

The Mt. Lassen Trail as a Metaphor for Marriage

Marriage is like hiking the Mt. Lassen trail
We leave the altar anticipating the mountain top experience
Only to discover a rocky trailhead and a steep grade
We quickly learn to appreciate the view
From the top of each switchback
As we pause for water and breath
Underneath the ancient volcano seethes and bubbles
But we keep climbing,
Supported by hope and thin air
Our lungs ache
Our lips crack
We stop talking to concentrate on the climb
Just when we're ready to rest
Or possibly turn back
Those more seasoned than ourselves
Pass us on their way back down
"A little further," they say.
"The view is worth it."
With plodding steps we stumble out on top
We embrace the panoramic beauty
That we sacrificed to see
The cinder cone
And beyond it, Mt. Shasta, 100 miles away
Suddenly wanting to memorialize our achievement
We carve our initials in the snowpack
And draw a heart around them
A juvenile gesture
But it reminds us of the love
That first led us to this trail