

The Lovesick Man

Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 75a

R. Yehudah said in the name of Rav

[There is] a story of a man who placed his eyes on a woman and his heart filled with black bile.

And they came and asked the doctors, and [the doctors] said “he has no treatment unless she has intercourse [with him].”

The sages said, “Let him die, but she will not have intercourse with him.”

[the doctors said] “She should stand before him naked,”

[the sages said] “Let him die, but she will not stand before him naked.”

[the doctors said] “She should converse with him from behind a barrier,”

[the sages said] “Let him die, but she will not converse with him from behind a barrier.”

R. Yaaqov bar Iddi and R. Shmuel bar Nahmeni disagreed about it.

One said she was married, and the other said she was unmarried.

For the one who said she was married the story works well,
but for the one who said she was unmarried, what is this all about?

R. Pappa said because of family shame.

R. Aha son of Rav Iqqa said so that the daughters of Israel should not be prostituted for illicit sex.

So let him marry her?

That would not settle his mind because of R. Yizhaq.

For R. Yizhaq said from the day of the destruction of the temple the flavor of intercourse was taken and given to sinners as it is written, “Stolen waters will be sweet and hidden breads will be pleasant.”