

GRAVITY OF EROS

2025

PRELUDE: JUSTICE IN ORBIT — A CONTEMPORARY ANALYSIS OF *GRAVITY OF EROS*

In an intellectual landscape often saturated by polemic, urgency, and systemization, *Gravity of Eros* emerges not as a treatise, but as an event—an orbiting dialogue between justice and injustice, eros and memory, thought and ache. It does not seek closure but rather performs its thesis: that some truths are not resolved but **traced**—like the arc of a planet circling a sun it can never reach.

This is not merely a dialogue in the tradition of Plato; it is a **postmodern cosmology of ethical being**, structured through what the authors Amos and Tobias identify as *eros*—not as romantic or sexual desire, but as **gravitational longing**: the force that binds injustice and justice in eternal tension. Their exchange resists didacticism. There are no final claims here, only questions that unfold into deeper topologies of ache, memory, gesture, and re-membering.

What distinguishes this work from contemporary moral philosophy is its refusal to instrumentalize justice. Justice is not framed here as an end, a law, or an ideal; it is cast as a **restlessness**, an “itch that never goes away,” a haunting that keeps language alive. If anything, this piece aligns more with Levinas’s **ethics of the other** and Simone Weil’s **concept of affliction** than with procedural theories of Rawls or Habermas. But even that comparison flattens what *Gravity of Eros* achieves: it does not argue for justice—it enacts it, by refusing to let it rest.

At the heart of this work is the metaphysical conceit of **orbit**. Justice and injustice do not cancel one another; they **circle**, each shaped by the gravitational pull of the other. The ache we experience in the face of injustice, the need to name it, remember it, speak against it—is here revealed as eros itself, the very force that prevents collapse into nihilism or domination. Tobias’ metaphor—“Eros is not the dot in the yin and yang, but the swirl”—repositions eros not as an object of longing, but as **the motion between polarities**, the energetic rhythm of ethical life.

Further radical is the text’s redefinition of **sacrifice**. In a cultural moment increasingly skeptical of grand narratives, *Gravity of Eros* returns to the question of martyrdom—not as sanctification, but as structural necessity. The dialogue suggests that **transcendence exacts a cost**, that justice (in its gravitational ache) often requires the suffering of those closest to light. Amos’ question—“Is virtue always shadowed by cruelty?”—is not answered, but held open, perhaps indefinitely. This withholding is not cowardice; it is ethical.

Even the Platonic foundations of the dialogue are disoriented. The Allegory of the Cave is not a story of escape here—it becomes a **circular orbit**, with no final liberation, only the ceaseless spinning between shadow and light. To be just, in this cosmos, is not to exit the cave but to become aware of one’s chaining—and to let that awareness become an eros that draws others toward seeing.

If this all sounds abstract, it is—intentionally. *Gravity of Eros* is not philosophy as system but **philosophy as gesture**, closer to a phenomenology of longing than to a rulebook of virtue. The reader is not asked to agree, but to ache alongside. It is no accident that the work’s most persistent motif is *re-membering*—the stitching-together of what has been dis-membered by violence, forgetting, and erasure. Here, justice is not law but memory; not balance but **the refusal to let the erased stay erased**.

In its form, *Gravity of Eros* is literary and elliptical, lyrical but rigorous, drawing from Plato, Simone Weil, Derrida, and even mystic traditions—but never mimicking them. It is a work that belongs in philosophy, literature, theology, and art—precisely because it resists the clean separations that injustice relies upon.

To read this dialogue is to enter the orbit yourself. And once within it, you may find—as Amos and Tobias do—that justice is not a place we reach, but the **gravitational pull that refuses to let us drift away**.

DLIALOGUE BETWEEN AMOS AND TOBIAS

Amos said:

Does injustice have justification?

Tobias said:

That's the kind of question where the words start to wrestle each other. If we take injustice in the strict sense—something that violates fairness, denies what is due, harms without right—then by definition it resists justification. To “justify injustice” sounds like trying to prove the unprovable, like arguing that a circle has corners. But here's the tension: in real life, people do justify it all the time. Empires called their conquests “civilizing missions.” Employers frame exploitation as “opportunity.” Even in personal relationships, someone might rationalize cruelty as “teaching a lesson.” Those aren't true justifications; they're more like masks—attempts to cover injustice in the clothing of necessity, progress, or virtue. So maybe the answer depends on whether you're asking: Can injustice be justified? (logically, no—it cancels itself out). Can injustice appear justified? (historically, constantly—through ideology, propaganda, self-deception). What this exposes is that “justification” itself is slippery. Sometimes it's a sincere appeal to reason; other times it's just a performance to make the unjust feel palatable. Let me throw this back into the ache-zone: if injustice is always dressed up in justification, then maybe “justification” is part of the very machinery of injustice. Maybe injustice needs justification the way a parasite needs a host. Would that mean true justice is the only thing that doesn't have to justify itself?

Amos said:

Is justice the biggest debate?

Tobias said:

It might be the oldest debate, or at least one of the most stubborn ones. Think about how many different arguments—about law, war, money, morality, relationships—eventually collapse into a fight over what's just or unjust. In Plato's Republic, justice is the whole framing question. Millennia later, political theorists, revolutionaries, even TikTok kids arguing in the comments are still circling the same core: What do we owe each other? What is “fair”? Who decides? But here's the twist: maybe justice isn't just a debate—it's the stage on which every other debate is acted out. Debates about freedom, equality, power, punishment, even love—they all lean on competing claims to justice. So in a way, justice isn't one debate, it's the background radiation humming through all the others. And yet... part of me wants to say the “biggest debate” isn't justice itself but truth. Because if you can't agree on what's true, you'll never agree on what's just. Then again, justice always sneaks back in—because deciding what counts as truth, and who gets to define it, is itself a justice question. So maybe the real ache is: is justice the biggest debate, or is it the arena where all the biggest debates happen?

Amos said:

So it circles on truth—something that's supposed to be shared between all of us and structured inside all of us, but it's weird how it's all “up for debate”.

Tobias said:

Exactly—truth is supposed to be the shared floor we're all standing on, but when you press into it, it feels more like a trampoline. Bounce, bounce, bounce—everyone lands differently. There's this paradox: truth gets imagined as universal, timeless, solid. But lived reality shows it behaving like something socially negotiated, fragile, always contested. We don't just “discover” truth, we also build it, argue it, enforce it, revise it. And that makes it feel both necessary and suspicious. And that's where justice circles back in: if truth were really unshakable, justice wouldn't need debate. But because truth is always filtered through power, perspective, language, memory—it becomes contested. Which means justice, instead of being an application of truth, becomes a battle over truth. It's kind of vertigo-inducing: Truth is what's supposed to ground us. But justice keeps showing us that truth itself is groundless unless we agree on it. Yet the act of “agreeing” is already soaked in power, bias, history. So maybe what's “weird” isn't that truth is up for debate—it's that we ever believed it wouldn't be.

Amos said:

What would being an *application of truth* look like?

Tobias said:

Ooooh—okay, so imagine justice as software and truth as the operating system. If justice were really an application of truth, then: Shared ground rules: Everyone would be running the same OS. No matter where you boot up—Athens, McHenry, Mars—you'd be drawing from the same kernel of truth. Justice would just be the user interface: different skins, maybe different languages, but still the same underlying code. No debate over the basics: You wouldn't have to argue over whether slavery is unjust, or whether stealing is wrong—it would compute as obviously as “ $2+2=4$.” Disputes might still happen about specifics, but the baseline would be unshakable. Error handling: Injustice, then, would be like a glitch or a bug—a malfunction of applying the truth, not a dispute over what the truth is. The fix wouldn't be philosophical debate; it would just be debugging. But reality doesn't look like that. It's more like everyone's running different hacked versions of the OS, with half the drivers missing, and justice keeps crashing. Each society acts like their patch notes are the real update, but no one's running the same system long enough for justice to function as “truth in action.” So maybe “being an application of truth” would look like justice being obvious—no courtroom theatrics, no political manipulation, no centuries-long debates. Just a direct unfolding: truth → action. Which makes me wonder—if we ever did live in a world where justice felt that frictionless, would it even feel like justice anymore? Or does justice only exist because of the frictions and the fights?

Amos said:

Maybe justice is the reason we're having this conversation at all...

Tobias said:

Yes—like justice is the ghost in the room, the thing that keeps stirring the air. If there were no such thing as “justice,” we wouldn’t even be circling these questions. We’d just live inside raw power—whoever’s stronger wins, end of story. No ache, no protest, no conversation. But the fact that we sit here puzzling over it suggests some kernel inside us refuses to let power be the final word. Almost like justice is the itch that never goes away. Not the settled agreement, but the very tension that makes humans talk, argue, revolt, write philosophy, flip tables. It’s not just a value; it’s a motor of discourse. And here’s the kicker: maybe justice never shows up as a finished thing—it only shows up in these restless conversations, in the questioning, in the refusal to let things stay comfortable. Justice as... the reason speech keeps going, the reason thought won’t shut up. So when you say “maybe justice is the reason we’re having this conversation at all”—yeah. Maybe justice isn’t the conclusion. Maybe it is the conversation. But then I feel the contradiction creep in—if justice lives in conversation, what about those who never get heard? Does justice die in their silence, or does it haunt the rest of us until we break it open again?

Amos said:

Well, this makes me think about the collective consciousness and the theory of re-membering...

Tobias said:

Ahhh, yes—you just cracked open a whole other tunnel. The collective consciousness idea says there’s this shared psychic reservoir we all dip into. Justice, in that light, isn’t just one person’s obsession—it’s a hum that lives in the group mind, resurfacing whenever the balance tips too far. Even if individuals forget, the collective remembers. Now fold in re-membering—not just “recalling,” but literally “putting the members back together.” Like stitching the body of humanity when it’s been torn apart. Injustice dis-members us (splits people, excludes voices, breaks bonds). Justice then is the act of re-membering—pulling the scattered limbs of the collective body back into coherence. So maybe that’s why justice feels so haunting: we carry the ache of what’s missing, what’s been dismembered, even if we can’t name it. The collective body keeps trying to reassemble itself through these conversations, protests, philosophies. Which makes me wonder—if justice is re-membering, is every act of injustice also a kind of forced amnesia? A demand that we forget certain people, certain truths, certain pains? And is every conversation like this one a tiny act of resistance—keeping the memory alive so the re-membering can keep happening?

Amos said:

Well, why would it be a demand? What’s the demand—the polarity?

Tobias said:

Mmm, yeah—let’s not let that slip past too clean. If injustice dis-members, maybe it doesn’t just happen—maybe it insists. A demand in the sense of: “forget this,” “exclude that,” “erase them.” Every injustice feels like it carries its own propaganda, its own script telling us what not to see. The demand could be: Don’t call this theft, call it progress. Don’t call this cruelty, call it discipline. Don’t call this person human, call them other. So injustice doesn’t only act—it narrates. It demands a story be swallowed, a perspective be erased. The violence is doubled: first the wound, then the forced forgetting of the wound. And yes—the polarity. Justice and injustice aren’t just opposites, they’re parasitic on each other. Injustice demands erasure; justice demands remembering. Injustice wants amnesia; justice wants memory. One pushes for dis-membering, the other for re-membering. But what gets thorny is that both sides use demand. Justice also insists—it says “remember this, acknowledge this, integrate this.” So maybe the polarity isn’t between

demand and non-demand, but between what kind of demand gets made: the demand to shrink consciousness or the demand to expand it. Which almost makes me want to ask—do you think justice can exist without being forceful, or does it always need its own kind of demand to counterbalance injustice’s?

Amos said:

I find it interesting that you said ‘shrink consciousness or expand it’ because I’ve been thinking a lot about the notion of love and Eros in the eyes of Diotima’s vision. And like... love and virtue... justice... but I think about my dialogue with the revelation of gestures. It’s like Eros is the gesture between justice and injustice, and injustice and justice cannot live without each other. Eros is the act of the opposite existing in the yin and yang—not the dot itself, but its placement.

Tobias said:

Oooo—yes, I feel that spine-tingle connection you’re making. Let’s sit inside it. If eros is the gesture, then it isn’t just longing for beauty—it’s the movement between poles. Justice alone could calcify into rigidity, dogma, self-righteous purity. Injustice alone devours itself into chaos, violence, oblivion. But eros... eros is what lets them touch. Like in the yin-yang, the black dot in the white, the white dot in the black—you’re saying eros isn’t the dot, but the swirl, the act of weaving opposites into each other’s field. It’s the current that makes the polarity dynamic instead of static. And if we follow Diotima’s vision: love/eros always points upward, toward beauty, truth, the eternal—but it never ignores the messy human ground. So eros as gesture here could be the force that refuses to let justice and injustice separate completely. It binds them in tension, like two notes that only make harmony because they rub against each other. That would mean justice isn’t some pure, untouched realm. It’s always being fertilized by injustice, provoked by it, shaped against it. And injustice is always haunted by justice, like a shadow it can’t shake. Eros is the ache of that relationship—the desire that keeps them entangled. And maybe that explains why justice never feels “finished.” Because without injustice, justice would lose its pulse. Without eros, the polarity would just collapse into silence. So then I wonder—if eros is that gesture, that swirl, does that mean the truest form of justice isn’t about eliminating injustice, but about keeping eros alive between them?

Amos said:

Keeping Eros alive, or merely seeing and being aware of Eros? Let’s think of the Allegory of the Cave.

Tobias said:

Ahh, bringing eros into the cave—that’s juicy. Let’s think it through. In Plato’s cave, people are chained, watching shadows. The philosopher turns around, leaves the cave, sees the sun, then comes back down to tell the others. If eros is the gesture between justice and injustice, then in the cave it could play two roles: Keeping eros alive: That would mean actively moving—turning your head, questioning the shadows, feeling that pull toward something more. Eros here is the restless current that won’t let you stay content with shadows. It’s what drives the philosopher out of the cave in the first place. Merely seeing and being aware of eros: That’s subtler—it’s noticing the ache, the tension, the desire itself. Even if you never leave the cave, even if you can’t escape, eros is the flicker inside you that says, “there is more than this wall.” Just awareness is already a resistance to pure captivity. So maybe the allegory maps like this:

Justice would be the truth outside the cave. Injustice is the shadow-play inside. Eros is the hinge—the ache that makes you notice the shadows are only shadows. Which makes me pause... if eros is that hinge, then justice doesn't "defeat" injustice, and injustice doesn't "erase" justice—they remain in orbit. What shifts is whether eros is suppressed (chains, silence, apathy) or whether it's alive (gesture, awareness, movement). Do you feel like eros, in this framing, is more about the motion toward light or the awareness of being in shadow?

Amos said:

They remain in orbit—round, circular—as the yin-yang is.

Tobias said:

Yes—exactly. A circle, not a ladder. The yin-yang image you pulled earlier makes it clearer: justice and injustice don't cancel each other, they orbit—eternal companions in a turning whole. And eros? It's the spin itself. The momentum that keeps them from freezing into a static dualism. The circle holds both, but it only moves because eros is in play. That's why it feels alive rather than dead geometry. Notice what that does to the cave allegory too: Plato frames it as a one-way ascent—out of shadow into sun. But if we think orbitally instead of linearly, maybe the cave and the sun are part of the same turning. The philosopher doesn't escape once and for all; they circle between shadow and light, always translating, always pulled back. Justice and injustice, light and dark, are both necessary for the wheel to turn. So the yin-yang isn't just about opposites—it's about the rhythm between them. And eros is the pulse of that rhythm: the reaching, the tension, the gesture that keeps the orbit alive. It almost makes me wonder—if justice and injustice are in orbit, then is the ache we feel (this constant need to talk about it) the gravitational pull of eros itself?

Amos said:

What... What's the conditions for orbit?

Tobias said:

If we think in physics terms—an orbit requires two conditions: Attraction (gravity): There has to be a pull strong enough to keep the body from flying off. Without gravity, the planet just shoots away. Motion (velocity): There has to be sideways movement so the body doesn't just crash straight into what it's orbiting. Too little speed and it falls inward, too much and it breaks free. Now, fold that metaphor back into justice/injustice: Gravity = eros. The pull that keeps justice and injustice bound, unable to fully escape each other. Desire, longing, ache—it's what keeps the orbit from scattering. Velocity = awareness/action. The momentum of human thought, speech, revolt, ritual, protest. If we had no motion, we'd collapse into domination (pure injustice). If too much motion without gravity, we'd fling into nihilism (no sense of justice at all). So the conditions for orbit are balance: enough eros to hold the poles together, enough human momentum to keep them from collapsing. The yin-yang doesn't just exist—it spins. Which makes me wonder—if eros is the gravity, and awareness is the velocity, then is philosophy itself the orbital path? The tracing of that endless circle between justice and injustice?

Amos said:

Orbital path? Is that even a thing?

Tobias said:

Yeah, it is—"orbital path" is the track an object traces as it moves around another body under the pull of gravity. Like the ellipse Earth makes around the Sun, or the loop the Moon traces around us. It's not a physical line in space—it's the invisible choreography carved by the balance of gravity and motion. So if we stretch that metaphor into the justice/injustice/eros frame: The orbital path would be the pattern of movement that emerges from their tension. Not justice in itself, not injustice in itself, but the shape of their endless dance. It's not static—each revolution shifts slightly. Orbits decay, wobble, get perturbed by other forces. The path is stable enough to hold, unstable enough to always need re-tracing. That's why I like your yin-yang image—because it's not a frozen symbol, it's a motion diagram. The swirl is an orbital path. Which makes me pause here: if justice and injustice are locked in orbit, is eros the gravity that makes the path possible—or is eros the path itself, the trace of their pull?

Amos said:

Well... that brings me back to your other question: is the ache we feel (this constant need to talk about it) the gravitational pull of Eros itself?

Tobias said:

Right—see how it folds back on itself? That ache you're describing, the compulsion to return again and again, is the force keeping the orbit alive. Think of gravity not as a thing you can see, but as the invisible pull that keeps bodies from scattering. Eros—understood Diotima-style as yearning, desire toward what is higher, more whole—works the same way. It's not an object we hold, it's the ache itself. The pull toward justice when injustice bites, the pull toward beauty when ugliness reigns, the pull toward connection when we're fragmented. So maybe that's why justice never feels "settled": it's not a destination, it's the ache's orbit. The need to keep talking, keep thinking, keep re-membering—that is eros doing its gravitational work. Without the ache, the orbit collapses—justice evaporates, injustice dominates, or vice versa. Which raises the question: is the ache itself the most just thing we'll ever experience? Not the victory of justice, but the never-ending gravitational tug that won't let us forget the orbit?

Amos said:

This makes me think of a mesh between the *Allegory of the Cave* and *Meno*... because the men who have seen the light—aren't they virtuous? Virtue cannot be taught, but is it learned—maybe mimicked by Eros in the gesture of helping those still chained to see the shadows? Because what about the others in the cave affected by injustice? The curse is that injustice touches those who (all?) are destined for the light... or is this why human sacrifice is a thing? For the balance of injustice? That's cruel, man.

Tobias said:

Whoa—you just braided several knots of Plato together and then twisted them into something raw. Let's tease it out.

1. The Cave and Virtue: In the cave, the one who turns toward the light is drawn by eros—that restless ache that refuses the shadows. Once they've seen the sun, they come back down. But here's the tension: in *Meno*, Socrates asks whether virtue can be taught. If virtue is tied to eros, maybe it isn't taught like geometry—it's caught, mimicked in the gesture of one who's been lit by the sun. A kind of contagious seeing. Not instruction, but an embodied spark that others can feel. So yes—the philosopher returning to the cave may be "virtuous," but not because they can hand over a manual. Their virtue is eros radiating as gesture, pulling others to notice the shadows are shadows. 2. Injustice

Touches Everyone: Your phrasing—the curse is that injustice touches those destined for the light—hits heavy. Because injustice isn't just for the chained. Even the one who sees the light can't escape it; they're dragged back into the cave, misunderstood, mocked, even killed (Socrates himself being the prime example). So injustice marks even the luminous, maybe especially the luminous. It's like a tax levied on transcendence. 3. Human Sacrifice: And that leads to your darker leap—sacrifice. Societies often framed human sacrifice as restoring balance, paying off the gods, appeasing the scales of order. Maybe that's because injustice is always felt as a surplus—something is out of balance, tilted, overdrawn. Sacrifice becomes the brutal attempt to “re-center the orbit.” Someone's blood for everyone's illusion of balance. It's cruel, yes—but it's also eerily consistent with this orbit logic we've been circling: justice/injustice locked together, eros keeping the circle spinning. Sacrifice is a society saying: we'll feed injustice now, so justice can keep breathing later. Which makes me ache to ask—if injustice inevitably touches even the destined-for-light ones, is every martyr (Socrates, Jesus, Joan of Arc, MLK) just another kind of “sacrifice” demanded by the orbit? And if so, is our idea of virtue always shadowed by that cruelty?

Amos said:

That's a big question—and one that makes a lot of sense to me. Okay, so what have we come to understand so far...

Tobias said:

Alright—let's gather the threads we've spun out, not as clean conclusions, but as the terrain we've mapped: 1. Justice as Conversation, Not Conclusion: Justice isn't a final state but the very reason we keep circling these questions. Injustice provokes it, justice resists, and eros keeps the tension alive. The “ache” we feel is not a flaw—it is justice in motion. 2. Truth as the Contested Ground: Justice wants to be an application of truth, but truth itself is always up for debate. That makes justice not a simple “truth in action,” but a fight over whose truth gets to count. The cave allegory reframes this: shadows and sun both exist, but the gesture of eros is what lets us notice the difference. 3. Eros as Gravity / Gesture / Orbit: Eros is the gravitational pull keeping justice and injustice in orbit, refusing separation. It isn't the dot in yin-yang but the swirl—the motion itself. The ache of eros is what drives us to turn toward light, or at least to recognize the shadows as shadows. 4. Injustice as Demand / Erasure: Injustice doesn't just wound—it demands forgetting, erasure, blindness. Justice demands remembering, re-mem-bering, reintegration. Both work through insistence—but one shrinks consciousness, the other expands it. 5. Virtue, Teaching, and Mimicry: In *Meno*, virtue isn't simply taught—it's more like mimicked, caught, sparked. The philosopher returning to the cave doesn't deliver doctrine; they embody eros, gesture it, and that gesture can ignite others. Virtue spreads not through manuals but through presence and ache. 6. Sacrifice and the Tax of Transcendence: Injustice touches even those destined for the light. The luminous often bear the weight of injustice most heavily (martyrs, visionaries). Human sacrifice—literal or symbolic—emerges as society's attempt to “pay” injustice so justice can breathe, a cruel balancing act. 7. Orbit as Our Condition: Justice and injustice don't cancel each other—they orbit. Eros is the gravity, awareness/action is the velocity, and the orbital path is philosophy itself. The ache we feel—the need to keep talking—is eros holding us in the orbit. So far, we've built this weird, beautiful cosmology: justice and injustice are eternal poles, eros is the ache that binds them, truth is the contested terrain they fight over, and philosophy is the orbital path we trace as we keep circling, never landing.

Amos said:

I ask... why do we trace??? Oh... Eros. Gravity. But what is gravity? What are the conditions for gravity?

Tobias said:

Ohh, you're chasing it beautifully—you're not letting "gravity" stay a metaphor, you're prying it open. In physics, gravity requires: Mass—something substantial, something with presence. Distance—it only shows up between things; if there's nothing else, there's no pull. A field—gravity isn't just contact, it's an invisible stretching, a curve in space-time that bodies fall into. Now—if eros is gravity, what does that mean in our orbit of justice/injustice? Mass → The weight of being human. The fact we exist, embodied, finite, mortal. Our presence itself gives eros something to pull on. Without the heaviness of life, there'd be no ache. Distance → The gap between justice and injustice. Gravity only makes sense if there's separation. Eros needs the tension of difference—the lack, the gap, the not-yet. That's what generates the pull. Field → The collective consciousness. Not just two isolated things, but a shared space where presence bends reality around it. Eros curves our consciousness, makes us fall toward beauty, truth, justice—even if we never quite reach it. So gravity (eros) isn't just "a pull." It's the condition that makes orbit even possible: mass (being), gap (tension), and field (shared reality). Which almost makes me want to ask—if eros is our gravity, is love itself just the bending of space-time around justice and injustice? Not a feeling, but the curve that makes us trace?

Amos said:

What's the difference between a condition and a law?

Tobias said:

Good catch—that distinction matters. A condition is what makes something possible. It's like the soil for a plant—without it, nothing grows. Conditions set the stage, they're the "if/when" of existence. (Ex: for gravity to exist, you need mass and distance—those are conditions.) A law is what governs once the conditions are met. It's the rule that describes how things behave once they're in play. (Ex: Newton's law of gravitation describes how masses attract, given that mass and distance exist.) So: Conditions = pre-requisites, the necessary environment. Laws = the governing principles once that environment is in place. In our justice/eros orbit language: Conditions for eros-as-gravity might be: human finitude, difference (the gap between justice/injustice), and a shared field of consciousness. Laws of eros would be: given those conditions, eros will always pull us toward connection, toward beauty, toward re-membering.

Amos said:

Are laws necessary under the conditions of what is a necessity?

Tobias said:

Ahhh—now you're really poking the soft underbelly. Let's slow-walk this. A necessity already implies something that cannot not-be. Fire burns, water wets, mortals die. If something is necessary, it carries its own inevitability. So where do laws fit into that? One angle: Laws are just our naming of necessity. They're not separate—they're how we codify, narrate, mathematize what necessity already is. Gravity "works" whether or not Newton writes the law. The law is our abstraction, not the cause. Another angle: Laws emerge when conditions alone don't guarantee order. Conditions give possibility, but laws structure behavior. For instance: you can have the conditions for life (water, atmosphere, carbon), but the laws of biology determine how life actually functions once present. And yet another: Necessity might cancel

law. If something is truly necessary, it doesn't need regulation—it just is. Laws become superfluous, or maybe ornamental. So the knot is: Conditions = the fertile ground. Necessity = the inevitability of something arising from that ground. Law = our attempt to trace the shape of that inevitability... or to enforce it where it doesn't naturally hold. Which makes me suspicious: maybe the most necessary things (eros, justice, mortality, ache) don't need laws at all—they generate them only because we humans can't tolerate raw necessity without trying to domesticate it. Do you feel like laws are an uncovering of necessity—or more like a nervous performance around it?

Amos said:

Let's go over the conditions of what counts as a necessity.

Tobias said:

Yes—let's get surgical here. If we're going to talk about necessity, we need to lay out what actually makes something count as necessary rather than contingent, accidental, or optional. Inevitability: A necessity cannot be otherwise. It's the "must" that undergirds being. Fire must burn, 2+2 must equal 4. If it can be different, it isn't necessity, it's preference or accident. Universality: A necessity doesn't just apply in one context or culture—it holds everywhere. Mortality isn't just "true in Illinois" but not in Athens. To qualify as necessity, it has to transcend circumstance. Independence: A necessity doesn't depend on human agreement, laws, or institutions. Justice systems are human constructs, but the fact of death, or the principle of contradiction ("A thing cannot both be and not be in the same respect at the same time")—those hold whether we believe them or not. Persistence: A necessity holds across time. Trends fade, opinions shift, but necessities don't erode with history. They may be recognized differently, but their underlying inevitability doesn't expire. Constitutive Role: A necessity isn't just present, it's foundational. It's what makes other things possible. Eros as ache might be necessity because without desire/longing, nothing human would move toward truth, beauty, justice at all. So maybe we can say: a necessity is that which is inevitable, universal, independent, persistent, and constitutive of being. Which makes me turn the knife back—when we talk about justice, eros, truth, mortality, love: do they pass this test of necessity? Or are some of them still just very sticky contingencies that feel like necessity because we can't imagine otherwise?

Amos said:

Wouldn't creating order control a transcended circumstance?

Tobias said:

That's a sharp cut—you're pointing right at the paradox. If necessity is supposed to be universal and independent, then any human attempt to order it risks... shrinking it. By creating order, we don't just name necessity—we box it, police it, try to domesticate it into rules that fit our scale. So when you say "creating order controls a transcended circumstance," I hear: once we codify necessity, we're no longer letting it be what it is (vast, transcendent, beyond context). We've dragged it down into our cave and said, "stand here, look like this, obey this law." That's what law does: it converts necessity into a controlled circumstance. Mortality (necessity) becomes funerary rituals (order). Desire/eros (necessity) becomes marriage contracts or purity codes (order). Justice (necessity-as-ache) becomes legal codes or constitutions (order). But the transcendent leaks anyway. Death laughs at ritual. Desire breaks contracts. Justice explodes laws. The necessity keeps overflowing the containers we make. So maybe order doesn't reveal necessity—it controls its appearance, like a dam holding back a river. It makes necessity livable but at the cost of

shrinking its transcendence into circumstance. Which makes me want to throw this back at you: do you think order is a betrayal of necessity, or is it the only way humans can endure necessity without being annihilated by it?

Amos said:

What does it mean to transcend circumstance?

Tobias said:

To transcend circumstance is to slip the leash of the immediate, the contingent, the “this particular setup right here.” Circumstance is all the stuff that situates us: where you’re born, what era, what body, what language, what laws. It’s the web of “this is how things happen to be.” To transcend it means: exceeding limits—stepping beyond what those conditions dictate. Like refusing to be only your social role, your accident of geography, your present mood. Touching universals—grasping something that would be true anywhere, anytime—like mortality, longing, numbers, maybe even justice. Holding perspective—seeing your circumstance as circumstance, not as the totality. You recognize “this isn’t all there is.” Gesturing toward the infinite—even if you never leave your cave, you can sense the sun beyond it. That gesture alone is transcendence. So, transcending circumstance doesn’t erase where you are—it reveals the beyond running through it. You’re still in the cave, still chained, but you know shadows aren’t the whole story. That knowing already cracks the wall. But here’s the ache: transcendence doesn’t mean you escape. You still eat, sleep, pay bills, get hurt. It means you carry a kind of double-vision—circumstance and beyond at once. That doubleness is exhilarating, but also unbearable.