

Affection is not a language but an ambiguous action that can become any form distinctively similar or entirely accursed. It's a fight for your life to control the jurisdiction in your relationship and your self-standards. If you can't hold onto both and let the other partner take advantage of your standards, worse can be applied to your dignity. Looking at Chapters 35-38, I notice a relapse in Offred's body language around others, including the Commander. As men around Offred become indulged by her presence, she asks the Commander if there is any free zone for her to occupy herself without being pried on. To his answer, "Just show them your tag," he says. It'll be all right. They'll know you're taken." (240) The message underlies a sequence of the Commander having Offred clinging to him even when not in close contact. The tag signifies his bargaining, his leash to withhold her freedom across the club. The terrifying message is not about this interaction but about Offred's response. She shows no repulse or no demand for correction from him but gladly leaves on a whim without saying anything about it. It's not that she's not saying anything, but she has no obligation to. If tactics like this keep her at bay, his volition will put her beneath the aspects of true protection. As Offred leans away from him, she confabulated, "*Several men look at me, with surprise I think rather than lust. I feel like a fool. I hold my left arm conspicuously in front of me, bent at the elbow, with the tag turned outward. Nobody says anything.*" (240) Even though the Commander isn't a bright person for catering to Offred, he's doing a bright favor by keeping others off her back. While those men feign for the entertainment of other female workers inside the establishment, they're keen to meet new traits and new ideals like Offred whom they aren't familiar with but not yet prepared to risk. Especially with that tagged leash, she wears that repels them from taking further action, which is possessively frustrating to me. "Nobody says anything", could mean someone wants to say something to Offred, but the commander's lane of property won't allow that. She's not being protected nor pried upon but corruptly idolized. The Commander is said to bring out some of his maidens to have a way of fun, leaving only arrogance in front of the others who can't compare to him. From Moira's perspective of Offred's current events, she evokes, "Some of them do that, they get a kick out of it. It's like screwing on the altar or something: your gang are supposed to be such chaste vessels. They like to see you painted up. Just another crummy power trip." (242) When you *paint*, the men want to show their new colors- new attractions. In the Commander's attention, Offred is his canvas, and he'll use whatever paint he sees fit to use on her to make others jealous. Her standards have driven me to the utmost empathy; whereas she has no control over being shown off, and she can't reason with those around her. They want to purchase her, they want

to burn her. They want her. The Commander uses his main attraction like children. In Chapter 36, Offred describes, "It's like a masquerade party; they are like oversized children, dressed up in toys they've rummaged from trunks. Is there joy in this? There could be, but have they chosen it?" Revelating in the idea of freedom, the women have to be in front of an audience they have no choice but to appeal to. Offred cannot find the attractions she's sought when her leash becomes tighter to the orders she follows inappropriately. On this auction, where she is not on sale, her preeminence can't be healthily upheld because she is not privileged to reason with her audience, an audience who doesn't know her enough to accept her. As readers, will we understand the motives of relationship dynamics from Offred? In Chapter 35, Offred wearily speaks, "I could just sit here, peacefully, I could withdraw. It's possible to go so far in, back, they could never get you out" (225) She makes it sound simple to accomplish, but deep down, she doesn't know how to go through with forfeiting everything she has left. She can't save herself from her predicaments, and she knows the more she places herself under other's higher thumbs, the smaller chance she has at redeeming her qualities. Attractions are irredeemable. They only bring glory to a show you do not need to perform for, but the glory of just needing to. We'll never know if partnerships that use attraction are what they once were, but the actions of appeal from others, sink one or both partners slowly into something far from sanity.