

## HEART

The Heart knows no pretense,  
Is never a party to fraud,  
Does not blur the lines  
    between pure and festive.  
Does not guess,  
Does not bargain,  
Does not conspire ill will.

The Heart invites hard times,  
Has no defense against dark clouds,  
Wears no armor in pursuit  
    of love or possibilities,  
Does not lie,  
Does not retreat,  
Does not hide behind closed doors.

The heart is a fighter,  
Knows not the meaning of defeat,  
Knows not the meaning of  
    softening blows,  
Does not blink,  
Does not turn the other cheek,  
Is your best chance for happiness.

## YOURS ALONE

It's not my truth to tell.  
Your heart speaks, but only to you.  
The magic that sweeps you off your feet  
is magic no one will ever know;  
it is yours alone.  
The castle that your soul manifests  
belongs to no man.  
The treasure hidden in the corridors of your mind  
can be opened with a key only you can wield;  
wield it well.

It's not my secret to share.  
Your tribe knows, but only they do.  
The whisper that comes unexpectedly  
is a whisper that resonates with you alone;  
the essence of you.  
The lyric that fits your song  
fits no other reframe.  
The orchestra playing in the recesses of your mind  
know only the songs that you compose;  
compose them well.

## GRATITUDE IS NOT A SHADOW

Gratitude is not a shadow peering over your shoulder,  
blessing you with lyrics of well-turned praise,  
or perfuming the air with godly ambrosia.

Gratitude calls for action in the world,  
clearing thorns and black fear for a passing stranger,  
planting yellow roses on hillsides lost of color.

Gratitude draws on bent backs and hard-rock spirits,  
opening roads on novel thought and gemstone horizons,  
taking root in peals of laughter and tinselled tears.

Gratitude lives in the memory like the scent of dawn,  
carves its existence out of revolution, evolution, and lasting love,  
stirring melody and song on heart-strings longing for home.

Gratitude leaves a man with more than he had,  
blesses a woman with love, light, and learning,  
touches a world with open doors and new perspective.

## PERFECTLY FLAWED

Picture someone close at heart.

Not infallible or without flaws,

but a man or woman of moxie, free-thinking,

and the ever-evolving qualities

of an open mind, ingenuity, and going the extra mile,

even in the wake of stormy days and harsh words,

a fall we all know too well.

Picture them now,

standing their ground,

prominent like shadows at sunset,

stride for stride with the stampede of hard knocks,

standing tall, a meridian of fight

and protector of the forthright.

Soldier, watchman, voice of reason.

Picture someone near and dear.

Not unimpeachable or without fault,

but a man or woman of savvy, enterprise,

and energy enough to create worlds

ruby rich in things sown of insight and innovation,

even in the face of insecurity and poor choices,

a road we've all been down.

Picture their faces,

deep in the knowledge

of life's many mysteries

and worldly enough to know that

goodness trumps anger and that action

fires the pistons of forward thinking.

Tiger, tender, lover of life.

This is not a perfect union.

Only perfectly flawed in its way forward.

All we can ask.

YOURS, MINE, OURS

Always the question...

Which of your many selves peeks out from the dark  
when all is dark?

Which of your many voices speaks  
when nothing but the truth will do?

What are the words you most hope to hear  
when motivation eludes you?

The wisdom you impart is wisdom  
only if it comes from the heart.

The inspiration of a selfless act  
will inspire for a lifetime.

The tenderness captured in a smile  
travels as far as a summer breeze.

The mastery you demonstrate is mastery  
only in the presence of humility.

Always the question...

Whose wisdom? Whose inspiration?  
Whose tenderness? Whose mastery?

Yours, mine, ours.