

**Compare how love between a parent and child is presented in 'Mother, any distance' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.**

Mother, any distance greater than a single span  
requires a second pair of hands.

You come to help me measure windows, pelmets, doors,  
the acres of the walls, the prairies of the floors.

You at the zero-end, me with the spool of tape, recording  
length, reporting metres, centimetres back to base, then leaving  
up the stairs, the line still feeding out, unreeling  
years between us. Anchor. Kite.

I space-walk through the empty bedrooms, climb  
the ladder to the loft, to breaking point, where something  
has to give;  
two floors below your fingertips still pinch  
the last one-hundredth of an inch...I reach  
towards a hatch that opens on an endless sky  
to fall or fly.

SIMON ARMITAGE

Compare how longing and desire is presented in 'The Farmer's Bride' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.

Three summers since I chose a maid,  
Too young maybe—but more's to do  
At harvest-time than bide and woo.  
When us was wed she turned afraid  
Of love and me and all things human;  
Like the shut of a winter's day  
Her smile went out, and 'twadn't a woman—  
More like a little frightened fay.  
One night, in the Fall, she runned away.

"Out 'mong the sheep, her be," they said,  
'Should properly have been abed;  
But sure enough she wadn't there  
Lying awake with her wide brown stare.  
So over seven-acre field and up-along across the down  
We chased her, flying like a hare  
Before out lanterns. To Church-Town  
All in a shiver and a scare  
We caught her, fetched her home at last  
And turned the key upon her, fast.

She does the work about the house  
As well as most, but like a mouse:  
Happy enough to chat and play  
With birds and rabbits and such as they,  
So long as men-folk keep away.  
"Not near, not near!" her eyes beseech  
When one of us comes within reach.  
The women say that beasts in stall  
Look round like children at her call.  
I've hardly heard her speak at all.

Shy as a leveret, swift as he,  
Straight and slight as a young larch tree,  
Sweet as the first wild violets, she,  
To her wild self. But what to me?

The short days shorten and the oaks are brown,  
The blue smoke rises to the low grey sky,  
One leaf in the still air falls slowly down,  
A magpie's spotted feathers lie  
On the black earth spread white with rime,  
The berries redden up to Christmas-time.  
What's Christmas-time without there be  
Some other in the house than we!

She sleeps up in the attic there  
Alone, poor maid. 'Tis but a stair  
Betwixt us. Oh! my God! the down,  
The soft young down of her, the brown,  
The brown of her—her eyes, her hair, her hair!

CHARLOTTE MEW

Compare how nature is presented in 'Love's Philosophy' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.

The fountains mingle with the river  
And the rivers with the ocean,  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion;  
Nothing in the world is single;  
All things by a law divine  
In one spirit meet and mingle.  
Why not I with thine?—

See the mountains kiss high heaven  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister-flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother;  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:  
What is all this sweet work worth  
If thou kiss not me?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Compare how distance is presented in 'Eden Rock' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.

They are waiting for me somewhere beyond Eden Rock:  
My father, twenty-five, in the same suit  
Of Genuine Irish Tweed, his terrier Jack  
Still two years old and trembling at his feet.

My mother, twenty-three, in a sprigged dress  
Drawn at the waist, ribbon in her straw hat,  
Has spread the stiff white cloth over the grass.  
Her hair, the colour of wheat, takes on the light.

She pours tea from a Thermos, the milk straight  
From an old H.P. Sauce bottle, a screw  
Of paper for a cork; slowly sets out  
The same three plates, the tin cups painted blue.

The sky whitens as if lit by three suns.  
My mother shades her eyes and looks my way  
Over the drifted stream. My father spins  
A stone along the water. Leisurely,

They beckon to me from the other bank.  
I hear them call, 'See where the stream-path is!  
Crossing is not as hard as you might think.'

I had not thought that it would be like this.

CHARLES CAUSLEY

**Compare how romantic love is presented in 'Winter Swans' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.**

**'Winter Swans'**

The clouds had given their all -  
two days of rain and then a break  
in which we walked,

the waterlogged earth  
gulping for breath at our feet  
as we skirted the lake, silent and apart,

until the swans came and stopped us  
with a show of tipping in unison.  
As if rolling weights down their bodies to their heads

they halved themselves in the dark water,  
icebergs of white feather, paused before returning again  
like boats righting in rough weather.

'They mate for life' you said as they left,  
porcelain over the stilling water. I didn't reply  
but as we moved on through the afternoon light,

slow-stepping in the lake's shingle and sand,  
I noticed our hands, that had, somehow,  
swum the distance between us

and folded, one over the other,  
like a pair of wings settling after flight.

**OWEN SHEERS**

**Compare how the relationship between a parent and child is presented in 'Climbing my Grandfather' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.**

I decide to do it free, without a rope or net.  
First, the old brogues, dusty and cracked;  
an easy scramble onto his trousers,  
pushing into the weave, trying to get a grip.  
By the overhanging shirt I change  
direction, traverse along his belt  
to an earth-stained hand. The nails  
are splintered and give good purchase,  
the skin of his finger is smooth and thick  
like warm ice. On his arm I discover  
the glassy ridge of a scar, place my feet  
gently in the old stitches and move on.  
At his still firm shoulder, I rest for a while  
in the shade, not looking down,  
for climbing has its dangers, then pull  
myself up the loose skin of his neck  
to a smiling mouth to drink among teeth.  
Refreshed, I cross the scree cheek,  
to stare into his brown eyes, watch a pupil  
slowly open and close. Then up over  
the forehead, the wrinkles well-spaced  
and easy, to his thick hair (soft and white  
at this altitude), reaching for the summit,  
where gasping for breath I can only lie  
watching clouds and birds circle,  
feeling his heat, knowing  
the slow pulse of his good heart.

**ANDREW WATERHOUSE**

**Compare how admiration is presented in 'Before You Were Mine' and one other poem from Love and Relationships.**

I'm ten years away from the corner you laugh on  
with your pals, Maggie McGeeney and Jean Duff.  
The three of you bend from the waist, holding  
each other, or your knees, and shriek at the pavement.  
Your polka-dot dress blows round your legs. Marilyn.

I'm not here yet. The thought of me doesn't occur  
in the ballroom with the thousand eyes, the fizzy, movie tomorrows  
the right walk home could bring. I knew you would dance  
like that. Before you were mine, your Ma stands at the close  
with a hiding for the late one. You reckon it's worth it.

The decade ahead of my loud, possessive yell was the best one, eh?  
I remember my hands in those high-heeled red shoes, relics,  
and now your ghost clatters toward me over George Square  
till I see you, clear as scent, under the tree,  
with its lights, and whose small bites on your neck, sweetheart?

Cha cha cha! You'd teach me the steps on the way home from Mass,  
stamping stars from the wrong pavement. Even then  
I wanted the bold girl winking in Portobello, somewhere  
in Scotland, before I was born. That glamorous love lasts  
where you sparkle and waltz and laugh before you were mine.

**CAROL ANN DUFFY**