

NORA.

We do a lot of things that aren't good for us –  
this we do because our parents tell us  
from an early age – our parents,  
our churches,  
our leaders –  
everyone  
tells us that we need it, so we believe it,  
and the idea gets etched inside our skulls  
but you only think you need it because it's all you've ever  
been told.

They tell us: "It's an expression of love,  
the ultimate expression of love,  
the one that we're all working towards"  
– but how does that make any sense –?  
to say "I love you, therefore  
you should tie yourself to me,  
and you can never leave me,  
you can never love anyone else,  
you're off limits, I own you."  
I *own* you.

That's what marriage says – to me that sounds more cruel than kind –

also, also –

When people marry,  
they say, "I choose you,  
and I choose you forever,"  
but who is this "you" that they're choosing?  
Because people change, over time  
people change into different people,  
so how can you say that "I want  
to be with this person"  
when "this person" is not  
going to be "this person"  
3 or 5 or 10 years from now,  
but there you are committed,  
forever

till death  
stuck,  
stuck either with a person you don't want to be with  
or with a person pretending to be a person they no longer are.  
I mean, I'd even go so far as to say that marriage  
makes a person change for the worse.

Because, before marriage, before marriage  
you're wooing the other person,  
wooing-what does that mean – that means always putting your best,  
your kindest, your most attractive side forward,  
and you woo and you woo until  
you can convince the other person  
to commit to marriage.

And then what happens?  
What happens when there's  
no more reason to woo –?  
to put your best side forward?  
Marriage tells us that you're committed,  
you're bound  
to this other person  
regardless of how you're treated.  
Think about it:  
Don't you think that that encourages  
couples to treat each other  
however they want –? to be as awful as you want –  
it doesn't matter,  
because you're in it until death.

This happens.  
All the time.  
And people are miserable.  
Yes, yes, we want to be intimate with another person,  
to know another person,  
to love that person deeply,  
and to be naked with that person –

but why do we need a marriage for that?

And why does it need to be with just one person  
and for the rest of your life?

Seems so sad.

And we know it's sad—we *know* it –  
We know it and we feel it  
and we go and we *reach*  
outside that contract of marriage,  
all the time it happens,  
men and women –  
we fail to be faithful because deep down we ache for more,  
because this ache is in the core of who we are –  
but we stomp it out,  
and we beat ourselves up  
for failing to be something we never were to begin with.

And so I say, well just end it.  
End marriage.

And it will end. I know it.  
In the future,  
20, 30 years from now,  
marriage will be a thing of the past,  
and those in the future  
will look back on us,  
and they'll be in shock,  
in total – just awe –  
at how stupid we are,  
how backwards our thinking,  
how sad it is  
that we put ourselves through  
this completely unnecessary  
process of self-torture.  
20, 30 years from now,  
people will have many spouses in a life,  
even many spouses at once.  
There won't be lines drawn between couples,  
and there won't be jealousy because there won't be anything to be  
jealous of