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Women In Love Part IV

Chapter XXI Threshold

In this section of D.H. Lawrence's, Women In Love, we find that the relations between Gudrun and Gerald and Ursula and Rupert are turning into blossoming romances. In the twenty-first chapter, Gerald is taken with Gudrun as she is off from Beldover in London have an art show for her work and he is comfortable with the suggestion of an art studio over the stables. His desire to support her work and artistic freedom with such space is to gift her full creative range. She too is taken with becoming a part of his home at Shortlands.

Father Crich has taken ill having his daughter, Winifred, or Birdie as she is called, take care in him. It is she who begins a greenhouse search for the perfect floral bouquet to greet Gudrun upon her return from London. She is decided upon roses and mystic white cluster of creepers. Their father relays that such flowers are given to queens.

Upon her return, Gudrun is taken with the gesture in knowing Gerald is behind them as she's pleasured with them. The real reward is at home, she reasons, and not away buried in the art world. And we are then reminded that in this dated work of the 1920's, 'for love and marriage, women are like a bull at the gate'.

Our authors share that Mr. Crich, though deathly ill, partakes in goodness of life's basics, water, friends, food, and his senses regardless of this illness that's brought him to a state of bedrest. Gudrun has come offering 30 minutes of stimulation from his motionless days. He feels a strength in exaltation and of pure freedom to continue living in light conversation and her shared thoughts. She visits ignoring his terrible appearance she'd worn beneath her consciousness. His own son, Gerald, avoided visits repulsed with his father's presence and dead like mouth as his words (echos) were distant in his thoughts. He unable to be wholly present for he (father) was near deaths door just as his father had hardship and irritation with his son in the presence of a dying man.

His father had recommended the studio for her so she'd stop teaching. This was a testament to the evolving 1920's and men accepting the work-life of women, yet, it shows concern in the patrilineal control as he wants her home, at home working. If she has a happy nature with this concept then she is good asset.

As time moves on, we find that Winifred and Gudrun are building a sisterly relationship hardly ever in the house fighting the dreadful, lowly state it was in with the father weakening with illness. He was losing the ability to focus attention on visitors. When awake he 'dimly' relives the old life as his eyes too have darkened with fragmented ability. Lawrence describes the father as portraying a repelling 'uncleanliness of death'. This simply means that death was a source of impurity. There is the biological decay and the ultimate consequence of sin as in the biblical determination of death relative to God.

Serpent of Laocoon

To further the emphasis of impurity as death, within our text, D.H. mentions the 'Serpent of Laocoon' in this novel symbolic of the era and interest held in the fascination of Greek Mythology. Laocoon is a Trojan priest notable for the blinding and thence death of he and his two young sons being attacked by giant serpents. Though this incident is disputed in respects to which god(s) sent the serpent to kill them, it is known that he warranted the need for burning the Trojan horse brought into the city to prove it not a trick. Either Apollo, Athena, Minerva or Poseidon sent the giant sea serpents to strangle him in accordance to the writings of Quintus Smyrnaeus and Virgil (Aeneid). Yet, it is the Trojans who charge that his death was for striking the horse with a spear.

Birkin's Opinion on The Institution of Marriage

The two men, Gerald and Birkin go along for a drive. Gerald, knowing the passion between Ursula and Birkin, wants to congratulate them on engagement, but, as Rupert reports that there are no further developments and he continues his distain for love and creating a binding contract siting he is not keen on the concept of love but free love as just 'love' is not enough for him. The ultimate exchange, pen ultimate in contract, is marriage housing love while it last as one can not insist on permanency and exactness. It is a social arrangement with no love depth for which women are, as previously stated, like that bull at the gate.

Women denying their very worth in existence forced them into the roles of marriage, being wifey while objectifying the husband. She relinquishes her rights to

be….and this is the foundation of Rupert's troubling mind. His internal turmoil is representative of the 1920's challenge to sell self-worth and self-ownership. It is the social science discussions of the times, we assume, imprint upon Birkin, though it is also noted the existing failure of the family form, equality for women, divorce rate rising, and expressions of cultured womanhood he's evaluating against his personal want and needs. Lawrence attempts to bridge the dynamics of each couple, their family structure, career choice acceptance, and want for marriage against every changing time.

No Marriage concept for Birkin

Though love can lead to marriage Birkin is not keen on marriage as a bird to a bush has many leaves to peck. It isn't good enough and he fears getting involved in a social arrangement with no depth of love. Here we kiss freely. If they fall in love they decide to marry or not, however, why break eggs about it as he can remain with a trustworthy 'mistress' who may become more faithful than a wife. It is a safer take of relationships as "Love is the ticket while it lasts."

Ursula is quite firm in heart with unfailing feeling of love for him. His talks make Gudrun upset.

In reading his take on this subject concisely, man and wife take it further in name but the outcome has the potential to become heavenly & hellish, often more hellish. Or, you leap into a paradise in this unison as you leave yourself and fuse into one. This is when you are abandoning, really abandoning yourself for the other person. It then began to rain as they drove along. The rain is metaphoric for renewal and growth.

Woman to Woman, Hermione to Ursula

The two sisters and Gerald with Birkin are invited to tea with Hermione. This scene opens with the two women analyzing one another's appearance and defending their individual positions in their shared relationship with Rupert Birkin.

According to Ursula, Hermione has a horse face and only one side to her penny. She, Ursula, was moon faced with no obverse as half of her was lost to life. For her (Hermione), knowledge was power as she used it for distinction in proving she held higher breeding kin to diamonds and pearls. Ursula believed she felt rejected and deficient elsewhere and chose to be condescending to she and others and was a life in thought was one of her elected cynicism at the bottom of herself. Her belief in herself,

flesh and the devil as a priestess without belief and no conviction toward the spirit world. No real feelings, detached from emotion.

She'll die from desecrated mysteries, old, outworn beliefs. These old great truths BAD been true as she was a leaf of an old tree. Ursula felt herself to be an emotional being as she and Rupert were……. and he is inside Hermione's background, her past.

Hermione is above Ursula's breed as she sees her as vaunt or vulgar as she digs questioning whether she believes she will marry. Though she is calm and mild it pleased her like wickedness in envy of Ursula's unconscious positivity seen as vulgarity by her.

This inquiry forces Ursula to admit her inability to accept him non-emotionally in submission to his desire. She says he is often in contradiction with himself as the demon he possesses wants physical mate and not the human being. It is his freedom and fight with submission and love. His selfishness is in feeding his own dissatisfaction(s) and argues that God knows what's inside of him and it must be a form of acceptance there. He is driven in thoughts and knowledge and has execrated her for it as she cannot think nor feel. As an absolute, he doesn't want to give anything.

Hermione agrees that, "he hates feelings." He wants a woman to take something from him and give-up herself for the last 'realties' of him as facts which are both physical and unbearable. Distancing her, he would use her as his instrument for his own private satisfaction. So, Hermione suggests that it would be a mistake for Ursula to consider marrying him. It would be disastrous for her. Her choice man should be strong willed and of soldierly. (spelling)

She must see his strength and hear his shout without sensitivity. Physical strength and virile in his will as Birkin are changeable and unsure of himself, frail in health and it takes patience & understanding. Ursula will suffer within his intense spiritual life as he worries and reacts she would be in agony. But in the end, Ursula asserts and agrees Hermione must have suffered with Rupert. They too agree that he is young on the inside, childish to them both.

<u>*Ursula In Her Thoughts Again*</u>

There aught a be a "Creed of Happiness" for Hermione as a matter of will as Ursula believes in her young analysis that it is degrading not to be happy with Birkin. She sees her love for him that of a genuine 'woman' whereas Hermione offers an "ideal" love for she doesn't know him for who he is. Nor can she accept him as he is.

Her old competition is conceited with no belief in her elfin womanhood dethroned in shallow cleverness. She is the untrue woman of the two.

Then D.H. Lawrence offers us a comparison of the two women with insight of Ursula an attractive emotional feminine intuition versus Hermione's injured psyche full of vulgar insensitive antagonism which lends toward her bullying men.

As Rupert finds the two women together, he begins to placate them with small conversation of conventional common places. In time, Hermione has resentment and pity for him and Ursula draws impatient, nervous, and talk of Christendom. To separate the two of them and have her observe the upper hand, Hermione begins to speak in Italian. Our author states that she "cast birth" at Rupert in waste basket. I believe she had taken their (trashy) relationship (Hermione + Rupert) back to its infancy, beginning leaving Ursula feeling imbalanced without Gudrun or Winnie Crich around to battle the pythoness with the inspiration of oracles. This makes her feel like the outsider between them as she watches Hermione pet the cat. This cat petting is an act of exercised power as her voice held a whimsical humorous note of bullying. Here, she is the foreigner drawn into Birkin and her past world together. That was where they shared the sanction of grace and age from which they have their established standards.

This writer once again, captures the essence of age and time weighing against new realities of life. Ursula grows angry, her nose out of joint, as she was established forever with him, it was as if she were ephemeral and had not arrived. For this she leaves, without his response, outside in fury and runs down the road. Hermione has roused unreasonable rage and violence inside of her as she leaving seemed uncouth, ill-bred, exaggerated and she cared not in her outrage. This is not unfounded female rage but that of disappointment in envy for something, the suggestion of unwelcomed love she was sure had died.

The Just of Chapter 23

Psalm 23: Yeah, though I walk through the valley in the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil.

For Ursula, especially, life is dark about as dark as Gudrun's take inside the 'nausea of death' for which she is glad the everyday world holds as good. But inside this chapter 23 is the reverence for the 23rd Psalm which tells us that in the 'shadow of death, I shall fear no evil'. Though dramatic, we find Birkin has come the next day to Ursula at school asking her to take a ride with him. With a 'closed face' she consents resisting him in an unresponsive mode.

Inside his minds he questions why he is even bothering with this relationship again as his heart is sunken in this tryst of male and female that's damned and doomed. In broken anger he hands her three rings. Though a lovely pleasure to look at she suggest, "Surely you should give them to Hermione, you belong to her?" As she owns hating what Hermione stands for, it is lies, false, death but he wants her, he is like a dog to vomit. It is a grotesque comparative that gives further credence to the displeasure she feels knowing she and Rupert's history. Here, her feelings ruled and their human idiosyncrasies where unacceptable as she suggest, 'you go with her and have nothing to do with me' testing his internal desire for truth in deciding the importance of her or she.

He further agitates her insisting he must leave for dinner with Hermione as she is leaving for a lengthy time abroad. In silence, he grows irritated with tense eye brows. Then she says she doesn't mind beyond his urgency to go. "Ah you fool," escapes uttering 'it's finished with Hermione' and he and that she shouldn't mind his going. Ursula's angry telling him to stop the car and she exits and tells him he can leave her there on the road.

I sense from this time in their relationship that she throws the rings into the mud displaying emotional and physical intimacy to Birkin against what she feels Hermione's spiritual intimacy. He says he needs the fusion of two people as one is the perfect idea and the other the perfect womb as he picks up the flung rings. A realistic perplex-ion for his well-designed character.

After she calms, she returns to the car bringing flowers, purple red bell heathers and everything suddenly became simple again as the anger or complexity gone into nowhere, non-existence. Keep in mind the romantic implications D.H. Lawrence offers us as they're in the fields along the side of the road with blooming flowers around them as she drifts off walking. She loses the emotion to the beauty of nature and their kind of love.

Modern men have said that they cheat and tend to become philanderers or womanizers for the same need to bridge two personalities together in fulfillment of their sexual confliction(s) and, yet, even our laws dictate marriage to a single individual as either hetero or homo-sexual relationships.

In regret, she asks of the rings as he commits to being in love with her. This is symbolic of the onset toward a marriage as they then take off in the car again and as our author says, 'leaving their beautiful battlefield'.

For Birkin, this is a new experience, described as a bird out of an egg and into the universe as life flowed in him from a new fountain born out of the cramp of a

womb. He is driving with a wakefulness with broken conscious tension. Drifting through the wild smiling and sweetly at ease for Southwell Minster.

"Are we here!" she cried with pleasure towards a rigid, sombre, ugly cathedral at the entrance of town. Descending upon the town, they heard the Minster bells having a hymn at the 6th hour, "Glory to thee God this night, for all blessings of light."

Ursula's world has become unreal, she felt strange and transcendent. As if new eyes were in her soul, it was the enchanted state magic of the Book of Genesis. Birkin was this strange creature from beyond finding her as fair and as a daughter by a Sons of God (Rupert) or does he mean daughters of her with Birkin as fair. She feels as if under a spell, drawn to him in neither love nor passion but as a "God sent" woman. In a 'rich' satiated peace, his dark fire of electricity rushed from him to her. She as the 1st luminous daughter of men.

They both seem to faint as we can read between the crafted lines of borderline poetic rhetoric depicting our two characters. D.H. Lawrence then goes on using skillful text describing the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches, good things as she believed she had learned to be still and perfect at last. Still and perfect with Birkin. Ursula coaxes Rupert to travel in the free world, in a free place. A sense of riches that could never be impaired in knowing "it's you and me isn't it my love," flooded her mind. She possessed him and she mindlessly connects with him as the <u>death of knowledge is knowing and this was lambent intellect.</u>

Awakened, she wanted to write both their letters of resignation from the world of work, writing a letter to the Director of Education to quit work. She lax in the beauty of fate…. they slept in the reclined seats of his vehicle, still, she was frightened in the darkness. They are in Sherwood Forest.

<u>We Can Travel, Take on The World</u>

"Travel is a way of turning the page," is what I read once as I believe it is a sense of freedom and exploration for supported change. Such change is devoured within the newness of marriage. Ursula and Rupert have decided to marry and she urges their immediate path into the world surrounding them. Together they are turning their page onto a new life using travel to clarify this union and their destiny. It is most interesting that they are from the age and attitude of the 1920's. The era upon which 'women' where striving to declare a sense of 'equality'. It also was the period during which 'homosexuality' was introduced, spurning for a sense of reality against biblical declaration of 'heterosexual' relationships.

As the communion of man and women in marriage gained momentum it began to suffer the backlash of individuality that presented among women who were in war, forced into the workforce. This gave them the onset of dependency and responsibility in marriage for total care and welfare of themselves, children, and finances. This gained ground as survival was urgent for self and the economic standing of the country. Within the momentum of the time 'dolls' were secretary's, teachers as Ursula, artist as Gudren and manufacturing plant line workers among other careers.

It is here that women began to realize self-potential and began to file for divorce for the same list of reasons which present in the 2000's. And too, the young began to crave living their lives more than settling down in marriage. The roar of the twenty's was clubs, dancing, alcohol, gambling and others forms of entertainment and fun that only supplement sexual desires between the sexes and exploitation that marriage would not sustain. Shorter dresses displaying the feminine physique, curves, the high heels, and lip color as complement to batty lashes assured attraction to men at social gatherings. As women begin to feel freedom, fun, and finance they were considered 'flappers'. Independent, short mouthed, and at times naughty these women fell outside the expectancy of especially their patrilineal upbringing and reserved marriage for a later time.

It is this sense of self-control that we experience with Ursula who chooses to marry but leave her post as traditional educator and housewife to explore the world with her new husband. They too are well outside that formal sense of what it meant to be a married couple, fighting tradition living a loose life together. This is more so of what's termed an 'egalitarian marriage' or relationship which stems from the 1920's era. It suggests that self-owning individuals treat one another as such, self-owning. It grants each family member to influence and guide themselves and the group as a unit. Patrilineal control(s) are stifled and equal standing and ability acknowledged.

However, in this union, we are challenged to see the 1920's marriage legally disemboweled the existence of women to that of the husband who was responsible for her protection, care, and public actions. Rupert fights the times through his verbal tirades as he questions his place, his emotions, and what he is taught and knows society traditionally finds acceptable. He has inadvertently poised himself from the subjectivity of 'husband' (bondage) in marriage onto the freedom he desires for himself. As he values sexuality of man and woman he falters initially within the concept of love, free love, self-love, and being in-love with another. He too challenges his ability to mold or shape Hermione and Ursula's persons which is the center of his personal and relational turmoil. Birkin fears the threat of being a 'mismatched' couple. Ursula believes she has taken hold of his conflictions and we see that his emotions are clearly winning-over his sociological conceptualizations.

Again, the value of our court system blossomed as single mothers used the instrument of child support to survive if and when the father was able to pay.

The confliction of this time, of this era is clearly understood throughout the text as we read how our author depicts craftily the imagery of Hermione and Ursula seemingly battling over Birkin. His personality, though complicated as he rattles on and on of the complexity of relationships and his ability to kindle and honor love for and of a woman, we too see the free he offers in constant travel and how he dwells in London and the countryside. It is feared that he fights against his personal freedom and the boundaries marriage establishes with women who too have self-control and seemingly so, financial freedom.

As Ursula and Rupert seek approval from one another they too are faced with that of family and friends as a couple. The compliment of Gudrun and the Crich's son is an external support they both seek and soon abandon once enthralled with their own possible union. The text from "Sanctuary…." too suggests or rather reiterates D.H. Lawrence's characterization of Rupert's stance toward 'possessive jealousy and property rights' as it relates to both women and land ownership itself. It bases it's relationships upon the 1920's traditional approach to sexuality as irrational and savage in belief that one person can own and possess another solely. He has a genuine internal fight undertaking the confusion this patrilineal culture causes onto change to equality and relinquishing his control. And, once again, his own choice in sexuality.

They are all surrounded by the contradiction's modernization imposes in war and the social sciences realigning our relationships.

The use of social researchers and activist such as T.H. Adamowski, Clayton Douglas, William Faulkner, William F. Ogburn, Terry Eagleton and other more radical thinkers provoked the nerve to brave out and into self-life orientation while providing knowledge based supportive grounds for reestablishing the institution of marriage between two recognized individuals. This eras thinker is the foundation of self-



awareness, self-esteem, self-actualization, self-indulgence all to be shared with one's significant other on equal footing.

Outtake on Greek gods and goddesses 1920's – 1950's

gods: *protection, because if the gods were unhappy with someone, then they would punish them*

During the time and age of D.H. Lawrence, as presented in his text, Greek religion and mythology had its impact upon the life of our characters. His references to the 'gods' and 'Apollo' etc....support this suggestion. It too calls in alignment the reality that the 1920's to 1950's was a transition period for the modern family and for religion and religious practices. As much as Hellenism, religion practiced in Greece, was explored and honoring, referencing or calling upon the great gods was accepted and thus their earthly forms of punishment for sin(s). Within this period in time, the sense of irrationality of it all was not considered.

Prior years exploring proved that Greek religion was animated, thence, the study of Greek religion was divided across countries and languages during these years. With the uprising of an 'intellectual culture, a shift in study of mythology and its counterparts gained momentum with anthropologists from Cambridge (ritualist), and others who conducted scientific analysis of Greek myth and polytheisms. This was highly inclusive in the adaptation of 'Religionswissenschaft' of German social scientist. Their thoughts toward the beliefs in gods and goddesses who controlled each aspect of people's lives and prayer for protection in life was aligned as "Irrational" cultish uptake. Exploring the anthropological and psychological value of such interpretation(s) and intuitive practice of these old rites and symbolic representation, had become necessary. As this 1920's period displayed a lack of confidence in scholarly efforts of the previous generation and hence, befallen debates of "rationality and irrationality" as religious matter. Each radical new development was a means of redefining the meanings of Greece for the new world before them.

The relativity of negative depictions of the Greek religion and superstitions is cosigned in the Greek alogon which is the 'irrational' number as its meaning is beyond that of the power of integers. The alogon is in a different realm of magnitude (megethos) having infinite extensions of mathematical value. This is outside of conventional reasoning just as their beliefs in gods and goddesses. There too is the 'irrational' of emotions and alternatives to reason as we are relating one unto another. Introspection of many sociological factors are held quite close in this novel.

Irrationality is to be understood on its own terms and as an elusive otherness of the divine. It is to evoke intellectual altitude and approach to learning in life as a psychological and social phenomenon formed opposing the typical realm of reasoning.

In fact, it is documented that during this 1920 period, the social changes of community provoked or reignited the fuse for Christians who were dismayed by the 'new way' women dressed and their behavior. And, the Renaissance gift of jazz along with cinema bore negative influence against fundamentalist with adherence to the Biblical verse(s).

The Era and These Relationship

In conclusion, the 1920's were essential to our cultural evolvement. D.H. Lawrence is one of the relevant writers of this time who depicted in totality and who illuminated with visual text, the matters of relationships and social and political growth as we read of the women along with these men and their expressive characterizations.

Many, prior to these times, wanted families and children as marriage was expected and necessary despite it often resulting from relationships which lacked 'romance.' Young men were chosen back then by families to court or call on young girls. This all began to change after the First World War.

Women held the right to vote just as movie pictures took over as influence of romance and notions of love. Dance halls, sporting events, and speakeasies were popular and accessible for those with vehicles. Even the car became an intimate meeting place for men and women. These active women were referred to as 'flappers'. Dating for fun grew common as did a new sexual liberation all chiming on one's popularity. This was offensive to the older generation as being in long term relationships only invited kissing and caressing in limitation. However, a freer sex liberated crowd grew, along with visual sexuality appreciation and with the proven effectiveness of birth control medicaments. However, if ones partner never married, female reputations were at stake. These were risky times for women as judgements were harsh. Going on dates without supervision was a dynamic change and charge.

D.H. Lawrence does a curtesy in provoking thought of his means of expressing visual and timeless relative behaviors inside the social climate and dynamic nature of the 1920's. Especially with chapter 23, we find the pleasures and obstacles in finding love and deciding upon that sense of commitment. He uses nature, the rivers and flowers, taps into her emotions and his (physical)nudity with words, and leaves us with our inference in explanation. In his written voice, we hear and know of their explicit acts, "She was like a paradisal flower open at his knees, beyond womanhood," as we candidly understand their choices. Because of their bravery, we have choice and a level of acceptance they had to challenge society for.

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