

A Service

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Excerpts from song texts by Sade and Oluf Ring
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Note: The titles/headings in bold corresponds to the headings in “Ritualbogen”.

1 Prelude

2 Entrance prayer

We are here in this chapel to lay ourselves upon the service
the way we lay ourselves upon the body of our beloved
whoever this may be
after the beloved has said, come to me, with me you will never thirst
We are here to remember the body of the beloved, even if the body of the beloved was a mirage
as if the light from our mother's fridge
was only a reflection of a distant light
and not a current through a hand filled by blood
We are here to release the body of the beloved. From our own body
as from a cross
We have taken over this ritual
which confirms that love is death, alone.
We lay ourselves upon the body of the beloved
We lay ourselves next to it and enter the ritual
We enter this service to turn the wine to tears
or to turn the division between two fluids to dust
and sprinkle it into water again
We enter this ritual
because I'm wearing my confirmation dress
We enter this ritual because you gave me peanuts
We enter this ritual to separate love and addiction
We use this ritual to dissolve time
We enter this ritual to bring together that which has been separated
We are here because there is a you
We are here because we go over these sentences again and again
Play songs on repeat
We are here
with all of these objects
Upon this ritual lies the wedding
Into this ritual flows the funeral

3 Entrance hymn

Min elskede

*Min øjesten
Lukkede øjne
Du fik mig til at glemme*

*Tid
Penge
Smerte*

*Du spurgte mig;
Er verden smukkere med lukkede øjne?*

*My beloved
Apple of my eye
Closed eyes
You made me forget*

*Time
Money
Pain*

*You asked me:
Is the world more beautiful with closed eyes?*

3a Kyrie

*Min elskede
My beloved*

*Lad mig sørge over dig - jeg gentager
Let me mourn you - I repeat*

*Min elskede
My beloved!*

4 Greeting

Velkommen

Welcome

*You, who recognise yourselves as the beloved:
Thank you!*

Thank you!

5 The Collect

We undergo this ritual through objects we have been passed down
through found objects from this room

We practice this ritual to explore our feelings
We change outfits
The closed eyes printed in a pattern on my cape

I have placed the objects you have touched
on the altar

Some of these objects you have touched,
some of these objects you haven't touched,
I no longer wish to distinguish between them

This ritual has been passed down to us
These sentences have been passed down to us

I'm wearing my confirmation dress
it affects my body

Do you recognise this ritual?
What is it like to be in this ritual alone?

The pictures of us
are like three altar pieces
that I open and close

I was so in love with you
I read this again and again and make it present tense

Make present tense

6 Reading from The Old Testament

Please stand for Name Name

I write, inviting you to a bar
When you walk through the door at 7.30pm
I realise you're lovely

You stand slightly removed from the counter
and I notice the smile lines at the corners of your mouth
We talk until closing time

Long and soft
The first kiss in the kitchen
You take an oven tray from my hands

I drop a bowl of muesli. You have this trick
of picking up flakes of oat
using the plum of your index finger

Would you recognise yourself if you heard this?
I listen to the same song
again and again

7 Psalm

*Jeg er ikke her
Men du kan godt ringe til mig
Hvor jeg så end er*

*I'm not here
but you can call me
wherever I am*

*Jeg tjekker min telefon hvert minut
I check my phone every minute.*

*Er der kommet en besked fra dig?
Is there a text from you?*

*Jeg har en telefon
Du kan nå mig*

*I have a phone
You can reach me*

*Jeg tjekker min telefon hvert minut
I check my phone every minute.*

*Er der kommet en besked fra dig?
Is there a text from you?*

*Jeg er ikke i min krop
Jeg er I din krop*

*I'm not in my body
I'm in your body*

*Jeg tjekker min telefon hvert minut
I check my phone every minute.*

*Er der kommet en besked fra dig?
Is there a text from you?*

8 Reading from The New Testament

I wait and I wait
This is real because I have a body
The colour of the heart you send me.
It's a sign
I interpret your text messages with friends
Give me a sign

You buy a take-away and the sauce spills into your bag while you walk towards me and for the next 40 days the bag will smell of the sauce we eat together. It's a sign that you love me.

You bake a big apple pie but only cut a small slice for me before you wrap up the rest in tin foil. It's a sign that you don't love me. Still, I eat off the slice three times, morning, noon and night – all day. Perhaps you love me after all.

After I've drunk my ale you buy me a bottomless cherry beer and exactly seven days and then again seven months later, you send me a cherry emoji. It's a sign that you love me.

You say you will call me at 5pm. At 5.30pm you still haven't called and I'm on the floor feeling like a dying child. I call a friend who assures me that you will be in touch. Perhaps you're running late and still on your way home. At ten to six you call and I feel alive again. It's a sign that you love me.

You're not in bed but stand naked in the dark in the middle of my room. Why do grab your clothes from my room and get dressed in the kitchen? So as not to wake me up, I think, and fall asleep. When I wake up again you are gone. It's a sign that you love me.

I reread and make it present tense
The first kiss.

I replay our first kiss again and again.
How you took the oven tray of food from my hands but embraced me

Your name is so beautiful

I had butterflies in my stomach when I wrote down my own name
and imagined you had written it

I love your stitched bellybutton

I write your name again and again

I imagine us marrying, imagine you walking up the aisle
in a dress we have made together

Then you visit me shortly before you're due to fly
and on my kitchen floor you cut out the lining of your coat

9 The Creed

In each and every situation in my life, my consciousness has been taken up by voices. And in each and every situation in my life, I must relate to those voices. It is my work in every waking moment: to relate and answer to the voices. This is my life's work.

What do the voices sound like? The voices are as diverse as life itself. Some, I can link to real, live people, those who also exist outside my mind. Others I can link to those who no longer exist, to the dead whom I remember. And further voices belong to people who only exist in my mind.

Some voices speak clearly, in words I understand. Others speak less clearly, their words difficult to decode, though often they are accompanied by an atmosphere, an affect which speaks its own clear language. Often the atmosphere is accusatory, but how does one respond to an accusation whose wording you don't understand?

Not all of the voices however are accusatory or judgmental. Others command or argue. And others still offer comfort or even praise. The manners in which the voices speak are endless.

For all of the voices, without exception, it remains the case however, that they demand an answer – from me. And this remains my work, my ceaseless work. And as the years pass, I become more and more exhausted by it.

In order to answer the voices, I must dress them in bodies, clothes and whatever else they require. I must create a room which I must also equip in different ways depending on whether the room is inside or outside, in nature or in the city. I must place my embodied voices and myself in the room. All of this I must do before I can answer them. And this remains my work, my ceaseless, exhausting work.

But who am I amongst all this? I am not always who I think I am. It happens that a voice assumes my identity. When this occurs I can be led to believe that it is I who speak. But if I listen carefully I realise it is not me speaking at all. It is one of the voices. It may sound like this: "Oh, I feel like doing this." Or: "Yes, I'm going to do this". But it is not me speaking at all. It is one of the voices placing a task onto me. And it convinces me to carry out the task by pretending it is me. And when I have completed the task, and it has only brought me disappointment, then I know that the voice didn't belong to me. But every so often it happens, after all, that which I refer to as the miracle. In brief moments I hear another kind of voice, a deep resonance which spreads throughout my body. And when I hear this voice, all the other voices fall silent and leave me in peace. And this other voice makes no demands of me. I can be in it. It is not a voice I inhabit. It's a voice which inhabits me. And this voice gives me peace. In this voice I find belonging.

It's a voice like no others. That is how I know it isn't of this world. It comes from a different place. It is a touch from another kingdom. And the place from which this voice comes, is my true home.

And where my true home lies, there I need not work. Paul writes "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Rom 4,4-5).

Some day I will dive into the depths of this one Voice and I need never work again.

10 Psalm

*I gave you all the love I got
I gave you more than I could give
Gave you love*

*I gave you all that I have inside
And you took my love
You took my love*

*Didn't I tell you
What I believe?
Did somebody say that
A love like that won't last?*

*Didn't I give you
All that I've got to give, baby?*

*I gave you all the love I got
I gave you more than I could give
Gave you love*

*I gave you all that I have inside
And you took my love
You took my love*

*I keep crying
I keep trying for you
There's nothing like you and I, baby*

*This is no ordinary love
No ordinary love
This is no ordinary love
No ordinary love*

11 Reading of the Gospel

It was that New Year's Eve when I didn't know if I'd see you again.
Where I hadn't heard from you for 40 days.

I was walking down Nørrebrogade with my friend.

Please stand for my friend

Stand for my friend.

We walked down Nørrebrogade and entered the kiosk on Heimdalsgade
to get warm

We were drunk
I recognised myself in my friend. Drunk and in love with Name Name

Wanting to see Name Name

Now!

My friend called
again and again
alternating between me as the most recent call
and Name Name who would hang up

40 times I saw after I came home

Now stop this!

Dropped the phone which slid down the floor
Bottles in the fridge, so colourful

I picked up the phone
and above a red dot I saw my own name on the screen

The body bent over
In the cold night

40 calls
My own name on the screen

My friend, again and again calling
Name Name who hung up

Where are you?
Have you left me?
Are you at Rådhuspladsen?
Where are you?
Have you left me?
Are you at Nørrebro Station?

Are you at home?
Where are you?
Have you left me?
Oh, you're at Runddelen?

Why can't I find you?

Where are you?
Will you meet me?
Will you meet me?

It wasn't ok.

We went back to the party
and threw up

My friend went home in a taxi

The next day I worried that I had killed my friend

Forgive my sick imagination, only I'm so scared of dying
that apparently I can't recognise it

I was afraid my friend would die,
for 40 days

12. Sermon

In a novel, it said that if Jesus told a human being: "Follow me", then this human being would have to follow him whether they liked it or not. Apparently, Jesus had such a hypnotically compelling power on others. The disciples would argue about whom he loved the most. They competed for his favour. Each of them wanted to be the chosen one, closest to him. However he had by all accounts no favourite disciple (although the author of The Gospel of John claims to be). In this sense, the relationship between Jesus and his disciples was not equal. They clung to him and could think of nothing better than to be near him. When he was away they felt abandoned in a way they had never felt abandoned before – at least this is how I imagine it to be. And I imagine him to be so entirely present in the company of another human being that this human being would have felt like the most important human being in the universe. Yet I also imagine that he could suddenly, and without prior warning, disappear from the people whom he had made to feel so very special and that he could be away from them for days, only to suddenly stand before them again. And when he wasn't around the disciples would feel desperate and tell themselves that they couldn't live without him. They would feel distraught and think: "If only we had never met him. Now we are entirely dependent upon him and our lives are nothing without him. We are nothing now". And when he then returned, they would think: "How wonderful life is, we who are in heaven, for he is with us now". They were dependent, and he was free. This is how I imagine it.

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I lay myself up upon this ritual

The way I laid myself upon you
The way you laid yourself upon me.

I'm lying here, I make my feelings present tense.

I turn around
One moment I'm high
The other moment I'm totally down.

Is it a lover
who turns in this way?

Is my worship
and service
loving
or are they beside you?
How can I distinguish when I want to gather?
Where are you now?

I think about sex with you
Replay moments over and over again
When you repeated my horny words from fourth to the fifth time
When you kissed me below my eye
When you placed your fingers several places in my hair

You say "I'm not there"
I'm lying here

I hear your sentences again and again
Being in love with you is a ritual
My body is made of sentences

You make me an ascetic
In fact, I don't need to do anything but wait until 8pm for instance

It's as if my falling in love is hoovering for me
Sucks away everything around me.
No other domestic chores befall the love.

Do you judge me as you judge yourselves?

I play out our first kiss again and again
until I'm destroyed.

Do I only love you
to kill time?

Who will my feelings be passed on to
when I'm dead?

I play out your sentences again and again

I bond with those whom I talk to about you
Can I convince any of you that I love you
under these circumstances

Still you see me

If I reach out, I can pat the coffin
I have a clear vision of my own body on stage beneath the light
As I write this sermon, I hear all of you say: Why do you do this
to yourself?

I don't have enough money to go on summer holiday
but you are my drinks

What on earth am I doing here?
Am I alone?

You suggest keeping in contact via text
You say we're a dream scenario
Can't you love me because I'm poor after all?
It's 8.30, I write with my eyes closed, the washing machine thumps
Red cheeks from fear and disappointment

I repeat
What on earth am I doing here?

I go out, down a gin and tonic. I down a dark and stormy.
When I was young I thought I was too young to be an alcoholic
Now I think I'm too old to be possessed
I don't fit in because I'm not present

I waste my time
I willingly waste my time

I consider following you on Instagram
Follow you
You're not on insta
This is going to take a long time
I love you because you're not on Insta
I love you because you don't keep an eye on me from a distance

I go out to places
where you have been
where you could be
I go places where I have thought about you
Where else would I go
Then I go to the island

On the island I think about you constantly, I feel happy to link you to the island by thought
But you don't stay there

In a different time, you say. At a different time
I look at the radiator and cry. I can't take it anymore
You say at a different time
A dream scenario you say

Your sentences tumble around my head like heavy objects

I survive second by second

I listen to the same song again and again

I can't be in this present tense body

- - -

A lake of spit from my mouth is left to rest on your collarbone to never dry up
Your sweet spit drips down on me and glues together the tear between time and space

- - -

I cried myself to sleep every night that summer.
I couldn't work from October until June the following year
I found a four-leaf clover in a field
I went to places
that were vaguely associated with you
I checked my phone again
I shouted at people in traffic
I was really rude to someone in the bike lane
I heard her happy voice down the phone behind me
I stopped and said 'pass' in a really mean way
and then I pulled over and cried

You said "I'm not there"

Speak directly to you?

I hope you're here
I hope you're in the audience

I'm fucking angry with you!
I do care whether I destroy myself with this text.

Litani after sermon (improv)

13. Prayers of the faithful

When we are done here, there will be a donation bar in the foyer
You are very welcome to stay behind – for about an hour...

14. Psalm

*Oh, that I dare embrace you, pure day
Call you by the names my soul desires
All the good names that I know best
Mother, sister, beloved: my love!*

15. Communion prayer

For that love or For my first love
who isn't present now

That you perhaps couldn't bear to be here

Absent eyes, look at us
Absent eyes, look at us, distant eyes

That you – perhaps - couldn't bear - to be here

Absent eyes, look at us
Absent eyes, look at us, distant eyes

*Oh absent eyes
Wandered alone
Let's leave
these distant eyes together
Poor us, child,
Let's leave
these eyes together*

*Oh absent eyes
Wandered alone
Let's wander
a long, bare distance*

*beneath leaking eyes
Let's wander together
beneath these eyes*

*Oh absent eyes
Wandered alone
Let's wander
towards these mirroring eyes
a long bare distance
for these eyes*

- - - - -

You want only one
Only one
Only one
Only one thing
One clear liquid

I'm talking about entering the laundry room alone
giving yourself communion.

Loving eyes?
Did the one reject you?

Collect what was taken apart
I so want to meet you
for a drink again

Or most of all I want you to
invite me
for dinner
It feels so unreal
I was so fond of you
Pass me a bit of the poison
I'd really like that
We see what we get
We see time shine between us
We see it now

16 Our Mother

Our Mother
(who art on the sofa)
Your name was removed from the ritual
until we believed we had forgotten you

You were powerless
in the symbol as in the body
Therefore you exert power over us now
It wasn't your fault
but it was your shame
You cooked us dinner every night
or pointed to the fridge so we could grab ourselves a snack
but unknowingly denied us nutrition
Beneath a distant light which went on automatically when the fridge was opened
We put it back in
Deliver me from my shame
as I ask that you be delivered from your shame
But deliver us
and let her be
For let it be
Our Mother
The fridge is empty
The silence between us
You were in love with Our Lord
who at best could clear his own plate from the table

Take what came first and what came last and bring it together here:

Our Grandmother
In the cemetery in the grave
We call you

That you accepted the words, strong and weak
that you enforced the division of strong and weak

We have two grandmothers
You accepted the division
despite knowing the flowers

We call you from the organ that was in your sitting room

We call you.

17 Consecration

We will not justify your suffering
Thank you for all the evening meals you have prepared for me
Night after night

Night after night

Like we will not justify our suffering
Thank you for the magical and wonderful things you have given me
Night after night

Night after night

18 Communion

What you see is what you get:

Peanuts or a kiss
Or both
Or none of them

Vodka or tears
Or both
Or none of them

-

All divisions are gathered
All queer time lines are valid
All situationships will be written into history if you so wish
All obsessions will be eaten and drunk and will become nutrition
All those in love will be lovers themselves and loved

19 Final Collect

All who recognise themselves in these descriptions of the lovers:
We thank you.

I know you felt unloved.
Sorry.

You cut a cloth from your coat lining
I have it right here

I can use it. To absorb the tears under my two thousand-year-old eyes

Thank you

20 Blessing

I have masturbated so much recently that I can't lift my hands at equal height

Both hands

And that's a good thing
Bring division and gathering

Not just one
We're seeing others

That your hair could absorb so much rain for instance
that it kept dripping onto the floor

You said that my vulva was nourishing
I say your vulva tastes like a spring
and then like the ocean
First fresh, then salty
like the spit in my mouth

21 Closing hymn

22. Closing prayer

This ritual is dedicated to all who are unhappily in love
and all who feel unloved by romantic love.

May we enter - a romantic relationship with all things.

Thank you for coming.

23. Exit (postlude)