

# One Hundred Love Sonnets: XVII

By Pablo Neruda

Translated by Mark Eisner

I don't love you as if you were a rose of salt, topaz,  
or arrow of carnations that propagate fire:  
I love you as one loves certain obscure things,  
secretly, between the shadow and the soul.

I love you as the plant that doesn't bloom but carries  
the light of those flowers, hidden, within itself,  
and thanks to your love the tight aroma that arose  
from the earth lives dimly in my body.

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where,  
I love you directly without problems or pride:  
I love you like this because I don't know any other way to love,  
except in this form in which I am not nor are you,  
so close that your hand upon my chest is mine,  
so close that your eyes close with my dreams.

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