Try to think of it as a third kind of love. The first kind is nice. The second kind is nasty. Another kind is nice because it’s nasty. Love three.

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,  
Guiltie of dust and sinne.  
But quick-ey’d Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,  
If I lack’d any thing.  

A guest, I answer’d, worthy to be here:  
Love said, You shall be he.  
I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,  
I cannot look on thee.  
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,  
Who made the eyes but I?  

Truth Lord, but I have marr’d them: let my shame  
Go where it doth deserve.  
And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame?  
My deare, then I will serve.  
You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat:  
So I did sit and eat.
What makes Love so attractive?

What powers does Love have and what powers do I give?

Love is not the kind of god who is everywhere and doing everything. I witness Love’s power only as power over me, knowledge of me, presence in my company.

Love forces me to eat the food that is served.

Love knows what I am thinking.

Love answers my objections. Always has the last word.

Do I know anything about Love’s other powers? Love’s history? I seem to have heard something about Love “bearing the blame” for my faults. I confirm a report of creation that says: Love made
me. Nothing about creating the rest of the world. Do I think all this trouble is for me?

Mainly Love dominates me verbally.
“Sweetly questioning.” Love is a sweet voice. Love is a questioning voice.

The speech tag partly obscures the exact wording of the question. You are asking me if I lack anything. It’s a merchant’s question. “What do you lack?” “What will you buy?”

Does the sweet tone modify the aggressive nature of the question?

What would be a less sweet way of asking the question?

“Do you have a problem?” The kind of emphatic question used to start a fight.

“I said is there a fucking problem?”
“You must sit down and taste my meat.” I don’t think there could be a less polite way of saying that.

What Love says could be written in a toilet stall. It could be a line in rap. It could be dirty talk. It could be assault.

Why doesn’t it sound like any of these things?

Herbert writes with a consistency of style that can accommodate basically any material.

A consistency of which I as a writer am incapable.

And which I value somewhat grudgingly.

I like too many effects made possible by inconsistency.

Herbert’s style covers the aggression of the penultimate line so that many otherwise careful readers hear only the sweet tone. Sweetness that overpowers every other suggestion.
You could underline the message by adding a rude word. “Bitch, you must sit down and taste my meat.” “You must sit down and taste my meat, shithead.” The expletive would intensify the harsh language that you were already using.
Idea for poem. Write a list of my sexual preferences, interests, fantasies, and limits.

What if “Love” (3) were such a list?

One interest is humiliation.

Some of the humiliation has to come from me. I announce my guilt; I specify its contents. (“Guiltie of dust and sinne.” Guilt is specified although sin is vague.) I announce my shame. (Which is not specified. Unless it's the marring of my eyes.)

Here's what I don't say. I don't say that I desire humiliation. My confession of guilt remains innocent of wanting to be guilty. I confess guilt and shame but you leave me the alibi of not getting off on my humiliation.

Nor do I ever express my desire for you. The only one who talks about enjoying this scene is you. Thus you leave me the protection of not wanting you.
Now I understand the worst cliché of dirty talk: “You like that don’t you.” I see why that’s important. A lame attempt to break down the last protection.

Other kinks in “Love” (3)?

Sight restrictions. “I cannot look on thee.”

Speech restrictions. My voice taken away, argued away, suppressed, stopped, gagged. Finally I don’t answer.

Bondage? “Love took my hand.” Bondage is a strange kind of holding. I learn that my body is not mine. And that I am not only a body.

Height restrictions? “You must sit down.” Unconvincing. This isn’t exactly human furniture, is it? If there’s a chair, I have to sit in it. The chair isn’t myself.

Pain? I don’t think so. Pain and its virtues are topics for other poems by Herbert.