

## Woman to Man

GAIL FOX

1

Poetry is not the answer. Even when someone reads it, I am still amazed and know I have run into a rare specimen of the human, one who, like myself, still believes that words can help. But often they don't. Sometimes, sharp-tongued as a spike, I nail you into a hard chair, trying to explain my problem. I do that far too much. What *is* my problem in a world so troubled by cruelty and death? Perhaps my problem is not a problem and does not need constant elaboration in the language of a shrew. Still, would I be happy to lock up anger, sadness, grief, long hours of waiting for you?

2

Dear love, it is not my wish to be cruel as the world is cruel. Or to kill your joy in being you. You take my words to heart as though they mattered, you who say that words don't matter, and do not answer back. I mean only that I do not want to squander time together — there is not a lot — you hurting me, then me retaliating. Deadlock. We hurt too easily, each of us, and love far too much for all the bickering. Please seek me out as I seek you, waiting for you always it would seem, as you are lost in your busyness of words and always words — need me a little more and show it.

3

Tonight You wrote a poem on what I meant to you. And it was moving. Yet it was not enough. I wanted so much to kiss you on the hand that held that stupid pen, and have you kiss me back. A poem is just a poem — I loved the ideas — I love you more than ideas or poems. I love you because you are so damned ornery in your dailiness — your chair, your rituals of breakfast and shaving — I love you for them, and I complain most bitterly that because of them, we cannot be closer. For I would give you almost anything. "Why not peace and quiet?"

4

Think of me as I speak to you tonight. While you are sleeping, think of me. I often speak and am not heard. Words are

nothing compared with simple love,  
that complicated thought and feeling.  
Forgive my clumsy words to ask forgiveness  
for bits and pieces of my life that haven't  
come together, live on in each new day,  
another habit to be broken, more muddled  
feeling that leads to loneliness and tears.  
In February the shadows are blue,  
the snow is blue on black. The world  
is cruel and troubled by death. In our  
small life give me, from time to time, your warmth.



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