

## Poor Oscar

## Or Twice About Love

### Part II. Chapter 10:

#### **Lord Douglas' Reasons**

This is not talked about in court. It is never talked about. It is not even written about in books.

About that lack of love can be an affection as strong as love. Giving the same ecstasies, the same bliss. But no one wants to accept it. The affection even hasn't got a name. L a c k of love! As if it were only a question of lack. Of an empty place. Of nothingness. Of indifference.

Whatever you may call it – it's great.

Breaking up, this hell for the one who loves – what a flight into brightness it can be for the one who doesn't. And if one made a calculation of pleasure and pain, as that old cynic Bentham suggested once, who knows if it wouldn't do justice for the one who doesn't love? Wouldn't the power of his joy, his relief in this divine moment of final liberation turn the scales in his favour? Wouldn't all the suffering of this deceived mongrel, chased out into freezing cold – the man who loved – turn out to be nothing in comparison to the happiness of shutting the door before the mongrel, happiness of returning to the warmth of one's flat, into quiet and freedom?

They don't understand that, fools. They pretend not to understand. The stinking stuffy air of love on one hand – and clean, cool, crystal freedom on another. The whirr of wings, carrying us upon heights, sharpness of sight, breathing full breath, flight up to the very God! What else is lack of love? But people will always pity a chased out dog instead of honouring the one who drove it out. Pretenders. Hypocrites. Liars.

Did Lord Douglas' happiness, when he threw out the door that intrusive, intolerable, flea-bitten dog – his love for himself – erase all the dog's sufferings before the Highest Judge? The shock the dog experienced? Its betrayed trust? Terrified eyes, which cannot believe, and a whining by the door, and straying in frozen lanes with a drawn-in injured paw wounded by stones, and searching for remains of food in garbage bins, and whimpering in

sleep, and dying a long death on some refuse heap? It sounds appalling. And yet!

After all, it was Christ who told people to reject those who trust us, hate those who love us – and follow him. *Whichever of you does not hate your mother and your father...* and so on and so on. And t h e y tell themselves that that is a metathesis, a rhetoric figure, that Christ did not demand hate. T h e y pity Wilde, condemn Douglas and still call themselves Christians!

This trial is a struggle between Christianity and paganism. Between Christ and the society. No one can see it, no one knows it, but Lord Douglas, Christ's only ally, the only Christian.

And one thing more.

The torture of putting up with unreturned love to you. That terrible boredom. Those fetters.

Maybe at some time you gave up to an illusion. Maybe at some time one said something careless. From pity, or because someone was playing the violin, you drank too much, it was twilight, it was dark, the moon was shining, you had trouble, you were in bad shape, doesn't matter: do you have to suffer all your life because of this? By Jove, no one does this way! Everyone withdraws, everyone leaves – everyone except freaks and people of no character. Everybody throws persistent, humble, fawning dogs out into freezing cold; everyone, even those who used to be dogs, who had also been thrown out, who well remember frost, emptiness, pain in injured paw, wandering round the bins; everyone! Because it is unbearable! Being loved IS UNBEARABLE, why can't someone finally say it?

Those naive tricks to extract our interest. Those naive show-offs: look how wonderful I am! Why don't you love me?

Those boring letters, composed for weeks, corrected and rewritten dozens of times, always too long, letters which you don't read, do you: you just glance to know what its all about and you put it away with a yawn. In vain, those beautiful, phrases, shocking curses, well-aimed reproaches – and tail-wagging, and hand-licking, and devoted gaze. Again, that flea-ridden mongrel, that boredom: when will he finally get lost?

And in all – how dares he?

He doesn't fit in with us. Humiliates us. Makes us ridiculous.

With a Siberian hound we looked better. Unless it gained weight.

That boring pleading.

That irritating memory, so different than ours: they caught us in our weak moment, took us by surprise, wheedled a meeting out of us, and again they start their: - Do you remember how long it is since we met each other? (Who would remember that: it

seems it were yesterday). - Since June 5, six weeks and two days! Christ Almighty. Alright then: an intelligent person knows what these weeks (and two days more) were for the one who loves. A medieval torture, sitting in a death cell, fear, a prayer, our presence in mind at each moment, in each second, from waking up till falling asleep (and possibly even in dreams), eternal waiting, trembling at the sight of the postman, heart stopping at every ring or knock on the door... let's say we know that, but so what? Its no reason to give up. To give up our soul to loss. Someone suffers, so what? Suffers because of us, not our fault? Because fault, there is never any. Sometimes there really isn't: we never offered even a scrap of hope, didn't let touch us, we put it clearly, and now we have to give in only because someone is SUFFERING SO TERRIBLY? So let him suffer, damn it, but in quiet! Let him not bother us! Sometimes there is some blame, maybe the highest judge could see a blame in this: we spared our body, we made them fall in love with our love confessions, called somebody our kitten, puppy, happiness, angel, salvation, the universe and Holy Trinity, we swore we had never had experienced anything like this before, we swore it was forever, we fell on our knees and submitted us to slavery... but it's not our fault that someone took this differently, and made it an excuse to bore us stiff later on. Because other's love is boring and this is the worst in it. By Jove, how boring it is!

You can't even sympathise with someone who bores us so terribly. You're more likely to sympathise with a stranger whose wallet was stolen on a bus. Because he's no threat to us.

And they who love us are not only boring: they are dangerous. Devil knows what will come to their mind. Like Oscar with this letter of his. Like Ross with his revenge for the harm done to Oscar. Just like those who come with a gun, with a knife, with poison. Really, if one thinks about it, to refuse love is heroic.

And one thing more. Nobody can see it. In refusing love there is greatness.

In this desperate defence of one's independence and pride.

In this rejection of any pity. Stinking, fatal pity.

You don't listen to someone's moaning and pleading. You disregard someone who crawls before us and humiliates, weeping and threatening with a suicide, pleading for a week, a day, a moment of our life. You refuse even that one moment. You slam the door. Wind, night, stars. A breath to the bottom of lungs, with whole body, with whole soul. Finally we're alone! Free, proud with honour saved. All ways are now open to us. All world's opportunities. Anyone who has experienced such a moment will never pity the feeble one who's dying out of love. Body out of stone, soul out of light, thoughts

sharp as a blade, ascending to the heights over that whine, mumble, bed of misery...

This is great! If only the world would finally pay honour to such greatness...

It will not. It's too hypocritical.

If only it understood.

It won't.

Love on one hand, freedom on another: is the account of profits and losses really obvious?

For them it is.

For you too.

And this is why they'll never forgive you.