

## Lady Chatterley's Lover- The Emotional and Spiritual Deadness of Past-industrial Society

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**Abstract:** The novel is set in a post-war society grappling with industrialization and the trauma of the great war, which left many men, like Clifford, physically wounded and society with a general sense of personal and societal paralysis. The novel advocates for individual regeneration and integrity achieved through a relationship that values passion, tenderness and respect and critiques the intellectualism of the aristocracy.

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### Introduction

*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the last novel of D.H. Lawrence, was considered by the novelist himself as "a novel contrasting the mental consciousness with the phallic consciousness". It is a tender phallic novel in which it is shown as to how sex relation can be 'valid and precious' instead of shameful. There should be a balance and harmony between the consciousness of body sensations and experience and those bodily sensations and experiences themselves.

### A Marriage Missirgenvie Conversation

In this novel, there is a triangular relationship between husband, wife and another man, the husband's gamekeeper. Lady Chatterley, who is a passionate woman, marries Clifford, who becomes disabled in the Great War. He seeks to offer Connie, Lady Chatterley, an intimacy that is 'beyond sex' as he is paralysed from the waist downward. He tries to share his life with her not out of manhood, strength and purpose, but out of weakness and dependence. His wife also devotes herself loyally to looking after her husband, but their relationship offers only mental intimacy and Connie gradually becomes oppressed by the emptiness of her life. She realizes that she is slowly drying up into nothingness.

### The Clash Between Mind And Body In Human Experience

Being unfulfilled, she turns for sexual satisfaction to Clifford's gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors. Mellors is also an unhappily married man and the both fall for each other. At first, there are secret meetings between them but later Connie decides to leave her crippled husband, unmindful of the fact that Clifford needs her more. In the end, Connie and Mellors are hopeful that they would be able to keep alive 'the little forked flame' that has come to exist between the two of them. "Sex is a thing that exists in the head, its reactions are cerebral, and its process mental.

Constance was a passionate girl from the very beginning. She had an intimate relationship once, with a German boy, before marriage, while she was studying. During the World War, he died and Connie forgot him as easily as she had loved him. He did not exist for her any more. After that, she came in touch with Clifford Chatterley. Clifford Chatterley was more upper-class than Connie and the sex part did not mean much to him. They were intimate and two people who stand together on a sinking ship Clifford though,

Connie, on the other hand, exulted only a little in this intimacy which was beyond sex, and beyond a man's satisfaction. She craved sexual gratification but Clifford anyhow was not just keen on this satisfaction. Connie did want children, but he did not care for this. Clifford, after the honeymoon of one month, went back to the War, six months later returned back with the lower half of his body, from his hips down, paralyzed forever, we begin to realize that the man who is shipped home smashed and paralysed from the war, was spiritually paralysed before he went. Being intelligent and rich, he becomes a writer of some distinction, though his stories are always in some mysterious way meaningless. There is no touch, no actual contact, even in these stories.

### Unsatisfying Intellectual Intimacy

Physically, Clifford and Connie are non-existent to one another. Their intimacy is an affair of the mind only. They cannot bring themselves to talk to each other on matters concerning their bodily existence. "Connie's Relationship with Clifford Offers only Mental Intimacy- A Mutual Absorption." The paralytic position of Clifford and the youthful vigour of Constance generate in her a strain of anxiety, a state of tension. She feels that there is no substance in her or anything; the whole fabric of her life seems to be disintegrating. When she looks at herself, at her own body in a mirror, she finds, her body was going

meaningless, going dull and opaque so much insignificant substance. It made her feel immensely depressed and hopeless....She was old, old at twenty-seven, with no gleam and sparkle in the flesh. Old through neglect and denial, yes denial.

She feels that Clifford has actually defrauded her of her own body, for there is in him no healthy human sensuality, that warms the blood and freshens the whole being. Constance becomes a nun-wife of Clifford and thus drags around her life aimlessly. He is a nice man, but for her is bodiless. She is aware of a growing restlessness in her. This restlessness is taking possession of her like madness. Vaguely, she feels that she is going to pieces, she is out of connection, she has lost touch with the substantial and vital world.

#### **Conflict Between Right and Wrong**

The relationship between Lady Chatterley and Michaelis is a short-lived one. Clifford's paralysis denies her a very serious part of life, i.e. sex. Michaelis himself is a lonely figure, an outsider, and out of sheer sympathy for him, she given her to him. On meeting him, Connie feels a sudden strange leap of sympathy for him; a leap mingled with compassion, and tingled with repulsion, amounting almost to love. Connie feels her feeling for Michaelis a secret from the beginning until the end. She does not find her act of loving Michaelis wrong, but at the same time, she does not want to hurt Clifford by letting him know her extramarital affairs. Michaelis rouses in her a wild, craving physical desire and Connie feels as if she were in love with him. She gets her sensual satisfaction out of his male passivity. But in the very core of her heart, she knows the hopelessness of her affair with Michaelis. Michaelis is an isolated man and is grateful to Connie for giving him love, comfort and spontaneous kindness. He even asks Connie to marry him and suggests he should leave Clifford. When Connie does not agree, on account of her sympathy for Clifford, he says: "He doesn't know that anybody exists, except himself. Why, the man has no use for you at all.... He's entirely wrapped in himself." But Connie does not agree to abandon Clifford. She says, "It may seem to you Clifford doesn't count, but he does. Why you think how disabled he is....."

#### **Mind and body**

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence argues that living a life that is 'all mind', which he particularly observed among the young aristocratic intelligentsia, ignores the human need for bodily intimacy. Equally, he maintains that pursuing bodily desires alone ignores the essential need for ideas and connection. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, therefore, is chiefly advocating for an equal respect towards the mind and body.

Throughout the novel, all of the characters struggle to reconcile their mind and body. For example, even

before Clifford's paralysis which put an end to his and Connie's sexual relationship, it is emphasised that Connie and Clifford's marriage is based upon their cerebral, rather than physical, connection.

In contrast, Mellors and Connie's affair is initially solely physical. However, over the course of the novel, Mellors' resistance to emotional connection lessens as he recognises that physical love presents spiritual challenges. Equally, Connie's attitude towards sex as a distasteful, almost pointless act is changed; she enjoys it deeply. As a result, Connie and Mellors appear to 'meet' in the middle, whereby they share a connection of both body and mind.

#### **Class and society**

Early 20th-century Britain was a period of rapid social and industrial change. The end of the Victorian era combined with world-altering events such as World War One meant that traditional class hierarchies and economic values were under intense scrutiny. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* most clearly captures this period of changing divisions through the affair between working-class Mellors and aristocratic Connie.

Mellors is someone who was recognised for his ability during the war, but then returns to Britain into his former position as a gamekeeper – and thus his former social class – on the Wragby estate. At times during the novel, he is clearly frustrated to be working for Clifford, who he perceives to be snobby, arrogant and out-of-touch. Mellors is more worldly than Connie, and is able to slip in and out of his local Derbyshire accent, which Connie finds amusing and even tries to imitate.

In contrast, Connie Chatterley has married someone of a slightly higher social class than her, but with very different social views: Clifford believes that the working classes have chosen to remain workers, and that some people, the upper classes, are naturally born to rule. He even compares the working classes to animalistic, machine-like creatures who exist to serve. The class divide between the Chatterleys in Wragby and the villagers in Tevershall is bridged by the nurse Mrs. Bolton, who becomes a strange mother-like figure to Clifford, but also provides the village with gossip about the Chatterleys, which ultimately drives Mellors out of his job.

#### **Industrialisation**

The intense mining, dangerous factories and densely-crowded city centres that characterised Britain's economic landscape during the Industrial Revolution are represented through the coal mining village of Tevershall on the edge of the Wragby estate. By contrast, the natural landscape of Wragby is emblematic of the 'old England' which Clifford is desperate to preserve; he sees Wragby as a haven from the brutish, changing outside world.

However, even Clifford changes from an intellectual artist to an industrialist when he develops a fervent interest in the estate coal mines. Connie is unable to do so, and along with Mellors, wants to shut herself away from the dirty, busy and ugly world of industry and live in a nature-oriented utopia. This is yet more pronounced when Connie and Clifford discuss the possibility of bringing their child into a changing world they are both afraid of and confused by.

As such, Connie's attraction to Mellors is both because of the physical pleasure he can offer her, and because, as a gamekeeper who lives in the woods, he represents the Jerusalem-like England of old.

### Youth

Throughout the novel, the 'youth of today' are blamed for many perceived societal ills. For instance, Clifford and his group of friends see the youth's love of dancing and jazz music as corrupting and distracting from the very urgent issues of the age, such as the war, and too overly-focused on fun and pleasure rather than serious intellectual pursuits.

At the time of writing, young men and women no longer solely prioritised marriage, and dressed and behaved in ways that were more gender fluid. Lawrence seems to be suggesting that World War One has stunted the world's growth and has fundamentally altered the new generation for the worse.

### Conclusion

#### Journey of self Discovery

To escape the restlessness, which has engulfed Connie, she starts going to the woods. Into this life of nothingness comes the gamekeeper. She is enigmatically drawn towards him. The gamekeeper. Mr. Olive Mellors, is also a man very much alone, yet there is a certain warmth about him and it is this which starts in Connie a weary yearning and a sense of dissatisfaction with her life. His white firm silky, divine body, which she sees while he is taking both, overpowers the mind and should of Constance.

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