"What is love" was the most searched phrase on Google in 2012, according to the company. In an attempt to get to the bottom of the question once and for all, the Guardian has gathered writers from the fields of science, literature, religion and philosophy to give their definition of the much-pondered word.“爱为何物”成了2012年谷歌最热门的搜索短语，跟据该公司。为了一劳永逸地弄清问题的真相，《卫报》聚集了来自科学、文学、宗教和哲学各领域的作家来给出他们对这个被思虑良多的单词的定义。

The physicist: 'Love is chemistry'

Biologically, love is a powerful neurological condition like hunger or thirst, only more permanent. We talk about love being blind or unconditional, in the sense that we have no control over it. But then, that is not so surprising since love is basically chemistry. While lust is a temporary passionate sexual desire involving the increased release of chemicals such as testosterone and oestrogen, in true love, or attachment and bonding, the brain can release a whole set of chemicals: pheromones, dopamine, norepinephrine, serotonin, oxytocin and vasopressin. However, from an evolutionary perspective, love can be viewed as a survival tool – a mechanism we have evolved to promote long-term relationships, mutual defense and parental support of children and to promote feelings of safety and security.

物理学家：“爱是化学反应”

生理上，爱情是一种像饥饿和干渴一样的强大神经反射，只是更持久。我们说爱情盲目或无缘由，在某种意义上我们无法控制它。但这并不令人惊讶既然爱情基本上是化学反应。虽然欲望是一种临时的激情的性渴望，涉及到在真爱或依赖关系中化学物质如睾丸激素和雌激素的释放增加，大脑会释放出一系列化学物质：信息素、多巴胺、去甲肾上腺素、血清素、催产素和垂体后叶加压素。然而，从进化的角度来看，爱情可被视为一种生存工具——我们已经形成的一种机制，为的是促进长期关系，共同防御和抚养孩子以及提升安全感。

The philosopher: 'Love is a passionate commitment'

The answer remains elusive in part because love is not one thing. Love for parents, partners, children, country, neighbor, God and so on all have different qualities. Each has its variants – blind, one-sided, tragic, steadfast, fickle, reciprocated, misguided, and unconditional. At its best, however, all love is a kind a passionate commitment that we nurture and develop, even though it usually arrives in our lives unbidden. That's why it is more than just a powerful feeling. Without the commitment, it is mere infatuation. Without the passion, it is mere dedication. Without nurturing, even the best can wither and die.

哲学家：“爱情是充满激情的承诺”

某种程度上答案仍然是难以捉摸的因为爱不是一件事。爱父母、伴侣、孩子、国家、邻居、上帝等等都有不同的特质。每一个都有它的变体，盲目的、片面的、悲伤的、坚定的、变化无常的、有回应的、被误导的、无条件的。但是，它最好的是所有的爱都是一种我们培养和发展起来的充满激情的承诺，尽管它通常不由自主地来到我们的生活中。这就是为什么它不仅仅是一种强烈的感觉。没有承诺，它只是单纯的迷恋。没有激情，它只是纯粹的奉献。没有培养，即使是最好的爱情也会枯萎、死亡。

The romantic novelist: 'Love drives all great stories'

What love is depends on where you are in relation to it. Secure in it, it can feel as mundane and necessary as air – you exist within it, almost unnoticing. Deprived of it, it can feel like an obsession; all consuming, a physical pain. Love is the driver for all great stories: not just romantic love, but the love of parent for child, for family, for country. It is the point before consummation of it that fascinates: what separates you from love, the obstacles that stand in its way. It is usually at those points that love is everything.

浪漫的小说家：“爱情驱动所有伟大的故事”

爱为何物取决于你在哪里邂逅它。在其中安全，它就感觉像空气一样平常和必须——你存在于它，几乎无意识的。失去它，它就感觉像是一场妄想；所有沉溺都是身体上的疼痛。爱是所有伟大故事的前因：不只是浪漫的爱情，也包括父母对孩子的爱，对家庭的爱，对国家的爱。这就是在它圆满之前令人着迷的一点：把你从爱中分隔的是阻挡它的障碍。爱是一切通常是关键点。

The nun: 'Love is free yet binds us'

Love is more easily experienced than defined. As a theological virtue, by which we love God above all things, it seems remote until we encounter it enfleshed, so to say, in the life of another – in acts of kindness, generosity and self-sacrifice. Love's the one thing that can never hurt anyone, although it may cost dearly. The paradox of love is that it is supremely free yet attaches us with bonds stronger than death. It cannot be bought or sold; there is nothing it cannot face; love is life's greatest blessing.

修女：“爱是自由但也使我们盲目”

爱更容易经历而非定义。作为一种神学美德，我们爱上帝高于一切，它似乎很遥远直到我们遇见它，可以这么说，在另一个生命里——在善举、慷慨和自我牺牲里重生。爱是不会伤害任何人的东西，尽管它可能成本高昂。爱的悖论：它是极其自由的但比死亡还强大的纽带把我们联系在一起。它不能买卖，没有什么它不能面对的；爱是人生最大的祝福。