

Celebration Rites: Making your dream reality.

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Readings to inspire

Here are readings you might want to use, adapt or modify to create your dream wedding ceremony.

From Captain Corelli's Mandolin

Love is a temporary madness; it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion. That is just being in love, which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.

Louis de Bernieres

From 'Gift From The Sea'

When you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity - in freedom, in the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now. Relationships must be like islands, one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits - islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

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The Wedding at Berrico

To reach your watershed country
we've driven the is summer's green climbs
and the creek water film spooling over
causeways got spliced many times
with its boulders like ice under whisky,
tree pools mirrory as the eyes of horses.
Great hills above, the house en fete:
we've parked between soaring rhymes
and slipped in among brilliant company.

Here are your gifts I see God's sent
all your encounters so far with him:
life, Landscape. Unfraught love. Some poetry.
Risk too, with his star rigger Freedom,
but here's poise for whatever may come.
What's life wish you? Sound genetics, delight,
long resilience against gravity, the sight
of great-grandchildren, a joint sense of home.

Hey, all these wishes in smart boxes! Fun
challenges, Meaning, work-satisfaction -
this must be the secular human lot; health
till high old age, children of character,
dear friendships. And the testing one: wealth.
Quietly we add ours, may
you always have each other and want to.

But now you join hands, exchanging
the vows that cost joyfully dear.
They move you to the centre of life,
and us gently to the rear.

Les Murray

Daily Afflictions

We're all seeking that special person who is right for us. But if you've been through enough relationships, you begin to suspect there's no right person, just different flavours of wrong. Why is this? Because you yourself are wrong in some way, you seek out partners who are wrong in some complementary way. But it takes a lot of living to grow fully into your own wrongness. It isn't until you finally run up against your deepest demons, your unsolvable problems - the ones that make you truly who you are - that you're ready to find a life-long mate. Only then do you finally know what you're looking for. You're looking for the wrong person. But not just any wrong person: the right wrong person - someone you lovingly gaze upon and think, "This is the problem I want to have." *Andrew Boyd*

Wedding Prayer

Lord, behold our family here assembled.
We thank you for this place in which we dwell,
for the love that unites us,
for the peace accorded us this day,
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,
for the health, the work, the food,
and the bright skies that make our lives delightful;
for our friends in all parts of the earth.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Dante On Love

The love of God unutterable and perfect flows into a pure soul the way that light rushes into a transparent object. The more love that it finds, the more it gives itself, so that, as we grow more clear and open, the more complete the joy of loving is. And the more souls who resonate together, the greater the intensity of their love, for, mirror-like, each soul reflects the others.

Dante

Abundance and delight

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves. When frustration, difficulties and fear assail your relationship, as they threaten all relationships at one time or another, remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part which seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the storms when clouds hide the face of the sun in your lives... remembering that even if you lose sight of it for a moment, the sun is still there. And if each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

Matthew 18:20

Giving Away the Bride

Half-kneeling and half-seated
The head of the family makes his address
communicating with the ancestors
Imploring them to bless the bride.

"The daughter you gave us is going.
We are taking her to her husband's.
We accepted their herd of cattle
And according to the teaching you gave us,
We have no right to keep both
Our daughter and their herd.

"You, my father, who has gone before us
And are watching over us from the clouds,
We ask you to tell the girl's grandmother -
Your wife and our mother.
Also tell our people who are with you
That we are taking their child to her new home.

"We thought it right and proper
That we should notify you before she goes.
You know as much as we do
That when she leaves behind
Guidance away from home
Can now only come from you,
You who only can be with us
And with her in her new home.

"Let there be happiness and good life,
Let there be tender pumpkins in their marriage.
You do know if there should be no little ones,
Her husband and his people may think
That their cattle brought no children home.
If there should be no little ones of her own,
Give her the wisdom

Not to try her luck with other men"

Paul Chidyausiku

Forever Young

May God bless and keep you always, May your wishes all come true, May you always do for others, and let others do for you. May you build a ladder to the stars and climb on every rung, May you stay forever young. May you grow up to be righteous, may you grow up to be true, may you always know the truth and see the lights surrounding you. May you always be courageous, stand upright and be strong. May you stay forever young. May your hands always be busy, may your feet always be swift, may you have a strong foundation when the winds of changes shift. May your heart always be joyful. May your song always be sung. May you stay forever young.

Bob Dylan

The Irish Wedding Blessing

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon the fields.

May the light of friendship guide your paths together.
May the laughter of children grace the halls of your home.
May the joy of living for one another
trip a smile from your lips, a twinkle from your eye.

And when eternity beckons,
at the end of a life heaped high with love,
May the good Lord embrace you
with the arms that have nurtured you
the whole length of your joy-filled days.

May the gracious God hold you both
in the palm of His hands.
And, today, may the Spirit of Love
find a dwelling place in your hearts.