

## *Love's Polysemy and the Threshold of Communication*

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Near the end of *Time and the Other* Levinas writes: "The pathos of love consists [. . .] in an insurmountable duality of beings; it is a relationship with what forever slips away." Along with this slipping there is also a turn. Orpheus turning to look at Eurydice sees what Blanchot calls: ". . . the instant when the essence of night approaches as the other night." When relation is not relation and contact inverts to allusive, the psyche of the be-loved faces the task of knowing and speaking in a completely different manner. In the absence of her person but the presence of love itself, Orpheus the be-loved becomes the poet and is 'listened into the world/word.'

As clinicians we are ultimately be-loved and in response to what is beyond the transference invited to inquire about and experiment with our relationship with our own words. To be loved by what 'slips away' is the interruption of an ordinary, univocal, interpretative speech and the inspiration for a poetic, polysemous, perpetually disrupted writing. Watching a young autistic boy in my office recently I wrote: "what place, if any, for words when watching his body change relation to the chair slowly over time?" How are we, when our 'turning' allows our patients to 'slip away,' to capture and share our experience in words? Imagining love, as Levinas and Blanchot do, encourages us - in addition to thinking about the 'historical' and the 'here-and-now' - to see language in the room.