

D. H. Lawrence's "Two Marriages" and "Daughters of The Vicar"

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"IT is very different from *Sons and Lovers*, written in another language almost" and "It's like a novel in a foreign language I don't know very well — I can only just make out what it is about"¹ wrote Lawrence in 1913 about his writing of *The Sisters*, the book that was later to become *The Rainbow*. He was in a period of intense creative activity, experimenting vigorously with language and style and feeling his imaginative vision, his psychological insight and his artistic powers unfolding with great rapidity. The revision which many of the tales in *The Prussian Officer* collection underwent at about the same time — that is between the summers of 1913 and 1914² — afford a striking insight into the development of Lawrence's art and of the consciousness from which it proceeded. A comparative study of the original and revised versions of such tales yields important critical results. In every case the revised version shows a vast improvement upon the first in Lawrence's imaginative approach to and handling of his subject. The later version is more discerning in its presentation of a general situation, psychologically more profound in its understanding of the characters, more assured in technique and richer in the experimentation with language and style which occupied Lawrence in the period after *Sons and Lovers*. All these points can be illustrated from "Two Marriages" and "Daughters of the Vicar," two versions of the same story.

"Two Marriages," the early version of "Daughters of the Vicar," was completed in July 1911³ and shows Lawrence obeying the advice he gave to Louie Burrows: "The great

thing to do in a short story is to select the salient details — a few striking details to make a sudden swift impression. Try to use words vivid and emotion-quicken; give as little explanation as possible.”⁴ The early version begins with some descriptions that might be called almost too “vivid” and “emotion-quicken.”

Miss Louisa loathed her brother-in-law. Most folk were merely pitiful or contemptuous in their attitude towards him, but Miss Louisa knew better. He was not insignificant; rather, very significant in her life. She loathed him, with horror. Beneath her habit of religious dutifulness, she was deeply indignant with both her parents for having given Mary to such a little monster. (“Two Marriages” p. 393)

He looked like nothing in the world but an abortion, a foetus of a man. He was very little, meagre to the last degree, silent, very nervous, looked about him in a vacant, goggling way from behind his spectacles, was apparently an idiot: he had the stoop and the rambling gestures and the vacant expression of one. Yet one soon felt he had an indomitable little ‘ego’. His silence became terrible when it would be followed by some venomous little sneer, or by his giggling little laugh of irony. (“Two Marriages” p. 394)

Lawrence’s undeniable power of conveying the essence of a person or a situation in a few succinct and compelling lines is evident in the opening to this tale and in the description of Mr. Massy, but the effect is here attained by oversimplification and exaggeration. A situation is stated, but its significance not explored, a character is described in one or two brilliant flashes but not explained. Lawrence is indeed content just to make a “sudden impression.” In “Daughters of the Vicar,” which was written by August 1913,⁵ the description of Mr. Massey avoids the highly emotive phrases and comparisons of the early text, in particular some phrases of grotesque caricature such as “blinked round like a naked owl shrinking up” and “like a critical plucked owl that had a monomania” (p. 396) and the story becomes stronger through a more balanced and humane, as well as a more discerning view of Massy as an understandable, although limited, person, rather than as something sub-human whose mind “it would need a pathologist to study” (p. 395).

There arrived instead a small, chétif man, scarcely larger than a boy of twelve, spectacled, timid in the extreme, without a word to utter at first; yet with a certain inhuman self-sureness . . . He had not normal powers of perception. They soon saw that he lacked the full range of human feelings, but had rather a strong, philosophical mind, from which he lived. His body was almost unthinkable, in intellect he was something definite. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 59)

The later description of this Casaubon-like figure has a dignity and restraint not achieved in the first, and Mary's acceptance of Massy as a husband becomes believable, so that the sheer revulsion which the marriage of a beautiful young girl with a "little monster" stimulates in "Two Marriages" is changed to pity at the tragedy of the alliance and the tale gains artistically by this change.

In the crucial years between *Sons and Lovers* and *The Rainbow* Lawrence's understanding of how class-conditioning affects people deepened (though of course it is always the fundamental classless humanity of his people that chiefly preoccupied him) and he came to see more fully how they resolved the problems life presented to them. The important nature of this change in his insight and his ability to transmit that insight in literary art is evident from the different accounts of the Lindley family in the two versions of the tale. "Two Marriages" has:

He had a large family, six girls and two boys. Mary, the eldest, a fine girl with a haughty, clear brow, was a peripatetic governess, who gave lessons to the tradesmen's daughters. Louisa also was at home. She was house-keeper and peripatetic music-teacher, giving lessons on the piano to all but miners' daughters. Frances was a missionary in China. Ronald was a bank clerk in Nottingham. Muriel was married to a poor curate in Newcastle. Rachael, newly home from school, was hanging about, getting on everybody's nerves. Luther would shortly be coming home. Hilda has two more years at the school for clergymen's daughters. It was an accumulation enough to worry any man into the grave. ("Two Marriages" p. 394)

His description of the Lindley children in this first version is a mere list and a rather badly written list at that, ending with the trite "It was an accumulation enough to worry

any man into the grave." The names and detailed facts reported about each child serve no illuminating purpose and seem to be there merely for the sake of detail, as a kind of guarantee of authenticity. Almost the only phrase in it of any interest is the description of Mary as a "fine girl with a haughty, clear brow" and there is nothing particularly distinctive or characteristic about this. In "Daughters of the Vicar" Lawrence completely re-wrote the passage:

The children grew up healthy, but unwarmed and rather rigid. Their father and mother educated them at home, made them very proud and very genteel, put them definitely and cruelly in the upper classes, apart from the vulgar around them. So they lived quite isolated. They were good-looking and had that curiously clean, semi-transparent look of the genteel, isolated poor.

Gradually Mr. and Mrs. Lindley lost all hold on life, and spent their hours, weeks and years merely haggling to make ends meet, and bitterly repressing and pruning their children into gentility, urging them to ambition, weighting them with duty. On Sunday morning the whole family, except the mother, went down the lane to church, the long-legged girls in skimpy frocks, the boys in black coats and long, grey unfitting trousers. They passed by their father's parishioners with mute, clear faces, childish mouths closed in pride that was like a doom to them, and childish eyes already unseeing. Miss Mary, the eldest, was the leader. She was a long, slim thing with a fine profile and a proud pure look of submission to a high fate. Miss Louisa, the second, was short and plump and obstinate-looking. She had more enemies than ideals. She looked after the lesser children, Miss Mary after the elder. The collier children watched this pale, distinguished procession of the vicar's family pass mutely by, and they were impressed by the air of gentility and distance, they made mock of the trousers of the small sons, they felt inferior in themselves, and hate stirred in their hearts. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 52)

The richness and profundity, the distinctive penetration and presentation of the effects of class-conscious indoctrination on the growth of personality, the replacement of a set of insignificant facts ("Frank was a missionary in China, Ronald was a bank clerk in Nottingham") by quite a different kind of descriptive detail in which every fact, every phrase serves a psychological purpose ("that curiously clear, semi-transparent look," "childish mouths closed in pride," "childish eyes already unseeing," "a proud, pure look of

submission") show the astonishing advances Lawrence made in technique, perception, feeling and the ability to associate human nature as he perceived it with the context — in this case that of class — in which it is obliged to exist, in the two years between the two versions. The first passage quoted might have been written by almost anyone. It is hard to think of any writer but Lawrence for the second.

But the distinctive quality that we have come to recognise as typically "Laurentian" goes far deeper than even this direct and sympathetic awareness of class distinctions and class consciousness. It is to present with equal authority and conviction states of mind and of being, the obscure processes of the human soul, which the reader himself may not have realised or recognised until he meets them in Lawrence's fiction. During his writing of the early drafts of *The Rainbow* Lawrence no longer concentrated on the individuality of his characters as persons: "You musn't look in my novel for the old stable *ego* — of the character. There is another *ego*, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable" and "I don't so much care about what the woman *feels* — in the ordinary usage of the word . . . I only care about what the woman *is* — what she *IS* — inhumanly, physiologically, materially — according to the use of the word."⁶ And here the true measure of his development between the writing of the two tales becomes evident. "Two Marriages" briefly sums up Mary's marriage:

Nevertheless, in a year's time she was married to him. And never, in their courtship and marriage, did he kiss her. The religious ideal is self-sacrifice; her parents would have Mary sacrifice herself. In doing so, she practically cut herself off from the rest of the world. People looked at her husband, looked at her, and were shocked. This isolated her, as the little man was isolated. It would need a pathologist to study his mind; hers we can understand.

She went away with him to the tiny village. There, as everywhere, the men looked in contempt on him, the women in horror. Mrs. Massy led a terrible year. ("Two Marriages" p. 395)

The passage explains nothing; it skirts the profudly shattering experience of that marriage in the off-hand comment "Mrs. Massy led a terrible year." In the later version the full horror behind the earlier simplification is revealed to the reader through a close imaginative following of the changing trains of feeling in Mary as she adjusts to her marriage with Massy, which exhibits to the full Lawrence's extraordinary capacity to identify with his female characters. Lawrence achieves this by subtly blending Mary's only half-articulate thoughts with analysis beyond her actual consciousness, a technique that mirrors the actual psychological state of the character and provides material that enriches the reader's understanding of that state.

Mary, in marrying him, tried to become pure reason such as he was, without feeling or impulse. She shut herself up, she shut herself rigid against the agonies of shame and the terror of violation which came at first. She *would* not feel, and she *would* not feel. She was a pure will acquiescing to him. She elected a certain kind of fate. She would be good and purely just, she would live in a higher freedom than she had ever known, she would be free of mundane care, she was a pure will towards right. She had sold herself, but she had a new freedom. She had got rid of her body. She had sold a lower thing, her body, for a higher thing, her freedom from material things. She considered that she paid for all she got from her husband. So, in a kind of independence, she moved proud and free. She had paid with her body: that was henceforward out of consideration. She was glad to be rid of it. She had bought her position in the world — that henceforth was taken for granted. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 68)

Here quite a new note is struck. In the later version of the story Lawrence has found a deeper understanding of his character and a vastly enriched command of the kind of language he needs to communicate it. It is in many ways a new and unprecedented use of language and it is worth examining the passage quoted in some detail to see how it has been attained. Lawrence eschews direct authorial commentary, though such comment is often implied, but equally avoids any attempt to portray a connected monologue in Mary, which in the circumstance of the story would be unconvincing: "How does one think when one is thinking pas-

sionately and with suffering? Not in words at all but in strange surges and cross-currents of emotions which are only half-rendered by words.”⁷ The presentation of Mary’s disillusionment and sexual humiliation probes beyond her verbal consciousness and conveys both her emotions and her unarticulated thoughts to give the reader the sensation of being directly in contact with her mind. Lawrence combines his narrative with “free indirect speech,” that is Mary’s distanced and only partly formulated thoughts rendered in the third person, past tense rather than in the first person, present tense of internal monologue. The free indirect style is a mimetic device which crosses the borderline between narrative and the character’s thoughts and in merging them reinforces both — the words are now echoes of the character’s thoughts, now the author’s discerning comment, and the ambiguity is a fruitful one. The opening two sentences of the passage are Lawrence’s analysis of Mary’s general reaction to her marriage, but with the repeated, italicised modal “would” the passage becomes free indirect speech and reveals what Mary’s thoughts would be if she were able to articulate them. Her near hysteria is conveyed through the repeated and emphatic build up of “She *would* not feel,” “she elected,” “she would be,” “she would live,” “she had sold,” “she had got rid of,” “she considered.” Lawrence uses a favourite device of continual, slightly modified repetition, characteristic of his mature style, which he commonly used to describe a character under emotional stress and tension. This reflects a psychological fact most people will be aware of — that the mind in such conditions commonly does function repetitively and is liable to attach itself in the thought process to certain key words and ideas which become symbolic of the whole state of feeling. Lawrence later recognised this feature of his writing and defended it as natural and appropriate: “every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro, which works up to culmination”⁸ but the young Lawrence who wrote

"Two Marriages" perhaps did not possess this insight and certainly did not reveal it in his writing.

"I am going through a transition stage myself"⁹ and "I can only write what I feel strongly about and that at present is the relation between men and women."¹⁰ Lawrence's letters about his writing of *The Rainbow* also reveal the central difference in the imaginative working out of the story in its two versions. Both tales have much of the clear presentation and objective style we associate with *Sons and Lovers*, with Lawrence's early period when he vividly and accurately portrayed the Midlands world he knew. But in "Daughters of the Vicar," as in *The Rainbow*, the focus of the tale is not on the description of the community and the working lives of its inhabitants as it is in "Two Marriages" but on an exploration of the relation between Louisa and Alfred. The focus moves from the known physical world of Aldecross, which has been so firmly delineated, to the unknown world of complex emotion, and it is in his search for a way in which to describe this new world that we find Lawrence's experimentation with language and style growing and recognise the validity of his claim that his writing was "so new, so really a stratum deeper than I think anybody has ever gone."¹¹ Both versions express Lawrence's characteristic belief in the primacy of deep instinctual forces over superficial barriers of class and rank in Louisa's rejection of the sterile, emotionally etiolated existence at the vicarage. But the later version reveals Lawrence's growing fascination with the mystery of the attraction between a man and a woman and his search to describe the process of that attraction in his fiction.

Miss Louisa served him his dinner. She loved doing it, it was so living, so different from the hateful barrenness at home. It was so personal, to live in this way with people: it seemed to satisfy her. She watched him as he sat for a few moments turned away from his food, looking at the fire, thinking, and he seemed pleasant to her eyes. His black face and arms were strange, his red mouth under the small, trimmed, but very coarse-fibred moustache, that looked like cocoanut fibre, only of a

lighter brown, startled her. But in its dirt his face had a kind of nobility, now he was sad and thinking. His coarseness was not repulsive to her, because it would wash off, and for the rest, he was so natural. ("Two Marriages" p. 399)

Miss Louisa served his dinner. It was strange and exciting to her. She was strung up tense, trying to understand him and his mother. She watched him as he sat. He was turned away from his food, looking in the fire. Her soul watched him, trying to see what he was. His black face and arms were uncouth, he was foreign. His face was masked black with coaldust. She could not see him, she could not know him. The brown eyebrows, the steady eyes, the coarse, small moustache above the closed mouth — these were the only familiar indications. What was he, as he sat there in his pit-dirt? She could not see him, and it hurt her. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 85)

"Two Marriages" simply describes the scene as it appears to Louisa and would appear to an onlooker. The same passage in "Daughters of the Vicar" is also presented in terms of ordinary observation but in addition it conveys Louisa's deeper awareness of what Lawrence later called each person's "intrinsic otherness" and expresses a central paradox in human relations — that the more intimate the contact between two persons the greater the sense of separateness, the awareness of that "otherness." Louisa's search to "know" Alfred transcends the physical appearance of the man before her, the visible known, the "familiar indications" and moves to the unknown reality and separateness of the being beneath. The nature of her search is suggested through the unusual formulation "Her soul watched him" and the questing intensity of that search is conveyed through the repeated phrases of "understanding," "knowing," "seeing." In the later version, too, Lawrence widens the scope of the tale by extending a sense of this otherness to Alfred as he watches Louisa writing a note to the vicarage: "She was all that was beyond him, of revelation and exquisiteness . . . She was there like a wonderful distance" (p. 89).

"Mightn't the body have a life of its own — truer than the personality?"¹² asks Connie in *The First Lady Chatterley*. The earliest statement of this notion appears in the

well-known letter to Ernest Collings in 1913 when Lawrence wrote: "My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect."¹³ The expression of this belief and the ideas arising out of it in his fiction can be found in abundance after 1912 but, significantly, not before it. In a passage of crucial importance to the story "Two Marriages" describes Louisa's embarrassment when she is asked to wash Alfred's back. The corresponding passage in "Daughters of the Vicar" presents the same situation, but with intuitive insight and perception Lawrence conveys Louisa's dawning awareness of the living reality of the body, the beauty of the flesh, the mystery of sexual attraction.

"Your mother said I was to wash your back".
He ducked his face round, looking up at her in a very comical way.

"How funny he looks with his face upside down," she thought. But she appeared so calm and official that he merely groped in the black water, fished out the soap and flannel, and handed them backwards to her without a word. Then he remained with his two arms thrust straight in the panchion, supporting the weight of his shoulders. His skin was beautifully white and unblemished of an opaque, solid whiteness. Miss Louisa flushed to the roots of her hair as she sponged him and saw that his neck and ears had grown flaming red. He was glad, however, because he knew he was so perfectly developed, and in such good condition. She knew nothing either about development or condition, only that he had a beautiful skin. They were neither of them sorry when the washing was done. She put down the flannel and fled upstairs, flushing furiously. ("Two Marriages" p. 399)

'Your mother said you would want your back washing,' she said.

Curious how it hurt her to take part in their fixed routine of life! Louisa felt the almost repulsive intimacy being forced upon her. It was all so common, so like herding. She lost her own distinctness.

He ducked his face round, looking up at her in what was a very comical way. She had to harden herself.

'How funny he looks with his face upside down,' she thought. After all, there was a difference between her and the common people. The water in which his arms were plunged was quite black, the soap-froth was darkish. She could scarcely conceive him as human. Mechanically, under the influence of habit, he groped in the black water, fished out soap and flannel, and handed them backwards to Louisa. Then he remained rigid and submissive, his two arms thrust straight in the panchion, supporting the

weight of his shoulders. His skin was beautifully white and unblemished, of an opaque solid whiteness. Gradually Louisa saw it: this also was what he was. It fascinated her. Her feeling of separateness passed away: she ceased to draw back from contact with him and his mother. There was this living centre. Her heart ran hot. She had reached some goal in this beautiful, clear, male body. She loved him in a white, impersonal heat. But the sunburnt, reddish neck and ears: they were more personal, even curious. A tenderness rose in her, she loved even his queer ears. A person — an intimate being he was to her. She put down the towel and went upstairs again, troubled in her heart. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 86)

Louisa's initial resistance to "the almost repulsive intimacy . . . so common, so like herding," her flashes of thought interspersed with those feelings "After all, there was a difference between her and the common people," her gradual response to the "living centre" of this person, her recognition "this also was what he was," are presented with an authority and penetration found nowhere else in Lawrence's early work. As Louisa's resistance, her "hard-scaled" separateness¹⁴ is overcome by her response to the "beautiful, clear, male body" before her we are aware that more is involved than sexual attraction alone, something involving what Lawrence has mentioned earlier in the story, Louisa's commitment to spontaneous life, to the vitality and wholeness of being that the young collier embodies. Her rejection of her parents' code of self-sacrifice and her decision to marry for love therefore has more than a sexual significance: "But I *will* have it. I *will* love — it is my birthright. I will love the man I marry — that is all I care about" (p. 71). Louisa's "will" is not the imposition of a mental idea — a notion that Lawrence detested — but the conscious expression of right moral judgment, and is in direct contrast to Mary's use of "will" to warp her life. In Mary the "will" is an abstract mental force which she wrongly wields to subdue the reality and judgment of her body: "Her physical self was prouder, stronger than he, her physical self disliked and despised him. But she was in the grip of his moral, mental being" (p. 65). Louisa's "fixed will to love, to have the man she loved" (p. 71) is on the contrary a

profoundly moral decision and Lawrence's imaginative following of the shifts in thought and feeling in her consciousness as she reaches this decision show his striking advance over the early version of the tale. Lawrence later expressed his belief in the necessity to render this process in art in his "Foreword to *Women in Love*":

The creative, spontaneous soul sends forth its promptings of desire and aspiration in us. These promptings are our true fate, which is our business to fulfil. A fate dictated from outside, from theory or from circumstance, is a false fate . . . Man struggles with his unborn needs and fulfilment. New unfoldings struggle up in torment in him, as buds struggle forth from the midst of a plant. Any man of real individuality tries to know and to understand what is happening, even in himself, as he goes along. This struggle for verbal consciousness should not be left out in art. It is a very great part of life. It is not the superimposition of a theory. It is the passionate struggle into conscious being.¹⁵

The story explores just this "struggle into conscious being" in Louisa, Mary, and Alfred, and their respective choices of right and wrong "will" to determine a true or false "fate" and it is significant that these ideas and the use of "will" in this sense are not present in "Two Marriages."

It is also in this "struggle for verbal consciousness" that we find Lawrence's need to express his ever deepening perceptions of the nature of experience in language that is original and idiosyncratic. "All the time, underneath, there is something deep evolving itself out in me. And it is *hard* to express a new thing."¹⁶ In "Two Marriages" Lawrence refers to but does not analyse the problem a young man might face of satisfying his need for a woman in a more than simply physical relationship: "He was thirty-one years old, and had never had a sweet-heart: not because he was timid or a ninny, but because he had never turned his thoughts to a girl, being never in a position to marry whilst his mother needed and monopolised him" (p. 397). In "Daughters of the Vicar" Lawrence felt compelled to analyse Alfred's situation beyond this over-simplification and his discerning description of the youth's strong sexual inhibi-

tions is virtually the same, even to some similarities of phrasing, as the penetrating account of Tom Brangwen in the first chapter of *The Rainbow* (lack of space forbids lengthy quotation here but the passages are on pp. 19-21 and pp. 79-81 in the Penguin editions of *The Rainbow* and *The Prussian Officer*, respectively). Lawrence evolved a style in which he used words in grammatically and semantically unusual ways to convey experiences which the language of prose fiction had not previously evolved a vocabulary for describing. A good example of the extent of this linguistic experimentation is found in the two following and strongly similar passages which describe a character under emotional stress: the first presents Alfred's new awareness of Louisa mingled with grief for his dying mother; the second, from *The Rainbow*, describes Tom Brangwen's heightened consciousness after he has met a woman he desires.

And, when he got out of the house, he was afraid. He saw the stars above ringing with fine brightness, the snow beneath just visible, and a new night was gathering round him. He was afraid almost with obliteration. What was this new night ringing about him, and what was he? He could not recognise himself nor any of his surroundings. He was afraid to think of his mother. And yet his chest was conscious of her, and of what was happening to her. He could not escape from her, she carried him with her into an unformed, unknown chaos. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 89)

Brangwen went up to his room and lay staring out at the stars of the summer night, his whole being in a whirl. What was it all? There was a life so different from what he knew it. What was there outside his knowledge, how much? What was this he had touched? What was he in this new influence? What did everything mean? Where was life, in that which he knew or all outside him? (*The Rainbow* p. 25)

The highly unusual expressions "He was afraid almost with obliteration" and "she carried him with her into an unformed, unknown chaos," suggest the breakdown of Alfred's conception of the world. His normal way of perceiving and reacting to the universe is warped by the stress of fear. In "He saw the stars ringing with fine brightness," which

breaks several normal linguistic restrictions, the language of sight and that of sound are interchanged and the linguistic confusion both evokes the brilliance of the night sky and the confusion in Alfred's mind. Similarly, the sudden enlarging of Brangwen's experience which has shaken his limited understanding of the world is conveyed through a series of interrogatives used in an original way: "What was he in this new influence?" and "What was this he had touched?" The questions recall Louisa's attempt to understand Alfred — "What was he as he sat there in his pit dirt?" and reveal that fruitful ambiguity between free indirect speech and narrative which often characterises Lawrence's writing when he seeks to present the powerful but only half-articulate thoughts which pass through a character's consciousness.

Primarily I am a passionately religious man, and my novels must be written from the depth of my religious experience. That I must keep to, because I can only work like that.¹⁷

The phrases "passionately religious" and "religious experience" reveal the nature of the creative intensity Lawrence felt in his search to describe the meaning of fulfilment in his novels and stories. For Lawrence "fulfilment" was indeed "religious" because it transcends individual passion and personality and aims to establish a relation with the beyond, with that which is outside of and greater than man. His exploration of this philosophy of life is contained in *The Rainbow* but some of its notions are already present in "Daughters of the Vicar." The theme of otherness and the sense in which each lover is an opening, a doorway into the unknown for the other are ideas present in moments of emotional crisis in Alfred and Louisa: "She was to him something steady and immovable and eternal presented to him" (p. 95), "All that was ideal and beyond him she was that — and he was lost to himself in looking at her" (p. 89), and "She saw his face all sombre and inscrutable, and he seemed eternal to her" (p. 97).

Lawrence's intuitive penetration into and analysis of the mystery of passion and his presentation of heightened states of awareness in his characters by setting them firmly against the ordinary round of daily living, foreshadow the writing and technique he developed in *The Rainbow*. When Louisa visits Alfred in her determination to break through his reserve the situation is given dramatic tension by the contrast between the minutely observed, trivial details of ordinary life (the painted clock with the signatures "T. Brooks, Mansfield") and the conventional dialogue and behaviour of the young people on the one hand, and the analysis of the mounting emotional stress within each character on the other.

'Were you going out tonight?' she asked.

'Only to the New Inn,' he said.

She reached for her hat. Nothing else was suggested to her. She *had* to go. He sat waiting for her to be gone, for relief. And she knew that if she went out of that house as she was, she went out a failure. Yet she continued to pin on her hat; in a moment she would have to go. Something was carrying her.

Then suddenly a sharp pang, like lightning, seared her from head to foot, and she was beyond herself. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 96)

The sentences "Something was carrying her" and "She was beyond herself" convey that sense of other, the impersonality of intense emotion that fascinated Lawrence and that he sought increasingly to express in his writing after *Sons and Lovers*. The coming together of Louisa and Alfred is described in a passage which bears a startling similarity to the courtship of Tom Brangwen and Lydia Lensky, as Mr. Littlewood has suggested in his article on Lawrence's early tales:¹⁸

Then, gradually, as he held her gripped, and his brain reeled round, and he felt himself falling, falling from himself, and whilst she, yielded up, swooned to a kind of death of herself, a moment of utter darkness came over him, and they began to wake up again as if from a long sleep. He was himself.

After a while his arms slackened, she loosened herself a little, and put her arms round him, as he held her. So they held each other close, and hid each against the other for assurance, helpless in speech. And it was ever

her hands that trembled more closely upon him, drawing him nearer into her, with love.

And at last she drew back her face and looked up at him, her eyes wet, and shining with light. His heart, which saw, was silent with fear. He was with her. She saw his face all sombre and inscrutable and he seemed eternal to her. And all the echo of pain came back into the rarity of bliss, and all her tears came up.

'I love you,' she said, her lips drawn to sobbing. He put down his head against her, unable to hear her, unable to bear the sudden coming of the peace and passion that almost broke his heart. They stood together in silence whilst the thing moved away a little. ("Daughters of the Vicar" p. 97)

The extract is a paradigm of Lawrence's new-found control of unusual language to convey deep emotion. There can be little doubt that the biblical quality of the writing emphasizes his belief in the religion of instinctive, blood-knowledge — the losing of one's ordinary consciousness in an emotion which, by overwhelming the identity of self, makes possible a re-birth into a new world of experience. The lapse of normal consciousness is conveyed in the long, organic first sentence with its images of falling and death: "reeled round," "falling from himself," "yielded up," "swooned to a kind of death of herself." The organic, growing quality of the prose is created by lexical and semantic repetition, subordination of clauses, and by the large number of conjunctions and connecting adverbs, which recall the language of scripture. The blurring of consciousness and the passing into a new state of awareness is analysed through metaphors of darkness, sleeping, and awakening or re-birth. Though the text is repetitious and lapses into occasional semantic vagueness in the attempt to express the essence of felt experience, the vagueness is not incoherent: it is the careful use of language to form a new vocabulary for expressing the quality of intense personal feeling which is, paradoxically, also impersonal and beyond the individual: "They stood together in silence whilst the thing moved away a little." For Lawrence this intensity of experience was a commitment to something eternal and beyond the rational understanding of the individual human consciousness.

"Daughters of the Vicar" is a transition between the *Weltanschauung* and style of *Sons and Lovers* and the early tales, and of *The Rainbow*, the novel which holds Lawrence's new vision of and belief in marriage as the creative means to fulfilment. The advances made by Lawrence are evident when we compare the conclusion of "Two Marriages," which ends abruptly at the point where Louisa writes a note to the vicarage, with that of the later tale:

"I want to write a note to the vicarage — will you give me some paper?"

He looked at her very keenly. She noticed his eyes were golden-brown, with a very small pupil.

"He is very keen-sighted, he can see a long way," said Louisa, looking full at his eyes. "But he can't see into things, he's not introspective. Ah well!" ("Two Marriages" p. 399)

The ending is unsatisfactory and leaves the reader dangling since there is no attempt to analyse the nature of the attraction between Louisa and Alfred nor the difficulties facing them. We are left with a vague implication, reinforced only by the title, that Louisa will choose Alfred. The fuller psychological analysis of the later text, the movement into new areas of awareness which as we have seen Lawrence depicted in the fourteen additional pages of "Daughters of the Vicar," demonstrate his growth in vision and craftsmanship. The later tale ends after the courtship of Louisa and Alfred, at the vicarage. The bringing together of the parent Lindleys and the two daughters with their chosen husbands recalls the wider issues in the story — the theme of class, the notions of false and true fate, of right and wrong will. The story ends neatly where it began, at the vicarage with the Lindley family, but that claustrophobic and limited world is now contrasted with Louisa's emotional and physical escape from it in her determination to marry and emigrate with Alfred. By making the final page an opening out as well as an ending, Lawrence has transformed the meaning of the original tale and made the short story as he used it into an instrument of prophecy instead of mere record.

NOTES

- ¹*Collected Letters*, ed. H. T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1965), (hereafter cited as *CL*), p. 259 and p. 203.
- ²Cf. *CL*, pp. 213-15 and p. 287.
- ³Cf. J. Boulton, ed., *Lawrence in Love* (Nottingham: Univ. of Nottingham Press, 1968), p. 12 and *CL*, pp. 80-81.
"Two Marriages" did not appear in print until it was published in the "Supplement to *Time and Tide*" for March 24, 1934. Page numbers in the text refer to that periodical and to "Daughters of the Vicar" in the Penguin edition of *The Prussian Officer*. See also Warren Roberts' *D. H. Lawrence: Bibliography* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1963) for versions of this tale. A typescript of "Two Marriages" exists in a private collection but permission to examine it has been refused and I have used the text of the published story.
- ⁴Boulton, *Lawrence in Love*, p. 19.
- ⁵Cf. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. A. Huxley (London: Heinemann, 1932), p. 136 and *CL*, p. 222.
- ⁶*CL*, p. 282.
- ⁷*The First Lady Chatterley*, (New York: Dial Press, 1944), p. 194.
- ⁸"Foreword to *Women in Love*," *Phoenix II*, eds., W. Roberts and H. T. Moore, (London: Heinemann, 1968), p. 276.
- ⁹*CL*, p. 263.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 193.
- ¹²*The First Lady Chatterley*, p. 20.
- ¹³*CL*, p. 180.
- ¹⁴*The Rainbow*, (New York; Compass Books, 1961), p. 495.
- ¹⁵"Foreword to *Women in Love*," *Phoenix II*, pp. 275-76.
- ¹⁶*CL*, p. 273.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 273.
- ¹⁸J.C.F. Littlewood, "D. H. Lawrence's Early Tales," *Cambridge Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 1966), pp. 107-24.