

The Queer Temperament in the Maelstrom of History

Do you plan on giving up on love?

Can you give up on love? Do you believe you can just stop loving?

Is desire preventable?

I believe it pushes through, but what about suffering? Despair? Does desire ever get tired of it all and stops, bringing you with it? It certainly does, it certainly has done so, in a particular sense. I say particular of course because this does not apply more generally, I would even go as far as saying that it cannot. Have you even somewhat as glanced at history? If death and despair were enough to stop desire forever surely we would be all gone. Yet still the flowers bloom, even through the rubble, this is evident. Even throughout all of the tragedies that have come and gone and occupied humanity's history the flowers never stopped blooming, desire breaks through and makes life beautiful, even if only at moments.

“There is only despair, hope existing only in scattering and flight like vermin.”

Then scatter and take flight, if that's what you can do, movement creates life and destroys the old. Despair crushes desire, castrates its potency, turns it into servile resignation and prevents life from springing forth. What brings this spring is movement and desire, so long as you keep moving, so long as you keep desiring life will spring up again, the flowers will keep blooming.

So is the general movement of the universal economy, that life brings tragedy, despair and suffering, that is undeniable, that death will never be satiated and torture will never be satisfied is but a fact, undeniable both when looking at history and the general movement of humanity. Yet, despite all of it, life pushes through, it keeps going, not just life, but joy as well, in all of the small moments. And it is those small moments that actually do matter, they carry your life, and the conjunction of all of them is what makes the large moments. Even if tyranny reigns it is part of the general movement of things that breakthroughs will happen, and people will be able to be joyous again, it is for those small moments that life organizes itself around.

Therein lies the struggle, death, despair, and the small moments in life, all floating together in the struggle, there is no peace in life. As Machado de Assis once wrote, “Life without struggle is a dead sea in the center of the universal organism”. To live is to struggle, and this is constant, and this fact should be as dreadful as it is hopeful, because struggle is the possibility of everything. Just as tyranny presses on it also permits the possibility of new life

blooming from the attrition of the conflict, reaction begets revolution just as revolution begets reaction. Of course, not to say that all struggle is the same, struggle grows harsher and softer periodically, but there is always struggle. Struggle is inevitable, struggling is the movement of life. Despair only exists insofar as there are those who believe there is an easier solution, that there is peace in life or meaning in death, it is only rejection of desire. But desire pushes through, it deterritorializes, creates new arrangements, brings about joyous encounters, it does all of this through struggle.

The queer temperament is this: There is no despair for those who only know struggle, because as dreadful as a life of struggle can be, it is also the way for meaning and for living, insurrection brings down arrangements, and then everything is different, despair has no place where dynamic movement takes place. Through all of the tyranny of history people have managed to push through, to keep struggling, to live and to laugh, to find joy in the small things, and they've managed to push forward. Only through throwing away despair and accepting struggle, and living in struggle, have people managed to eventually coalesce enough force to bring about change.

Do you not understand the weight of all of that? That despite everything that has happened, people have always managed to push through. I'm not speaking in macro terms of course, but I mean people more generally, living their lives, pushing through, creating meaning despite it all, this has been the case throughout all of history. Even through the roughest of prohibitions people have still managed to be queer, to live life and leave stories. What does that say about you? That you are part of the movement too, of the struggle, of life. As history shows; this life is harsh, it is not a fairy-land, but despite how harsh it was made, people managed to live. People managed to enjoy life and create moments of tenderness and joy, little fae circles dotting all of space and history.

Ever since I left my childhood I have not thought that I would ever go my whole life without a great struggle, some great struggle would come eventually, the past century taught us a lot can happen in 80 years. I believe there is strength in accepting this place, even as horrid and violent as it may be, because there is strength in struggle, and in there, I would say, there is also comfort. Comfort in knowing this was always what it would boil down to; struggle, and that there was only one option: struggle.

We cannot deny ourselves life, we cannot fall into a pit of loathing and despair, reduced to resentment-filled slaves that have accepted their fate. We must struggle, there is no way but forward, no way outside but breaking through, no way to liberation without fighting, such is the general movement of life. So I ask again, do not despair, despair only serves to weaken you, to make you servile and docile, that or dead. What is necessary now is willpower, the will to struggle, you must keep going, not for anyone else, but you.

The queer temperament throughout all of history has been that of the flower that blooms even in the harshest conditions, because it desired to, it did not give up on that.

Postface

I am writing this on the day of Donald Trump's reelection as President of the United States to the tune of an entire day of the most heart wrenching despair I think I've seen so far in my short life. The rise of an authoritarian right-populist reactionary is deeply concerning and that we will have to deal with whatever horrors are to come is dreadful. Much more dreadful though, was seeing the despair of so many queer people that I hold near and close to my heart, this moment is terrifying and the mood is that of resigned defeat. I don't deny things will get bad, they will, and it's not that I think that this despair isn't justified, it is, but I just can't stand seeing people with their head down, that is too painful. What struck me to write this though, was not necessity as much as inspiration, I have to justify things to myself, justify that I have to keep going, and from that did the inspiration to write these words come to me. I suppose it may have been hope that thus motivated me to write this, I had to have hope and this short text is the product of it, much less of a theoretical text, it's simply emotional. But I don't think it was hope, and I don't care for what it is, what I care about is the message, and that people understand it. No matter how bad things get, do not despair, keep struggling.

Now more than any other moment is the time to fight, organize, build community and networks of people you know you can trust, do what you can to fight against your oppression and find ways outside it through organizing and community. Right now I don't plan on staying static either, here in Brazil I also need to organize, the far-right has been emboldened globally, and this weak pathetic left will need to deal with whatever 2026 has in store and the possibility of meddling. Despite this I do not despair, I plan on seeing it through, on struggling. Despair gets you nowhere, it is now the time to act, so please, there will come a time the clouds will part and sunshine will grace us again, I want you to be there with me to see it.

"There's no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons." - Gilles Deleuze