

She fantasised about him, because he symbolised her freedom to be all the things she wanted to be but was not. From her mother's perspective these were negative traits. She hadn't considered that maybe if she wished to be these things she should just be them. Something about being that person without being loved seemed tragic, as if only with the chaotic beautiful terrifying sweet glare of love could the scene she desired to be in be correctly lit.

She fantasised about him, because she had spent many years reprimanding herself when fantasising about men. Reprimanding herself for continuing what at the time felt a cliché, something false, reprimanding herself for not being whole enough. But, without some kind of acknowledgement of a lack, some kind of room, some small empty cupboard or gaping unfurnished hall we will not, and do not, fall in love. The desire to complete such a wholeness creates aggravated trauma or shallow lies. So she lounged in her own lack, swam in the empty pool and shivered ecstatically in the large cold hall.

We hope that if she had to give up the fantasy she would. That she would rub out, or rip apart, those neuro pathways, built on fictions stolen from places she would never be able to reference, which relied wholly on the unfulfillment of the situation (not that in love we are ever continuously fulfilled. Enough is not enough¹.) That she would, better yet, take her lack and her fantasy and serve it on a platter or wear it as her dress at their first dinner. We would hope that she would not be ashamed, and that she would not mistake the man sitting opposite her as real flesh with its own fantasies, lacks, thoughts, past. We would hope that that would become her new fantasy. To listen, to receive, to collide and attempt to achieve the unachievable; to, despite the unequivocal truth of our own solitude, know something about another person.

¹ "I feel frustrated; for me, enough means not enough" Barthes, Roland. *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*. , 1978.