

Women in Philosophy Journal  
Volume 10, 2019  
Print ISSN: 1943–7412  
Online ISSN: 1943–7420  
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## LOVE AND DESIRE A Heideggerian Ontological Analysis

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*“I hold this to be the highest task of a bond between two people: that each should stand guard over the solitude of the other. For, if it lies in the nature of indifference and of the crowd to recognize no solitude, then love and friendship are there for the purpose of continually providing the opportunity for solitude. And only those are the true sharings which rhythmically interrupt periods of deep isolation.”*

—Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

### **1. Introduction**

Using Heidegger’s ontological method, I analyze how desire and love tend to be confounded and how love tends to be reduced to its everyday notions. I demonstrate this ontologically by distinguishing desire and love. I argue for what is constitutive to each under Heidegger’s philosophy; namely, that love is an authentic form of Being-with, and desire an inauthentic form. Both lie as extrema on the spectrum of positive modes of Being-with, while the ordinary conceptions of desire and love are mostly deficient modes of Being-with. I further show the way in which each can manifest under these positive modes of Being-with, and conclude that authentic love can be understood as an ontological rebirth of a shared moment constituted by the entwining of eros and philia. Throughout the analysis, I elucidate on Heidegger’s key themes, utilize Ann Carson’s accounts on eros as a framework for the

discussion, and bring in aspects of Rilke's and Nietzsche's thinking to facilitate the ontological analysis of love. While this analysis is not a complete account of the ontology of love in general, I nevertheless take it that Heidegger's work can allow us to rethink some of the ordinary ways we confound love with notions of desire.

## **2. Ontological Analysis of Love and Desire in General**

In *Eros the Bittersweet*, Anne Carson discusses the paradoxes and complexities of eros as erotic desire—this does not always entail sexual desire (in particular because of her later discussion on eros within the pursuit of knowledge), but sexual desire tends to be the most common form of eros. Carson says that desire lies between the two poles of “absence and presence” where “love and hate [are] its motive energies.” Her text displays the various ways sexual desire conveys its paradoxical nature.<sup>1</sup> Carson emphasizes the notions of lacking, reaching, and the edginess of one's boundaries as a person. She states, “The Greek word eros denotes ‘want,’ ‘lack,’ ‘desire’ for that which is missing. The lover wants what he does not have. It is by definition impossible for him to have what he wants if, as soon as it is had, it is no longer wanting.”<sup>2</sup> Reaching for—but never having—the other, goes hand in hand with lacking.

She later argues, by way of the Phaedrus, for a more enhanced meaning of eros as *pteros*, the winged version of eros; and describes the complexities that this version brings about. *Pteros*, while carrying more meaning than eros, does not fit metrically in Socrates' verse because it creates an issue with long and short vowel patterns. Through this, Socrates attempts to show, and Carson points out, the persistent conflicts that eros brings: if we find a way to give it more meaning, we end up falling short in formal structures of elucidation. *Pteros* is a ‘God's understanding’ of eros, which we can never fully comprehend. Wanting to understand eros, but never being able to do so in a comprehensive way, is also what occurs in the desire for knowledge. The pursuit of knowledge parallels desire, since the quest for true knowledge always eludes us. Hence, the pursuit of knowledge carries its own form of eros.

Carson defines erotic love and desire as a reaching characterized by ungraspability. Her project helps make sense of the complexities and

conflicting nature of eros as such. In this paper, I aim to further her project by ontologically analyzing the distinctions between love as *pteros* and desire as eros under Heidegger's framework. Certain aspects of eros under Carson's account, if viewed through a Heideggerian ontological lens, would fall under inauthentic positive modes of Being-with, and other aspects of it would better be understood as authentic positive modes of Being-with, which I distinguish as love.<sup>3</sup> If we take Heidegger's proposals of Dasein's care structure seriously, we find a conflation between desire and love in our general understanding of intimate care for another person that is not solely friendly nor familial. Thus, I will argue that love, as an authentic mode of Being-with, involves a longing-for that is distinct from desire's tormented reaching, and is constituted by belonging. Love's features of longing and belonging will be distinguished from desire's features of 'urge' and 'penchant.' I will further suggest that this authentic love is something like an interweaving of eros and *philia*, the other ancient Greek word for love. This interweaving, along with an analysis of love's 'falling' character, will lead us to the final section of love's rebirth. Prior to all this, however, I will expound on Heidegger's ontological project of Dasein to frame the context of my argument.

Importantly, while it is customary to understand desire as sexual attraction and want of another in general, in this paper I am approaching desire and love through a Heideggerian ontological lens, wherein desire is a particular form of attraction to another. As such, it has certain defining features that characteristically place it as an inauthentic mode of Being-with. These features are what Heidegger calls 'urge' and 'penchant.' They are directed towards something other in order to grasp it and take it over. Desire is potentially dominating, but it doesn't always, nor explicitly, manifest in this way. Hence, desire does not necessarily have to be physically based. There is also non-physical desire for another.<sup>4</sup> These physical and non-physical desires can manifest sexually, but not in all cases. For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the variations of physical and non-physical desire as simply desire.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, in what ensues, I want to make it clear that sexual intercourse and sexuality are not what is being discussed nor criticized here, but rather, the 'state-of-mind' that one is in when under the pull of desire or love. In other words, what is being analyzed is one's existential

understanding and comportment when inundated by these moods. Moreover, sexual actions can occur within a variety of moods which do not necessarily imply a state of desire nor one of love; they can occur under many different moods, for example, fear, indifference, friendliness, or admiration. The variations of possible moods pertaining to sexual actions is outside the scope of this paper.

### **3. The Ontological Project Concerning Dasein**

Preliminarily, we must first clarify what Heidegger means by an ontological account of Being as opposed to an ontic one, Dasein and its care structure, and the modes of Being that Dasein can take on. These elements are important for the subsequent analysis of desire and love.

Something being ontical is simply what is in being. That is, the phenomenon in being, which includes all the ready-to-hand and present-at-hand entities; the extant entities that we treat as equipment or as objective entities before us for study and contemplation. Dasein, that Being which is in each case is 'my own,' is also ontical insofar as it is Being. What is ontical is characterized in *existentiell* terms. These are concrete ways of Being and how we usually describe ourselves. Ontic inquiry is the general and varying ways in which we try to make sense of our being. The understanding of oneself, which leads along this way of trying to make sense of our existence as *existentiell*, is an ontical affair. We all are concerned about our Being. No theoretical transparency in ontical inquiry is required in order to pose questions such as that of "To be or not to be" in Shakespeare. Of course, that is not to undermine these *existentiell* ways of inquiry, as they nevertheless take tremendous effort and thought. Ontical inquiry can be captured descriptively or by the usual ways of thinking about our lives such as, questioning what sort of sense I should give my life. Ontical normative questions are tied to who we are when we are thrown into this life.

The ontological perspective, on the other hand, is trying to make us aware of what makes ontic understanding—the ability to question our lives and think of our being—possible. It is an endeavor to get clear of the conditions of possibilities that push further than what has been done in ontic inquiry. Trying to work out ontologically what makes the ontic realm possible must begin with an open mind that is guided by a certain

question, namely, the question of the meaning of Being. In being guided by this question different horizons will open up. Whatever is opened up will reflect back to our question and will develop itself. This means that it cannot be understood in the sense of grasping an answer. Conditions of possibilities are to be worked out and will change by way of the ontological inquiry itself. Ordinarily, we think we understand Being, and tend to be fixated on getting answers as if they are something objective in themselves. Through his methods, Heidegger tries to have us get the hang of a certain kind of questioning, a kind of investigating, that does not rest on any kind of graspable answer. If we deal with the conditions of possibilities of our very understanding there is no answer we can get in this sense of a concrete objective fact. In order to get us to see this, Heidegger needs to clear the way of all the presuppositions and common notions that hinder us from understanding the process of ontological inquiry.

What is ontological is characterized in *existential* terms. Existentiality singles out the possibility of Being that is *exclusive* to Dasein. Any kind of existential analysis has to begin with how we are most of the time in our everyday lives. Hence, ontological inquiry is based on Dasein's ontic constitution. All ontic entities (things, equipment, animals, Dasein as an entity), have their *way* of Being which can be explained in the ontological perspective. This makes sense of Heidegger's common phrase, 'the Being of beings.' Where the lower case beings refer to entities which are present-at-hand or ready-to-hand, the upper cased Being refers to the ontological understanding of them, namely, the *how* of entities. Under Heidegger's analysis, ontological interpretation is difficult to enact not because of intellectual capacities or IQ levels, etc. It is difficult because of the very nature of Dasein, as ahead-of-itself, as Being-in-the-World, and as Being-alongside, is constantly falling back into everyday concerned ways of Being. This is not a negative thing *per se*; rather, the task of analyzing our existential Being will not come so easily, but will require much effort. An ontological interpretation of Dasein must consistently fight from falling, and consequently, from interpreting Dasein at the ontic level.

Heidegger's notion of Dasein, which can be translated directly as 'being there,' or 'the being that is there,' refers to we ourselves. More

precisely, Heidegger means to refer to the Being of that specific kind of being that we ourselves are. In the first paragraph of the opening chapter of *Being and Time*, Dasein is characterized in four ways: (1) Dasein is the Being that is in each case mine; (2) In its Being (the ‘how’ of its being), this being comports itself towards its Being; (3) As an entity with this Being, it is delivered over to its own Being; (4) it *is* that *Being* which is an issue for it—its “that it is” is an issue for it.<sup>6</sup>

Dasein cannot have the kind of Being that belongs to something present-at-hand, which are entities that can be presented thematically.<sup>7</sup> Dasein *is* Being *there* and cannot be reduced to a present-at-hand object, even though science (biology and psychology, for example) can thematize Dasein and thus view it through the particular lens of the present-at-hand. While factual, this thematic conception of Dasein is only partial and reductive of its Being under existential terms. That Dasein *is* its ‘there’ means that it is grounded in disclosedness. Disclosure of the ‘there’ is disclosure of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world. This means that “the world, Being-in, and the Self, which, as an ‘I am,’—is disclosed with equal primordially.”<sup>8</sup> When a world is disclosed, so are the entities within it that are ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. Disclosure is a differentiation, which lets entities be seen in their own Being, from the undifferentiated character of everydayness, which takes things as mere objects for use or examination without heed to the thing itself in its Being. For Heidegger, the traditional models of truth as an assertion (judgement), or truth as an agreement (correspondence), do not get to the more primordial relationship that truth has with Being. In ¶44 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger shows, by way of Aristotle and Parmenides, that truth as ἀλήθεια (aletheia), Being, and the thing that shows itself all belong together.<sup>9</sup> When ontologically understood, ἀλήθεια, he argues, is Being-true and this means “taking entities out of their hiddenness and letting them be seen in their unhiddenness (their uncoveredness).” Ἀλήθεια, connected to “the things themselves,” means “entities in the ‘how’ of their uncoveredness.”<sup>10</sup> Thus Being-true is Being-uncovered. All uncovering of entities (including scientific discovery, and theoretical reflection) is grounded in “the world’s disclosedness.”<sup>11</sup> Disclosedness, the Being of the there, is constituted by the fundamental existentialia of understanding, state-of-mind, and falling. These three are existential

characteristics of Dasein. Hence, Dasein as Being-there is the truth of its existence as the *how* of its uncoveredness, opened up by these three existentialia.

Moreover, because Dasein is singled out as existence—only Dasein can exist (i.e. no animal, thing, or equipment can exist in the sense of Dasein’s existence). There are of course other entities there, in Being. Heidegger doesn’t deny this. He is, however, focusing on Dasein’s Being and therefore reserves existence exclusively to Dasein’s kind of Being there. This is a terminological distinction, useful for the purpose of understanding how Dasein is distinct from all other beings and ways of Being. Things are important in this discourse insofar as they make sense of how it is that we comport ourselves as entities in the world and how we are in-the-world. The word ‘existence,’ from the Latin prefix *ex-* and the verb *stare*, literally, means to stand out. Existence, in Heidegger’s sense, is a kind of standing outside of one’s ordinary conception of self. It is also linked to temporality via the Greek ἐκστατικόν, which will not be discussed here.<sup>12</sup>

To ontologically clarify the analytic of Dasein as Being ‘there,’ Heidegger shows that the structures which are characteristic of Dasein’s Being—existentiality, facticity, and Being-fallen—are primordially woven together in the unity of care. Dasein’s care structure can be summed up by the formula: “ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered in within-the-world).”<sup>13</sup>

The first part, Being-ahead-of-itself, means that Dasein is constantly projecting upon its possibilities, that is, it is “Being towards its own most potentiality-for-Being.”<sup>14</sup> In German, as in English, projection as *Entwurf* has a double meaning: *Entwerfen*, to project, means to design as well as to throw...out of. Thus, projection and possibilities go together in the sense that Dasein is itself a project for itself that is constantly ahead-of-itself in the way that a project is constantly a process of becoming. Dasein thus exists; as Being-ahead-of-itself it stands outside of itself. Dasein does not realize itself as actual, which would reduce it to an ontic present-at-hand understanding; rather, it is always its possibilities as such. Dasein, therefore, is never the kind of being that is isolated and in itself, as it is for Descartes’ ego. Dasein can project itself upon its potentiality authentically by ‘choosing itself,’ inauthentically by ‘fleeing from itself,’

and by falling back to its everydayness. In everydayness Dasein's possibilities are "leveled off" to what is at its disposal, and thus, its possibilities are tranquilized with what is "merely actual." Nevertheless, authentic Being towards possibilities (Being-ahead-of-itself) is not destroyed but can remain manifest in "mere wishing." Wishing is inauthentic insofar as Dasein misunderstands its factual possibilities. Facticity pertains to the second part of the formula, Being-already-in-(the-world).

Being-ahead-of-itself is not contained within an isolated nor worldless subject, but rather, co-occurs with Being-in-the-world. Dasein is delivered over to its 'there' and thus is "thrown into a world."<sup>15</sup> Being-in is an existential state of Dasein and is not the kind of being in of a fish being in the ocean. Heidegger shows how in comes from *innan*, which is 'to reside' or 'to dwell' and that 'I am,' the German *ich bin*, means 'I dwell.' 'Being' (as the infinitive of 'I am') is 'to reside alongside' or 'to be familiar with.'<sup>16</sup> Thus, Being-in is *how* Dasein is. The world is a characteristic of Dasein, which in everydayness gets understood as its 'environment.' For the sake of being concise, we won't undergo a study of 'the worldhood of the world,' which Heidegger goes to great lengths in order to expound. It is sufficient to understand that, ontologically, only Dasein has a world, insofar as it exists. Being-in-the-world and Being-ahead-of-itself is the unitary characteristic of care as thrown-projection. That is, Dasein is thrown *from out of* itself to its possibilities.

Being-ahead-of-itself-already-in-the-world is always alongside entities within the world. Entities include those characterized phenomenally as ready-to-hand, as well as other Daseins with which Dasein shares the world. Dasein as Being-with means that it is absorbed in the world of its concern and falls alongside entities *within* it. Being-with is irreducible and autonomous to Dasein's factual existence. Primordially, care (the German *sorge*) manifests as concern (*besorgen*) with regards to Being-alongside the ready-to-hand environmentally, and as solicitude (*fürsorge*) with regards to other Daseins.<sup>17</sup> Solicitude is a "factual social arrangement" and constitutes how we are with others in the world.<sup>18</sup> Solicitude is important for the analysis of Being-with in desire and love.



Finally, authenticity and inauthenticity are irreducible modes of Dasein's Being, which "are grounded in the fact that any Dasein whatsoever is characterized by mineness."<sup>19</sup> That these are *modes* of its Being, means that they cannot be understood by way of some other thing; they are *a priori* to any understanding of existence. Only the particular Dasein decides its existence, either by taking hold of it, or by neglecting it. This gets decided through existence itself. Dasein is authentic when it 'chooses itself' and inauthentic when it 'flees in the face of its Being,' and thus forgets itself. Both of these give Dasein a *definite* character. Whereas average everydayness gives it its *undifferentiated* character. Everydayness is the mode of Being that Dasein is 'proximally and for the most part.' Having an undifferentiated character means Dasein is not really 'anywhere,' because it is not 'in' any mode of Being, that is, it is not definite, and thus has no characteristics of its own, but only those of the 'they'—that is 'Das Man,' or 'The One' or 'Anyone.' Everydayness is characterized by "the comfortableness of the accustomed... That which will come tomorrow (and this is what everyday concern keeps awaiting) is 'eternally yesterday's.' In everydayness everything is all one and the same, but whatever the day may bring it is taken as diversification."<sup>20</sup> In everydayness we seek new ways to alleviate the "dull suffering" and sinking away in the dullness of it. Thus, in everydayness, along with the habitual day-to-day mannerisms and expected ways of living, there is a hankering after the new and the eventful, the excitable, and the lively experiences. Dasein is always searching for the next thing to keep it interested.

It is important to note, as Heidegger does, that inauthenticity and everydayness, are not "any less or any lower degree of Being" than authenticity; "even in its fullest concretion Dasein can be characterized by inauthenticity—when busy, when excited, when interested, when ready for enjoyment."<sup>21</sup> Inauthenticity means having one's own Being in view, standing in the face of one's Being, but not choosing one's Self, and instead fleeing from it; thus existing as the undifferentiated 'they' self encountered in everydayness. Even if authentic "existence can gain mastery over the everyday... it can never extinguish it."<sup>22</sup> Dasein cannot permanently be in the authentic mode, nor can it always be in the everyday inauthentic way. The very nature of Dasein, as an entity who's

Being is an issue for it, means that within the moments and intervals of its everydayness, it comes back to its authentic Being, just as much as it falls back into its everyday customs and ways of understanding itself. These modes of Dasein's Being are very much linked together, and characterize the 'how' of Dasein's comportment to its Being and in its Being. With regards to love and desire, characterizing them respectively, as authentic and inauthentic forms of Dasein's potential for Being-with refers to Dasein's ontological constitution. There is no essential hierarchy between them since they involve one another. In a way, Dasein shifts between these modes and everydayness. Our Being-with another in love or desire involves these three modes; authentic Being-with which can manifest as love, inauthentic Being-with which can manifest as desire, and the average everyday way of Being-with which can manifest as indifference to the other.<sup>23</sup>

#### **4. Modes of Being-with: in-Desire and in-Love**

Dasein is always Being-with others in-the-world. Existing as Being-with others is not the same as existing as Being-alongside the ready-to-hand entities. Dasein comports itself to other Daseins, as Being-with, by way of solicitude (*fürsorge*), which is related to care (*sorge*). Most of the time, solicitude falls under deficient modes of Being-with, which manifests as the different ways of how we are with one another in everydayness. The positive modes of Being-with take on two extreme possibilities, which, as extrema, span a range of "positive" comportments. These are Leaping-in and Leaping-ahead. Leaping-in (or standing in for) places oneself in another's concern and takes away her own Being as 'care.' This can manifest as making the other dependent or dominated but does not necessarily come out explicitly as such. Leaping-ahead, on the other hand, liberates the other by helping her gain a sense of herself as Being, existentially, care, and thus opens up the paths for her "to become free for it [her Being]."<sup>24</sup> The analysis of desire and love is a complicated one because it is not very clear where each falls, that is, on which mode of the extema spectrum; this is especially so because in each case it can vary for the different circumstances surrounding lovers. For the sake of determining an authentic form of love that is freeing and helping the

other, we can say authentic love tends towards a leaping-ahead and desire tends more towards a leaping-in.

Being-with, as the spectrum of positive and deficient modes, circumscribes the possible ways in which lovers can comport with and towards one another. Thus, even a pair held together by mostly leaping-in behaviors have the potential for being held together by leaping-ahead behaviors, and vice-versa. Likewise, those comporting under deficient modes, namely indifference, who are not really held at all, also have the potential for positive modes of Being-with one another. We can choose the modes we stand in depending on the situation and the stakes. What is most common amongst non-indifferent individuals is something of a mix of positive modes, with neither extrema fully undergone. A full understanding of one's own Being-with requires that one pay heed to both extrema. The dominating form as the contrast to the liberating form grants a sense of where one stands in relation to another, and can open up the possibility of Being-with manifested as authentic love.

Desire as a positive mode of Being-with is a yearning to have the beloved. Dasein in desire is nevertheless aware that it cannot take over what it wants to possess. This awareness is primarily motivated by a notion of being an individual subject separate from the objective world, which includes the other to which desire gets orientated by. For desire to remain, Dasein takes its object of desire as ungraspable. If it has the other, it no longer desires them. Understanding itself as an isolated subject, bound-off from the other, Dasein can keep within desire, since desire involves sensing one's limits as an individual subject. Physically and understandingly, Dasein is tormented by its separation from the other and the lack encountered in this separation. Interaction with the other, as an effect of this tormented lack, will be in relation to one's own understanding of oneself as an entity in need of becoming 'completed.' This form of relating to the other converts the beloved into a present-at-hand object that Dasein takes as able to fill its 'void.' As an object of Dasein's desire, the other or the beloved is obfuscated and turned into idealizations of Dasein's self fulfillment. The beloved gets covered up by the divide spawned from a conceived subjective isolation and is morphed into an object ordained to serve the self-completion of the lover. The lover's desire is motivated to act against the liberation of the beloved by

the very torment of its own paradox— of having a stirring sensation that is impulsive towards the other yet unsatisfactorily contained within oneself, of reaching but never having. This paradox leads Dasein to become perplexed about understanding itself as a subject; perplexed, Dasein has the potential to encounter a kind of gateway to authentic comportment. Most of the time, however, it gets caught up in the torment of the perplexity instead of seeing it through.

Carson expresses how loving and hating the object of one's desire is part of what occurs in desire. Desire is the in between of love and hate because it relies on these two poles to keep it in that penchant state of lacking. In making the other a present-at-hand object, the other is unattainable because the lover can only see the other as always separate and present-at-hand. Given the way in which desire blinds the lover from authentic forms of Being-with, it is not primarily motivated by the lover's beloved, but by its intoxicating nature as such. Desire awakens in the lover a sense of liveliness and excitement in her otherwise dreary everyday life, characterized by indifference and leveled off ways of Being-with others. In desire, the lover's sense of a lack hints at the lack-of-fullness in everydayness, but the lover misunderstands this as a lack of having the other. Thus, in reaching for her beloved, Dasein gains a sense of liveliness—something exciting and distinct from the surface-level existence of the day to day. Desire is a kind of intoxication which needs the reaching and never-reached in-between to continuously return to the sensation of exciting desire itself. For this reason, the lover never fully hates nor fully loves the other—but keeps her between these poles. Therefore, it is the very sense of *reaching* the other, and not the other as another Dasein, that the lover truly craves. Likewise, it is her sense of not ever grasping the beloved that the lover hates. This is so even in the torment of lack. The torment itself is part of the excitement that desire awakens in Dasein's leveled-off existence. The lack allows for a reach, a potential more than the everyday. It is in this way of craving desire that it becomes the lover's penchant, and it is in the way of taking the other as an object for the lover, that desire is exhibited as an urge.

The tranquilizing effect that everydayness has on Dasein blinds it from its possibilities. By falling prey to the they, Dasein has a tranquilized willing which is a modification of authentic Being-towards one's

potentiality-for-Being. This tranquilized way of Being towards possibilities manifests as wishing. In wishing, Dasein's projection never takes hold of its possibilities as such, nor ever carefully considers their fulfillment. Being-ahead-of-itself dominates and does not understand factual possibilities. That is, "wishing is an existential modification of projecting oneself understandingly, when such self-projection has fallen forfeit to thrownness and just keeps hankering after possibilities." Hankering "closes off the possibilities."<sup>25</sup> This hankering is driven by the penchant [addiction] for lively experiences in Dasein's world. The penchant for experiences of feeling alive blinds Dasein in such a way that all its possibilities serve what it is addicted to. In the penchant for the experience of desire, which makes its everydayness more lively, Dasein gets closed off from its potentiality-for-Being and constantly only confronts the possibilities of Being-with in the mode of leaping-in. In a penchant, care is bound. On the other hand, in an urge, care "has not yet become free." This is because the urge to live or feel alive in the averageness of the everyday is an impulse to live *at any price*. In this inauthentic Being-ahead, urge leaves no room for other possibilities to arise and can outrun the situation that Dasein finds itself in.<sup>26</sup> Thus in desire as an urge, Dasein does not hold the situation but runs past it for the sake of desire's liveliness, and thus, crowds out all possibilities of authentic sharing in Being there. In the wish-world of a Dasein caught up in lively experiences themselves, such as desire, the hankering after possibilities binds care and does not set it free. Hence, the possibility of Being-with, under the mode of Leaping-ahead, becomes closed off. Carson expresses that the paradox of the lover caught up in eros, occurs as an "arrest" which confounds the lover's reality, a reality that disappears "into the possibility of what we could be if we were other than we are."<sup>27</sup> Desire's perplexity, if paid heed to without the disposition to solve its enigmatical qualities and its hint of the more, can lead Dasein from out of its urge and penchant for desire into a genuine Being-with in-love that leaps-ahead.

Authentic Being-in-love does not leap-in as desire does. It steadies, or settles, itself in the equiprimordiality of one's own most Dasein as null and as constitutive of mineness (essentially bounded by one's ownmost) *and* simultaneously, as essentially Being-with the other *as* Being-alongside.

That is to say, it does not take over the other, but instead, lets them Be what they already are as their ownmost potentiality. Authentic Dasein understands that it can only ever desire the other because its very Being means Being-with others that are also their ownmost potentiality-for-Being. In love, the other is authentically understood as a Dasein to which the lover longs for, but does not *wish* to grasp them in the sense of a present-at-hand object. Longing for, I will argue, is a distinct way of Being-towards the other that is not the same kind as desire's reaching that is founded upon urge and penchant. Love, as a kind of longing and Belonging, is neither tormenting nor lively in the sense of an amusement. Love will be shown to be liberating and a condition for the possibility of rebirth. Prior to this, I will first clarify what is meant by Dasein's nullity and the notion of anticipatory resoluteness, Dasein's authentic projection towards its possibilities. These are two features of Dasein that are essential for understanding any authentic comportment.

### 5. Nullity

One of the important structures of Dasein, which reveals its care structure as essentially null, is Being-guilty. Heidegger aims to clarify the primordial ontological meaning of Being-guilty by first rejecting the common understandings of guilt as having debts, being responsible for, or coming to owe something to others.<sup>28</sup> To owe something to others is based off of Being the reason for a *lack* of something in another, and similarly, having a lack due to a failure to satisfy duties or requirements to others. To define guilt under a lack, Heidegger argues, is to consider Dasein as present-at-hand because something (which can go missing) has gone missing, and that means not-Being-present-at-hand—what should be present is not. Being-guilty, as a phenomena, does not first arise from an indebtedness in the sense of lack, but from the more original character of the 'not,' through which something can even come to be understood as lacking in the first place. From this, Heidegger argues that Being-guilty means "being-the-basis of a nullity." The ordinary understanding of guilty as having responsibility for, is, ontologically, Being-the-basis-for, that is, Being-the-reason/ground-for, "a Being which has been defined by a not."<sup>29</sup> Dasein as care is thrown-projection. This essentially means it

is constituted by Being-guilty. In both its thrownness and its projection, Dasein confronts a nullity.

As an entity that has been *thrown* into the world, Dasein is delivered over into its 'there,' but not out of its own choosing nor willing. Being-thrown isn't any one-time event that occurs prior to its being 'there.' Dasein is *in each case* thrown in its very Being, and thus "constantly lags behind its possibilities." Being a basis means "existing as thrown," and as such, it means "never to have power over its ownmost Being from the ground up." In existing, Dasein is the basis for its potentiality-for-Being, and "although it has not laid the basis itself, it reposes in the weight of it." Having been thrown, Dasein must now be the ground, or the reason, for its own Being. Yet, because it never got to choose this sort of responsibility towards itself, nor will ever have that control over its thrownness, it always carries the weight of the 'not mine,' that is, the weight of accident. It never 'has a reason' for why it must now 'Be the reason,' that is, it never "takes over Being-a-basis" for itself.<sup>30</sup> Being-a-basis is itself a nullity.

Dasein is also a *projection*. As Being-ahead-of-itself, Dasein understands itself in terms of its possibilities that is projected. But since Dasein can only ever stand in one possibility or another, it is "constantly not other possibilities... [thus] projection itself is essentially null."<sup>31</sup> In choosing possibilities open to it, Dasein is also constantly not-choosing others, and so it is surrounded by all the possibilities that it did not choose. Thus, projection is pervaded by nullity, and is itself null.

Being-guilty as 'Being-the-basis of a nullity' is the very thrown-projection which constitutes Dasein's structure as care. A structure "permeated with nullity through and through."<sup>32</sup> Authentically, Dasein takes hold of Being-guilty, inauthentically it avoids this at all costs. Taking a stand within possibility doesn't mean having some goal and making it tangible and accessible. Rather, it signifies that sense of existence as outwardly standing and gaining a distance to one's everyday comportment, that is, Being as thrown-projection, which ultimately means Being-guilty. In not choosing to heed this distance, Dasein is inauthentic and falls back to everydayness, thus forgetting its null essence.

## 6. Anticipatory Resoluteness

The meaning of choosing to stand within one's possibility can be understood through anticipatory resoluteness; its upshot is gaining primordial self-standing. The authenticity of care, that is, authentic Dasein, is characterized by anticipatory resoluteness. Resolute in German is *entschlossen*. Broken up, ent-schlossen is something like 'unlocked' or a kind of removal from becoming closed. Resoluteness is a "letting oneself be called forth to one's own most Being-guilty."<sup>33</sup> It is a "reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty" and this means having one's essential nullity, as care, in view—that is, disclosed.<sup>34</sup> Resoluteness is distinctively an authentic Being-one's-Self because it is the disclosure of one's Self as Being-a-basis of a nullity which brings Dasein back to itself from its lostness in the everyday.

Anticipation in German is *vorlaufen*, and anticipatory is *vorlaufenden*. The prefix 'vor' signifies 'forward' or 'ahead of,' and laufen is 'to run' or 'to move,' while laufend is 'ongoing.' Hence, being anticipatory means something like being 'an ongoing forward movement,' or 'a running ahead.' As running ahead, anticipation is the possibility of authentic resoluteness. In being forward moving, anticipation is the possibility of the utmost certain possibility: death. Death is Dasein's certain possibility of its impossibility and is thus essentially indefinite in the sense that death means that Dasein will not be in any mode of Being (authentic nor inauthentic) insofar as it is no longer existing.

Unified, anticipatory resoluteness makes manifest the thrownness of Dasein "into the indefiniteness of its limit-Situation." This means that Dasein is bounded by its original thrownness of birth and its ultimate possibility of Death; "when resolved upon the latter, Dasein gains its potentiality-for-Being-a-whole."<sup>35</sup> Anticipatory resoluteness is authentic Dasein as the disclosedness that is towards its possibilities, death being one of them. As such, Dasein is open for its potentiality-for-Being. Anticipatory resoluteness "frees for death the possibility of acquiring power over Dasein's existence...it brings one without Illusions into the resoluteness of 'taking action.'"<sup>36</sup> Here, taking action does not mean that a free subject wills something or other, rather, taking action is a releasement that has overcome this modern subjectivist position. One's decisions informs one's Being and makes manifest the nullity pervading



projection of one possibility and decisively not-Being other possibilities. The 'decision' of 'taking action' by the authentically understanding Self means that 'letting act' is a response to 'the Situation' that has been disclosed for and by way of Dasein's existence. Dasein's authentic Situation is, briefly put, the present moment, the 'blink of an eye,' that is ecstatically 'held' and thus opened up by the co-happening of the 'has been' and the 'to come' of the past and future. This must be further elaborated by Heidegger's temporality, which is another paper in itself. It suffices for our purposes to understand, although generally, that Dasein's situation is no 'event' which can be recorded, but an existential moment that carries no ordinary sense of the linear homogenous time we use on a day to day basis. An existential moment can be however long or short when understood through linear time, but it carries no standard measure inherent in itself.

### **7. Boundaries and Belonging**

In Carson's account, the lover is at "at the edge of eros." The lover sees their own boundaries but is unable to transgress them in order to unite with the beloved. In this boundedness, "the presence of want awakens in him nostalgia for wholeness. His thoughts turn toward questions of personal identity: he must recover and reincorporate what is gone if he is to be a complete person."<sup>37</sup> Carson shows that the way in which literary training has developed has influenced the outlook of oneself as bounded, and thus effects the way in which eros is experienced. For the lyric poets, "love is something that assaults or invades the body of the lover to wrest control of it from him."<sup>38</sup> The boundedness of the person in love is an important feature of love, as is the interpretation about this very boundedness.

Boundaries, or the ancient greek *πέρας* (*peras*), according to Heidegger's later work, is not where a thing or place ends, but where it begins to be what it *is*.<sup>39</sup> A *peras* allows something to come about as its own. It holds an entity together and so grants it the possibility of its Being.<sup>40</sup> The *peras* of a lecture hall, of a kitchen, or a playground, for example, are not necessarily their physical borders, but what gathers it together *as* that space and frees it to Be that space. The entities within a space play an important role in the formation of it as that space, as does

the social context and time period that give meaning to a space. These are ways in which a *peras* can form around the entirety of a space's Being 'there.' The space created allows for dwelling and Being in a certain compartment.

Dasein's boundaries, understood ontically, are its physical-biological boundaries, its historical context, and its circumstances as a person in a shared world. Ontologically, its *peras* is its birth and its death which bind and hold together Dasein's existence in its entirety. Dasein's birth and death signify its way of Being as thrown-projection. Thrown into the world in birth, it projects upon its possibilities, one of which is its ultimate possibility of death. Dasein, however is in each case a thrown-projection. Throughout its existence, Dasein is always encountering its thrownness and possibilities that it can project upon. Ontological boundedness thus illuminates Dasein's nullity as understood by way of anticipatory resoluteness' self-projecting upon one's Being-guilty. Being, constituted by a nullity, "does not detach Dasein from its world nor isolate it as a free-floating 'I.' And how should it?, when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness is nothing else than Being-in-the-world? Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concerned Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with others...Only by authentically Being-their-Selves in resoluteness can people authentically be with one another—not by ambiguous and jealous stipulations and talkative fraternizing of the 'they' and in what 'they' want to undertake."<sup>41</sup>

Ontology inquires into what makes the ontic realm possible. Hence, Dasein's ontic boundaries are not of secondary importance to what makes it fully itself. Its birth and death are paid special attention to in its ontological understanding because they are what grant Dasein the possibility of any ontic circumstances that determine its life. Ultimately, heeding these boundaries brings Dasein right back to Being in the world alongside others in a new way that is not leveled off and indifferent of its existence.

Being one's ownmost nullity is a *belonging* to oneself as bounded in one's birth and death. In love, two Daseins, as null in their essence, hold each other in their belonging. Each always belongs to its own. Together they each find their belonging as their ownmost nullities. It is in this sense

of holding one another, and not fusing together, that Being-with each other in-love gains meaning as belonging together. Rainer Maria Rilke, in his 7th of the *Letters to a Young Poet* rightfully said, “Love consists of this: two solitudes that protect and border and greet each other.”<sup>42</sup> Each belongs to its own solitude, its own boundedness as a thrown-projection; and with that, its potentiality-for-Being is always its own.<sup>43</sup> Yet, in Being-with one another and in seeing, as disclosure, the other *as* other, in their wholeness, each also can see itself as *its* Self, and so *together* can find their belonging to their self. In the immense distance of Being-with, as solitudes, Dasein finds that it belongs only truly to itself. Insofar as the other lets it find itself, and does not delude nor take over the other, equiprimordially, it also belongs to the other in authentic Being-with. The notion of leaping-ahead, which liberates the other to Be itself in its wholeness and helps it to develop as its own, is how love brings one to their own through the other in a shared realm. This contrasts to a notion of love that is one of unification with the other. The ideology of unification confounds and blinds Dasein’s ability to take hold of itself in its own boundedness.

The notion of to belong or something belonging to something, means ‘rightfully,’ or fittingly, ‘being in place.’ It also carries the meaning of ‘to be the concern, interest, or business of.’ Belong, in Middle Dutch and Middle High German, *belanc*, *belang*, also had the meaning of ‘longing,’ or ‘interest for.’<sup>44</sup> ‘Long’ itself derives from the ancient greek *δολιχός*, which had multiple uses such as to denote a long race, or merely the adjective long (e.g. long neck, long spear), but it also meant making long journeys.<sup>45</sup> To Be-long thus carries a sense of distance, and a journeying through an expanse. To be ‘in’ the ‘long’ for the other is a kind of movement that is always towards the other, and never at the other. Longing, as a kind of yearning, coincides to some degree with desire as a reaching that constantly never has. The sense in which desire as reaching does not fit with Belonging is in the way that desire is ‘tormented’ by this never-having. It never settles within the longing *as* that immense distance between solitudes as such. The reach and torment of desire focuses only on getting to an end, and that it never actually gets to its goal. Thus, it never takes hold of the journey itself as an undergoing. In considering having its object as a kind of end, reaching is

always painfully a lack.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, once the lover in desire thinks it has the other, it ceases to Be in the disclosure of the immense distance to the other and has effectively reduced the other to something present-at-hand.

Belonging-to the other ontologically, is a kind of Being 'in the long run' for which has the sense of an unceasing reach, and thus, there is a standing within that distance to each other. Indeed, it is precisely a distance gained in love that allows Dasein to project upon its Self, alongside *with* the other. It is precisely the distance gained away from the ontic understanding of oneself that allows for a sudden hint, if not a complete exposition, of the ontological understanding of one's existence. Rilke also beautifully captures this notion of solitudes belonging in infinite distance to each other in his letter to Emanuel von Bodman.

The question of marriage, to my feeling, is not to create a quick commonality of spirit by tearing down all boundaries; but rather, a good marriage is one in which each partner appoints the other to be the guardian of his solitude, and thus they show each other the greatest possible trust. A merging of two people is an impossibility, and where it seems to exist, it is a hemming-in [narrowing], a mutual consent that robs one party or both parties of their fullest freedom and development. But once the realization is accepted that even between the closest people infinite distances exist, a wonderful living side-by-side can grow up, if they succeed in loving the expanse [distance] between them, which gives them the possibility of always seeing each other as a whole and before an immense [wide] sky.<sup>47</sup>

The immense sky not only captures the great distance that resides between lovers, but also the heights of this love. While love, rightfully, tends to be characterized as 'falling-in,' 'deep,' and 'all consuming,' it also carries a sense of height, and thus, of flight. Indeed, Carson's account of *pteros* does carry more meaning than eros. The depths of the chasm that exists between lovers is also the height of its infinite expanse. Falling in love is an uprooting of Dasein from its own depths into its own heights. Love is indeed a falling, but it is a kind of falling which is not

falling-prey to inauthentic everydayness, but a falling-upon, as in, up towards the other and thus back-to oneself; it is a kind of falling-up-in-love which allows for a kind of flight. This is to say that, in falling-in-to-love, Dasein encounters its Self in the expanse of its possibilities.<sup>48</sup>

Rilke also states that lovers must be *guardians* to each other's solitudes. A guardian is one who guards, in the sense of protecting and preserving. A guardian defined as 'one to whom the care and preservation of any thing is committed' captures the caring solicitude as leaping-ahead of authentic Being-with in Heidegger's sense.<sup>49</sup> In his later essay, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger gives an account of a certain understanding of preserve as being one of the meanings of 'the free' (German *das Freie* and *frei*).<sup>50</sup> Preserving in this sense is a freeing of something by allowing it to Be what it is, for its self, and that means to tend, to cultivate or to help along, in such a way that does not stifle, but allows it to grow. Also relevant is that 'guard' is connected with 'ward' in old Germanic, in the sense of a watchman, or a guard keeping a look out in order to keep safe what it's guarding.<sup>51</sup> To ward is to keep watch carefully. To be a guardian of the other's solitude is to keep watch of their solitude anticipatorily, and not merely curiously seeing it. That is, *holding* in sight the solitude of the other, and not leaping after it in 'leaping away' curiosity. This is what lets the other Be in the sense of preserving which frees up. Overlooking the nature of Dasein as their own solitude tends to lead to the leaping-in modes of Being-with which comes with, although not necessarily, that comportment to the other that dominates. Although, more often, it leads to everyday indifference that is not open to the other. In Being-with in-love, lovers hold each other, as their own solitudes, in view so as to free up their potentiality-for-Being their own selves, as selves that are always, primordially, with the other in *resoluteness* as un-locked, that is, opened.

The lack the lover finds in their self when desiring another misinterprets one's ownmost nullity as being something lacking from their completed or whole self, and moreover, understanding their Self under ontic terms, and not those of existentiality. The crucial parallel here with Heidegger's nullity and Carson's account of the paradoxical arrest that occurs under the influence of eros, is the notion of coming to see the possibilities of what one can become. Possibilities are never

actual. In the palpable sense of the possible, one discovers a moment of one's own Being. The reach becoming a longing will get one back to oneself by the very distance found in Belonging.

All of this is not to say that love is tranquil, which would place it under the realm of everyday secureness. On the contrary, love is deeply unsettling; it is a profound uprooting of the certain sense of oneself in one's everyday mode of existing. Falling in love is, indeed, an arousal which carries both of its ordinary notions of becoming sexually excited and of becoming awakened from sleep. Ontologically, love's arousal stretches one's Being from the familiar, asleep-like world of everydayness to the indefinable pure possibility of one's authentic Being-with, and equally into one's essential lack of ground. This is by no means a calm occurrence. The potential of love as Belonging also carries the possibility of devolving into a possessive desire. The torment of inauthentic desire occurs in the need to re-secure one's uprooting (to 'solve' the paradox) and as such Dasein 'flees in the face of' itself. Acting upon this torment and need for a ground, the devolution of love falsely projects onto the other as the source of Dasein's security and clings for the other in order to arrest, and to have them, or to have true knowledge of them. Yet with love, and as Stanley Cavell brought out more lucidly, we can never truly know another's inner world, so-to-speak, nor understand their love for us, their pain, their happiness in the strict sense of 'having a grasp on it,' but we can *acknowledge* these in the other. Acknowledging is never knowing; it is, rather, the way of Being-with others that does not take hold over them, but releases them by way of seeing them, hearing them, and Being open to their Being there *with* you. In particular, to acknowledge, is a kind of giving the other thought. Thinking is related to thanking, etymologically.<sup>52</sup> To thank the other is to express gratitude for something they have done or said—to give them thought—and this is an important sense of what we mean when we acknowledge one another. Love consists of thanking and giving careful thought to the other.

### **8. Eros, Philia, and Innocent Desire**

τὸ φιλεῖν (*philia*) is defined in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* as "wanting for someone what one thinks good, for his sake and not for one's own, and being inclined, so far as one can, to do such things for him."<sup>53</sup> Love is an

encounter that eros forces upon one but manifests itself into philia. It has been said before that if love is to last, lovers must become friends. Nevertheless, eros is still a crucial component for love to endure not solely as friendly. That is, it can't just stand in pure desire, nor can it end up as pure friendship if it is still to have the characteristics of love that is intimate. Love must be a kind of mix of the two. Eros and philia, when held together, give rise to a nurturing form of Being-with that takes into account both one's desires and the selflessness of concern for the other. Philia better captures the sense of leaping-ahead and belonging that love has. It is a fondness and a responsive type of love; a kinship. Eros has that sense of reach and lack that can become a more authentic longing-for and standing in one's own nullity. As was mentioned earlier, it is not obvious what kind of Being-with love or desire tend towards. While it is more evident that philia is a leaping-ahead, eros has a tendency of leaping-in (in its tormented reach), but can become a leaping-ahead. Eros guided by philia, however allows for a genuine leaping-ahead in-love. Authentic Being-in-love needs both the passion started up by eros's reach and lack, as well as the kindness for-the-other's-sake that philia brings. In the 'moment' of love, eros and philia interweave as a Nietzschean innocent desire.

The notion of an innocent desire is brought up in 'On Immaculate Perception' in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as a love of "creators, begetters, and enjoyers of becoming." Those that desire with innocence want "to create over and beyond" themselves, which requires perishing.<sup>54</sup> A love that goes beyond oneself goes beyond one's ordinary self-understanding and secure sense of what one is. In love, lovers want to become more than what they currently are, and in reaching for more, they inevitably must shed their foundations. Shedding one's foundation not only means ridding oneself of the typologies imbued on oneself in everydayness, but also Being one's null groundlessness.

The creator's innocent desire is encompassed by the heights and the depths of Nietzsche's "solar love."

Look there, how she glides impatiently across the sea! Do you not feel her thirst and the hot breath of her love? She would

suck at the sea and drink its depths into herself in the heights;  
now the sea's desire rises with a thousand breasts. It wants to be  
kissed and sucked by the thirst of the sun; it wants to become  
air and height and footpath of light and light itself!<sup>55</sup>

In love, the heights and the depths are not encountered separately, as if one solely referred to the lover as the sun and the other solely to the beloved as the sea. As if one were always the giver and the other always the receiver. Rather, each Dasein is equally the sun and the sea, and they learn to become their own depths and heights in shared love. In part three, Zarathustra is speaking sorrowfully to his own soul about having given everything to it and now being empty. It responds, "Who of us is supposed to be thankful? -does the giver not have to give thanks that the receiver received? Is bestowing not a bare necessity? Is receiving not-mercy?" Crucially, Zarathustra is both his own giver and his own receiver.

It is customary to place most attention on the side of the lover and to think that the lover is giving a gift while the beloved is something of a well where the lover is to dispel all that love into; that somehow, the beloved doesn't have to do much except 'give in.' The receiver's mercy for the bestower in love has a sense of giving in, but it is not one that is indifferent and merely letting it be overtaken and filled up. It is, instead, a kind of blessing, a forgiveness that grants love its flow outward in the first place. Forgiveness is a granting.<sup>56</sup> Bestowing and receiving in love are not separate traits of different people, but features of love that are shared equally; in authentic love, a lover must also be a beloved, and vice versa. The depths of the sea and the heights of the sun are always one's own. But being one's own, existentially, also means that it is shared with others since Dasein's basic constitution is part and parcel Being-with others. In love, belonging together is a shared loving and being loved; the heights and depths are equiprimordially considered one's own and shared. The fashioned idea that there must be one lover and one beloved is embedded into the normative conceptions of not only patriarchal relationships but also monogamous ones. Authentic love only attends to a shared moment of Belonging between Daseins; it does not entail long term monogamy. Albeit, I will argue in the following section that it is



possible to be ‘in the long run’ for a shared love, which can manifest as an enduring relationship, but does not necessarily have to be this way.

### **9. Falling Out**

*“We need, in love, to practice only this: letting each other go. For holding on comes easily; we do not need to learn it.”*  
—Rainer Marie Rilke <sup>57</sup>

Love can leave. In its most difficult case, it is the complete falling out of love that (usually) comes with the end of a relationship. Falling out of love completely is painfully being dislodged from a place of belonging and being forced back into everyday ways of interaction with others that are leveled off, indifferent, and at the plain surface of Being-with. In the return to everyday Being-with, one notes that all things lack meaningfulness. Many times when a love relationship ends the sense of pointlessness to everyday life is overwhelming: one can hardly eat, colors lose their luster, one is indifferent and hardly ‘here’ when the other is not ‘there’ to share the world with.

Falling out of love, however, also inevitably occurs along with falling in-love. In a subtle way, falling out of love occurs in the intervals between the shared moments of Being-in-love. That is, one comes back to the everyday mode of existing with others, and this includes the other whom is loved. Everyday comportment with a lover, albeit different from comportment with office acquaintances or with parents for example, can lead to the stagnant state of not falling-back-in-love. The falling-in and falling-out ways of love are neither a deception nor a toying with another’s feelings. Ontologically speaking, everyday comportment is part of what allows for authentic comportment and vice versa. One must be open to falling-in again or being open to being uprooted again. The stagnation that one can reach is not the failure of love as a mood itself but part of the very essence of Dasein to fall back into the everyday mode of Being. This equally effects how Dasein is with others, since authenticity cannot be a permanent mode of Being. With our return to everydayness, we not only forget our authentic selves but that of our beloved as well. We come to view them in their plain surface level features of everyday life, indifferently and in a leveled-off manner and under societal types. This does not mean that we view them coldly nor

with malicious intent, but rather, with little concern for what they say or do. Moreover, in everydayness that distance opened up between solitudes in-love gets muddled. Love is work, in the sense that it needs to be continuously nurtured by way of one's Self being-open for possibility, by leaping-ahead, and by acknowledging the other. Stagnancy comes from not Being-towards this sort of nourishment, and this is most evident in our regular way of speaking about past failed loves as unwilling to put the work into love.

Love is falling in love over and over and over again<sup>58</sup>. This falling is not that of falling into everydayness, but falling towards belongingness with the other. The repetition of 'over and over' is not merely repetitive, but is an inevitable encountering of the possibility again. The possibility of a shared love is evidently no simple matter, and requires each Dasein to seize the day out of everydayness together. It is difficult since it is not solely reliant on oneself being open, leaping-ahead, and acknowledging the other, but it needs the other to also work on these ways of authentically Being-with in order to be open for the moment together; the rarity of this phenomenon cannot be overlooked. Staying open for the other, and for the possibility of coming-back-to each other in the occasional authentic moments shared, is what keeps lovers together, despite the inevitability of falling-out back to everydayness. While rare, love nevertheless motivates these comportments in each if lovers learn how to distinguish between leaping-in and leaping-ahead behaviors.

Even in a complete falling-out of love (such as in a break up), Dasein can still move on in that it has found itself as essentially null in the process. That is, it has understood itself not as something that can be filled up by any other, but is its own potentiality for its Being. Great love gives each the possibility of finding their own way to becoming themselves as pure possibilities. This gift in love, even after it has passed, is by no means a loss. Loss of love is not loss of self, which would imply being a present-at-hand entity that could be completed by the other.

Great love, however long it lasts, sometimes calls for an end, as much as it called for the beginning, so as to bound it whole as a moment shared. This distinguishes love from the dispersive unending nature of everydayness. An end of a moment shared doesn't mean it is decisive. Reunions are possibilities opened up after the fact, and must be possible

if love is to be something that one can be in the long run for. The beginning and end of shared authentic moments in love come back in new ways; this gives love its way of falling over and over again which allows authentic love to repeat (not redundantly), as momentarily arising as whole and honest in itself. This is possible, of course, until death decisively parts them, which is why love is deeply constituted by rebirth.

### **10. Rebirth In-Love**

The ontological boundedness of Dasein consists of its birth and death. These poles hold Dasein in its 'there,' and gives way to its potentiality-for-Being. Death, of course, plays a central theme in Heidegger's ontology, specifically because death is what gives meaning to our deep finitude by way of anticipatory resoluteness. Given that birth and death are constitutive of Dasein, they always play crucial roles in any phenomena. Death cannot have more primacy with regards to Dasein's boundedness than birth, nor vice versa. The possibility of death, which is certain, relies on Dasein's having-been-born. That something is born means that it is dying. Viewed backwards, that something died means it was born and endured the process of becoming. Becoming requires a sense of birth throughout, that is, re-birth.

Given love's falling-in and falling-out character, it doesn't seem like it is a confrontation with one's possibility of death that impels one to come-back-to oneself, and to the other whom is loved, but rather, it seems that birth, as a rebirth, tends to guide one in love. Love illuminates ones birth. It tends to bring about a renewed sense of oneself and of the world. While anxiety impels one futurily, as a projection upon the utmost possibility of death, love arouses one from the falling of everydayness into the primordially of shared possibility. The arousal of love is anew and filled with hope for what is to come. The primary sense of how one is in falling-in-love is that of a childlike sense of wonder in a new found possibility. In love, one finds oneself anew in the sense of an overflowing rebirth throughout this falling-in over and over with another. Rebirth bestows lovers with a sense of having found something remarkable in the other, and this childlike wonder for the other further comes with an honest playfulness that deeply enjoys this Being-with, as Nietzsche's innocent desire.

Rebirth is a newfound self, which is always deeply familiar in that what is found is what one *has* always Been, yet has never truly undergone. Becoming one's ownmost Self can feel like new when one has primarily been absorbed in everydayness, but it is never the kind of new that is associated with lively experiences like a concert or a performance. Rather, it is new in the sense of renewal; of coming back to something that has been unknowingly forgotten and finding new ways to interact with it. Put in another way, rebirth's familiar new is that sense of when what is commonly dealt with suddenly takes on an enigmatical wondrous presence, seemingly for the first time but always with its ties to its original context.

Being-in-love thus alters Being-in-the-world in this familiar new way. One's comportment in the world takes on a heightened glee for everything encountered. This comportment manifests in the ways in which poets tend to express their love, in one's sense of the brightness in colors, in the attuned ear to birds' songs, and in that happy-step the lover takes on its paths; when in-love, all is radiant and agreeable. The world's address to the lover is a welcomed and a pleasant one. It is as if all the sounds and sights are trying to speak to the lover. Responsively the lover is generous and greets all with bright eyes and warm gestures. The lover frees up the chains of everyday Being-with others and finds its own ability to Be-with others in a solicitous way. Thus, the world becomes meaningful as a shared world, and in particular, as one shared with the beloved.

### **11. Conclusion**

I don't mean to suggest a superficial cliché understanding of love as one that should avoid lust and pursue 'pure love.' Authentic love, the rebirth of a shared moment constituted by the entwining of eros and philia, is being gathered with the other in the moment of a shared liberation. It is not possible to permanently be authentic, thus it is not possible to always be in this shared moment in-love. Indeed, Heidegger reiterates that "proximally and for the most part" we are in the mode of everydayness. But we also cannot always be in this undifferentiated mode either. It is in the nature of Dasein to ponder over its own Being and to be confronted by its existence. These are, however, rare moments, usually undergone

through anxiety, as Heidegger elaborated, or through love, as what I have tried to show. Both are not common everyday phenomena, even though our everyday talk tends to amass a plethora of differing experiences and distort them to fit into the meanings of anxiety and love, without ever distinguishing the experiences' differing existential states of Being. While not common, it is important to open up the authentic areas of our Being-with one another. This mode will undoubtedly modify how we treat one another in favor of a more caring comportment. It can, for one, decrease our tolerance for being treated as a kind of tool or a step-stone for others' satisfaction. There are moments when authentic love can be experienced, and while it cannot be forced, one can be open to its happening.

*“For one human being to love another: that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks, the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other work is but preparation.”*

—Rainer Maria Rilke

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anne Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet*, (Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> This distinction, I think is both intuitive and not. Intuitive because we take love as something authentic and special, distinct from pure erotic lust; unintuitive because many conflate their desire as love, or their love as desire, and some of what Carson says about eros seems to capture our understanding of love.

<sup>4</sup> Non-sexual desire, or non-sexual attraction towards another, might look something like wanting to fully *know* the other in such a way as to take hold over—or grasp—their feelings and thoughts. That is, know the other more penetratively than what their boundaries will allow. This tends to also be included in sexual desire on top of its physical forms, albeit not always, as can be deduced from the cases of desire in the form of pure lust or rape.

<sup>5</sup> To be holistic, one can also be physically attracted *without* any attraction towards the other's non-physical attributes (i.e. wanting sex or sexual satisfaction for other purposes than for the sake of the other, emotionally,

mentally, etc.), one can *not* be physically attracted but still be non-physically attracted to others, and one can as be *neither* be physically nor non-physically attracted to others. Importantly, many of us exhibit various degrees of these combinations, especially in light of different partners and different contexts in which they arise.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by Macquarrie & Robinson (Harper & Row, 1962), p. 67

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68-69.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

In the German, primordial is the *ursprünglich*. The prefix *ur-* refers to something being first, original, or primitive. It can be temporally first but it is not reduced to solely this sense. ‘*Ur*’ can itself be thought of as something primordial. It always comes in terms of the farthest down we can go or reach in our analysis. Pragmatically we can take it as a ground, but it doesn’t mean it has to be an absolute ground. The other part of the term, ‘*sprünglich*,’ comes from ‘*Sprung*’ which is ‘to leap.’ It, however, is also customarily used to describe something like crack in a glass, that is, a kind of fissure. The suffix ‘-lich’ can be thought of as ‘-ary’ in English. Literally, ‘*ursprünglich*’ is something like ‘originary,’ ‘original,’ but it also hints of meaning a kind of ‘original-breaking-leap.’ It carries a sense of something that is about to burst outward from itself into kind of ‘first breakthrough.’

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256.

*aletheia*—the Ancient Greek term for truth.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>12</sup> Existence, the *ἐκστατικόν*, according to Heidegger, is the manifestation of temporality.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 422.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 422.

<sup>23</sup> I say can manifest because there are also other ways in which Being-with manifests under these three modes. I am focusing on how Being-with unfolds under love and desire, as they are tremendously important to us and tend to get conflated.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Carson, p. 75.

<sup>28</sup> Heidegger, p. 327.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 329.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 330.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 353.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 343.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 356.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 357-358.

<sup>37</sup> Carson, p. 31.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>39</sup> The neuter noun *πέρας* can be translated as an extremity, bound, or end. One can apply this also to the sense of a boundary (not necessarily a physical one), such as, “the ends of the earth”— or the horizon.

<sup>40</sup> Heidegger states,

A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary, Greek *peras*. A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing. That is why the concept is that of *horismos*, that is, the horizon, the boundary.

Martin Heidegger, *‘Building Dwelling Thinking’* in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, (NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1971), p. 152.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 344.

<sup>42</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, translated by Stephen Mitchell (New York: Vintage Books, 1984).

<sup>43</sup> That one is alone is a deficient mode of Being-with, but that one is essentially a solitude refers to one’s ownmost, care as pervaded by nullity, which can only ever Be as Being-with others.

<sup>44</sup> belong, v. OED Online,

<sup>45</sup> long, adj.1 and n.1. OED Online.

Giles, John, *A Lexicon of the Greek Language* (London 1840, p191-192).

<sup>46</sup> A (somewhat clichéd) parallel would be when one is running long distance and is solely focused on getting to the end of the run, the toil and tread of running becomes the most manifest. It's never ending because only the end is what yearned for, and the entirety of what is traversed is overlooked in favor of the finish line. When one focuses on the journey that running brings as an entire experience in itself, and the stretch is the reason for undergoing this act. Running becomes a kind of meditative exertion that can be both pleasant and brutal at once; an exertion which is always taken as a whole experience.

<sup>47</sup> *Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke 1892-1910*, To Emanuel von Bodman.

<sup>48</sup> Such as when a bird, thrown out of the comforts of its nest, learns to fly in the process of falling.

<sup>49</sup> guardian, n. OED Online.

<sup>50</sup> Heidegger, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, p. 147.

<sup>51</sup> ward, n.2. OED Online.

<sup>52</sup> thank, n. OED Online.

<sup>53</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1380b36–1381a2

<sup>54</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 104.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>56</sup> forgive, v. OED Online.

<sup>57</sup> Rainer Marie Rilke, *Translations from the Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, translated by M.D. Norton (W.W. Norton Company, 1993).

<sup>58</sup> As my sister has put it.