



{ *for married people* }

JOHN KENNEY



BANTAM PRESS

For Barbara

Karen

Pam

Miss France

Claudine

Ramone

Lissa

I honor you and our love but I also lost track of time
at a bar with my coworkers

In France, *cing à sept* was once sacrosanct,
a euphemism for rendezvous,
for the thing that men and women do.

But we are not in France.
We are here, in Montclair, New Jersey.
And it is well past seven.
And I promised to be home at six.

And, yes, that's booze on my breath.
The guys and I had one . . . fine, three drinks after work.

And apparently I have forgotten the milk.
And the bread and the pasta and the pull-ups.
And the allergy medicine.

Why are you dressed up?
Wait. Today is Valentine's Day?

Are you in the mood?

I am.

Let's put the kids down.

Have a light dinner.

Shower.

Maybe not drink so much.

And do that thing I would rather do with you than
anyone else.

Lie in bed and look at our iPhones.

Our love

Our love is like the padlocks on the Pont des Arts, in
Paris.

Thousands of locks, symbols of unbreakable love.
Isn't that beautiful?

Apparently, though, all those locks are
too heavy for the bridge.

Did you hear this?

I read it somewhere.

The locks are weighing the bridge down.

So you know what they're going to do?

They're taking them off with bolt cutters and throwing
them in the trash.

Isn't that beautiful, too?

So now the people aren't locked together anymore.

They're free to maybe see other people.

I thought that was interesting.

Why are you in the shower with me?

Did the bathtub shrink?
I ask because here we are,
naked,
showering together,
like we once did all the time.
Remember? At the beginning?
We would stand and talk,
seals slipping by one another,
a playful ease letting the other into the stream.
Now?
I'm not sure what you're doing in here.
I'm freezing.
There's shampoo stinging my eyes.
You just stepped on my foot.
For the love of Christ who flushed the toilet?
Because I'm being scalded alive.
Get out.
Now.
It was a nice idea though, honey.
Could you close the door?