

# Unbearable lightness of being quotes



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Kundera's use of language gives the reader the impression that Tereza is struggling to discover herself as a person. " I was at a large indoor swimming pool. There were about twenty of us. All women. We were naked and had to march around the pool. There was a basket hanging from the ceiling and a man standing in the basket. The man wore a broad-brimmed hat shading his face, but I could see it was you. You kept giving us orders. Shouting at us. We had to sing as we marched, sing and do kneebends, If one of us did a bad kneebend, you would shoot her with a pistol and she would fall dead into the pool.

Which made everybody laugh and sing even louder. You never took your eyes off us, and the minute we did something wrong, you would shoot. The pool was full of corpses floating just below the surface. And I knew I lacked the strength to do the next kneebend and you were going to shoot me! " – Tereza (pg- 18) " Again it occurred to him that Tereza was a child put in a pitch, daubed bulrush basket and sent downstream. He couldn't very well let a basket with a child in it float down a stormy river!

If the Pharaoh's daughter hadn't snatched the basket carrying little Moses from the waves, there would have been no Old Testament, no civilization as we now know it/1 How many ancient myths begin with the rescue of an abandoned child! If Polybus hadn't taken in the young Oedipus, Sophocles wouldn't have written his most beautiful tragedy! " – Narrator/Tomas (pg 10-11) " Tereza was born of the rumbling of the stomach. The first time she went to Tomas' flat, her insides began to rumble. And no wonder; she had nothing to eat since breakfast but a quick sandwich on the platform before boarding the train.

She had concentrated on the daring journey ahead of her and forgotten about food. But when we ignore the body, we are more easily victimized by it, She felt terrible standing there in front of Tomas listening to her belly speak out. She felt like crying. Fortunately, after the first ten seconds Tomas put his arms around her and made her forget her ventral voices. ”- Narrator (pg 39) “ Tereza was therefore born of a situation which brutally reveals the irreconcilable duality of body and soul, that fundamental human experience. - Narrator (pg 40) “ She took after her mother, and not only physically. I sometimes have the feeling that her entire life was merely a continuation of her mother’s, much as the course of a ball on the billiard table is merely the continuation of a player’s arm movement. ” - Narrator (pg 41) “ Tereza’s mother never stopped reminding her that being a mother meant sacrificing everything. Her words had the ring of truth, backed as they were by the experience of a woman who had lost everything because of her child.

Tereza would listen and believe that being a mother was the highest value in life and that being a mother was a great sacrifice. If a mother was Sacrifice personified, then a daughter was Guilt, with no possibility of redress. “- Narrator (pg 44) “ Tereza appears to me a continuation of the gesture by which her mother cast off her life as a young beauty, cast it far behind her. ” - Narrator (pg 46) “(And if Tereza has a nervous way of moving; if her gestures lack a certain easy grace, we must not be surprised: Her mother’s grand, wild, and self-destructive gesture has left an indelible imprint on her. ”- Narrator (pg, 46) “ Now we can understand the meaning of Tereza’s secret vice, her long looks and frequent glances in the mirror. It was a battle with her mother. It was a longing to be a body unlike other bodies, to that the

surface of her face reflected the crew of the soul charging up from below. It was not an easy task; her soul – her sad, timid, self-effacing soul- lay concealed in the depths of her bowels and was ashamed to show itself. ”- Narrator (pg 47) “ In Tereza’s eyes, books were the emblems of a secret brotherhood.

For she had but a single weapon against the world of crudity surrounding her: the books she took out of the municipal library, and above all, the novels. She had read any number of them, from Fielding to Thomas Mann. They not only offered the possibility of an imaginary escape from life she found unsatisfying; they also had a meaning for her as physical objects; she loved to walk down the street with a book under her arm. It had the same significance for her as an elegant cane for the dandy a century ago.

It differentiated her from the others. ” – Narrator ( pg 48) “ And in times of weakness, she was ready to dismiss the crew of her soul from the deck of her body; ready to descend to a place among her mother’s friends. ”- Narrator (pg 60) “ She longed to do something that would prevent her from turning back to Tomas. She longed to destroy brutally the past seven years of her life. It was vertigo. A heady, insuperable longing to fall. ”- Narrator (pg 76)