

## What Makes Up Love?

The sinking sun settled slowly on the far horizon. With his bare-feet snuggled into the soft sand he had, over time, idly watched it arc and fall. From this perspective it seemed the restless ocean was greedily reaching up and gradually swallowing the fiery ball, slowly draining its great strength with its own undeniable watery power. The last few rays sped across the waves, desperately flecking the water with their diminishing light, a glint here, a flicker off the crest of a wave there, these speedy escapees growing weaker with each passing minute. In half an hour or so the whole glorious show would be over, only for the battle to resume again tomorrow and the everlasting cycle would continue.

From where he sat, he picked up a small smooth flat stone, examined it's potential and flung it into the flat surf, hoping it would skip but not really disappointed when it didn't. Half heartedly he searched for another. The rest of the stones within reach were not built for skipping and he didn't really feel like forcing them to try. Placing his arms behind himself as props, he extended his feet out towards the ocean. With one hand he picked up a small stick and started drawing doodling lines in the sand. It was that time of day again and he let his mind drift.

"So what is love?"

"Well people say they love a lot of things, family, children, friends. Understandable I spose. Good people can bring the greatest joy in life."

"Some people will love special things or a cherished place or a treasured memory of some sort, something that holds a special intimate significance for them, maybe a ring or letter." He smiled at the thought. "I like that sort of memory."

"Still other people love the good things in life, gold, money, food or even the drink. Fair enough I guess, as long as it doesn't rule your life. Those habits are hard to break."

For a moment he paused in his thoughts, summarizing the choices, balancing the options.

"I guess people love all sorts of things but what does love mean? How do you know it's really love and not just something else?" In his hand the stick continued its unconscious doodling.

"To me, I don't think you know how much you love something until you haven't got it anymore. That's when you know whether you love something or not. Can you get by without it? Does it hurt so much each day to be without it that you find yourself constantly thinking about it? Every morning when you first wake does it seem impossible to get through the day without it? Even after

years without it does the nag of not having it still grow till madness without it seems the only future?"

"To me that's love."

"Yearning, aching, never fading, never forgotten."

He rolled onto one side and then slowly stood. Out of habit he dragged his ragged hand through his long scruffy graying beard disturbing the salt crystals and dirt. He turned his tired bent back on the setting sun and cast his permanently squinting eyes about. As usual the beach was totally deserted, so deserted as to be desolate.

He laughed out loud and threw his head back. "Me," he shouted to the wafting sea breeze and perhaps to God. "I'd just love to have a decent conversation with some-one, any-one will do."

Looking at his feet he examined his idle doodling. Strangely, in the midst of all the lines and whorls he had written his name.

*'Robinson Crusoe'.*