



The Flower Godmother's

# floral quotes & passages

INSPIRATION LIST



**Flowerhandlers**<sup>®</sup>

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A publication of



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## INSPIRATION LIST

**H**umanity has always had a love affair with flowers. You can look to history and discover what writers, teachers, poets, and sages have known for eons ... that flowers express the inherent goodness, wellbeing, and loving intentions within all of us.

Here, there are more than 300 floral quotes and passages for you to peruse, ponder, and use when appropriate in notes, greeting cards, and publications. Use these quotes and passages to enhance, add value to, and strengthen the story in your own web, print, and media projects.

But, most of all I encourage you to make fresh flowers a welcome part of your own life as it unfolds and find your own meaning as you experience the power of flowers instead of taking someone else's word for it. Then come up with your own floral mantras for centering yourself and sharing with others.

*“Flowers are unconditional interpreters of emotion.”*

– Dottie Harrigan “Voice of The Flower Godmother”



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*A cynic is a man who, when he smells flowers, looks around for a coffin.*

Henry L. Mencken



*A flowerless room is a soulless room, to my way of thinking; but even a solitary little vase of a living flower may redeem it.*

Vita Sackville-West



*A flower's fragrance declares to all the world that it is fertile, available, and desirable, its sex organs oozing with nectar. Its smell reminds us in vestigial ways of fertility, vigor, life-force, all the optimism, expectancy, and passionate bloom of youth. We inhale its ardent aroma and, no matter what our ages, we feel young and nubile in a world aflame with desire.*

Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of the Senses*, 1990



*A fox is a wolf who sends flowers.*

Ruth Weston



*A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.*

Walt Whitman



*A rose is a rose is a rose.*

Gertrude Stein



*A wedding is like a funeral except that you get to smell your own flowers.*

Hansen



*All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.*

Indian Proverb



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*Am I accurately reporting what I see in such a blossom?*

*The answer is no ... and yes.*

*Allen Lacey, [The Gardener's Eye](#), 1992*



*And because the breathe of flowers is far sweeter in the air where it comes and goes like the warbling...*

*Francis Bacon, 1561-1626*



*And I will make thee beds of roses*

*And a thousand fragrant posies.*

*Christopher Marlowe, [The Passionate Shepherd to His Love](#), 1564-1593*



*And if you voz to see my roziz*

*As is a boon to all men's noziz,-*

*You'd fall upon your back and scream-*

*"O Lawk! O Criky! it's a dream!*

*Edward Lear, 1885*



*And it's my faith that every flower*

*Enjoys the air it breathes.*

*William Wordsworth*



*And the heart that is soonest awake to the flowers*

*Is always the first to be touched by the thorn.*

*Thomas Moore, 1779-1852*



*Are we, finally, speaking of nature or culture when we speak of a rose (nature), that has been bred (culture) so that its blossoms (nature) make men imagine (culture) the sex of women (nature)? It may be this sort of confusion that we need more of.*

*Michael Pollan, [Second Nature](#), 1991*



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*Arranging a bowl of flowers in the morning can give a sense of quiet in a crowded day – like writing a poem or saying a prayer.*

Anne Morrow Lindbergh



*As I work among my flowers, I find myself talking to them, reasoning and remonstrating with them, and adoring them as if they were human beings. Much laughter I provoke among my friends by so doing, but that is of no consequence. We are on such good terms, my flowers and I.*

Celia Thaxter, 1835-1894



*As well as any bloom upon a flower  
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost  
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.*

Edward Thomas, 1878-1917



*At dawn I asked the lotus,  
“What is the meaning of life?”  
Slowly she opened her hand  
With nothing in it.*

Debra Wollard Bender, *Paper Lanterns*



*Be like the flower, turn your faces to the sun.*

Kahlil Gibran



*Brave old-flowers! Wall-flowers, Gilly flowers, Stocks!  
For even as the field flowers, from which a trifle, a ray of beauty, a drop of perfume, divides them, they have charming names, the softest in the language; and each of them, like tiny art-less ex-votos, or like medals bestowed by the gratitude of men, proudly bears three or four.*

Maurice Maeterlinck, *Old Fashioned Flowers*, 1907



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*Break open  
A cherry tree  
And there are no flowers,  
But the spring breeze  
Brings forth myriad blossoms.*

*Ikkyu Sojun, 1394-1481*



*But ne'er the rose without the thorn.*

*Robert Herrick*



*But pleasures are like poppies spread –  
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed.*

*Robert Burns*



*Bread feeds the body, indeed, but flowers feed also the soul.*

*The Koran*



*Christianity sees plants and flowers as created by God to show forth and share with humans the divine goodness, beauty and truth – the purpose of all Creation. In this flowers may be enjoyed simply and directly in themselves as showing forth god's goodness and beauty, or, more fully, as archetypes, signatures, symbols, and bearers of legends, mirroring the revealed articles of Christian faith – thereby serving as means for their teaching, recollection, contemplation and celebration.*

*John S. Stokes Jr., Flower Theology II*



*Different flowers look good to different people*

*Chinese Proverb*



*Does anything eat flowers. I couldn't recall having seen anything eat a flower –  
are they nature's privileged pets?*

*Annie Dillard*



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*Don't try to force anything. Let life be a deep let-go.  
See (God/Spirit/All That Is) opening millions of flowers  
Every day without forcing the buds.*

Bhagwan Shree Rayneesh



*Each flower is a soul opening out to nature.*

Gerald De Nerval



*Every flower about a house certifies to the refinement of somebody.  
Every vine climbing and blossoming tells of love and joy.*

Robert G. Ingersoll



*Flower arrangement:  
Just two yellow daffodils,  
the first to bloom*

L. A. Davidson, *The Shape of the Tree*



*Flower construct the most charming geometries: circles like the sun, ovals,  
cones, curlicues and a variety of triangular eccentricities, which when viewed with  
the eye of a magnifying glass seem a Lilliputian frieze of psychedelic silhouettes.*

Duane Michals, *The Vanishing Act*



*Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are  
sunshine, food and medicine for the soul.*

Luther Burbank



*Flowers ... are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty out-values all the  
utilities of the world.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1844



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*Flowers are beautiful hieroglyphics of nature, with which she indicates how much she loves us.*

Wolfgang von Goethe



*Flowers are love's truest language.*

Park Benjamin 1809-1864



*Flowers are lovely; love is flower-like; Friendship is a sheltering tree.*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772-1834



*Flowers are not made by singing "Oh, how beautiful," and sitting in the shade.*

Rudyard Kipling



*Flowers are the sweetest things God ever made and forgot to put a soul to.*

Henry Ward Beckford, 1759-1844



*Flowers are restful to look at. They have neither emotions nor conflicts.*

Sigmund Freud



*Flowers grow out of dark moments*

Corita Kent



*Flowers have spoken to me more than I can tell in written words. They are the hieroglyphics of angels, loved by all men for the beauty of the character, though few can decipher even fragments of their meaning.*

Lydia M. Child



*Flowers leave some of their fragrance on the hand that bestows them.*

Chinese Proverb



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*Flowers never emit so sweet and strong a fragrance as before a storm.  
When a storm approaches thee, be fragrant as a sweet smelling flower.*

Jean Paul Richter



*Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.*

John Milton



*Footfalls echo in the memory  
Down the passage which we did not take  
Towards the door we never opened  
Into the rose garden.*

T. S. Elliot, *Four Quartets*



*Forgiveness is the scent that the violet leaves on the sole of the foot that crushed it.*

Anonymous



*For myself I hold no preferences among flowers,  
So long as they are wild, free, spontaneous.*

Edward Abbey



*Forsythia is pure joy. There is not an ounce, not a glimmer of sadness or even  
knowledge in forsythia. Pure, undiluted, untouched joy.*

Anne Morrow Lindbergh



*From a thorn comes a rose, and from a rose comes a thorn.*

Greek Proverb



*Garden Angel come below  
Warm and bless these seeds I sow.*

Anonymous



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*Gather the flowers, but spare the buds*

Andrew Marvell, *The picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers*, 1621-1678



*Gather ye rosebuds while ye may*

*Old time is still a-flying*

*And this same flower that smiles today*

*Tomorrow will be dying*

Robert Herrick



*Give and Take ...*

*For to the bee a flower is a fountain of life*

*And to the flower a bee is a messenger of love*

*And to both, bee and flower,*

*The giving and the receiving is a need and an ecstasy.*

Kahlil Gibran



*Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers  
where I can walk undisturbed.*

Walt Whitman



*Good God. I forgot the violets!*

Walter Savage Landor, 1775-1864

*(after he threw his cook out the window onto a bed of flowers)*



*God loved flowers and created soil. Man loved flowers and created the vase.*

Anonymous



*He that plants thorns must never expect to gather roses.*

Bidpai



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*He who wants a rose must respect the thorn.*

Persian Proverb



*I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell  
I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it.*

Gerald Manley Hopkins



*I don't know whether nice people tend to grow roses or growing roses  
makes nice people.*

Roland A. Beowne



*I didn't know what narcissism was until I beheld my own narcissus.*

Charles Kuralt



*I have a garden of my own,  
But so with roses overgrown,  
And, lilies that you would guess  
to be a little wilderness.*

Andrew Marvell



*I have here only made a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought  
nothing of my own but the thread that ties them together ...*

Seigneur de Montaigne, 1533-1592



*I know that for me,  
To whom flowers are part of desire,  
There are tears waiting for me  
In the petals of some rose.*

Oscar Wilde



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*I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers.*

Claude Monet



*I was not looking now at an unusual flower arrangement. I was seeing what Adam had seen on the morning of his creation – the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence.*

Aldous Huxley



*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;*

*Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.  
Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,*

*They stretched in never ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in a sprightly dance.*

William Wordsworth, *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, 1804



*I want real flowers, perennials which not only grow and change and die, but also rise again and astonish me. A garden shouldn't just bloom and look pretty; it should develop like the rest of life. Otherwise it, and we, live only to be spaded under.*

Emma L. Roth-Schwartz



*I will be the gladdest thing under the sun!  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
And not pick one.*

Edna St. Vincent Millay



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*I'd rather have roses on my table that diamonds on my neck.*

Emma Goldman



*I'd be a butterfly born in a bower,  
Where roses and lilies and violets meet.*

Thomas Haynes Bayly



*If dandelions were hard to grow, they would be most welcome in any lawn.*

Andrew Mason



*If, I can someday see M. Claude Monet's garden, I feel sure that I will see something that is not so much a garden of flowers as of colours and tones, less an old fashioned flower garden than a colour garden, so to speak, one that achieves an effect not entirely nature's because it was planted so that only the flowers with matching colours will bloom at the same time, harmonized in an infinite stretch of blue or pink.*

Marcel Proust, "Spendours" *Le Figaro*, 1907



*If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft,  
And of thy meager store  
Two loaves alone to thee are left,  
Sell one, and with the dole  
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.*

Sheikh Muslih-uddin Saadi Shriazi, *The Gulistan of Saadi*, 1270



*If seeds in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses, what might not the heart of man become in its long journey toward the stars?*

G. K. Chesterton



*If there were nothing else to trouble us, the fate of flowers would make us sad.*

John Lancaster Spalding, *Aphorisms and Reflections*



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*In friendship's fragrant garden,  
There are flowers of every hue.  
Each with its own fair beauty  
And its gift of joy for you.*

Friendships Garden



*In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends.*

Kozuko Okakura



*In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-washed pailings,  
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,  
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,  
With every leaf a miracle – and from this bush in the dooryard,  
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,  
A sprig with its flower I break.*

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1865



*In the garden the door is always open to the “holy” – growth, birth, death.  
Every flower holds the whole mystery in its short life cycle, and in the garden we are  
never far away from death, the fertilizing, good, creative death.*

May Sarton



*In the hope of reaching the moon  
men fail to see the flowers  
that blossom at their feet.*

Albert Schweitzer



*Isn't it odd that flowers are the reproductive organs of the plants they grow on?*

Logan Pearsall Smith, 1865-1946



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*It is at the edge of a petal that love waits.*

William Carlos Williams



*It is the month of June, The month of leaves and roses, When pleasant sights salute the eyes, And pleasant scents the noses...*

Parker Willis, 1806-1867



*Just now the lilac is in bloom*

*All before my little room.*

Rupert Brooke, 1887-1915, *The Old Vicarage*, 1913



*Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.*

Marcel Proust



*Let us open our leaves like a flower,*

*And be passive and receptive.*

John Keats



*Life is a rose ... More exquisite and precious,*

*When shared with others.*

Jane Oechsle Lauer



*Like the musician, the painter, the poet, and the rest, the true lover of flowers is born, not made. And he is born to happiness in this vale of tears, to a certain amount of the purest joy that earth can give her children, joy that is tranquil, innocent, uplifting, unflinching.*

Celia Thaxter, *An Island Garden*, 1894



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*Little flower, but if I could understand,  
what you are, root and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.*

Tennyson



*Lone and erect, beneath light's primal flood,  
A lily! And pure as any one of you.*

Mallarme



*Lowly, with a broken neck,  
The crocus lays her check to mire.*

George Meredith



*Moonflowers aglow  
Along the lattice walls;  
A candlelit porch.*

Michael Garofalo, *Cuttings*



*Nature smiles with flowers.*

Anonymous



*No path of flowers leads to glory  
Jean de La Fontaine, 1621-1695*



*No flowers, no bees;  
No bees, no flowers.  
Blooming and buzzing,  
Buzzing and blooming;  
Married and still in Love.*

Mike Garofalo



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*Observe this dew-drenched rose of Tyrian gardens  
A rose today. But you will ask in vain  
Tomorrow what it is; and yesterday  
If thou canst but thither,  
There grows the flower of peace,  
The Rose that cannot wither,  
Thy fortress and thy ease.*

Henry Vaughn



*In my garden there is a large place for sentiment. My garden of flowers is also  
my garden of thoughts and dreams. The thoughts grow as freely as the  
flowers, and the dreams are as beautiful.*

Abram L. Urban



*It was the dust, the sunshine, and the rains.*

Christina Rosetti



*None can have a healthy love for flowers unless he loves the wild ones.*

Forbes Watson



*One of the most attractive things about the flowers is their beautiful reserve.*

Henry David Thoreau



*Perfumes are the feelings of flowers.*

Heinrich Heine



*People from a planet without flowers would think we must be mad with joy  
the whole time to have such things about us.*

Iris Murdoch, *A Fairly Honorable Defeat*



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*Pick the flower when it is ready to be picked.*

Chinese Proverb



*Plant Kindness*

*Harvest Love*

Anonymous



*Plum Blossoms soften a stone wall, give warmth to the moon.*

*Flower Power.*

Black Feather



*Roses red and violets blue, And all the sweetest flowers that in the forest grew.*

Edmund Spenser, 1599



*Say it with flowers.*

Patrick O'Keefe, 1872-1934

Advertising agent – slogan for SAF



*Science, or para-science, tells us that geraniums bloom better if they are spoken to. But a kind word every now and then is really quite enough. Too much attention, like too much feeding, and weeding, and hoeing, inhibits and embarrasses them.*

Victoria Glendinning



*She wore a wreath of roses,*

*The night that we first met.*

Thomas Haynes Bayly, *She Wore a Wreath of Roses*, 1797-1839



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Should I pluck it,  
My hands  
Would defile the flower;  
I offer it as it stands,  
To the Buddhas of the Three Worlds.

Empress Komyo, Japan



Silently a flower blooms,  
In silence it falls away;  
Yet here now, at this moment, at this place,  
The world of the flower, the whole of  
The world is blooming.  
This is the talk of the flower, the truth  
Of the blossom:  
The glory of eternal life is fully shining here.

Zenkei Shibayama



Since Iris is the Greek goddess for the messenger of Love, her sacred flower is considered the symbol of communication and messages. Greek men would often plant an iris on the graves of their beloved women as a tribute to the goddess Iris, whose duty it was to take the souls of women to the Elysian fields.

Hana No Monogatari: *The Stories of Flowers*



Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns.  
I am thankful that thorns have roses.

Alphonse Karr, 1808-1890



Still – in a way – nobody sees a flower – really – it is so small – we haven't the time –  
and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time.

Georgia O'Keefe



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Take time to smell the roses.

Gardening Clichés



*The Amen! Of nature is always a flower.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes



*The best rose bush, after all, is not that which has the fewest thorns,  
but that which bears the finest roses.*

Henry Van Dyke



*The delicate droop of the petals standing out in relief,  
Is like the eyelid of a child.*

Auguste Rodin



*The Earth Laughs in Flowers*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882



*The fairest things have the fleetest end,  
Their scent survives their close:  
But the rose's scent is bitterness  
To him that loved the rose.*

Francis Thompson, 1859-1907



*The fall of the leaf is a whisper to the living*

Anonymous



*The flower is the poetry of reproduction.  
It is an example of the eternal seductiveness of life.*

Jean Giraudoux



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*The flower that you spent time to care for does not grow  
While the willow that you accidentally planted flourishes and gives shade.*

Chinese Proverb



*The fragrance always remains in the hand that gives it.*

Heda Bejar



*The gardens that make us happiest flourish because we have taken the time to  
make sure they feed our souls and fill a special place in our lives. Sometimes you  
have to think about what you really want from your garden ... once the beds  
are laid out and the rose bushes planted.*

Lindley Karstens



*The old tree is shook  
White blossoms slowly float down  
Dancers in the wind*

Alexandra Kim



*The rose has thorns only for those who would gather it.*

Chinese Proverb



*The sweetest flowers in all the world – A baby's hands.*

Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1837-1909



*The temple bell stops but I still hear the sound coming out of the flowers.*

Basho, 1680



*The world is a rose; smell it and pass it to your friends.*

Persian Proverb



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*Their smiles,  
Wan as primroses gather'd at midnight  
By chilly finger'd spring.*

John Keates, *Endymion*, 1795-1821



*There came a time when the risk to remain tight in the bud  
was more painful that the risk it took to blossom.*

Anais Nin



*There is nothing more difficult for a truly creative painter than to paint  
a rose, because before he can do so he has first to forget all the  
roses that were ever painted.*

Henri Matisse



*They are not long, the days of wine and roses:  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges for a while, then closes  
Within a dream.*

Ernest Dowson, 1867-1900



*Think of this: the morning glory has been blossoming for so long  
without permission that in some gardens it is no longer censored.  
What does that tell you?*

Anne Pitkin



*This old world that we're livin' in  
Is might hard to beat.  
You get a thorn with every Rose  
But – ain't the roses sweet?*

Frank Stanton



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*Thou art the Iris, fair among the fairest,  
Who, armed with golden rod  
And winged with the celestial azure, bearest  
The message of some God.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



*Though one were fair as roses  
His beauty clouds and closes.*

Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1837-1909



*Thou unassuming common-place Of Nature*  
William Wordsworth, 1770-1850, *To The Daisy*



*Tiptoe through the tulips with me.*  
Al Dubin, *Gold Diggers of Broadway*



*Tis now the summer of your youth.  
Time has not cropt the roses from your cheek,  
though sorrow long has washed them.*

Moore, 1712-1757



*Tis the last rose of summer  
Left blooming alone;  
All her lovely companions  
Are faded and gone.*

Thomas Moore, *Irish Melodies*, 1807



*To analyze the charms of flowers is like dissecting music;  
it is one of those things which it is far better to enjoy,  
than to attempt to fully understand.*

Henry T. Tuckerman



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*To be overcome by the scent of flowers is a delectable form of defeat.*

Beverly Nichols



*To pick a flower is so much more satisfying than just observing it, or photographing it ... So in later years, I have grown in my garden as many flowers as possible for children to pick.*

Anne Scott-James



*To plant a seed is a helpful deed*

Anonymous



*Today as in the time of Pliny and Columella, the hyacinth flourishes in Wales, the periwinkle in Illyria, the daisy on the ruins of Numantia; while around them cities have changed their masters and their names, collided and smashed, disappeared into nothingness, their peaceful generations have crossed down the ages as fresh and smiling as on the days of battle.*

Edgar Quinet, *Philosophy of Human History*, 1825



*True friendship is like a rose: we don't realize its beauty until it fades.*

Evelyn Loeb



*ʻUo ʻia I ka mania ho` okahi.  
Strung like flowers on the same lei needle.  
Married.*

Hawaiian Proverbs



*Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost.*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772-1834



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*You can't be suspicious of a tree, or accuse a bird or a squirrel of subversion  
or challenge the ideology of a violet.*

Hal Borland, *Sundial of the Seasons*, 1964



*We bring roses, beautiful fresh roses,  
Dewy as the morning and colored like the dawn.*

Thomas Buchanan Read, 1822-1872



*We can complain because the rose bushes have thorns,  
or rejoice because the thorn bushes have roses.*

Abraham Lincoln



*What a desolate place would be a world without a flower! It would be  
a face without a smile, a feast without a welcome. Are not flowers the  
stars of the earth, and are not our stars the flowers of heaven?*

Clara Lucas Belfour, 1808-1878



*What grows in the garden, so lovely and rare?*

*Roses and Dahlias and people grow there.*

*From the TV show "A Gardener's Diary"*



*What more delightful than an infinite variety of sweet smelling flowers?  
Decking with sundry colours the green mantle of the Earth, the universal  
Mother of us all, so by them, and wherein it is more fit to admire the Dyer,  
than imitate his workmanship. Colouring not only the earth, but  
decking the air, and sweetening every breath and spirit.*

William Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden*, 1618



*Whatever a man's age, he can reduce it several years by putting a  
bright-colored flower in his buttonhole.*

Mark Twain



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*What's in a name? that which we call a rose*

*By any other name would smell as sweet.*

*William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet*



*Their lips were four red roses on a stalk.*

*William Shakespeare*



*When bright flowers bloom*

*Parchment crumbles, my words fade*

*The pen has dropped...*

*Morpheus*



*When you have only two pennies left in the world, buy a loaf of bread  
with one, and a lily with the other.*

*Chinese Proverb*



*When words escape, flowers speak.*

*Bruce W. Currie*



*When Spring unlocks the flowers to paint the laughing soil.*

*Reginald Heber*



*When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it, it's your world  
for the moment. I want to give that world to someone else.*

*Georgia O'Keefe*



*Where flowers bloom so does hope.*

*Lady Bird Johnson, Public Roads: Where Flowers Bloom*



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Why always 'Not yet'?  
Do flowers in spring say, 'Not yet'?

Norman Douglas



*You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will, But the scent of  
the roses will hang around still.*

Thomas Moore, 1779-1852



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