

Margaret J. Wheatley



Together is the Natural State of Life

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*(written for the marriage ceremony of Paul and Marianne at Kufunda, Zimbabwe,
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Marriage is not about love.

It begins with love, but truly it is about union.

Two people who vow to forego separation and step forward to journey together, to explore union.

Even these stones, seemingly
so strong in their separation,
were once together.

Once they were a great blanket of granite that covered this land.

It was time and events that wore them apart.

Today they stand with us so that we can remember:

Even those who are apart, strong as they appear,
are meant to be together.

Together is the natural state of life. Union. Communion. Community.

Life cannot bear separation. Like rivers seeking ocean,
we want to flow toward one another,

We only know who we are when in relationship.

We call this 'love' but really, it is life we are loving.

We can be human only together.

Love is in the geology of Africa.

She is the mother continent who still sits
in the same planetary space where she's always been.

500 million years ago, the continents began their drift.

For all these years whose duration we cannot comprehend,
these other lands have wandered away, exploring separation.

They created new habitats, new species, new identities.

But Africa never waivered.

Africa sits and waits, like all mothers, for her children to return.
And now—at least one geologist tells this story—the continents
are returning, beginning their slow drift back to where they once began.
Returning to the shores of the mother.

Africa never waivers.
People, like continents, leave Africa.
Africans leave Africa.
But Africa does not leave us.

So Marianne returned to Africa and found Paul.
And Paul, who was wandering, found Marianne.
And now, like two rivers, carried by currents of love,
carrying currents of love,
they stand here, together, on the good earth of Kufunda.

May their love reach far beyond this place,
to those who so need love.
May their hope travel far beyond this day,
to those who so need hope.
May their faith in the human spirit travel far beyond this time
to those who so need faith.

And may we who have drifted away
and are now returned
open wide our hearts for this land
and be nourished by this Mother
who has never wavered,
who only ever reminds us (like these stones)
we are meant to be together.



ABOUT MARGARET (MEG) WHEATLEY, Ed.D.

Margaret Wheatley writes, speaks, and teaches how we can accomplish our work, sustain our relationships, and willingly step forward to serve in this troubled time. She is co-founder and President emerita of The Berkana Institute, an organizational consultant since 1973, a global citizen since her youth, and a prolific writer. She has authored eight books. Her numerous articles may be downloaded free at her web site: margaretwheatley.com. For more biographical information, see margaretwheatley.com/bio