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# Carver, Cavell, and the Uncanniness of the Ordinary

Niklas Forsberg

## On the Turning Away

A TYPICAL PHILOSOPHICAL MOVE is to divide our world into two. In its most general variety such a division leads to a distinction between appearance and reality. In more subtle versions it comes out as the difference between the just government and the world we live in, between the true me and the lowlife I am, between our emotionally charged responses to each other in contrast to strictly rational ones, etc. We are supposed to move away from the ordinary world toward a better one, from our ordinary selves toward our true selves; and philosophy is often thought to be the prime mover here. This sense of a doubled world is so common in philosophy that it would be more accurate to say that philosophy begins in a turn away from the ordinary, rather than that it begins in wonder (as suggested by Plato and Aristotle).<sup>1</sup>

The sense of a doubled world is also inherent in both the common idea that our ordinary language is fluctuating and vague, and in that idea's subsequent quest for a more precise language. The quest for a more accurate language has taken the form of a search for a formal language, a scientific language, even a mathematical language; it has also taken the form of a turn to literature, poetry, and nearly all other art forms. Differences aside, *something* is exactly the same in Gottlob Frege's quest for a *Begriffsschrift* and Martin Heidegger's call for a poetical form of "thinking" (which can no longer be called "philosophy").

But if philosophy often—though certainly not always—begins in a turn away from the ordinary, and if philosophy (as we know it) *is* an expression of a certain kind of dissatisfaction or disappointment with the ordinary, then one is more or less forced to ask questions of this sort: Where does this disappointment come from? What spurred this desire to escape the (apparently) fluctuating character of our everyday lives in language? Is this dissatisfaction with the everyday well founded? And why are we to assume that philosophical clarity is to be found by

means of a deliberate turning away from that which troubles, or disturbs, us? These questions *should* trouble us.

Yet it strikes me that these kinds of questions do not get a great deal of attention in philosophy. Does this mean that the dissatisfaction with the ordinary is so well established or well founded that no one needs to talk about it? Perhaps people have already looked closely at the ordinary and discovered that there was nothing to be found. Or do we have reasons to think that one *cannot* approach these questions without lapsing into “mere” (meager, unscientific) psychologizing? Or does it mean that we do not even know that we *are* turning our backs to the ordinary in philosophy, by means of philosophizing?

In what follows, I will discuss three immensely difficult (as I see it) topics. One is the value of attempting to return philosophy home, as it were, to the everyday and the ordinary. One of my leading thoughts here is that ordinary language is not just a given, there for us to take in and relate to in our different ways of philosophizing. Rather I want to underline the ways that even ordinary sense is something we may have to work to attain a clear sense of, the kind of work pursued and encouraged by figures such as J. L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein. The biggest philosophical mistake is the conviction that we already have “ordinary sense” framed.

The second topic concerns the philosophical value of thinking about literature, especially a kind of literature that does not aim to be “philosophical.” My discussion of the philosophical value of literature that does not aim to be philosophical is, obviously, meant to put pressure on our conviction that we already know what “the philosophical” is and where to look for it. Raymond Carver’s short stories contain no philosophy, as we know it, but they must be seen as adequate pictures of what our lives in language may look like, and so we may think about them as exercises of seeing what matters, of uncovering the point, force, importance, thrust, of a small piece of everyday life. There is no self-evident “philosophical content” that Carver’s short stories convey, and no position for which they present arguments. But he has the ability to bring our everyday lives into view in a plain (not moralistic, not didactic) way that makes the familiar return to us in a new, uncanny, way. He thereby helps us see the role that linguistic instability and vulnerability plays in human life.

My discussion of the first two topics here will also serve to shed light on some of Stanley Cavell’s most, well, melodramatic thoughts—thoughts in the expression of which Cavell presents himself at his most vulnerable, perhaps even at his weakest. I am thinking about some of his more baffling remarks in which he, apparently aiming to speak for all of us, suggests not only that there’s a truth in skepticism, but that skepticism is

part of the human condition—remarks like “there is no assignable end to the depth of us to which language reaches; that nevertheless there is no end to our separateness. We are endlessly separate, for *no* reason.”<sup>2</sup>

How could one not instinctively pull back in the face of such exclamations? Can we even imagine somebody saying “Yes, that sounds plausible” as a response to these kinds of thoughts? I think one *ought* to initially reject them and then work one’s way through them, in order to hear them right.

### The Unknown First and the Most Important Aspects

One of the most persistent myths about philosophies that “proceed from the ordinary” is that any kind of philosophy that emphasizes the ordinary does so in order to find the true and original meaning of our words, uncontaminated by “philosophy.” The perseverance with which people insist on thinking that ordinary language philosophers *must* argue that ordinary language constitutes a philosophical standard of correctness, and that uses of language that deviate from ordinary language are *thereby* faulty, is just astonishing. This is pretty much as far away as one may come from what I think of as the real significance of philosophical attention to the everyday. I want to shed light on how figures such as Austin and Wittgenstein think of the everyday and the sense of our ordinary lives in language as being far from simple, as well as immensely difficult to bring into view. It is precisely the *failure* to acknowledge these kinds of difficulties that often leads philosophers into philosophical problems and metaphysical speculation.

Austin, for example, is quite clear on this point: “Ordinary language is *not* the last word: in principle it can everywhere be supplemented and improved upon and superseded. Only remember, it *is* the *first* word.”<sup>3</sup> Ordinary language, by itself, does not offer a way out of philosophical problems by means of supplying us with a standard of correctness or some kind of blueprint for how to solve all philosophical problems. It’s the first word. Not the last.

But what does that mean, more specifically? Here it is, I think, quite easy to halt in one’s thinking too soon. A common way of thinking with and about Austin is to say that he suggests that a philosophical or technical use of a concept has its own context, just like a scientific, well-defined technical concept has a limited range of understandable uses. And we often get into philosophical problems because we do not pay enough attention to these barriers (between, say, ordinary and technical, or philosophical and scientific, or everyday and theoretical).

Philosophical problems occur, according to this view, when two contexts clash, and when we then solve problems by means of recognizing that they do so. Once we have sorted things into the right boxes, the work of the philosopher is done! According to this kind of reading, the first-word/second-word remark merely tells us that a second word, a scientific, specialized, theoretical, technical use of a concept, may occasionally replace the first word and become a new first, as it were. The ordinary language philosopher becomes something like a housekeeper of language. "Don't mix and blend," he says, "that just creates a mess." For if you do, the ordinary language philosopher will threaten to force his way into your house and tidy things up.

If this was all there was to it, the bad reputation of ordinary language philosophy would be well deserved. What I want to suggest, however, is that somebody like Austin gives us more than reasons to think deeply about how scientific, theoretical, and technical uses of language differ from language as used in everyday life. What we need to acknowledge (and what I take to be missing in the reception of Austin's thought, even among many of his followers and admirers) is that the ordinary is *not* simply a given, there for us to just take in, as it were. So, in an ever so important sense, *even the first word is yet to be discovered*. Furthermore, if the ordinary is not always known or clear to us, and if philosophy nevertheless cannot disconnect itself from the ordinary, it follows that there is a sense in which the discovery of the first word also is a (re)discovery of philosophy. Philosophy will often and continuously "come to us" in unexpected ways and be discovered in places where we did not expect to find it.<sup>4</sup> The word "philosophy" does not simply denote a fixed subject matter, a specific field of inquiry. Incidentally, this also helps us see why a philosopher who discovers philosophy anew (just like Austin did) will often be accused (just like Austin was) of "not doing philosophy."

I want to suggest that "ordinary language" *is* an important site for philosophical reflection, but not because it is simple and clear. Rather, I want to show that it is possible to be dissatisfied with the philosophical aspiration to escape the ordinary (to rise above it, as it were), and to still think that the everyday and ordinary language are deeply problematic and immensely difficult to understand. This means, by extension, that a philosophy that evades the everyday thereby evades its own seriousness and is quite likely to betray its own aspirations. A flight from ordinary language is a flight from philosophy.

Many forms of philosophical reasoning about specific concepts (philosophers always creatively dub these "x"), take this shape:

- i. “*This* is what we ordinarily mean when we say ‘*x*.’”
- ii. “*That* is a naive, faulty, confused, corrupt way of thinking about ‘*x*.’”
- iii. “I will now offer you a *new way to think about ‘x’* in a way that is *not* naive, faulty, confused, or corrupt (or all of the above).”

But what one often does *not* realize, or examine philosophically, is precisely one’s own conviction that *this is* what these concepts ordinarily mean, as assumed in (i). At this point I find Austin and Wittgenstein extremely helpful. They manage to make clear that it is not so much the escape from the ordinary itself that is the problem, as it is the idea that one has managed to frame *the* sense (in the singular) of some word of ordinary language. The problem becomes truly important if one then goes on to think of oneself as held back personally and philosophically by, say, *that* particular inflection of a concept. We must find ways to make clear that our lives in language are much more complicated than philosophers tend to think, and we must find ways to let our thoughts linger in the ordinary and not move on too soon.<sup>5</sup>

The powerful reference to things we ordinarily say enters philosophy as the attempt to bring a manifold of uses into view (i); not as a corrective recommendation for how to talk, as in (iii) above. Austin argues, for example, that “over-simplification, schematization, and constant obsessive repetition of the same small range of jejune ‘examples’ are . . . far too common to be dismissed as an occasional weakness of philosophers.”<sup>6</sup> In direct contrast to the received view of this strand of thought, Austin is abundantly clear that, in his view, the *point* of ordinary language philosophy is to show that “our ordinary words are much subtler in their uses, and mark many more distinctions, than philosophers have realized; and that the facts of perception, as discovered by, for instance, psychologists but also as noted by common mortals, are much more diverse and complicated than has been allowed for. It is essential, here as elsewhere, to abandon old habits of *Gleichschaltung*, the deeply ingrained worship of tidy-looking dichotomies.”<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, to learn how to see—and so to discover philosophy anew—is a matter of patience and of learning to let one’s eyes remain still and take in what is really there.<sup>8</sup> It is a matter of waiting, of not thinking that one already knows, and of being able to acknowledge that truth may unfold in front of us when we least expect it. This is at least part of what Wittgenstein is after when he says that “the aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something—because it is always before one’s eyes.) The real foundations of his enquiry do not strike a

man at all.”<sup>9</sup> To perceive the everyday and to become clear about one’s own ordinary language are tasks, achievements.<sup>10</sup>

I now want to connect these reflections to the idea that the philosophical importance of literature cannot be reduced to its capacity to express, illustrate, test, exemplify, or elucidate “a philosophy.” (I am also suspicious of further shadowy ideas about, say, literature’s ability to express the inexpressible, but these questions require a different sort of discussion.) For *if* literature’s role in philosophy is to illustrate, exemplify, test, or express “a philosophy,” then “the philosophy” must be in place already at the outset—the thinking behind it already done, as it were. Literature is reduced to something that is at the service of philosophy.

I do not mean to suggest that these kinds of employments of literature are necessarily bad or mistaken. It is quite possible, for example, that one will understand Martha Nussbaum’s Aristotelean virtue theory better by means of illustrative descriptions of a kind of virtuous character, and it is perhaps possible to think fruitfully about the limits of, say, utilitarian ethics by means of reading Dostoyevsky, in the same way as it may be striking to think about thought experiments such as Robert Nozick’s “experience machine” or Hilary Putnam’s brain in a vat after watching *The Matrix*.<sup>11</sup> But often, in such cases, the philosophical thought itself is already clearly articulated *before* we enter the work of art, and there is little, if any, room for the thought that the artwork itself is a piece of philosophy, or philosophizes on its own (with or without the intention of the author).

We need a way to think about literature as “having its own say”—as being a place of discovery, a work of attention, and a form of reflection upon the human condition, that *challenges* philosophy (as we know it) and brings something that “we did not know we knew” into view.<sup>12</sup> If we want to reach clarity about the “aspects of things that are most important for us,” as Wittgenstein suggested, we just might need a presentation of all those things that are “hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity.”<sup>13</sup> If I am right in suggesting that one important route to bad philosophizing is the conviction that we already know what sense there is to be found in the ordinary, then we just may need a presentation of what is “always before our eyes” that not only brings it into view, but also presents the familiar *as* something unfamiliar, the homely as strange. We just might need to learn that we are *not* as at home as we think we are in the language we call ours.

Cue Carver.

## On Gifts and Apologies

Carver reports that he once walked around for several days with the sentence “He was running the vacuum cleaner when the telephone rang” in his head, knowing that “there was a story there and that it wanted telling.”<sup>14</sup>

It strikes me as quite significant that Carver, an author who writes fiction—that is, “makes things up” in some sense—talks about his own work, the writing of short stories, in terms of *discoveries*. As an author one needs, Carver seems to suggest, to *wait* for the story to unfold itself. “The first sentence of the story,” Carver says, “had *offered itself* to me when I began it.”<sup>15</sup> He also claims that *the story* “wanted telling.” A sentence reported itself, and thus it became clear to Carver that there was a story there that *wanted* to be told.

“The intentionality of unwritten stories” sounds like a rather suspicious subject matter for philosophical discussion, and Carver’s claim will probably seem strange to some. But it foregrounds the idea that the stories writers of fiction tell come from somewhere too. That they are “made up” does not disqualify that fact. It also matters that not all stories that are relevant and demand our attention are overly dramatic. And it matters too that seeing what matters, uncovering the point, force, importance, thrust, of a small piece of everyday life, is quite a difficult endeavor, which may require some detailed and patient work on our behalf.

This is precisely what I take Carver’s short stories to be doing. They are like cross-sections of everyday life. They are precise and accurate, and they demand our attention *without* “having something (recognizable as specifically philosophical) to say.” They are not moralistic, not didactic. Carver has an ability to bring the familiar to us in a stark, straightforward way, so that the familiar returns to us aslant, as uncanny.

One may perhaps speak about a “Carver mood”—to make contact with Emerson: “Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and as we pass through them they prove to be many-colored lenses which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus”—but then one must be able to say something about what that mood is, and what that mood allows one to see, or teaches one to be attuned to, or what kind of attention that kind of mood enables.<sup>16</sup>

The mood that Carver invites us to pass through is not formed out of words and works of kings, great battles, grand human conquests, and so on and so forth. Carver, one may say, follows Emerson on this point in his effort to “embrace the common” and “explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low.”<sup>17</sup> This does not mean that Carver’s pictures of human life are without edge. But there are various ways to portray the



wounded and the vulnerable. Husbands and wives may have been, and may still be, hurting each other. His short stories are not enactments of the historian's "great battles of humankind," and if they are related to a major event, they tend to describe something after the event—it has already happened. Carver is not an author who bangs his drum, but one who ends a poem called *Drinking While Driving* with "Any minute now, something will happen."<sup>18</sup> If there's drama and death in one of his stories, the deadly deeds are mentioned almost in passing: "Jerry used the same rock on both girls, first on the girl called Sharon and then on the one that was supposed to be Bill's."<sup>19</sup> And then the whole thing ends, abruptly.

So what we get are detailed descriptions of life in-between. The catastrophes and miracles have already happened or have not happened yet—and the more dramatic events of his short stories are mentioned in passing. It matters that short stories—Carver's preferred form—are, well, short. They begin too late and end too soon.

Listen, for example, to this opening of one of Carver's short stories:

Vera's car was there, no others, and Burt gave thanks for that. He pulled into the drive and stopped beside the pie he'd dropped the night before. It was still there, the aluminum pan upside down, a halo of pumpkin filling on the pavement. It was the day after Christmas.

He'd come on Christmas day to visit his wife and children. Vera had warned him beforehand. She'd told him the score. She'd said he had to be out by six o'clock because her friend and his children were coming for dinner.<sup>20</sup>

It is hard to imagine an opening that would sound more like Carver than this. Nothing fancy, nothing out of the ordinary. Yet it is also quite clear that all is not well. For starters, there's the pumpkin pie and the aluminum pan on the driveway. It was dropped the night before, so we know that there has been time to clean it up, but nobody has done so. Did they not want to? Did they not care? Somebody has acted as if this accident never happened, or has been too upset to care, or has willfully left the mess, as if it were an emblem of something. Some misfortune of a "domestic" nature happened last night, and we may assume that anyone who passes by will notice.

Burt has been allowed to come and visit his wife and children. But a man who is *allowed* to visit his wife and children is a husband in a specific sense. And given that she has the custody of the kids, and that she has the power to dictate the rules for his visit—"She'd told him the score"—we may also assume that he, Burt, is not in a good place; that this divorce was a hard blow to him. With good reason, perhaps. For we are (are we not?) ready, after nothing more than eight sentences,

to think that somehow, he is to blame. And we also know (don't we?) that the "friend" who is supposed to arrive with *his* kids after six o'clock is not just any old friend. But a great deal of the story depends on the fact that for *Burt*, Vera's friend can be no more than a friend, cannot be a "boyfriend," he just *cannot* be. (Classic case of denial, of course.)

The following paragraph begins to describe Burt's visit on Christmas day, and I want to discuss this passage in relation to these questions: What reasons do we have to say that Burt's separateness—his existence as tormented by a separation, the divorce—tells us something important about the uncanniness of the everyday and ordinary language? Can this help us see that this form of uncanniness may be something that spurs philosophical confusion and reflection and, in some cases, typically philosophical aversive maneuvers?

So, here's a glimpse at Burt's visit on Christmas day:

They had sat in the living room and solemnly opened the presents Burt had brought over. They had opened his packages while other packages wrapped in festive paper lay piled under the tree waiting for six o'clock.

He had watched his children open their gifts, waited while Vera undid the ribbon on hers. He saw her slip off the paper, lift the lid, take out the cashmere sweater.

"It's nice," she said. "Thank you, Burt."

"Try it on," his daughter said.

"Put it on," his son said.

Burt looked at his son, grateful for his backing him up.

She did try it on. Vera went to the bedroom and came out with it on.

"It's nice," she said.

"It's nice on *you*," Burt said, and felt a welling in his chest.

He opened his gifts. From Vera, a gift certificate at Sondheim's men's store. From his daughter, a matching comb and brush. From his son, a ballpoint pen. (ST 105–06)<sup>21</sup>

It is clear that Burt is there only on sufferance—the *real* festivities begin at six o'clock.

I want us to focus now on the ways we talk about gifts and giving, and on the way that this passage includes a claim of sorts about the nature of a gift. One common way to think about the things we keep is that they are what they are in themselves, as it were. They have a set of properties or features. They often have a specific function. They can be replaced if they break. They are objects, and in that sense *objective*, in contrast to *subjective*. And so one may feel inclined to think about the value and importance of a gift in terms of the qualities of the thing.

But is the value and importance of the cashmere sweater, *this* sweater, possible to measure by means of describing its objective features? It's cashmere. Cashmere sweaters usually come in sizes that do not fit all. (It is beige, we are told in the nonedited version.) So should we say that this was a good gift, the right one perhaps, if Vera *likes* beige cashmere sweaters in the right size? And would it be fair to say that the authenticity of Vera's gratitude depends on whether or not Burt managed to make the right connections between the objective features of a thing and Vera's preferences?

It looks good, the kids say. But Burt is then quick to stress that it looks good on *her* (Vera). He wants the sweater to mean more than what we can discern from the objective features of the sweater. He wants to say that *she* is beautiful. It wouldn't look good on any woman. This gift is only in a limited sense *for* her. It would be more correct to say that it is *about* her, or *about them*. And so, in this setting, her response to the gift received is a response to his attempt to reach out. And suppose that she really did not like the sweater and said "This is not me," or "This color doesn't become me," or "How much do you really think I weigh?" Are we now to say that they would be in disagreement about the features or properties of the object? No. They are close enough to give gifts to one another. But they are also separate(d). Different from each other, held at a distance from each other. And so the gift comes in as a sort of measurement of both closeness and distance.

It seems clear to me that Burt's heart is calling out for her to like *the gift*, because if she does, it would be a mark of a reduced distance between them. The gift thus marks these individuals as individualities, as separate from each other, at the same time as it elucidates the bond between them, and the vulnerability of that bond. What the gift, the thing, *is* is far from unimportant, but the giving of the gift here reveals something about the uncanniness of the ordinary. The act of giving may bring the bond between two persons, and the vulnerability of that bond, into broad daylight. It may show that we are exposed to one another. Our intimacy, the bond between us, is made visible by the ways we talk to each other, and perhaps this bond *is* nothing less and nothing more than the ways we talk to each other. From a naturalistic perspective, what we say may be nothing more than "thank you." But the physical utterance of a sequence of words is *not* how we measure the weight of them. The "thank you" that says "Yes, please come home again" is quite different from the "thank you" that says "It's nice, but you need to go now."

The meaning of a gift—and our shared understanding of what gifts are—cannot be disconnected from what happened before and what happens after, the concrete exchange of things. The sense of what hap-

pens in a scene (or in a short story, or in a concrete exchange of words and things) falls back upon what's off-frame—behind it and ahead of it.

This is something that Carver teaches us. He does that, I assume, without wanting to give us his “philosophy of . . . something”—say, the gift, language, communication, relationships, love, emotions, fatherhood, marriage. And it strikes me that the eventuality of somebody “discovering” that Carver actually had this or that intention changes nothing. What makes this passage philosophically relevant is not that Carver wanted to make one claim rather than another, take this “position” rather than that. Instead, it is a matter of precision. It is a matter of him being able to listen to how words sound. He philosophizes with his ears, one may perhaps say—*this* is the way these words sound at this particular moment, and everything depends on that. It is a question of *telling it like it is*. Because of Carver's ability to find the precise wordings in different situations, the text serves to shed light on the ways that meaning has its contexts (which is not necessarily the same thing as saying that the context is what breathes life into otherwise dead signs). My formulation “telling it like it is” is obviously not meant to be understood in terms of photographic copying. Carver's short stories are not mimetic in that naive sense. But Carver, so it seems to me, has a sensitive ear. He knows how to discover and present his characters' wordings. He tells it like it is, not because he writes realistic short stories and not, say, fantasy, but because his literary images leave us with characters' wordings, and he does not explain them, does not claim that the wordings are to be traced back to something ulterior, to a literary content, a philosophical idea(1) that precedes the text and that the text is supposed to give voice to. We, his readers, are therefore assigned the task of trying to understand *them*.<sup>22</sup> “To care about a specific character,” Cavell claims, “is to care about the utterly specific words he says when and as he says them.”<sup>23</sup>

As the story unfolds, Burt stays for a while with his (former) family—but not for long, he is not allowed to—and it is clear that he thinks, or wants to think, that *this* is his home. “Burt liked it where he was. He liked it in front of the fireplace, a glass in hand, his house, his home” (ST 106).<sup>24</sup> On his way out, he puts too many logs of wax and sawdust on the fire, and steals the family's pumpkin pies. As he fumbles with the door to his car one of them falls to the ground.

Burt is back the next day to apologize, but Vera (who is the only one at home now) is not open to excuses. He has wrecked one holiday too many. While Burt is there, attempting to apologize, his mind wanders to his son's bicycle that needs to be repaired and to the “weeds growing along the redwood fence” (ST 108). That is, he knows that he has done wrong, and all he sees are the responsibilities he (still thinks he) has

to, but fails to, meet (his son's bike and their garden). The distancing, or detachment, of the wandering mind that we (ordinarily) may feel inclined to think of in terms of not-being-present or not-paying-attention is here (in the clearing of the aspects of the ordinary that we may have a hard time discerning) rather a signal of a desire for intimacy. Burt's mind wanders away from Vera, not because he does not want to be close to her and their children, but because he wants to. Nevertheless, desired intimacy is not intimacy: "I am sorry" is not good enough, yet there are no other words he can reach for. Put differently, he can *say* that he is sorry. He can *mean* it in as serious a manner as a man can mean it. But her mind is set. They are beyond apologies.

One cannot read this story without knowing that Burt wants them to get back together, and it is equally obvious that Vera is done with him. Their life as a couple has come to an end. But of course, the words "I'm sorry" are still there, and Burt can and will reach for them. And it will always be up to Vera to respond to them. So this is the kind of tragedy that they will live with, at least until Burt realizes that the apology's (logical) possibility is no longer relevant. The words "I'm sorry" can become idle too.

What one must find interesting here is that if *we*, as readers of this short story, can see so clearly that this door is shut, then *why* cannot Burt see this too? The connotative logic of the story could hardly be any clearer. Burt is heartbreakingly off the mark when he thinks: "They had to have a serious talk soon. There were things that needed talking about, important things that had to be discussed. They'd talk again. Maybe after the holidays were over and things got back to normal" (ST 113). He is just as competent as we are when it comes to knowing the language. He knows Vera and their kids in a way that we cannot. One may perhaps say that he knows and understands the context much better than we ever can. They have had a life together; we have merely seen a snapshot of it. Why should *we* see this, but Burt not? Everything lies in plain view.

It might be tempting—especially within a Cavellian idiom—to say that Burt's problem here is not one of knowing but one of acknowledging, and it is true that something like that is going on here. It may be rather helpful to describe Burt's tragedy in terms of a failure to acknowledge Vera's words. But such a reading may also be too rushed. For one would misrepresent that matter if one thought that Burt would be happy, or could at least open up a path toward goodness and happiness, if he only could acknowledge what he knows (that is, take Vera at her word). That line of thinking may seem to suggest that acknowledgement is *the* route to truth. But shouldn't we say that acknowledgements come in many forms too? It is likely that Burt's problem is not that he lacks the

relevant kind of knowledge. But why should we not say that the kind of aversive maneuvers that Burt engages in are forms of acknowledgment too? If we say, for example, that Burt is in denial, then that denial is a form of acknowledgment too, right? “A ‘failure to know’ might just mean a piece of ignorance, an absence of something, a blank. A ‘failure to acknowledge’ is the presence of something, a confusion, an indifference, a callousness, an exhaustion, a coldness.”<sup>25</sup> This means that it may be true to say that Burt’s problem is not a problem of knowing, but one of acknowledging. It does not mean, however, that he would surmount his difficulties if he only acknowledged (her, her words)—for “the concept of acknowledgment is evidenced equally by its failure as by its success.”<sup>26</sup> Burt’s tragedy is not *caused* by him failing to acknowledge Vera (though one may perhaps say that Burt’s failure to acknowledge Vera *is* his tragedy.) It is also quite possible that the best way to describe Burt’s situation is to say that he is in denial—that he is, as it were, completely unable to hear her out—and so there actually still is a question of knowledge in play. But, in such a case, it is still likely that the attainment of new knowledge would not solve things. The question of acknowledgment would still arise, or take on a new shape under the pressure of that knowledge. This is, I take it, one way of saying that acknowledgment “goes beyond knowledge,” and it does so not “in the order of knowledge, but in its requirement that I *do* something or reveal something on the basis of that knowledge.”<sup>27</sup>

Where’s Carver in all of this? Should we say that the merit of Carver’s short stories is that he portrays Cavell’s theory of acknowledgment? No. I think it would be better to say that Carver comes in here, not as an illustrator of Cavell’s thought (in fact, I have no reason at all to assume this), but as a sensitive ear. A different way to say this is to say that Carver’s writing clearly and skillfully “assume(s) responsibility for three of the features of the language it lives upon: (1) that every mark of a language means something in the language, one thing rather than another; that a language is totally, systematically meaningful; (2) that words and their orderings are meant by human beings, that they contain (or conceal) their beliefs, express (or deny) convictions; and (3) that the saying of something when and as it is said is as significant as the meaning and the ordering of the words said.”<sup>28</sup> That is, Carver becomes relevant because he makes Burt’s case clear to us—shows us that our moral vulnerability is rooted in, or at least not disconnected from, questions of language. Carver teaches us that our word is our bond, not because Carver wanted to teach us that our word is our bond but because he is able to picture the ways that the choice of words, the tone of them, the fact and fate of them, their timing and timeliness, may reveal the world as it is—and we understand Burt because we understand that linguistic vulnerability.

The image of Burt failing to embrace the words handed to him is an image of Burt at his weakest; and Burt at his weakest is also, one may say, an image of ordinary language philosophy at *its* weakest: “An urgent methodological issue of ordinary language philosophy—and the issue about which this cast of thought is philosophically at its weakest—is that of accounting for the fact that we are the victims of the very words of which we are at the same time the masters; victims and masters of the fact of words.”<sup>29</sup> And we can now begin to more directly discuss Cavell’s thought about the uncanniness of the ordinary.

### The Uncanny

The concept of the uncanny [*Unheimlich*] has a particular ring to it in German. The word *Heimlich* means “familiar” and “secret,” which suggests thick layers of connotations. Ordinarily, the word *Unheimlich* translates to “uncanny” or “awful” or perhaps even “dreadful”—but we should remain open to the connotative logic that links these thoughts to something that is “no-longer-secret,” to the disclosed; the uncanny links us to the nakedness and vulnerability we are exposed to when everything is open to view, in plain sight. That the uncanny includes this relation between the familiar and the strange, the hidden and the disclosed, is quite important. One may say that we may want to hide, or deny, only things that others can see. In short, the term *Unheimlich* suggests that *there is something uncanny in that which is open to view*.

In Cavell’s thinking, “the uncanniness of the ordinary is epitomized by the possibility or threat of what philosophy has called skepticism, understood . . . as the capacity, even desire, of ordinary language to repudiate itself, specifically to repudiate its power to word the world, to apply to the things we have in common, or to pass them by.”<sup>30</sup> Skepticism, as it enters here, should not be reduced to people and thinkers who claim to hold a skeptical position, and in one of the most well-known passages regarding Cavell’s understanding of skepticism, Cavell makes clear that he does not “confine the term [skepticism] to philosophers who wind up denying that we can ever know.” Rather, he applies it “to any view which takes the existence of the world to be a problem of knowledge” (*CR* 46). The idea here is that what the skeptic denies, and what the anti-skeptic wants to emphasize, are precisely the same thing—criteria. “What philosophically constitutes the everyday is ‘our criteria’ (and the possibility of repudiating them). . . . It is another way of saying that skepticism underlies and joins the concept of a criterion and that of the everyday, since skepticism exactly repudiates the ordinary as constituted

by (or by the repudiation of) our criteria. So the appeal to criteria against skepticism cannot overcome skepticism but merely beg its question."<sup>31</sup>

The wrong way to understand this is to say that human beings first learn the criteria that tell us in which contexts or situations a word is used correctly and then go on to apply words accordingly. As we go through life, from the cradle to the grave, use and criteria come together. First of all, the idea that *all* possible employments of a word or a concept could be surveyable is, at best, empty. And as life changes, so do our concepts. This is true both on a large and on a small scale. A teenager and an adult have different concepts of love, and it makes perfect sense to say that one earns a new concept of love if one is blessed with a child. If a European experiences Halloween in the United States, her concept of "pumpkin" is widened.<sup>32</sup> The concept of a good father is likely to be quite different in a more equal society in which both parents work, than in a society where the work done at home was done without pay and by women only. The concept of sin is different before and after secularization. In Cavell's words: "In learning language, you do not merely learn the pronunciation of sounds, and their grammatical orders, but the 'forms of life' which make those sounds the words they are, do what they do" (*CR* 177–78).

Criteria don't exist outside the lives we lead and they are therefore under constant renegotiation; this is one reason why one may feel out of tune, not at home, in one's own habitat. This also means that understanding one's fellow beings and the situation requires a form of trust in these criteria. *That* the criteria are there, in plain sight, expressed and acknowledged, does not mean that the persons involved will live by them, stay attuned to them, or think and act accordingly.

And so, one may say that the particular form of uneasiness one may feel when reading one of Carver's short stories, the tonality of the Carver mood, is precisely to be seen as a quiet recognition of the truth of this description of our world: this is what our lives together often look like. It is a momentary image of when the homely returns to us unfamiliar and frightening. It is by no means the *only* image of what life is and can be, and it is not the only image of how philosophical thought relates to the everyday and our ordinary language. But it is one image. An important one. A neglected one. Life can be like this, and an important part of philosophy *is* discovered here.

## Concluding Remarks

I have tried to show that the senses of the everyday and of our ordinary language are far from clear and stable, and that many philosophical



problems are formed precisely out of a false sense of having framed “the ordinary sense.” One of the main achievements of ordinary language philosophy, as I want to think of it, is its capacity to *undo* that false sense of certainty.

Carver’s stories philosophize about these things. We may speak about Carver’s stories as investigations into what it means to share a language, but I don’t think Carver intentionally uses literature to make philosophical points. One may perhaps think that this has to do with Carver being a realist writer, and that is surely part of it. But my view of why Carver’s short stories are so pertinent, expounding the Cavellian theme about the ordinary and the uncanniness of the ordinary, is something that goes beyond the fact that Carver is a skilled realist writer. In order to really learn why Carver is helpful here, we also need to make contact with, elucidate and reflect upon, formal features of Carver’s work.

One thing about Carver’s *form* is what might be called his “realist spirit,” i.e., a desire to tell it like it is. One of the best formulations of the spirit in which he writes is his own:

I have some three-by-five cards [taped to the wall beside my desk]. “Fundamental accuracy of statement is the ONE sole morality of writing.” Ezra Pound. It is not everything by ANY means, but if a writer has “fundamental accuracy of statement” going for him, he’s at least on the right track.

I have this three-by-five up there with this fragment of a sentence from Chekhov: “and suddenly everything became clear to him.” I find these words filled with wonder and possibility. I love their simple clarity, and the hint of revelation that’s implied. There’s mystery too. What has been unclear before? Why is it just now becoming clear? What’s happened? Most of all—what now? There are consequences as a result of such sudden awakenings. I feel a sharp sense of relief—and anticipation.

I overheard the writer Geoffrey Wolff say “No cheap tricks” to a group of writing students. That should go on a three-by-five card. I’d amend it a little to “No tricks.” Period. I hate tricks. [—] Writers do not need tricks or gimmicks or even necessarily to be the smartest fellows on the block. At the risk of becoming foolish, a writer sometimes needs to be able to just stand and gape at this thing or that—a sunset or an old shoe—in absolute and simple amazement.<sup>33</sup>

It is important to take note of the fact that one may write in a realist spirit in any literary genre. “Fundamental accuracy of statement”—*this* character can only say *this* word, in *this* way, in *this* tone, in *this* light and so on—will make *any* writing (fictional or not, realistic or not) better.

So precision is one thing. Another is precisely captured in the uncanniness of the ordinary and in the philosophical aspiration to escape it. Carver’s writings elucidate the ways in which the world that we share

on a daily basis—that is, *our* language and *its* criteria, our communality—is all we have to go on when we struggle to “word the world” and understand each other. If we happen to be caught by, or driven by, classical metaphysical demands, this is bound to be unsatisfying. We make contact with words. We break bonds by repudiating them (unwittingly or not). What words *mean* is precisely the sort of thing that the philosophically inclined mind is more than willing to disclaim.<sup>34</sup> For example, the fact that we see Burt repudiate Vera’s words is what unveils the drama, makes the story move. (It is as if Burt wants the words “I’m sorry” to do the work of forgiving *for* them.) Carver can thus be said to surpass our desire to smoothen and order the everyday (by means of philosophical abstraction, generalization, and theorization), and to bring the uncanniness into view in (and by means of) a distinct artistic form. This is one of the reasons why I want, in Cavell’s aftermath, to think of the *work* as intending, as thinking, as philosophizing, quite regardless of what its author intended.<sup>35</sup> Carver’s stories work (hold together, tick) on the condition that his readers see (or at least experience) “the condition of words” as explicated in them (or as repudiated by some individuals in them).<sup>36</sup> For example, when Vera tells Burt to go, he *can* hear a “go” that leaves the nature of their relationship in a not-too-distant tomorrow open; even though it is quite clear that we, the readers of the story, must hear a “go” that suggests that there is no tomorrow of that relationship in that sense. The short story as a whole, the form of it, feeds, one may perhaps say, on the tension created between Vera’s wordings and Burt’s repudiations—a tension rooted in the fact that language is not a system that can take over the responsibility to mean. Carver has created an accurate image of such a conversational scene. Cavell has crafted ways for us to discern the philosophical and moral relevance of such scenes. (And I also think it’s fair to say that such scenes, as well as the relevance of them, tend to be downplayed if seen at all in contemporary philosophy.) One may also say that Carver has crafted a story that enables us to keep Cavell’s wordings grounded—clearing a path for an understanding of them that does not render his view overly dramatic.

There is also a formal kind of resemblance between “the impulse to philosophy” and the short story as form. For if it is true that “there is nothing beyond the succession of each and every day; and grasping a day, accepting the ordinary, is not a given but a task”<sup>37</sup>—as Cavell says after Emerson—and if the philosophical impulse is precisely the denial of the everyday spelled out in this way, *then* the short story, as a form, can be seen as an image of this situation. The formal features of the short story remind us of the fact that the weight of our words depend on what comes before and on what follows; it depends on the mood,

or tonality, of the “now” (or the utterance) as it takes shape because of that “before” and that “after.” So one of the lessons that one may bring into view by means of reading Carver’s short stories is that *reference*, the ribbon tied between the word and the world, *does not* and *cannot* frame sense and meaning for us; and that, in a surprisingly large amount of cases, reference is nothing without tonality and mood, without atmosphere and human beings exposed to one another (which is not to say that reference is nothing).

The short story is quite literally nothing beyond one of those days in that succession—beyond *it*, beyond that day, beyond that moment. And a good short story works because we see that there has been a “before” and there will be an “after.” The recognition that life just may be nothing more than the succession of days, and that human intimacy depends on shared concepts—the willingness to acknowledge each others’ projections of words—is likely to be a terrifying encapsulation of the human condition, and precisely the reason why somebody like Cavell finds it adequate to say that “nothing is more human than the wish to deny one’s humanity” (*CR* 109). But if that thought, that “human wish,” is a recognition of the impossibility of a life without vulnerable bonds between us on the one hand, and the acknowledgement of the philosophical impulse to solidify and secure knowledge and morality beyond this on the other hand, then perhaps such a wish is not as impenetrable or baffling as it may seem. After all, the recognition of a *vulnerable* bond is also the acknowledgement of a *bond*.<sup>38</sup>

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## Notes

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1 In “Theaetetus,” Socrates says: “It seems that Theodorus was not far from the truth when he guessed what kind of person you are. For this is an experience which is characteristic of a philosopher, this wondering: this is where philosophy begins and nowhere else.” See Plato, “Theaetetus,” in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 173d. Aristotle claims that “human beings originally began philosophy, as they do now, because of wonder.” See Aristotle, “Metaphysics,” in Aristotle, *Introductory Readings*, trans. Terence Irwin and Gail Fine (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996), 982b.

2 Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy*, new ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press 1979), 369 (hereafter cited as *CR*).

3 J. L. Austin, "A Plea for Excuses," in *Philosophical Papers*, 3rd ed., ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 185.

4 It may be helpful here to return to these oft-quoted words from Kant's first critique: "We cannot learn philosophy; for where is it, who is in possession of it, and how shall we recognize it? We can only learn to philosophize." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, unabridged ed. (Boston: St. Martin's, 1965), A838/B866.

5 There are, of course, other reasons for a philosopher to want to escape the ordinary. One of the most predominant is the idea that ordinary language is unclear and therefore needs to be surpassed. This may seem to go against the line of thought presented here, and in some respect that's true. But there's no need to think that philosophical problems have one root only. If, however, one attempts to evade the ordinary because our ordinary language is unclear, one is at least clear about what one wants to say, and one knows that the ordinary ways of turning our concepts do not enable one to express a particular meaning with precision—which is to say that one is again driven by a sense of disappointment with the ordinary, and that disappointment cannot be disconnected from an idea of what ordinary language means, even if one thinks that ordinary language means too much, or is lacking the required form of precision.

6 Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia*, reconstructed from the manuscript notes by G. J. Warnock (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 3.

7 Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia*, 3.

8 I allude here to some of Iris Murdoch's formulations that, I think, well capture both the difficulty of assessing the everyday philosophically, and the philosophical urge to evade the responsibility to do so. Murdoch says, for example: "The details of our world deserve our respectful and loving attention, as artists have always known. There is an attentive patient delay of judgment, a kind of humble agnosticism, which lets the object be." Murdoch, *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (1992; London: Vintage, 2003), 377.

9 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 2nd ed., trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997), §129.

10 Cavell, "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary," in *In Quest for the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988), 171. It should also be noted that I think that Austin is closer to Cavell on this point than Cavell recognizes, in e.g., "An Emerson Mood," in Cavell, *Emerson's Transcendental Etudes*, ed. David Justin Hodge (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2003), 21–22.

11 See Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 42–45; and Hilary Putnam, "Brains in a vat," in *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982).

12 Literature, Murdoch argued, "shows us the world, and much pleasure in art is a pleasure of recognition of what we vaguely knew was there but never saw before. Art is mimesis and good art is, to use another Platonic term, *anamnesis*, 'memory' of what we did not know we knew. Art 'holds up a mirror to nature.'" Murdoch, "Literature and Philosophy: A Conversation with Bryan Magee," in *Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature*, ed. Peter Conradi, foreword by George Steiner (New York: Penguin, 1999), 12 (emphasis mine). I have explored these themes in more detail in my *Language Lost and Found: On Iris Murdoch and the Limits of Philosophical Discourse* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013).

13 Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §129.

14 Raymond Carver, "On Writing," in *Call if You Need Me: The Uncollected Fiction and Prose* (London: The Harvill Press, 2000), 91.

15 Carver, "On Writing," 91 (emphasis added).

16 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Experience," in *The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, introduction by Mary Oliver (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 309.

17 Emerson, "The American Scholar," in *The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 57. See also Cavell "An Emerson Mood," 20.

18 Carver, "Drinking While Driving," in *All of Us: The Collected Poems* (New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 1996), 3.

19 Carver, "Tell the Women We're Going," in *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love: Stories* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 66. This collection has been published in another version, in the form they had before the texts were edited, and rather drastically altered, by Carver and his editor. I hesitate to call either of these versions of the collection "original." It is better to think of them as the nonedited and the edited versions. The nonedited collection is called *Beginners* (thus suggesting that on the topic of love we are always beginners, never experts, always students). If there is one major difference between the nonedited and the edited version that strikes me as the most relevant, it is that the nonedited contains *more* details, including descriptions of minute details, and that Carver quite often gives us brief descriptions of how some of his main characters' thoughts wander in the midst of discussions and rather striking events. This, I take it, underlines the haphazardness of some of the more decisive actions they do, and it might also be said to be written in a somewhat warmer tone. In the particular case of the short story, "Tell the Women We Are Going," the tales are so different that it makes sense to talk about two different stories. I don't know which is better—that is, worse—but I am not sure how that matters if I were to find a way to decide. See Carver, "Pie," *Beginners: The Original Version of What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*, text established by William L. Stull and Maureen P. Carroll (London: Jonathan Cape, 2009), 151–58.

20 Carver, "A Serious Talk," in *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love: Stories*, 105 (hereafter cited as ST).

21 The same passage in the nonedited version runs:

They had sat in the living room and solemnly opened the presents he had brought. The lights on the Christmas tree blinked. Packages wrapped in shiny paper and secured with ribbons and bows lay stuffed under the tree waiting for six o'clock. He watched the children, Terri and Jack, open their gifts. He waited while Vera's fingers carefully undid the ribbon and tape on her present. She unwrapped the paper. She opened the box and took out a beige cashmere sweater.

"It's nice," she said. "Thank you, Burt."

"Try it on," Terri said to her mother.

"Put it on," Jack said, "All *right*, Dad."

Burt looked at his son, grateful for his show of support. He could ask Jack to ride his bicycle over some morning during these holidays and they'd go out for breakfast.

She did try it on. She went into the bedroom and came out running her hands up and down the front of the sweater. "It's nice," she said.

"It looks great on you," Burt said, and felt a welling in his chest.

He opened his gifts: from Vera a certificate for twenty dollars at Sondheim's men's store; a matching comb and brush set from Terri; handkerchiefs, three pair of socks, and a ballpoint pen from Jack.

(Carver, "Pie," 151.)

There are several quite striking differences here between the nonedited and the edited versions. For starters, here, the kids have names, and that already brings us so much closer to them, and, I would argue, closer to Burt. It is also more detailed, and perhaps one may call it more attentive, or nuanced. Furthermore, in the edited version, his son's (Jack's) show of support is more or less cut out. "Put it on" may perhaps be said to express some kind of support, but it is quite different from the exclamation "All *right* Dad!" in which Burt's choice of gift was *right* (in italics), and in which his son underlines the intimacy of the bond between them by calling him "Dad." In the nonedited version, Burt's mind

wanders to dream about his son riding a bicycle and them having breakfast together. That this longing for connection and intimacy is removed in the edited version also has the effect of presenting Burt as colder.

22 This theme is well explored in Sarah Beckwith's "Are There Any Women in Shakespeare's Plays?: Fiction, Representation, and Reality in Feminist Criticism," *New Literary History* 46, no. 2 (2015): 241–60.

23 Cavell, "The Avoidance of Love: A Reading of *King Lear*," in *Must We Mean What We Say? A Book of Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976), 269.

24 In this particular respect, I think that some of Cavell's remarks about the movies as being particularly "apt to capture" our ordinary lives, can help us see what "telling it like it is" may mean. See Cavell, *Cities of Words: Pedagogical Letters on a Register of the Moral Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2004), 5–6. One thing that Cavell wants to emphasize by means of linking film and philosophy together is that films are "preoccupied with ways in which we miss our lives, miss the density of significance passing by in a film, in our speech, in our lives. And we are allowed to, we survive because we can, remain oblivious to it, sometimes feign oblivion." Cavell, "What Becomes of Thinking on Film?" (Stanley Cavell in conversation with Andrew Klevan), in *Film as Philosophy: Essay on Cinema after Wittgenstein and Cavell*, ed. Rupert Read and Jerry Goodenough (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 206. And it is in relation to this that I think of Carver's short stories as being attempts to tell it like it is: in Carver's short stories, just like in films, "Choice—thought, reflection—is on the surface." Carver thus assigns us, his readers, the task of measuring the weight and significance of words, that is, to "care about the utterly specific words he says when and as he says them." Cavell, "The Avoidance of Love," 269.

25 Cavell, "Knowing and Acknowledging," in *Must We Mean What We Say? A Book of Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976), 264.

26 Cavell, "Knowing and Acknowledging," 263.

27 Cavell, "Knowing and Acknowledging," 257.

28 Cavell, *Senses of Walden*, expanded ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992), 33–34.

29 Cavell, "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary," 169.

30 Cavell, "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary," 154.

31 Cavell, *This New Yet Unapproachable America: Lectures after Emerson after Wittgenstein* (Albuquerque, NM: Living Batch Press, 1989), 51.

32 "To 'know what a pumpkin is' is to know, e.g., that it is a kind of fruit; that it is used to make pies; that it has many forms and sizes and colors; that this one is misshapen and old; that inside every tame pumpkin there is a wild man named Jack, screaming to get out" (*CR* 171).

33 Carver, "On Writing," 88.

34 Thus, this is no side issue in philosophy. The theme of the uncanniness of the ordinary illustrates nothing less than the urge to find some sort of extrahuman form of solidity beyond our lives together in the words we share and repudiate. "It turns out to be something that the very impulse to philosophy, the impulse to take thought about our lives, inherently seeks to deny, as if what philosophy is dissatisfied by is inherently the everyday." Cavell, "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary," 170–71.

35 Compare this with Cavell's remark about film: "My formulation employing the work's thinking or intending or wanting something, is meant to emphasize the sense that the work wants something of us who behold or hear or read it. This is a function of our determining what we want of it, why or how we are present at it—what our relation to it is. It and I (each I present at it) are responsible to each other." Cavell, "What Becomes of Thinking on Film?" 186.

36 See Cavell, *The Senses of Walden*, 33–34.

37 Cavell, "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary," 171.

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