

If I write to him and tell him I will wait, he will come back to me. I would run into his arms like a lover in a dream, in a film, in a book. He would embrace me on the top of a wind-blown hill, under a tree in the swirling rain, in a garden full of flowers, on a beach where the waves would crash at our feet. If I still believed in blue lagoons, if I still believed in fairy tales, if I still believed in desert islands, if I still believed in the eternity of romantic love, that things never changed, then I would write.

But where would we go, the two of us, where could we exist together, without having to be part of the complex world which enfolds us? Where could we hide from the reality of living?

To have that kind of love, she needs to go back to the beginning, to the time before Freda, who she loves very much, and before Sam. I am so proud of you, Lucia, he said. The wound would heal, he would find someone else, he would forget. But she, who inflicted the wound, would not be able to forget, she would have to endure for always that severance, it would always be there for her.

She needs to go back to the time before Chris, to eradicate him, to eradicate the dead baby. To go back to the beginning, to the time when she believed in the immutable, the eternal, when she believed in the beautiful, unchanging, whole and complete nature of love. But there is no beginning. She had decided to give her love to Sam, which she now knows is not the same as being in love. But you cannot constantly snatch back this gift of love so that it can be bestowed on someone else.

There is no eternity in loving. There is only something diverse and changing, shaped by individual experience, conditioned by time and custom and character, something that has no existence save what we make of it ourselves. Loving, like living, is the beginning of death.

Tiresome heart, forever living and dying!

She crouches on the floor and whispers to herself, I will hold his memory for a while like water in my cupped hands. Tomorrow, tomorrow, it will be gone.

ends

But love is a durable fire
In the mind ever burning;
Never sick, never old, never dead,

Collection Number: A3299

Collection Name: Hilda and Rusty BERNSTEIN Papers, 1931-2006

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers Research Archive**

Collection Funder: **Bernstein family**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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