

I have always like the poem by Rudyard Kipling called 'If'. Nevertheless, I have also been somewhat incensed by the fact that it was written primarily for boys. It seems that so much good stuff has been created with boys and men in mind, ignoring that girls and women have as much stake in this life, as do men and boys. As the result of my appreciation for the sentiment in this poem, and the feeling that it should speak to women too, I rewrote it, so that even women and girls could feel included. I also updated it, just a little.

Now some might say, "How presumptuous of you to take the poem of such a renowned and celebrated writer and change the words to suite yourself!" Nevertheless, you be the judge. Is this an affront to Kipling? Or does it honor his wisdom and insight and yet afford the stirring of the hearts and minds of those of the female gender, something that maybe even Kipling might agree is necessary, in this world of sexual equality and the shared responsibility of all people, in spite of their sexual orientation. In fact, my personal philosophy embraces the possibility of reincarnation. From the standpoint of my philosophy it's possible that Mr. Kipling is alive today and maybe even be expressing in a female body. Gosh! He could even be... me.

So, without further ado, I would like to read - **Another If** (For men *and* women, boys *and* girls) By Rudyard Kipling, and Kerry Dennis

## **Another If**

(For men *and* women, boys *and* girls)

If you can keep your head when those around you  
Are losing theirs and maybe blaming it on you?  
If you can trust yourself when others doubt you,  
And yet make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not get tired by waiting,  
Or, when you're being lied about, refuse to deal in lies,  
Or, when you're hated, refrain from hating,  
And never try to look too good, or to appear too wise;

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
And can treat both conditions just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by others to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to - broken,  
Yet stoop to build them up again with worn-out tools;

If you can make one pile of all your winnings  
And risk it all in a game of dice - with just one toss,  
And if you lose, start again - at the beginning  
And never speak a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and all that is within you  
To do the work when everyone has given up and gone,  
To hold on to hope - even when there's nothing you can do  
Except be faithful to your Will that says: "Hold on";

If you can perform before crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings – and never lose the common touch;  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
If all people count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of the distance run -  
Then the Earth is yours and everything within it,  
And the understanding of life's true meaning - when it's done!

By Rudyard Kipling & Kerry Dennis