Bacon: Of Love

The stage is more beholding to love, than the life of man. For as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief; sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury. 舞台上的爱情生活比生活中的爱情要美好得多。因为在舞台上，爱情只是喜剧和悲剧的素材，而在人生中，爱情却常常招来不幸。它有时像那位诱惑人的魔女(1)，有时又象那位复仇的女神(2)。

You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remained, either ancient or recent) there is not one, that hath been transported to the mad degree of love: which shows that great spirits, and great business, do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. 你可以看到，一切真正伟大的人物（无论是古人、今人，只要是其英名永铭于人类记忆中的），没有一个是因爱情而发狂的，而这些完成伟大的事业的人中只有罗马的安东尼和克劳底亚是例外(3)。前者本性就好色荒淫，然而后者却是足智多谋的人。这说明爱情不仅会占领开旷坦阔的胸怀，有时也能闯入壁垒森严的心灵----假如你抵御不严的话。 It is a poor saying of Epicurus Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus; as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven, and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye; which was given him for higher purposes. 埃辟克拉斯(4)曾说过一句笨话：“人生不过是一座大戏台。”似乎本应努力追求高尚事业的人类，却只应象玩偶般地逢场作戏。虽然爱情的奴隶并不同于那班只顾吃喝的禽兽，但毕竟也只是眼目色相的奴隶，而上帝赐人以眼睛本来是有更高尚的用途的。

It is a strange thing, to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature, and value of things, by this; that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole, is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, that the arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self; certainly the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself, as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, That it is impossible to love, and to be wise. Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved; but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciproque. For it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded, either with the reciproque, or with an inward and secret contempt. 过度的爱情追求，必然会降低人本身的价值。例如，只有在爱情中，才总是需要那种浮夸陷媚的词令。而在其他场合，同样的词令只能招人耻笑。古人有一句名言： “最大的奉承，人总是留给自己的。”----只有对情人的奉承要算例外。因为甚至最骄傲的人，也甘愿在情人面前自轻自贱。所以古人说得好：“就是神在爱情中也难保持聪明。”情人的这种弱点不仅在外人眼中是明显的，就是在被追求者的眼中也会很明显----除非她（他）也在追求他（她）。所以，爱情的代价就是如此，不能得到回爱，就会得到一种深藏于心的轻蔑，这是一条永真的定律。 By how much the more, men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself! As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them: that he that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas. For whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom. 由此可见，人们应当十分警惕这种感情。因为它不但会使人丧失其他，而且可以使人丧失自己本身。甚至其他方面的损失，古诗人早告诉我们，那追求海伦的人，是放弃了财富和智慧的(5)。

This passion hath his floods, in very times of weakness; which are great prosperity, and great adversity; though this latter hath been less observed: both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best, who if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarters; and sever it wholly from their serious affairs, and actions, of life; for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men, that they can no ways be true to their own ends. 当人心最软弱的时候，爱情最容易入侵，那就是当人得意春风，忘乎所以和处境窘困，孤独凄零的时候，虽然后者未必能得到爱情。人在这样的时候最急于跳入爱情的火焰中，由此可见，“爱情”实在是“愚蠢”的儿子。但有一些人，即使心中有了爱，仍能约束它，使它不妨碍重大的事业。因为爱情一旦干扰情绪，就会阻碍人坚定地奔向既定的目标。

I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think, it is but as they are given to wine; for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. 我不懂是什么缘故，使许多军人更容易堕入情网，也许这正像他们嗜爱饮酒一样，是因为危险的生活更需要欢乐的补偿。

There is in man's nature, a secret inclination and motion, towards love of others, which if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable; as it is seen sometime in friars. 人心中可能普遍具有一种博爱倾向，若不集中于某个专一的对象身上，就必然施之于更广泛的大众，使他成为仁善的人，像有的僧侣那样。

Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth, and embaseth it. 夫妻的爱，使人类繁衍。朋友的爱，给人以帮助。但那荒淫纵欲的爱，却只会使人堕落毁灭。