

Prefatory Note: The following essay was published in Humanitas, Vol. 11, No. 2, Fall 1966. It was partly written for presentation in a symposium on Love and Violence held at Duquesne University under the auspices of the Institute of Man on November 20, 1965. And the concluding part was written after the symposium was held. The title includes a significance not reflected in the essay, namely that the presentation prepared under that title was slated to open the symposium and was intended to suggest a point of departure from which one might hope to approach the ambiguities and ambivalences of 'love-and-violence'.

As nearly as I can recall the preceding essay, on the sublime, was written earlier than this one on love, even though the latter was published before the former. And on internal grounds the sequence seems to me corroborated.

### On Starting With Love

As the time for this symposium has drawn near, I have wondered if the honored tradition of a libation might not be appropriate for the occasion. Then we four who are counted on to speak might come at least more quickly to invite the hour, while listening, too, might become the more relaxed. And at some point we symposiasts might not neglect to tell what's occurred to us since we agreed to converse on love and violence, as events have interplayed with our commitment to reflect on these themes. What hassles may have sprung up around us, and how did we fare in coping with them? What silent fingers of night may have brushed us with misgivings? What glimpses of lives or shafts of late Fall light have vibrated with these themes, or stirred our reflection on them? With what authors did we consort, and which of them actually came to mind in ways implementing our decision, perhaps sentence by sentence, on what and what not to say?

I should be interested to discover, too, if I have been alone in my exposure to a rather characteristic response from those who have learned that I was to join in speaking on love and violence: A vehement exclamation--"Wow!"--coupled with a sage wagging of the head. Perhaps this was by way of tribute to the malicious cunning of our hosts for having set us a regular Tortuga of a topic,

and one to foil all guile. At any rate, I found these very exclaimers usually not at all loath to expatiate on our themes, and I hopefully encouraged them. But time kept running out before the purport of these conversations could be fixed, and there I was once again, alone with the ever-thickening plot. Where to lay hold of it? How to limit it for a manageable discussion? And from what vantage point could that be done?

The last of these questions I discussed with my companion, and she suggested that violence might be an easier handle to take hold of the pair by than love. What did she mean? Well, granting they are a pair and require to be understood in their connections, still, isn't violence somehow easier to understand, at least part way, than love? And especially if love can be understood at all as carrying us beyond the ambiguities and ambivalence of those loves that seem to throw us into violence. Wouldn't love that could be pure in that sense also be love that is most "beyond us," and therefore least amenable to understanding?

This was a rousing good line of questioning, and I rose to it like a bass hitting a plug--a plug festooned with treble hooks. I was hooked more unerringly than I knew as I came up with the rejoinder that love must provide us with such measure of understanding as may be possible to us of love and violence. What did I mean? Well, I meant that love enjoys priority in the order of intelligibility over the phenomena of love-and-violence, and to the effect that we simply can't be any clearer in our understanding of these phenomena than love unambiguously enables us to be. Violence is by its very nature unclear and akin to unclarified love. Therefore our only hope in trying to understand, where love and violence are at issue, must be drawn from a love which in principle can illuminate our intelligence; granting that we might invoke it in vain.

In so joining the issue, had I merely taken a rash leap, or was it a sufferable expression of "the logic of the situation," triggered under sudden and

healthy compulsion?

Not from any vantage point, but merely in response to the way the issue was thus joined, what I have to say ensues. It is by way of an open-ended reflection--at once meditative, speculative, and phenomenological--on love in its suggested priority. And no Diotima has come to my aid, though so many have.

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In love, and by virtue of love, we come to know the emptiness and the fullness of the world. This emptiness and this fullness seem contrapuntally conjoined: Together they belong to the kind of music things make in the relationship of the listener with the beings of the world.

Something like this is what I want to say--and to think out in a somewhat reasoned way. My path is a reflection on being in the world.

One may proceed, of course, as if the meaning of being in the world might admit of separation from our own mode of participation in the world. That is, we may simply assume being in the world as the status of an order of entities discovered to us in this status, without our own being in the world having a bearing on this status and on how it is made out. And perhaps the notion of spatio-temporal existence may be taken for granted as sufficing to fix the meaning of "world" and the sense in which beings are "in the world," as if their place in the world were equivalent to their location according to a system of coordinates. Then we, the beings for whom something can be "at stake," might take "the world" optimistically or pessimistically as it bears on what is at stake for us. But the "at stake" would be only "for us;" and what could it have to do with the meaning of being in the world?

Even our own being in the world, would that not tend to reduce to "bare existence?" That expression catches a kind of emptiness--the emptiness of an order of "bare existents;" and there would be a kind of fullness about such an

order--an order replete with all kinds of factually given entities, exhibiting manifold characteristics, structures, functions. But signifying nothing. For after all, within the purview of what appears as factually given, significance appears as occurring to one kind of entity, and then as an accretion upon an existence presupposing so many other characteristics as preconditional to its occurrence.

But can we assume the meaning of being in the world admits of legitimate abstraction from the way in which it is disclosed to us, coordinately with our own mode of participation in the world? For this way is no less than the way in the course of which we have anything to do with beings or they with us. Let us be reflectively realistic on the matter: Only in the course of the way of our life with other beings and within our cumulative relationship with them in its actual manifoldness can the question arise as to the meaning of their being in the world--along with ourselves. Perhaps we think with reference to other beings in many relevant ways that need to be distinguished from thoughtfully accommodating the meaning of their being in the world. For their being in the world is as it speaks to our being in the world, and in mutual address. In order to approach this matter of mutual address, however, we must dwell explicitly on our own mode of being in the world.

If we try for as neutral an expression as possible to suggest it, perhaps we can join Heidegger in the use of the expression "care" or "concern." In some respects "responsibility" might be a better expression--with emphasis on responsiveness and the ability to respond; but this expression seems vitiated by a kind of moral and even moralistic persuasion in which it seems taken for granted that we understand responsibility and what it implies--almost as if it were simply an affair of goading other people, or ourselves, rather than in essence a questionable mode of being in the literal sense of being as in question and susceptible to

questioning, and therefore as called upon to render some account of itself.

Well, let us say we are in the world as beings who are concerned, and that this still holds beneath the possibilities of concern in privative modes, such as apathy, where the life appears to have gone out of a person. Now if concern in some mode or other is defining for our participation with other beings in the world, then our reckoning with the meaning of being in the world is at once and inalienably twofold: Our own being in the world and that of the beings we have to do with are inseparably decided. Thus we reckon with other beings in point of their being in the world as they speak to our concern, in coordination with this--our own mode of being in the world with them. Therefore to give appropriate thought to the "enworldment" of other beings is to reflect on them in consonance with the possible ways in which we respond out of concern in our relationship with them. And that reflection is itself essentially qualified by the mode of concern defining our own being in the world in the act of reflection. We are thus also reflexively bound up with what is in question for us. This does not mean that we ourselves obtrude and compete with other beings in our own attention as we reflect on them in their enworldment--as if by an oscillation between intro- and extra-spection. It means, rather, that such competition in and for attention need not occur. And in this connection there is something immediately and particularly suggestive about respect. For in respect it is a matter of mutual standing that is being defined, answering to the mutual questionableness of being in the world--our own and that of other beings. It is not a question of separating our standing from that of other beings, or of oscillating between respect for them and self-respect. The two are inalienable, and self-respect is reflexively coordinate with giving one's whole attention to beings in respecting them. In this sense a mutual "at issue" or "at stake" would be of the essence of being in the world. Not at all a matter of fixed status de facto attributable to other beings or ourselves. Rather a matter in which we are called

upon to place ourselves with other beings as they address us--a matter continuing and open as ever to be resolved, and for us to resolve ourselves upon.

Enworldment, then, obtains in "vocative" relationship between ourselves and beings which in one manner or another "speak to us" and evoke our response, correlatively with the manner of heeding them in which we feel ourselves called upon.

The clarification of concern is the clarification of what it is to be called upon. This can only transpire in the course of our venturing to render what is called for. And to respond is, ineluctably, to venture some rendering of what is called for, in a situation in which we are as called upon; even if only as in responding to calls of nature in the most straightforward fashion. Our activity is itself by way of a continuing dialogue with those beings with which, and with whom, we have to do. Existence, then, takes place in the modes of meaning according to which anything at all can be unto us in a manner coordinate with our response.

Now it is a blessing, I'm sure, that we can re-present to ourselves the beings with which, and with whom, we have to do. That we can entertain them in a continuing manner and recognize them from time to time, that we can be cognizant of changes and project possibilities--all depend in part on a representational mode of meaning in which they are accommodated. However, in representing beings in the act of referring to them--perhaps particularly in conversing with one another about them--we are constantly liable to the illusion of getting at an order of beings in independence of the order of meaning. The meaning things assume cor-  
relatively with our representation of them then tends to preempt ultimacy. Another way of putting this might be to say that objectivity then tends to invest itself with absolute sovereignty as the stance we necessarily assume in responsibly ac-  
commodating ourselves to other beings.

Now objectivity is a stance in which we abstract from the evocative way in which the beings we represent to ourselves are present as holding concrete meaning for us. It is a kind of deliberate detachment from the mutuality of existence, though a sense of that mutuality with the beings we are thus considering may well persist, and is further implicitly presumed in the address of thinking and speaking with other persons, or as in the presence of other persons, with reference to what is thrown into objective aspect. Still, the explicit rendering of meaning coordinate with the stance in objectivity abstracts from the mutuality of existence between oneself and the beings thus being taken into account. Likewise abstraction is made from the concern but for which we could not be called upon by anything to render what is called for with respect to it, even if that be in giving an objective account of it. Not that we are unconcerned in so far as we assume a task of objective inquiry, or in the act of representation. But the reflexivity of the concerned self is discounted, or suspended in its relevance with respect to the way things are being thought of, the way one is mindful of them, and the modes in which they may mean and lay claim upon us.

I have said that it is a blessing to be capable of such detachment. Perhaps we should add that beings not only permit it and lend themselves to it, but even call upon us "in their own right" in a way that we may meet in an objective rendering of their meaning--as decidedly called for. It is tempting, however, to interpret beings calling on us in their own right as something akin to a property in terms of which we might extend our account of them in objectively representing them to ourselves. And not finding any such quasi-property of things--naturally, for properties obtain vis-à-vis a consideration of beings in abstraction from their calling on us--what if we call concern to account as well, within the purview of representational judgment? Instead of holding by the reflexive attestation of concern as called upon, we then pose it in the aspect of an object of investigation,

whereupon it readily reduces to a factor of de facto significance--as disposition to deal with beings as we may happen to do. In some such fashion it is quite possible to estrange our thought from the "normative" character of the existence of which we actually partake, and even as we credit the normative force of objective inquiry as an undertaking.

The irony of such a gambit is compounded, however, in so far as we attempt to make objectivity "stand in" for responsibility, so to speak--perhaps on the supposition that by detaching consideration from concern we may divorce ourselves from what is peculiarly suspect in our make-up. For aren't our biases and prejudices rooted in concern? And if so, can't we avoid the risk of arbitrariness by being determinedly "objective," permitting ourselves holidays of "subjectivity," as it were, only in so far as nothing serious is at issue?

The only thing is--this attempted objectivization of responsibility and the subjectivization of concern, even in our seriousness, seem to go hand in hand. To consider things in abstraction from concern and pose them for consideration "in themselves" implies no distortion in the life of concern. But to articulate consideration alone on the meaning things explicitly hold for us through representing them in abstraction from concern is to abdicate the position of concern as pivotal for the way things can mean in so far as it is their meaning we act upon. The fundamental actuality of the relationship in which we stand with the beings we consider is missed in preoccupation with these beings in their evident actuality. Not that the life of concern is thereby suspended; no, it is preoccupied--naively and uncritically riveted on things. It becomes more a way in which beings are taken for granted, whether favoringly, disfavoringly, or indifferently, instead of a way in which we may find ourselves as called upon by beings in an address coordinate with reflexively sensitized concern. The more we tend to tacit disavowal of the life of concern as at the heart of responsibility, the more we



actually refuse to take that life on ourselves thoughtfully, for all the risk, the doubt, the ambiguity and confusion attendant upon it. To this extent we seal ourselves off from the possibility of a knowing participation in the world, in mutual existence with other beings.

If maturity and depth of life are open to us, it would not seem that there is anything assured about them--either as a matter of course or through attainment. They seem to hinge on the sense of something radical about being in the world, on which the possibility of decisive meaning in existence would depend, if only we might somehow accommodate ourselves to whatever may lie "at the root of the matter."

And that is the pivotal point: Our being in the world is a radical, a rooted mode of being even as it is also a being unto other beings in mutual existence with them. Therefore we and our relationship with them stand under qualification through the radicalization of concern. Now the way in which this matter dawns on us seems to be twofold: It is essentially a reflexive realization of ourselves as rooted and responding upon "that which is given from the root," and at the same time it is a realization of beings responded to in the meaning they hold on the strength of that which we respond upon. Coming to a reflexive sense of ourselves as rooted, deriving, and so as "depending on," is therefore implicated in awareness of other beings as derivative and dependent in the very meaning and being in which we are able to affirm them. To know and to act with respect to other beings out of radical concern is to know ourselves and them as derivative in the received power upon which they can be affirmed in their being and meaning. In becoming able so to affirm them we become confirmed with them according to the essential character of a mutual existence: coderivation in that being in the world which we come to share in with them.

This is no closed or finished affair; rather, it seems open, determinable,

and inexhaustible; but nonetheless there is a wholeness about it, for in the way it works out finitude receives defining--as a dependent order. As being in the world finite beings are in principle embraced,--all. To be as a finite being is, as it were, to call for a place in the world. And to be truly known as a finite being is to be found as belonging in the world, happening in concurrence with the self-discovery of the knowing agent. Finitude is the condition in which we come knowingly to share with other beings through dependent participation with them in the world. Their entering into the composition of a world in which we share with them is none other than the meaning they come to assume in coordination with our agency, under the condition of finitude: in dependency, that is, on a world-constituting principle underlying concern itself.

The crucial factor, then, is the sense of world and meaning as bound up with . . . , as depending on . . . an "absolute determinant," which dawns on us, not in the manner of a being--to which or to whom we might direct our attention, but reflexively, as underlying our very selfhood--animating, sustaining, supporting and binding us over into indissoluble bond with beings to which and to whom our attention can be directed. Our receiving from the root is thus coordinate with our receptivity toward beings encountered, enabling of us in our capacity to meet them, and grounding of us in the relationship in which these beings tend to enter into a meaning in which they are established, even as we become able to act upon the power animating us and participate in that establishment. The spontaneity of concern, in so far as we are reflexively-attentively responsive in this manner, is not sporadic; for it partakes of the essential continuity of life, under a governing simplicity. That is the simplicity of spirit--as it is given, in all manner of incarnate ways, coming right down to the everyday, whatever the walk of life in which we may happen to be engaged.

As in-spirited we stand forth from that which comes to us from the root

of concern as decisive and enabling power; we stand forth into relationship with other beings. Our responsiveness is "ek-static" as reflexively grounded; but it is also and at once evoked in the call and claim upon us with which these beings speak to our concern. Thus the power on which we reflexively depend and the beings of the world become co-articulate in and for our decisive mode of response. It is as if that power gave them voice and us hearing in the unity of a univocal event.

We are thus transpropriated in concern, or rather as concerned, both by that in which we are grounded in our response, and unto those beings so received and responded to. The events of our lives permitting such an interpretation are preeminently world-events, in which we discover ourselves reflexively-attentively with other beings as conjointly create. But such events--disclosive of the fundamental meaning of being in the world--only seem really known to us as we willingly give ourselves in them unto the beings we encounter--on the strength of that which makes this possible.

It is from the love that comes to us as reflexively given that we become truly concerned with beings occupying our attention, feeling no less than the fittingness of their call as a claim upon us; not as a claim inherent in them or conferred by us, but as intrinsic to their mode of being in the world with us. Their claim is, as it were, substantiated in that which discovers itself to us reflexively as grounding ourselves. It is by virtue of love as thus coming to us that we are able to receive other beings into our concentrated, undivided, undistracted attention. "Love" as naming our mode of concern in attending to them is reflexively grounded in love as coming to us. The latter, love as fore-given, is also fore-giving of ourselves. It transpropriates us into its own "image." This cannot be known as a process. For it happens at the heart of our own agency and intelligence as the principle of their animation: We know love in its unambiguous essence as gracing us.

By the measure of love as coming to us in such a way as to make us possible in the essence of our selfhood and our being in the world, we know ourselves with other beings as incapable of Inherent reality. Not only can no being embody reality in itself; there can be no being through which reality can be appropriated. For reality is established only through dependent participation in realization. "The one thing needful to the fullness of being in the world" nothing in the world can contain. In this sense we can know the non-self-sufficiency of finitude in principle. Therefore, the more decisively the gift of being in the world is disclosed as such, the more inseparably and contrapuntally are interwoven the emptiness and the fullness of the world. But the emptiness of the world is the very condition of its fullness.

Thus the testimony of the naturally austere, of the desolate and the destitute is perhaps especially proximate to love.

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#### A Fresh Start

When our symposium was coming up, I could not help but feel that Plato had set us a model for such an occasion--that we too should speak freely and give rein to our reflections, agree to drink moderately and dismiss the flute-girl. And then I fell to thinking about Socrates' speech in the Symposium, not only because it embodied so much of interest on love and moved me to want to concentrate on love, but also because there seemed something impeccably exemplary in its style revolving around the figure of Diotima. Her role in that speech gives such admirable expression to the fact that where love is concerned it is appropriate to depict even Socrates as in need of instruction. And if it is of love in its essence that we would hope to hear, isn't there something appropriate in hearing of it from a speaker who is himself giving report of what he has listeningly learned, and learned subject to reproof for his own laggard understanding?

You can imagine the quandary I was placed in. I felt desperately in need of such instruction; yet who or what would serve as my Diotima? And if I did not find her, might I not inadvertently cast someone or something in her role, by way of a darkened and even oracular imitation of the way wisdom might come to men?

Fortunately, my quandary was temporarily relieved before our symposium took place. In conversation with my attractive companion it occurred to me that for all the prevalence of ambiguous love in ambivalence with violence, one would nevertheless depend on love transcending ambiguity and ambivalence for the measure of genuine clarity and depth of understanding one might hope to bring to bear on love-and-violence. There was something about the way this cue came to me which reminded me of Diotima, but instead of reflecting about it, I laughed, and then I waived the old woman from my thoughts as if she represented nothing more than a grace note of Plato's literary genius. With this pat conclusion I proceeded from my cue and wrote a discussion of love.

But I fear I paid for the cavalier gesture. When something is in question and one does not agree to live with it this way, that it may appear foolish fortifies the fiat by which it can be dismissed from mind. My musing on Diotima had appeared to me foolish. But the fact is that Diotima remained in question for me. Therefore when I refused her further place in my thoughts she permitted me to fall victim, all unawares, of the most naive question I might possibly have entertained of her. For the truth is that upon returning from our symposium I took up a kind of search, as if the question were: "Does Diotima exist?" For, seeking a certain way of being instructed on love, I sought it as an extant source of instruction.

That gives one a lot of ground to cover. I turned again to Plato and to other works of his; then to St. Augustine and Meister Eckhart. I sought in the

Gospel according to St. John and in the letters of St. Paul. I ranged through old haunts in Spinoza and stopped off, too, with Kant. I consulted the Bhagavad Gita and certain Buddhist writings once more. Nor did I neglect either Shakespeare or works in depth psychology which had previously arrested me, all with their bearing on love. There were the contemporary philosophers, too, men like Heidegger and Marcel, Buber and Tillich, who have reflected deeply on love; and they could not be left out of account. All of these sources were so compellingly relevant to what I wanted to discuss. It was only natural that I tried to take off from things that one or another of these authors or works have to say. Yet the upshot of these efforts both dismayed and astonished me. My failures brought Diotima to mind again. And it was as if the very authors whom I had been consulting suddenly spoke to one effect: "Not until you have found what Diotima means for yourself will our works lend themselves to being drawn into your discussion of love." And I could perceive with many of them as with Plato, that something had happened to them to loosen their tongues and to give them a certain right to speak. But what could be the equivalent of that for me?

It was an exasperating situation, and I confess that at that juncture my thoughts took the wind from a direction diametrically opposite to the polarity of unambiguous love. If one is in the midst of some kind of bondage, very well, why not face up to it and take love-and-violence as one's theme? That proved to be pitiful indeed, for in a frame of mind akin to violence not only does the actuality of violence loom so large, it also seems so inextricably interwoven with whatever one could mean by love, that one can no longer believe in love. To what animus then may one not become a prey?

In an impasse at last recognized as such, I took stock. My trouble started from something in Plato's style that had caught hold of me, and if it had led to some ridiculous business about Diotima and a series of frustrated efforts, what then? I still stood in need of whatever it might be that Diotima

suggests. I let my mind play over the matter, listening more intently to Socrates' speech, and letting the style interweave with what is expressly said. The voice of Diotima speaks from intimacy with love and reasons against taking love to be a god; for it has to do with standing in need. Yet neither is love simply on a mortal plane. Diotima advises Socrates to consider love in a kind of mediative capacity, intermediate between the divine and the mortal, conveying the prayers and sacrifices of mortals to the gods, and the commands and replies of the gods to men. Therefore it is through love as interpreted by Diotima, but not through love made into a god, or inflected in some other fashion, that we open ourselves to the divine and are receptive of the divine. Could it be, then, that Diotima personifies a condition of not hopelessly missing the meaning of love, but therefore of divinity and mortality vis-à-vis one another? But if so, in what way could that be a matter of style?

At that precise point I happened to read over Alcibiades' speech, and it struck me then and there: "Why that speech too satisfies the condition of style which Diotima peculiarly personifies in Socrates speech!"

How?

Well, in a way it seems as simple as that Alcibiades is talking, but really Alcibiades now; and if by the aid of wine, still, far more soberly than would be the custom of Alcibiades sober. And notice how what he has to say comes forth as a kind of testimony wrung from him, as if he were acknowledging the deliverance of a level or depth of experience, if you will, into which no man extends proprietary rights. Alcibiades too tells a tale at his own expense, even as Socrates has done; and because it is in each instance a genuine tale genuinely told the atmosphere of the occasion is most cheerful and clear.

What I have to say now of love involves in some measure the telling of a tale.

Some thirty-four years ago music and reflective literature began to open up for me: both of them, and together. Each seemed to draw me on in the same way and to refer me time and again to the other, as if they somehow complemented one another in speaking to the same condition, yet in such a way that neither obviated the need for the other. I think I felt that condition simply as the one we must all be in, but also as qualified in a certain defining way: as a condition admitting of some kind of essential transcendence in which alone it could be realized and the truth of it be found. And from that time forth I have not been able to trust in the grasp of anything as real except as it carried the suggestion of participating in a transcendence through which realization somehow may obtain. Such a persuasion must carry a heavy burden of reflective criticism, for it does not concede that what it means to be real is just the same thing as what it means to be actual. And by the same token such a persuasion can have no assured recourse by which to keep to its bearings or clarify itself. On its own terms it is exposed to doubt.

Since I still credit the persuasion to which I allude, I would like to distinguish it in its youthful inception from what seems to be frequently passed off as "the idealism of youth." To be sure there is a note of aspiration in it, but of aspiration to share in our actual condition as taken up into that transcendence in which the actual might be realized. The sense of reality which thus came over me at the time consolidated in the direction of an affirmation of actual beings which could be fundamental and decisive: In short, my intuition was to the effect that the reality of actual beings themselves could not be an arbitrary matter. From this it would follow, not that they are of diminished importance, but that the condition or conditions of their standing and importance require to be discovered through an appropriate participation in the fulfillment thereof. The discovery of beings in their rightful importance thus became my fundamental concern. I could not suppose that to know them in reality could mean any less



than that.

The tutors from whom I chiefly derived such a sense of reality during those earliest years of reflective struggle were composers, among them very prominently Handel and Bach, Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. They taught me to believe in reality as a dynamic order that would make sense, and not to accede to less. And they disciplined me in accordance with a spirit in which I could sense my own existence and power of action as an essentially derivative affair: For one is animated; and one does not animate himself. I knew of this, as it seemed to me, no less surely through the testimony of their music than through the power rising up in me as immediately received. There was that, then, in the music to which I listened which accorded with the way in which I was able to hear it, so that the essence of the event was a kind of confirmation in dialogue. There was the characteristic sense that there could be no mistake about what is happening, however at a loss one might be to render the ramifications of such events in their import for reflection. It does not seem so very different from the way people in love with each other may experience from each other the confirmation of what it is that they are in. The possibilities of promise and betrayal seem to arise from therein, brought to concentration and radiating forth to embrace even unknown reaches of time and space.

In speaking of this time when music was so central in my life, I should remark on a telling ambiguity which cropped up in that relationship: Music as I had come to know it was good; yet at times I also tended to use it in the sense of leaning on it to do something for me, as it were. And the same ambiguity crept into my relationship with things of the natural order in the places where I dwelt. It was the same tremulous creature falteringly turning this way and that, whatever his concern might be lighting upon, seizing upon what attracted and getting stuck. But it was most noticeable with music that it would refuse

to comply with the passionate craving I sometimes brought to it; for in such instances I was not infrequently forced to recognize that I was simply missing the hang of it, and that in place of the sense it had made to me something in the last analysis vacuous was taking place. Fortunately these occurrences did not lead me to hold the music suspect, and I kept coming back to it, sometimes at any rate with more aptness and discretion. And so I began to distinguish in reflection too between that kind of using things one has found good in which their goodness tends to be lost even while they may remain stimulating or gratifying after a fashion, and the vein in which goodness may flow with undiminished freshness, as in works of Mozart themselves. Indeed those very works spoke to me with incomparable lucidity of a lightness of heart that can offer no affront to the miseries of life, since it is not contrary thereto, but gentle to lift them up with respect and with care, and to bind over all moments of life into a preserving and persevering way which is true to them, that flows and dances, is tractable and disciplined, quick to bind and to release.

Right alert, alive, centered in the silence in which it may be heard, there, whence it comes and into which it returns, there in the silence that reigns, the measure of unknowing, there music carried me, to leave me, listening still. I might have then known, but did not, how the music to which I attended for so long--as if there were no direction in it not reverting upon itself--nevertheless gently, and never in a declared manner, was preparing me for a leave-taking. Yet every great work in some measure really heard tended to culminate beyond itself in that palpable silence into which it would carry, searching one's readiness to follow.

Thus it is as if through binding me by their music my tutors had wanted to hold me toward an eventual release. And so they schooled and schooled me in the mode of listening attention which they wished me to bring even to the events

and relationships of every day.

Henceforward actual existence began gradually to assume the character of a vocative situation, in which I could know that I was at a loss except insofar as I came to locate myself in the manner of a being who is called upon--in relation with beings occurring in the manner of address. In such concurrence, thus sometimes able to respond to beings in consonance with their mode of address, it has seemed that they and I were conjoined in the mutual relevance of a being unto one another through which I might be sharing with them in something like a real world. The situation--actual existence--in its vocative character thus seems open to participation, and by the same token permissive of refusal.