

THE MARRIAGE

THE FIRST READING

'SONG OF SOLOMON' 2. 10-13; 8. 6,7

Read by Emmett Roberts

My beloved speaks and says to me:

'Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtle-dove
is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.'

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm:
for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire
a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love
all the wealth of one's house,
it would be utterly scorned.

THE SECOND READING

Epilogue from 'THE FIRST BAD MAN' by Miranda July

Read by Bo Bottomley

The flight from China was full of families and it took a long time to deplane. Then there was an endless line at Customs and a teenager in front of them couldn't find his passport. Finally they were headed down the long corridor to Arrivals. Moms and dads and husbands and wives at the end of the hall were exclaiming and hugging. As they walked he wiped his face with his hand and smoothed his hair down. She looked at him nervously.

"Are we late?"

"We're a little late. It's okay."

"What if she hates me?"

"Not possible."

"What should I call her? Ms. Glickman?"

"Just call her Cheryl."

"Is that her? That woman waving?"

"Where?"

"Down at the very end. With the blond lady. See?"

"Oh. Yeah. She looks old. Clee came too, that's Clee."

"She's so happy to see you - oh she's running."

"Yeah."

"It's pretty far."

"We could meet her halfway - should we run?"

"Really? I have my bag. How about you just run and I'll catch up?"

"No, no. We can walk."

"It's just - my bag. Oh wow. She's really gonna run the whole way."

"Yeah."

"Just go."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, give me your bag. I'll catch up with you. Go."

He ran toward her and she ran toward him and as they got closer they both started to laugh. They were laughing and laughing and running and running and running and music played, brass instruments, a soaring anthem, not a dry eye in the house, the credits rolled. Applause like rain.

HYMN

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven
Feed me till I want no more.
Feed me till I want no more.

Open thou the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream shall flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer
Be thou still my strength and shield.
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises, songs of praises
I will ever give to thee.
I will ever give to thee.

Words: William Williams (1717-1791)

Music: John Hughes (1873-1932)

THE THIRD READING

'IDYLL' *by Wendy Cope*

Read by Matt Gavan

We'll be in our garden on a summer evening,
Eating pasta, drinking white wine.

We won't talk all the time. I'll sit back,
Contemplating shadows on the red brick path,

And marvel at the way it all turned out.
That yellow begonia. Our gabled house.

Later we'll stroll through Kingsgate Park.
My leg won't hurt, and we'll go home the long way.

Asked to imagine heaven, I see us there,
The way we have been, the way we sometimes are.

THE HOMILY

Revd Rosamond McDowell

THE SIGNING OF THE REGISTER

Canon in D, *Johann Pachelbel (1653 - 1706)*

HYMN

I danced in the morning
When the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon
And the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven
And I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem
I had my birth.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.*

I danced for the scribe
And the pharisee,
But they would not dance
And they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for the fishermen,
For James and John –
They came with me
And the Dance went on.

Chorus

I danced on the Sabbath
And I cured the lame;
The holy people
Said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped
And they hung me on high,
And they left me there
On a Cross to die.

Chorus

I danced on a Friday
When the sky turned black –
It's hard to dance
With the devil on your back.
They buried my body
And they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Dance,
And I still go on.

Chorus

They cut me down
And I leapt up high;
I am the life
That'll never, never die;
I'll live in you
If you'll live in me –
I am the Lord
Of the Dance, said he.

Chorus

Words: Sydney Carter (1915-2004)
Music: Joseph Brackett (1797-1882)

THE PRAYERS

Priest: Faithful God, holy and eternal,
source of life and spring of love,
we thank and praise you for bringing Alastair and Emma to this day,
and we pray for them.
Lord of life and love:
All: Hear our prayer.

Priest: May their marriage be life-giving and life-long,
enriched by your presence and strengthened by your grace;
may they bring comfort and confidence to each other
in faithfulness and trust.
Lord of life and love:
All: Hear our prayer.

Priest: May the hospitality of their home
bring refreshment and joy to all around them;
may their love overflow to neighbours in need
and embrace those in distress.
Lord of life and love:
All: Hear our prayer.

Priest: May they discern in your word
order and purpose for their lives;
and may the power of your Holy Spirit
lead them in truth and defend them in adversity.
Lord of life and love:
All: Hear our prayer.

Priest: May they nurture their family with devotion,
see their children grow in body, mind and spirit
and come at last to the end of their lives
with hearts content and in joyful anticipation of heaven.
Lord of life and love:
All: Hear our prayer.