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Pages of Love

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Pages

-By Pat Kourt

“It’s love that makes the world go ‘round!” declared Sir William Gilbert in his drama *IOLANTHE*. If that is true, the world of innocent schoolday crushes and puppy love continues to inspire special words scribbled in autograph books and on pages of school annuals.

Although love remains the main theme of the brief lines, careful thought seems to have been given to end rhyme. Sentiments as far back as the turn of the century were as simple as:

Love

Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
Sugar is sweet,
And so are you.

■ However, creative variations continue to appear, such as:

Roses are red,
Lemons are sour.
You’ll always be
My gal of the hour!

■ Ninety years later, end rhyme is no less important, but lines are somewhat less formal:

Remember Bob,
Remember Pete.
The heck with them—
Remember me!

Occasionally, young poets have penned original verses. Charlotte Hunter of Thomas shares lines written for her in 1938:

O, memories roll—
 Few come to stay
 And linger long in view.
 I bless the day
 I first caught sight of you.

A popular love rhyme of the forties made this prediction, which usually brought a blush to the addressee's cheeks:

First comes love,
 Then comes marriage.
 Next comes Judy
 With a baby carriage.

Boys have never been too anxious to write in autograph books or in annuals; but when they do, there is often a hint of teasing to their words:

Never kiss by the garden gate—
 Love is blind,
 But the neighbors ain't.
 OR

Alice had a little sock;
 She rolled it very low,
 And everywhere that Alice went
 The boys were sure to go!

The forties brought lines of advice for the lovelorn almost as pointed as those of syndicated columnists today:

When your husband gets too cross,
 Pick up a broom
 And show him who's boss!

Kiss me, honey.
 Kiss me quick—
 'cause here comes your daddy
 With a great big stick!

Judy is sweet and full of fun.
 If you kiss her,
 Better catch her on the run!

The fifties produced rhymes of pursuit in both a bashful sense as well as one of urgency:

Columbus discovered America in 1492.
 But I found something greater
 When I discovered you!
 (Anonymous)

Tear down a barn.
 Tear down a rafter.
 I wish I was the one
 You are after!

The world of innocent love has shown signs of eternal promises from both girls and boys:
 Yours 'til bobby pins get tired of riding permanent waves.

As sure as the vines grow around the stump,
 You're my little lump.

U R 2 sweet
 2 B 4gotten.

or even a threat—
 Love me—
 Love my cat!

Of course, slang continues to be important for addressing childhood or teen love interests:
 You're a neat dude. I'll love ya forever!

To the coolest guy in school—
 Hey, babe, I'll always love you!

As far as literary genius goes, none of these authors qualify, but their lines have pleased their audiences in a special sense just as Shakespeare or Browning did for his peers. Those precious pages of the past refresh the memory of a less complicated time. The innocent words of youth cause a warm blush as tangible as a secretly held hand in the hall or a stolen kiss on the school bus. Yes, romance in writing can be re-lived and enjoyed forever—as sure as the world goes 'round.

Special thanks go to Helen Huckins, Roshelle Ridenour, Charlotte Hunter, and Keren Miller for sharing their special pages of love.

*(PAT KOURT is Library media specialist for grades K-12 at Thomas Schools. Her favorite pastimes are researching Western Oklahoma history and hunting Native American artifacts with her sons.) **

Designed by Olivia Ortiz