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## introduction

I look back on these stories and I realize that, in the past, I had a very dim view of love. Which is a fact of much amusement to me now, now that I understand how important love truly is to me.

I have spent a good deal of my life running from the fact that having love in my life is my top goal, my highest priority. It was not that I thought love unimportant, I just thought it to be a part of life that happened in parallel to living.

Living was for goals, for accomplishments and to-do lists. Love for me was a steady background constant that was only brought to the foreground on special occasions. It was never to be made a fuss over, or to be examined, or to be questioned.

It was this view that made for the stories in this collection. Some deep drive in me could not be suppressed, because I wrote again and again about love. Each of the stories have at their center a search for a perfect love that can never be. The thrill of the first blush of love sings through the first four stories, only to be dashed against the rocks like a shipwreck in increasingly complex and hopeless ways.

In a way it was my own head I was beating against that metaphorical rock: 'perfect' romantic love doesn't exist, because within a single relationship are the two visions of perfect love. Love becomes lasting and something much better than perfect when two people are able to understand the needs and wants that drive their vision of 'perfect,' and are able to communicate to their partner what they need fulfilled and why. And while a lover might fulfill their partner's needs in the way in which the partner envisions, the lover might do so in a completely unexpected manner that is even more wonderful than what the partner could ever have dreamed.

(Notice I said the first four stories. Lest you fear this collection shall depress you to the point of tears, the last story of the bunch is a quietly