

You know, there's an old saying: "Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer."

There's some truth to this. Not because everyone is scheming, nor just because friendship is never symmetrical, i.e., since a friendship is dynamic, 'give and take,' that is, a power struggle;

The real truth is in this: you can't really hate someone until you know them well. That's also to say you can't really hurt someone until you let them get close to you. Likewise, you can't get your heart broken if you never let yourself fall in love. That seems strange to say—"let yourself fall in love"! After all, we tend to think "love" in a very passive, gentle way. Love is enchantment, the world is transformed: the ocean becomes an orchestra and the stars become angels, the woman into goddess, love indeed is a transubstantiation: but could it be an involuntary reaction?

Isn't what we are thinking of here as "involuntary" things we do without thinking like our heartbeat or breathing? Aren't these things done really by the whole organism, as it were, all at once and for the benefit and survival of the creature? Now, wouldn't love be the MOST voluntary action as an embrace with your "whole" body? We hate our enemies in the same logic as we love anyone: not because there is a goal outside of love or hate for which we strive, but because these experiences, these modes are goals-in-themselves. We play merely because there is a game to be played, we push only because we know there is resistance, we move only if we know there is going to be a counter-movement. On several levels, love is oscillation between polarities— as such, love articulates an ancient, infinite rhythm; love is the glorious betrayal of the power of One.

Modern romantic love: tragic transcendence. Billy Corgan singing: "Love is suicide." The narcissistic and self-destructive hope that—one day—meaning and truth can be restored their rightful, empty place.

As firmly as "love" and "death" are inscribed into the mysterious circle of our existence, there is a proper LACK of experience of the direct thing-cause of either love or death. We only experience death from the point of view of the living other, even in the case of "our" own death, since technically speaking, death occurs to something which is not "us," since that which is "us" is already dead and gone; in a similar vein, we experience in love the death of someone, the "old" you that wasn't in love. Not that we become someone else, but we watch the death of another *who is ourselves*: "Love is watching someone die," as Ben Gibbard put it.) Death as experienced in love is also an inner rebirth. "Falling in love" follows the monotonic rhythm of annihilation/creation/annihilation. In love is there not a transfiguration of our everyday world which amounts to a revelation of the before-unseen but beautiful qualities of our surroundings? Yet despite such 'spiritual' changes we draw not one inch closer to the true object-cause of our desire, since our desire, insofar as it is 'pure,' is technically meta-physical: not because it is a non-substantial desire, but because love is a desire for *that which is not merely substance*, that is, a desire for something which is absolutely other than ourselves: love denotes the relation between two absolute entities which yet does not bind them into being defined only by one another: a sort-of "touching with pressure," a respect for mutual freedom to exist in their own way. Yet love certainly is transformative, perhaps is transformation itself. Movement without love is empty, mechanical. Passion is what gives color, vibrance, energy to human existence.

Love as a desire embraces (but does not consume) the transcendent, the coherence of alterity. Lust as a drive is an oscillation (like, of course, sex): a merging of boundaries, a sort of immersion into the cosmic flux. In love we experience indirectly our own death: but only as another who is oneself. Love is, then, distinguished from the bravado of lust: "I am greater than myself;" love is rather the movement of transformation, the powerful injection of change and life into reality. Love follows a rhythm of death and resurrection, a living-through-death which results in a more "meaningful" life: after Ranciere: "I am another."

Love represents not a unity, for the people in the relationship remain "absolute", are still completely and wholly "themselves," irrelevant of whether they "want" to be. Even if you're whipped, you're still yourself—you're just acting submissive, : love is but arrangement, the anticipation of the other within the same: the lover is the woman among women. Fear of death is the intoxicating anticipation of the object of love: the vertigo of the infinite abyss, the endless crazy energy of the libidinal drives. Love and death share their deepest meaning in representing an ultimate dis-connection. Is romantic love in a sense not the reversal of Christian 'fraternal' love between all members of humankind? "Love thy neighbor" is antithetical to particular love. Only the experience of death (or anticipation of, really a kind of 'inner' death)—before we can even comprehend such a universal love.

Thus love as well as death disconnects us from the universal, from the real; in love we escape from the true reality into a rosy realm glowing with a holy, otherworldly light, the entire universe orbiting majestically around the object-cause of our desire: my lover. Death is the irreducibility singularity, the base common ground of all "life" and therefore endlessly chained to, or rather: us to it, as the lover to the object of love, unable to carry his weight properly but also unable to let go and so jealously guarding it, pushing it along until: without warning—the weight is lifted.