

"THE RULES THAT BIND US HERE"

Everything I do is carefully executed performance. I am eternally performing, dancing in the face of Love. Love is a silent audience and holds herself with poise. She is not uncouth and claps quietly, never shouts, purses her lips into a smirk at the end of the show. The applause roars and ignites something primal within my hips. It is then when I fall with artistic fever. But, Love is a minimalist. I frenzy. She glances only.

I have a lover now and I will extrapolate the idea of him to prove a point in my personal thesis where I declare what Love is and what Love isn't. This lover of mine is a sweet man, but he says his heart is hurt. I think he fears how deep Love runs through my veins. At times he is sharp and he pricks and the leak is so laced with the Love that feeds the life within me. He thinks it would stain. It could. It doesn't have to. I live in a society where monogamy is the norm, and many of my peers in Love associate the things I do and the things I feel with such an endgame. I want to be honest but it feels like there is something ill-willed about describing in true detail the nature of how my heart interplays with the (heartthrobs of my) local community. I would suffice to say that there are seven days of the week. I could devote Love for others to six of those days. Loyal understanding is not mutually exclusive with exclusivity.

"I'm yours."

There are so many parts of me that I would so enjoy for another to Love. It's yours, and it's his too. Maybe there is a long line of lovers waiting that all take share in it. At the end of the day, anything that is mine was bestowed upon me against my will. I am endlessly seeking something to make it worthwhile.

(After being prompted) he asked, "Can I see you on Tuesday night?"

When I decide to respond I will tell him that of course, I am free. For him, I am always free. I am in his hands. I am a real lover, and I would let his Love destroy me, despite all logic and inhibition. But before that, I am a person who exists in the material ether. My angle must withhold the pleasure just a little bit.

"Let me check my personal narratives, and I will see if I can fit you in during this phase," I would say, if I were not congruent with the truths of Love.

Sometimes I call this my politics of Desire - the silly little things that I must do to navigate the devouring truths of Love while hostage within the physical realm. Really, I am a deeper force controlling something crystalline. The bonds that hold the structures that comprise the body that is me are organized and enthalpically governed in such a way that radiates light so

stunningly. It is a pain that the shape that is me is not uniform with how the rest of the physical ether is constrained.

I have never truly felt beautiful. My shape has changed in so many ways throughout the time that I have been conscious. Yet the feeling of un-Desire in prior shapes is something that prevails.

For the residual un-Desire, my mouth does not open to get fed. I am a closed mouth. Does that make me any less deserving of being sustained? Why does the privilege of life support not extend to someone who has been beat down by life but can still breathe on their own?

Maybe it is because a life I lived was dearth of Desire and thereby exempt from stepping into the stage of Love that I am now so obsessed with it. There is nothing more delicious to me than adoration. Adoration is a facet of Desire which is a proponent of Love. Sometimes obsession is the same. Sometimes hatred holds that space as well. Regardless, I am happiest when I am on someone's mind. I am happiest when I am in Love's mind. Perhaps, I am happiest when I am on your mind.

Sometimes I will think of the past lovers of mine who have irreversibly changed the trajectory of my life. I wonder if they know that they did that. I am (not so) blissfully unaware of my impact in the lives of those who have impacted me. For example, there is one real lover of mine whose Love is perhaps the closest thing to a god that I have encountered thus far. His fluids in my mouth were the ambrosia that empowered me one year, and then furthered me another when I again had an unwise post-cataclysm trace exposure. I think of him daily, if not hourly. Does he think of me? Would I ever know? He has not responded to any of my text messages for months. I stopped reaching out because I hate being ignored. But, I know that when the planets align again, I will be reaching out. The question is not whether he will answer me or not. Instead, the question is if I will prompt the exchange or will he. The Universe likes to operate in a fashion that respects all laws but knows the very exception to each one, doing so in a way that the exceptions to the rules become the prevailing forces of intrigue, almost as if we are trying to rewrite the Universe.

Whatever rule there is I will break. Someone I admire once said, "I've never been a well-trained poodle; jumping through hoops would be torture."

I recognize that sentiment well as a diamond in the bedrock. I am a crystal in the grit of physical ether.

"When can I have you?" he asked me. A blow to my stomach. I fell to my knees.

"I'm pretty busy... but I could make some time for you, next week? Weekend?"

Radio silence. When I contacted him it was a cry for help, but also perhaps it was one of those rule-breaking phenomena that gave me an extra spark to help

get me through the gris that enshrouds the phase I am in right now. In times of lack, those maybe questionable sources of fuel gain an ethical depth that would not be there otherwise. Or it could just be that I liked the way he tasted and desired the ravenous beauty one could infer from the bruises he left all over my body.

Actually, now I have played my hand and I will wait patiently as my turn rotates through the table. What we have is finite, and it will return to me eventually. I think that I am so overstimulated with the line of lovers in front of me that I can't relax and instead just run. I do not want to fight. It is all flight. And for that reason, I become something so easy to drop. I do not even need to be dangled off the ledge - I am perpetually one foot out the door. I know what happens during the times that I untie my shoes and take them off - in those cases, you outrun me.

I catch up, though. Winded, asthmatic, and honestly just pissed off, but we remain in our photo-finish postures. You are my best friend as we race across the field of Love.

A dream that haunted me when I had it and continues to haunt me most days when I look up to the sky runs through my mind when I take these tangible interactions and convert them to metaphor. Let's recount this dream together, please?

It was themed around that one lover of mine who was more of an obsession than a partner, and this dream followed the brief aftertaste I took of him. I had almost detoxed from him until the relapse, and now I fear I will never get his drug out of my system. Night upon night I had inconsequential dreams of him. This time was different. If he were someone in touch with Spirit, then I would postulate he directly contacted me. Knowing him, this was instead a deeper guide belonging to me who bestowed their ancient wisdom upon me through his physical form.

The room we were in was rustic. It was some sort of cottage. Very vintage. Almost Irish? I do not know. We were there. I looked in your eyes as I always did - my lapis lazuli met your arctic ice. Funny how my crystalline state is permanent and yours was always variable. Anyways, I looked into your eyes with the Love that was always there (and perhaps will always be there. Though I do not wait for you anymore, I would never close that door.)

"It is not meant to be."

I know.

Another, different lover of mine had appeared. Was he there always? I do not recall. But then he was there, and his empty embrace filled the void you left. Were you still there? That I also do not recall. It does not matter, for I left for the streets. The sadness washed over me like I had just jumped into a

freezing bath. Everyone else on the street was walking as if everything was normal. I looked to the sky. I saw a cartoonish beast materialize from a video game I had played recently.

"All of the Love within you is finite, so anything you felt once will forevermore be," the beast spoke directly into my head.

I woke in peace. Peace turned to horror. By that logic, I realized that all of the pain that once was thereby forevermore will be.

That is the balance I constantly teeter upon.

Now that I told you that I am just helpless propped upon the scale and simultaneously the showman gazing at Love, I might sound like a careless narrator. In some regards, it is true that I am careless when it comes to boundary. I do not like borderlines and I would rather them be destroyed. I would rather we all fade away into a sunset of Love that encompasses each small joy as something paramount. If the great thesis statement is that Love is immaculate, perhaps a sub-thesis statement of that is that the consequence of Love is irreconcilable with the constraints of the physical ether. Thereby I am congruent with what I've said - which is that who I am as an entity is not who I am as a crystalline solid. It is less than ideal, but it is okay. I am sure we can coexist just fine.

With all thinkers come the inconsistencies of theory versus praxis, but I like to set myself apart from others (due to a perverted delusion that occasionally rears its ugly head, which in others might be seen as self Love, but for me manifests more along the lines of sheer delusion) and declare that I am one of the few who finds congruence with my personal theory and my applied practices. I think this is the actuality of why my everyday life is full of pain, even in the most joyous states. Others will find trace metabolites of Love spent and think of it as something that binds them to the past, something that must be cleaned, something rather unusual and confusing. When I find that residue, however, I liken it to something deeply whimsical. The remnants of Love gone is the batter on the spoon for the cake I've spent countless time measuring and mixing and heating and cooling. I take one lick, or a few, and then the spoon just becomes a spoon. I wish for the spoon to be a continuous replenishing source of the sugar that is Love, but unfortunately it is just a part of the material realm where sometimes the particulates can get trapped. A reminder. A ghost.

It would be nice if things operated on a less ghastly rhythm and that the scientific method were more applicable to the truths of Love. The rules of Desire, unfortunately, are as exceptional as the rules in any system (which is very) and often leave oneself spinning. My Love for you exists outside of the scales on which Desire sings. My Love for you is the sound of a tree that falls without an ear to hear it.

As an experimentalist, I sometimes like to take one Love and compare it to another. The Venn diagrams I produce are as useless as any other, but there is something gratifying about seeing the overlap of different qualities and quantities between two unrelated systems. I find there is a certain unifying magic that comes with Love. Maybe he is not connected to him, but through me there is a tunnel that leads from his heart to his by way of the depth of my Desire. Do you think that Desire is agnostic of Time? I do.

Someone else that I deeply admire had their own personal dissertation that asked if Love was a symptom of Time, or if Time was a symptom of Love. The evidence they had analyzed supported the latter.

I too think that Time only becomes tangible in the context of Love. Love is the umbrella that shields your delicate scalp from the chilling droplets of Time.

As for Space, where does that fit in? Well, that begs the question of the physical ether again. We can revisit that later.

Let's return to the question of being on the stage of Love. At times I feel like a child star whose formative years have been spent ushered from room to room, asked to dance and jig and sing and act and spin and twirl, all for the very honor of being Loved. Love was always the audience, but Desire was the executive who gatekept me from the venues where I deserved to bare my heart. This has brought me to a point where I am deeply confused whether I Love myself or not. I doubt that I Desire myself. These details might seem strange to someone who knows how much time I spent with myself, the lengths by which I go to make sure my appetites are satisfied, the egregious actions I do to maintain my physical form. But all of these things are in vain. I am like a scientist being funded by a government to research a specific problem. I will do everything I can to prove my hypothesis and get the grant extended, even if the evidence is shaky and must be patchworked to make any semblance of sense. That is where my vanity lies.

"I get it completely," told a boy who did not understand whatsoever.

I've reached a point this type of narrative cycle where there is no rhyme nor is there any reason. I am a flickering switch, never off nor on. It is impossible for me to put into words what it is that I want.

Perhaps what I want is to succumb to the ideals of monogamy - the big, bad upon which the politics of Desire have often been built upon in this cruel physical world. Maybe there will be a day that I resign and cut my losses. I will choose a man who is cute and well-adjusted, perhaps not my favorite lover, but I will tie a rope around my neck and hang from the tree that is him. Then, I will further exist in a dearth of Desire and thereby Love (beyond which I can muster for myself), but I would have a consistent partner. Could it be that my obsession with Love is not even about Love, but instead it is an obsession with the physical provisions with which another human could provide me? I can

effortlessly feed myself, clothe myself, exercise my body, and cleanse it, but then enters two distinct provisions that I would need a man to give to me. Foremost, sex. Secondly, I need a man who is able to lure me out of my house. When it gets bad (and it often is), I seldom leave the comforts of my bed if I can avoid it. I know I regard myself as a beautiful crystalline system whose jagged shape makes little sense against the cold harshness of the material world, but sometimes the best conformation of my shape is wrapped in a blanket in my bed with all the lights off and the blinds closed.

I don't think that is me, but I think that if the sadness grows any stronger that is where I will head. My Spirit is far too aloof to be tied down, but if grief possesses me like a demon then the Spirit must be constrained whether willingly or not.

At the very heart of things, I just want to be Loved. I know that my mind is full of the very ore that creates unbridled, passionate Love. I could share it with six lovers across seven days of the week, with some for myself and some for those who are not lovers but are entitled to my Love (i.e., those whose Spirits know mine). I am a core, and I am trying to find someone whose core is as deep as mine. I have found great tricksters who are willing to dig a hole that is perhaps as wide but nowhere near deep enough to contain the multitude of my Love wherein Desire would carefully lower me, harnessed, excavating all of the archaeology of the Love of another. Unfortunately, without the depth, it's just a hole.

Maybe that analogy creates a space to discuss Space. Space is the primary axis wherein the physical ether exists, and Love transits throughout, propelled by Time. When I think of that one great lover of mine, the biggest villain (which I once thought was simply the intrinsic disorder of my mind) is in fact the circumference of Space itself. I like to think that if the Universe were perhaps a little more compressed, my Desire would entangle yours and Love would ensue.

Should we now discuss my antagonism with that former lover of mine? I am a poor narrator for I am shaky and I am biased, but I think that I will bare a centimeter of my soul and provide for a more balanced narrative, if the prior has not been that thus far.

Apparently we had met digitally two years prior. I forgot. He remembered. We met digitally again and that is when I considered having met him for the first time. I did not really care. I was drunk. We chatted. At this time, I was with another, deeply entangled in a trench of toxic dependencies. I did not know what I was getting into with this one. I thought he would be like all of the others, and I would slowly disappear (or better, he would vanish immediately, and I would simply not even notice).

Unfortunately, we met. It was during a time where illness enshrouded the land. I finally felt protected and the world re-opened, and we met face to face. His

eyes met mine, and my eyes met his. Our date was interrupted because he had a work call. Actually, I sat in his car as he remained muted on Zoom. He drove me home. I thought not very much of it, until several months later when I was crying over his inability to Love me with the same fever that motivated me to Love him. Soon thereafter, we were going to go on a trip. I canceled last minute. Then I showed up anyways, solo. My broken brain broke his unusual heart (in doing so, mine broke too). I danced in the cemetery with a fury magnified by those who suffered before me. I listened to the song of a witch. I cast illness on him. He dumped me over text.

To this day, I still haunt his heart. Or so I would like to think. At this point, my calcified organ is essentially a gravestone devoted to him. He fucked me a year after ignoring a text I sent him on a bender where I longed for him to return to me. He never spoke to me again after that. I grew stagnant. Love and romance had jaded me then for quite some time. And then...

I am not entirely sure what changed to make me obsessed with all of this again. I curse whomever cursed me to feel this way another time. If it weren't so unlucky, I would curse the Universe if this is not a curse and if this is just how I am programmed to feel. I wish I had a better operating system if this is all encoded deeply. But I would like to blame this all on a little witch who lives in a cave and spends all of her days before a flame hexing me nonstop to make me feel like this.

Hours later, I decided to try again and sweat it out. It did not work.

I texted a lover who I had scorned for anger towards the logic of material ether, "I think my drinking is killing my mind and my body."

He did not respond. A song comes on, "My drinking is killing me."

I stare at the ceiling. My skin is salty. In a way, I lay in a sun-bleached field, spread-eagle for the sun. Is the sun a friend? If she were, I would feel her eyes gaze upon me with a discerning familiarity. You smile, but it is a tired smile.

I do not think that the sun is a beacon of Love nor an artifice of Desire, but a source of life that conducts the playing field of the Universe. A mediator of Space and Time. I am not sure what role she plays in my story.

Then, there is the Moon. The Moon is not a friend. She is an authority. She is a divine goddess. One who operates with the logic of Dreams, but exists outside of the realm of Love and without the law of Desire. That way, the Moon is the governess who pushes the tides forward in times where no other motion can be mustered through the Universe, at least as it is experienced through the interface of the crystalline solid and the Spirit that is me. (But if I were to retract what I had just said, maybe then the Moon is a goddess who provides the space for me to find self Love.)

A woman I deeply admired died because she fell off a rooftop trying to photograph the magnificent Moon over Athens.

With her, so died a part of me as well.

Death is an unusual thing. I think of it always and I think of it never. Will it happen to me?

Sometimes I talk about a certain date. When the world was closing in on me, it was the date on which I was going to kill myself. In times of joy, I look at that date as a prophetic vision. It is just a month and a day. No year. Time, what are you trying to tell me?

I hope that whatever's next will be more delicious than where I am right now. Shatter the crystal structure, denature it all, and free my Spirit into a realm of Dream where truth and honesty replace Space and Time.

That day will come, but until then I must manage my way through Space and Time, eternally hungry for a bite of Love. One realization that I had was that I do not want a greedy lover, as for once I had yearned. I confuse my sins. I always wanted a gluttonous lover, not a greedy one.

There are moments like right now where I starve myself of Love. I want to give in and give myself away, but instead I would rather inhibit the appetite and feign satiety as a means to protect myself from the risk of binging a Love that must be purged when the Desire fades. And I will do all of that soon. But Time is operating off schedule now. Timing is everything. I am poised to pose on that stage. My figure will be underfed, but I hope the audience will eat it up.

Then, there are days where I am not hungry anymore.

Some days, Time is just a number, and Love is just a feeling.

I looked through my collections of writings, and I found an entry that I had flagged. It was not a note, but it was a poem that I dedicated to you. It read more like a prayer. You were not a lover, but you were the makings of an altar. Perhaps you were not Love, and you were Space instead.

Nevertheless, Space and Time have oscillated now, I do not know who you are anymore. In a way, I never knew who you were to begin with. Nowadays, I have realized that there is always a gap no matter how closely two hearts may recognize each other. It's funny how something so temporary can be so permanent too. The Love we shared was ink to skin with just as much pain.

Love is everything. It is everywhere. I spend my life spreading it around. Love is the jam that I spread on the burnt slice that is reality itself.

Love is heavier than the airs I breathe, my lungs engulfed.

I sit here in a park. There was a rock I sat on most mornings during the Summer weekends this year. Someone else was sitting there on this unusual day wherein a relapse of Summer was an unthinkable surprise. My rock was in the sunlight. This rock sits beneath foliage, creating a little cove where I now sit and reflect.

I am near the slide where I broke up with my ex boyfriend. He was not a lover. He was just a boyfriend. Maybe not even a friend and just a boy. I slid him down.

As I sit here, I listen to *Vespertine* by Björk. I was intrigued after hearing something verbatim along the lines of embarrassment.

"I would kill myself if I made an album like that and then got a divorce."

"It's not meant to be a strife; it's not meant to be a struggle uphill."

The hill is a facet of Space, and it has lasted the duration of Time. From Sisyphus to Kate Bush to twigs, the hill is this eternal obstacle. But I think that your Love is a mountain.

You do not think you are a mountain the same way that a human does not think one is an animal. I am not you so I see you for who you are. What do you see in me?

This is the perfect moment for me to take in your landscape. I really hope you will not waste my eyes. The cycles of a season's change, for me, is not as circular as it is for you. I know that Summer falls and Winter springs, but one Summer is not the next. What dies every year is not promised to grow back.

Summer is my one true Love. While I consider Space as more of an enemy, Time is lawful like the Moon. There are moments for grief. There are moments for progress. Even, sometimes a moment for joy. This unusual Summer day on Hallow's Eve signals something gravely wrong about the planet. But it provokes a feeling deep inside me. Two times true at once. I wonder what I will learn (if at all) this time.

The lover I had scorned finally responded. He sent me a picture of the Moon.

I think the key concept I am dancing around in this particular phase is that I wish I was yours in the way that you are mine. My eyes can see a cathedral in you, but a place of worship is not just that for architecture and name. I am aiming to climb deep inside of you and bare it all. I want to surrender. There is a certain delicacy that comes with giving up, and I believe I am ready to give up, limp in your hands, spent but still dripping. Wouldn't you like for that too?

I waltz with fire under my step. Though I do intend to get wet, I would not let you have all of my flame. There is a certain intrigue that do not intend to shut down for anyone. (It would be romantic but impossible to do so without risking losing it all. And losing it all for Love is romantic in and of itself, but that is a different stage of romance that perhaps is not what I want from you. I would and want to do it for you, but I won't for me.)

Maybe I will ditch the riddle-speak for a moment and be candid. I want you to be my lover. I want to know what your Love sounds like when no one is around to hear it. You have mercilessly trapped me in this glass jar whose walls are too steep for me to scale. It is not fair. I am beginning to feel parts of myself that have been altered by your perverted kindness. You make me feel so helpless. Being with you is like sleeping on the hands of a clock. I am worried that your tongue across my body comes with an expiration date. Please do not change the hour unless it is really time for Spring. It is then I will be forward for you. I would like to be forward right now, but I fear that your coordinates perhaps disagree with that. I know you are sore. So am I. What would you say if I told you that Time is on our side? (That is a lie. Never true. But you touch me in a way where I am unafraid to put faith in dishonesty.)

I just wanted you to know that I threw one Love away just for you. Perhaps more were sacrificed as well. But I took something immaculate and donated it to the abyss in your honor.

My stomach is ready for whatever I will have to do whenever you do what I am afraid you'll do. Once, I swallowed a bag of nails to alleviate the pain of heartbreak. I beg not to have to do that ever again.

Teach me how to trust.

Let's return to the mystical lover. I reached out to him. I will provide a brief timeline of our history after he dumped me over text. I yearned for months and then texted him something hardly lucid. No response. I gave up. He texted me. I responded. We met again. I yearned for months and then texted him something mildly lucid. No response.

This time, "Happy Halloweekend."

No response.

That is exactly what I expected, and perhaps it is what I need. This lover is less of a lover and more of the Fantasy that keeps my flares blitzed. There is still time for him to resurface. Doubtful if he would. I admit that I have no clue who he is. Once, I had an inkling. Now, I have a name. If my heart is a home, I once dedicated every room to him. But now I seek to fill the vacancies with someone who will live here. (I almost wanted to make an analogy to "tenants", but concepts such as that and renting have no role in the world of

Love, Fantasy, and Desire. That is crude material ether.) There is no doubt that there would always be a bed with his name on it within the confines of my heart, but my heart will become a home rather than the place of worship that comes and goes. It would not be respectful of Love if I were to remove all of your traces from my heart.

And I threw it all away for a man who did not want to be my lover. In fact, he calls himself a boy because he does not know himself as a man. The interesting thing is that the eyes of the world do see him as the man that he is. Stubborn. He is a man and a mountain.

I intentionally obscure who the "you" that I write to is in this essay. But I will provide more finite detail here. Both lovers who do not want me the same are Scorpio. There is a sadness in my heart for the former (despite my actualized act where I pretend that his ignorance of my Love has no cosmic consequence). This sadness provokes some of the embers in the flames beneath my feet, and the other dancing sparks come from the latter, the one who is within my grasp but is so slippery that he is never caught. I know nothing profound of the zodiac. Someone once asked me what would happen if her baby was born on the Blood Moon in Taurus. I told her that I did not know. Rationality, maybe? Regardless, the zodiac is quite arbitrary to me. By trade, I am a scientist. I use the zodiac as a hypothesis-building framework. It is the categories that I give to experimental detail that I record. I have found that these Scorpios are slippery because they are always wet. (Beyond the figurative, Scorpio is the lover whose hand is heavy on the Astroglide bottle.) Feeling shafted from one Scorpio and invisible to the other, I met a man who was not a lover but was someone in whom I would unload in times of loneliness. He offered me a hit of his nitrite. I look at the bottle and read the label: Double Scorpio.

A question that lingers: was I just a pretty thing? Did you just put me on when it was cold out? I wrap around your body better than any sweater ever will. I know you feel my warmth. My fibers are soft, and my patterns make sense. Don't you see that I am your heirloom?

I sit amidst the foliage again. Sometimes I think there's a language I know how to speak but don't quite understand how to read. I look at the shapes and can almost recognize symbols. It almost means something. I know your code is there, but I don't know what it is. Quite everything means a lot to me. Not everyone finds meaning under the leaf that fell on the park bench next to them. I like to think that everything holds a little bit of truth. There is no such thing as nothing. You just aren't looking hard enough.

Perhaps that's why I fear you. It feels like you look a lot more closely at the world than most others do. When you don't see me, what is it that dances across your eyes? My body is only mine as little as everything else is, but while I'm in it, I contort it towards your gaze. Were I more delicate, I would be a polymeric fiber elongating and extending with the dynamic of your eyesight.

Jealousy is a curse.

My hands are cold as I write this. There is no feeling in anything that leaves the sleeve of my parka. I am not an indoor cat, nor am I feral. My mode ambidextrous, I would like to step out of the pool that is the exposed world and rest in your lap. I know, it's fleeting. I'll pretend anyways.

Tomorrow I am going to dance. It is the celebration of the DJ's birthday, so I could not miss it as I deeply admire their command of a dancefloor that seems fabled in a city like the one I'm in. Despite my antique quality, I am a stranger in this crowd. For better or for worse. I will dance with the fever that Love grants me. Is it your Love, or is it byproduct Love from the fumes of cosmic paint drying that that gives me enough head-rush to frenzy in that room? The night calls.

I think you are a puddle. At once, the truck that is Time carrying Space sprayed you against me. You had no problem soaking my freshly laundered outfit. Now I fear I will forever feel you as I am walking miles with socks soaked in my worn-down boots. The water damage will forever be seen on the aging suede.

Still, I think I would like to jump in.

Time and Space sneer at me through a screen. I am not a person to you, but instead I am a commodity. When I hop on the apps where sex is solicited from those who would rather be adored instead, I feel like a little toy. There isn't anything wrong with being objectified in the bedroom (which in fact actually checks a few of my carefully wired boxes). But it feels almost as if the rules that bind us here have imprisoned me in a straitjacket because no one believes the Love that I can see in the Space that surrounds me. And when I am bound, I would rather consent to you. When I am bound, I don't know what to do.

I know what I want to do with you, but I do not think I am good at saying it. It never ends, does it?

The thing is that I am just so used to the end. I know the end. This is the end.

To many, they are my lover; to them, I am a novelty.

I told him, "I'm really, really confused about you and it's lost the romantic, exciting sheen."

He told me I was too suicidal for him.

I sat on the rock that I wrote about on Halloween. It is my first time sitting here while writing this essay. It is freezing.

I told that central lover how I felt, and then I told him how I felt even more.

"There is so much more to me than who you think I am. If you ever want to know, let me know."

He never let me know.

I am beginning to wonder what is the purpose of this. It is like the set of rules that bind me here mandate that I'm strapped down to a target. Each lover is a bullet. I think of you, fired from the cylinder, and I wonder which bone(s) your collision will shatter. My fusiform, aerodynamic Love, how long did you glide through the atmosphere that stood between the gun and me? And who is it that pulled the trigger?

The thing that was revealed to me in the light of the sun was the key difference between you and me. You held the intrinsic belief that everything has a solution. What you never considered is that some things will just never be fixed.

And honestly, that's okay. Something unfixable, in a sense, is truly never broken. If we stop looking at the trees and instead peer into that forest, disorder is a form of order in and of itself.

At this point, you may be wondering what the narrative is. Disorder is a form of order in and of itself. I write to you (whomever that "you" may be, at least five that I recall appearing in this essay whom I can recollect without rereading anything I wrote), and you can read what I have to say. I am not writing with a narrative structure in hand. This is a mosaic of Desire on the axis of Love. I am trying to enumerate the rules that bind us here. And these rules bind us so powerfully. All my life I have sought an exception to the rules. I truly believe that rules are unreal. But sometimes rules are so powerful, like the ones that haunt me every time.

Maybe, I am wrong, and there are no rules.

Does disorder's fist meet order's skin? Or is it the other way around? Who is the passive one?

I have all of these questions living inside of me like my heart is an apartment complex that I try to convert into a commune. But the coldness of the world we live in does not provide for community and instead of being full with warmth I am just engaged for no good reason. I think that this the biggest problem with Love in our current day (and perhaps it is something that was there always, preceding my frame of reference). We fill and fill and fill. We burst. It is all bound to burst. My Love, you were in the kitchen telling me that inevitability was your biggest fear and I was just too high to know what you meant, but deep down I understand everything that comes out of your mouth. Fret not, for I will always be right here.

The time has come for me to conclude this essay not because I have run dry, but rather I need to move on with my life and operate beyond what has bound me here. There are two central lovers who have bound me to this piece. Both Scorpio. Night and day. I choose to free myself from being bound here any longer. I have spent weeks as a scribe for the patterns that live in my heart. I have taken the signal from the Universe and encoded it to see if there was some standard operating protocol that could make it easier on me. I don't know if I've accomplished that or if that could even be possible. But it felt good to let it out. If I am the star of Love, this is my tell-all where I expose all of the gritty crevices that the tabloids have written about. It is true, your bed is the rehab where I kicked it. It is true. It is all true. Whatever you hear about me, it is true. Everything I say, hereafter, it is true.

I still don't know what purpose the rules serve. If there weren't any rules that bound me here, I don't know what would have happened. I would still be in your bed. I would be in California. I would be in Arizona. I would be on the beach with you. I would be in New York. I would be on the internet, baring it all. I wouldn't be bleeding on the street outside of a stranger's apartment. I wouldn't have been told I wouldn't fit. I wouldn't have always felt so small. I wouldn't have been handled with hands that should wield weapons instead. If there were no rules that bound us here, I shouldn't have ever been born. I get mad about that one every so often. I am too tired to be mad now.

Oh, Love. What I wish I could tell you.

I think of my ex boyfriend. Fancy bars, cold nights, raw sex. Isn't that what it's all about? Yet I evicted him from my heart. He Loved me too much. I was greedy. I repented.

I think of my first Love, who will never go away.

I think of a secret Love, who always lives inside.

You run to the theater. Doors were at 8:00. The clock is about to strike midnight. How were you so late, Love? What were you doing? Don't you know the show is almost over? Curtain call. Applause. You missed the opener. You missed the intermission. You couldn't even go to the bar to buy a drink, or skip your least favorite song to take a piss. You weren't chanting to the sound of the crowd begging for an encore. Didn't you miss the shriek of the amplifier when the bass was being tuned? Weren't you hungry for the view of the stage being blocked by someone unnecessarily tall and drunk? A special song was added to the set list that night for the special occasion. All that is left for you now is a dirty dancefloor, evidence that a crowd frenzied here once. Love, you missed it all.

And what are we to do now?