

The first few pages of  
the unbearable  
lightness of being  
essay



The first Few Pages of The Unbearable Lightness of Being“ The Unbearable Lightness of Being” created by Milan Kundera provides the readers with philosophical insights on the reality of love and relationship. Reading this book, one might say that Milan Kundera was perhaps a student of a school of thought under philosophy since even from the very first few pages of the beginning of the novel, he already provided the readers with profound philosophical insights. This book gives much philosophical points of view that seem unique.

However, it would be wrong to regard Kundera as a philosopher in education because he is a proponent of no concrete school of thinking (? ulík).

Nevertheless, Kundera created limitless possibilities in his characters' fate and experience which he playfully analyzed rationally. As the novel has historical perspective, the work is full of reflection where most of the settings happened during the times of political struggles. Although the characters are fictional, the setting is a gentle inspiration from Kundera's unique and personal experience of disillusionment with the left-wing mythology of communism in Central European particularly in Prague, Czechoslovakia (? ulík). The story revolves in the interlocking stories of four complicated and unfaithful relationships that primarily focus on Tomas, a man torn between his love and commitment for Tereza and his habitual erotic adventures with women particularly his long time affair with the international painter, Sabina. The beauty of this story can be perceived on how the characters shaped their lives with the irrevocable choices they made in the midst of unexplainable human desires and intruding demands and standards of the society. Kundera's fictional characters struggled to construct a meaningful

life despite human imperfections and political domination. The four central relationships of the novel Tomas and Tereza, Tomas and Sabina, Fanz and Sabina embody Kundera's primary themes and concerns.

The choices that will define the faith of these characters can either bring them into the gift of eternal return or not. Kundera opens the story with a sentence that will make sense as the story progresses, "In the world of eternal return the weight of unbearable responsibility lies heavy on every move we make" (Kundera 5). The story examines how the characters approach burden and human responsibility to achieve eternity. Kundera asks in the beginning of his novel whether an individual should choose "weight or lightness". He subtly defined lightness and weight when he said, "the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant" (Kundera 5). The number of questions that Kundera poses in the beginning of the novel specifically the comparison between the weight and the lightness will be answered through the characters' choices, fulfillment of dreams, moods and motivations. The first 35 pages of the book, Kundera gives account on the meaning of lightness and heaviness.

To attain meaning, peace and happiness in life, one must live a life with purpose outside himself. Light individuals cultivate the idea that life must be lived fully since we live our life only once so such events and actions human makes are futile that will carry no major implication. Moreover, lightness here is associated with freedom, sexual pleasure and unrestricted choices.

As the story progresses, it will be learned that Thomas and Sabina chose the <https://assignbuster.com/the-first-few-pages-of-the-unbearable-lightness-of-being-essay/>

road of “lightness” who unconsciously live superficially, uncommitted and selfishly. Both don’t believe in commitment and responsibility outside themselves. They are the personas that carry the attributes of the unbearable lightness of being. Thomas and Sabina believe that body and soul are two different division of an individual, that sex without love is possible.

They considered sex and love two unrelated entities and see no problem in the simultaneous application of these two activities. Weight or “heaviness” is the path Tereza chose who despite Tomas infidelities has struggled to adhere to her commitment as a loving wife despite the unbearable pain and sacrifices. Tereza is the female counterpart of Thomas who believes that body and soul go together, that love and sex must be one. Tereza was born in a “situation that reveals the irreconcilable duality of body and soul, that fundamental human experience” (Kundera, p. 40). She is the representation of “weight” who suffers from the heaviness of life because of her persistence and the loyalty to commitment. Tereza stayed with Tomas even though she’s aware of Thomas’ adulteries because she simply loves him and she’s willing to accept him.

She is weighted because she finds a sense of purpose in every action. Kundera in the first part illustrates “heaviness” allows and motivates someone to find beauty and meaning in life, a benefit Kundera gave in experiencing heaviness. Heaviness is associated with honesty in love, responsibility, commitment and destiny. The unbearable Lightness of Being definitely talks about the ambiguity of human existence that each individual is sometimes forced to teeter between lightness and weight because of the <https://assignbuster.com/the-first-few-pages-of-the-unbearable-lightness-of-being-essay/>

standard and concept of eternal return. “ The unbearable lightness of being” is experienced without following the standard of religion, psychology, philosophy, politics and romantic beliefs. Man according to Kundera has only one opportunity to live life wherein every circumstance only happens once so there’s no point of comparison when it comes to meaning.

So why not live life with unrestricted choices to completely enjoy freedom. After all, as Kundera says, eternal return does not exist. Work Cited Page: Kundera, Milan.

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