

# The lamp at noon

[Life, Relationships](#)



In the lamp at noon Sinclair Ross describes his view of a failing marriage.

This is most clearly evident in the conversation between Paul and Ellen. This conversation shows a distinct lack of communication between the couple as well as a lack of tolerance and respect. Mister Ross grew up with his single mom and never married, which leads me to believe that this is his personal opinion and only experience with marriages. Paul appears to love his land more than his wife and favors it above all else in his decision making.

This is shown clearly whenever his wife asks him to leave it. He consistently responds in defence of his land and refuses to listen to her requests. His lack of consideration for her plea is most accurately depicted in the quote " he clenched his lips a minute that, then, with his eyes hard and contemptuous, struck back. . . " Sinclair Ross must have seen much of this in his early years as a child before his parents were divorced. He would have witnessed firsthand what poverty does to a young couple, and how devastating it can be for their children. Ellen, the supposed loving mother, doesn't seem to care all that much about her own child. Rather, she uses the unnamed baby as an excuse to leave the farm and travel into town where she can live with her parents. In her arguments, she attempts to use the baby against her husband in the quote " think of me - and him. It's not fair. We have our lives, two, to live. " The dash in that quote shows the baby as an afterthought - an extra point. Ellen is not yet mature enough to cope with poverty as well as a family, as shown here. " It was the face of a woman that had aged without maturing, that had loved the little vanities of life, and lost them wistfully. " The argument between Ellen and Paul does not seem like that of a understanding couple, rather, the bickering of high school children.

Interestingly, their age back may have put them in the earlier years of their life. Through Ellen and Paul's conflict, Ross conveys a message of dysfunction and chaos, and allows the reader to contrast it against one's own image of a successful relationship.

The author evidently understands that this will not sustain a healthy marriage, and in all likelihood, is unsure of what would. He therefore omits a section of making up and mending, edging the story in a decidedly negative direction. Near the end of the argument, the conversation seems to cool down and leave off in somewhat of a resolved state. However, Ross will not let his characters make up properly. He instead has them separated and brooding, awaiting the next conflict, and mentally arming themselves in preparation. Hearing each other is not enough, understanding is the key to a continuing relationship.