



# SENTENCING

Isn't it funny how people keep things?  
 People keep many things but one thing that creates a lot of peculiar moments is the keeping of secrets.  
 Secrets of thinking and feeling are catalysts for drama.  
 Many people like drama.  
 Paul and Karen like drama and so they keep secrets.  
 It's best that one of two holds the secret so the other can try to find it out.  
 He held the secret.  
 She wanted to know.

She asked him what it was.  
 She asked him to speak.  
 He told her that he had to leave soon and he didn't have time to figure out what she meant.

This is best for dramatics.  
 If a secret is being kept then it must be with-held for the purpose of dramatics.  
 Of course one can always change the mood to change the action.  
 Moody people are often dramatic.  
 A sudden change of mood is all a person needs to put themselves somewhere else.

They suddenly had the feeling that what was happening between them was unreal.  
 They had to get out, go for a walk.

Did she forget about the secret?  
 She almost did because the change was so powerful and seemingly magical.

She remembered the secret. She thought he might speak of it while they walked.  
 They went for a walk.  
 He did not forget the secret.

Would he tell her?  
 Maybe.

He wanted to walk.  
 He wanted some air.

This is something many people will say during a dramatic moment.  
 Is getting air dramatic?... Perhaps...but what was important to him was that the air was outside and he wanted to be outside so he could walk. He knew that if you are outside walking it is easier to conceal a secret.

He wondered why he felt he couldn't tell her.

She asked him suddenly if he was afraid to tell her.  
 He told her he wanted to walk and not speak.  
 She did not understand.

Well, she did really, but never-the-less she still wanted to know.

She became angry and yelled at him to Speak! Speak! Speak!  
 She said that he couldn't fool her with that innocent act.

That has been said many times, but often the question has been raised of the possibilities of innocence and it would seem that it is a hard thing to achieve, so it might seem an odd thing to say.

He thought so.  
 He thought it was an odd thing to say because he did not understand what it meant, although he knew why she said it.  
 He was like that.

Sometimes he separated the intention of a sentence and focused on the particular meaning. This is one of the reasons why he was easily distracted from drama.

They walked.  
 They walked casually and quickly at first, but after a bit they slowed down.  
 When they reached a park they walked around in it for awhile and then he told her his secret.

Often the telling of a secret can stop drama. Especially if the secret is not what is expected. If people are dying to know a secret, it is usually because they think it may concern them. If it does then the possibilities for further drama are many.  
 The telling of a secret is usually exciting for all involved, but it is always exciting for one who has it.

To release a secret is to make a space available and simultaneously fill it up.

He told her his secret.  
 It was not about her.  
 She was not disappointed because she had not thought it would be directly about her but she thought it would concern her, in as much as she was concerned about knowing him.  
 The secret was about himself.

He told her the secret, but he had many others he did not tell her.

He wondered why she didn't have any secrets. He could not believe it could be true. He thought everyone had secrets.  
 He wondered if it were possible to have a secret and not know it.  
 She told him that she tells him everything.  
 He didn't believe that she knew what a secret was because otherwise he was sure she would say she did have one.  
 He said he would tell her his secret but first he wanted to know what she thought a secret was.  
 Although it usually annoyed her to hear him say something like that, she was too anxious to know the secret, so she sat down.

## Michael Boyce

Drawings by Eric Miller



She said a secret is him.  
 She said a secret is something unknown by her.  
 She said a secret is a tempter.  
 She said a secret is a daring-tease.  
 She told him that a secret is something half-told.  
 A secret is an invitation that has a condition of difficulty for being received.  
 She did not make invitations to him because she had received him and never given a dismissal.

Maybe she was wrong.

He said a secret was a separation.  
 He was afraid to tell secrets, he said, because he did not want to expose himself.  
 He said he did not feel he was concealing absolute truths about himself; the truths were only fleeting and so ultimately irrelevant.  
 He said that to speak even a transient truth about himself was to create an image that struck into the minds of others like a small incision that leaves a prominent scar. To tell a secret is to make a cut; to create a division, and yet also a binding. But the binding was a deception, he said, so the telling of the secret was futile, it gave nothing to the hearer but the opportunity for a response in that moment, it did not give a perception of an unchanging truth that could function as a landmark in the relationship.

She said the response was the important thing. She said the fear of the cutting could only repress the need for the division *if* the fear was in control. She said '*if*' because she felt that the fear was a response that was not invalid, in spite of the problems it could produce. She knew that as a response it was important. The response of the moment was the catalyst of movement; the agent of the gesture. That was her opinion.

She said that although she was aware of the temporal weakness of the secret she felt that he should know the secret was a strong medium for the expression of the sentence. The sentence and the gesture are very hard to make. The telling of the secret was almost always a gesture. She knew this. She said she knew it. She said a secret is a separation of the self for the sake of the communicative gesture. The nature of the gesture was the nature of the secret. Speak your secret to me, she asked.

She felt somehow that in all that, she had somewhere said a sentence. She felt excited and intensely attentive.  
 She felt in relation.

He spoke his secret.  
 His secret was about people who are mad.  
 He said he believed that speaking with people who are mad is a very exciting and important experience.  
 His secret was about how it came about that he spoke with a madman.  
 He said he saw a man walking in a circle. The man was walking around in the park, the same park they were now sitting in. It was a week-day, so there weren't many other people there. But there were some who passed by and laughed because he was speaking-out very loudly.

People don't necessarily laugh if they see someone walking in a large circle, (maybe for a small one), but they usually laugh if they notice someone talking very loudly when they are alone.

When he noticed the madman he thought at first he wanted to speak to him. He was on his way to do something else so he only glanced and took minor note. But then he began to listen, and as he listened he thought about social commitments. He heard the madman addressing someone or everyone and he saw that no one was truly listening. So after he heard the madman say something about syringes in oranges, he called out 'Hey!' The madman stopped talking and walking so he asked him who he

was speaking to. The madman said he was speaking to nature and anyone who wanted to listen.

The madman started walking and talking again.  
 He watched the madman and decided to join him and listen. He had decided but he hesitated, and as he hesitated he grew excited. He walked towards the madman feeling very nervous and anticipating something great to happen.

When he joined the madman, he heard him say 'Hi!', and as the madman turned and said 'Hi!', he was shocked to discover a madwoman.

He wondered if people are more inclined to laugh at madwomen than madmen.

As he walked and talked with the madwoman he discovered her speech becoming centralized.

This can happen when you are addressing a large group of people and then you address a single person.

He said the experience was amazing but the thing that really struck him was a sentence she had said. She said that people are afraid to be real. This struck him because he was thinking this earlier and it was the reason he went to join the madwoman. He thought that it was important to follow some impulses and intuitions.

The madwoman said many things to him about different topics. She spoke about sex, ecology, education and politics, but he felt that none of her opinions were so important as the fact that she had no fear in expressing them, and he felt that she did more than express opinions; he felt she exposed a lot of her true being. He knew that was a scary thing to do.

When he had said this about the madwoman he did not feel he had really told a secret about himself.

He wondered if he had told a secret or a story.

He wondered if there was a difference.

He was not sure, but he did feel empty. So in order to feel as if he really had told a secret, he said that he was afraid to show his true being.

She was mesmerized during the secret, but when she heard him speak of his fear she felt like responding. She was not sure what she should say so she hugged him and said that she loved him.

This made him feel something he could not quite define but he thought he expressed it to a degree by saying he felt centred.

He was not sure what it meant to be centred, or rather how he could articulate the notion of being centred because he chose the word so quickly.

No, he thought, he did not choose the word. But he wondered how he could describe the feeling further to someone else making the word 'centred' the pivoting notion.

Did words distract from feeling, he wondered? No, he thought, words create and *are* feeling.

Then he wondered if the description of the feeling invoked the feeling for the other.

In order to see if this could be the case he told her that he felt centred, and then he asked her if she knew what he meant?

She said she wasn't sure.

He asked her if she felt anything when he told her about being centred.

She said she did.

She said she felt like she was looking at something without focusing on it. She said her shoulders relaxed, but they tightened-up again when he asked her if she knew what he meant.

She said she was tense now.

She said the feeling changed when she tried to think what it was he meant by the expression.

He said that if he heard or spoke the name of a feeling he could feel it.

He wondered if thinking the name would invoke the feeling.

He asked her if she thought that one can think things as well as about things.



She was confused so he rephrased the question. He said that he wasn't sure whether one could only think *of* something or could also *think something*. He said that one could speak of love or speak love, that is, speak love as a noun or verb, but could one think love? Could thinking be a direct action, he asked? Of course, she said. She said that thinking was speaking. He agreed with her, but then asked if she thought one could feel *of* something. She said she felt that he was asking not so much because it was a concern as much as he wanted to raise issues. She said that she suddenly saw the social aspect of what was happening and that the issues weren't important to him; the conversation was important. The conversation had a specific style and thus the feeling of it was specific. The style of the speech was the feeling of the speech, she said, and she could now see it as the relationship between them. She said she knew there was no other way of expressing that style in the exact way that they were now doing and she felt aware that one had to take it seriously in order for the relationship to do itself. She said the individual meanings of the words were not so important as was the speech as a complete gesture. She said the gesture was a situation and that the situation embodied feeling. She said one could not have feeling *of* feeling because that would require one to feel something other to the feeling. She said that feeling could not stop and experience non-feeling because to experience was to feel. She said that feeling is consciousness but it is not reflective of itself. However, she said, when we think about a feeling, that is, when we think of the significance of its name we invoke the feeling, so that the feeling is reflected by the linguistic thought. She said that this was apparent because the thinking was an action that took place while it ignored the present movement of the world. In this sense, it made no gesture towards the world, only to itself, but it was betrayed by itself because the world could still see the body despite the fact that one had made the world invisible, so because of its stilted mobility, the thinking did not *do* the feeling but merely reflected it. This is the closest the body came to reflecting feeling upon itself. The feeling can't be done twice, she said, it is thought of once and it then echoes; reverberating in a semi-presence. She said isn't it funny that the linguistic can speak and speak of itself and then she fainted. He was amazed. He suddenly remembered he had to be somewhere soon and at the same time he quickly went to her aid. This simultaneity of intent created in him a great stress. He was primarily concerned for her, but he felt the other commitment nagging him. He ignored it. She could not wake up so he picked her up and started to walk.

To be or not to be.

Sometimes one must invoke the familiar to deal with the strange.

This is what he did.  
He said to be or not to be.  
He said it again and again.  
To be or not to be.  
It did not make things sharp, but it did make it easier to walk.  
He felt himself carrying her and he thought that it was as if she

were dead. He wasn't thinking about what she had said. He was thinking to be or not to be and he was feeling that she was not there except as a weight. He could feel that she had been there. He said to himself she was present like a name in a book after it had been read. He did not say she was present like a *character* in a book because he did not think that characters existed. He believed that books conveyed meaning but not characters. Not very many others agree with him on that point. A friend of his thinks something similar. His friend thought that books personified meaning. He did not agree with his friend but he like the thought of meaning becoming a person and he felt it was better to speak in these terms than in ones concerning the notion of characters.

He remembered a woman who thought he was a character in a book she read. She went out of his life because he could not live up to the character. He wondered who could live up to a character. Although he felt Karen becoming heavier he still could not feel that she was there. Her name was there. What's in a name, he thought. A rose by any other name is still a rose. There is something wrong with that, he thought.

He had a friend who said that all the time. He used to write things while looking at paintings and when someone would ask him what he was doing, he would say that he was remaking the painting. They would ask how it was he could write the painting? How could he make the same thing in such a different way? Then he would say that a rose by any other name is still a rose. They would not think of the reply as a satisfactory answer but because of the power of sayings like that they would not say anything else, although they would think he was strange. Artists like people to think they are strange.

Sayings are powerful but he always questioned them. He was suspicious of sayings. He suspected that his friend did not know the nature of his own art. He wondered if she were still she by any other name.

He wondered if it was good to control oneself. He imagined her replying that it was obvious that some inclinations had to be controlled, specifically physical ones. He said words can sometimes be as brutal. She said of course, that's right, but she felt that verbal expression should not be repressed unless it was absolutely necessary, in fact she thought this was the case for all expression. He said there are no absolutes. She said but there are social standards. He said yes.

He stopped imagining this conversation and thought that he didn't realize she had so much power. Her words' strength seemed to be too much for her. Did she know she had such power? She seemed to be looking for the power of a sentence for a long time. She was always reflecting on sentences. Sentences are very important because they are meaning; deep expression. It wasn't *just* the sentence. The sentence was in tune with her expression. Her intention was the power.

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