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“When it is a duty to love, neither is a test needed nor the insulting foolhardiness of wanting to test, because if love is higher than every test it has already more than passed the test... Testing is always related to possibility; there is always the possibility that what is being tested will not pass the test.”

Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, page 48

In this passage, from Søren Kierkegaard's *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard is explaining one of the consequences of a characteristic of eternal love. Namely that when it is a duty to love, love is eternally secure against every change and therefore does not need to be tested. This was very profound to me because in life I often see many people testing each other's love. Lovers purposefully making their partners jealous to see how they will react; a parent accepting a child's love only after the child has proven something to the parent; or friends that purposefully betray one another. These are all examples of a test of one's love, and these tests are very much portrayed in the media, in movies, and in books. I don't want to say that my idea of what love is, is a love that needs to be tested but it is hard not to have those thoughts when you grow up in a society that shows love as such. But after reading Kierkegaard I have realized that love that needs to be tested isn't true love. For Kierkegaard, eternal love never needs to be tested, it is only in spontaneous love that we feel a test is needed.

Kierkegaard explains that “there is always the possibility that what is being tested will not pass the test.” In other words, the mere act of testing love makes it possible that love will not pass the test. In a way you are expressing to the another, “I don't trust your love, so I will test it” and in doing so the other feels your mistrust and in turn becomes skeptical of your love. This causes anxiety in love. I did not fully realize what the pitfalls of testing love were or even what the feeling of needing to test love were until I read Kierkegaard. I did not associate the need to

test love as a kind of warning that maybe this love isn't really love. But now if I have the feeling of needing to test love, I may reevaluate the kind of love I am giving. I also just appreciated how straight forward Kierkegaard said, "testing is always related to possibility". It made me think of other areas of my life where consciously and unconsciously I give myself or others unnecessary tests because I feel doubtful about things. Kierkegaard's discussion of love made me think of other concepts of life that are often questioned, such as happiness, and the way that love can affect so many other feeling and emotions.