D. H. Lawrence

Class notes:

The most adventurous novelist in the English context in the 20 century.

Working class novelist. He was a teacher for a short time. Poor health: tuberculosis.

His novels provided a post-Christian metaphysic of life. Industrialization: life as mechanical.

Most important work: “The sister”, composed by 2 books: “The Rainbow” and “The Women in Love”. They were about 2 couples developing their relationships, taking into account their social statement.

He was not just novelist; he also was essayist.

He provided some good analyses of Tomas Hardy.

He is a later example of a classic Romantic writer, but just with the relation with nature.

Lawrence was not socialist. He is from the working class, but he doesn’t want the equality. He hates patriotism.

Blake is an influence for Lawrence, but just about the natural world.

There are better thing in your life than being petty: more generous point of view of life.

The form of the poems is very direct (“Snake” and “The Man and the Bat”).

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-\_-

Birds, beast and flower:

Snake

Description of how the snake is appearing and drinking.

A snake came to my water-trough

On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,

To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark carob tree

I came down the steps with my pitcher

And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was at the trough

            before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the gloom

And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down, over

            the edge of the stone trough

And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,

And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a small clearness,

He sipped with his straight mouth,

Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack long body,

Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,

And I, like a second-comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,

And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,

And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and mused

             a moment,

And stooped and drank a little more,

Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning bowels

            of the earth

On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

The voice of my education said to me

He must be killed,

For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the gold

            are venomous.

He said that the snake should be killed. But he doesn’t want to. He asks himself about if it is because of being a coward.

And voices in me said, If you were a man

You would take a stick and break him now, and finish him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,

How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to drink

            at my water-trough

And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,

Into the burning bowels of this earth?

Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him?

Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?

Was it humility, to feel so honoured?

I felt so honoured.

And yet those voices:

*If you were not afraid, you would kill him!*

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,

But even so, honoured still more

That he should seek my hospitality

From out the dark door of the secret earth.

The snake drank and started to go back.

He drank enough

And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,

And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air, so black,

Seeming to lick his lips,

And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,

And slowly turned his head,

And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,

Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round

And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,

And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,

            and entered farther,

A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing into

When the snake gave him the back, he through him something. And the snake run away.

            that horrid black hole,

Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly drawing

            himself after,

Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,

I picked up a clumsy log

And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,

But suddenly that part of him that was left behind convulsed

            in an undignified haste,

Writhed like lightning, and was gone

Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-front,

At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.

And immediately I regretted it.

I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!

I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.

And I thought of the albatross,

And I wished he would come back, my snake.

He was sorry about what he did. He felt bad about the human education that we have.

For he seemed to me again like a king,

Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,

Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords

Of life.

And I have something to expiate:

A pettiness.

*Taormina*

 CONTACT WITH THE ANIMAL WORLD.

Lui et Elle

She is large and matronly

And rather dirty,

A little sardonic-looking, as if domesticity had driven her to it.

Though what she does, except lay four eggs at random in the garden once a year

And put up with her husband,

I don't know.

She likes to eat.

She hurries up, striding reared on long uncanny legs,

It describes a girl so ugly. She eats like a pig.

When food is going.

Oh yes, she can make haste when she likes.

She snaps the soft bread from my hand in great mouthfuls,

Opening her rather pretty wedge of an iron, pristine face

Into an enormously wide-beaked mouth

Like sudden curved scissors,

And gulping at more than she can swallow, and working her thick, soft tongue,

And having the bread hanging over her chin.

O Mistress, Mistress,

Reptile Mistress,

Your eye is very dark, very bright,

And it never softens

Reptil lover?

Although you watch.

She knows,

She knows well enough to come for food,

Yet she sees me not;

Her bright eye sees, but not me, not anything,

Sightful, sightless, seeing and visionless,

Reptile mistress.

Taking bread in her curved, gaping, toothless mouth,

She has no qualm when she catches my finger in her steel overlapping gums,

But she hangs on, and my shout and my shrinking are nothing to her,

She does not even know she is nipping me with her curved beak.

Snake-like she draws at my finger, while I drag it in horror away.

She bites him

Mistress, reptile mistress,

You are almost too large, I am almost frightened.

He is much smaller,

Dapper beside her,

And ridiculously small.

Her laconic eye has an earthy, materialistic look,

His, poor darling, is almost fiery.

His wimple, his blunt-prowed face,

His low forehead, his skinny neck, his long, scaled, striving legs,

So striving, striving,

Are all more delicate than she,

And he has a cruel scar on his shell.

Poor darling, biting at her feet,

Running beside her like a dog, biting her earthy, splay feet,

Nipping her ankles,

Which she drags apathetic away, though without retreating into her shell.

Agelessly silent,

And with a grim, reptile determination,

Cold, voiceless age-after-age behind him, serpents' long obstinacy

Of horizontal persistence.

Little old man

Scuffling beside her, bending down, catching his opportunity,

Parting his steel-trap face, so suddenly, and seizing her scaly ankle,

And hanging grimly on,

Letting go at last as she drags away,

And closing his steel-trap face.

His steel-trap, stoic, ageless, handsome face.

Alas, what a fool he looks in this scuffle.

And how he feels it!

The lonely rambler, the stoic, dignified stalker through chaos,

The immune, the animate,

Enveloped in isolation,

Forerunner.

Now look at him!

Alas, the spear is through the side of his isolation.

His adolescence saw him crucified into sex,

Doomed, in the long crucifixion of desire, to seek his consummation beyond himself.

Divided into passionate duality,

He, so finished and immune, now broken into desirous fragmentariness,

Doomed to make an intolerable fool of himself

In his effort toward completion again.

Poor little earthy house-inhabiting Osiris,

The mysterious bull tore him at adolescence into pieces,

And he must struggle after reconstruction, ignominiously.

And so behold him following the tail

Of that mud-hovel of his slowly-rambling spouse,

Like some unhappy bull at the tail of a cow,

But with more than bovine, grim, earth-dank persistence,

Suddenly seizing the ugly ankle as she stretches out to walk,

Roaming over the sods,

Or, if it happen to show, at her pointed, heavy tail

Beneath the low-dropping back-board of her shell.

Their two shells like domed boats bumping,

Hers huge, his small;

Their splay feet rambling and rowing like paddles,

And stumbling mixed up in one another,

In the race of love —

Two tortoises,

She huge, he small.

She seems earthily apathetic,

And he has a reptile's awful persistence.

I heard a woman pitying her, pitying the Mère Tortue.

While I, I pity Monsieur.

"He pesters her and torments her," said the woman.

How much more is he pestered and tormented, say I.

What can he do?

He is dumb, he is visionless,

Conceptionless.

His black, sad-lidded eye sees but beholds not

As her earthen mound moves on,

But he catches the folds of vulnerable, leathery skin,

Nail-studded, that shake beneath her shell,

And drags at these with his beak,

Drags and drags and bites,

While she pulls herself free, and rows her dull mound along.

THIS IS A POEM ABOUT HIS OWN MARRIAGE. IT IS MAKING REFERENCES WITH THE HUMAN MARRIAGES. THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE. TEMPERAMENTAL FIGHTING PEOPLE. The man has no command.

Man and Bat

WHEN I went into my room, at mid-morning,  
Say ten o'clock . . .  
My room, a crash-box over that great stone rattle  
The Via de' Bardi. ...  
  
When I went into my room at mid-morning  
\_Why? . . . a bird\_!  
  
A bird  
Flying round the room in insane circles.  
  
In insane circles!  
. . . A bat!  
  
A disgusting bat  
At mid- morning! . . .  
  
\_Out! Go out\_!  
  
Round and round and round  
With a twitchy, nervous, intolerable flight,  
And a neurasthenic lunge,  
And an impure frenzy;  
A bat, big as a swallow.  
  
\_Out, out of my room\_!  
  
The Venetian shutters I push wide  
To the free, calm upper air;  
Loop back the curtains. . . .  
  
\_Now out, out from my room\_!  
  
So to drive him out, flicking with my white handkerchief:  
  \_Go\_!  
But he will not.  
  
Round and round and round  
In an impure haste,  
Fumbling, a beast in air,  
And stumbling, lunging and touching the walls, the bell-  
  wires  
About my room!  
  
Always refusing to go out into the air  
Above that crash-gulf of the Via de' Bardi,  
Yet blind with frenzy, with cluttered fear.  
  
At last he swerved into the window bay,  
But blew back, as if an incoming wind blew him in again.  
A strong inrushing wind.  
  
And round and round and round!  
Blundering more insane, and leaping, in throbs, to clutch at  
  a corner,  
At a wire, at a bell-rope:  
On and on, watched relentless by me, round and round in  
my room,  
  
Round and round and dithering with tiredness and haste and  
  increasing delirium  
Flicker-splashing round my room.  
  
I would not let him rest;  
Not one instant cleave, cling like a blot with his breast to  
  the wall  
In an obscure corner.  
Not an instant!  
  
I flicked him on,  
Trying to drive him through the window.  
  
Again he swerved into the window bay  
And I ran forward, to frighten him forth.  
But he rose, and from a terror worse than me he flew past me  
Back into my room, and round, round, round in my room  
Clutch, cleave, stagger,  
Dropping about the air  
Getting tired.  
  
Something seemed to blow him back from the window  
Every time he swerved at it;  
Back on a strange parabola, then round, round, dizzy in my  
  room.  
  
He \_could\_ not go out,  
I also realised. . . .  
It was the light of day which he could not enter.  
Any more than I could enter the white-hot door of a blast-  
  furnace.  
  
He could not plunge into the daylight that streamed at the  
  window.  
It was asking too much of his nature.  
  
Worse even than the hideous terror of me with my hand-  
  kerchief  
Saying: \_Out, go out\_! . . .  
Was the horror of white daylight in the window!  
  
So I switched on the electric light, thinking: \_Now  
The outside will seem brown\_. . . .  
  
But no.  
The outside did not seem brown.  
And he did not mind the yellow electric light.  
  
Silent!  
He was having a silent rest.  
\_But never!  
Not in my room\_.  
  
Round and round and round  
Near the ceiling as if in a web,  
Staggering;  
Plunging, falling out of the web,  
Broken in heaviness,  
Lunging blindly,  
Heavier;  
And clutching, clutching for one second's pause,  
Always, as if for one drop of rest,  
One little drop.  
  
And I!  
\_Never\_, I say. . . .  
\_Go out\_!  
  
Flying slower,  
Seeming to stumble, to fall in air.  
Blind-weary.  
  
Yet never able to pass the whiteness of light into  
  freedom . . .  
A bird would have dashed through, come what might.  
  
Fall, sink, lurch, and round and round  
Flicker, flicker-heavy;  
Even wings heavy:  
And cleave in a high corner for a second, like a clot, also a  
  prayer.  
  
\_But no.  
Out, you beast\_.  
  
Till he fell in a corner, palpitating, spent.  
And there, a clot, he squatted and looked at me.  
With sticking-out, bead-berry eyes, black,  
And improper derisive ears,  
And shut wings,  
And brown, furry body.  
  
Brown, nut-brown, fine fur!  
But it might as well have been hair on a spider; thing  
With long, black-paper ears.  
  
So, a dilemma!  
He squatted there like something unclean.  
  
No, he must not squat, nor hang, obscene, in my room!  
  
Yet nothing on earth will give him courage to pass the  
  sweet fire of day.  
  
What then?  
Hit him and kill him and throw him away?  
  
Nay,  
I didn't create him.  
Let the God that created him be responsible for his death . . .  
Only, in the bright day, I will not have this clot in my room.  
  
Let the God who is maker of bats watch with them in their  
  unclean corners. . . .  
I admit a God in every crevice.  
But not bats in my room;  
Nor the God of bats, while the sun shines.  
  
\_So out, out you brute\_! . . .  
And he lunged, flight-heavy, away from me, sideways, \_a  
  sghembo\_!  
And round and round and round my room, a clot with wings,  
Impure even in weariness.  
  
Wings dark skinny and flapping the air.  
Lost their flicker.  
Spent.  
  
He fell again with a little thud  
Near the curtain on the floor.  
And there lay.  
  
Ah death, death  
You are no solution!  
Bats must be bats.  
  
Only life has a way out.  
And the human soul is fated to wide-eyed responsibility  
In life.  
  
So I picked him up in a flannel jacket,  
Well covered, lest he should bite me.  
For I would have had to kill him if he'd bitten me, the  
impure one. . . .  
And he hardly stirred in my hand, muffled up.  
  
Hastily, I shook him out of the window.  
  
And away he went!  
Fear craven in his tail.  
Great haste, and straight, almost bird straight above the Via  
  de' Bardi.  
Above that crash-gulf of exploding whips,  
Towards the Borgo San Jacopo.  
  
And now, at evening, as he flickers over the river  
Dipping with petty triumphant flight, and tittering over the  
sun's departure,  
I believe he chirps, pipistrello, seeing me here on this  
  terrace writing:  
\_There he sits, the long loud one!  
But I am greater than he . . .  
I escaped him\_. . . .

In the Summary and analysis of Bat by D. H. Lawrence the poem starts with the poet’s persona description of the nature of his environment as if he is talking to someone. At the beginning of the poem, the poet’s persona sits somewhere in Florence and admires the dying sun’s beauty.

In the second stanza, he describes how the light reflects on the stream to create a vivid picture of the sun setting on a city or river. As he admires this beautiful scenery, his attention is called to something flying through the arches of Ponte Vecchio.

The poet’s persona admires the spools of dark thread sewing formed by the birds’ flight, which he assumes are Swallows because of how they fly together. At this point, the poet’s persona observes the picture created by the birds as they fly. reveal his confusion and doubt about birds’ nature.

He doesn’t want to kill them, as they are a God creation.

 Figs

The proper way to eat a fig, in society,

Is to split it in four, holding it by the stump,

And open it, so that it is a glittering, rosy, moist, honied, heavy-petalled four-petalled flower.

Then you throw away the skin

Which is just like a four-sepalled calyx,

After you have taken off the blossom with your lips.

But the vulgar way

Is just to put your mouth to the crack, and take out the flesh in one bite.

Every fruit has its secret.

The fig is a very secretive fruit.

As you see it standing growing, you feel at once it is symbolic:

And it seems male.

But when you come to know it better, you agree with the Romans, it is female.

The Italians vulgarly say, it stands for the female part; the fig-fruit:

The fissure, the yoni,

The wonderful moist conductivity towards the centre.

Involved,

Inturned,

The flowering all inward and womb-fibrilled;

And but one orifice.

The fig, the horse-shoe, the squash-blossom.

Symbols.

There was a flower that flowered inward, womb-ward;

Now there is a fruit like a ripe womb.

It was always a secret.

That’s how it should be, the female should always be secret.

There never was any standing aloft and unfolded on a bough

Like other flowers, in a revelation of petals;

Silver-pink peach, venetian green glass of medlars and sorb-apples,

Shallow wine-cups on short, bulging stems

Openly pledging heaven:

Here’s to the thorn in flower! Here is to Utterance!

The brave, adventurous rosaceæ.

Folded upon itself, and secret unutterable,

And milky-sapped, sap that curdles milk and makes ricotta,

Sap that smells strange on your fingers, that even goats won’t taste it;

Folded upon itself, enclosed like any Mohammedan woman,

Its nakedness all within-walls, its flowering forever unseen,

One small way of access only, and this close-curtained from the light;

Fig, fruit of the female mystery, covert and inward,

Mediterranean fruit, with your covert nakedness,

Where everything happens invisible, flowering and fertilisation, and fruiting

In the inwardness of your you, that eye will never see

Till it’s finished, and you’re over-ripe, and you burst to give up your ghost.

Till the drop of ripeness exudes,

And the year is over.

And then the fig has kept her secret long enough.

So it explodes, and you see through the fissure the scarlet.

And the fig is finished, the year is over.

That’s how the fig dies, showing her crimson through the purple slit

Like a wound, the exposure of her secret, on the open day.

Like a prostitute, the bursten fig, making a show of her secret.

That’s how women die too.

The year is fallen over-ripe,

The year of our women.

The year of our women is fallen over-ripe.

The secret is laid bare.

And rottenness soon sets in.

The year of our women is fallen over-ripe.

When Eve once knew in her mind that she was naked

She quickly sewed fig-leaves, and sewed the same for the man.

She’d been naked all her days before,

But till then, till that apple of knowledge, she hadn’t had the fact on her mind.

She got the fact on her mind, and quickly sewed fig-leaves.

And women have been sewing ever since.

But now they stitch to adorn the bursten fig, not to cover it.

They have their nakedness more than ever on their mind,

And they won’t let us forget it.

Now, the secret

Becomes an affirmation through moist, scarlet lips

That laugh at the Lord’s indignation.

What then, good Lord! cry the women.

We have kept our secret long enough.

We are a ripe fig.

Let us burst into affirmation.

They forget, ripe figs won’t keep.

Ripe figs won’t keep.

Honey-white figs of the north, black figs with scarlet inside, of the south.

Ripe figs won’t keep, won’t keep in any clime.

What then, when women the world over have all bursten into self-assertion?

And bursten figs won’t keep?

San Gervasio.

APPEALING TO THE FEMALE. INTRODUCING SEX AS A TOPIC.

Medlars and Sorb-Apples

I love you, rotten,

Delicious rottenness.

I love to suck you out from your skins

So brown and soft and coming suave,

So morbid, as the Italians say.

What a rare, powerful, reminiscent flavour

Comes out of your falling through the stages of decay:

Stream within stream.

Something of the same flavour as Syracusan muscat wine

Or vulgar Marsala.

Though even the word Marsala will smack of preciosity

Soon in the pussy-foot West.

What is it?

What is it, in the grape turning raisin,

In the medlar, in the sorb-apple,

Wineskins of brown morbidity,

Autumnal excrementa;

What is it that reminds us of white gods?

Gods nude as blanched nut-kernels,

Strangely, half-sinisterly flesh-fragrant

As if with sweat,

And drenched with mystery.

Sorb-apples, medlars with dead crowns.

I say, wonderful are the hellish experiences,

Orphic, delicate

Dionysos of the Underworld.

A kiss, and a vivid spasm of farewell, a moment’s orgasm of rupture,

Then along the damp road alone, till the next turning.

And there, a new partner, a new parting, a new unfusing into twain,

A new gasp of further isolation,

A new intoxication of loneliness, among decaying, frost-cold leaves.

Going down the strange lanes of hell, more and more intensely alone,

The fibres of the heart parting one after the other

And yet the soul continuing, naked-footed, ever more vividly embodied

Like a flame blown whiter and whiter

In a deeper and deeper darkness,

Ever more exquisite, distilled in separation.

So, in the strange retorts of medlars and sorb-apples

The distilled essence of hell.

The exquisite odour of leave-taking. Jamque vale!

Orpheus, and the winding, leaf-clogged, silent lanes of hell.

Each soul departing with its own isolation.

Strangest of all strange companions,

And best.

Medlars, sorb-apples

More than sweet

Flux of autumn

Sucked out of your empty bladders

And sipped down, perhaps, with a sip of Marsala

So that the rambling, sky-dropped grape can add its music to yours,

Orphic farewell, and farewell, and farewell

And the ego sum of Dionysos

The sono io of perfect drunkenness

Intoxication of final loneliness.

                                                                                San Gervasio

Two fruits = sex. Young people against old people.

PANSIES:

How Beastly the Bourgeois Is

How beastly the bourgeois is

especially the male of the species--

Presentable, eminently presentable--

shall I make you a present of him?

Isn't he handsome? Isn't he healthy? Isn't he a fine specimen?

Doesn't he look the fresh clean Englishman, outside?

Isn't it God's own image? tramping his thirty miles a day

after partridges, or a little rubber ball?

wouldn't you like to be like that, well off, and quite the

thing

Oh, but wait!

Let him meet a new emotion, let him be faced with another

man's need,

let him come home to a bit of moral difficulty, let life

face him with a new demand on his understanding

and then watch him go soggy, like a wet meringue.

Watch him turn into a mess, either a fool or a bully.

Just watch the display of him, confronted with a new

demand on his intelligence,

a new life-demand.

How beastly the bourgeois is

especially the male of the species--

Nicely groomed, like a mushroom

standing there so sleek and erect and eyeable--

and like a fungus, living on the remains of a bygone life

sucking his life out of the dead leaves of greater life

than his own.

And even so, he's stale, he's been there too long.

Touch him, and you'll find he's all gone inside

just like an old mushroom, all wormy inside, and hollow

under a smooth skin and an upright appearance.

Full of seething, wormy, hollow feelings

rather nasty--

How beastly the bourgeois is!

Standing in their thousands, these appearances, in damp

England

what a pity they can't all be kicked over

like sickening toadstools, and left to melt back, swiftly

into the soil of England.

The speaker starts the poem by commenting on how beastly the bourgeois are. He focuses on especially the male species.  
They look presentable but it is only on the outside.

The bourgeois are like a mushroom, standing erect and sleek, but all the while feeding off others. He’s stale inside, all wormy and hollow.  
The speaker ends the poem by saying it’s a pity that all the bourgeois can’t be kicked over, back into the soil of England.

The [central idea of the poem](https://beamingnotes.com/2017/08/25/analysis-central-idea-theme-ball-poem/) is to showcase the superficial characteristics of the bourgeois.

The Oxford Voice

When you hear it languishing

and hooing and cooing, and sidling through the front teeth,

the Oxford voice

or worse still

the would-be Oxford voice

you don’t even laugh any more, you can’t.

For every blooming bird is an Oxford cuckoo nowadays,

you can’t sit on a bus nor in the tube

but it breathes gently and languishingly in the back of

your neck.

And oh, so seductively superior, so seductively

self-effacingly

deprecatingly

superior.

We wouldn’t insist on it for a moment

but we are

we are

you admit we are

superior.

Pullitas a Oxford. Intellectual vs experience.

Give Us Gods

Give us gods, Oh give them us!

Give us gods.

We are so tired of men

and motor-power. —

But not gods grey-bearded and dictatorial,

nor yet that pale young man afraid of fatherhood

shelving substance on to the woman, Madonna mia! shabby virgin!

nor gusty Jove, with his eye on immortal tarts,

nor even the musical, suave young fellow

wooing boys and beauty.

Give us gods

give us something else —

Beyond the great bull that bellowed through space, and got his throat cut.

Beyond even that eagle, that phoenix, hanging over the gold egg of all things,

further still, before the curled horns of the ram stepped forth

or the stout swart beetle rolled the globe of dung in which man should hatch,

or even the sly gold serpent fatherly lifted his head off the earth to think —

Give us gods before these —

Thou shalt have other gods before these.

Where the waters end in marshes

swims the wild swan

sweeps the high goose above the mists

honking in the gloom the honk of procreation from such throats.

Mists

where the electron behaves and misbehaves as it will,

where the forces tie themselves up into knots of atoms

and come untied;

Mists

of mistiness complicated into knots and clots that barge about

and bump on one another and explode into more mist, or don’t,

mist of energy most scientific —

But give us gods!

Look then

where the father of all things swims in a mist of atoms

electrons and energies, quantums and relativities

mists, wreathing mists,

like a wild swan, or a goose, whose honk goes through my bladder.

And in the dark unscientific I feel the drum-winds of his wings

and the drip of his cold, webbed feet, mud-black

brush over my face as he goes

to seek the women in the dark, our women, our weird women whom he treads

with dreams and thrusts that make them cry in their sleep.

Gods, do you ask for gods?

Where there is woman there is swan.

Do you think, scientific man, you’ll be father of your own babies?

Don’t imagine it.

There’ll be babies born that are cygnets, O my soul!

young wild swans!

And babies of women will come out young wild geese, O my heart!

the geese that saved Rome, and will lose London.

Post Christian metaphysics. No roman, pagans gods… tradition and modern society.

Little Fish

FISH, oh Fish,  
So little matters!  
  
Whether the waters rise and cover the earth  
Or whether the waters wilt in the hollow places,  
All one to you.  
  
Aqueous, subaqueous,  
Submerged  
And wave-thrilled.  
  
As the waters roll  
Roll you.  
The waters wash,  
You wash in oneness  
And never emerge.  
  
Never know.  
Never grasp.  
  
Your life a sluice of sensation along your sides,  
A flush at the flails of your fins, down the whorl of your  
  tail.  
And water wetly on fire in the grates of your gills;  
Fixed water-eyes.  
  
Even snakes lie together.  
  
But oh, fish, that rock in water,  
You lie only with the waters;  
One touch.  
  
No fingers, no hands and feet, no lips;  
No tender muzzles,  
No wistful bellies,  
No loins of desire,  
None.  
  
You and the naked element,  
Sway-wave.  
Curvetting bits of tin in the evening light.  
  
Who is it ejects his sperm to the naked flood?  
In the wave-mother?  
Who swims enwombed?  
Who lies with the waters of his silent passion, womb-  
  element?  
--Fish in the waters under the earth.  
  
What price \_his\_ bread upon the waters?  
  
Himself all silvery himself  
In the element  
No more.  
  
Nothing more.  
  
Himself,  
And the element.  
Food, of course!  
Water-eager eyes,  
Mouth-gate open  
And strong spine urging, driving;  
And desirous belly gulping.  
  
Fear also!  
He knows fear!  
Water-eyes craning,  
A rush that almost screams,  
Almost fish-voice  
As the pike comes. . . .  
Then gay fear, that turns the tail sprightly, from a shadow.  
  
Food, and fear, and joie de vivre,  
Without love.  
  
The other way about:  
Joie de vivre, and fear, and food,  
All without love.  
  
Quelle joie de vivre  
Dans l'eau!  
Slowly to gape through the waters.  
Alone with the element;  
To sink, and rise, and go to sleep with the waters;  
To speak endless inaudible wavelets into the wave;  
To breathe from the flood at the gills,  
Fish-blood slowly running next to the flood, extracting fish-  
  fire;  
To have the element under one, like a lover;  
And to spring away with a curvetting click in the air,  
Provocative.  
Dropping back with a slap on the face of the flood.  
And merging oneself!  
  
To be a fish!  
  
So utterly without misgiving  
To be a fish  
In the waters.  
  
Loveless, and so lively!  
Born before God was love,  
Or life knew loving.  
Beautifully beforehand with it all.  
  
Admitted, they swarm in companies,  
Fishes.  
They drive in shoals.  
But soundless, and out of contact.  
They exchange no word, no spasm, not even anger.  
Not one touch.  
Many suspended together, forever apart,  
Each one alone with the waters, upon one wave with the rest.  
  
A magnetism in the water between them only.  
  
I saw a water-serpent swim across the Anapo,  
And I said to my heart, \_look, look at him!  
With his head up, steering like a bird!  
He's a rare one, but he belongs\_ . . .  
  
But sitting in a boat on the Zeller lake  
And watching the fishes in the breathing waters  
Lift and swim and go their way--  
  
I said to my heart, \_who are these\_?  
And my heart couldn't own them. . . .  
  
A slim young pike with smart fins  
And grey-striped suit, a young cub of a pike  
Slouching along away below, half out of sight,  
Like a lout on an obscure pavement. . . .  
  
Aha, there's somebody in the know!  
  
But watching closer  
That motionless deadly motion,  
That unnatural barrel body, that long ghoul nose, . . .  
I left off hailing him.  
  
I had made a mistake, I didn't know him,  
This grey, monotonous soul in the water,  
This intense individual in shadow,  
Fish-alive.  
  
I didn't know his God,  
I didn't know his God.  
  
Which is perhaps the last admission that life has to wring  
  out of us.  
  
I saw, dimly,  
Once a big pike rush,  
And small fish fly like splinters.  
And I said to my heart, \_there are limits  
To you, my heart;  
And to the one God.  
Fish are beyond me\_.  
  
Other Gods  
Beyond my range . . . gods beyond my God. . .  
  
They are beyond me, are fishes.  
I stand at the pale of my being  
And look beyond, and see  
Fish, in the outerwards,  
As one stands on a bank and looks in.  
  
I have waited with a long rod  
And suddenly pulled a gold-and-greenish, lucent fish from  
  below,  
And had him fly like a halo round my head,  
Lunging in the air on the line.  
  
Unhooked his gorping, water-horny mouth.  
And seen his horror-tilted eye,  
His red-gold, water-precious, mirror-flat bright eye;  
And felt him beat in my hand, with his mucous, leaping  
  life-throb.  
  
And my heart accused itself  
Thinking: \_I am not the measure of creation.  
This is beyond me, this fish.  
His God stands outside my God\_.  
  
And the gold-and-green pure lacquer-mucus comes off in my  
  hand,  
And the red-gold mirror-eye stares and dies,  
And the water-suave contour dims.  
  
But not before I have had to know  
He was born in front of my sunrise.  
Before my day.  
  
He outstarts me.  
And I, a many-fingered horror of daylight to him,  
Have made him die.  
  
Fishes,  
With their gold, red eyes, and green-pure gleam, and  
  under-gold,  
And their pre-world loneliness,  
And more-than-lovelessness.  
And white meat;  
They move in other circles.  
  
Outsiders.  
Water-wayfarers.  
Things of one element.  
Aqueous,  
Each by itself.  
  
Cats, and the Neapolitans,  
Sulphur sun-beasts,  
Thirst for fish as for more-than-water;  
Water-alive  
To quench their over-sulphureous lusts.  
  
But I, I only wonder  
And don't know.  
I don't know fishes.  
  
In the beginning  
Jesus was called The Fish. . . .  
And in the end.

How fishes swimming.

Self-Pity

[I never saw a wild thing  
sorry for itself.](https://genius.com/D-h-lawrence-self-pity-annotated#note-2416502)  
[A small bird will drop frozen dead from a bough  
without ever having felt sorry for itself.](https://genius.com/D-h-lawrence-self-pity-annotated#note-2416523)

Nunca vi una cosa salvaje

perdón por sí mismo.

Un pájaro pequeño caerá muerto congelado de una rama

sin haber sentido nunca lástima por sí mismo.

Leave Sex alone

Let sex die. Sex in the mind is different than having physic sex. Intellectual and phisic. Sex related with religion.

The Mess of Love

We’ve made a great mess of love

No al matrimonio y se un picaflor

U can’t express what love is.

Since we made an ideal out of it.

The moment I swear to love a woman, a certain woman, all my life

That moment I begin to hate her.

The moment I even say to a woman: I love you! –

My love dies down considerably.

The moment love is an understood thing between us, we are sure of it,

It’s a cold egg, it isn’t love any more.

Love is like a flower, it must flower and fade;

If it doesn’t fade, it is not a flower,

It’s either an artificial rag blossom, or an immortelle, for the cemetery.

The moment the mind interferes with love, or the will fixes on it,

Or the personality assumes it as an attribute, or the ego takes possession of it,

It is not love any more, it’s just a mess.

And we’ve made a great mess of love, mind-perverted, will-perverted, ego-perverted love.

A Sane Revolution

If you make a revolution, make it for fun,  
don't make it in ghastly seriousness,  
don't do it in deadly earnest,  
do it for fun.  
  
Don't do it because you hate people,  
do it just to spit in their eye.  
  
Don't do it for the money,  
do it and be damned to the money.  
  
Don't do it for equality,  
do it because we've got too much equality  
and it would be fun to upset the apple-cart  
and see which way the apples would go a-rolling.  
  
Don't do it for the working classes.  
Do it so that we can all of us be little aristocracies on our own  
and kick our heels like jolly escaped asses.  
  
Don't do it, anyhow, for international Labour.  
Labour is the one thing a man has had too much of.  
Let's abolish labour, let's have done with labouring!  
Work can be fun, and men can enjoy it; then it's not labour.  
Let's have it so! Let's make a revolution for fun!

Critic to socialism. The goal is not the communism state. Abolish Labour.

Wages

The wages of work is cash.

The wages of cash is want more cash.

The wages of want more cash is vicious competition.

The wages of vicious competition is — the world we live in.

The work-cash-want circle is the viciousest circle

that ever turned men into fiends.

Earning a wage is a prison occupation

and a wage-earner is a sort of gaol-bird.

Earning a salary is a prison overseer’s job,

a gaoler instead of a gaol-bird.

Living on your income is strolling grandly outside the prison

in terror lest you have to go in. And since the work-prison covers

almost every scrap of the living earth, you stroll up and down

on a narrow beat, about the same as a prisoner taking his exercise.

This is called universal freedom.

CAPITALISM.

Crítica a la Sociedad desde el punto de vista económico y los salarios. Es una prisión de dinero. U get money, u want more, then the competition and then the evil is coming.

LAST POEMS:

Bavarian Gentians

Not every man has gentians in his house  
in Soft September, at slow, Sad Michaelmas.  
  
Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark  
darkening the daytime torchlike with the smoking blueness of Pluto's  
     gloom,  
ribbed and torchlike, with their blaze of darkness spread blue  
down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day  
torch-flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto's dark-blue daze,  
black lamps from the halls of Dis, burning dark blue,  
giving off darkness, blue darkness, as Demeter's pale lamps give off  
     light,  
lead me then, lead me the way.  
  
Reach me a gentian, give me a torch  
let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch of this flower  
down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is darkened on blueness.  
even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted September  
to the sightless realm where darkness was awake upon the dark  
and Persephone herself is but a voice  
or a darkness invisible enfolded in the deeper dark  
of the arms Plutonic, and pierced with the passion of dense gloom,  
among the splendor of torches of darkness, shedding darkness on the  
     lost bride and groom.

The first two lines express the poet’s insistence on telling his readers that not everyone has gentian in their house.

Now the poet describes the Bavarian gentians as big and dark and then focuses on the dark He then compares this darkness to Pluto’s gloom. Pluto is the king of the underworld. The poet also refers to ‘Demeter’s pale lamps.’Demeter is the goddess of harvest and agriculture. The poet then asks the blue darkness or, rather to the gentians to lead him to the underworld.

He wants to be handed gentian so that he can have the torch and thus guide himself using the blue flames or light from the torch formed by the flower as he descends slowly down the stairs into the dark underworld. Now the poet refers to Persephone, the wife of Pluto whom he abducted and married. She stays on earth for six months and then returns to the underworld during September. But the imagery here becomes sexual as it is suggested that she is enfolded in the deep dark Plutonic arms filled with dense passion. In the last lines, the poet continues to give us the dark blue image even when describing the couple. He considers them as lost or rather forgotten as their tale is old and resides so deep beneath amidst the blueness.

Gentials are hard to be found.

The Ship of Death

I

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit

and the long journey towards oblivion.

The apples falling like great drops of dew

to bruise themselves an exit from themselves.

And it is time to go, to bid farewell

to one’s own self, and find an exit

from the fallen self.

II

Have you built your ship of death, O have you?

O build your ship of death, for you will need it.

The grim frost is at hand, when the apples will fall

thick, almost thundrous, on the hardened earth.

And death is on the air like a smell of ashes!

Ah! can’t you smell it?

And in the bruised body, the frightened soul

finds itself shrinking, wincing from the cold

that blows upon it through the orifices.

III

And can a man his own quietus make

with a bare bodkin?

With daggers, bodkins, bullets, man can make

a bruise or break of exit for his life;

but is that a quietus, O tell me, is it quietus?

Surely not so! for how could murder, even self-murder

ever a quietus make?

IV

O let us talk of quiet that we know,

that we can know, the deep and lovely quiet

of a strong heart at peace!

How can we this, our own quietus, make?

V

Build then the ship of death, for you must take

the longest journey, to oblivion.

And die the death, the long and painful death

that lies between the old self and the new.

Already our bodies are fallen, bruised, badly bruised,

already our souls are oozing through the exit

of the cruel bruise.

Already the dark and endless ocean of the end

is washing in through the breaches of our wounds,

already the flood is upon us.

Oh build your ship of death, your little ark

and furnish it with food, with little cakes, and wine

for the dark flight down oblivion.

VI

Piecemeal the body dies, and the timid soul

has her footing washed away, as the dark flood rises.

We are dying, we are dying, we are all of us dying

and nothing will stay the death-flood rising within us

and soon it will rise on the world, on the outside world.

We are dying, we are dying, piecemeal our bodies are dying

and our strength leaves us,

and our soul cowers naked in the dark rain over the flood,

cowering in the last branches of the tree of our life.

VII

We are dying, we are dying, so all we can do

is now to be willing to die, and to build the ship

of death to carry the soul on the longest journey.

A little ship, with oars and food

and little dishes, and all accoutrements

fitting and ready for the departing soul.

Now launch the small ship, now as the body dies

and life departs, launch out, the fragile soul

in the fragile ship of courage, the ark of faith

with its store of food and little cooking pans

and change of clothes,

upon the flood’s black waste

upon the waters of the end

upon the sea of death, where still we sail

darkly, for we cannot steer, and have no port.

There is no port, there is nowhere to go

only the deepening black darkening still

blacker upon the soundless, ungurgling flood

darkness at one with darkness, up and down

and sideways utterly dark, so there is no direction any more

and the little ship is there; yet she is gone.

She is not seen, for there is nothing to see her by.

She is gone! gone! and yet

somewhere she is there.

Nowhere!

VIII

And everything is gone, the body is gone

completely under, gone, entirely gone.

The upper darkness is heavy as the lower,

between them the little ship

is gone

she is gone.

It is the end, it is oblivion.

IX

And yet out of eternity a thread

separates itself on the blackness,

a horizontal thread

that fumes a little with pallor upon the dark.

Is it illusion? or does the pallor fume

A little higher?

Ah wait, wait, for there’s the dawn,

the cruel dawn of coming back to life

out of oblivion.

Wait, wait, the little ship

drifting, beneath the deathly ashy grey

of a flood-dawn.

Wait, wait! even so, a flush of yellow

and strangely, O chilled wan soul, a flush of rose.

A flush of rose, and the whole thing starts again.

X

The flood subsides, and the body, like a worn sea-shell

emerges strange and lovely.

And the little ship wings home, faltering and lapsing

on the pink flood,

and the frail soul steps out, into the house again

filling the heart with peace.

Swings the heart renewed with peace

even of oblivion.

Oh build your ship of death, oh build it!

for you will need it.

For the voyage of oblivion awaits you.

Lawrence wrote this poem when he was terminally ill from tuberculosis in late 1929 or 1930. There are several versions of "The Ship of Death" and of "Bavarian Gentians," another death-poem written around the same time. It appears that Lawrence kept re-working the same material, perhaps in this way building his own ship of death.

Building a metaphorical ship is one way to prepare for the ultimate journey. The Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Christian "Ars Moriendi" of the Middle Ages are other forms of preparation. Our contemporary preference in the United States is to deny the approach of death and remain silent, while we allow our bodies to be impaled by machines in the name of "survival."

Preparation for death