

## **You Must Not Force Sex**

*all my love affairs and marriages  
have been little games  
- Mary McCarthy*

You must not force sex to do the work of love  
she reminded herself or love to do the work of sex.  
It was as if she said our history together  
had made me impotent and infidelity

with other men had shown that relations in bed  
need not be unsatisfactory. Having served his purpose  
he became an embarrassment which led her to dissolve  
that marriage, her first of several yet to come

for, her best friend recalled, "She believed in marriage,  
or rather, in being married." She was, she told her journal,  
incapable of living without love for more than a month  
or so and though sexual happiness (luxurious

contentment) did make quite a difference it was not  
the decisive factor. One, for instance, she confessed  
to the journal, she finally married to punish herself  
for having gone to bed with him in the first place.