Chapter - 3
COUNTERFEIT LOVES

THE WHITE PEACOCK

This Chapter deals with the first phase of Lawrence’s creative career from 1906 to 1913. *The White Peacock*, *The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers* are taken up for consideration. As all Lawrence’s works constitute one bulk, most of issues touched upon in the earliest novels are dealt in detail by Lawrence in his later mature fiction. “The White Peacock is like a dream before it is interpreted, or before the possibilities of interpretation has been entertained. Many of classic Laurentian motives which he was later to drag out into consciousness and expound and comment on here appear unanalyzed and unaware of their own significance.”(Hough 26) It can be called a novel of exploration. Despite its technical faults from very beginning, Lawrence very clearly “establishes himself as a novelist absorbed in the interior life of his characters, yet accurately observant of appearances.”(Niven, *The Novels* 10) In his early works while he grappled with the problem of personal relationships, it seems Lawrence was not quite sure about the cause of the conflicts.

Lawrence’s morality in relationships as we have known from his essay “Morality and the Novel” centers around equitable relationship of sexes. This, he finds, is the only way to having freedom from conflicts, or to sublimate sex, or to be conscious whether they are spiritual or sensual. That is why he seeks a balance between the two. However, he feels that there is no norm; a norm is merely an abstraction. There is no such thing in human relations that we may call ought to be. Suffice is to say that the equilibrium is never perfect. In the present novel too, Lawrence searches for this equilibrium but finds no actual norm, a living norm. In chapter one, Lawrence searches for a girl for George. The narrator’s sister and his mother are of the view that nobody will ever be good for George. The narrator, however, is sympathetic to his friend. We learn
that George is rather good looking, though is a spoiled child. As we move into
the second chapter, we learn that George is unsympathetic to animals, to their
miseries. For Lawrence, love and life are the same, for both spring from the
deep source of life or call it love. Therefore when we torture animals or even
destroy plants we hurt ourselves, for the same life flows in all organic and
inorganic life. Emily comments on her brother’s callousness saying: “He fills
me with disgust.” (WP 14)

Lawrence’s ethics underline adjustment of acts to ends—adjustment of
internal to external relations and above all adjustment of one individual with
another individual. It is the same with justice, the right of each man to do, as he
pleases so long he does not trespass upon the equal freedom of every other
man. The title of his next novel is not only significant but in fact it is the lait
motif of all his novels. The White Peacock is also a novel of human
adjustments, or better maladjustments. We confirm from maladjusted
relationship of our narrator’s parents. One day his mother receives a letter that
her father will not last a day or two because his kidneys are nearly gone. The
parents parted long back. Cyril can hardly remember his father—a tall,
handsome, dark man. The marriage had been none happy. What Cyril
remembers, is that his father was vulgar—a liar, one who deceived his mother.
Whether his father was a cheat or not, this was what he remembered. The old
man now dying after eighteen years of broken marriage. He wanted to live
with the family but Cyril’s mother kept him away. The mother now feels sorry.
She wants to see him at the earliest, accompanied by her son she leaves for the
destination. But by that time he is dead. Frank lived all alone. He lived poorly.
They learnt that he was very down at last. Though a generous fellow, he was
always hated as people could not get to the bottom of him. As Spilka writes,
“life takes place in the individual. The central law of all organic life is that each
organic intrinsically isolate and single in itself. But the secondary law of life is
this: that the individual can only be fulfilled through contact and communion
with his fellow men and women.” (Love Ethic 127) Lawrence evolved his ethics. The death of Cyril’s father changes their lives. It is not that the family suffered a great grief; the chief trouble is the same question: Why do human relationships fail? Meanwhile, other relationships are developing for sometimes. Cyril’s sister is being wooed by Leslie. Leslie has that fine physique, he has much animal vigor. He is exceedingly attractive, though he is not handsome but he had frank wholesome laugh. He pays frequent visits to show his love. Lettie also feels attracted towards Leslie. They sometime quarrel, but mostly they loves each other.

Another young man is George, Emily’s brother. George and Cyril are also friends and lives not a great distance from each other. George is happy to be a farmer. He often talks about sex and farming life. He loves his comfort more than anything else. That is why he cannot find a girl. He wants to marry someone with fortune. It is for this reason he wants Lettie to be his wife. He makes advances towards her, even when the girl is engaged to Leslie.

Lawrence is of the view as the case of George suggests, the education and upbringing of a child should be towards the full end and harmonious development. The final aim is not to know, as he put it in Fantasia of the Unconscious, “but to be.” (FU 200) Know thyself, the Socratic formulation is a more risky motto than “to be.” For Lawrence knowledge is not for the sake of knowing. It is awakening to primal consciousness being. That is the last motto for Lawrence and it is not purely mental. Human development rests on full development in terms of full adjustment with others, not self-assertion, but self-adjustment. For Lawrence a more adjusted man is a more developed person. And although he is aware that in human relationships this is an abstraction, an ideal more aspired for, less achieved. That is why this ideal is always a trembling balance, like The Rainbow. “Morality for him is a delicate act of adjustment on the soul’s part,” (FU 41) as he says in Fantasia of the Unconscious. An adjustment that Lawrence claims is the highest achievement
of the human race — the individual adjusted with other individual. That is all through his fiction he is concerned with establishing this equilibrium. Love is one aspect in human life which can bring two people together, but Lawrence cautions, that this relationship can’t be forced into the old mould.

Lawrence feels it necessary to bring about a balance between the two opposites to achieve fulfillment in life. But in The White Peacock almost all the characters fail to achieve this balance, all the female characters lead thwarted lives because of the male they choose. None of the characters achieve self-fulfillment which is essential to make marriage a success. The Lettie-Leslie-George triangle is at the heart of the book. “In The White Peacock Lawrence creates the fully engaging girl Littie, whose fully calculating choice of Leslie as a socially valuable husband destroys her own integrity and breaks the spirit of her more sensual lover, George.” (Cavitch 19)

Lettie’s relationship to George is anchored in the blood, seeming at times to obliterate mental consciousness. When they look at each other, their veins are filled with “fiery electricity” and both feel “the blood beating madly in their necks.” (WP 44) But Lettie is not willing to submit to the call of blood-consciousness. Her resistance to instinct shows her willfulness to resist the natural flow of her life resulting in disillusionment after she marries Leslie. What really kindles Lettie is not the male in Leslie, but the flattering positions he commands through his social position. Even after her marriage, she remains divided about the choice she has made. The error of Lettie’s decision lies in the fact that by rejecting George, she has denied the fundamental needs within herself. After her marriage, she becomes absorbed in her children and bourgeois world of surface values. Lawrence writes:

Having reached that point in a woman’s career when most, perhaps all of the thing in life seems worthless and insipid, she had determined to put up with it, to ignore her own self, to empty her own potentialities into the vessel of another or others, and to live her life at second hand. This peculiar abnegation of self is the resource of a woman for the escaping of the responsibilities of
her own development. Like a nun she puts over her living face a veil, as a sign that the woman no longer exists for herself: She is the servant of God, of some man, of her children or may be of some cause… (WP 323)

Lawrence makes it clear that Lettie falls apart at the innermost core of her being. She begins the willed negation of one half of her being and allows to lapse in the life of her children. Such a sacrifice of her own “self” is a denial of the responsibility of her own development. Unlike Ursula and Constance Chatterley, Lettie lacks the courage to be herself. Through Lettie’s mistakes, Lawrence illustrates a general principle that concerned him throughout his life that fulfillment of self is more important than winning success, or finding economic security or satisfying oneself at the procreative level. He declared: “The final aim of every living thing, creature, or being is the full achievement of itself.” (P 403) Lettie’s life becomes a “barren futility”, for she reduced herself to “a small indoor existence.” Only occasionally did she hear the “winds of life outside.” Sometimes she crawled to be out in the “black keen storm,” and was driven to the door. But “feminine caution kept her from stepping over the threshold.” (WP 331) Frank Kermode writes: “The sexual act is the leap into the unknown; the deposition of seed for continuance of the race is a consequence, not a cause, of this poppy like fulfillment. That she bears children is not a woman’s significance. But she bears herself that is her supreme and risky fate.”(Lawrence 39)

George’s own marriage to Meg also proves disastrous. They have children but George shirks his responsibilities. Meg, who has her own money, assumes the role of the dominating female thwarting the natural male. Meg is the prototype of Mrs. Morel in *Sons and Lovers*. George complains that Meg never found any “pleasure” in him as she does in her “children.” (WP 317) Their marriage is “more of a dual than a duet” (WP 342). As Schopenhauer writes: “Happy marriages are well known to be rare; just because it lies in the
very nature of marriage that its chief end is not present, but the coming generation.” (Schopenhauer 377) Meg wins because she has the support of her children. Lawrence very pertinently remarks, “a woman who has her child in her arms is a tower of strength.” (WP 332) But for this failure, the fault also lies in George who by denying the “responsibilities” is also denying his “profoundest impulse” or “his deepest soul.” (FU 100) He is incapable of giving himself to his wife that “vital part that she wants.” (WP 343) What man in her reckoning, requires of the woman is no more than the satisfaction of sexual instinct. Thus, she rejects. Lawrence remarks:

A woman is so ready to disclaim the body of a man’s love; she yields him her own soft beauty with so much gentle patience and regret; she clings to his neck, to his head and his cheeks, fondling them for the soul’s meaning that is there, and shrinking from his passionate limbs and his body… (WP 317)

Another example of the unfulfilled life and the thwarting of the sensual male is presented in the episode of the gamekeeper Annabel. His episode is powerfully felt and is powerfully presented. Annabel is a man of physical “vigor and animalness” (WP 172) who hate all the signs of culture and regard the civilization as the “painted finger of rottenness.” (WP 172) He believed only in the physical and sexual. “Be a good animal, true to your animal instinct,” (WP 173) is the motto of his life. His marriage with the Lady Crystabel violated his essential nature. Viewed in the “aesthetic light” he was reduced to art object by the spiritual “Lady of Shallot.” (WP 177) Annabel was disgusted with her “souly” nature. Lady Crystabel is the symbol of “The White Peacock” in the novel. Her refusal to have children was to humiliate her husband’s virility. The marriage proved to be “an unfortunate misalliance.” (WP 177) One day Annabel leaves her, for he cannot bear the desecration of his living body. The character of Annable emphasis is what Lettie, along with others has lost and what she needs for a fulfilled life, Graham Hough calls
Annable “the first Laurentian character, who embodies his philosophy.” (Hough 30) Yudhistar disagrees with Hough on this point and maintains that belief “only in the physical” and scorn for “all spirituality” is no tenet of Laurentian creed.” (Yudhistar 69) The animal like existence of the gamekeeper is itself no more complete. It lacks wholeness. Lawrence never approved a half whether sensual or spiritual. In a way Annable’s death suggests that halfness of life must be destroyed. Although the Annable episode has been considered “irrelevant,” (Antony West 96) It can be viewed as an illuminating comment on the possibility of fulfillment between Lettie and George. Besides it is Annable who with Cyril, establishes the “White Peacock” as the basic symbol of the novel. When Annable was telling his story to Cyril, a peacock came and perched as the bowed head of the statue of an angel. The bird befouled the face of angel with its excrement. Annabel sees it as the very “soul of a lady” and comments “a woman to the end, I tell you, all vanity and screech and defilement.” (WP 175) The characters standing close to the symbol of “the white peacock” are the Lady Crystabel, Lettie, her mother, Meg and Most of the girls who are fond of attending the parties. They illustrate the violation of natural man by idealism, and Lawrence shows them “oppressing and dominating the truth of nature that man’s instinctive being affirms.” (Gagduse, Miscellany 193) The “white” in the novel’s title indicates the ideal (in the sense of an idea in the mind) moral quality. Lawrence uses it in a pejorative sense, for such “purity” is really an avoidance of life. It also indicates lack of “blood,” life of spontaneity which is the essence of all life.

The world of The White Peacock is “dark,” “grey,” full of “gloom” (WP 13) offering a sharp contrast with the exquisite description of the beauties of the nature to the human world. Lawrence believed that the “mission of art” is to “bring us into sympathy with as many men, as many objects, as many phenomena as possible…We are forever trying to unite ourselves with the universe.” (PII 226) The mechanistic tendencies in the modern civilization are
destroying the spontaneous creative being of man making him incapable of achieving self-fulfilment.

Although Lawrence is not yet certain, he is trying to find out the cause of maladjustment in life. “Life is blighted, because men and women have been driven far apart and have no getting together again.” (Moynahan 10) unfulfilled by man, woman becomes the white peacock, whereas unfulfilled by woman; man gives way to the anti-social destructiveness of an Annable or self-destructiveness drunkenness of George. The remedy is suggested vaguely when Annabel says: “Tell a woman no to come in a wood till she can look at natural thing—she might see something.” (WP 157) That is to say, a woman should accept natural, instinctive and sensual life in its wholeness, untrammeled by spirituality or idealism. Only then she can come in close contact and achieve self-fulfilment. It is this quest for “the instinctive awareness” which Lawrence continues in his other novels also and which is necessary for a fulfilled life on this earth.

In fact Lettie has discovered the wonderful charm of her womanhood. However, she misses the point of perfect relationship, as Lawrence would say, because she has an upper hand over her husband. She makes fun of George also for the way he sees life. Cyril finds a good deal of difference in Leslie after marriage. With Lettie as a dominant partner, he loses his self-confidence. He is a lot subdued, humble and decent as he never has been in accompany. She almost forces him to a secondary position. This is what Lawrence considers immoral in sexual relationships. On the other hand, George is not much too happy. He starts drinking; it is not that Meg is not beautiful but that it is not the marriage of blood relationship. This is only an adjustment between the two. In chapter five of the third section of the novel, Lawrence gives it a sub heading “The Dominant Motive of Sufferings.” Lawrence’s fiction is all about those motives which cause sufferings.

There is a greater misery when couples get busy in having more and more children as Lettie put it, it doesn’t matter whether one produces grapes or pears or pineapples or children. Alas! That is what all people do. This is the
only thing one founds any pleasure in — that is to say any satisfaction. George thinks that Lettie’s thinking is poetic. For women, producing children appears to Lettie the only career worth pursuing. As a woman her own happiness is of no importance. She lives her life at second hand as Lettie said — “Services light and easy. To be responsible for the good progress of one’s life is terrifying. It is the most insufferable form of loneliness, and the heaviest of responsibilities.” (WP 323)

So Lettie indulges her husband, but does not yield her independence to him. Rather it is she who takes much of the responsibilities of him into her hands, and therefore he is so devoted to her. But she too succumbs to her predesigned role of being a nursery for the next generation. So she is determined to abandon the being of herself to her children with the full knowledge that when the children grew up, either they will unconsciously fling her away, back upon herself in bitterness and loneliness, or they will tenderly cherish her, chafing at her love bonds occasionally.

Annabel is Lawrence’s weapon against The White Peacock. It is he, who in rejecting all, towards which Lawrence’s own mother, Lettie and Emily strive — culture, wealth and matriarchal domination — symbolizes Lawrence’s as yet unconscious rejection of these. Like Lawrence, Cyril’s resentment against woman is rooted in his deep need for coming to terms with life, not with one part or another, but with the whole living composite. At the end we see Emily retired to her house and garden, George degenerated past individuality, Lettie wealthy but bored and Cyril in some no man’s land waiting. All the relations are away from notion of perfected relations. Thus in the very first novel, Lawrence put his morality so clearly and perhaps so nicely that there is no mistaking it in his novels to come. Moynahan calls this novel “a stagnant pool.” (Ibid 8) dimly reflecting some of important issues, Lawrence was later to take up. Despite criticism it can be said that The White Peacock is an important work as it points towards the direction
Lawrence’s art was to take later. In the novels to follow Lawrence grows subtlest in his critique of human follies more particularly when sex goes into the mind.

THE TRESPASSER

*The Trespasser* is Lawrence’s second novel, the shortest of all his novels. It is considered the worst of all his novels. It was published in 1912. *The Trespasser* is definitely an advance over the first novel and makes a crucial stage in the development of Lawrence’s creative genius. In *The White Peacock*, Lawrence is unsure about his vision of life. *The Trespasser* can be seen as his agonized search to realize his vision. But one can see that he still did not grasp it fully. Lawrence himself described the first two novels as “a florid prose poem, or a decorated idyll running to seed in realism.” (CL 66-67) John Worthen considered the novel as “something of a living fossil.” (Idea of Novel 22) *The Trespasser* deals implicitly with the question of conflicts in relations. No attempt has been made on the part of the novelist to reconcile the two opposites into oneness. Perhaps Lawrence himself was in the process of knowing the cause of this conflict and its resultant effects on the human psyche. At the end of 1909, shortly after Lawrence had finished *The White Peacock*, Hueffer, at the strength of “Odour of Chrysanthemums,” had prescribed for him a course of workingman novels. But his next novel *The Trespasser* is ever farther from his family experience and the mining background than *The White Peacock*, being about a tragic love affair between middle-class people, in London and Isle of Wight.

It is based on Helen Corke’s affair with an older married man, at Freshwater, Isle of Wight, who had hanged himself shortly after his return. *The Saga of Siegmund* was Lawrence’s original title for *The Trespasser*. Helen Corke was amazed that Lawrence, never having met her lover, and with so little help from her, could enter so deeply into the relationship. Lawrence was
able to identify so closely with Siegmund not only because he was falling in love with Helen, but — also because the pressure which had driven Siegmund to his death was primarily the same frustrations, Lawrence was suffering at hand of all his girl friend’s Agnes Holt, Jessie Chambers, and now Helen herself. As David Daiches writes “How is love possible in a world of individuals imprisoned by their own private and unique consciousness? Loneliness is great reality, love the great necessity, how can the two be brought together?” (Modern World 141)

The protagonist Siegmund, who is a married man, has no fulfillment in his life. For years, he has “suppressed his soul, in a kind of mechanical despair doing his duty” (T 13) to his wife and children, what he gets in return is alienation. Siegmund wants to “break free” from the dull mechanical routine life in London. He wants to escape with Helena on the Isle of Wight to have a few days of joy. But it is no easy task for him, for it meant “breaking of bond, a severing of blood ties” and yet at the same times “a sort of new birth.” (T 13)

For a while, Siegmund feels revitalized in his communion with Helena, despite her passional feelings. The divergent fragments of his split personality seem to be joining together in a unified wholeness. He feels like “Adam when he opened the first eye in the world.” (T 60) But this intense experience is ephemeral. Helena, however, can only form connection with the seeming reality—what Siegmund appears to her and not what he is. She cannot grasp the unconscious, “non human” (CL 282) element of his personality. His impersonality is beyond the comprehension of her mind. She is a “dreaming woman” for whom “the dream was always more than actuality.” (T 30) Her idea of Siegmund is more to her than the real man. Siegmund is only the creation of her mind. Helena is the result of a long process of refinement; the same comment which Lawrence was later to make about Sue in “the Study of Thomas Hardy” that “she did not, like an ordinary woman, receive all she knew through her senses, her instinct but through her consciousness.” She exists as a
“consciousness.” (P 501) She is “cruel” (T 30) to the real man. For centuries a certain type of woman have been rejecting the “animal in humanity, till now her dreams are abstract, and full of fantasy, and her blood runs in bondage, and her kindness is full of cruelty.” (T 30)

It is not that Helena does not love Siegmund. She wants that he should love her “madly.” (T 56) She does not want his “Passion.” And when she meets his passion, she feels “destroyed.” (T 50) “She seemed to be offering him, herself to sacrifice.” (T 35) Helena wants only dream-love which is only a mental and imaginative longing without any positive connection with the bowels. Hers is not spontaneous, but idealized love. Siegmund too has dreams but his dream “melted in his blood” whereas Helena’s dreams are “detached and inhuman.” (T 30) She lives in the world of abstractions without any contact with reality. Her conscious will cannot dissolve in the blood and renew her whole being. She cannot respond to call of the passionate, unknown, mysterious otherness of the blood-consciousness. The unconscious dark otherness of the passionate self is something unknown to her.

Helena wants love which will come through the “upper channels” and rejected the way of fulfillment through “complete, passionate, deep love” (FU 123) that Siegmund offers. When her illusion of him is shattered, she shudders with horror. She sees that Siegmund is no “God” but only an ordinary man “like the rest of men,” something of the “clothed animal on end.” (T 100)

She could not accept the natural, physical and passional man that Siegmund is. His love becomes stifling, suffocating bondage and she fights to “free” herself. (T 101) It appears that Siegmund only “flees from one conflict to be caught up in a different one.” (Yudhistar 74) Instead of getting fulfillment, he gets despair and disappointment. Their love and togetherness for five days instead of refreshing them makes them depressed and they come to hate each other. It brought out the utter incompatibility of their natures and also the conflict between the blood consciousness and the material-spiritual consciousness.
Lawrence probably searches for the cause of human struggle. For Helena love is nearly pure passion, a half-dream, but for Siegmund it is nothing sort of bodily passions. Like Miriam, “she wanted to sacrifice to him, make herself a burning altar to him and she wanted to posses him.” (T 48) During the first night of their holiday she meets his passion and love. It is not his passion she wants. But she desires that he should want her madly, and that he should have her all —everything. Then Lawrence finds out the cause of human satisfaction and dissatisfaction all at once, as he writes: “It was a wonderful night to him. It restored to him the full will to live. But she felt it destroyed her. Her soul seemed blasted.” (T 48)

Siegmund looks at himself with disapproval, though his body is full of delight. This means his mind disapproves the act. Helena feels it more acutely. Hence while their bodies approve, their minds feels the remorse of it. As Keith Sagar writes: “All Lawrence’s hatred of the dreaming woman; his sense of her destructiveness went into his work. In The White Peacock it was Lettie, in The Trespasser Helena.” (Life into Art 89)

Nevertheless they continue to drag during the rest of their holiday in between the phrases of happiness; we can see the distance between them. While she kisses him swiftly, he lays still, his heart beating heavily; “he was almost afraid of the strange ecstasy she concentrated on him…” looking at him, her heart melted with sorrowful pity. Lawrence’s reading of human psyche with reference to human sexuality is Pre-Freudian. In his book Fantasia of the Unconscious, he traces the unconscious from the earliest time. This enables Lawrence to focus on the source of life, mysterious though, is the spring of all life calls it solar-plexes or carbon in the coal. Lawrence wants parents to tell their children after puberty what it means to be the sexual, so that they know that sex is but the source of life. That is why he does not want sex in the head, but rather in the body.

Commenting on nature of their relationship, Lawrence writes that such women who lead a mental life of abstractions suppress the “gross and animal” in man. Such women, who want the “flower of spirit” and the soul, “destroy
the natural man.” (T 84) They love their men madly only to “possess” them completely. They are not like an ordinary woman who is “a great potential force” springing up from the “soul of life.” (T 84) Helena wants Siegmund’s “vitality” to “infuse” her and make her “live” but he should not demand “the return of the female impulse into him.” (P 498) Siegmund wants “consummation” “that deepest experience” with her which will connect him with “the unknown and undiscovered which lies in the body of man and woman.” He wants to receive from her “the quickening, the primitive seed and impulse which should start him to a new birth.” (P 503) But he fails to get this fulfillment because there is no “dynamic polarity” (FU 106) in this relationship.

Siegmund also is responsible for this failure of relationship. He could never act spontaneously: “The centre of sensual, manly independence, of exultation in the sturdy, defiant self wilfulness, masterfulness and pride lay suppressed in him.” (FU 117) He lacks the courage to be himself and face reality. Living his life from sympathetic mode only and the failure to balance him, leads to disaster. Thus we have seen that the basic conflict is responsible for the failure of any meaningful relationship between Siegmund and Helena and also with others.

Both set judgment on each other. In this triangle of love Siegmund has two women, and he hates both of them. But he does not want himself to be judged by either of them. In fact, he recognizes in them the source of life — great and impersonal. He will like to live alone, away from Helena but the very next moment he would desire for her. Regarding children, Siegmund feels that if he has one, he should be damned by the thought of the other. The guilt that burdens his mind is on account of his wife and children — she will be in endless difficulty. She will keep a red shore inflamed against him. So he thinks that thing will go from bad to worse; it will be gangrene of shame. With regard to Helena, as he says: “I should have nothing but mortification. When she was asleep I could not look at her…” (T 120)
Turning to Siegmund’s state of mind we learn that he remains in a sort of stupor the whole afternoon. Seeking him in this state, his wife’s restraining gives way to an outburst of angry hysteria. Her first concern is about money. She knows that he is no more interested in work. And then she blames him by saying that he has his fling and that he will want to keep on. She reminds him that he has his children back home: “Whose are they? You talk about shirking the engagement, but who is going to be responsible for your children, do you think?” (T 144) In reply he says that he is not shirking the engagement but what it amounts to, she asks when he sulks all day. As a mother she says, she will not leave little children — to the workhouse or anything. And though he assures her that there is no need for children to labor, Beatrice is in a terrible mood. She calls him a coward — a miserable coward. It is thus she tortures him. He can bear her but not the way his children look at him. As Lawrence writes in Fantasia of the Unconscious that: “The woman is now the responsible party, the law-giver, the culture bearer. She is the conscious guide and director of the man. She bears his soul between two hands. And her sex is just a function or an instrument of power.”(FU 107)

We may think we marry because we are in love; sex is rather “nasty fiasco.”(FU 95) We may still keep up a pretense of being friends and nice love. But sex spins wilder in the head than ever. There is either a family of the children whom the dissatisfied parents can devote them to … or else there is a divorce. This shows Lawrence’s distaste for sex because it produces generation of children — the more they are, the unhappy mankind feels. The parents sacrifice their personal happiness in the grip of sexuality: “And the great dynamic centers nothing has happened at all. Blank nothing. There has been no vital interchange at all in the whole of this beautiful marriage affair.” (FU 94) Siegmund and Beatrice though not divorced live virtually separate lives. While she continues to drudge for her children, Siegmund seeks happiness elsewhere. As Lawrence writes this is the case of the parents: “They are criminal trespasser in that field…” The title of the novel is suggested in this regard. It
may be Helena refer to as the trespasser but on another level both Siegmund and Beatrice are each a trespasser in each other’s life. They establish a circle to be broken either by divorce or by death. Siegmund choose the later course.

This is the same situation in which Paul found himself. Lawrence wrote to his friend that Paul was moving towards death, as part of his dilemma. But Lawrence would not have him commit suicide. As we have already seen that suicide offers no solution, neither to the person dying nor to those living after him. Siegmund is presently in a frame of mind to take death as a refuge from pain. It is in this conflict that Siegmund ends his life. *The Trespasser* brings to a tragic conclusion the conflicts introduced in *The White Peacock*. Siegmund kills himself because he cannot resolve the situation between himself and two women. Due to this imbalance both the relation tends to become immoral and ends with immoral act of suicide. Siegmund failed to recognize what Lawrence puts in *Apocalypse*:

> For man, the vast marvel is to be alive. For man, as for flower and beast and bird, the supreme triumph is to be most vividly, most perfectly alive. (A 199)

**SONS AND LOVERS**

With the death of Siegmund in *The Trespasser*, Lawrence’s quest for the resolution of conflicts does not end; rather it begins afresh in *Sons and Lovers*. The original title of this novel was *Paul Morel*, which it long retained. Lawrence writes about the novel: “*Paul Morel* will be a novel — not a florid prose poem, or a decorated idyll, running to seed in realism.” (CL 66) Our reading shows, as we have seen in the first two novels that sexual life remains impure, and so do human relationships, so long sex is diverted from its primary function. That is why Lawrence has been reminding us not to read the novel merely as an autobiography. There is some thing of the philosophical in it. Therefore he asked us to trust the tale and not the teller. The conflicts which shortly develop between them is to be seen in Lawrence’s moral context that sex has to be pure, which means that it has to be for the sake of the sex and for
the sake of relationships on an even keel. So that mankind might live happily. David Daiches while discussing *Sons and Lovers* rightly observes: “Insistently like a drum beat in the background of novel runs the question: What is, what ought to be the most vital relation between man and woman?” (*New World* 145)

The first part of the novel deals with the maladjustment of the Morels. In 1912 Lawrence penned his own analysis of *Sons and Lovers* in a letter written to a friend, Edward Garnett:

> A woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class and has not satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband…But as her sons grow up, she selects them as lovers… when they come to manhood, they can’t love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives and holds them….As soon as the young man come into contact with women there is split. All the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and girl with the son as object. (*CL* 160)

The novel begins with early married life of Morels. At the age of twenty three, Miss Gertrude Coppard met, at a Christmas party, a young man by the name Walter Morel. The young man at the time was twenty seven years old. He had an excellent physique. He at once became interested in Gertrude and she was attracted by him. She thought him rather wonderful, never having met anyone like him. This is despite the fact, that she with a Puritanical mind was rather contemptuous of dancing; she had not slightest inclination towards that accomplishment. Such is nature’s doing that a high minded lady melt for a dusky miner; as reconciliation of opposites is the law of nature. “There the dusky, golden softness of this man’s sensuous flame of life, that flowed off his flesh like the flame from a candle, not baffled and gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed to her something wonderful, beyond her.”(*SL* 13)

This shows Lawrence’s concern for the blood-consciousness, where the human character is composed, not in the mind, in the consciousness, but in the
depth of the unconscious, the carbon in the coal. The ordinary novel of sexes, traces the history of the diamond but Lawrence would say diamond is carbon. We look at the coal but that burns is the carbon. So his diamond might be the coal but his theme is carbon the inner reality. The voice of the self in its wholeness, to guide us in the course of our life and this wholeness of our being is the “Holy Ghost.” The true unconscious is the first bubbling of life in us, the will to live; and is prior to any mentality. It is spontaneous life motive in every organism or may be called blood-consciousness.

The blood-consciousness is the first and last knowledge of the living soul: the depths. It is the soul acting in part only, speaking with its first hoarse half-voice. And blood-consciousness cannot operate purely “until the soul has put off all its manifold degrees and forms of upper consciousness.” (FU 132) It is the individual in his pure singleness, in his totality of consciousness, in his oneness of being: the “Holy Ghost” which is with as after our Pentecost, and which we may not deny. Lawrence writes: “It is no piece of mental interference. It is not just the soul sending forth a flash. It is my whole being speaking in one voice, soul, mind and psyche transfigured into oneness.” (FU 102)

After their marriage, they shifted to Bottoms. Mrs. Morel was not anxious to move into the Bottoms but it was the best she could do. Moreover, she had an end house in one of the top blocks. She felt superior to other collier housewives but even this satisfaction was not lasting. She was thirty one year old and had been married eight years. As Lawrence states: “Nowadays, alas, we start off self-conscious, with sex in the head… we marry because we are ‘pals’: the sex is a rather nasty fiasco.” (FU 96) We keep up a pretense of “pals” and nice love. Sex spins wilder in the head than ever. There is either a family of children whom the dissatisfied parents can devote themselves to, thereby perverting the miserable little creatures: or else there is a divorce… There has been no vital interchange at all in the whole of this beautiful marriage affair.
And the first thing happens in case of Mrs. Morel. Human relationships could form a rainbow only when the sexual parameters wake up to reality, that they should live their own lives. Within six months the battle between Gertrude and Walter started. The same happy spirit of Walter now became a thorn in her flesh; she could not tolerate his merry-making. She found it immoral.

The conflict and tension of married life began out of her disillusionment. Mrs. Morel was shocked when she came to know that Walter told her lie, that he owned the house and furniture, which had virtually been taken on rent. She had come from a rich middle class family, so the poverty of miner’s life was so much for her. This is how an economic conflict started between them. Secondly, the mutual incompatibility of their temperaments was also a cause of their marital antagonism. “The next Christmas they were married, and for those months she was perfectly happy: for six months she was very happy.” (SL 11)

But happiness continuous to dwindle. David Cavitch writes: “For month after their marriage, Gertrude was thoroughly happy with Walter, but when she discovers how much of his cheer masks an attitude of irresponsibility for his family and even for his own pride and manhood, her love turns to hostility which in time burns down to a foundation of habitual resentment.” (Cavitch 22)

Mrs. Morel soon emerged as an egoistic and wilful woman with a sense of superiority. She was a very high minded and intellectual lady, for whom mental consciousness was the goal of life, not the means to understand the ‘otherness’ of her life partner and adjust with him. On the other hand, Morel was humble and tender at heart, though violent sometimes in quarrels. That’s why they often quarreled: “The house is filthy with you,” she cried. “Then get out of it – its mine. Get out on it!” he shouted. “It’s me as brings the money who am, not thee. It’s my house, not thine. Then get out on it -ger out-on’t!” (SL 18)

She tried her best to mould her husband according to her own middle class standards of refinement and culture. And he was incapable of refinement and sophistication, she began to despise and humiliate him. There began a
battle between the husband and wife — a fearful bloody battle that ended only with death of one. She fought to make him undertake his responsibilities, to him fulfill his obligations. But he was too different from her. His nature was purely sensual, and she strove to make him moral, religious. She tried to force him to face things. He could not endure it - “it drove him out of mind.” (SL 22-23) In his essay “Morality and the Novel,” Lawrence has warned us against two facts, that either the relationship end in the death of one or one sacrifices oneself to the other. In either case the loss is human happiness. Birkin says: “Fusion, fusion, this horrible Fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men insisted on…Why they couldn’t remain individuals, limited by their own limits? Why not leave the other being free, why try to absorb, or melt, or merge?”(WL 353)

We have seen how soon, the fight between Gertrude and Walter began, as if their only meeting point was the birth of children, “Mrs. Morel had a passion for her husband so the children are born of passion.”(SL 160) After the first child was born, the estrangement between the two began. Mrs. Morel despised her husband, even when he tried to be good to her. His very presence became stifling. It seemed to intensify her loneliness. Her rigidity, a high moral sense, which she inherited from the generation of “Puritans,” strove to make him moral, religious. “If he sinned she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully.”(SL 25) This stern attitude results in Morel’s disintegration. He ruins his life by excessive drinking. “The pity was, she was too much his opposite. She could not be content with the little he might be, she would have him the much that he ought to be. So in seeking to make him nobler than he could be, she destroyed him.”(SL 25) Disappointed and dissatisfied with her husband, Mrs. Morel turned to her children and began to live through them. As Lawrence states:-

At the very crucial time when she should be coming to a state of pure equilibrium and rest with her husband, she turns raptidly
against rest or peace or equilibrium or husband in any shape or form, and demands more love, a new sort of lover, one who will “understand” her. And as often as not she turns to her son.

(FU 94)

It always happens in Lawrence that one wins the battle, as it happens in the animal world. The vanquished take s the defeat as part of the battle. Walter now made his own breakfast. He rose early and had plenty of time. Lawrence, indeed says, that this is a form of sacrifice. It is a form of old relationship that he wants to condemn as immoral. He seems to ask whether all our love comes to this. Within two years their love cools down. She said very little to her husband, but her manner had changed towards him. It happened within one year. Last year she had married him and this Christmas she would bear him a child. And that was the end of it, as if she needed him for the child. She was intellectual. She loved ideas. However, the father’s physical gusto, simplicity and humanity are brought out in many scenes of the descriptions of his noisy washing, his soldering, his account of life down the mine; his loneliness is also apparent, in his solitary happiness in the early morning before the others get up. While Morel’s coarsening is revealed, it is clear that this partly caused by his family’s hostility. His child like attempt to run away was an unconscious plea for sympathy, but Mrs. Morel had little sympathy for his agonies, mental or physical. When he was seriously injured, the main concern of his wife and son is for each other; when Paul was ill, Morel was tender and anxious for him, but the child only wanted the mother. “He frequently feels guilty after their quarrels; she never does, but returns in renewed strength and self-assertion.”(Pritchard, Body of Darkness 37)

The birth of Paul did not bring them any closer than they were before. She turned to religion, would discuss finer points with a priest Mr. Heaton. Occasionally the minister stayed it to tea with Mrs. Morel and she hoped Walter would not come too soon. She didn’t like to bring Paul into the world. She had seemed this baby like a catastrophe, because of her feeling for her
husband. She no longer loved her husband and she had not wanted this child to come. “She felt as if the naval string had connected its frail body with hers, had not been broken.” (SL 35) A wave of hot love went over her to the infant. She holds the child close to her face and breast. With all her soul, she would make up to it for having brought it into the world unloved. She would love all the more, now it was here: carry it in her love. She was anxious about Paul’s frail body. She named him Paul knowing not why, perhaps after Saint Paul. Lawrence felt that mother’s love is the most dangerous to children, not for any Freudian reason, but because our new deadly idealism insists on idealizing every relationship particularly that of mother and child. As a Magna Mater, mother in her new role of idealized and life Managers never for one single moment gives her child “the unthinking response from deep dynamic centers.” (FU 142) Child becomes his mother’s ideal and she continuous her ideal shoving of it through all stages of an ideal upbringing. Baby does not even for a single moment draw a breath free from imposition of pure unselfish and detestable love will directed by the mother. Lawrence held that “there is no mother’s milk today, save in tiger’s udders, and in the udders of sea whales, our children drink a decoction of ideal love, at the breast.” (FU 142) And this is what happens with William and Paul later in the course. As Lawrence further writes:

Seeking the self-fulfillment in the deep passional self, diseased with self-consciousness and sex in the head, foiled by the very loving weakness of her husband who has not the courage to withdraw into her own stillness and singleness… and usually she turns to her child. Here she provokes what she wants. Here, in her own son who belongs to her, she seems to find the last perfect response for which she is craving. (FU 95)

By this time Walter was exhausted. He was left alone, away from the family — unwanted. The two occasionally quarreled. As Paul grew, he became the darling of his mother because he hated his father. Finally the family
abandoned him, except for some moments when Mrs. Morel was more tolerant of him, and he depending on her almost like a child was rather happy. But all the same, the love between the two was ebbing, always ebbing. With the birth of fourth baby, she herself no longer set towards him. The desire for having children was exhausted and with it love for Walter. The tide for love scarcely rose. After this she scarcely desired him. And standing more aloof from him, not feeling him so much part of herself, but merely part of her circumstances, she did not mind so much what he did, could leave him alone. Thus it was the end of relationship. Gertrude casted Walter off half regretfully, but relentlessly, “casting him off and turning now for love and life to the children. Hence forward he was more or less a husk. And he himself acquiesced, as so many men do, yielding their place to their children.”(SL 62)

It is on this basis that Freud as his disciple made a complex, called Oedipus complex. But it is in fact, not a complex but a life principle that either of parents start to live for their children, not for themselves. Mrs. Morel decided to live for her children and in fact, her own self through her children. Commenting on the situation Yudhistar writes that: “one unforgivable sin of Mrs. Morel is her dragging the children into these quarrels. Her feeling of resentment against her husband is transmitted to the children who are thus unnecessarily implicated in the conflict, sharing her trouble and pain, and hating their father.”(Yudhistar 92)

All the more children loved their mother and hated their father. Several years later Lawrence voiced his disapproval of this very clearly. It is despicable for any one parent to accept a child’s sympathy against the other parent. “And the one who received the sympathy is always more contemptible than the one who is hated.”(FU 10) Lawrence believed that children should not be made party to adult affairs. It is sinful to implicate them in adult relationships. He warns that parents should never try to establish adult relations of sympathy or anything else with their children. The attempt to do so will only “rupture the deepest dynamic circuit of living” and “derange the whole flow of life for
themselves and their children.” (FU 139) That is what Mrs. Morel did and therefore ruined her own life as well as of her sons. She did not realize her own will to live, William’s and Paul’s life current is disturbed. “This tyranny started in the cradle where frustrated parents began foisting their pet ideas on the children.” (Study of His Ideas 132) The result was that even an infant channeled his impulses according to his parent’s preconceptions. They were incapable of living a life of genuine passion. Only Annie and Aurther escaped this negative influence for the simple reason that they were not darlings of her soul.

Disillusioned with Walter, Gertrude gradually casted him off and transferred her will to her elder son, William. Gertrude was so over possessive that she could not tolerate William in the company of young girls. When William brought his girlfriends and dancing partners to his home, she was rude to them. Once when a girl came to their house to ask for William, Mrs. Morel replied rather coldly: “I don’t approve of the girls, my son meets at dance and he is not at home.” (SL 74) Due to her dominating and possessive temperament, she failed to understand her growing son’s emotional requirements. Later, when William bound himself in passionate love with a girl, Gyp, Mrs. Morel was highly critical of the girl. She told William not to carry his love affair with Gyp. As Karl and Maglaner says in Great 20th Century Novel that: William’s match is based solely on sexual infatuation. William mocks his fiancée before his mother and by doing so demonstrates that the latter is his true lover and that Gyp will provide only temporary sexual satisfaction. He suffered from terrible anguish. He found himself torn between the conflict, his love for his mother and his passion for Gyp. This strain was too heavy for him. His mental equilibrium was finally shattered into fragments and he died. Lawrence suggests through his personal experience that if there is something wrong with the relation between husband and wife, it affects the life of the children, when their relation is not fulfilled, such children are born out of passion and heaps of vitality, but this vitality becomes self-consuming. As R.E. Pritchard states: “Mrs. Morel so hinders William’s interest in girls that it is only in when away in London that he can develop any relationship.” (Pritchard 37)
With her intense love Mrs. Morel awakened Paul into consciousness much before his time. He felt for his mother that he should have felt for the girl of his own choice. Everything he did to please her. After William’s death, Paul’s relationship with his mother became more subtle and intense and it seems that the naval string that connected him with her was not broken. R.P. Draper very pertinently points out: “the mother’s love proves to be only superficially wife submissive. In reading it is a form of domination, subtly disguised as submission. The mother exploits her son, making him subserve her own need and refusing him the right to an independent life of his own.” (Mother Love 286) Lawrence is trying to show how the over-stimulation of the son’s “upper centers” leads to the stimulation of the “lower centers” as well; and “the bond of adult love” which is “higher love” or “spiritual love” is established between the parent and the child. The result is sexual frustration, because “it robs the son of his own spontaneous consciousness and freedom.” (FU 115) We know that Paul remained a virgin till he was twenty three. But his spiritual love for his mother was fully developed long before Paul confronted this problem when he grew up.

After the death of William Mrs. Morel focused her love on Paul, more so because he was again st Walter. She depended on Paul also for economic reasons also. Paul was her dearest soul. He loved to sleep with his mother. He felt more secure and at peace in the company of his mother. He often got well from illness in her company. Lawrence writes that: “This is the case of the parents. Parents are first in the field of the child’s further consciousness. They are criminal trespassers in that field…They establish a dynamic connection. Very often not even death can break it.” (FU 96) He was now fourteen and was rather small and finally -made boy. He was too sensitive for anything rough. It is at this time that he came in contact with Miriam. By this time he also started working, his wages were raised, and his drawings were appreciated. He met Miriam during a family meeting. He had gone to Miriam’s place with his mother. Miriam was also about fourteen years old, had a rosy dark face, a bunch of short black curls, very fine and free, and dark eyes. While the mothers
talked, Paul and Miriam felt happy in each other’s company as young souls. She got interested in him because in comparison of her brothers, who were brutes.

With the advent of Miriam, the nature of the novel changes, Paul’s relationship with Miriam is purely spiritual and abstract, “a platonic friendship.” (SL 213) Miriam was a self-conscious girl who loved “coiled within herself.” (SL 183) Because of her self-consciousness, Miriam could rarely form living connections with others. She could never be her real, natural self. This is all because of living too conscious life from the head. Paul and Miriam had contrasting views about God and religion. For Miriam God was a living thing — a human form. “Christ and God make one great figure.” (SL 177) Paul like Lawrence had a much wider sense of religion and God. He, however, refused to accept the existence of a “soulful God” who presided over the universe as the conventional religion makes us believe. To him every living thing is godly and divine. “God doesn’t know things, he is a thing.” (SL 307) Paul rejects conventional religion which considers the purity of soul neglecting the claims of body. Lawrence believed that soul has no existence apart from the body. It is in this sense that Paul told Miriam: “It is not religious to be religious.” (SL 307) What this paradoxical statement implies is that living through fixed conventional religion is not to be religious because then we reduce religion and God to mere ideas, a mental concept.

It would be wrong to consider Lawrence as an atheist, which he was not. He only rejected conventional religion with its taboos. Otherwise he believed in religion, in God. But he had his own attitude, his own view of religion. In 1911, Lawrence wrote to his sister Ada: “It requires a lot of pain and courage to come to discover one’s own creed, and quite as much to continue in lonely faith.” He considered it a fine thing to establish one’s own religion in one’s own heart, and not to be dependent on “tradition and second hand ideals.” (CL 76) Lawrence’s God is not spiritual God; it is the God of dark regions which exists in what Wordsworth called “unknown modes of being and this is what cannot be comprehended by mind.” (Wordsworth 12) Huxley pointed out that
Lawrence was “always aware of the mystery of the world. He could not forget the dark presence of the otherness that lies beyond the boundaries of men’s conscious mind.”(HL X1-X11) Religion for Lawrence was another name of “reverence for life,” (K 125) which is individual life and individual life in contact with other beings as well as the cosmos.

The friendship between Paul and Miriam was always pitched at an intensely spiritual level so that even the simplest contact seemed repellent. All his natural fire of love was transmitted into the fine stream of thought. The intimacy between them goes on in utterly chaste fashion. Miriam shrinks away from the physical contact as if she could scarcely stand the shock of physical love. And then “he was too shrinking and sensitive to give it.”(SL 221) Although Miriam’s emotional life was intense, it was split off from sexuality. As Spilka writes: “This concentrated attention on lack of balance in Miriam’s make up (and its destructive consequences) seems to be the first clear-cut example of the psychology of organic wholeness, or the ‘centers of consciousness’ theory, which Lawrence would later work out, schematically in Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious.”(Love Ethic 87) Lawrence divides body into two upper spiritual poles and two lower sensual poles: at each of the two levels there is a positive outward flow of sympathy and a negative assertion of will (the upper will achieves objective awareness of the beloved, while the lower will asserts the self). Now Miriam functions only on her upper poles, so that the flow of her spiritual sympathy tends to be excessive, or stifling. In the meantime she had withered at the sensual level; she had no outward sensual flow (no warmth): hence her touch proves sterile, and she could only feed upon Paul’s vitality. As Paul’s own awareness of his need for physical love grew, he suppressed it “into a shame.” (SL 221) This is quite contrary to Lawrence’s sound basis for a perfected relationship. As Lawrence believed that passional communion is not complete unless it is sexual also.

However, Miriam idealism causes her to suppress as far as possible the sensual centers. This makes them negative and the whole activity is concentrated in the upper spiritual centers. An “ideal” according to Lawrence is
nothing but an abstraction. “A static abstraction abstracted from life” (P 222), and idealism means the “fall into automatism, mechanism and nullity.”(FU 130) Idealism alone as a life mode “brings us to our destruction. We must listen to the voice of soul in its wholeness.”(FU 134) Miriam’s frigidity was the result of the restraint placed on her by the idealism, she inherited from her mother. She was her mother’s child. Here Lawrence breaks away from the hold of psychological complexes. The mother and Miriam formed a happy companionship. She loved Paul passionately but her religious upbringing inhibited her response. She suppressed her desire for physical love and considered it a “sin.” But the desire was still there in her dark, deep self: “But there was a serpent in her Eden. She searched earnestly in herself to see if she wanted Paul.”(SL 212) Recognizing the threat to her spiritual identity, she prayed to God to prevent her from loving Paul: “Oh Lord, let me not love Paul, keep me from loving him, if I ought not to love him.”(SL 212) But she concluded to herself that even though love caused her shame she would love Paul as a “sacrifice” as Christ would. And Lawrence advocates no sacrifice in a moral relationship. Paul’s attitude towards Miriam was ambivalent. He hated her because she made him “so spiritual which he did not want to be.”(SL 232) He wanted to break away from her, but “he could not leave her, because in one way she hold the best of him. He could not stay with her because she did not take the rest of him which was three quarters.”(SL 307)

In fact Miriam wanted soul communion with Paul. She wanted to possess his soul. Paul could not give his soul to her as his mother “has had it, and nobody can have it again.”(CL 70) As Graham Hough writes: “Miriam trespasses on the sanctities that had been the mother’s preserve, Clara Dawes stands freely on unoccupied grounds.”(Dark Sun 48) This possessive attitude of Miriam was indicated in the scene where she loved the flowers. Paul hated her worshipping and fawning attitude and said: “Can you never like things without clutching them as if you wanted to pull the heart out of them.”(SL 268) Here is a negative attitude to life for this adsorbing attitude shows as if she had “got a shortage somewhere.”(SL 268) The relationship of the girl to the flowers was
that of “blasphemous possessiveness which denies the separateness of living entities — the craving to break down boundaries between thing and thing.” (Quoted by Spilka, *Essays* 25) That is also seen in Miriam’s relationship with Paul whom she could not love without trying to absorb him. Lawrence believes that this “spirit of possession is always destructive.” (CL 359) For it distorts the selfhood. Paul felt stifled and told Miriam: “You want me to put in your pocket. And I should die there smothered.” (SL 306)

Mrs. Morel also directed her bitterness against Miriam’s possessive attitude, although for different reason. “She is one of those who want to suck a man’s soul out till he had none of his own left.” (SL 199) Ironically what she said of Miriam’s influence on Paul was true of her own relationship with her son. In her will to live she did not realize that so long she herself lives her life through Paul and was “the supreme thing” (SL 261) in his life, the chances of his living a fulfilled life are remote. The mother’s love which starts at the “primary centers” (FU 139) is polarized at the “upper centers.” (FU 167) And once the circuit is established in the upper spiritual centers, there is always a corresponding activity in the lower centers, the denial of which results in repression. That was what happened to Paul. He could not give himself to Miriam, “he was as much to blame himself.” (SL 346) He felt that there was some kind of a flaw in his own make up and he was deficient in something with regard to Miriam. And this something was “physical love” which he longed for, but felt himself incapable of. He could not love her physically because of her spiritual nature. Miriam infuriated Paul by wanting and at the same time denying sexuality. He suppressed his passionate desire for her because “she never realized the male he was.” (SL 233) His mother’s love was not enough in his life. His new young life urged him towards something else to attain his manhood. But whenever he grew hot, her eyes seek to mentalize and rest the unknown otherness of his sex. Paul broke away from Miriam calling her a “nun.” Lawrence writes:

We are creatures of two halves — spiritual and sensual — each half is as important as the other, any relationship based on the one
half — say the delicate spiritual half alone — inevitably brings revulsion and betrayal. (CL 828)

Love means a mutual passion. Miriam felt reassured about the terrible nature of love and marriage, for each does not remain balanced, resulting in hate and brutality, cruelty and destruction. However, Lawrence feels that these consequences are avoidable. The deadly clash between lovers could be avoided when love is not possessive. Happiness lies when each seeks only the true-relatedness to the other, a polarity in relations. And this exactly is Lawrence’s moral position that is love without any kind of assertion. He seems to plead for denial of willing, because willing leads to self-assertion and which eventually leads to terrible consequences, including death one of the lovers. Lawrence formulation is as follows:

Each must be true to himself, herself, his own manhood, her own womanhood, and let the relationship workout itself. This means courage above all things and disciplines. Courage to accept the life thrust from within oneself, and from the other person. Discipline not to exceed oneself… (P 531)

In their love making Miriam only gave her body to Paul as a sacrifice and not the whole of herself and he felt “her soul stood apart, in a sort of horror.” (SL 350) Miriam seeks to maintain her conscious self, which Paul seeks to destroy. The conscious self to him was nothing but “ego” or a construct of the will. “Ego” according to Lawrence is the sum total of what we consider ourselves to be. Lawrence believes that to achieve equilibrium, the ego must be swept aside “all strong emotions concentrated.” (SL 347) When in each lover the delimiting and personalized impurities of will or ego burn off in the heat of sexual communion, the lovers come into contact with the mystical real otherness in each other. They arises like phoenix renewed and refreshed from the ashes of their own conscious selves.

But desire for the desolations of personality, to achieve fulfillment remained blocked in Paul. Thus the relations give him a sense of failures and death instead of, a feeling of renewal. Murry sees the cause of this failure in
both Miriam and Paul: “The indulgence of their passion was disastrous, because it was not passion at all. On both sides it was deliberate and passionate.” Each was a divided being. Miriam strove to subdue her body to her spirit. Paul strove to subdue his spirit to his body. They hurt themselves and they hurt each other. (Son of Woman 34-35) Murry blames Paul’s mother for this failure of relationship. On the other hand Mark Spilka believes that the chief split between Paul and Miriam came from the abstract nature of their love and not from the mother “hold upon the young man’s soul.”(Love Ethic 66) In fact Paul’s mother and Miriam both are to be blamed for this failure of relationship, for them both aim at possessing his soul. And Lawrence’s morality demands no possession, no submission. And Paul’s fault lies in the fact that at this stage, he was incapable of balancing the conflicting forces he confronted. And Miriam made matters worse by concentrating on the spiritual love. “His rejection of Miriam is not simply because he is possessed by his mother, but because, having come so close to incest, he feels that Miriam, as his mother’s representative, must be purged of sexuality.”(Pritchard 41) Lawrence has clearly stated in “Morality and the Novel” that either of these two positions sadism or masochism is unfortunate. But Miriam shows the latter perhaps thinking that it could avert battle of sexes. But we know that, Paul left her to go over to Clara, now a divorcée. This marks the end of the first phase of Paul’s love affair.

Meanwhile he met, thanks to Miriam’s introduction, Clara Dawes. She had scornful grey eyes, a skin like white honey, and a full mouth, with a slightly lifted upper lip that did not know whether it was raised in scorn of all men or out of eagerness to be kissed. Paul remembers that Clara Dawes was the daughter of an old friend of Miriam’s family. Miriam had sought her out because she had once been spiral overseas and her husband was smith for the factory, making irons for cripple instruments. By that time Clara was separated from her husband and had taken up women’s rights. This aspect interested Paul on two accounts, one that he was not religious and again unlike Miriam was not, too sensitive to the rough and tumble of life. He knew her husband and
disliked him for various reasons, one that his whole manner was of cowed defines. Paul, on the other hand was a sensitive man. In t rying to seek fulfillment of the self, Paul finally rejected Miriam and turned to Clara. For sometimes he lived with Clara in physical ecstasy and get solace and relief. In her seek “a new self or a new centre of consciousness.”( SL 309) He had achieved what the heroes of his first two novels failed to achieve “the baptism of fire in passion,” ( SL 387) the climax of living experience: As Lawrence writes:

As a rule, when he started love-making, the emotion was strong enough to carry with it everything reason soul blood in a great sweep… Gradually the little criticism, the little sensations were lost, thought also went, everything borne along in one flood. He became, not a man with a mind, but a great instinct… his limbs, his body, were all life and consciousness, subject to no will of his, but living in themselves. (SL 442)

As the experience overwhelmed his whole being, the split in personality dissolved. Their physical communion was complete. They had known “the immensity of passion.” It was for them initiation and satisfaction. Graham Hough writes: “Clara Dawes represents all that Miriam does not. She is independent, emancipated and physically inhibited.”(Hough 48) In such rare moment Paul felt Clara’s and his own social personality discarded. “His experience had been impersonal.”( SL 431) But Clara could not recognize and accept her new self that emerges unconsciously through this consummation. She did not realize that to come in context with “otherness,” one has to transcend one’s individuality. Although the experience was important for Paul, he refused to accept sex as aim of life.

After Paul’s experience with Clara, “life interested him more.”( SL 313) He came to acquire a deeper understanding of life and knew that it was useless to look for some God or codes outside oneself. He came to believe that “one should feel inside oneself for right and wrong one should have patient to gradually realize one’s God.”( SL 313) He was convinced that not by brooding,
but by living fully, one can realize one’s God within. Lawrence suggests that by shedding the beliefs, we can loosen the hold that our will and ego have on most of us, most of the time, and aspire for a perfected relationship.

However, Paul’s fulfillment with Clara was short lived. She was soon dissatisfied with impersonal love and like Miriam, tried to possess Paul personality. She was, too demanding and wanted something permanent: “she had not got him; she was not fully satisfied.” (*SL* 431) Their love making lost its earlier warmth. Paul too, realized this failure. He was not capable of giving himself to this woman. Later he reflects: “I even love Clara, and I did Miriam; but to give myself to them in marriage I couldn’t. I couldn’t belong to them. They seem to want me and I can’t ever give it them.” (*SL* 427) Lawrence stresses that man and woman must be polarized, balanced with each other, as individuals with distinct “life flows” of their own. Only them genuine love can flourish. The relationship had lost the balance. In the end he rejected Clara. Paul had realized that to achieve what Mailer calls “sexual transcendence,” he had to transcend his “ego,” his “sense of self” and “his will.” He had recognized the threats posed to him by Miriam, Clara and his mother, who are different versions of the same problem. In the end Paul learned to abandon those counterfeit loves which destroys utility. Sagar writes: “Neither woman proves satisfying in the long run because neither meets the standard of wholeness set by the mother. The physical relationship is good as far as it goes, but limited, the spiritual relationship is deadly.” (*Life Into Art* 90) He rejected both Miriam and Clara because they represented “halfness” of life. What Paul needed was a woman who should be both Clara and Miriam in one. As Lawrence suggests that, the pre-requisite of a perfected relation is whole man alive. However, Paul did not achieve wholeness in life; he had at least realized the need for it. He decided not to “take that direction, to the darkness to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming glowing town, quickly.” (*SL* 511) Here again Lawrence’s moral concern is obvious. Against logic of the story Paul did not commit suicide. He rejected death which hero of the earlier novel had embraced. Instead of “drift towards death” (*CL* 161) he went in search of
life. It was not an end but beginning for Paul. Graham Hough states: “In fact, he refuses to give in and the final motion is towards life. Paul, whose vacillations and refusals have worn him away till he has reached something like nonentity, proves in the end capable of a regenerative spark.” (Dark Sun 21) At whatever cost to himself and others he has kept his frail independence alive. Paul overcomes the temptations to commit suicide and follow his mother into the darkness of death, accepting instead the challenge to live, to gain the quick rather than the dead, to answer the call, to find a place for himself within the world of creative human activity represented by the city which glows with promise on the horizon.

As H.T. Moore points out, Paul’s return to life hinges upon the final word, “quickly” which means livingly rather than rapidly. “The last word in Sons and Lovers is an adverb attesting not only to the hero’s desire to live but also to his deep ability to do so.” (Life and Works 105) And it is this quickness, this vitality, which has enabled Paul to turn away, first from Miriam, then from Clara, and now, finally, from his mother. If Paul has failed in his three loves, he has also drawn from them necessary strength to life. Mr. Moore’s observation stands in sharp contrast with Mark Schorer’s contention, in “Technique as Discovery” that Paul returns to life “as nothing in his previous history persuades us that he could unflatteringly do.” Yet there is nothing unflatteringly about his final action. It is an act of will, and less a complete rebirth than a choice of direction or the first stage of a potential resurrection. Nevertheless it indicates his ascent to manhood, for the choice is clear and extremely credible. This combination of hurling along in the sea of life, yet remaining still and perfect in oneself is the nucleus of Laurentian belief, though we see here only a first rough version of things to come. Nevertheless, at the end, we have experienced the fact that Paul Morel has achieved a kind of half-realized Jigsaw, consisting of mixed elements of life warmth, creative vision, incipient manhood, and most important of all, a belief in life itself: which Siegmund can’t achieve in The Trespasser and put an end to his life.