

If revisited

If you can keep your heart when all about you
Are losing heart or living in denial;
If you can trust yourself when others doubt you
And greet their mistrust with an open smile;
If you can feel and not be scared of feeling,
Or being wounded, do not deal in pain;
If you can face a truth that's unappealing
And find the strength to look, and look again;

If you can dream - and make your dream your teacher;
If you can think - and keep your thinking clear;
If you can meet with any living creature
And treat them with respect and hold them dear;
If you can speak the truth in spite of rumour;
If you can see the fear through the spin;
If you can keep your patience and good humour
When those around you buckle and give in;

If you can set aside the need for winning
Or who is in control and who is boss
And in yourself create a new beginning
Where suffering is everybody's loss;
If you can honour air, and soil, and water
And love the living land you walk upon;
If you can show your son and teach your daughter
To do the same long after you are gone;

If you can know yourself to be the equal
Of anybody you have ever met;
If you can know your story has a sequel,
More beautiful, that isn't written yet;
If you can fill the day and month and season
With true and ever clearer ways of seeing,
Yours is the Earth, by love, and rhyme, and reason
And - which is more - you'll be a human being.

Jojo Mehta, November 2015 (with thanks to Rudyard Kipling)