

Desires are Born of Love

*A man loves only what is lovable.
- José Ortega y Gasset*

1

Desires are born of love but love itself
is not desire and though love is separated
from all intellectual functions —
recall, perception, consideration, thought,

imagination — and there is no love
without sexual instinct (something love
uses like a brute force), love is not
passion, falling in love or affection,

for passion is not the height of amorous feeling
but its degradation, a pathological state
(let us cease believing the measure of a man's love
is how stupid he has become or is willing to be);

and falling in love is an imbecility:
without a paralysis of consciousness
and reduction of our habitual world
we would never fall in love;

and in affection (at best the usual form
of matrimony) two people feel
mutual sympathy fidelity
adhesion but not enchantment and surrender —

so absorbed to the core of one's being,
so total an unwilled surrender no matter
whether bodily or spiritual:
not an instinct but a creation,

a work of high art a magnificent
transaction between minds and bodies
an infrequent occurrence only certain souls
with specific talent can hope to experience.

2

I am proud to be one of a group of men who believe
that everything does not happen by chance,
that things do not move blindly like atoms

changing from time to time and place to place

given form by statistical induction.
In opposition to such vast anarchy
contrary to the empirical tradition
is the older tradition which seeks the essence

the unique mode of each reality
the desire for generation and birth in beauty.
So too Love has its law:
its never-changing unitary existence,

a relation so close it leaves no room between lovers
to perceive the reform one works upon the other —
he as Nietzsche said feels an instinct
to take possession of another, she

feels her destiny will be fulfilled when she
surrenders herself to another; he
feels a violent desire to be loved, she
wants the experience of love itself.

Because love is the most delicate
and total act of the soul it will reflect
the state and nature of the soul: the characteristics
of the person in love must be attributed

to love itself. If the individual
is not sensitive how can his soul be sentient?
If he is not profound how can his love be deep?
As one is, so is his love.