"For a long time he looked at her mouth, her old tired mouth and her shrunken lips, and remembered how once, in the spring of his life, he had compared her lips with a freshly cut fig. For a long time, he looked intently at the pale face, at the tired wrinkles, and at the same time he saw his face and hers, young with red lips, with ardent eyes and he was overwhelmed with a feeling of the present and contemporary existence. In this hour he felt more acutely with indestructibleness of every life, the eternity of the moment," (Hesse 114).

I wonder if Siddhartha's love for Kamala has diminished during the time he spent with Vasudeva, the ferryman. Siddhartha "looked at her mouth, her old tired mouth and her shrunken lips, and remembered how once, in the spring of his life, he had compared her lips with a freshly cut fig." Has Siddhartha's love for Kamala become reduced to nostalgia? Is love between old people in real life more nostalgia or actual love?

The majority of "The Ferryman" revolves around a river. It is mentioned that no matter where the river begins or ends or how much it flows, it will always be there as a river. Siddhartha learns from Vasudeva that Vasudeva interprets this as the river always being there despite the shadow of its past and the shadow of its future. The reader can take this lesson and say that the theme of this chapter heavily revolves around understanding the present. When Hesse mentions "For a long time, he looked intently at the pale face, at the tired wrinkles, and at the same time he saw his face and hers, young with red lips, with ardent eyes and he was overwhelmed with a feeling of the present and contemporary existence," Siddhartha is at peace because he sees an old flame as she is now as well as how they were before. Does this mean that Siddhartha has liberated himself from the shadows of the past? What does it mean to rid oneself of the shadows of the past? Is it really necessary to eliminate the past to achieve enlightenment? Is it disturbing that Siddhartha does not seem to mind Kamala's death?

Using schema, I know that in Buddhism, life is a cycle. When a person dies, that person is reborn as something. Siddhartha's feelings in the last quote: "In this hour he felt more acutely with indestructibleness of every life, the eternity of the moment," describes the effect of having someone near him die. Instead of sadness, Siddhartha has a religious experience, or at least moves closer to enlightenment. I understand that not getting emotional about mortal matters is a part of advancing toward enlightenment in Buddhism, but is this too heartless? By modern standards, is the quest towards enlightenment a pervasive curse?