

A Gift from the Sea: by Anne Morrow Lindberg

When you love someone,
you do not love them all the time,
in exactly the same way,
from moment to moment.

It is impossibility.

It is even a lie to pretend to.

And yet this is exactly what most of us demand.

We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships.

We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb.

We are afraid it will never return.

We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity;

when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth,

in fluidity- in freedom,

in the sense that the dancers are free,

barely touching as they pass,

but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing,

not in demanding or expecting,

not in hoping, even.

Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia,

nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation,

but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now.

Relationships must be like islands,
one must accept them for what they are here and now,
within their limits-
islands,
surrounded and interrupted by the sea,
and continually visited
and abandoned by the tides.