



what  
do you  
love?

mike de souza

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# what do you love?

for children and adults everywhere

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happiness in two (hundred) words

First Edition: January 2025

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# What do you love?



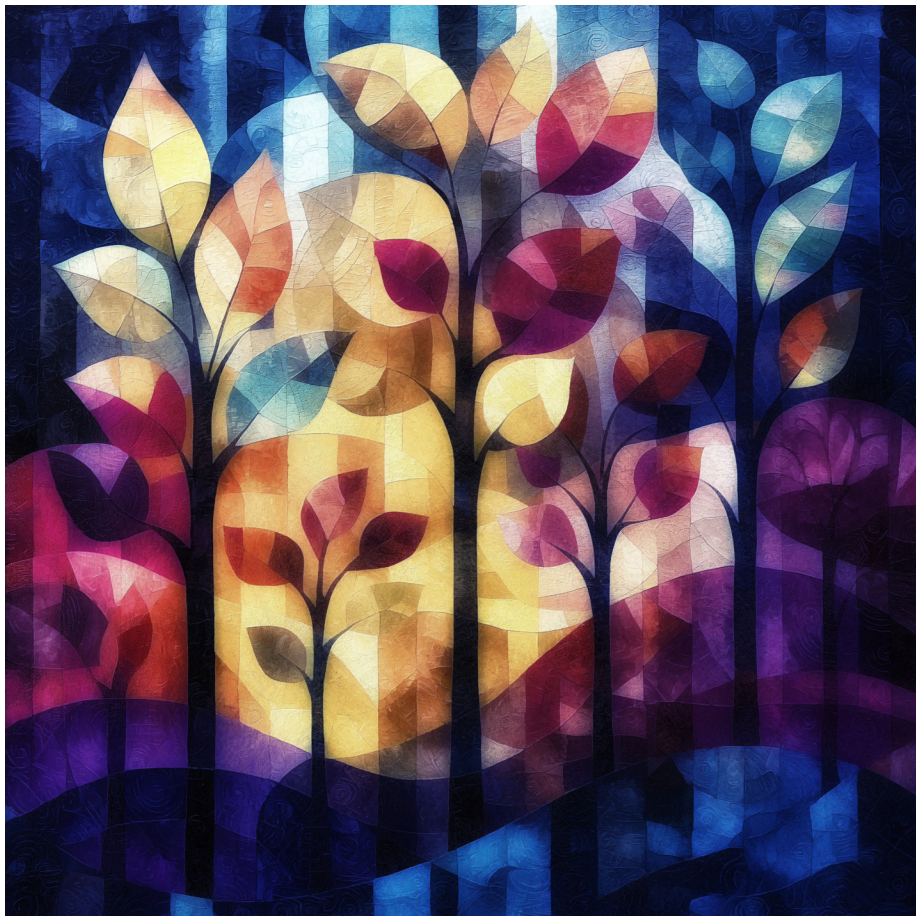
A story about five young friends sharing their love.

The story is in three forms: designed text, designed text with art, and text for visually impaired readers.

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what do you love?  
b e i n g t o g e t h e r

---

picture this

Five young friends lay on the ground  
looking up at the blue sky.

One asks:

What do you love?

Another replies:

Trees.

The friends smile as they turn their  
heads to one another.

A whisper:

Birds.

They hear their distant chatter and  
flight. Their hearts fill with hope.



I touch the surface of the earth with my  
fingers and think of my mother:

Flowers.

Another finds their voice:

I love flowers.

My friend who is often silent takes a  
deep breath as if enjoying their scent:

Me too.

The furthest from me shares their love:

Bread.

Our conversation carries on:

I love bread.

The golden brown of bread.

The warm crust and crumb of bread.

The soft inside and fresh of bread.

With happy satisfaction we return our  
gaze to the sky:

How about you? What do you love?

You take a shallow breath:

This.

We all begin to think:

Our being here.

Together.

Yes.

With you.

Without the friend's imaginings there are no trees, no birds, no flowers, no bread. Only the heartache and cruel destruction of war, everywhere.

We are happy as we look up at the big blue sky. We are happy for this moment, being, together.



# Three Kinds of One Book

The first section of this book invites the reader to “picture this”. Here the reader has the opportunity of imagining those things written about, as they focus on the music, form, play, and meaning of words.

The second section includes artworks that present ways of seeing the story.

The third version has been formatted for the visually impaired.

Speech quotes are omitted from all versions as this allows for more open and poetic reading.

I read differently when words are alone as compared with when they are presented with pictures. Each approach leaves a unique impact on the head and heart.

Words become within us. Saying words out loud, repeating them, even whispering them, transforms them.

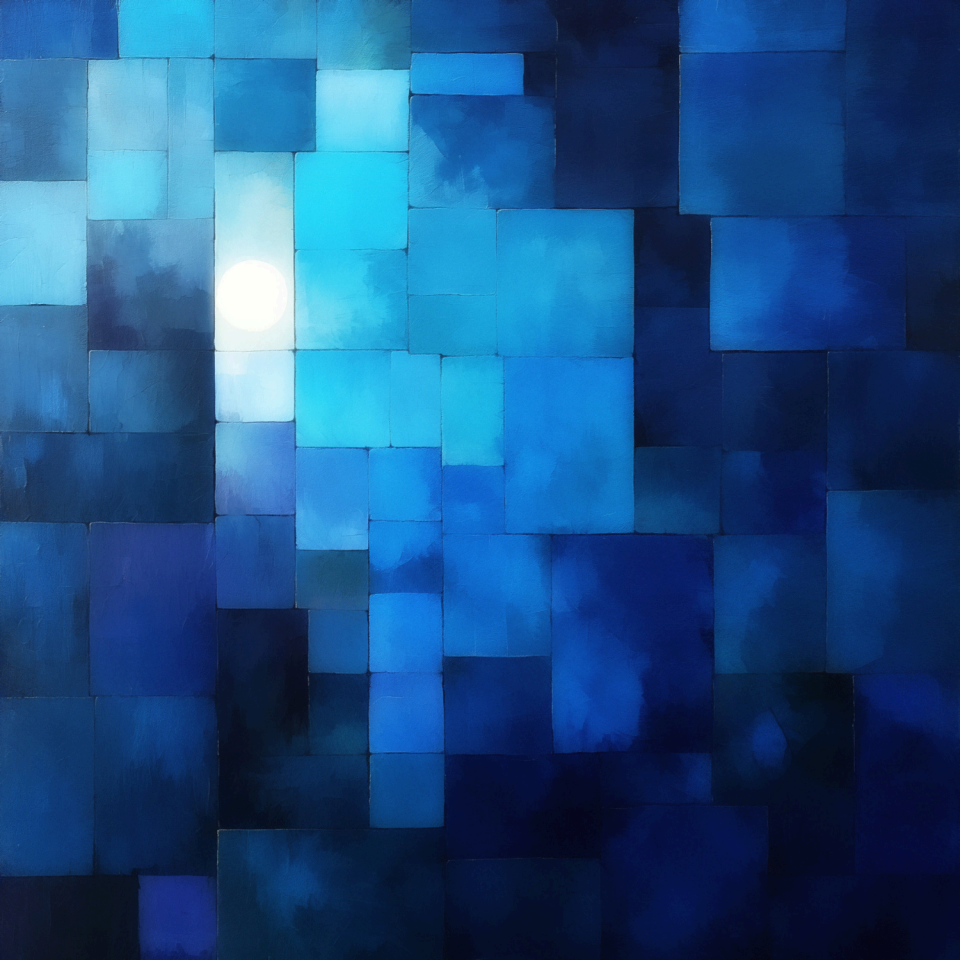


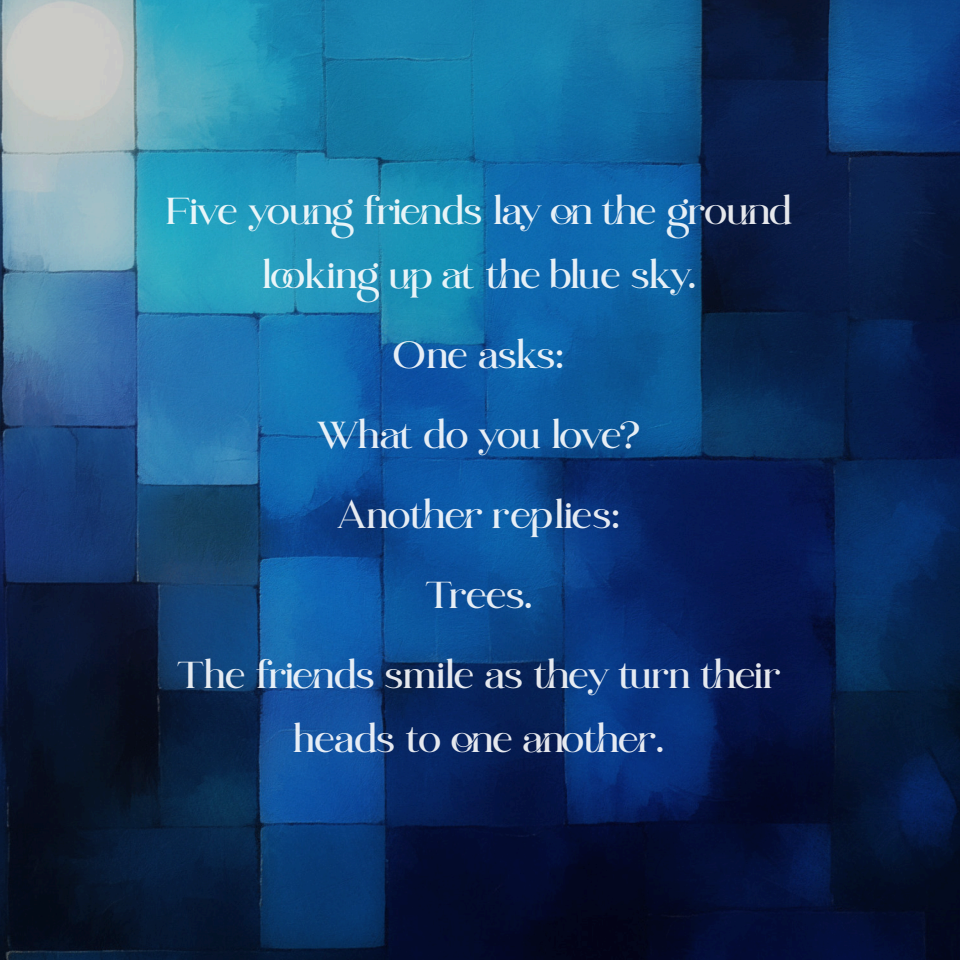


what do you love?

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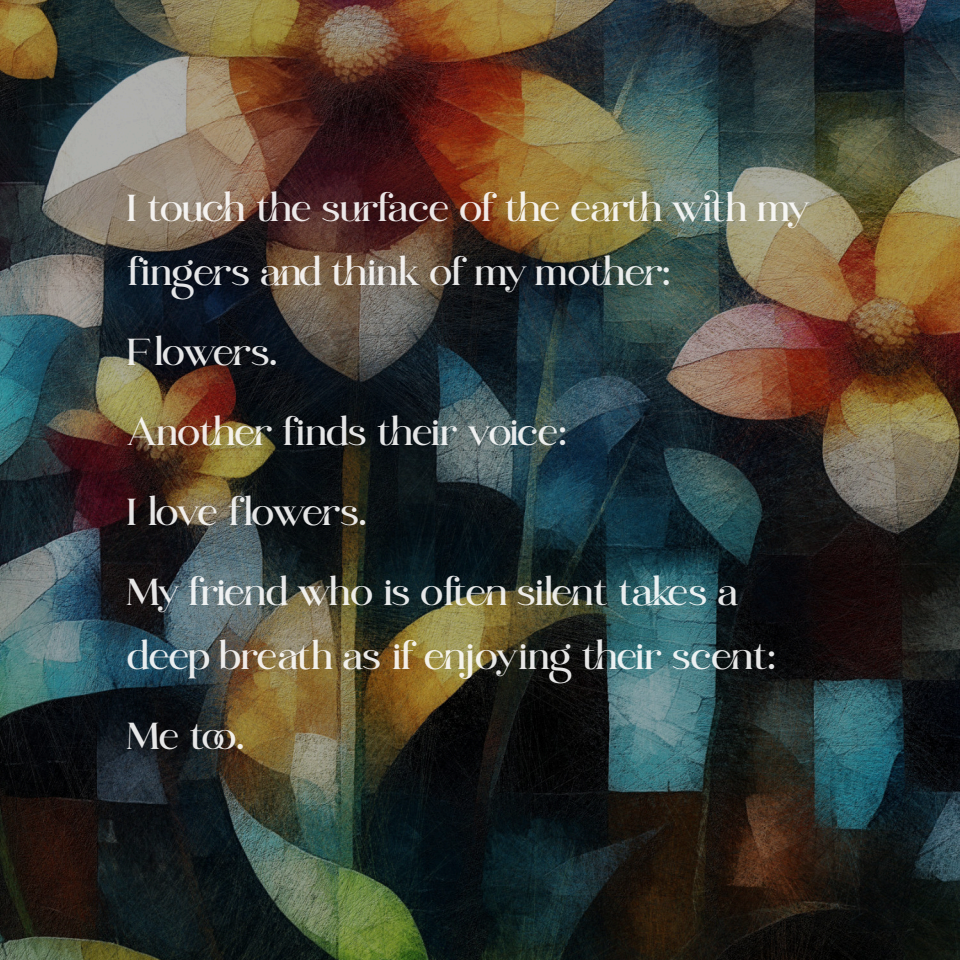


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A detailed painting of a basket filled with various types of bread. The breads are rendered in warm, golden-brown and tan tones, with some showing a soft, white interior. The brushwork is visible, giving the scene a textured, artistic feel. The lighting is soft, highlighting the curves and textures of the loaves.

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The background is an abstract composition of various shades of blue and green, with a prominent yellow-green vertical strip near the top center. The colors are applied in textured, block-like shapes, creating a mosaic effect. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

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You take a shallow breath:

This.

We all begin to think:

Our being here.

Together.

Yes.

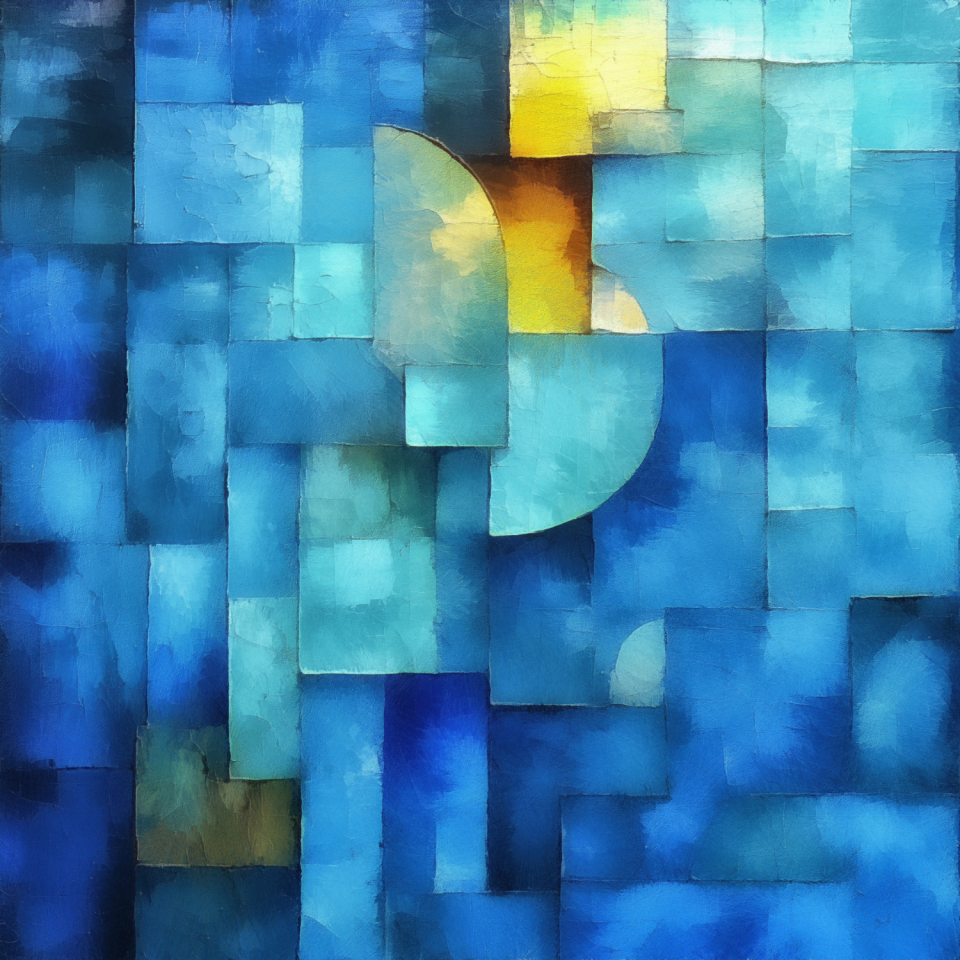
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# What Do You Love?

## Styled For Those With Vision Impairment

The font used for the first two presentations of this story may not be accessible for everyone as it uses a style with ligatures, a feature of typography that combines the shapes of certain sequences of characters into a new form that makes for a more visually harmonious reading experience. The third version of this story that follows is therefore presented in a more conventional font format that is more easily read by those with visual impairment.

**BEGINNING**

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**END**





# what do you love?

## author notes

This short work for all ages shares the foundational experience and value of being together. When I share, I seek common ground, and when I share those things I love with others who welcome me, friendship follows.

Nurturing friendship is at the heart of a good society.

The question: what do you love? Is at the root of what we value, and this in turn drives how we act.

My idea was to imagine five young children sharing those things that are most important to them. As time went on I realised these could be friends of any age.

The friends choose simple pleasures: trees, birds, flowers, and bread. When the question is turned back to the one who first asked, they share their most loved experience: being together.

What do you love? This is as much a question for the reader as the title of the story. The reader journeys from what at first seems like an idyllic setting, to the devastation of war. Yet in this darkest of places the reader is witness to the hope and beauty that love and friendship bring.

Being together and sharing their love is all these friends have. Human conflict has left nothing else, even the most essential of things that are needed to live, like bread.

As I re-read the story I ponder on what I most love, and those I most love. As the story ends “We are happy for this moment, being, together.” I consider my moment of being, my life, and how those moments I have most valued, and most value, are when I am with. With nature, life, and you.

With Love,

Mike

Oakley, England.

January 2025





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love?