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When We Talk About Love

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When We Talk About Love

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For M. A.

¹ Just when he refused to love say so repeat he felt a crimson stain all down his neck a Picassoed jugular.^k

^k A mouth within a mouth within a mouth.

² Marvin Bell, *Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense*:

“Metaphysical, not pornography,
to say we balanced each other.
Some thought it bad to exercise
unless trying to have children.
If we had a thousand, it wouldn’t
be enough but just crowded.”

³ She used to tuck his amorphous heart into the space between two mattresses, tightly, if on second thought she had to run before his metabolism even sped up to collect his heart’s wit before she tucked it evenly, _____ away.

4 Because she would make a list of the reasons to love him versus the reasons to oversex herself (while considering extemporaneous methods of persuasion *ad infinitum*), her rationale for doing either knew no relative solipsism.

5 This would imply affection, manifestation: lurid dance away from a life of common happily everafters.^d

^d "Does the blossom study her day of life?
Is the butterfly vexed with an hour of soul?
I had rather a rose than live forever"

(e. e. cummings, "Love Poem IV" from *Etcetera*).

6 See Poststructural notions on “transcendental signifieds” for what it means to revolve around one man whose light will die^k faster than a medium-sized star once burned her under-exposed over-exposé.

^k (Photosynthetic Apostasy): Etiolated cheeks not feigning love’s chaste little sunburn.

7 Reminiscent^a adhesion to his mouth and hands.

^a n. awakening memories of something else; suggestive.*

* Of vermilion liner shaping _____^v it might be prudent not to remember ever wanting to wear.

^v Insert likely exclamation: “Oh!” (where breathing might occur but does not necessarily connote seduction).

8 You want to avoid a commitment; or other marriages: any lover you take for granted (see her first bite of lemon meringue become your first bite of lemon meringue—you don’t offer), not just any lover but only until the west is won, cowboy.

⁹ *How many rhetorical questions does it take to catalyze these innocuous platitudes?* she queried quite neutrally. To recapitulate: *Will you call me even when the mundane is worth—while—HELLO?*

¹⁰ It should be understood that I dressed up every day after he left me. Angry red skirt to match my mouth, hair under blood-flower bandanna like maybe I cut it all off. Tragic to emanate red haze when he beautiful in the same room tells me I look so good in red.ⁿ

ⁿ Coincidental gorgeous feels like death in public places where he asks me why I have to tell him everything privately as he turns to go, the way he talks to mere acquaintances like my lips were not blood red.

¹¹ He inclined “Don’t feel less of a woman if I start seeing someone right away.” She thought he might be charming, like a Greek god in his immortal allure to wend ladyfingers through his heart’s golden curls, but not that lucky.ⁿ

ⁿ This seems to foreshadow a conscious inconstancy that would witness this becoming less of an ecstatic devotional day by day, almost too enamored of luck’s long-drawn-in affairs.

¹² [illegible] seemed often enamored of romance he could not read. He would devise irresistible death chants on his little selfish island where all love unread lies broken on the rocks—how a siren would sound to one alone.

¹³ If she saw his new lover she might lure them out into deep waters. Instead, she rambles on about short-lived subjects ⁹.

⁹ “This stone is the hard feeling in my stomach
When I’m talking nonsense to you.

This stone is so inviting
Everyone wants to walk right into it
And become a fossil” (Tom Hennen, *Smelling a Stone in the Middle of Winter*).

14 Linda Hogan, *The Avalanche*:

"Just last month
the avalanches like good women
were headed for a downfall. I saw one
throw back her head
and let go of the world." k

k And only *good women* accumulate that much snow and ice? What if letting go is admitting no two snowflakes are created equal?

15 Exercising not because she pleads heart healthy but because every time it slows to a near-debilitating halt she sees him with another [woman].^h

h Infinitely more attractive mane hackles rising along shouldered ridges though such hair is bloodless and brittle.

16 In retrospect, suppose [her] body tasted like canned peaches.^{*}

* Supposing: woman in can. Convenient when you want her just drain any excess syrup, but maybe raze your tongue on her metallic lingerie as you take off her push-up wondertin with your mouth, teeth rusted losing enamel to her slow-rotting sugar.

17 Janet Holmes, *Pastoral*:

“It would have been natural for that time to be perfect—
perfect! —the definition of romance. Looking back, though,
I remember the blank faces of sheep
perhaps more than I should, see their dark ears
flapping as they feed, their grave
stupid bodies; I hear their noise.”

17.999 Romance as sheep-bleating inquiry asks why all these
maple leaves out of reach, *oh blunted teeth!*, should tantalize
even out of reach so the definition of romance skewed by all these
overgrazed eyes-to-the-ground nettles is more intent on what it
will not.

18 Catharsis is throwing blue-winged darts at a photograph of him you don't own pretending you're no goddamn Cupid.

19 Exception when you wake up knowing her house is safe from the ultimate torchingⁿ because she lives on the other side of town.

ⁿ Does not imply threesome, but might reference hypothetical obsolescence because murder had better be conventional if at all finite. Torching ::: out of question.

20 "Then I pulled out my automatic—I mean, this is the kind of fool thing a reader might suppose I did" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*).