

The horse dealers daughter essay sample

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



D. H. Lawrence's short story "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" is a psychologically unconventional and unnerving love story, where the ending defies all readers' expectations of how such a traditional love story is supposed to be played out. The inherent romanticism of this kind of a plot is subdued by presenting the story through the lens of a third person omniscient narrator, animalization of the characters and the archetypal conveyance of the water element.

The point of view Lawrence utilizes is third person omniscient, which slips into third person limited, because the readers are occasionally locked outside of the characters' inner workings of the mind and their thought processes. However, the point of view shifts back to the omniscient one at the end. The author plays with the information he gives to his readers, he conveys the characters' traits himself, instead of allowing the readers to reach their own conclusions through a character's thoughts. For instance, Mable's thoughts are an utter mystery to the reader, as are her brothers' but this is not the case with the doctor, whose complicated thought machinery opens up a dark psychological process of "falling in love."

Animal imagery is abundant in the "Horse Dealer's Daughter." For instance, the eldest son Joe is compared to massive draught horses, powerful animals but bound by their master who controls them: "Joe watched with glazed hopeless eyes. The horses were almost like his own body to him." His fate is to be married to a woman whose father will give him a job working on his estate: "He would marry and go into harness. His life was over, he would be a subject animal now." This imagery suggests the idea that Joe has lost control over his life. For now on, he is just an animal that has food, shelter,

and someone to care for it. He will lose his freedom, just like those horses, and will be doomed to work for someone else until the end of his days. Similarly, Lawrence describes Mabel's physical appearance and nudity after going into the lake, which is another possible connotation of animal imagery. On finding herself in Jack's arms after being brought back to life, she is described as resembling a wild animal: " He looked down at the tangled wet hair, the wild, bare, animal shoulders. He was amazed, bewildered and afraid." This conveyance is highly noteworthy because it appears to accentuate the way in which the intense sensuality of this encounter relates more to the sexual drive of animals than to the reasoned and rational approach of us humans. This suggests that there is more of the animal in us than we would like to admit.

In its very essence, water symbolizes life and rebirth, but as it is in nature, rebirth also requires death. The lake is depicted as filthy and murky, with " deep, soft clay, he sank in, and the water clasped dead cold round his legs. As he stirred he could smell the cold, rotten clay that fouled up into the water." One possible interpretation of the pond scene are its baptismal qualities, due to the fact that Mabel and Jack both arise out of the water changed in their own way. Mabel is revived and is given another chance at life, while Jack does an incredibly brave and adventurous deed, which is utterly out of character of his current life station. Preceding the scene of the attempted suicide, both of them feel dead inside and perceive themselves as stuck in a rut, out which they see no way out. Jack's feelings of vocational inadequacy and dissatisfaction are interrupted by a glance at Mabel, and this proves to be a revelation: " He had been feeling weak and done before. Now

the life came back into him, he felt delivered from his own fretted, daily self.” In a way, she becomes his counterpart, he sees all his frustrations within her, which afterwards leads him to be afraid of her gaze and to question whether he really loves her.

In addition, the notion of love overruling judgment can also be perceived as another archetype. It is conspicuous that the sudden love stirred up between Mabel and Jack is something that completely overpowers them, both spiritually and physically. This communicates Lawrence’s idea that the mind is not able to perceive things clearly and rationally, due to the emotion that is overwhelming the heart. In particular, the doubts that Jack begins to have about Mabel's class and social status are most attention-grabbing. Doubts about their relationship start to arise: “ The strange pain of his heart that was broken seemed to consume him. That he should love her? That this was love! That he should be ripped open in this way! Him, a doctor! How they would all jeer if they knew! It was agony to him to think they might know.”

He instigates recognition of falling in love with Mabel as a poor match for him in the eyes of society and his mind is filled with shame because of her lowly status. However, the emotion of love is simultaneously something that will not be defied so easily. He recognizes that in many ways he is in fact love's slave, even though his reasoning disagrees with his offers and promises to Mabel.

Lawrence portrays a love story is which “ all that and much more,” because it does not offer a happily ever after. It is a bleak story of two people who saw a glimpse of their savior in each others’ eyes, not realizing that other person needs to be saved even more.