

An Online Appendix

This appendix to *Order in Disorder: Intratextual Symmetry in Montaigne's "Essais"* consists of two parts. Part A is my translation of the 29 sonnets of Étienne de La Boétie that appear in I: 29 of the editions of the *Essays* published during Montaigne's lifetime. Part B provides some additional cross-references between chapters III: 5 and III: 9.

Part A

I

Forgive, O Love, forgive! O Lord, I vow to you
The remnant of my years, my writing and my voice,
My sobbing and my sighs, my tears, my pleading cries;
Naught, naught will I ascribe to anyone but you.

Alas, my fortune plays its tricks upon myself!
It wasn't long ago that, Love, I laughed at you.
I've sinned, I know; I yield: I am your prisoner.
I kept my heart too long; I disavow it now.

If for having kept it I slowed your victory,
Don't treat it worse for that; more glorious still you'll be.
And if at the first blow you did not strike me down,

Bear in mind a good conqueror, born to be great,
When his new prisoner at last decides to yield,
Esteems and loves him more, for having so well fought.

II

It is Love, it is Love, him alone, this I feel:
But the sharpest kind of Love, the most poisonous
That ever a poor heart has allowed in the door.
Not just one piercing shaft this cruel one has shot,

But bow, shafts and quiver--and himself--in my soul.
Not quite a month ago it was my freedom died.
Since that time dread poison I've carried in my veins:
Already now I've lost both my heart and my sense.

But what if such a love should in proportion grow,
Which in such great travail within me was conceived?
O grow if you can grow, improving as you grow.

You feed yourself with tears, tears then I promise you.
Should coolness you desire: my sighs for ever more.

But may the worst of pains be these that I feel now.

III

What's done, my heart, is done: no longer free,
What good would it do then to fight back now,
Except make worse the crime and punishment?
No longer have I now the strength I had.

Though reason for a time was on my side
She has revolted now, and tells me that
What I should do is serve--and be consoled
That never was one caught in such a knot.

If then I must submit, the time is now
That reason's gone and left me all alone.
I see that Love, through no fault of my own,

Nor legal claim, has come to make arrest;
And see as well that such a king requires,
Though in the wrong, that reason be his slave.

IV

And so it came to pass--the dog days gone,
When Autumn, stained, goes treading in the vats
The juicy grape that flows beneath the foot--
That my misfortunes started on their way.

The peasant gathers in and beats his sheaves,
In cellars rolls his hogsheads into place,
Shakes Autumn's harvest fruit down from the tree:
Long labor finds at last its recompense.

Might this have been a warning meant for me
That my fond hope was--like the wheat--cut down?
No, surely not. But certainly I think

I'll have, if I can prophesy aright,
If one can foretell anything at all,
Some great and wondrous fruit of such long hope.

V

I have seen her sharp eyes, I have seen her bright face;
Never does any man unharmed gaze on the gods;
Bereft of heart, and chilled, by her victorious eye,
With awe was I struck down by the force of its light.

Like one surprised at night by lightning's sudden flash,
And astonished, turns pale--the arrow from the skies
Hissing, passes by, making him shut tight his eyes.
He trembles, then sees, transfixed, Jupiter in rage.

Tell me truly, tell me: My lady, your green eyes,
Aren't they the very ones it's said that Love keeps hid?
You had them, I believe, the time I saw you last;

At least I can recall, as then it seemed to me,
The first time I saw you that all of a sudden
Love discharged upon me both his bow and his gaze.

VI

Many say this of me: "Why does he so complain,
And lose his life's best years in frivolous pursuit?
Why does he cry so much, if he retains some hope?
And if he has no hope, why then not be content?"

When I was free and whole, I used to say as much,
Yet surely such a one is not in his right mind,
But has a heart destroyed by some despotic pride,
Who'd complain of my plaint: He cannot feel my pain.

Love all at once inflicts a hundred pains on me,
And then I am informed that I cannot cry out.
But I am not so vain that I'd increase my pain

My dint of speaking: If I could be exempted
I'd give up my sonnets, I'd give up singing too;
Forbidding me to grieve would bring about my cure.

VII

When at times I venture to honor you in song,
Though daring not express your great name in my verse,
Fathoming the shallows of this extensive sea,
I fear to come to grief and so I hug the shore,

Afraid, should my praise fail, that I would do you harm.
The people, though, surprised to hear you so esteemed,
Ardent then to know you, attempt to guess your name,
And seeking thus by chance your holy name to find,

Dazzled, cannot manage to see so bright a thing;
Such coarse and vulgar folk discern you not at all.
They have the means at hand, but lack the wit to see:

It would be to search out, if first they would compare
The world's most perfect women, the most perfect one.
Then, if they can speak, cry out boldly: "She's the one!"

VIII

When will that day come, when your name will truly pass
Throughout France, in my verse? How often and how much
Does my heart race ahead, my fingers itch to write?
Many times in my verse by itself it appears.

Despite myself I write you, and despite efface.
When Astraea returns and with her, faith and law,
Then in joy will your name to all the world appear.
Now it is for this age, that you must be kept hid,

For such an evil age it is a crying shame.
My lady, until then I'll call you my Dordogne.
Yet all the same let me, let me inscribe your name;

Have pity on the age: If I bring you to light,
And the age be aware, then I promise you now
It will be golden then, if ever it can be.

IX

O, among your beauties, your constancy is fine!
It is this steadfast heart, this constant moral force,
That, among your virtues, is what one prizes most:
What could be more lovely than faithful affection?

Now don't reproach your sister, faithless though she be,
Vezere your sister river: Wandering she goes,
Flowing never steady in her inconstant course.
Can you see how the winds play with her at their whim?

And never regret, as the right of the elder,
Having picked constancy for your inheritance.
From the same race sprang forth the sovereign friendship

Of the good twins, of whom each to the other gave
Of heaven and of hell the half of his portion;
And the slandered love of the too beautiful Helen.

X

Well I see, my Dordogne, how humbly you still flow:
You are too shy to show yourself Gasconne in France.

If one now sets great store by the stream of the Sorgue,
There was a time when he too had once been obscure.

You see the little Loir, how he quickens his pace?
How already he counts himself among the great?
How he walks with high step, more quickly flowing by,
Right next to Virgil's Mincio, nor does he complain?

An olive tree from Arno, grafted near the Loire,
Makes him run more bravely, endues him with glory.
Let me, let me do it, and one day, my Dordogne,

If I predict correctly, you'll be better known;
And Garonne, and the Rhone, and these other great gods,
Will suffer jealousy, and maybe even shame.

XI

You who hear my sighing, don't be severe with me
If secretly I shed my tears, all mine, alone,
If my love does not follow in its varied pain
The languorous regrets of the charmed Florentine;

Nor of Catullus either, frolicsome lover,
Who by persistent tickling pierced his lady's heart;
Nor the learned love of the half-Greek Propertius;
They do not love for me, nor do I love for them.

He who can upon another limit his griefs,
Can imitate as well another man's complaints:
Each one feels his own pain, and knows what he endures;

Each one did speak of love according to his lights.
I dictate what my heart, what my pain says me:
That little loves the one who measures out his love.

XII

What! What is this? O winds! O clouds! O storm!
Suddenly, as I was approaching her,
As mountains, woods and valleys I did cross,
On purpose did you vent your rage on me.

For all of that my heart now burns the more.
Go, go strike terror in some merchant's heart
Who seeks his fortune in the ships at sea;
My courage won't be shaken in that way.

When winds and tempest thunder in my ear
Their malice makes me laugh inside my heart.
Think they that by such threats they'll make me yield?

Let heaven do her worst, the winds as well:
I want, I want, and do it declare it thus,
If I'm to die, to die like Leander.

XIII

You, not yet knowing what it means to love,
Who hear me talk of my Leander now,
If you have never heard, they you should learn,
If you have any goodness in your heart.

He dared defy, by the strength of his hands,
Armed only with love, the power of the sea,
Which once took the girl Helle in tribute,
Though sparing Phrixus and the golden ram.

On the night sea, by ruthless waves undone,
Seeing already, this valiant lover,
That the water turned him at her pleasure,

Spoke loudly to the waves--and this he said:
"I ask for pardon now, before I go,
And save that death for me, till I return."

XIV

O fickle heart! O uncertain virtue!
Do you imagine that I could bear more?
O hollow kindness! O covert malice,
Treasonous beauty, sweetness envenomed!

And so you were your sister's sister still?
And I, too simple, had to try it out
Upon myself, and all too late would hear
Your double speech and your songs of the hunt?

Since the day that I started to love you
I would have conquered the waves of the sea.
But from now on what can I hope to gain?

How could I ever be happy with you?
Who could ever teach your heart constancy,
When mine was such a failure at that task?

XV

I'm not a man to suffer such abuse--
Try out those ruses on some ignorant child,
Who, artless, takes in nothing that he hears.
I know how to love, I know how to hate.

Content yourself with having until now
Kept shut my eyes, for now it's time I saw:
And time as well, alas, that I, in shame,
Regret such ill-spent use of time and care.

Would you dare then, in light of what you've done,
Entreat me now to have a steadfast heart?
My bitter sorrow seems to you delight.

You even tell me not to feel my pain,
And then want me to die of loving you.
Bereft of sense, how think you I could love?

XVI

Did I say that? Alas! Was it a dream?
Or did in fact I speak such blasphemy?
For that, false tongue, my lady's honor must
Be by me, through me, over me, avenged.

My heart, beloved, within you is lodged.
There find some novel torture to inflict;
Make it to suffer cruelly some pain;
Do, do unto it all save give it rest.

But you will be (I know this) too humane,
Unable long to watch my suffering.
But can a crime like mine seek clemency?

The least that I can do is to unsay
These guilty sonnets, which I'll now recant:
For these two false I'll write five hundred true.

XVII

If now my reason has returned to me,
If I can have recovered at this hour,
If I have sense, and am once more a man,
O happy letter, all I owe to you!

Who would, alas, who would have known me then,
When raging, overwhelmed by my dismay,

I blasphemed my beloved senselessly?
Far off, ashamed, I saw you then appear,

O holy document! I then awoke,
And in your presence came devotedly.
For what you are I'd like to build a shrine

Displaying what this hand divine has traced.
But none deserve to see such wondrous lines--
Nor I, had she not written them to me.

XVIII

I was prepared to bear forever some just blame;
Inflamed by heated bile, I burned in bitter rage,
My maddened voice would shake at the whim of my wrath,
I was vexing the gods, and even more my love:

When from afar she threw a charm into my flame,
All at once I felt its powers of restoration,
Felt, too, in its presence my madness disappear;
Leaving me, the conqueror, in its place my soul.

Just between yourselves, who from me these wonders hear,
What do you say of her? Tell me please, don't you see
That I am obliged to adore her, as I do?

What miracles in me do you think she could do
With her powerful eye, or one ray from her face,
If all this was done by mere traces of her hand?

XIX

I trembled when before her I waited, transfixed,
For some just retribution to avenge my crime,
Content within myself to bear the weight required,
When then she said to me, "Go, I grant you mercy,

May praise of me henceforth be spread throughout the world:
Make this your lifetime's task; and from now on resolve
To enrich by my name--through your poems--our France;
Cover with verse your sin, and recompense me thus."

On then, my pen; you must, to profit from my pain,
Flow, by my lady's grandeur, in a larger vein.
But look to her eye, that it not abandon us.

Without her eyes, in languish would our spirits die.

Courage do they give us, they give us sense as well.
If she's to be repaid, then she must give to me.

XX

O you, my cursed sonnets, you who had the nerve
To do my lady harm! O evil and perverse,
The reproach of the Muses, the shame of my verse!
If ever I did make you, and if I am forced

To do myself the wrong of admitting you're mine,
Then never did for you pour forth the divine streams
Of golden Apollo, or the green-eyed Muses;
But you received at birth Tisiphone instead.

If ever in posterity I have some share,
I want you both to suffer disinheritance.
If now I do not throw you in the vengeful fire,

It's for your shame: live on, you puny things, live on;
Live on in the sight of all, of all honor shorn;
It's for your punishment that I pardon you now.

XXI

Give it up, my friends, give it up: this vain desire
That I should cease to love. Let me obstinately
Live and die like this, because it is foreordained.
My love: it is the thread on which my life depends.

That's what the Fairy told me; in Egeria
Did she make Meleager to love thus fated,
And ignited the brand at the hour he was born,
Saying, "You, and this fire, keep yourselves company."

Thus did she speak, and the man's ordained extinction
Followed with precision the thread of destiny.
The brand (as it is told) was in the fire consumed;

And then (great miracle!), at one and the same time,
One could see, at once, the unfortunate lover's
Life, together with the brand, both go up in smoke.

XXII

When on your conquering eyes all astonished I gaze,
Within, I can see the inscription of my hope;
Within them, I can see the smiling god of Love
Slyly showing the joy he keeps in store for me.

But when I dare at times, my love, to speak to you,
It is then that my hope, dried up, returns to dust;
Cruel one, you never allow your eye, on which
I feed, to say a single considerate word.

If your eyes are on my side, then see what I say:
It is to them alone that I capitulate.
My God! What a quarrel in yourself would arise,

If your mouth and your eyes should wish to disagree!
Better, my sweet torment, better to divide them.
And to take at their word the promise of your eyes.

XXIII

Those piercing eyes of yours grant courage to go on.
Within them I can see gay liberty dancing.
My little archer too is leading by his side
Beautiful Bawdiness and frivolous Pleasure.

But then, the severity of your sad language
Shows me that in your heart proud Righteousness still reigns.
Found guilty, I can see obdurate Chastity
Solemnly seated there, ferocious Virtue too.

Through such undulations my motleyed fortune moves;
Now her eye calls to me, now her mouth drives me out.
Alas! In this debate, how much have I endured!

And since it would be good to have some pledge of love:
Ceaselessly night and day I think of serving her,
Without even being sure of my misfortune.

XXIV

I now must truly say my hope is dead.
Now perished are my ease and my estate.
What's wrong is clear to me, I see it well:
I'm wedded to the sadness that I bear.

Attacked from every quarter, comfortless,
By all abandoned; and from her nothing
Save that she always grants me some new strength
That makes my pain and sorrow all the worse.

What I wait for is one day to evoke
Some sighs from generations yet to come:

Someone will pity me and then will say:

"His lady and he were destined from birth
To perish alike in obstinacy,
The one from harshness, the other from love."

XXV

So weakly in my languor have I lived
That though I'm still alive, I've seen my hope
Before my ravished eyes in pieces torn,
All broken on the reef of her stern pride.

What good have all these years of service done!
My pain has not come near assuaging her:
She even laughs, and has no other wish
Than to ensure the vigor of my pain.

I'll therefore have, unfortunate in love,
Always a heart, but some new torment too.
I know quite well that I am out of breath,

About to give my life up from the strain:
But what else could one do save what I do?
Stung with pain, I persist in my travail.

XXVI

My bitter destiny thus set in stone,
I'll have my fill, if possible, of pain.
If I must agonize, she wants it so:
I will complete the term imposed on me.

You forest nymphs, astonished at my hurt,
Feel pity, I believe, for my travail.
What counsel can you give? Will I survive
If no surcease is given to my pain?

If anyone should care to hear my plea,
Then listen, for God's sake, as I foretell:
The day is near when my now futile strength

No longer will suffice to feed my hurt.
That is my hope: to die by force of love.
That way, it seems, I will escape my fate.

XXVII

When he is tired of tiring me with pain,
Freshening my illness with some good,
Love will caress my dead heart's languid wound,
Thus nourishing my hurt that it might breathe.

It's then that I imagine some vain hope:
But suddenly this tyrant, if he feels
My hope is gaining strength as it matures,
Inflicts a hundred pains to snuff it out.

Quite fresh from this, I then begin to blame
Myself for my revolt, to my torment.
Long live the ill, O gods, that feeds on me!

Long live, should it desire, my bitter pain!
O fortunate the one, twice blessèd he,
Who's always been unhappy, ceaselessly.

XXVIII

If I am unprotected against Love
I will complain, condemning him in verse,
And after me the rocks will tell again
The wrong he's done to my strong constancy.

Because from him I suffer this offense,
At least out loud my rhythms will it tell,
And our descendants when they read my lines,
In blaming him will grant me my revenge.

Because I've lost all ease that I once had,
It won't be much to lose my voice as well.
If my sad trouble's bitterness were known

By him who gave to me this injury,
He'd show, obdurate though his heart may be,
Some pity, unaccompanied by grace.

XXIX

Already did the blessèd day then shine
That Nature for your sake owed to the world,
When to the treasures she reserved for you
She gave the key to do with as you wished.

The grace you then assumed was yours alone;
You plundered all the beauties she possessed:
Indeed, beholding you, proud Nature is

At times herself astonished at the sight.

Your hand at last in taking was content.
But nature had yet one more thing to give:
Enriching you with this land where we live.

You'd nothing have of it; but laughed inside,
Imagining you'd taken quite enough
Since here you reign as queen of all men's hearts.

Part B

There are so many cross-references between chapters III: 5 and III: 9 that there wasn't enough room in the book for them all. Here are some additional ones:

(1) Montaigne alludes in both chapters to the same line in Horace about adding a bit of folly to one's wisdom. In this passage from "Sur des vers de Virgile" he quotes the line: "Et la sagesse & la folie, auront prou à faire, à m'estayer & secourir par offices alternatifs, en cette calamité d'aage. Misce stultitiam consiliis brevem" [Both wisdom and folly will have all they can do to support me and help me by their alternate services in this calamity of old age: "Mingle a dash of folly with your wisdom."] (III: 5, 843b, DM 368r; 640). In "De la vanité" he writes: "Il faut avoir un peu de folie, qui ne veut avoir plus de sottise" [A man must be a little mad if he does not want to be even more stupid] (III: 9, 995b, DM 439v; 761). Balsamo et al. point out that he is here alluding to the very line from Horace that he quoted in "Sur des vers de Virgile" (1801). In a post-1588 addition at this point he appears to allude to the fact that he is quoting him: "disent et les precepts de nos maistres et encores plus leurs exemples" [say the precepts of our masters, and even more so their examples] (III: 5, 995c; 761).

(2) In both chapters he writes of "bossus" [hunchbacks], in two of the three references in the *Essays* to persons suffering that deformity, and the only two in which he spells the word in that sense as "bossu" (as opposed to "bossé").¹ In "Sur des vers de Virgile" he writes: "Louez un *bossu* de sa belle taille, il le doit recevoir à injure" [Praise a *hunchback* for his handsome figure, and he is bound to take it as an insult] (III: 5, 847b, DM 369v; 643). In "De la vanité": "J'approuve celuy qui aime moins son enfant, & son cousin, d'autant qu'il est ou teigneux ou *bossu*: & non seulement, quand il est malicieux, mais aussi quand il est malheureux, & mal nay" [I approve of a man who loves his son, and his cousin, less for being mangy or *hunchbacked*, and not only when he is malicious, but also when he is ill-favored and ill-born] (III: 9, 968b, DM 426v; 739). There is an intriguingly similar passage in the first sentence of "De l'institution des enfans," that became increasingly similar as Montaigne revised it. Originally, it read "Je ne vis jamais

¹ The word "bossu" makes one other appearance, referring to hills rather than persons, in the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond": "Cyrus ne voulut accorder aux Perses de abandonner leur país aspre et *bossu* pour se transporter en un autre doux et plain" [Cyrus would not allow the Persians to abandon their rugged and *hilly* country to move into another that was mild and flat] (II: 12, 575b; 433).

pere pour *bossé* ou boiteux que fut son fils, qui laissast de l'avoüer non pourtant, s'il n'est du tout enivré de cet'affection, qu'il ne s'aperçoive de sa defaillance, mais tant y a qu'il est sien" [I have never seen a father who failed to claim his son, however hunchbacked or lame he was. Not that he does not perceive his defect, unless he is utterly intoxicated by his affection; but the fact remains that the boy is his] (I: 26, 145a, DM 185-86; 106*). On the Bordeaux Copy he first changed "bossé" [hunchbacked] to "borgne" [one-eyed], producing the alliterative phrase "borgne ou boiteux"; subsequently he changed that to "teigneux ou boiteux" [mangy or lame], and then he marked out "boiteux" and replaced it with "bossé" [hunchbacked],² with the result that the passage finally read "teigneux ou bossé" (and "bossé" disappeared, then reappeared in the other position). In addition, on the Bordeaux copy he marked out "& son cousin" [and his cousin]. Looking at how he continually reworked the first sentence of "De l'institution des enfans" takes us away from our primary interest in his symmetrically placed parallels, but does provide strong evidence to contradict Montaigne's assertion, quoted above, that he only reread his text with reluctance. Even so, a symmetry and a uniqueness involving III: 5 and III: 9 are maintained: despite all his reworking of that sentence in I: 26, Montaigne never changed "bossé" to "bossu," even though the meaning is similar.³ In other words, he maintained the absolute and unique parallel between the "bossu" in III: 5 and the "bossu" in III: 9. It is also amusing to wonder if he was thinking of the possible pun on his name lurking in what such a father might call such a son: "Mon teigneux."⁴

(3) Montaigne alludes in both chapters to the curious fact that Théodore de Bèze, who succeeded Jean Calvin as head of his church, had written obscene Latin poems before his conversion. In "Sur des vers de Virgile" he writes "ce n'est pas raison qu'à faute de rime ils me refusent la dispense que mesme des hommes ecclesiastiques des nostres et plus crestez jouissent en ce siecle" [it is not right that they should refuse me, because I lack rhyme, the dispensation that even churchmen, and some of the most proudly crested at that, enjoy in our time] and then quotes one of Bèze's obscene lines: "Rimula, dispeream, ni monogramma tua est" [May I die if your crack is more than a faint line] (III: 5, 888-89c; 678). In "De la vanité" he again alludes to Bèze without naming him: "J'ay veu en ma jeunesse, un galant homme, presenter d'une main au peuple, des vers excellens & en beauté & en desbordement, & de l'autre main en mesme instant, la plus quereleuse & espineuse reformation theologienne, de quoy le monde se

² That he did it in two stages is suggested by (1) the fact that there is one line crossing out "bossé" in the original "bossé ou boiteux" and another crossing out "ou boiteux" and (2) by the difference between the thickness of the letters forming "borgne" and those forming "teigneux ou bossé."

³ Yet perhaps not quite the same. Randle Cotgrave in 1611 defined "Bossé" as "Swollen, risen, bunchie, bulched, puffed up; knobbie, bulked, or bumped out" but "Bossu" as "Hulch backt, crump-shouldered; knobbie, knappie; swelling, puffed up, rising unevenly, crookedly unhandsomely." One can have a "bosse" without being hunchbacked.

⁴ Not to mention the possibility of La Boétie's name finding an echo in "bossé"-- in which case this could be considered an allusion to what Montaigne said of his friend in "De l'amitié": "nous nous embrassions par noz noms" [we embraced each other by our names] (I: 28, 188c; 139).

soit desjeuné il y a long temps” [In my youth I have seen a gentleman offer the public with one hand verses excelling both in beauty and in licentiousness, and with the other at the same moment the most contentious work on theological reform that the world has feasted on for a long time] (III: 9, 989b, DM 437r; 756). Balsamo et al. note that Montaigne is alluding to Bèze, and add that he “maliciously quotes one of his obscene lines” (1799)--the one we have just seen him quote--in “Sur des vers de Virgile.”

(4) Montaigne complains in “Sur des vers de Virgile” of the French custom of kissing as a form of greeting. It’s unpleasant for the women, and men don’t get much out of it either, because “pour trois belles, il nous en faut baiser cinquante laides: & à un *estomac tendre*, comme sont ceux de mon aage, un mauvais baiser en surpaie un bon” [for three beautiful women we have to kiss fifty ugly ones. And for a *tender stomach*, as men of my age have, one bad kiss is too high a price for one good one] (III: 5, 881b, DM 386v; 672). In “De la vanité” tender stomachs reappear in what seems at first a different context, but then turns out to be about sex after all:

Aux *estomacs tendres*, il faut des reigles contraintes & artificielles: ainsi font nos medecins, qui mangent le melon & boivent le vin fraiz, ce pendant qu’ils tiennent leur patient obligé au sirop & à la panade. Je ne sçay quels livres, disoit la courtisane Lays, quelle sapience, quelle philosophie, mais ces gens la, battent aussi souvant à ma porte, que nuls autres.

[For *tender stomachs* we need strict and artificial diets. So do our doctors, who eat the melon and drink the new wine while they keep their patient tied down to syrups and slops. “I do not know about their books,” said the courtesan Laïs, “or their wisdom or their philosophy, but those men knock at my door as often as any others.”] (III: 9, 990b, DM 437r-37v; 757*)

Tender stomachs, whether in the singular or plural, make only these two appearances in the *Essays*.

(5) So too do *tendrons*. In “Sur des vers de Virgile” Montaigne writes:

Et ce germe de beauté naissante ne se laisse manier à mains si gourdes et pratiquer à moyens purs materiels. Car, comme respondit ce philosophe ancien à celui qui se moquoit de quoy il n'avoit sçeu gagner la bonne grace d'un *tendron* qu'il pourchassoit: mon amy, le hameçon ne mord pas à du fromage si frais.

[And this bud of nascent beauty does not let itself be handled by such stiff hands or be won over by purely material means. For as that ancient philosopher replied to one who mocked him for having been unable to win the good graces of a *tender youth* he was pursuing: “My friend, the hook will not bite into such fresh cheese.”] (III: 5, 894c; 682)

This post-1588 addition matches nicely an allusion in “De la vanité” to how the aged King David kept warm: “on fournissoit des jeunes *tendrons*, à couvrir la nuit ses vieux

membres, & mesler la douceur de leur haleine, à la sienne aigre & poissante” [he was furnished with *tender young girls* to keep his old limbs warm at night, and mingle the sweetness of their breath with the sourness and oppressiveness of his] (III: 9, 981-82b, DM 433r; 750). In both anecdotes, old and young are brought together in a sexual context, though in opposite ways. The ancient (that is, aged) philosopher make advances on a youth; the aged king does not make advances on the girls, but they are placed in his lap without his asking for them.

At this point in “De la vanité” Montaigne is arguing that those entering into old age, with its ailments and eventual death, should go live alone and not burden their family with their cares and complaints. He pairs his allusion to David with another to King Louis XI, who was rumored to have slit the throats of children to use their blood as medicine against his illness. Both are examples of the old crushing the young: “Nous avons loy de nous appuyer, non pas de nous coucher, si lourdement sur autrui, & nous estayer en leur ruyne” [We have a right to lean, but not to lie down so heavily, on others, or to find our support in their ruin] (III: 9, 981b, DM 433r; 750). Sex is not a factor in this discussion--until we come to the story recounted in I Kings 1, which Montaigne alters to make of one girl (Abishag the Shunammite) several. Nevertheless that story responds uncannily to what he was saying in his chapter on sex, “Sur des vers de Virgile,” just before he brought up the one about the ancient philosopher pursuing the “tendron.” Montaigne was discussing old age there, just as he would be when “tendrons” come up again in “De la vanité.” But more than that, he was speaking of the power of sex to warm up an old man, which is precisely the reason the virgin was brought to the king: “When King David was old and well advanced in years, *he could not keep warm* even when they put covers over him. So his servants said to him, 'Let us look for a young virgin to attend the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king *may keep warm*'” (I Kings 1: 1-2).⁵ Montaigne in that part of “Des vers de Virgile” was saying of love that at his advanced age

Je n’ay point autre passion qui m’exerce. Ce que l’avarice, l’ambition, les querelles, les procès, font à l’endroit des autres . . . l’amour le feroit plus commodément: il me rendroit la vigilance, la sobriété, la grace, le soing de ma personne: r’asseureroit ma contenance, à ce que les grimaces de la vieillesse, ces grimaces difformes & pitoiables, ne vissent à la corrompre . . . : *reschauferoit*, au moins en songe, ce sang que nature abandonne.

[I have no other passion that exercises me. What avarice, ambition, quarrels, lawsuits, do for others . . . love would do more agreeably. It would restore to me vigilance, sobriety, grace, care for my person; would secure my countenance, so that the grimaces of old age, those deformed and pitiable grimaces, should not come to disfigure it . . . would *warm up*

⁵ Et rex David senuerat habebatque aetatis plurimos dies cumque operiretur vestibibus *non calefiebat* dixerunt ergo ei servi sui quaeramus domino nostro regi adulescentulam virginem et stet coram rege et foveat eum dormiatque in sinu tuo et *calefaciat* dominum nostrum regem.

again, at least in dreams, this blood that nature is abandoning.] (III: 5, 893b, DM 392r; 681-82*)

And then, in a post-1588 passage inserted just before this, Montaigne recreates the scene where the “tendron” is brought in to “couver” a cold body to warm it up, except that now it is the soul that plays the tendron’s role: “aux plaisirs corporels, est-ce pas injustice d’en refroidir l’ame, et dire, qu’il l’y faille entrainer comme à quelque obligation et nécessité contrainte et servile? C’est à elle plus tost de les *couver* et fomentier” [in bodily pleasures, is it not unjust to cool the soul toward them and say that she should be dragged to them as to some constrained and servile obligation and necessity? It is rather for her *to place herself over them like a brooding hen* and warm them up] (III: 5, 893c; 681*⁶).

That is, the soul should take an active role in inciting the body to sexual activity, so that sex at least in the mind (“au moins en songe”) could warm up that poor body. When one’s body is weakened by age “il est excusable de le *rechauffer* & soutenir par art: & par l’entremise de la fantasie, luy faire revenir l’appetit & l’allegresse, puis que de soy il l’a perdue” [it is excusable to *warm* it up and support it by art, and by the intervention of the imagination to restore to it appetite and joy, since by itself it has lost them] (III: 5, 892b, 391v; 681*).

Montaigne plays another variation on this brooding in a post-1588 addition immediately following the allusion to David and the girls brought in to “couver” his body: “La decreptitude est qualité solitaire. Je suis sociable jusques à excez. Si me semble il raisonnable que meshuy je soustraye de la veue du monde mon importunité, et la *couve* à moy seul” [Decreptitude is a solitary quality. I am sociable to excess. Yet it seems reasonable to me that henceforth I should withdraw my importunity from the sight of the world and *brood* on it by myself] (III: 9, 982c; 750*). This C addition obviously picks up on the David story, transforming what happened between the “jeunes tendrons” and David into something taking place within Montaigne, but as a brooding interior to the self it likewise echoes the internal brooding of the C addition in the companion chapter in which the soul is invited to “couver” the body.

We can see Montaigne enriching both the text of III: 9 and the intratext that chapter forms with III: 5 by his post-1588 additions. Love’s warming power in III: 5 already in 1588 matched the warming power of the “tendrons” in David’s bed in III: 9. In one C addition to III: 5 the erotic pursuit of a “tendron” is brought in to match David’s “tendrons”; in another, the soul is invited to “couver” the body as the tendrons did the king’s. In an addition to III: 9 the verb “couver” follows close on the heels of the one in the David story, but in doing so evokes another brooding (another “couver”) added to III: 5.

⁶ Villey glosses “fomentier” as “réchauffer” [to warm up] (893n), as does Balsamo et al, (937n).