

CHAPTER 2 – LOVE AS A TWOFOLD TENDENCY OF WILL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Is love merely something we suffer, or is it related in some way to our agency? Does love merely have an object, or does it also have aims? The answer to these questions depends upon what kind of attitude love is. David Velleman has argued that love has no aims, and thus no systematic connection with what we do. As he puts it, “I venture to suggest that love is essentially an attitude toward the beloved himself but not toward any result at all.”⁸⁷ As the title of Velleman’s article suggests, he views love as a kind of “moral emotion” that does not necessarily bear on our action. That love is an emotion is, of course, also a popular view outside the philosophical world. On this popular view love is understood primarily as a certain euphoric feeling about the beloved. The paradigm case of this attitude is being or falling “in love” with a romantic⁸⁸ partner.

⁸⁷ Velleman, “Love as a Moral Emotion,” 354.

⁸⁸ My use of ‘romantic’ is not meant to evoke directly the Romantic period of history or the notion of love owing to that period. Rather, I mean simply to evoke the ordinary contemporary English sense of the term, which, I take it, describes something related to love involving a sexual interest. Of course, insofar as this ordinary English concept has been influenced by notions from the Romantic period, there will be some complicated indirect connection between “romantic love” and “Romantic love.” Nevertheless, for my purposes, that connection is not important.

Thomas Aquinas would likely take issue with the picture of love sketched above—both with Velleman’s philosophical version and with the less refined popular account. While he would affirm that love is, in some sense, something that “happens to us,” and is thus what he would call a “passion,” he would also suggest that love for people is essentially tied to two aims—the good of the beloved and union with him—and so bears on our agency. Furthermore, he would likely claim that the kind of emotion often popularly associated with love is not constitutive of love, but rather is a typical effect of love under certain circumstances.

My aim in this and the next chapter will be to flesh out and defend a broadly Thomist view of love like this. Specifically, my aim will be to defend a general account of human love—love by people and for people. Examples of the attitude I have in mind include love for our romantic partners, our friends, our family members, and even strangers. In Chapter Two I will offer an account of the attitudes that partially constitute love. In Chapter Three I will offer an account of love’s constitutive causes, or operative grounds, as I will call them. As a whole, the account will be part of my larger effort to lay the philosophical groundwork for addressing the two aims of the dissertation. While I take my account of love to be broadly Thomist, I follow Aquinas more closely at certain points than at others.

In Chapter Two, I will begin with Aquinas’s view that love consists of a twofold orientation, or tendency, of the will toward the good of the beloved and toward union with him—a twofold conditional tendency to intend or desire particular aspects of the beloved’s good and union with him, under appropriate circumstances. I will reject the most plausible alternative views, namely that love itself is a kind of occurrent desire,⁸⁹ intention,⁹⁰ or emotion.⁹¹ I reject the

⁸⁹ Harry Frankfurt and Eleonore Stump hold that love consists of certain desires. See Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*, chap. 2. and Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*, chap. 5.

⁹⁰ Niko Kolodny characterizes the motivational aspects of love as “standing intentions.” See Kolodny, “Love as Valuing a Relationship,” 151.

⁹¹ As noted, from the title of his famous paper David Velleman seems to view love as a kind of emotion, though he does not elaborate the sense in which he thinks it is. See Velleman, “Love as a Moral Emotion.”

views that love is occurrent desire or emotion on identical grounds: both views make love to consist, at least in part, in transient attitudes that are incompatible with our sense that love may persist even when affect and occurrent motivation do not. Instead, with Aquinas, I will claim that a range of desires and emotions are typical downstream *effects* of love that do not constitute love itself. I also reject the view that love consists of intentions since intentions aim only at ends whereas certain aspects of love's two targets could not be our ends. For example, love might include a motivating attitude toward a friend's promotion (as part of her good) or toward union with a deceased family member, even though we might be unable to effect such states of affairs. Given that aspects of love's two targets could not be our ends, it seems better to think of love as a possible *source* of intentions, rather than as a kind of intention itself.

Without further delay, then, I will turn to Aquinas's view that love is a twofold motivational tendency toward the good of the beloved and union with him.

2.2 AQUINAS ON APPETITES AND "COMPLACENCY"

According to Aquinas, "Love is something pertaining to the appetite; since good is the object of both."⁹² Here, by 'appetite' Aquinas means a tendency toward activity. Appetites exhibited by human beings include the "sensory"⁹³ and the "rational" appetites, both of which operate in response to features of the world represented as good.⁹⁴ The sensory appetite is the tendency toward activity shared by all animals with the capacity for perception and is something

⁹² *Summa Theologica* (ST) I-II 26.1. Unless otherwise noted translations of the ST will be adapted from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols. (New York: Ave Maria Press, 1981).

⁹³ The traditional way of translating *appetitus sensitivus* is "sensitive appetite." However, I will employ "sensory appetite" since I think it better captures the meaning of the term.

⁹⁴ He also thinks there is something called a "natural" appetite, which exists in objects that have a characteristic sort of activity but do not have, in themselves, a capacity for representing features of the world. Such appetites operate in certain inanimate objects, including the objects involved in the nonconscious biological sustenance of the human body (e.g., digestion, blood circulation, etc.). I set aside discussion of this natural appetite, and the corresponding "natural love," for simplicity.

like instinct. He calls it the “sensory” appetite because it operates in response to sensory representations of goodness. We apprehend with our senses certain things that appear good to us—especially in a bodily, or pleasure-making sense—and our sensory appetite inclines us toward them. So, for example, when a person is tempted by a piece of chocolate cake, Aquinas would likely say that the sensory appetite is at least the first appetite engaged by the visual or olfactory apprehension of the cake.

The “rational” appetite responds not to the mere sensory apprehension of an object, but rather to the rational apprehension of an object with the intellect—a capacity that Aquinas thinks animals do not have. He also refers to the rational appetite as the “will.”⁹⁵ According to Aquinas, the object of the will is some state of affairs that is understood (by the intellect) as falling under the universal GOOD. In contrast, the object of the sensory appetite is grasped merely as a particular good.⁹⁶ Importantly, Aquinas thinks humans always act from the inclinations of the will and never merely from the inclinations of the sensory appetite. So, for example, when we are tempted by the piece of chocolate cake and set about eating it, while our sensory faculties first apprehended it, and while our sensory appetite likely first inclined toward it, if we act to eat it then, according to Aquinas, it is also the case that our rational faculties judged the cake to be good (either on the basis of the sensory evidence, or some piece of reasoning), that our will inclined toward it, and that this rational inclination was what produced our action.⁹⁷ Thus, we

⁹⁵ ST I-II 26.1.

⁹⁶ We must be careful here since Aquinas’s account is quite subtle. It seems to be his view that the higher animals with whom we share a sensory appetite are capable of apprehending universals, but that they are not capable of apprehending them *as such*. So, for example, the sensory appetite of a sheep is repelled by all individuals of the kind wolf, and so there is a sense in which a sheep understands the wolf as a member of a feared kind. However, Aquinas denies that the sheep grasps the kind “wolf” itself, as a kind. Here I follow the interpretation of Paul Hoffman. See Paul Hoffman, “Reasons, Causes, and Inclinations,” in *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 164–165.

⁹⁷ As Hoffman puts it, passions like sensory love “cannot move or incline the will directly because the passions themselves are not the direct object of the will; they move or incline the will indirectly by impeding reason—either by distracting it or by focusing its attention upon the object of the passion.” See *Ibid.*, 163.

might say that, on Aquinas's picture, any activity inspired by the sensory appetite is filtered through the will, since the will is the only thing that can bring about human action.

Love, then, on Aquinas's view—whether “sensory love” or “rational love”—is a certain condition of the appetite which he calls the appetite's “very complacency in good.”⁹⁸ By ‘complacency,’ Aquinas means something like an orientation of the appetite toward the thing apprehended as good.⁹⁹ The lover apprehends something as good, fitting, or appropriate to her, and then her appetite responds by orienting toward the object—the “appetible object,” as Aquinas sometimes calls it. The orientation of the sensory appetite toward an object Aquinas calls “sensory love,” while the orientation of the rational appetite toward an object he calls “rational love.”

He also refers to love as “the principle of movement towards the end loved.”¹⁰⁰ Here, by ‘end’ Aquinas simply means the good that is loved. The sort of “movement” that Aquinas has in mind is the activity of the appetite that is initiated by its orientation toward the beloved object. This activity seems to include both a desire for the object,¹⁰¹ and, in the case of the will, any resulting action. Thus, as the principle—i.e., the origin or cause—of such movement, love, on Aquinas's view, is distinct from such movement. However, importantly, Aquinas also thinks there is a sense in which love *itself* may be described as a certain movement of the will. He writes, “Although love does not denote the movement of the appetite in tending towards the appetible object, yet it denotes that movement whereby the appetite is changed by the appetible object, so as to have complacency therein.”¹⁰² Thus, since love denotes the change in the appetite

⁹⁸ ST I-II 26.1.

⁹⁹ He also describes “complacency” as a sort of “adaptation” of the appetite to the beloved object (ST I-II 26.2), and as “connaturalness” (i.e., a sharing of nature) between lover and beloved in the case of natural love (ST I-II 26.1).

¹⁰⁰ ST I-II 26.1.

¹⁰¹ ST I-II 26.2.

¹⁰² ST I-II 26.2, ad 3.

wrought by the beloved object—i.e., the appetite’s orientation toward it—love itself is also described as a kind of “movement” of the will. Furthermore, since the beloved object acts upon the appetite in bringing about the change or movement that is love Aquinas calls love a passion.¹⁰³

According to Aquinas, at the most general level there are two kinds of love: “love of concupiscence” and “love of friendship.” As he puts it in ST I-II 26.4, “...the movement of love has a twofold tendency: towards the good which a person wishes to someone,—to herself or to another, and towards that to which she wishes some good.”¹⁰⁴ His aim here seems to be to distinguish the kind of love that we typically have for inanimate objects, such as wine, from the kind of love we may have for people. He calls the first the “love of concupiscence” and the second the “love of friendship.” That he has this distinction in mind seems evident from the *sed contra* for ST I-II 26.4, which suggests (following Aristotle’s example¹⁰⁵) that we do not have friendship with wine, and thus that the love we have for wine must be different from the love we have for friends.¹⁰⁶ According to Aquinas, the distinction between our love of concupiscence for things like wine and our love of friendship for people consists in the fact that when we love wine we love it as an instrumental good whereas when we love people we typically love them as final goods. Put another way, Aquinas thinks that, in the best cases of love, when we love a person we typically love him because of who he is—for himself—and not something further he can get us, such as pleasure or some other benefit. In contrast, when we love something like wine we love it

¹⁰³ ST I-II 26.2. Strictly speaking, sensory love is a passion, while rational love is a passion “in a wider and extended sense.”

¹⁰⁴ ST I-II 26.4.

¹⁰⁵ *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII.2.

¹⁰⁶ Of course, the *sed contra* does not always reflect Aquinas’s own view. However, in this case it seems to. He confirms the point in his discussion of charity at ST II-II 23.1. He takes charity to be both a kind of love and a kind of friendship. His discussion there suggests that we do not have such love for inanimate objects like wine, or even for animals such as horses. Rather, such love is typical of love for people. His point seems secure for inanimate objects. However, one might question his view that we cannot have friendship of some kind with animals (e.g., dogs).

only because it is a means to some further good (e.g., our pleasure). As he puts it in the quotation at the beginning of this paragraph, when we love an inanimate object with the love of concupiscence, we love it as a good that we wish (or will) *for* someone that we love with a love of friendship. So, I might love wine with the love of concupiscence as a good for myself, whom I love with the love of friendship. Importantly, we could also love a person merely with the love of concupiscence, though it seems Aquinas thinks such cases are not typical. In such a case we would love the person in an exclusively self-serving way, viewing him as an instrument of our pleasure or use. In such cases I am tempted to say that we would treat the person as a thing, “objectifying” him. Certain cases of lust come to mind as examples of such love.¹⁰⁷ In any case, Aquinas’s central claim in the passage quoted above is that the “movement” that constitutes love—i.e., the orientation of the appetite toward the beloved—comes in the two kinds described.

This picture is complicated by the fact that Aquinas seems to think that both kinds of love are instantiated when we have the love of friendship for a person. In that case, we love the *person* with the love of friendship and the *good of the person* with the love of concupiscence. If this is correct, Aquinas thinks that when we love someone as a friend—i.e., for who he is, not what he can get us—the appetite is oriented in two directions and we actually exhibit two distinct loves. This seems to be the sense of Aquinas’s claim (noted above) that “the movement of love [i.e., the movement that constitutes love] has a twofold tendency.” The view I am attributing to Aquinas, here, is confirmed in his discussion of charity, which he takes to be both a kind of love and a kind of friendship. There he writes, “According to the Philosopher (*Ethic.* viii. 2, 3), not every love has the character of friendship, but that love which is together with benevolence, when, to wit, we love someone so as to wish good to him.”¹⁰⁸ Here he offers another

¹⁰⁷ Some might hesitate to call such cases love at all. However, it also seems reasonable to think of them as Aquinas does—cases of defective love.

¹⁰⁸ ST II-II 23.1.

distinguishing mark of the love of friendship: it is accompanied by benevolence, which may be understood as an orientation of the will toward the good of the beloved friend, i.e., a love of concupiscence. Thus, it seems Aquinas thinks that if we have love of friendship for someone, then we also experience the love of concupiscence for that person's good. Similarly, Aquinas's view seems to imply that whenever we have love of concupiscence for something, we will also experience a love of friendship. As noted above, if I love wine or another person with the love of concupiscence, then I apprehend that object as an instrumental good for myself, whom I love with the love of friendship. Thus, Aquinas's view suggests that the two kinds of love always come in pairs, though the objects of each are typically different for any given case.¹⁰⁹

In the remainder of the chapter, then, I will defend what I take to be Aquinas's view that love is a "twofold" orientation or tendency of the appetite¹¹⁰—toward the beloved himself and toward his good. Because my aim is to give an account of love *by* and *for* human beings, and since it does not necessarily seem natural for contemporary English speakers to think of Aquinas's love of concupiscence for a person as genuine love, my focus will be on Aquinas's love of friendship. Thus, I will speak (less precisely than Aquinas) of love as having one object (the beloved person) and two "targets" toward which the appetite is oriented (the beloved, or "union" with the beloved as I will suggest shortly, and his good). Furthermore, my focus will be love in the rational appetite—i.e., the will—though I will also make use of Aquinas's notions of

¹⁰⁹ Aquinas's view of charity provides further evidence of this point. In II-II 27.2 Aquinas argues that goodwill toward a person (i.e., benevolence or love of concupiscence for the good of the person) is not the same as love. He writes, "...love, considered as an act of charity, includes goodwill, but such dilection or love adds union of affections," which (as I will explain shortly) is an orientation of the will toward the beloved person himself. By "act" of charity, Aquinas does not mean an outward action inspired by charity, but rather the movement or complacency of the appetite wrought by the appetible object, i.e., love itself. Thus, his point here is that the kind of love he calls charity consists of two orientations of the will—toward the beloved himself, and toward his good.

¹¹⁰ It may seem odd to say that love is a "tendency" of an appetite, since I have claimed that the appetite itself is a tendency. In other words, it seems I would have love be a tendency of a tendency, which might seem strange. However, this is, in fact, what I mean. Love is a kind of specification of the appetite. The appetite is a tendency toward the good in general while love is a more specific tendency toward an instantiation of the good. Thus, love is a specific orientation, inclination, or tendency of the more general tendency which is the appetite.

the sensory appetite and sensory love at certain points. In due course I will say more clearly what I mean by an “orientation” or “tendency” of the appetite. However, first I will clarify the two targets of love and their relation to each other.

2.3 FIRST TARGET: THE GOOD OF THE BELOVED

One target toward which love orients the lover is the good of, or for, the beloved person. Thus, I will say that love partially consists in a tendency to realize the beloved’s good. This good might include general over-arching outcomes in the beloved’s life—such as his health and happiness—as well as particular specifications of such outcomes, such as proper mental and physical development, sufficient financial resources, quality healthcare, close friendships, success at work, a vibrant religious life, or a preponderance of certain positive emotions, such as joy or contentment.

Eleonore Stump has argued that, on Aquinas’s view, this first of love’s tendencies (which she thinks are desires) is toward what is *in fact* the good of the beloved and not merely toward what the lover *takes* the beloved’s good to be. According to Stump, then, Aquinas would think that a lover who tends toward what she *thinks* is a person’s good but that is not *in fact* his good could not really love the person, even if all the other conditions of love were met. For example, she writes,

If what a person desires as good for another is not in fact the beloved’s good by [an] objective measure, then, to one degree or another, the lover does not love him, whatever she may believe about herself. A parent who desires to beat her child because she supposes that beating is a good for the child is wrong in that supposition; and her desire to beat her child does not therefore count as a desire of love, whatever the parent may believe of herself.¹¹¹

Importantly, Stump qualifies her position by claiming that if a lover makes a mistake about the means to a genuine good for a person, then the lover may still count as loving the person. For

¹¹¹ Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*, 94.

example, if a mother desires a certain drug for her child on the mistaken belief that it will bring about his health when in fact it will harm him, according to Stump her desire may still count toward loving her child. What is necessary for genuine love, says Stump, is that the lover tend toward an end that is partly constitutive of the beloved's objective good, such as health.¹¹²

However, Stump's proposal seems problematic for several reasons. First, the example of the parent that beats her child "because she supposes that beating is a good for the child" seems highly implausible. Stump's idea seems to be that such a parent thinks that being beaten *itself* is a final end that partially constitutes the good of the child. But, this kind of case seems extremely implausible. To see the implausibility, contrast the case with two others that seem far more plausible: a parent that beats her child because she mistakenly views the beating as a means to some genuinely good end for the child (e.g., discipline), and a parent that beats her child because she enjoys the sense of power that beating the child gives her. In the first of these cases, of course, there is no real difference from the harmful drug case—both are cases of taking a mistaken means to a genuinely good end, and so the relevant tendency in that case could count as love on Stump's view.¹¹³ In the second case, the inclination to beat the child would not count as love, but it would fail to do so not because of a mistake about which ends partially constitute the child's good, but rather because the child's good shows up nowhere in the parent's motivation. Rather, her motive is her own corrupt pleasure. Contrasted with these two more plausible cases—neither of which make Stump's point that a tendency toward things mistakenly viewed as part of a person's good could not count toward love—Stump's beating case seems very strange: who, in their right mind, would ever think that being beaten was a final end partially constitutive of a person's good? Given the implausibility of the case, Stump's view seems unsupported.

¹¹² Ibid., 94–95.

¹¹³ Indeed, she says as much in her footnote 62.

Nevertheless, despite its implausibility, the case raises a further problem for Stump's view: if she is willing to grant that mistakes about the *means* to the beloved's genuine good are compatible with love, why not also think that mistakes about the final ends constituting the beloved's good are, at least in principle, also compatible with love? For example, while it seems almost impossible to imagine, if a parent really did think that a child's being beaten was partially constitutive of his good—not as a means to some further end, but as a final end—and so beat him for that reason, I see no reason to doubt that the parent might genuinely love her child. Of course, the behavior would still be terrible and something we would want to put a stop to. But, it does seem possible that it could express a mistaken sort of love. Another more plausible example will suggest my point more strongly. Suppose a parent is convinced that a high degree of material comfort is part of his child's good and so he sets about providing such comfort for her. However, suppose further that such comfort is actually corrupting for the child in various ways and is not part of her objective good. In this case, although the parent would be mistaken in his view of the human good, and thus would actually be harming his child, it seems obvious to me that the parent's activity could still count as loving. After all, he is acting toward the child in a way that he thinks accomplishes her genuine good, despite the fact that he is mistaken about the content of that good. Thus, it seems best to think that mistakes even about the final ends constituting the beloved's good are compatible with love.

The upshot of this discussion, then, is that Stump's view seems incorrect. She seems correct that love *does* target the beloved's objective good—after all, we go for what is *really* good for the ones we love, not what merely seems good for them. Nevertheless, as the example of the parent that desires great material comfort for his child suggests, it is also clear that genuine

love may be consistent with mistakes about what that objective good consists in, as well as mistakes about the means to that good.¹¹⁴

2.4 SECOND TARGET: UNION WITH THE BELOVED

Love's second tendency, according to Aquinas, is "towards that to which [the lover] wishes some good," i.e., toward the beloved person himself. Aquinas's idea here seems to be that the lover's appetite is oriented toward a certain relation to the beloved, which he calls "real union."¹¹⁵ This real union—or simply "union," as I will call it—is a target of love that is distinct from love itself. If conditions are right, then union will be an effect of love. In describing real union Aquinas suggests that it involves the "presence" of the beloved¹¹⁶ and he says that the lover and beloved seek "...to live together, to speak together, and be united together in other like things."¹¹⁷ From these textual hints we can sketch a picture of the beloved's union with the lover that has several elements.¹¹⁸ I take it that each of the elements contributes to making two people

¹¹⁴ My verdict here leaves open the question of whether Stump has the right interpretation of Aquinas. While I cannot engage the interpretive point in depth here, let it suffice to say that I think she also reads Aquinas incorrectly on this point. In his discussion of the will it seems very clear that although the will inclines toward the good as its object, Aquinas thinks this claim is consistent with errors about what that good consists in. As he puts it, "...in order that the will tend to anything, it is requisite, not that this be good in very truth, but that it be apprehended as good. Wherefore the Philosopher says (Phys. ii. 3) that *the end is a good, or an apparent good*" (ST I-II, 8.1, emphasis original). Consider further the following passage: "...sometimes the will tends to something which is apprehended as good, and yet is not really good..." (ST I-II, 13.5 ad 2). Insofar as rational love is simply an orientation of the will toward some good, it seems Aquinas would endorse not Stump's view but rather the kind of view I have supported. Obviously, to show this clearly would require much more discussion, so I set the question aside.

¹¹⁵ ST I-II, 28.1. That Aquinas has in mind a certain relation to the beloved is evident from his discussion of the final or ultimate end of human beings, happiness. He suggests that happiness as the final human end may be understood in two ways. In the primary sense it is the "attainment or possession" of God, i.e., standing in a certain relationship of union with God. This, Aquinas says, is the "very essence of happiness." However, in a second and somewhat derivative sense, *God himself* may also be understood as the happiness of humans since God is its cause (ST I-II 3.1). Thus, when Aquinas says that love inclines toward the beloved person himself, he also means that love inclines toward a certain union with the beloved.

¹¹⁶ ST I-II, 28.1.

¹¹⁷ ST I-II, 28.1, ad 2.

¹¹⁸ My account below is informed by Eleonore Stump's insightful account of union in Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*, chap. 6. Her treatment of attentiveness and awareness was particularly helpful to me.

—lover and beloved—into a kind of “unity” or, as Robert Nozick might put it, a “we,”¹¹⁹ rather than merely two individuals.¹²⁰

First, union includes a pattern of mutual sharing of certain aspects of one’s mental life with the other, such as thoughts or feelings that matter to oneself. Thus, the lover seeks to share such aspects of her mental life with the beloved, and she seeks that the beloved reciprocally share with her. By referring to a “pattern” of mutual sharing, I do not mean that two people constantly share the relevant aspects of their mental lives with each other. Rather, I mean that two people have moments when they share things with each other, followed by (typically longer) periods when they do not. The point is that there are moments of such sharing in the ongoing interaction between the people. The *history* of such activity is part of the pattern.

Of course, mutual sharing comes in many different kinds. In some unions, lover and beloved might share thoughts about a mutually valued hobby and not much more. In others, they might share thoughts about personal relationships or work activity but they might not express feelings to one another. In still others they might express some of their feelings about certain topics to one another, but share little about their political or religious views. Moreover, the mode of sharing or expression is not limited to verbal communication. Insofar as physical affection can be a means of communication, it too can be an expression of one’s thoughts and feelings. In particular, acts of affection often communicate one’s thoughts and feelings *about the loved one*. For example, when we blow a kiss to someone, it communicates our attitude toward him. Depending on the relational context, it might tell him that we love him (or at least care about him), and that we want to be physically affectionate toward him, despite being separated in some way (e.g., being on the train as it pulls away from the station). In each of these cases, the mutual

¹¹⁹ Robert Nozick, “Love’s Bond,” in *The Examined Life: Philosophical Meditations* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1989), 70ff.

¹²⁰ I take it as obvious that the two parties to a union *also* remain distinct individuals. In my view, ink has needlessly been spilled in the literature over this issue.

sharing—and so the union—would be different according to the subject matter, mode of communication, and freedom with which the two were willing to share. Typically, different kinds of sharing are appropriate to different kinds of relationships.

Second, union includes a pattern of mutual attentiveness. Mutual attentiveness is a state in which the lover is attentive to, or focuses attention on, the beloved, and the beloved is likewise attentive to the lover. Such attention involves both a persistent perception of the other and an effort to understand her. When one is attentive to another, one typically looks at him or listens to him, and one tries to grasp how he is. As for the case of mutual sharing, when I refer to a “pattern” of mutual attentiveness, I mean that there are moments of attentiveness in the ongoing interaction between two people and not that the two are constantly attentive to each other. The history of mutual attentiveness is also part of the pattern. In some unions, physical touch and affection are modes of attentiveness to the other. Just as being attentive typically involves visual and aural perception of the other, it can also involve perception of the other through touch. Sexual activity is a particularly focused and intense example of mutual attentiveness that (typically) involves physical touch.

The examples of the previous paragraph suggest that mutual attentiveness, like mutual sharing, comes in different kinds. Love for a young child might incline one to a mutual attentiveness instantiated in snuggling and reading a book together before bed. Love for an adult friend would typically incline toward mutual attentiveness of a different sort, perhaps including conversation and a hug before parting. Similarly, the mutual attentiveness sought out of love for one’s parent is different from that sought out of love for one’s romantic partner. Like different modes of mutual sharing, different modes of mutual attentiveness are appropriate to different kinds of relationships. Within the bounds of what is appropriate to various relationships, modes of mutual attentiveness also vary quite appropriately by personality and preference. For example,

some people might be more physically affectionate than others, and so their modes of attentiveness to those they love—their children, their friends, their romantic partners—would likely reflect this fact.

Third, in addition to mutual sharing and mutual attentiveness, the union toward which a lover tends includes a certain mutual knowledge or understanding, i.e., a state in which the lover knows the beloved and the beloved knows the lover. Such knowledge typically includes (among other things) knowledge of a person’s values, her likes and dislikes, her aims and goals, aspects of her history, as well as her current state of mind and body. Two people achieve this aspect of union when they “get” or understand each other in such ways. The sort of mutual knowledge toward which a lover tends might also have a physical aspect to it. This point is most evident in unions involving sexual intimacy. As suggested by traditional translations of certain biblical passages, to have sexual relations with someone can be, in part, to *know* him in a particular way.¹²¹ It can be to have a kind of knowledge of his body and physicality. This sort of sexual knowledge might be one aspect of the knowledge toward which a lover tends in tending toward union with the beloved, though, again, only in certain kinds of love.

Fourth, union includes mutual love. Of course, the lover already loves the beloved—this is what it is to be a lover. So, in practice, what the lover tends toward in tending toward union is that her love be requited—that the beloved love her in return. Thus, if union between lover and beloved is achieved, both parties also have a tendency toward the good of the other. Moreover, as a relationship between lover and beloved emerges and matures, and as the lover becomes increasingly committed to the beloved, part of the union that the lover seeks with the beloved includes the beloved’s reciprocal commitment to the lover. In Chapter Three (Section 3.3) I will argue that this sort of mutual commitment sought by the lover is a kind of mutual love in which

¹²¹ For example, the King James Version (KJV) of Genesis 4.1 states, “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain.” Similarly, after the angel has announced to Mary that she will bear a child, she responds by saying, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1.34, KJV).

love's two tendencies are particularly firm or fixed. Given that I think such commitment is a kind of love, I do not view reciprocal commitment as an element of union wholly distinct from the reciprocal love toward which the lover tends.

Fifth and finally, the union toward which a lover tends includes a kind of mutual awareness. For example, suppose the lover sits alone in one room while the beloved sits alone in another. Each room has a hidden video camera and microphone focused on the person and a screen that allows each to see and hear the other by video. However, neither person is aware that she, herself, has a camera focused on her, or that the other person can see and hear her. In this case, there could be a kind of mutual attentiveness between lover and beloved—each might persistently perceive the other and try to understand how it is with the other—but it would not be the union toward which a lover tends. What is missing, here, is an *awareness* that the beloved is attentive to the lover. In addition to an awareness of their mutual attentiveness, the lover seeks a state in which each party is aware that the other is willing to share relevant aspects of her mental life, in which each party is aware that the each knows the other in relevant ways, and in which each party is aware of the other's love or commitment to her.

Given this account of union, we may understand joint activities engaged in by lover and beloved as having at least three relations to union. First, we may understand joint activity as an *instantiation* of union. In ideal cases, when we cook a meal, or go for a walk, work on a project, celebrate, or have a conversation with someone we love, we are attentive to each other, we share part of our mental life with each other, and we are mutually aware of these facts. Thus, such activity is an instantiation of these aspects of union. Joint activity that instantiates union may also be understood as an expression of love and commitment, insofar as union is one of love's targets. Similarly, joint activity that serves the good of the beloved—e.g., helping him move to a new apartment—can also be understood as an expression of love, and of love's tendency toward the

beloved's good in particular. But, insofar as mutual love partially constitutes union, such joint activity may also be understood, in the second place, as an *expression* of union, since it is an expression of the mutual love that partially constitutes union. Third, we may understand joint activity such as conversation as a means to knowledge of the other, and thus as a *means* to union. We share our thoughts or feelings, we describe what we have been doing, we talk about our aims and goals, we tell stories about our past, and in so doing we learn about each other and gain the knowledge that is partially constitutive of union.

2.5 EXCURSUS: AQUINAS ON “UNION OF AFFECTION”

Before leaving the topic of union, a final point of historical interpretation is in order. Specifically, to avoid confusion it is important to distinguish the “real union” I have described above from what Aquinas calls the “union of affection.” He says of the union of affection that “love itself is this union or bond.”¹²² Thus, the term ‘union of affection’ seems to be another way in which Aquinas talks about love itself. To understand this “union of affection” we must say slightly more about how he thinks love comes about. (I will treat this topic in further depth in Chapter Three.) As noted above, according to Aquinas love arises in the appetite in response to features of the world apprehended as good. Indeed, Aquinas views the apprehended good as a kind of cause of love—i.e., that in response to which love arises or is sustained. As he puts it, “good is the cause of love, as being its object. But good is not the object of the appetite, except as apprehended. And therefore love demands some apprehension of the good that is loved.”¹²³ In context, it is clear that Aquinas thinks a person must apprehend the object as good *in a particular sense* if she is to love it. Specifically, the respect in which the beloved is apprehended as good

¹²² ST I-II, 28.1.

¹²³ ST I-II, 27.2.

must also be a respect in which the beloved “fits with” or is “like” the lover,¹²⁴ such that the lover views the beloved as “one” with her.

The likeness or oneness that Aquinas has in mind, here, may be of two sorts. First, it may be that the lover recognizes in the beloved a valuable feature that she has in common with him—e.g., moral virtue, wit, family origin, or a history of interaction—and thus that she recognizes the beloved as like her, or one with her, in this respect.¹²⁵ Second, it may be that the lover recognizes in the beloved a valuable feature that she would like to have. Aquinas describes this as the apprehension of a likeness or oneness of “potentiality,” since the lover seeks what the beloved has, and thus seeks to possess it in actuality, or in “act.” As Aquinas puts it, “potentiality bears a *resemblance* to its act; since act is contained, in a manner, in the potentiality itself.”¹²⁶ According to Aquinas, then, we might say that love is sustained in response to (or depends upon) a recognized *capacity* for real union with the beloved, either because he has some good feature that the lover also has, or because he has some good feature that the lover would like to have.¹²⁷ In response to this recognized capacity for real union, the lover’s appetite orients toward real union with the beloved. Put another way, the lover recognizes the beloved as “another self”—a mirror of either who the lover actually is, or who the lover would like to be—and sets about integrating the beloved with the self to some degree, via real union with him. Hence love’s tendency toward real union.

Now, the orientation of the appetite toward the beloved’s capacity for real union is what Aquinas calls the “union of affection.”¹²⁸ Evidently, he views it as a kind of union in itself.

¹²⁴ See ST I-II, 27.3.

¹²⁵ In Aquinas’s language, the two share a single Aristotelian “form”, and so are “one in that form.” See ST I-II, 27.3.

¹²⁶ ST I-II, 27.3, emphasis mine.

¹²⁷ I will take up whether this account is adequate in Chapter Three.

¹²⁸ See ST I-II, 28.1 and II-II, 27.2.

Obviously, then, “union of affection” is just another way of talking about the “complacency” of the appetite in good, or about love itself—the orientation of the appetite toward an object apprehended as good.

2.6 THE RELATION BETWEEN LOVE’S TARGETS

That love tends toward two targets—the good of the beloved and union with him—raises the question of the relationship between them. Under many circumstances, union with the beloved is simply part of the beloved’s good toward which the lover tends.¹²⁹ For example, a loving father’s union with his child is typically part of the child’s good toward which he tends. However, there are also circumstances in which union with the beloved is not part of the good of the beloved, in which case the two targets conflict. Shakespeare’s *Pericles* provides a dramatic example. Pericles and his pregnant wife, Thaisa, are sailing for Tyre so that Pericles may inherit the throne of Tyre. However, a storm whips up and the tumult sends Thaisa into labor. Although her daughter, Marina, is delivered safely at sea, Thaisa dies in childbirth. Distraught, Pericles heads for the nearest coastline out of fear that his newborn might not survive the remainder of the trip to Tyre without nursing. Once ashore, Pericles leaves Marina with Cleon, a friend, whom he charges with raising his daughter until he can return for her.¹³⁰ Here, Pericles’s union with Marina is incompatible with her good: if he seeks union with her she will die. In Pericles’s case, the incompatibility of Marina’s good and union with her is only temporary: Pericles can eventually return for her. However, it is also easy to imagine cases in which union is permanently incompatible with the good of the beloved, such as when a lover must give her life for the beloved’s sake. Such sacrifices are a common element of tragic drama.

¹²⁹ Stump makes this point. See Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*, 96.

¹³⁰ William Shakespeare, “Pericles,” in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, The Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1994), Act III, Scene 3.

From cases in which love's targets conflict it is evident that, in genuine love, the beloved's good has a certain priority over union with him. It seems patently unloving for a person to insist on realizing union with another despite the fact that such union is not part of the beloved's good. For example, it would be unloving for Pericles to insist that Marina remain with him on the ship despite the fact that she would die.

Importantly, the temporary or permanent incompatibility of union and the beloved's good need not imply that the lover ceases to *tend* toward both targets, and thus that the lover ceases to love the beloved. For example, Pericles may still tend toward union with Marina, even though such union is temporarily blocked. Thus, lovers may still love in such cases. It is just that the impossibility of realizing one of love's targets (union) will make them cases of frustrated love, to one degree or another.

Finally, the fact that the lover typically views union as part of the beloved's good does not mean we can collapse love's two tendencies into one tendency toward the good of the beloved. Why not? Because the lover must view union with the beloved not only as part of the beloved's good but also as a distinct target toward which she tends. If this were not the case, i.e., if the lover only viewed union with the beloved as the realization of part of the beloved's good, it seems the lover's tendency toward union with the beloved would be instrumental: the lover would tend toward union only as a means to, or part of, the beloved's good. But, this would be odd since it seems essential to love that the lover tends toward union as a good in its own right. Put another way, the lover tends toward union also as a good *for herself*—not just for the beloved—and as good *because of what it is*—not just because of what it might achieve (i.e., the beloved's good).¹³¹ My point, then, is that the two tendencies of love are distinct and essential constituents of love. The targets of these tendencies are both final goods at which the lover aims

¹³¹ Robert Adams makes a similar point. See Robert M. Adams, "Pure Love," in *The Virtue of Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 190.

—goods that she views as good because of what they are and not merely because of some further thing they achieve. That they are so is unchanged by the fact that the lover typically understands union with the beloved as *also* part of the beloved’s good.

2.7 LOVE IS NOT OCCURRENT DESIRE

Thus far, I have explained and tried to defend Aquinas’s view of the two targets toward which love tends: the good of the beloved and union with him. In this section I will begin to shift my focus to the nature of the specific tendencies or attitudes that a lover has toward these targets, which attitudes I take to partially constitute love.

A natural suggestion here would be to understand love as two *desires*—one for the good of the beloved, and one for union with the beloved.¹³² As noted above, Stump takes this view, which she attributes to Aquinas.¹³³ However, it seems quite common to love someone and yet fail to experience persistent desires of this sort. David Velleman raises an objection in this vein, as follows:

Certainly, love for my children leads me to promote their interests almost daily; yet when I think of other people I love—parents, brothers, friends, former teachers and students—I do not think of myself as an agent of their interests. I would of course do them a favor if asked, but in the absence of some such occasion for benefiting them, I have no continuing or recurring desire to do so.¹³⁴

¹³² Such a view would be consistent with certain views of romantic love in the psychological literature. For example, Acevedo et al. offer the following claims as part of their interpretation of a recent fMRI study of the neural correlates of long-term romantic love: “Recruitment of the mesolimbic dopamine system, which mediates reward and motivation, is consistent with notions of romantic love as a ‘desire for union with another’.” Bianca P. Acevedo et al., “Neural Correlates of Long-Term Intense Romantic Love,” *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 7, no. 2 (2012): 154. As noted in the introduction, Harry Frankfurt also holds that love consists of a complex of desires. See Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*, esp. ch. 2. However, it seems Frankfurt does not have in mind an attitude that is affective in any way. Rather, he seems to have in mind “volitional desire”, whereby all that is meant is an attitude that motivates action. No affective qualities are implied.

¹³³ Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*, Chapter 5. I doubt very strongly that Aquinas holds such a view, though it depends, of course, on exactly what Stump means by ‘desire’, which she does not explain. As noted above, according to Aquinas human love is, strictly speaking, a kind of orientation of the appetite toward the beloved object. As Aquinas sees it, desire (*cupiditas* or *desiderium*) may result from this orientation of the appetite, but it is a further downstream effect of love and not part of what constitutes love itself. See ST I-II 26.1, I-II 26.1 ad 2, 26.2, and 26.2 ad 3.

¹³⁴ Velleman, “Love as a Moral Emotion,” 353.

Before interpreting Velleman's objection, it is worth pausing and reflecting briefly on the notion of "desire", since it is often used in different ways. First, desires are typically motivational—they are generally understood as precursors and movers to action. Second, the notion "desire" may or may not imply some affect that accompanies its motivational character. For example, I might say that I "want," one day, to buy a house without implying that I experience some sort of affect or feeling toward that end. Such desires without affect are sometimes called "volitional desires" or "volitions." However, if I say that I want the piece of chocolate cake in front of me, or that I desire someone sexually, there is typically a certain affect associated with the basic motivational attitude I am referring to. Third, we can distinguish "occurrent" desires from "dispositional" or "standing" desires. Occurrent desires are desires that one *experiences* in some way, i.e., that are in the foreground of one's mental life. Dispositional or standing desires are desires that are typically latent, but that become occurrent under the right conditions (e.g., an occasion for benefiting someone you love). Thus, we might say that such desires are *dispositions* to desire in an occurrent sense. There may be both occurrent and standing volitional desires, and occurrent and standing affective desires: the two distinctions are orthogonal to each other.¹³⁵

Now, in the objection above I interpret Velleman as using the word 'desire' to refer to an occurrent desire, i.e., a desire that a person *experiences* as motivational. The desire does not seem to be a dispositional or standing desire, since his talk of a "recurring desire" would not make sense if that were his meaning. Whether he has in mind an affective or volitional desire does not seem clear and is likely unimportant to the objection.

Velleman's target here is an account on which love is (or "entails," as he puts it) a desire to *benefit* the beloved, which is different from the account I am entertaining, according to which love is, in part, a desire for *the good* of the beloved. Nevertheless, the basic worry remains the

¹³⁵ The notion of "desire" is very complicated and there is obviously much more that could be said. However, sustained discussion here would take me too far afield, so I set the issue aside.

same: insofar as there are many cases in which we fail to experience persistent desires of the relevant sort—either to benefit someone, or for her good—and yet in which we persistently love the person, it seems false that love partially consists in such desires. We might raise a parallel objection to the idea that love partially consists in an occurrent desire for union with the beloved: there are many cases in which we consistently love someone, and yet do not experience a consistent desire for union with him. Incidentally, Velleman’s objection seems to apply equally well to the view that love is a kind of occurrent emotion: insofar as we often consistently love people without consistently feeling any particular emotion, it seems love could not be a particular occurrent emotion.¹³⁶

2.8 LOVE IS NOT STANDING INTENTION

In response to this objection, a Thomist might shift to the view that love partially consists in two standing desires, or perhaps two standing intentions, rather than two occurrent desires. I will consider first the idea that love might consist in two standing intentions and return to the idea of love as standing desires in the next section. By ‘standing intention’ I mean an intention that is something like a policy or plan. On this picture, the objects of the standing intentions—the beloved’s good, and union with the beloved—would be understood as the lover’s *ends*. Standing intentions aimed at general ends like these do not issue in action until particular circumstances arise such that the general standing intentions are given particular content. For example, when your partner is out of town we may suppose that you continue to love him, and so that your general standing intention toward union with him would remain in place. However, since circumstances preclude spending time together (or even communicating, let us suppose), the standing intention would not necessarily issue in any particular action; rather, it might simply

¹³⁶ Interestingly, this point seems particularly worrying for Velleman since he, himself, holds the view that love is a “moral emotion”. However, it is not clear what he means by “emotion” from the paper, and so it is not clear that this objection would really cause problems for his view.

stand ready to produce action at some other time. When your partner returned and circumstances allowed, your general standing intention toward union with him might well be expressed through a more particular intention to do something together (e.g., to see a movie or to share a meal), followed by the relevant action. We can imagine parallel cases for the standing intention toward the good of the beloved: such a general intention does not issue in action unless circumstances arise in which beneficence is necessary. So, unless your partner needs something that you can provide, your standing intention toward her good will simply stand ready to produce action at another time. Niko Kolodny holds a view in the neighborhood of this proposal, whereby love partially consists of a standing intention to act in the beloved's interest, and a standing intention to act in the interests of the relationship between lover and beloved.¹³⁷

This kind of account would avoid Velleman's objection above, since standing intentions are not occurrent in the way that Velleman's notion of "desire" seems to suggest. Thus, if we do not constantly experience a desire for the good of and union with the people we love, that fact need not indicate that we lack the standing intentions of love. Of course, such an account would also be consistent with the idea that we *do* sometimes experience occurrent desires for the good of, or union with, the beloved—in general or particular ways. We might, then, speak of desires as possible but not necessary *effects* of the two general standing intentions that partially constitute love.¹³⁸

However, the account of love as standing intentions also seems problematic. The main problem centers around the idea that I cannot intend things that seem impossible for me to effect. For example, it might be part of my beloved's good to obtain a promotion at work, and yet there be nothing I could do to bring the promotion about. Nevertheless, my love for her involves some

¹³⁷ See Kolodny, "Love as Valuing a Relationship," 151.

¹³⁸ As noted above, Aquinas seems to think of the relation between love and desire in this way. See ST I-II 26.2 and 26.2 ad 3.

motivational tendency or attitude toward the promotion, since it is part of her good. Or, suppose someone I love is sick and there is nothing I can do to help her recover. Nevertheless, my love for her involves some motivational attitude toward her recovery. In such cases, our attitude could not be a standing intention, since the outcomes partially constituting her good—promotion or recovery—could not be our ends.

There are, of course, parallel cases in which aspects of union with the beloved are impossible to effect. For example, suppose my spouse of many years has severe dementia. Although I can still sit with her and experience her physical presence, she is no longer capable of union with me, since she cannot know me or be attentive to me in the ways partially constitutive of union. Nevertheless, if I love her I will still have some motivational attitude toward union with her. In this case, aspects of union with the beloved would be impossible for the lover to effect, and so it seems love could not partially consist in a standing intention toward those aspects of union with her, and so toward union in general.

Love for someone who has died is the most extreme case in this vein. Realizing union with a deceased person might seem entirely impossible, as might furthering his good in any way. Given Aquinas's view that love is a twofold tendency, and given that love for dead people seems possible—even for those who think realizing love's targets with respect to the deceased is impossible—it seems love cannot consist of standing intentions toward the good of and union with the beloved.

2.9 LOVE AS TWOFOLD TENDENCY OF WILL

In light of these objections, I claim with Aquinas that love partially consists neither in two occurrent desires nor in two standing intentions, but rather in an orientation or tendency of

the will¹³⁹ toward love's two targets.¹⁴⁰ More specifically, I take this tendency of will to be the source of a range of different attitudes sometimes associated with love, including occurrent desires, intentions, and emotions (the last of which which I will discuss in the next section). Thus, love has something of the character of a standing desire insofar as it gives rise to specific occurrent desires. But, it also has something of the character of a standing intention, since it also gives rise to specific intentions. In the end, then, it seems that love is neither standing desires nor standing intentions but a more basic orientation or tendency of the will distinct from them both.¹⁴¹

By calling love a “tendency” I mean to appropriate Aquinas's sense of this notion whereby to claim that something has a tendency is to claim that it performs some characteristic activity unless it is interfered with.¹⁴² So, to say that love is a tendency of the will is to say that love is a condition of the will such that, in the right circumstances, the will desires or intends in

¹³⁹ Strictly speaking, I take it that love could also be an orientation or tendency of the sensory appetite, though the account would have to be slightly different in that case. For example, I take it that the sensory appetite is not capable of intending things as the will is. Thus, for simplicity I will set aside the sensory appetite for the time being, though I will return to it in Chapter Three.

¹⁴⁰ Aquinas seems to hold the view that the lover's tendency toward the two targets is a kind of wish. See ST I-II 26.4. The verb there translated “wish”—*velle*—may be variously translated “wish”, “want”, or “will”. On Michael Sherwin's reading, this verb as used by Aquinas picks out the will's most primal activity. See Michael S. Sherwin, *By Knowledge & By Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 31. Although it is not clear that in ST I-II 26.4 by “*velle*” Aquinas means to include objects of willing that are impossible to achieve (as the view I advocate does), such a reading of Aquinas certainly seems plausible. For example, in ST I-II 13.5 ad 1 Aquinas contrasts the complete act of the will, which must be in respect of an object that is possible to achieve (i.e., a genuine end), with the incomplete act of the will, which he describes as follows: “But the incomplete act of the will is in respect of the impossible; and by some is called ‘velleity,’ because, to wit, one would will [*vellet*] such a thing, were it possible.” My idea, then, is that Aquinas holds the view that to love is to wish (*velle*) for two general objects, certain particular aspects of which may or may not be possible for the lover to bring about. As is evident from ST I-II 26.4, Aquinas attributes his view of love as wishes, ultimately, to Aristotle (*Rhetoric* ii.4).

¹⁴¹ This idea might seem frustrating to some readers, since I have not analyzed love in terms of particular attitudes that are part of our standard repertoire of psychological concepts. By calling love a “source” of intentions, desires, and emotions, you might say I've only *located* love with respect to these more familiar attitudes. However, this result does not necessarily suggest that my account is problematic. Indeed, I think instead that it suggests that the standard English repertoire of psychological concepts is inadequate for my task, and that the wider repertoire available to the medievals (or at least to Aquinas) is better suited to the job.

¹⁴² Here I draw on Peter Geach's reading of Aquinas's notion of a “tendency” in Peter Geach, “Aquinas,” in *Three Philosophers: Aristotle, Aquinas, Frege*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and Peter Geach (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1961), 101–109.

particular ways unless it is interfered with.¹⁴³ Importantly, the notion of something's having a tendency is not that it has a mere potentiality. As Peter Geach puts it, "A piece of soft wax in London has the potentiality of assuming any number of shapes, but it has no particular *tendency* to take, e.g., the shape of a Birmingham man's thumbprint."¹⁴⁴ Tendencies are more active than mere potentialities: they describe what a thing *does* in the absence of interference, not merely something that might *happen* to a thing under certain circumstances.¹⁴⁵

It will help to describe the two tendencies partially constitutive of love in more detail, including the conditions under which the relevant activity occurs. Consider first the tendency toward the beloved's good. This tendency amounts to a conditional tendency as follows: if (1) circumstances arise in which some aspect of the beloved's good is lacking or threatened, and (2) it seems possible for the lover to remedy the situation, and (3) it seems appropriate for the lover to do so, then the lover will gain a particular intention to do so. If condition (1) holds but condition (2) or, in some cases, condition (3), fails, then the lover will gain a particular desire to do so, but not an intention. This formulation requires further explanation.

First, according to (1), if the lover is to intend or desire some particular aspect of the beloved's good, it must be that the thing is either lacking or threatened. If there is no lack or threat, then the lover's general orientation toward the good of the beloved will simply stand in the background of the lover's mental life, ready to produce particular intentions or desires at another time. Second, according to (2), if the lover is to intend some particular aspect of the beloved's good, the lover must think it possible for her to effect it. If she does *not* think it

¹⁴³ What might interfere with the loving tendency of the will? Perhaps strong desires alien to the love, such as those associated with drug addiction or a powerful temptation.

¹⁴⁴ Geach, "Aquinas," 104, emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁵ This distinction between tendencies (which are active) and mere potentialities (which may be passive) also accounts for my preference for "tendency" over "disposition." It seems to me that "disposition" is ambiguous between an active sense resembling "tendency" and a passive sense resembling mere "potentiality." Windows have a disposition to break (or, perhaps more correctly, to *be* broken) under certain conditions, but they do not have an active tendency to do so.

possible for her to effect it, then her love will not give rise to an intention to do so; rather, it will simply produce a particular desire for the thing.

Finally, if we suppose that conditions (1) and (2) hold, then according to (3), if effecting the relevant aspect of the beloved's good seems all-things-considered appropriate to the lover, then she will intend it. However, if the lover does not deem it all-things-considered appropriate, then she may or may not intend it, depending on whether she suffers from weakness of will. I take the following two examples to be typical illustrations of what I have in mind here. Suppose it is genuinely part of your beloved's good that he obtain a promotion, and that the only way you could effect this promotion would be by blackmailing his boss. If you thought blackmailing his boss was *not*, all things considered, appropriate, then it seems likely that you would not intend to bring about the promotion. Rather, you would merely desire your beloved's promotion. Similarly, suppose your friend is at odds with his mother and that it would be a genuine aspect of his good to be reconciled to her. Suppose further that you could step in and smooth things over for them. Nevertheless, it might seem inappropriate for you to step in: you might think your friend should really patch things up himself.¹⁴⁶ In that case, despite your love for him, and despite the fact that you *could* effect the reconciliation, you likely *would* not intend or do it since you think it is inappropriate. Instead, your love for him would simply give rise to a particular desire for their reconciliation.

However, despite what I take to be the typical character of these examples, it seems quite possible that a lover might nevertheless intend the blackmail or intend the reconciliatory

¹⁴⁶ You might think this because it would be better for him—i.e., part of his good—if he patched things up himself. In that case, it would not be that some separate norm of appropriateness kept you from intervening, but rather that intervening would just not be part of his good. In that case, condition (2) would rule out your action: you would not really be able to bring about the beloved's good under the circumstances—or, at least, not his complete good. However, it could also be that you think he should patch things up himself because your intervening would be poking your nose too far into your friend's business—whether or not doing so is good for him. In that case, a distinct norm of appropriateness would keep you from intervening, i.e., condition (3) would rule out your action. I am thinking of the case according to the latter construal, rather than according to the former.

intervention even in the face of her judgments that such acts would be inappropriate. Such might be the case if the lover were weak of will.¹⁴⁷ Thus, condition (3) does not imply that if the relevant act does *not* seem all-things-considered appropriate to the lover that she will thereby fail to intend it, though this seems to me to be the typical case.

Importantly, I take the all-things-considered appropriateness criterion here to be subjective. In other words, I am not claiming that the intentions of love are contingent on the objective (e.g., moral) appropriateness of some act. Indeed, I think love can be at odds with objective norms of appropriateness, such as morality. For example, in some cases love might well drive someone to judge that blackmailing a boss is appropriate. And, it might well be that you find effecting your friend's reconciliation completely appropriate, and that your love motivates you to do it, even if such an act would not, in fact, be appropriate.

Love's tendency toward union with the beloved has a form that is parallel to the tendency toward his good. The orientation of the will toward union amounts to the following conditional tendency: if (1) an opportunity to effect or preserve some aspect of union with the beloved arises, and (2) it seems possible for the lover to act in the relevant way, and (3) it seems appropriate for the lover to do so, then the lover will gain a particular intention to do so. If condition (1) holds but condition (2) or, in some cases, condition (3) fails, then the lover will gain a particular desire to do so, but not an intention. If no opportunity arises (i.e., if condition (1) fails) then the general tendency toward union will simply remain in the background.

The appropriateness condition on intending some aspect of the beloved's good, or union with the beloved, suggests a typical way to distinguish kinds of love, namely, by the particular ends that it would be appropriate for a lover to intend and act for. These ends, and so kinds of love, typically vary with different kinds of relationships. So, while it might be inappropriate for you to step in and resolve your friend's familial conflict as an expression of your love, it might

¹⁴⁷ I owe this observation to Gavin Lawrence.

be perfectly appropriate for you to do something quite similar for your young child (say, in a conflict with his sister). This is because the portion of your young child's good that it is appropriate for you to make your end is much broader than that of your friend, given that your friend is an autonomous adult while your child is not. This is one way to distinguish parental love from love for a friend. Similarly, the particular end of intimate physical and sexual activity—indicative of a romantic relationship—distinguishes romantic love from other kinds of love, such as love for one's own children, one's own parents, or a mere friend or colleague. This end of intimate physical and sexual activity is a specification of love's general tendency toward union with the beloved and gives particular romantic content to that tendency.¹⁴⁸

To complete the explanation of love's two tendencies, consider again the case of love for a person who has died. According to my account, the lover would have a twofold orientation of the will: toward union with the beloved and toward the good of the beloved. In this case, the lover *might* think some sort of union with the beloved was still possible, or that his good was still possible to effect in some way. For example, the lover might think putting flowers at the beloved's grave was a way of preserving union with him, or that taking care of his surviving children was a way that she could further his good. In that case, the lover might intend such acts. However, as noted above, if the lover took it to be impossible to effect union or the good of the beloved in any way, then her love would not give rise to any intentions. However, her love might well give rise to certain particular desires from time to time. If the lover was somehow reminded of the deceased beloved, her love might produce a particular desire for particular aspects of union with him—to have a conversation with him, to embrace him, etc. Similarly, the general tendency of will toward the deceased beloved's good might sometimes give rise to certain particular desires. For example, if the deceased beloved were a parent, and if his still living child

¹⁴⁸ This approach to distinguishing kinds of love fits with traditional Greek distinctions between *philia*—love between friends—*eros*—typically, a love with sexual aims—and *storge*—a love born of familiarity, typified by parental love. See C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harvest/HBJ, 1960).

were getting married, one might desire that he could be alive to see the event because it would be part of his good. On this picture, then, particular intentions and desires may arise as a result of love's general tendencies of the will, but such particular intentions and desires do not, themselves, constitute love. Rather, it is the general orientation or tendency of the will toward the good of and union with the beloved that partially constitutes love.

2.10 LOVE AND EMOTION

As noted above, Velleman's objection to the view that love is a kind of occurrent desire seems to apply also to the view that love is a kind of occurrent emotion: it seems we often consistently love people without persistently experiencing any *particular* feeling or feelings.¹⁴⁹ Thus, I reject the view that love, itself, is a particular emotion, or collection of emotions.¹⁵⁰

Nevertheless, love does seem importantly associated with emotion. If a lover consistently failed to feel any emotion in connection with her love for someone, we would either want an explanation of the failure or we would question whether she really loved the person. Thus, in my view, in addition to particular intentions and desires, the two tendencies of love also give rise, under certain conditions, to particular emotions we typically associate with love. For example, when my daughter whom I love is very sick, I feel anxious. When my spouse whom I love is sad, I frequently feel sad too. Or when my friend moves away, I might feel lonely. Conversely, when

¹⁴⁹ The philosophy of emotions exhibits one of the most divergent range of views in the discipline of philosophy. For example, I concede that there might well be an account of emotion according to which the account of love I have just given—i.e., love as tendencies of the will—entails that love is an emotion. Indeed, given that Aquinas calls sensory love a passion and rational love a passion “in a wider and extended sense” (ST I-II, 26.2), one might be tempted to think he simply views both kinds of love as emotions. However, it is far from obvious that our concept of “emotion” is the same as Aquinas's concept of “passion.” Indeed, Thomas Dixon has pointed out that there are reasons for denying it. See Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). In any case, in order to make the discussion tractable, here I make the perhaps flat-footed assumption that emotions are affective and felt (or at least experienced) in some way.

¹⁵⁰ This sort of view seems consistent with recent views of love in social psychology. For example, Aron and Aron have suggested that romantic love is not an emotion. Rather, “romantic love is a goal-directed state that leads to varied emotions.” Arthur Aron et al., “Reward, Motivation, and Emotion Systems Associated with Early-Stage Intense Romantic Love,” *Journal of Neurophysiology* 94 (2005): 328.

my daughter recovers from her sickness I might feel relieved; when my spouse is happy again, I might feel content; or when my friend comes for a visit, I might feel joy. These emotions are natural deliverances of love in situations where the targets of love's tendencies—the beloved's good, and union with the beloved—are either frustrated or realized in some aspect and degree. In light of these cases, it might seem promising to suggest that love partially consists in a tendency toward the range of emotions I have just indicated.¹⁵¹ Indeed, Kolodny holds this kind of view.¹⁵²

Such a view seems plausible as far as it goes. However, it seems very difficult to spell out the relevant tendency to emotion in any great detail. For example, must one *always* feel sad or lonely when union with the beloved is thwarted in some way? It seems quite plausible that one might feel sad or lonely for a period if a dear friend moved away. But after a while one adjusts and one's emotions subside, despite the fact that one still loves the friend. In short, it seems relatively easy to imagine exceptions and counter-examples to the sort of tendency I have suggested, and difficult to come up with a tendency that fares any better. This result seems attributable, in part, to the fact that the affective make-up of different people varies quite widely—from relatively passionate to relatively stoic—and so it seems the emotions associated with love vary accordingly.

Given the possibility of such variation, I propose the more moderate preliminary view that certain emotions are typical but contingent effects of love under certain circumstances, perhaps those resembling (but not limited to) the circumstances sketched above. Of course, this proposal is far from a complete account of the relation between love and emotion. Nevertheless, it at least locates emotion relative to the account of love I am defending here.

¹⁵¹ On some views a tendency toward certain feelings might just be an emotion. Thus, again, it should be emphasized that I am greatly simplifying the view of emotion in play in order to make the discussion tractable.

¹⁵² However, Kolodny uses the language of “disposition” rather than “tendency.” See Kolodny, “Love as Valuing a Relationship,” 151–152.

2.11 CASES LACKING ONE OF LOVE'S TENDENCIES?

I will now turn to an objection to my account of love. Velleman has raised a second objection to a desire-account of love that might seem also to threaten my view that love consists of a twofold tendency of the will. He suggests that “troublemaking relations” are examples of people you cannot stand to be with, yet whom you might well love. He writes, “This meddling aunt, cranky grandfather, smothering parent, or overcompetitive sibling is dearly loved, loved freely and with feeling: one just has no desire for his or her company.”¹⁵³ To aim the objection more clearly at my view, suppose an opportunity for union with some such troublemaking relation arises, such as a family holiday gathering. Suppose further that the behavior of this relation is such that it is either impossible or inappropriate for me to attend the gathering. On my view, we could understand why I would not *intend* to be with the relative, despite my love for him: it would be impossible or inappropriate to act in that way. Nevertheless, according to my view, if I loved him I would still have a desire to be with him, and perhaps also a desire that his behavior be different, thereby making it possible or appropriate to attend. (It seems likely I would also have a conflicting desire *not* to attend the gathering.) This, according to Velleman, would be where my view goes wrong: I might love the troublesome relation and yet fail to have any desire whatsoever (even a conflicted one) to attend the gathering. If so, the objection seems to suggest that there are cases of love in which we do not exhibit any tendency of will toward union with the beloved.

Could there be cases of love like this? I don't think so. Velleman's case of the troublesome relative does not seem to fit the bill. If I do not even have a conflicted desire to be with the relative under the circumstances described above, it is hard to see what would make this a case of love. Perhaps the idea is that I might still have a tendency of will toward the good of the

¹⁵³ Velleman, “Love as a Moral Emotion,” 353.

relative, and that this would be enough for the case to count as love. However, in that case I seem at best more like a distant benefactor of the relative than someone who loves him.

Perhaps the New Testament picture of love for one's neighbor could be the model for a kind of love lacking any tendency toward union.¹⁵⁴ The parable of the Good Samaritan, who helps an injured Jew on the road to Jericho, is typically taken as a paradigm of love for neighbors.¹⁵⁵ In that case it might seem that the Samaritan merely had a tendency toward the good of the Jew and not toward union with him.

However, I think it is a mistake to understand love for neighbors as lacking any tendency toward union. Love for neighbors tends toward a union characterized by living at least part of one's life in the society of at least some neighbors. Such a union involves being around and interacting with one's neighbors. If the Good Samaritan had lacked a tendency toward this sort of union, he likely would not have been in a position to help his injured fellow traveler in the way that he did. I take it that the central point of the parable is that even strangers (or, in the case of the Jew and the Samaritan, traditional enemies) may be neighbors. If one wished only for the company of those one knew, or those with whom one had a special relationship of some sort—even if one had the opportunity to live part of life among strangers—then, on my view, one would fail to love one's neighbors. Granted, the union aimed at in the case of the Good Samaritan is very thin. Indeed, the Samaritan's neighborly love for the Jew did not even include a tendency toward union with and the good of *that particular Jew* prior to encountering him, though he did have particular desires and intentions to interact with and help that Jew once he came across him. Nevertheless, the Samaritan seems to have had a tendency toward the good of and union with his neighbors in general, of whom the Jew was one. Obviously, much more

¹⁵⁴ E.g., Matthew 22.39, Mark 12.31, Luke 10.27, Galatians 5.14, and James 2.8. Love of neighbor has its origin in the Hebrew Bible at Leviticus 19.18.

¹⁵⁵ Luke 10.29-37.

should be said in spelling out the view of love for neighbors that I have gestured at here.¹⁵⁶

However, the point for my present purposes is that love for a neighbor *does* partially consist in a tendency toward a kind of union with one's neighbor. Thus, love for neighbors does not seem to be a case of love lacking a tendency toward union, and so it does not pose a problem for my view.

The difficulty of imagining a case of love that lacks any tendency toward union seems exceeded by the difficulty of imagining a case of love that lacks any tendency toward the beloved's good. Return, for a moment, to the case of Pericles, who must temporarily forego union with his infant daughter Marina for the sake of her survival. Here, Pericles's tendency of will toward Marina's good issued in a particular intention to bring her to shore and to leave her in the company of a friend who could care for her. However, suppose, instead, that Pericles's love for Marina was such that he was only concerned for his union with her, and that he cared nothing for her good, i.e., that he had no tendency of will toward her good. In that case, Pericles might not have made for shore—thereby threatening Marina's life—and if he did make for shore it would have been *solely* because tending to Marina's needs would have been a means to future union with her. But, tending toward the good of the beloved as a merely instrumental target seems contrary to love: genuine lovers tend toward the good of those they love as a *final* good, something worth realizing because of what it is and not merely because of what else it might achieve. Could Pericles genuinely be understood to love Marina in such a case? I don't think so. And I don't think cases in which one lacks any tendency toward the good of a neighbor or a troublesome relative fare any better. Thus, I take it that tendencies of will toward the good of the beloved and union with him are partially constitutive of love.

¹⁵⁶ Indeed, I hope to say much more in future work.

2.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have defended part of a broadly Thomist account of human love—love for humans, by humans. Specifically, I have argued that such love partially consists of two tendencies of the will—one toward the good of the beloved and one toward union with him. I claimed that union includes five elements: patterns of mutual sharing and attentiveness between lover and beloved, mutual knowledge or understanding of lover and beloved, mutual love between lover and beloved, and mutual awareness of these activities and states. I claimed that the desires, intentions, and emotions often associated with love are best thought of as downstream effects of love. On my account, then, love is a *source* of such attitudes and is distinct from them.

In light of this account we can see more clearly the sense in which love is an active attitude related to our agency. Love is the origin of great swaths of human action. It is the source of the desires and intentions that move us to the service and presence of those we care about. Indeed, if we include self-love, for some of us love may be at the root of most things we do—our work, our leisure, our social life, and our solitude. Love, then, plays a crucial role in human agency.

In this chapter I gestured at the causes of love in my explanation of Aquinas’s notion of “union of affection” (Section 2.5). In Chapter Three I will continue my account of love by offering a more thorough explanation and defense of love’s constitutive causes, or operative grounds, as I will call them. Together, Chapters Two and Three will amount to my complete account of human love, which will serve as part of the philosophical groundwork necessary for achieving the two aims of the dissertation: to point out the central problem with Augustine’s argument that we should love all people equally, and to give an account of why we should love some people more than others.