

However, it is not only unrequited love that leads frequently to a tragic end; for requited love more frequently leads to unhappiness than to happiness. This is because its demands often so severely clash with the personal welfare of the lover concerned as to undermine it, since the demands are incompatible with the lover's other circumstances, and in consequence destroy the plans of life built upon them. Further, love frequently runs counter not only to external circumstances but to the individuality itself, for it may fling itself upon a person who, apart from the relation of sex, may become hateful, despicable, nay, even repulsive. As the will of the species, however, is so very much stronger than that of the individual, the lover shuts his eyes to all objectionable qualities, overlooks everything, ignores all, and unites himself for ever to the object of his passion. He is so completely blinded by this illusion that as soon as the will of the species is accomplished the illusion vanishes and leaves in its place a hateful companion for life. From this it is obvious why we often see very intelligent, nay, distinguished men married to dragons and she-devils, and why we cannot understand how it was possible for them to make such a choice. Accordingly, the ancients represented _Amor_ as blind. In fact, it is possible for a lover to clearly recognise and be bitterly conscious of horrid defects in his _fiancée's_ disposition and character--defects which promise him a life of misery--and yet for him not to be filled with fear:

"I ask not, I care not,

If guilt's in thy heart;

I know that I love thee,

Whatever thou art."