

THE ACTIVITY OF LOVE, AS IN TENNIS

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If you do an activity, wear the clothing of that activity. Do not show up in a priest's outfit (if it isn't a priesthood) and do not wear any percentage of cotton if the requirement of the activity is to sweat. Don't wear a hat if a hat is not intrinsic to the activity at hand, if the sun is not somehow involved, if it is night.

Everything on your person should be about what you are doing. For instance, if you are playing tennis in the evening, you should wear the gear of a tennis player and nothing else. Not jewelry: opal, gold, silver, ruby, metal, etc. Do not wear even a plain watch or a heart monitor or lipstick. Don't soak your underwear in champagne in the morning, before you play tennis at night.

If you are making love, if you are a coital clone of your neighbor's wife, (she is a myth for a series of moments, an inside joke, an imagination, a laughable sphinx), do it with your clothes (your pleats) off. Put your pleats on the railing if he is going to enter you, and have him do the same with his pleats. From a distance (you are distant, your brain is distant) they look like two stacks of plain business envelopes.

Only use your body parts. Leave props, for once, out of it, since props come in between bodies, even when the props are designed to connect those bodies, those people, you. Don't use a scent on yourself. Let the scent—whatever it is, groinal, lion saliva—come from within.

Focus only on the activity. Use your hand if inspiration lubricates its bones. Touch him on the neck. You are the kind of lovers who use necks—you both threaten to cut off air, to choke for fun, since choking corresponds to your genitals. Take your shoes off if you haven't yet. Throw them in the direction of the trees. Let slugs oil them with their excrement while you are connecting against the net (your naked ass is divided into squares, someone could come up and draw a chart on it, could track the changes that you can't).

Now that it is over, look at him through the thatch of one of the tennis rackets. Tell him something sentimental through it—you love him, you hate this—and kiss him through the tight strings like a conjugal visit. Which is what this is like.

If you tear up, only use tears. If you get dressed, only use clothes. Walk around the court getting them. If you are ashamed and you are dressing, do not use leaves, since you are not Her. He isn't Him. If his wife appears in your brain, a chemical that feels acidic in the cerebellum (did angels jab that needle full of it in? did they fly down in their ragged tennis clothes?) wear the soul of a fawn and flee.