The Complete Short Novels

D. H. LAWRENCE

PENGUIN CLASSICS

THE COMPLETE SHORT NOVELS

DAVID HERBERT LAWRENCE was born at Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, in 1885, fourth of the five children of a miner and his middle-class wife. He attended Nottingham High School and Nottingham University College. His first novel, *The White Peacock*, was published in 1911, just a few weeks after the death of his mother, to whom he had been abnormally close. At this time he finally ended his relationship with Jessie Chambers (the Miriam of *Sons and Lovers*) and became engaged to Louie Burrows. His career as a schoolteacher was ended in 1911 by the illness which was ultimately diagnosed as tuberculosis.

In 1912 Lawrence eloped to Germany with Frieda Weekley, the German wife of his former modern languages tutor. They were married on their return to England in 1914. Lawrence was now living, precariously, by his writing. His greatest novels, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, were completed in 1915 and 1916. The former was suppressed, and he could not find a publisher for the latter.

After the war Lawrence began his 'savage pilgrimage' in search of a more fulfilling mode of life than industrial Western civilization could offer. This took him to Sicily, Ceylon, Australia and, finally, New Mexico. The Lawrences returned to Europe in 1925. Lawrence's last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, was banned in 1928, and his paintings confiscated in 1929. He died in Vence in 1930 at the age of 44.

Lawrence spent most of his short life living. Nevertheless, he produced an amazing quantity of work – novels, stories, poems, plays, essays, travel books, translations and letters . . . After his death Frieda wrote: 'What he had seen and felt and known he gave in his writing to his fellow men, the splendour of living, the hope of more and more life . . . a heroic and immeasurable gift.'

•

KEITH SAGAR is Reader in English Literature in the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Manchester. Dr Sagar is the author of *The Art of D. H. Lawrence* (1966), *The Art of Ted Hughes* (1975 and 1978), *D. H. Lawrence – a Calendar of His Works* (1979), *The Life of D. H. Lawrence* (1980), *The Reef and Other Poems* (1980) and *D. H. Lawrence: Life into Art* (Penguin, 1985). He has also edited several books, including Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* for Penguin Classics. He is now editing volume seven of Lawrence's letters for the Cambridge edition, and working on a *magnum opus*, *Worshippers of Nature*.

•

MELISSA PARTRIDGE is preparing an edition of Lawrence's *Twilight in Italy* for the Cambridge edition.

The Complete Short Novels

D. H. LAWRENCE

EDITED WITH AN
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY KEITH SAGAR
AND MELISSA PARTRIDGE

PENGUIN BOOKS

Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England
Viking Penguin Inc., 40 West 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, U.S.A.
Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia
Penguin Books Canada Limited, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 1B4
Penguin Books (N.Z.) Ltd, 182–190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand

—

This selection first published in the Penguin English Library 1982
Reprinted 1984
Reprinted in Penguin Classics 1986

—

—

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd,
Bungay, Suffolk
Filmset in Monophoto Ehrhardt by
Northumberland Press Ltd, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

Contents

Lawrence's Life and Works: a Chronology

1885	David Herbert Richards Lawrence born in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, the fourth child of Arthur Lawrence, miner, and Lydia, *née* Beardsall, formerly a schoolmistress.
1891–8	He attends Beauvale Board School and becomes the first boy from that school to win a County Council Scholarship to
1898–1901	Nottingham High School, which he attends until 1901.
1901	Begins frequent visits to Chambers family at Haggs Farm, and his relationship with Jessie Chambers (the Miriam of *Sons and Lovers*) which was to develop into an 'unofficial engagement'.
1901–2	Works as a clerk at Haywood's surgical appliances factory. Has to leave after severe attack of pneumonia.
1902–6	Pupil-teacher at British School, Eastwood. Sits the King's Scholarship examination in December 1904 and is placed in the first division of the first class. A few months later he matriculates and qualifies himself to take a two-year teachers' certificate course at Nottingham University College, beginning in September 1906.
1906–8	Writes his first poems and stories and begins his first novel *Laetitia* (later *The White Peacock*). Wins *Nottinghamshire Guardian* Christmas 1907 short story competition with 'A Prelude'. Loses his faith in 'a personal, human God'.
1908–11	Teaches at Davidson Road School, Croydon. Meets Ford Madox Hueffer who begins to publish his poems and stories in the *English Review* and introduces him to the London literary world. In 1910 he writes his second novel, *The Trespasser*, in conjunction with Helen Corke, and begins *Paul Morel* (later *Sons and Lovers*). His relationship with Jessie Chambers comes to an end. He has a brief affair with Alice Dax, wife of an Eastwood chemist, then becomes engaged to Louie Burrows, who had been a fellow-student at college. In December 1910 Mrs Lawrence dies of cancer. In January 1911 *The White Peacock* is published by Heinemann. Edward Garnett becomes Lawrence's mentor. Lawrence becomes seriously ill with pneumonia and has to give up school-teaching.
1912	In March Lawrence meets Frieda Weekley, wife of his former modern languages tutor, and six weeks later elopes with her

to Germany. Lawrence records the vicissitudes of their relationship in '*Look! We Have Come Through!*'. They walk over the Alps into Italy and settle at Gargnano, where Lawrence finishes *Sons and Lovers* and begins *The Insurrection of Miss Houghton* (later to be rewritten as *The Lost Girl*).

1913 Begins *The Sisters*, eventually to be split into *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, and *Italian Sketches* (later *Twilight in Italy*). They return to England in June and begin friendship with John Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield. They return to Italy (Lerici) in September. Lawrence works mainly on *The Sisters* until June, when they return to England to

1914 marry (Frieda having at last obtained her divorce) and to find a publisher for *The Rainbow*. The wedding takes place at Kensington Registry Office on 13 July 1914. Lawrence works on revising his short stories for *The Prussian Officer*. The outbreak of war the following month prevents the Lawrences from returning to Italy. At Chesham and Greatham during the next six months, Lawrence rewrites *The Rainbow*. He

1915 begins important friendships with Lady Cynthia Asquith, Lady Ottoline Morrell, Bertrand Russell and E. M. Forster In August they move to Hampstead. Lawrence develops his idea of an ideal community, Rananim, envisaged, at this stage, in Florida. His plans to form a revolutionary anti-war party with Russell and Murry collapse. *The Rainbow* is published by Methuen and immediately suppressed. This blow, together with the war, ill-health, increasing poverty, the defection of several friends, humiliating examinations for military service, and his inability to get permission to leave the country, brings Lawrence close to despair and misanthropy – his 'nightmare'.

1916 The Lawrences move to Cornwall where Lawrence writes *Women in Love*.

1917 He begins *Studies in Classic American Literature*. The Lawrences are evicted from Cornwall on suspicion of spying. In London Lawrence begins *Aaron's Rod*.

1918 They move to Newbury, in Berkshire, then to Mountain Cottage, Middleton-by-Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Lawrence writes *Movements in European History*.

1919 Lawrence is very ill with influenza. Moves back to Berkshire. In November the Lawrences leave for Italy and settle in Capri.

1920 Moves to Fontana Vecchia, Taormina, Sicily. Visits Maurice Magnus at Monte Cassino.

1920–21 Writes *The Lost Girl, Mr Noon, Sea and Sardinia* and the two psychoanalysis books; begins *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*;

finishes *Aaron's Rod*. Revises stories for *England, My England* and *The Ladybird*.

1922 Translates Verga. Visits the Brewsters in Ceylon on the way to Australia, where he spends the summer at Thirroul, N.S.W., writing *Kangaroo*. Goes to New Mexico in September at the invitation of Mabel Dodge Luhan. In December settles at Del Monte ranch, Questa, near Taos. Finishes *Studies in Classic American Literature*.

1923 Finishes *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*. Spends the summer at Chapala in Mexico where he writes *Quetzalcoatl* (the first version of *The Plumed Serpent*). Rewrites Mollie Skinner's novel *The House of Ellis* as *The Boy in the Bush*. Frieda returns to England in August; Lawrence follows in December.

1924 Dinner at the Café Royal where Lawrence invites his friends to form a community at the ranch in Taos. Only Dorothy Brett accepts and accompanies the Lawrences to New Mexico in March. Frieda acquires Lobo ranch, later renamed Kiowa, from Mabel in exchange for the manuscript of *Sons and Lovers*. That summer at the ranch Lawrence writes *The Woman Who Rode Away, St Mawr, The Princess* and the New Mexico sections of *Mornings in Mexico*. Lawrence's father dies. In November the Lawrences move to Oaxaca, Mexico, where Lawrence writes the Mexican sections of *Mornings in Mexico* and rewrites *Quetzalcoatl*.

1925 In February Lawrence almost dies of malaria. In Mexico City a doctor tells Frieda that he is dying of consumption. He puts rouge on his cheeks to get back across the border. Recuperates at the ranch and writes *David* and *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*. In September the Lawrences return to Europe and settle at Spotorno in Italy, where Lawrence writes *Sun*.

1926 Writes *The Virgin and the Gipsy*. Quarrels with Frieda and leaves her for several weeks. Has an abortive affair with Dorothy Brett. In May the Lawrences move to the Villa Mirenda, Scandicci, near Florence. In the late summer Lawrence makes his last visit to England. On his return he writes *The First Lady Chatterley*. Takes up painting seriously.

1927 Writes second version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Makes Etruscan pilgrimage with Earl Brewster. Writes *The Escaped Cock* and *Etruscan Places*. Begins final version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Prepares *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories* for publication.

1928 In June the Lawrences move to Switzerland and settle at Gsteig. Lawrence is too weak to work, except on newspaper articles and paintings. In October he visits Richard Aldington

on Port Cros, then settles in Bandol. Begins *Pansies*. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* published, with consequent furore.

1929 Visits Paris in the spring, then Mallorca. Lawrence's paintings exhibited at the Warren Gallery in London. On the day the show is raided by the police Lawrence collapses at Forte dei Marmi. He goes to Bavaria for treatment, but returns, no better, to Bandol in September. Writes *Nettles* and *Last Poems*. Begins *Apocalypse*.

1930 On Dr Morland's recommendation Lawrence enters Ad Astra sanatorium at Vence in February. After three weeks with no improvement, he is moved by Frieda and Aldous and Maria Huxley to a nearby villa where he dies the following night. He is buried at Vence.

1935 Lawrence's body exhumed, cremated, and the ashes taken to Taos where Frieda's third husband, Angelo Ravagli, has built a small shrine above the ranch.

1956 Frieda dies and is buried outside the shrine.

KEITH SAGAR

Introduction

'The Captain's Doll', 'The Fox', 'The Ladybird'

These stories were written during the last three months of 1921, and published together under the title *The Ladybird* in England, and *The Captain's Doll* in America, in 1923. Each story made use of earlier material, 'The Fox' being a much extended version of the short story with the same title written in November 1918 and published in *Hutchinson's Story Magazine* for July 1919; while 'The Captain's Doll' and 'The Ladybird' were new approaches to themes and material from two earlier short stories, 'The Mortal Coil' and 'The Thimble' respectively.

When Lawrence had completed the first two short novels, he wrote to his American publisher Thomas Seltzer: '"The Fox" and "The Captain's Doll" are so modern, so new: a new manner.'* He clearly felt that the short novels shared qualities which distinguished them from either his novels or short stories, and required a different name – 'novelettes'. What, then, were these qualities? Only a sensitive reading of the stories in the context of Lawrence's other works can yield a full answer; but we can note here some of the more striking features.

The most obvious of these is the use of a central, symbolically charged image or emblem, as the organizing principle of the whole work. It was by no means new for Lawrence to extract an important symbol from a work as its title; but in no previous work had the story's development and exploration of its themes been so exclusively and explicitly linked with a single dominating motif.

'The Captain's Doll' was the first of the short novels to be completed. The doll directs the story from beginning to end. On the first page Hannele is making the doll; on the last she burns the painting of it. The story is skilfully organized, and the

* D. H. Lawrence, *Letters to Thomas and Adele Seltzer*, ed. G. M. Lacy (Black Sparrow Press, 1976), p. 29.

significance of the title left in no doubt. Very near the end Hepburn asserts: 'If a woman loves you, she'll make a doll out of you.' This story, like both the others, is about the right relation between men and women. The doll represents what Lawrence finds wrong in most sexual relationships.

'The Captain's Doll' certainly cannot be called simply a later version of 'The Mortal Coil', yet there are closer links between the two stories than mere similarity of theme. The plot of 'The Mortal Coil' (which Lawrence had written in 1913 and revised in 1916) had derived from a real experience of Frieda's father, and is quite different from that of 'The Captain's Doll'. It concerns a young army officer called Friedeburg, who is strikingly similar to Anton Skrebensky in *The Rainbow*. Friedeburg is deeply in debt from gambling, and sinks into despair because he knows that this will ruin his army career; and his army life, the life he shares with his men and fellow-officers, is everything to him, giving him purpose and his sense of self. He is unable or unwilling to be comforted by his mistress Marta, who, as the story opens, is waiting for him in his room, as Hannele waits for Hepburn. When he comes, they have a fierce argument, Marta pouring scorn on her lover for his weakness and his dependence on the army, and bitterly hurt because he does not see their relationship as giving any meaning to his life. But when she makes to leave, he prevents her, exercising his will and sexual power to keep her with him through the night. Apparently, she heals him with her love and passion; but in the morning, though she is triumphant and deeply satisfied, he seems destroyed: 'He felt as if someone had stolen away his being in the night.'* The cold morning and strenuous physical activity with his men at first restore and exhilarate him, but with the progress of the day his despair returns bringing thoughts of suicide. When he returns home, full of the idea of his own death, he discovers that Marta and her woman friend, who had joined her for companionship when he had left in the early morning, are dead, asphyxiated by fumes from the stove.

It is a puzzling story, which draws no moral, about a young

* D. H. Lawrence, *The Mortal Coil and Other Stories* (Penguin, 1971), p. 227.

man who 'felt himself nothing' and a girl who tries to fill him with her own abundant vitality. He refuses responsibility both for himself and for her; and she, trying to be what he will not be, succeeds only in smothering him:

'You'd never shoot yourself, because you're mine, aren't you!' she said, knowing the fine quivering of his body, in mastery.
'Yes,' he said.
'Quite mine?' she said, her voice rising in ecstasy.
'Yes.'
'Nobody else but mine – nothing at all –?'
'Nothing at all,' he re-echoed.
'But me?' came her last words of ecstasy.
'Yes.'*

But it is she who suffocates in the poisonous heat of the too-cosy room. The deaths are purely accidental, yet it is clear that the weak and purposeless man can bring good neither to himself nor to his woman, and she cannot take the place that should be his. Friedeburg fails to be 'the free indomitable self-sufficient being which a man must be in his relation to a woman who loves him'.†

In 'The Captain's Doll' Lawrence rewrites the story, but with a man who is to be just that 'free indomitable self-sufficient being'. 'The Mortal Coil' has no doll motif, at least not explicitly; but Friedeburg, without the army, is described as 'a palpitating rag of meaningless human life'. In the army he is a puppet, the army holding the strings which keep him upright and putting him through the motions of life. It is, however, a life supported entirely from the outside. Those strings once cut, the puppet becomes a rag doll with no support or motive power. Though the woman here did not create the doll, she pushes him closer to destruction with her overweening love.

'The Captain's Doll' stands as an answer to the earlier story; a prescription for success in reply to the earlier delineation of failure. Hepburn is not a doll. We may have doubts about a man who could have behaved so abjectly with his first wife, but his strength (though never adequately defined) and his integrity are

* ibid., p. 226.
† ibid., pp. 218–19.

constantly emphasized. The doll here is not the man, but a travesty of him. His assertion of his own un-doll-like being, and his insistence that his woman should recognize it, is the burden of the story, and its prescription for a successful relationship.

'The Captain's Doll' has been much praised; but there are considerable problems for the reader. One disturbing element is the over-convenient death of Mrs Hepburn, and the comic tone in which Lawrence seeks to pass it off: 'And then a dreadful thing happened: really a very dreadful thing.' The ending, too, raises problems. Again the mode is comic, with the crucial discussion taking place in a car bumping and rattling down the mountain-side; but the comedy does not obscure the serious import of the discussion. Hepburn defines what he is looking for in a wife: 'I want a sort of patient Griselda. I want to be honoured and obeyed.' When Hannele, who loves him, assuming that his assertions are less than fully serious, replies: 'I'll come to Africa with you. But I won't promise to honour and obey you', he answers: 'I don't want you otherwise.' Half a page later, though Hannele has not agreed to his conditions in so many words, she has tacitly capitulated, and the story ends with her planning to marry him and accompany him to Africa.

What the reader who objects to this ending must decide is whether his objections derive from outside the story – from the reader's own prior commitments and beliefs – and are insisted on in spite of the story's own internal integrity and artistic success, or whether the story itself shows any evidence of strain, any suggestion that Lawrence was forcing it towards a willed conclusion. That he was conscious of some difficulty in writing the ending is evident:

> I suddenly wrote a very funny long story called 'The Captain's Doll', which I haven't finished yet. But I have just got it high up in the mountains of the Tyrol, and don't quite know how to get it down without breaking its neck.*

Did he break its neck?

The ending of the story as it stands depends on a confusion;

* *The Collected Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. H. T. Moore (Heinemann, 1962), p. 670.

for the Hannele Lawrence has created *cannot* accept Hepburn's terms as he interprets them, that is, not just as forms of expression lifted from the marriage service, but absolutely literally, and as constituting an ultimatum. Yet her acceptance of his terms is the ending Lawrence requires, so she is made to accept them in a non-committal way, as a few words she will agree to say at the wedding, to humour him, which makes nonsense of the seriousness of his proposals. He is not seeking merely freedom from the tyranny of idealized and smothering love and the falsity of conventional ideas of marriage. He wants to impose another, equally fixed idea of marriage – that implied by the allusion to Griselda. Griselda did not merely respect her husband. Her obedience was total and unquestioning, acquiescing in her husband's most outrageous demands and entirely resigning her judgement and responsibility to him. Hepburn's allusion to 'patient Griselda' implies the same idea of what a woman should undertake in marriage as Count Dionys, in 'The Ladybird', expresses in defining what a man should undertake when he swears fealty to a chosen leader:

> 'My chosen aristocrat would say to those who chose him: "If you choose me, you give up forever your right to judge me. If you have truly chosen to follow me, you have therefore rejected all your right to criticize me. You can no longer either approve or disapprove of me. You have performed the sacred act of choice. Henceforth you can only obey."'

To agree in any real way to this, Hannele would have to be a different woman; perhaps such a woman as we find in March in 'The Fox', mesmerized and entirely under the domination of her man, or Lady Daphne in 'The Ladybird', eagerly accepting the hypnotic mastery of Count Dionys as an escape from the emptiness of her life with her husband. But those two stories use strategies of non-realistic self-enclosure, isolating themselves in an autonomous world by the use of extended animal analogy and of myth. 'The Captain's Doll' differs from them in being much closer to the realistic mode of the earlier novels, and its realism defeats its purpose. Unlike a novel such as *Women in Love*, it insists on a closed ending, with a definite prescriptive message; but it tries to impose this on a story which, like *Women in Love*,

incorporates lively resistance to some of its ideas. The result is willed distortion. Perhaps it was his desire to remove the last remaining resistance to his ideas, his message, which impelled Lawrence to move into less realistic modes in 'The Fox' and 'The Ladybird'.

Immediately after finishing 'The Captain's Doll', Lawrence 'put a long tail to "The Fox", which was a bobbed short story. Now he careers with a strange and fiery brush.'* The story takes its outward circumstances from life. In 1918 and 1919 the Lawrences had stayed intermittently at Chapel Farm Cottage, Hermitage, near Newbury, in Berkshire, and made the acquaintance of two young women at nearby Grimsbury Farm. After the death of its owner, Grimsbury Farm was being run by his granddaughters, two cousins named Cecily Lambert and Violet Monk. Cecily Lambert's memoir reveals how much Lawrence drew on Violet Monk's manner and appearance when he created March:

> My cousin was a good-looking girl with dark wavy hair and velvety brown eyes, but an undefinable personality ... [She] was a strange mixture of overwhelming conceit and arrogance allied to a kind of meekness and unsureness in direct contradiction. In appearance she was very feminine except for a flat boyish figure, which was graceful ... She loved doing mannish jobs – carpenting, digging and rough jobs generally ... In her very scarce spare moments as a complete contrast she would crochet lace with very fine white cotton and seemed to enjoy this hobby. If by any chance visitors came, she would leave the entertaining entirely to me while she would go off and wash up or do jobs outside – anything to avoid the bother of talking.
>
> At this time also a brother of mine was home on sick leave from the East Africa War Zone ... But far from having any amorous feelings towards the lady (my cousin), he actively disliked her ... I believe between them they mutilated a tree.†

Cecily Lambert also recalled that they were infested with foxes at that period, but added: 'regarding the short story attributed to us: it was sheer fantasy really.' She considered the story offensive, and a breach of hospitality.

* ibid., p. 678.

† *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography*, ed. E. Nehls (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957–9), Vol. 1, pp. 465–6.