

# Ode to Marriage

*By P. Donohue Shortridge*

The world knocks on my door, I'll now greet it with some grace,  
for I found what I needed behind it - closed, locked and braced;  
my heart's been defrosted in the crook of your arm  
and still is warmed there by your steadfast embrace.

We were tested for years in our tempests' black weather  
where we were forged by our steel, yet now supple and tender;  
and so we've come out to thrive in the world's daily tussle  
buoyed by who we are and what we mean to the other.

And as we depart once again at the dawn of each day,  
we put us on pause . . . to be resumed sweet, in our nightly advance  
of this affair born long ago out of lust and awareness  
that ours was that love that would live on forever.

Watching you now as you lie close to me  
You fill up my eyes and I know who you are,  
a king of a man who lives his life straight  
a hero whose name is courage, quiet integrity.

Oh my darling! My heart soars! This love is my bliss,  
you are beside me, you're my life's finest gift;  
so, we'll be remembering, dwelling, and venturing on  
living out loud forever, scented by this love's kiss.

*to my husband on the occasion of our 21st wedding anniversary  
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*fostering the authentic life of children and their families in the American culture*