



EDITED BY JANE MCMORLAND HUNTER

**POETRY
OF LOVE FOR
EVERY DAY
OF THE YEAR**



JANUARY

With a Smile

1 JANUARY

Sonnet 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error, and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

2 JANUARY

Early Affection

I loved thee from the earliest dawn,
 When first I saw thy beauty's ray;
And will until life's eve comes on,
 And beauty's blossom fades away;
And when all things go well with thee,
With smiles or tears remember me.

I'll love thee when thy morn is past
 And wheedling galantry is o'er,
When youth is lost in age's blast,
 And beauty can ascend no more;
And when life's journey ends with thee,
O then look back and think of me.

I'll love thee with a smile or frown,
 Mid sorrow's gloom or pleasure's light;
And when the chain of life runs down,
 Pursue thy last eternal flight;
When thou hast spread thy wing to flee,
Still, still a moment wait for me.

I love thee for those sparkling eyes,
 To which my fondness was betray'd,
Bearing the tincture of the skies,
 To glow when other beauties fade;
And when they sink too low to see,
Reflect an azure beam on me.

George Moses Horton (1798–c. 1883)

3 JANUARY

She Tells Her Love While Half Asleep

She tells her love while half asleep,
In the dark hours,
With half-words whispered low:
As Earth stirs in her winter sleep
And put out grass and flowers
Despite the snow,
Despite the falling snow.

Robert Graves (1895–1985)

4 JANUARY

Air

FROM A NEW CANTATA

Would you wish to keep your lover,
Lay these wanton airs aside;
Do not all your charms discover,
Let discretion be your guide.

When the object is deserving,
And your heart declares for one;
All your charms for him reserving,
Should the rest he reigns alone.

Smiles and looks to all imparted,
Have no value, no regard,
But to be by all deserted,
Is the vain Coquette's reward.

Clara Reeve (1729–1807)

5 JANUARY

Without Ceremony

It was your way, my dear,
To be gone without a word
When callers, friends, or kin
Had left, and I hastened in
To rejoin you, as I inferred.

And when you'd a mind to career
Off anywhere – say to town –
You were all on a sudden gone
Before I had thought thereon,
Or noticed your trunks were down.

So, now that you disappear
For ever in that swift style,
Your meaning seems to me
Just as it used to be:
'Good-bye is not worth while!'

Thomas Hardy (1840–1928)

6 JANUARY

Love

Love is like a lamb, and love is like a lion;
Fly from love, he fights, fight, then does he fly on;
Love is all in fire, and yet is ever freezing;
Love is much in winning, yet is more in leezing;
Love is ever sick, and yet is never dying;
Love is ever true, and yet is ever lying;
Love does dote in liking, and is mad in loathing;
Love indeed is anything, yet indeed is nothing.

Thomas Middleton (1580–1627)

7 JANUARY

I wish I could remember

'ERA GIÀ L'ORA CHE VOLGE IL DESIO.' – DANTE

'RICORRO AL TEMPO CH'IO VI VIDI PRIMA.' – PETRARCA

FROM MONNA INNOMINATA: A SONNET OF SONNETS

I wish I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand – Did one but know!

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)

8 JANUARY

A Poet to His Beloved

I bring you with reverent hands
The books of my numberless dreams,
White woman that passion has worn
As the tide wears the dove-grey sands,
And with heart more old than the horn
That is brimmed from the pale fire of time:
White woman with numberless dreams,
I bring you my passionate rhyme.

W. B. Yeats (1865–1939)