



Surrealist Love Poems

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Love poetry includes, yes, descriptions of the beloved. And images of a fantastic idyll complete with falling stars, the sound of the sea, and beautiful countryside. In the hands of Surrealists, though, love poetry also includes gravediggers and murderers, dice and garbage, snakeskin purses and "the drunken kisses of cyclones." Surrealism, the movement founded in the 1920s on the ashes of Dada's nihilism, embraced absurdity, contradiction, and, to a supreme extent, passion and desire. From André Breton's battle cry of "Mad Love" to the quiet lyricism of Robert Desnos, Surrealist writers and artists obsessively expressed the permutations of that fundamental human state, love, and they did so with the vocabulary of natural and unnatural worlds, the explicit language of sex, and a great deal of humor.

Surrealist Love Poems brings together sixty poems by Surrealists who charged their work with all forms of eroticism. Expertly and energetically edited by Mary Ann Caws, this collection seeks to demonstrate the truth of Breton's words, that "the embrace of poetry like that of bodies / As long as it lasts / Shuts out all the woes of the world."

"Erotic, impassioned and necrophilic, the sixty works gathered in *Surrealist Love Poems* celebrate the idea of obsessive and transformative love. 'I want to sleep with you side by side. . . . Stretched out on your shadow / Hammered by your tongue / To die in a rabbit's rotting teeth / Happy' writes Joyce Mansour. . . . Caws places poems by major surrealist writers like André Breton and Paul Eluard, along with the poetry of Picasso, Dalí, and Frida Kahlo, side by side with fourteen lushly printed and alluring black-and-white photos by the likes of Man Ray, Lee Miller, and Claude Cahun."—*Publishers Weekly*

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