

**For Love in a Time of Conflict**

from *To Bless the Space Between Us*, p 32

John O'Donohue

When the gentleness between you hardens  
And you fall out of your belonging with each other,  
May the depths you have reached hold you still.

When no true word can be said, or heard,  
And you mirror each other in the script of hurt,  
When even the silence has become raw and torn,  
May you hear again an echo of your first music.

When the weave of affection starts to unravel  
And anger begins to sear the ground between you,  
Before this weather of grief invites  
The black seed of bitterness to find root,  
May your souls come to kiss.

Now is the time for one of you to be gracious,  
To allow a kindness beyond thought and hurt,  
Reach out with sure hands  
To take the chalice of your love,  
And carry it carefully through this echoless waste  
Until this winter pilgrimage leads you  
Toward the gateway to spring.

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