This hermeneutic study focuses on the nurses love for the patient as a stranger in caring. The aim of this master’s thesis is to reach patterns of thought for outlining what love for strangers means in caring. The key questions are: How is love for strangers expressed? How do nurses serve a stranger in love? The study material consists of theologian and philosopher Knud Ejler Løgstrups book *Det etiska kravet*. The method used is a model for hermeneutic work developed by P-J. Ödman. The theoretic perspective follows the tradition of the department of caring science in Åbo Akademi University.

The main findings of this study are concluded in the following statements: The nurse can serve the stranger with love by meeting the patient with natural trust and by making the patient's world as spacious as possible. Love is created by the fact that the patient's life is given into the nurse's hand without the patient being a part of the nurse’s existence. Accomplishments of love rise when the nurse and the patient feel that life is given them as a gift. The outer dignity or the aesthetic acting and posture moulds love. The nurse should not think caritas in caring, she should live caritas in caring. That which is considered unfamiliar can be seen as the driving force of love in caring. The presence of love in the relationship between the patient and the nurse is experienced when the patient’s suffering becomes a part of the nurse’s life.

Love is foundational in the nurse - patient relationship because there is a demand for love in the relationship. Only love can live up to the fact that the patient’s life is given to the nurse and his life lies in the nurse’s hands. The patient, the stranger, is a part of the nurse’s life in natural love. Serving a stranger with love is rendered possible because love and compassion are spontaneous. Love goes beyond the thought of a motive for caring because love is given to the human being when she receives life as a gift.