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etion for another of kinship or personal ties:

Loving Me

All this love...inside of me,
Springing forth out of my heart like
a natural spring,
Sprinkling cool, wet drops of love on
people dear to me...near to me.
Just pouring it out 'til there is
none for...Me.

Me?
Me love...Me?
Retain some of those sweet drops of
love
For Me?
I never thought of loving myself.
I thought I needed a mother, a father,
...a lover.
But I am my lover.
One of the greatest loves I have is
the one I have for myself.
And if I can't love Me...how can I
love you?

—Gwen Upchurch

Hold Me Close

Just hold me close and say you love me.
I need no fancy words nor jewels to know your heart.
Your love will always be enough.
Don't try to give me more nor attempt perfection.
Be with me and accept me as I am.

Share my dreams. Do not harm them nor consider them impossibilities.
Take my hand and never let it drop,
when times are hard and when all seems to fail.
Always cherish what we have and we alone.
Envy no other lover, nor wander in curiosity.
Love me, but honor the world, for it holds us both.
Never try to imitate the almighty or harm his gift of life.
Forever be the man you are today.
Don't let the ways of the world change you or
hinder your growth and dreams.
Just hold me close and say you love me.
I need no fancy words nor jewels to know your heart.

—Regina Newell

The Power of Your Love

I've spent most of my life
building a wall
around myself.
Yet, it could not withstand
the strength of your love.
The wall fell —
brick
by

brick and
the warmth of your
smile and the love
in your eyes warmed
any cold that existed inside.
I owe you for making
my life worthwhile,
for being my friend
and taking care of me.
I love you because
you never make me feel small.

Your words, your smiles,
and the laughter
we've shared
make me feel
that I'm a great part of
your life.
You've given me the chance
to finally express myself
in the only way I know.
Words are my gift to you
and though they may seem
small—
They come from the heart —
The come from my heart.

Y. D. Moultrie

In Search of Love

So many mornings she was
unaware that I saw her tear-stained
pillow cases. She tried to hide the
hurt from me but I was her friend and
I knew things weren't as they should
be. It got to the point where I
thought loneliness would tear her
apart. I was there if she needed to
talk or if she just needed someone to
tell her she was special.

There is a point when you stop
needing a friend and you start
needing a lover. She needed a man
who would hold her in his arms and
make the big, bad world go away
when things get to be too much. She
needed someone who would love her
just for herself, someone who would
make love to her if that's what she
wanted and someone who would just
talk to her if that's what she wanted.

Each time she would meet a man
she'd say to herself "Are you the one
who'll make me happy?" It wouldn't
be. She looked for a long time and
this man did not seem to exist. I

didn't know what to tell her but I
found a poem that said it better than
I ever could. It said, "If you go look-
ing for love you will never find it but
if you stop looking it will come and
sit quietly on your shoulder." She
took the poem, read it, thought
about it seriously and thanked me.
Her outlook on life changed. She
became a woman who took life one
day at a time. For the first time in a
long time she enjoyed herself and
she found that being alone wasn't so
bad.

I would like to say she found a
prince charming and they lived hap-
pily ever after. That's not realistic.
There is someone for everyone and
for something as precious as love, we
shouldn't mind waiting on it. Those
who have yet to experience love,
have something to look forward to.
Love must be the most sought after
emotion with all its agony and
ecstasy.

—Ann Holmes

FOR YOU, LOVE

You saw through me
and fulfilled unspoken dreams
You have been four springtimes
in one year
You came to me with an armful
of rainbows and cool breezes
You stood beside me,
yet helped me stand alone
You made me love you,
as well as myself
You are my fantasy, love
for you've added another
dimension to this life.

—Shelia Russell