of the wide blue sphere
Where rainbows merge, dissolving back to light.
And as the evening gathers up this day
In slowly deepening shadows, we above
Who watch these fluid processes at play
Can see in earth's affinities *our* love.
For, like resolve that's sought through ebb and flow,
We find our concord *sharing* this day's glow.

II. Love Sonnets, #23

Written Just for Us

Sometimes we live within a work of art
So deeply that it's ours. Its secrets hold
Our own so knowingly we feel a part
Of what's revealed beneath the story told.
This happened long ago when one whose love
Was uncontainable sat down and wrote
It out: desire's map, from anguish of
Pure self into love's rapture, note by note.
And then we came and found what he had left
Us both: the sound of our own desperation
For each other's touch; the warp and weft
Of want, with which to weave love's exaltation.
Now, we hear the yearning in these lines
And know it's *our* embrace their search defines.

II. Love Sonnets, #24

Annus Mirabilis

Go scoop a year of time from out the flow
Of its events and watch it trickle through
Your grasp of its significance, as though
In meaning's gravity, truths bend askew.
This seems to happen in my measure of
That special year in which you had emerged
Into the light of my potential love
And lived your life towards mine till they'd converged:
Within the circuit of my memory,
A moment in some far-off family's life
Becomes a golden age I tend to see
Predictive of our bliss as man and wife.
This year that gave me you is but cold time
That meaning's heat has raised to the sublime.

II. Love Sonnets, #25

Love & Time

From that bright moment we first met, till now,
When we look back across the splendor born
Of its event, time seems *itself* endowed
With that exalted feel of love fresh-sworn,
As if the very *measure* of love's bond
Becomes at length the matter it would gauge,
Providing passion's sustenance *beyond*
Attraction's force, which *first* had set love's stage,
As if duration's steady trial of trust
Can render stronger what survives its test
By weeding out the fleeting in our lust
To leave just what erects the surer nest.
Yes, time reveals to us love's *mounting* bliss;
So, come, my love, extend it with a kiss!

II. Love Sonnets, #26

Lovebirds Refurbishing their Nest

A pair of aging lovebirds made their nest
Upon a paradise of trust. The house
They'd called their home was fine...though not the *best*
They could conceive toward sharing with a spouse.
And here were they forewarned by seasoned birds
Whose rebuilt nests had brought *their* love's demise
(When costly strangers came in noisy herds
To pry their world apart with compromise).
Yet our pair, confident in what induced
So strong a bond as theirs, would go select
With pluck the fabric of their ideal roost
With high-priced contractor and architect.
And once all done, though *fiscally* quite poor,
Their *love* cooed deeper, richer than before.

II. Love Sonnets, #27

Feeling a Tad Psychotic

I met you in the afternoon of this
Well-reasoned life I'd led while occupied
With cogent, philosophic thoughts. That kiss
I dreamed of from you thereon in hog-tied
My analytic strengths and left me drained
Of focus toward my tasks, like tying shoes
And finding words. But this was well explained
By natural brain events, which was good news.
For, were I really nuts I wouldn't know
"Reality" from what I merely dreamt,
And I knew *well* this difference by my show
Of apt responses to your lips, which tempted
Me to see them in each evening sky.
And I knew too that SUNSETS DO NOT LIE!

II. Love Sonnets, #28

Borodin in Love

The chemistry between two beings bound
By love's exhilarations can be heard
In these complexities of nuanced sound
That interact with feelings beyond words:
As if the laboratory of the heart,
In which we test affinities we crave,
Reveals its best-kept secrets through the art
Of organizing pitches upon staves,
Inviting us to gauge that appetite
A body suffers for connection deep
Within another's yearning and delight
Upon those pleasures found within its sweep.
And in these fluid properties explored
We find our *own* bond strengthened in accord.

II. Love Sonnets, #29

The Language of Love

I often hear some couple suffer words
With one another that provide, it seems,
Safe distance for respite from wounds incurred
In trespassing their partner's self-esteem.
And I can't help but sense in every blow
Of hurtful comments proffered their high need
To take another language up; yes, throw
Away these sharpened phrases and proceed
In softer, warmer, more inviting sounds
Through which their vulnerabilities are bared
So dangerously that both seek grounds
To be protector of the other's cares —
Till, soon, like us, they find themselves in bed,
Re-conjugating risqué verbs instead.

II. Love Sonnets, #30

A Sonnet to My Muse

My muse, I've called to you these anguished years
To teach me how to sing the world anew,
To find that voice in which our hard-earned tears
Might nourish joyful reverence for what's true.
And though I'd thought you couldn't hear my call
(Because this voice I seek is yours), I see
Now that you'd never left my side at all:
You are Love's genius come to set me free.
And now I see you everywhere I go,
My love: each port at which my ship arrives.
I find you in each eye I meet and know
You in the beauty of all seas and skies.
I burn to taste the wisdom of your lips
And learn the world with my fingertips.

II. Love Sonnets, #31

Admitting Our Impediments

Let's talk of love, but not that ideal stuff
Of stars and ships and well-fixed points beyond
The reach of time. No, I mean love that's tough
As life, admitting faults through which we bond.
It is a thing we make – a thing of nerves
And not some disembodied force that moves
The planets. (That's called gravity.) Love serves
No greater outcome than to help us choose.
And that's where our impediments come in:
Because it *can* be lost, our love must hold
The all of us, and not just traits that win
Our favor. These will sag as we grow old.
Let ours be that true marriage of two minds
Embodying the real in what love binds.

II. Love Sonnets, #32

An Exquisite Sadness

At times, the deepest love can taste like grief,
As when our happy hold on what we prize
The most seems lost to our worst fear's belief
That it won't last, and we rehearse goodbyes.
It is that haunting sense where beauty stings
Us with the dread of evanescence, keen
To what is missing in that vowel she sings
Relentlessly in search of hope unseen.
And as we listen to this wordless text
That reads like our empathic need to feel
Each other's pain, we savor the complex
Convergence of emotion that's revealed.
For here, distilled from *all* the heart's affairs,
A yearning aches to suffer love's great cares.

II. Love Sonnets, #33

Romeo, Juliet,
Lytton & Carrington

To want what one can't have can forge that bond
Surviving reason's most persuasive proofs
By focusing priorities beyond
The comfort of convention's feel of truth.
It is to sacrifice the ease routine
Provides formality, so as embrace
The precious burden of what lies between
Two lives long shaped by different fears to face.
To love someone enough to forfeit hope
Of ownership is to fulfill our lust
For deep attachment in that richer scope
Where intimacy lines its nest with trust.
And it is this I want for us as well:
That what we have in love is where we dwell.

II. Love Sonnets, #34

At Home on the Roam

That journey we now share upon this earth
Between two places we have made our home
Reveals to us with each new year the worth
Discoverable in learning how to *roam*:
Yes, travel *indirectly* – *past* the route
Efficiency prescribes – to view what lies
Between those compass points of our commute
As *new* horizons to survey and prize.
For, all those little rituals we call
Our life include the ways we soothe our fear
Of change, though these buy satisfactions small
Compared with those that thrill the pioneer.
So, let us keep our destinations set...
But just *defer* them, *past* routine's regret.

II. Love Sonnets, #35

My Spiritual Journey

I woke to find myself awake amidst
A dark wood bedroom suite in some motel
Halfway between my lust and what it fixed
Upon: a gorgeous woman, hot as hell.
I knew I wasn't sleeping anymore
Though, since this beauty I'd been kissing proved
None other than the one I heard now snoring
Soft against this shoulder I'd not moved.
And then it was the reason had occurred
To me just why conjugal intercourse
Like ours might cook still with such heat, though stirred
By reproductive instincts reinforced
Well past our procreative age: Above
This waste of seed prevails the boon of love.

II. Love Sonnets, #36

Sharing Our Fortune

The wealth of nations is no match for ours,
Which is derived not from commodities
Agreed to have fixed worth but by those powers
Trust invests *past need* of guarantees.
For, goods are only made to be consumed
And services to be enjoyed, but trust,
Love's bond, grows most abundant when it's used
And stays, through vulnerability, robust.
Though, fundamentally, all love may be,
Like money, but a matter of belief,
This doesn't lessen its authority,
As hormones ply where even faith is brief.
Our fortune, love, is vast because we care
More for *each other* than our market share.

III. Notes on the Dates of Composition of these Poems

The poems in this volume are all the result of an unusually slow process of composition, often encompassing numerous revisions. Some sonnets progressed in this manner over periods of many months. Therefore, in order to avoid offering an unrealistic sense of precision, dates given below to these poems have been limited to their year of completion only, though in most cases this *is* synonymous with the year of composition as well. The poems in the subject volume may be found as well in the larger volume of my poetic work entitled *Collected Poems (& Prose Works)*. Those chosen from that to comprise the subject volume include the wedding poem, *Epithalamium* (Nuptial Ode, a Ceremonial Wedding Hymn), the erotic ode, *Ode to a Nightgown*, and twenty-nine love sonnets for various occasions, including wedding anniversaries and Valentine's Day, as well as *unofficial* memorializations of romantic love. All of these were written by me to express my love for my wife (and muse) Carol. And it was Carol's idea to collect them here for others to enjoy for special occasions of their own.

Only one change has been made to any of these poems: a stanza was removed from *Epithalamium* to render it more universal (i.e., less specific to the particular circumstances of our own wedding). This missing stanza, which had been the penultimate one in the original version, may be found *in situ* as Stanza XI in my *Selected Poems*. Its removal was purely one of practicality and not of critical editing, as it happens to pertain to very specific dynamics of our two families at the time Carol and I married and would therefore sound disorienting if read at almost anyone else's wedding.

Carol's original presentation copies of the poems in this volume typically include a sometimes-lengthy presentation legend, often including an "argument" characterizing the subject of the poem's meditation. Although appropriate to the specific ceremonial spirit of their presentation, the vast

Notes on the Dates and Circumstances of Compositions, *continued*

majority of such inscriptions have been excised from the texts of these poems for publication in the subject volume. The dates and circumstances of composition of all these poems may be found below in a separate section, "Original Prefaces."

Carol's copies of these poems included a presentation preface (or legend, or "argument" [summarizing or characterizing the subject of the poem's meditation]). Although I still believe these inscriptions to be appropriate to the specific ceremonial spirit of the *presentation* of these poems, I agree with my two best critics (my wife and muse Carol, and my friend J. Allan Hobson) that they run the risk of distracting the reader from the *poems themselves* (by inviting, or at the very least *endorsing*, indulgence in extracurricular speculations). Hence, such presentation inscriptions have been excised from the texts of these poems as presented in the subject volume. However, for those who have already confronted the poems without this distraction and who still yearn for more context or explication, I have endeavored to include below a transcription of this original prefatory material for each poem, including date of composition or presentation:

Original Presentation Prefaces

1.

Epithalamium

("Before the Nuptial Chamber")

A Nuptial Ode**(or Ceremonial Wedding Hymn)**

In the tradition of

Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, John Donne, Ben Jonson, et al.

(Themselves in the tradition of Sappho, Catullus, et al.)

But especially

Spenser's splendid *Epithalamion* (1594, for his own wedding)*Celebrating**The Spiritual, Corporal, and Legal Marriage**of**Two People**Committed to Each Other**Forever*

Cast in Eleven* Rhymed and Metered Ten-Line Stanzas

Each Comprising Two Elegiac Quatrains

Terminating in an Alexandrine Couplet

Of Non-Verbatim (Incrementally-Repetitive) Refrain

[*Originally *twelve* stanzas, the penultimate one having been removed from the poem for the subject edition due to its likely irrelevance to anyone except the subject poet and his muse.]

[Composed between January 17th and March 18th, 2005 for Public Recitation

By the Poet at His Own Wedding on September 24, 2005.]

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued

2.

Love's Banquet

A Second Epithalamium
(Ceremonial Wedding Ode)

In Sixty Lines
(Cast in Ten Sixains of "Venus and Adonis" Stanza)

Exploring the Idea of Feast or Banquet as Metaphor for
The Sumptuous Variety of Delicious Satisfaction
Offered Us by Life
*When in the Ongoing Preparation and Enjoyment of
Shared Love*

A Poem Composed by the Groom's Father, David Borodin

*Specifically for the Celebration of the Wedding Ceremony of
Daniel Borodin and Sirirat Kaewthavorn
At Lower Twin Lake, Idaho, on July 23, 2022*

3.

The Bougainvilleas of Sonora

[Composed March-April 2018 for February 2019]

A Poem in Punctuated Stichic Form
Conceived in Couplets and Gathered in
A Dozen Sonnet-Size Clusters
In Celebration of
The Perennially Sultry, Tropical Lushness
Of Our Love

*For My Carol Lynn
Valentine's Day, 2019*

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued

4.

Ode to a Nightgown

A Reverently Subversive Parody Ode

In Praise of

Erotic Intimacy

And its Effect

Upon the Health of a Marriage

And

Its Participants

Inspired by the Approach of

The Thirteenth Anniversary

Of Our Publicly Acknowledged Legal Union

To Freely Enjoy Such Intimacy

While Also Filing a Joint Return

(As Well as by, of Course,

The Immortal Odes of John Keats)

[Composed During January 2018,

Largely in Ecuador,

For Presentation to My Muse on the Occasion of

Our Thirteenth Wedding Anniversary on September 24th]

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued: Love Sonnets

1. ***Economics 101*** (September-October 2010) 33
- A Love Sonnet Aspiring to Assess
The Vast Capital My Love Represents
In the Household Management of My Heart
For My Valentine, Wife, Love & Muse
My Carol Lynn
On Valentine's Day, 2011
2. ***Taking Inventory of My Love*** (July-September 2006)..... 34
- A Sonnet by one professional appraiser to another
Attempting to identify and describe
(Though ultimately to *value*)
That most mysterious, magical, and personal of properties
Which holds him blessed each day of his life
Married to his intoxicating, unforgettable woman.
Collected, collated, and compiled
For Christmas, 2006
For my Carol Lynn
3. ***Our Life Together*** (late 2006 / early 2007) 35
- A Sonnet
Addressing the Sustaining Power of Love
In Time for Valentine's Day, February 14, 2007
For My Carol Lynn
4. ***Your Body as My World*** (September 2005) 36
- A Sonnet
Addressing the Landscape of My Desire
(Inspired by *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos*,
a painting of a female nude in a landscape,
by John Vanderlyn [American, 1775-1852], circa 1809-14,
at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.)
For My Carol Lynn
On Christmas Day, December 25, 2005
5. ***The Anatomy of Love*** (September , 2012 through January 2013) 37
- A Spirited Celebration of the Body
As Sole Source and Experience
Of Love

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued: Love Sonnets

Conceived in Rhyme *and* Reason
 In Honor of Valentine's Day, 2013
For my Wife, My Muse, My Love
 My Carol Lynn

6. *Let Eros Make Our Bed* (November 2009) 38

An Erotic Sonnet for
 My Wife and Muse,
 My Carol Lynn,
 On Valentine's Day, 2010

7. *Pleasures of the Flesh* (November 2013 through February 2014) 39

Pleasures of the Flesh
 An Epicurean Erotic Sonnet
 Savoring the Delicious Wholesomeness of
Erotic Love
For my Wife, Muse, and Banqueting Companion
My Carol Lynn
 On Valentine's Day 2014

8. *Between the Sheets* (January through September 2014)..... 40

A Bibliophilic Sonnet Perusing
 The Enduring Beauty of Our
 Magnificent Conjugal Binding
 On the Occasion of Our Ninth Wedding Anniversary
 On September 24, 2014
For my Wife, Muse, and Book-Loving Bed Partner
My Carol Lynn

9. *Sleep & Love* (November 2011)..... 41

A Sonnet Dreaming about Our Love
 of Sleeping Together
For My Wife, Muse, Valentine, Lover, and Sleeping Companion
 My Beloved Carol Lynn
 On Valentine's Day, 2012

10. *Married Love* (January 2013)..... 42

A Few Quatrains and a Couplet Savoring the Satisfactions
 Of Living Deep in Love with One Another

IV. Notes, Section B: Dates and Circumstances of Composition of the Poems

While Still Married to Each Other
 In Honor of the Inception of
 The Eighth Year of Our Deeply Loving Union
For my Wife, My Muse, My Love
 My Carol Lynn
 Original Presentation Prefaces, continued: Love Sonnets

11. *The Magic of Your Voice* (July-August 2008) 43

Three stanzas and a couplet
 Rhyming in adoration of the sound
 Of the voice I love best in all the world.
To My Carol Lynn, My Muse
 Right in time for Valentine's Day, 2009

12. *Why This Day is So Very Special, Like All Others* (Dec. 2004-Jan. 2005) 44

A Love Sonnet
 Commemorating St. Valentine's Feast Day
 February 14th, 2005
 (And the Other 364 Days of the Year
 In Which I Treasure My Love)
For My Beloved Carol Lynn

13. *Not in My Wildest Dreams* (February-March 2011) 45

A Love Sonnet Wondering in Search of
 Boundaries Distinguishing Dreams
 From Mere Dreams
 On the Occasion of Our 6th Wedding Anniversary
 On September 24, 2011
 This Theme and Title Having Been Assigned to Me
 By My Muse (and Loving Wife) at 3:00 p.m., February 8, 2011

14. *Words, Words, Words* (April 2014) 46

A Word or Two of Appreciation
 For the Value of Language
 In the Feeling and Practice of
 LOVE
For My Love
 My Carol Lynn

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued: Love Sonnets

(As Well as My LOVE of WORDS)
On Valentine's Day, 2015

15. *The Magnificent Accident of Us* (January and August 2012)..... 47

A Sonnet Celebrating the Accident of Chance
As an Essential Ingredient
In the Recipe for Life and Love
(In Repudiation of the Fabulously Ludicrous
Yet Ever-Seductive Myth of Destiny)
Commemorating the Seventh Anniversary
Of Our Accidentally Inevitable-Seeming
Yet Happily Ever-So-Essential Marriage
September 24, 2012
For My Carol Lynn

16. *Waking Up in Paradise* (July-August 2005) 48

A Love Sonnet
Addressing the Splendor of Waking
With my Beloved Overlooking a Lake in North Idaho
(Lower Twin Lake, Morning of July 20, 2005)
For My Carol Lynn
On Her Birthday, October 25, 2005

17. *At Home in Paradise* (August-September 2009)..... 49

A Love Sonnet Celebrating
Our Fourth Wedding Anniversary
September 24th, 2009
In Special Appreciation of
Our Life Together in Our New Home
On Lower Twin Lake, north of Rathdrum, Idaho
For My Carol Lynn, My Wife and Muse

18. *Paradise Sustained* (August-September 2009)..... 50

A Love Sonnet Celebrating
The Paradise in Which We Dwell
Here in Love
On the Occasion of
The [Who's Countingeth?] Birthday
On October 25, 2009 of

Original Presentation Prefaces, continued: Love Sonnets

My Beloved Wife and Muse, my Carol Lynn
(Without Apology to John Milton [or to Anybody Else])

19. *First Anniversary Sonnet* (April 5-28 [and into May], 2006) 51

A Sonnet Celebrating Our First Year
As Husband and Wife,
As Lovers,
As Parents,
As Partners.
September 24, 2006
To My Loving Wife, My Only Muse,
My Carol Lynn

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Remembering the moment of our placement
(at the position of 6:00, the hour of our wedding)
Of a heart-shaped brass lock, engraved *Carol & David*, on a chain of locks
Wound around a marble railing surrounding the summit stone
In the courtyard of the *Yuhuang miao* ("Jade Emperor Temple") at the summit of
Yuhuhuang ding ("Jade Emperor Peak"), *Taishan* ("Mt. Taishan")
North of Tai'an in Shandong Province, China, on April 18, 2007
This poem prepared for Valentine's Day 2008

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(Three Years Ago Today This September 24, 2008)
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 An Intimate Aquatic Nocturne Heard as
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 On October 25, 2014

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Composed During the Period of His Meeting and Engagement to
The Love of His Life
Ekaterina Sergeevna Protopopova (later Borodina) in 1861
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Love & Marriage Poems

40 Poems, Long & Short

(Four Longer Poems and Three Dozen Sonnets)

Lovingly Gathered from:

Collected Poems

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by

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