On Casual / On Courage / On Devotion

I

An entrance: it begins as an intertwining of limbs; the adjacency offers a chance for coalescence. Depth of feeling, intensity, branching extension. There is nothing marked out forward, nothing marked out backward—at its most amorphous and most *forgetful* this emergent relation is at its highest state; to plan out the progression of the familiar series: friendship, dating, relationship, marriage, etc., or to have the invasion of any past grievances—such expectations and recollections spoil it! As to say, the beginning should be *the* feeling, the always-beginning-feeling; to feel as much as possible, do as much as possible.

II

The phrase 'let's keep things casual' attempts to clarify away always-beginning-feeling, to solidify it into a usual common state; while aloof casual is a space created by bated breath, as opposed to the constant happening of always-beginning-feeling. Clarify into what? What is 'casual?' It is a muddled, purportedly relaxed space. Perhaps this is its appeal, relation made to be at one's convenience, the middle-ground for loungers, for relishing in nonspecific *fun*. The relief: "*I know* (?) *what this* is." Here, in this room, a backdoor is created and one may walk out meekishly at any time. The highest emotional peaks and the lowest, dirtiest troughs; it's casual, so don't worry your head about it.

Its constraint is less obvious as its free roaming style is adept at disengagement; you might say it is as 'unrestrained' as quitting one job and moving into another—how free! Its constraint, in fact, is that one must deny themselves a depth of feeling; a feeling may not be this, it may only be that. Moreover, it is not to pass a certain point; overextension is its greatest potential conflict, the easiest route to its dissolution. *Am I feeling too much for something casual?* Casualness, or to play it cool: it is the luxury of handholding without intensity or extension. Casual attempts to answer the question: how might I isolate fun? To pull out only the fun of it? This settles into an awkward compromise. The compromise morphs into always-denial. That always-beginning-feeling, the flood animated by the first extension, is lost to the door casualness has installed. When the time comes for disengagement—as casual is only a forestalling, a standstill, or an upkeep for the eventual disengagement (that bated breath must be expelled!)—it pretends to reset the stage. Yet affects are as they are.

III

We disavow the always-beginning-feeling while rescuing controlled semblances of it, that little bit we enjoy. Casual is just one of these controlled semblances. Always-beginning-feeling retracts, it is reduced to familiar options we *remember* and *expect*: casual, relationship, friendship, etc. One might say that casual is Splenda (synthetic) taken as sugar (organic, origin)—casual is distinguished from a traditional 'real' relationship, the sugar—this for not quite 'this,' but even 'this' cannot stand. For what is a relationship if not its own series of restraints on feeling? Another controlled semblance?

"What is sugar anyway? *Perhaps it's best to forget it*." That is the always-beginning-feeling—to not even know what one is tasting, thinking kaleidoscopically! It is not the isolation of enjoyment or fun, neither does it revisit traditional relationship formalities; it is intensity, extension, variety splitting and branching. Hardly an ascetic suggestion, always-beginning-feeling is a deluge, a different kind of excess.

IV

I would rather have the room completely destroyed, to have to begin again, than have someone simply disengage. The greatest joy is to construct anew.

V

The appeal to casualness is related to the way in which our space-time is structured. It is impossible to gift time, offer time 'freely.' The consequences of doing so are pinned to the top of our heads; such and such thing must be done first, I must be at work first, I must write first, I must read first, I must… etc. Death is interlacing such thoughts; every moment is a small death, an exposure of the finite. *Prioritization*, or the forced mechanical assessment and arrangement of what is most important in the face of small death and the prevention of outright death in general relations which encourage it.

To be bold enough to offer time one must offer their death *without the thought of consequences*. Unprioritized. Derrida will not allow me to forget this. A gift does not think in terms of afterwards or exchanges, it is done, thrust, thrusted again, continually—impossible. I die

small deaths to be with you/us. Always-beginning-feeling, a coalescing stream onward, extended onward; I stroke your shoulder, I experience *real-time*, I feel *alive!*

(And in fact, if one is to spend time at all, why spend it casually? What are the elements of that casual time if not a series of cowardly *necrotic* blunders? A choking of the stream? A prevention of feeling? Time unrealized?)

VI

Always-beginning-feeling (depth of feeling, extension, intensity, forget, amorphousness), the offering of time (death), is altogether *courage*. The fluid beads together, coalescence. Motion is courageous. It only occurs as courageous roaring confluence. In every relation, the extent and confluence of courage relates to depth of feeling. Why deny feeling? Why stop it from doing as much as it can do? Let it be a torrent!

VII

I want to feel as much as possible, extend as much as possible. I want to forget as much as possible. Always-beginning-feeling. Courage. I call this *devotion*. It is not attachment (merely one to the other, the other to one), but relation (confluence of courage, always-beginning-feeling, the branching torrent). Always-beginning-feeling is incomparable to any familiar ways of attachment; this has not been about a love or an articulation of a way to make new 'committed' love, but an expression of a happening which while it occurs cannot even be remarked upon. It

happens, relates in and through confluence, and the deluge does not cease unless met by familiar, remembered, and expected forces which wish to cut it off and *make it* familiar.

A feeling which forgets all other ways to be, always beginning.

VIII

With all that being said, I do not exempt myself from cowardice!