

Write to the Heart of Motherhood
connecting to our true voice in the middle of our messy lives

Week 5. POEMS



~ TO LIVE WITH AND/ OR LEARN BY
HEART ~

Greetings, lovely!

Here five more poems to add to your collection, for you to peruse and enjoy, and – if any of them speak to you, to live with and/or learn by heart.

I will keep adding five poems each week to this bank, so you'll have 30 total by the end of the course. I've tried to choose a range of topics, but all with lengths that are workable to learn by heart. Of course, choose any poems you like outside this list too! And feel free to post those you love in our Facebook group. Enjoy!

THE DAKINI SPEAKS

Jennifer Welwood

My friends, let's grow up.

Let's stop pretending we don't know the deal here.

Or if we truly haven't noticed, let's wake up and notice.

Look: Everything that can be lost, will be lost.

It's simple — how could we have missed it for so long?

Let's grieve our losses fully, like ripe human beings,

But please, let's not be so shocked by them.

Let's not act so betrayed,

As though life had broken her secret promise to us.

Impermanence is life's only promise to us,

And she keeps it with ruthless impeccability.

To a child she seems cruel, but she is only wild,

And her compassion exquisitely precise:

Brilliantly penetrating, luminous with truth,

She strips away the unreal to show us the real.

This is the true ride — let's give ourselves to it!

Let's stop making deals for a safe passage:

There isn't one anyway, and the cost is too high.

We are not children anymore.

The true human adult gives everything for what cannot be lost.

Let's dance the wild dance of no hope!

blessing the boats

Lucille Clifton

(at St. Mary's)

may the tide

that is entering even now

the lip of our understanding

carry you out

beyond the face of fear
may you kiss
the wind then turn from it
certain that it will
love your back may you
open your eyes to water
water waving forever
and may you in your innocence
sail through this to that

INVINCIBLE

Alfred K. Lamotte

I don't want to be invincible.
I want to be astonished by loss.
I want to be stunned
and defeated by wonder,
shocked into a new creation
where only dancing is allowed.
I want to fall down again and again.
How close can my head come to your toes
before it shatters into spirals of gold?
Lift me up, I'll do
what a fountain does to sunbeams.
Step on me, I'll be the sky.

FOR MY DAUGHTER ON HER TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

Ellen Bass

When they laid you in the crook
of my arms like a bouquet and I looked
into your eyes, dark bits of evening sky,
I thought, *of course this is you*,
like a person who has never seen the sea
can recognize it instantly.

They pulled you from me like a cork
and all the love flowed out. I adored you
with the squandering passion of spring
that shoots green from every pore.

You dug me out like a well. You lit
the deadwood of my heart. You pinned me
to the earth with the points of stars.

I was sure that kind of love would be
enough. I thought I was your mother.
How could I have known that over and over
you would crack the sky like lightning,
illuminating all my fears, my weaknesses, my sins.

Massive the burden this flesh
must learn to bear, like mules of love.

BURY THE SEED

Brooke McNamara

Pain always teaches me
to make new things.

Less for what the things become
than for how the making
re-makes me
brave and grateful.

Early this morning,
under a cobalt, cloudless sky,
my steps each send instructions
up to worried, humble ears:

The bells are ringing.

It's time you knew —

*in your gripped fist
has always been
your specific
hallowed seed.*

*Release
that lifelong holding
into open hands
and here,*

*exactly as you already are,
break ground, dig down,
and simply, faithfully,
bury the seed.*

*In the moist eternal darkness,
let life split open
and become.*