

The Andrea Gibson Love Poem

By Bella Cox

I cannot listen to Andrea Gibson poems without remembering how you turned my forearm over in your hand the first day we met to find a stamp inked on my skin that proved I was into poetry too. And how you looked at me like you'd just found a mouth to the ocean out of the river of misunderstanding you'd known as your life for the last 2 decades and how 1 month later you slipped your fingers into the gaps between mine where no one else had fit before and I took a picture of our hands stitched together that way that I can't bring myself to look at now without feeling that that was the last time my hand would ever tingle with loving someone new for the first time.

I can't believe the sun has tiptoed day by day around the whole globe since my skin last touched yours when it rose for three years on your face lying so close to mine on the pillow I could sense the quivers in your dreams as you slept soundly next to me the way you only slept soundly when next to me.

Do you remember that afternoon, how our fingers slipped inside the gaps of ourselves as we swam back into each other after an argument I've forgotten to remember and you recited Andrea, saying *you would kiss me in the middle of the ocean during a lightning storm cos you would rather be left for dead than to never know what thunder sounds like* and how I learnt that day that your tide eyes did more for my orgasm than either finger or tongue. Babe,

I wish I could call you home to me now. To this winter bed in this London house and play you this album she wrote cos there's a poem in here that sounds spoken for us and I wanna watch your face ribbon into a rainbow of dimpled smile and liquid eyes when you hear it. I wanna hold your body in mine and remind you again how your skin is my favourite colour on me and your body is the perfect weight to balance out my anxieties and some days your faith in God is the only flame to my hope-fire and I cannot help but miss your soft grace.

I want you to know, I still correct every person that mispronounces your name, holding it on my tongue like a conch shell to their ear so they must hear the beauty in its waves.

I want you to know, I have written over 2 thousand poems in the four years since we met and that love poems for you make up over 60 per cent even though I know it in my bones that our ocean is all dried up and I cannot call you mine anymore.

I want you to know; you will always be the first woman who loved me without disclaimers. Thanks to you I've stopped looking for my love in the mail box marked return to sender.

You are the longest chapter in my story so far so don't you ever let your demons convince you I drowned our memories in the wreckage. It is not true.

It is 2am and 4am and I know you are asleep, but I've got Andrea Gibson poems lapping at my heart like the sea and I wish, I wish you could be hearing them with me.