# Kahlil Gibran on Love

When love beckons to you follow her,
Though her ways are hard and steep.
And when her wings enfold you yield to her,
Though the sword hidden among her pinions may wound you.
And when she speaks to you believe in her,
Though her voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden.
For even as love crowns you so shall she crucify you. Even as she is for your growth so is she for your pruning.
Even as she ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun,
So shall she descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth.
Like sheaves of corn she gathers you unto herself.
She threshes you to make you naked.
She sifts you to free you from your husks.
She grinds you to whiteness.
She kneads you until you are pliant;
And then she assigns you to her sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for the goddess's sacred feast.
All these things shall love do unto you that you may know the secrets of your heart, and in that knowledge become a fragment of Life's heart.
But if in your fear you would seek only love's peace and love's pleasure,
Then it is better for you that you cover your nakedness and pass out of love's threshing-floor,
Into the seasonless world where you shall laugh, but not all of you laughter, and weep, but not all of your tears.
Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself.
Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;
For love is sufficient unto love.
When you love you should not say, "The goddess is in my heart," but rather, "I am in the heart of the goddess."
And think not that you can direct the course of love, for love, if it finds you worthy, directs your course.
Love has no other desire but to fulfil itself.
But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires;
To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night.
To know the pain of too much tenderness.
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.
To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving;
To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;
To return home at eventide with gratitude;
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your ear and a song of praise upon your lips.