

**LOUISA VICTRIX: FEMALE INITIATIVE
IN 'DAUGHTERS OF THE VICAR'**

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In the Sisters was the germ ... woman becoming individual,
self-responsible, taking her own initiative.
(Lawrence to Edward Garnett, 22 April 1914, 2L 165)

Written and revised between 1911 and 1914, in the early phase of D. H. Lawrence's career, 'Daughters of the Vicar' reveals in its various incarnations the transition that the author was concurrently making between *Sons and Lovers* and *The Rainbow*. Many decades have now passed since the first published discussions of the differences between 'Daughters of the Vicar' and its earlier conception as 'Two Marriages', and a fair amount of attention has been paid to the story over the years, including its connections to the aforementioned novels. Little analysis has been made, however, of what is to me a major point of difference between the early and later versions of the story, and a major point of similarity between the 1914 publication of the tale in *The Prussian Officer* and the novel-in-progress then called 'The Wedding Ring' (soon to be renamed *The Rainbow*): that is, "woman ... taking her own initiative". In the three years between the earliest and latest versions of 'Daughters of the Vicar', the protagonist, Louisa Lindley, develops into a risk taking, independent woman, not a daughter of the vicar but a daughter victrix (to appropriate and paraphrase a chapter title from *The Rainbow*). Close examination of the changes from the story's early version in 1911 through its publication in *The Prussian Officer* volume of 1914 reveals the ways, both blatant and subtle, by which Lawrence effected this transformation.

The circumstances and history of composition bear repeating, to set the stage for a discussion of the texts themselves. Like *The*

Rainbow, 'Daughters of the Vicar' is in good part both a homage to and a rewriting of the real-life figure of Louisa ("Louie") Burrows. Lawrence met Louie around 1900, went through teacher training with her in Nottingham from 1906-8, and was engaged to her for a little over a year, from December 1910 to February 1912. It was under her name that Lawrence submitted one of his short stories to the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* competition in 1907. James T. Boulton's 1968 edition of Lawrence's letters to Louie,¹ some 165 missives in all, highlighted the importance of this figure to the young author.

In mid-July 1911, while engaged to Louie, and in response to what he considered a firm proposal from Martin Secker to publish a volume of Lawrence's stories in the spring, Lawrence composed 'Two Marriages', the first version of what would become 'Daughters of the Vicar'. As Martin Kearney says, "The reflection of Lawrence's fiancée ... in the Louisa character seems almost palpable".² Meanwhile, Edward Garnett encouraged Lawrence to write for magazines; so Lawrence sent him 'Two Marriages' in September and then revised it to make it more manageable for magazine publication. The story would never be accepted by a magazine, perhaps for a combination of reasons: its length (at 20,000 words, it was far longer than any of the other stories eventually collected in *The Prussian Officer*), its attitude toward Christianity (scathing), and its "frank treatment of sexuality" (as Kearney surmises³). William Heinemann, having published *The White Peacock*, convinced Lawrence to focus on the novel then called 'Paul Morel' (though Heinemann ultimately rejected it, in July 1912). Lawrence continued to create and rework short stories, however, even after he left England with Frieda Weekley in May 1912.

In spring 1913, Lawrence began 'The Sisters' and a few months later had revised 'Two Marriages' – a work that could also have been entitled 'The Sisters' – into 'Daughters of the Vicar', changing the original version "a good deal" in the process (2L 44). He rewrote 'The Sisters' into 'The Wedding Ring' between

September 1913 and April 1914; he also did extensive work on 'Daughters of the Vicar' in July 1914 and made many corrections on the galleys in October, "alter[ing] the text ... on more than 250 occasions" (PO xxxii) before the volume's publication the following month. These alterations over a three-year period, as provided in the Cambridge edition of *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*, chart the growth of Louisa Lindley into an ever stronger, more assertive woman like her "sister" figure, Ursula, in *The Rainbow* (also based to an extent on Louie Burrows, as well as on Frieda), published the following year.

J. C. F. Littlewood (1966) and, later, Brian H. Finney (1975) and Mara Kalnins (1976), produced three of the earliest analyses of 'Daughters of the Vicar' to compare variants in the tale between 1911 and 1914.⁴ Littlewood writes of the revivification that comes from engagement with another person; Finney echoes the role of Frieda in the creation of the tale and the breaking away from the mother; and Kalnins focuses on Lawrence's growing maturity of style and technique. Keith Cushman, in his full-length study *D. H. Lawrence at Work: The Emergence of the 'Prussian Officer' Stories* (1978),⁵ deals extensively with the early versions, but in differentiating between 'Two Marriages' and 'Daughters of the Vicar', Cushman concentrates on issues of class, the mother-son relationship, intensity of emotion, and body versus mind. These four landmark studies are attentive to the relationships between 'Daughters of the Vicar' and *The Rainbow*, but their attention is turned to similarities of the story and novel around language, style, plot, and/or character. Emile Delavenay, in his 1972 study of Lawrence's "formative years" (1885-1919), makes important but general observations about the two versions of the story, remarking that, in 'Daughters of the Vicar' and other works of the 1913-14 period, "the women ... now know how to take the lead";⁶ he largely concerns himself with other aspects of the story and with what he considers Lawrence's improvements in technique between the early and later versions. None of these critics explores what most interests me with reference to 'Daughters of the Vicar' and *The*

Rainbow; that is, the pains Lawrence took in the final version of this story to highlight the theme of woman taking her own initiative.⁷

The differences between the first versions of the story and the final published version reflect the different circumstances of Lawrence's life in the years between 1911 and 1914 – perhaps the most seminal changes in any three years of Lawrence's lifetime. He progressed during that period from a school teacher engaged to a childhood friend but still very tied to his mother to a man liberated from teaching, from his Midlands environment (including Louie Burrows and Lydia Lawrence), and even from England. More, he was determined to address the emancipation of women, although he would not have used this word – as noted, “women taking her own initiative” is what he called it while reworking ‘The Sisters’ into ‘The Wedding Ring’. He had also said, more than a year earlier, in December 1912, that he would “do [his] work for women, better than the suffrage” (*IL* 490); perhaps not coincidentally, Louie Burrows had been at least “interested” in the Suffragette Movement⁸ and was possibly even “a dedicated campaigner for women's voting rights”.⁹

As ‘The Sisters’ transmogrified into *The Rainbow*, and “concentrated increasingly on what it was like to be a woman in the modern world”,¹⁰ so too did ‘Two Marriages’ intensify the focus on “the new woman” when it became ‘Daughters of the Vicar’.¹¹ In the process, the real-life Louisa Burrows became less “palpable” as Lawrence exchanged his “betrothed young lady ... who loves me, and takes good care / Of her maidenly virtue” – as he put it in a poem about Louie, ‘The Hands of the Betrothed’ (*CP* 129) – for the adventurous, risk-taking Frieda, a woman who fearlessly made her desires known, and who had left her children and security behind to make a new life with Lawrence. Lawrence was mindful of her courage: as he wrote to Sallie Hopkin during his first winter with Frieda, “It is not so easy for a woman to leave a man and children like that” (*IL* 490). Lawrence was ready for such a companion. Coincidentally, in a letter to Louie a year earlier, before meeting

Frieda, he had remarked (apropos of quitting teaching to write full time), “for myself, I don’t mind risk – like it” (*IL* 303). That he was a perennial risk taker himself shows just how much he did like it.

The progression from ‘Two Marriages’ to ‘Daughters of the Vicar’ reflects Lawrence’s increasing understanding of and respect for a woman who knows what she needs and is willing to take a risk in order to obtain it; this progression marks a kind of women’s liberation, to use the parlance of a much later time (but a time in which Delavenay stressed the assertiveness of women in his reading of the story in his original French version of his book in 1968-9 and his wife’s 1972 translation). To be sure, Louisa and her strong character are prominent in ‘Two Marriages’, in a few ways more prominent than in ‘Daughters of the Vicar’. A major reason for the change in title, as implied by the first sentence – “Mr. Lindley was first vicar of Aldecross” (*PO* 40) – is to underscore the negative influence exerted by the reverend; ‘Two Marriages’, in contrast, begins with Louisa: “Miss Louisa loathed her brother-in-law” (*PO* 209). As well, in the early version Louisa has all the right inclinations: the narrator states that Louisa “had been brought up to submission, self-subordination, she had been trained never to judge save by the given canons, never to be independent, never to move save on authority. But now the woman in her rose and judged. ‘My father and mother did this to Mary [her sister, pushed into marriage with an insipid husband]: they would do the same to me. Is this love? I would die rather than be disposed of in such [a] way’” (*PO* 219). This portion does not appear in the later text. Nonetheless, by emphasizing the false pride, gentility, class consciousness, and isolation of the household in ‘Daughters of the Vicar’ – not to mention the Christian morality and sense of goodness narrowly defined – Lawrence makes Louisa Lindley’s decision to leave her conventional environment simultaneously daring and inevitable. More, Lawrence places greater barriers to Louisa’s success in ‘Daughter of the Vicar’ and adds a corresponding need for her greater resolve and initiative in overcoming them.

Louisa's foray into a new life starts small, with a baby step out of her home: when Mary comes home for Christmas with her family, Louisa is so distressed by what she sees in Mary's demeanor and relationship to her husband that she has to leave the house. In 'Two Marriages', "it was the resignation [in Mary's voice] that hurt Louisa most" (*PO* 222) and prompts her exit. In the 1914 version, there is no mention of resignation, merely that Mary's voice "forbade anyone to approach her", which makes Louisa furious rather than hurt (*PO* 63). Lawrence has thus intensified Louisa's emotions at her sister's decision to marry the Reverend Massey. "Where shall I go?" Louisa asks in the first version (*PO* 222), when she leaves the house; "Where am I going?" she asks in the final version (*PO* 63). The difference is small, but may suggest a greater forward movement more in keeping with the statement, in both versions, that she "did not hesitate". She arrives at the Durants' house in either case, but the imperative is greater in the final version: "she wanted to see Mrs. Durant" (*PO* 222) versus "she must go and see" her (*PO* 63).

In the earlier version of the story, Louisa gets involved with the Durants as an escape from "the hateful barrenness at home" (*PO* 231). Of her growing intimacy with Alfred Durant the narrator states, "It seems a strange adventure to her, that she should wash the shoulders of a young man" (*PO* 232). In the final version, the imperative toward escape, rebellion, and adventure is certainly implied, but the text does not make it explicit; instead the text concentrates on the foreignness of Alfred and the difficulty in making meaningful contact. He is metaphoric unfamiliar territory, and the protagonist will have to make a concerted effort to bridge the gap between them. Looking at him in his pit clothes, unwashed, Louisa realizes that he is "foreign ... She could not see him, she could not know him" (*PO* 71). There are few "familiar indications". But in washing his back, she sees him as "a person—an intimate being he was to her" and "now her soul was going to open ... She felt strange and pregnant". Thus, Louisa stays on in the Durant

home, even though she feels excluded; always persevering, she is "patient and unyielding", wanting to "share their lives" (PO 73).

Louisa becomes more purposeful in 'Daughters of the Vicar' than she was in 'Two Marriages' as, and in great part because, Mrs Durant grows correspondingly less dominant and consequential. Indeed, the different role of Mrs Durant in the two versions of the tale is of critical importance. In the early version, after her cancer incapacitates her, Mrs Durant insists that Louisa stay at her house (PO 233); in the final version it is Louisa who does the insisting, categorically declaring, "I will stay and do the nursing" (PO 74). More tellingly, in 'Two Marriages' Mrs Durant speaks candidly with Louisa about the possibility of marrying a collier and says of her son Alfred, "I'd leave him to you, if you'd have him". Louisa replies that he hasn't asked her; "If you let him—he will do," says Mrs Durant (PO 233). In the final text, this bequeathing is absent, and the fact that Louisa feels like an outsider (PO 74) makes her resolve to stay as daring as it is necessary. In the 1911 version, "[Louisa] seemed so strong in her loneliness that [Alfred] knew she must be accustomed to grief" (PO 240); in 1913, Lawrence changed the last part of the sentence – "she must be accustomed to grief" – to "she needed nothing" (PO 278); this entire section, about the mother's intention for Louisa to have her brooch, is absent from the final, 1914 version, and with that absence the mother's role as possessor and bequeather is further diminished, while Louisa's role as one who is self-possessed is strengthened. 'Daughters of the Vicar' states that "in the girl's heart the purpose was fixed. No man had affected her as Alfred Durant had done, and to that she kept" (PO 66). This assertion does not appear in 'Two Marriages'; on the contrary, in that version, at this point in the story she does "not concern herself seriously with [Alfred]" (PO 226). In 'Two Marriages', Louisa "has been debating with [her]self whether to call [on Alfred]—but I thought I would" (PO 238); in 'Daughters of the Vicar' she is "wanting to call—I thought I would" (PO 80). In these ways, Lawrence transitions Louisa into a woman who seems

surer of herself and her need for Alfred, a woman who is more directed and intentional.

In 'Two Marriages', Mrs Durant's final words to her son on her deathbed – "You'll always do what's right, Alfred?" (PO 236) – are confusing to him, but clearer to the reader than the same words are in 'Daughters of the Vicar' (PO 77) because the bequeathing scene does not appear in the final version. On the literal level, those words have to do with abstaining from drink, and the Explanatory Notes to 'Daughters of the Vicar' in the Cambridge edition (PO 257) point by way of clarification to the elaboration of that statement in 'Two Marriages', where Alfred says he might go off to the pub (PO 240: 28-33). On a deeper level, however, I believe the mother's words relate just as pointedly to Alfred's marrying Louisa; for immediately after the conversation in 'Two Marriages' about Alfred's intended sally to the New Inn, Louisa almost wills him to consider marriage as an alternative to a life in the pub, and, more, to consider marriage to *her*. She leads him to this possibility in a psychologically skillful manner: in answer to her question "And can you think of *nothing* better to do [than go drinking]?" he eventually "flounders" the response "I could get married" (PO 241) and then he takes just a little longer to realize that he will marry her (PO 242).¹²

In 'Daughters of the Vicar', Louisa must be more explicit than she is in 'Two Marriages' because she is not now included in the bosom of the family and thus mere insinuation will not suffice. "I wanted to stay with you", she states: "Don't you want me?"; "I love you" (PO 81-2). This is compared to "I will come if you want me" in the earlier story (PO 241), a meeker proposition that puts more responsibility on Alfred than it does on herself. Indeed, revising 'Daughters of the Vicar' in 1914, on the page proofs of the *Prussian Officer* volume, Lawrence intensified Alfred's understanding of Louisa's desire for him, and her intentionality in having him: the author changes Alfred's response to Mr Lindley's question of whether Louisa is willing to marry Alfred from "I think so" to a simple "yes" (PO 257, 85:5). The mother's blessing on the

marriage is repeated at the end of the proposal scene in 'Two Marriages' (*PO* 242) and Alfred is overcome by a paroxysm of grief for his mother after Louisa leaves; in 'Daughters of the Vicar' the narrator relates, in contrast, "But something was sound in his heart" (*PO* 84).

Earlier in the story, when Alfred discovers Louisa sleeping with his mother in 'Two Marriages', "It gave him a shock, and a peculiar flame passed over him" (*PO* 235); the second part of the sentence is missing from the final version (*PO* 77). As well, in 'Two Marriages' but not in 'Daughters of the Vicar', Alfred looks a second time at Louisa in the bed. In both cases, the finding of another woman in the mother's bed is as shocking to the man, and as psychologically and symbolically profound, as the similar but gender-reversed scene in the later story 'Hadrian'. In 1911, Lawrence may have been consciously or unconsciously suggesting the connection in Alfred's mind between the two women. No doubt it is relevant that Lawrence proposed to Louie somewhat impulsively five days before his mother died, in December 1910. Brenda Maddox says that Lawrence was steeling himself for that death by this act.¹³ He asked his mother, when he got home, if marriage to Louie would be "all right" and she gave her blessing.¹⁴ Likewise, after Louisa in effect proposes to Alfred in 'Two Marriages', she asks point blank, "Does it seem right to you—when you think of your mother?" and he answers, "Yes—she'd want me to" (*PO* 242).

As Keith Cushman puts it, in "the early forms of the story, Alfred never really frees himself: Louisa simply becomes his new mother".¹⁵ Cushman also says that Lawrence intensified Alfred's "Oedipal agonies" in the later versions of the story, so as to make the breaking away, the "finding of himself through Louisa", more of an accomplishment. "The *Sons and Lovers* material became more dominant with the 1914 revision", Cushman concludes.¹⁶ It is certainly true that Alfred "long[s] for [Louisa] keenly" in 'Two Marriages' (*PO* 234), whereas in the final text, though he is attracted to Louisa, his thoughts concentrate on his mother – "he

could not escape from her" (*PO* 75). But surely there are ways in which the *Sons and Lovers* material becomes *less* dominant in 'Daughters of the Vicar', especially in the risk-taking heroine who acts *without* the mother's blessing. This is something that Miriam Leivers, in the novel, could never do.¹⁷ And it is something that Jessie Chambers, on whom Miriam is modeled, was also not strong enough to accomplish.

Alfred's love for Louisa in 'Daughters of the Vicar' is subsumed by fear: "He loved her violently", as the text puts it in 'Two Marriages' (*PO* 239), becomes "He felt afraid of her as she sat there, as he began to grow conscious of her". As the woman becomes more assertive, more powerful, the man becomes afraid – not so much of her, I believe, but of the new life he is being called on to give birth to (Louisa is not the only one who is "pregnant"). As a consequence, in 'Daughters of the Vicar' Alfred entertains the possibility of going away from her, to Canada (*PO* 80). The collier protects himself from the vicar's daughter by ranking himself her inferior: "that was how he could avoid all connection with her" (*PO* 54). To Louisa this is "cowardice". In opposition to the path that her sister Mary has taken, Louisa is determined to take the way of love: she "had her fixed will to love, to have the man she loved" (*PO* 59). Though not particularly attractive – she is "short and plump and plain" (*PO* 63) – she knows how to love, how to make people warm: she tends to the ill Mrs Durant with blanket and flannels warmed in the oven (*PO* 65). Indeed, even in this post-*Sons and Lovers* period of Lawrence's career she reminds readers of Paul Morel carrying his mother, ill with a tumor on her side, up the stairs; and Alfred is also like Paul, as many critics have remarked: overly attached to his mother, late in coming to sexual maturity, rather fearful of making contact with a woman, and in agony over his mother's impending death. He wishes dearly to be less self-conscious, more spontaneous (*PO* 68). Perhaps it is through his observation of Louisa's tender care of his mother that Alfred first feels the stirrings of longing for her.

Yet class differences stand in his way: even though Alfred enjoys having Louisa in the house, and in fact is very attracted to her, he feels that Louisa has “no connection with him” and thus “he [does] not approach her” (*PO* 75). In the corresponding section in ‘Two Marriages’, Alfred recognizes her higher station but grows hot at the thought of her, finds her desirable, and, as already noted, “long[s] for her keenly” (*PO* 234). Lawrence has thus intensified in ‘Daughters of the Vicar’ the breach between them that Alfred, but not Louisa, is loath to cross. Louisa is “indignant” with Alfred as with her own family after he comes to dinner, for their patronizing treatment of him and for his acceptance of that treatment as his due (*PO* 79). (This indignation is absent in the early version [*PO* 238]). Louisa thus recognizes that it is up to her to take the initiative with Alfred: “How was she to approach him? For he would not take one step towards her” (*PO* 74). This statement is also absent from the early version (*PO* 234). To the removal of Mrs Durant’s overt matchmaking Lawrence has added Alfred’s heightened sense of class differences as obstacles that Louisa must overcome.¹⁸

When Louisa calls on Alfred in his home (as she must if they are ever going to get together, given his reluctance to “take one step towards her”), and learns that he is planning to go to Canada, “she [sees] him drawing away from her forever”. Alfred seems unable to do anything about his attraction to Louisa but sit there with a heart “hot in an anguish of suspense. Sharp twitches of fear and pain were in his limbs” (*PO* 81). Although he intends to go off to the pub and cannot bear to have her there any longer – in part because he believes she is literally out of his class and hence unavailable to him – Louisa knows that if she leaves without anything being spoken between them she will leave a “failure”. In ‘Two Marriages’, the frustrated Louisa refers again to Mrs Durant while fastening her jacket belt: “I will call occasionally for your mother’s sake”, she says (*PO* 241). Even the 1913 manuscript has Louisa saying that Alfred’s “mother wanted [them] to be friends” (*PO* 279). But Mrs Durant, with her deathbed wishes and her bequeathed brooch, is irrelevant in this critical moment in the 1914

publication, and does not figure. Instead, this Louisa takes the step that Alfred is afraid to take: suddenly, with her “lungs full of fire” and “beyond herself”, she asks, “Do you want me to go? ... Because I wanted to stay with you” (*PO* 81). The moments that pass are electrically charged. Will he move toward her or won’t he? When “the moment [comes] for her to go” (*PO* 82) she still does not leave; instead, she makes another move: “‘Don’t you want me?’ she [says] helplessly” (although she has acted far from helplessly), and that simple question seems to release something in Alfred. They embrace and swoon in a familiar Lawrentian state of passion. Ironically, Louisa is described as “spellbound, like a creature given up as prey”; yet clearly she has been the aggressor, the one who refuses to let Alfred draw away. She is the one who says “I love you” – the declaration is absent from ‘Two Marriages’ (*PO* 242). “And ever it was her hands that trembled more closely upon him, drawing him nearer into her, with love” (*PO* 82).

The *pas de deux* is not yet complete. “His heart, which saw, was silent with fear”; but after their kisses, “fear was transfused into desire ... He felt as if his heart were hurt, but glad”. He has made himself vulnerable, opened himself to her; yet even now, for all his responsiveness, he “scarcely dare[s] look at [Louisa]”, has not the “presence of mind” to speak, and “dare[s] not assert himself”. Louisa therefore forces the issue gently, asking with laughter in her voice “What do you want me to do?” (*PO* 82-3). On their walk back to the vicarage, “he was more shy than she, and would have let her go had she loosened in the least. But she held firm”. Perhaps they are holding hands; if so, the letting go of Louisa, which she refuses, refers equally to something more intangible but also more real: the pledging of their troth. Indeed, Alfred realizes that he has not asked Louisa to marry him, that it is the other way around though nonetheless inevitable (*PO* 84).

The pivotal proposal scene is lengthier in ‘Two Marriages’ than in ‘Daughters of the Vicar’ but less intense; the later version is more dramatic because of the many ways in which Louisa asserts herself in the face of no social or parental imperative to do so. I

take issue with Keith Cushman's interpretation of Louisa's thinking "I *will* have love" as a wrongheaded, willful decision: "only the experience of physical attraction and contact melts away this willfulness and puts the vicar's daughter squarely in the camp of life".¹⁹ Her will is living: a "right moral judgment" as opposed to the "imposition of [Mary's] mental idea", as Kalnins puts it,²⁰ and as contrasted to Mr Massey, whose "non-human will dominated them all" (PO 51). When *his* will is mentioned, as it is several times in 'Daughters of the Vicar' (but not in 'Two Marriages'), it is in terms of coldness (PO 57) and a power that makes Mary go cold (PO 55); yet it rouses a flush in Louisa (PO 56). I see Louisa's determination not as an exertion of what would later become a familiar Lawrentian bugbear, female will, but rather as a sign of the necessary strength of character that will lead Louisa to take courageous steps to controvert Massey-ness and fulfill her dream.²¹

The imagery of coldness and warmth that suffuses the story lends support to this interpretation of Louisa's will as a positive force; Lawrence enhanced this imagery when he revised 'Two Marriages' in 1913-14. Louisa is unhappy to hear that Alfred Durant is joining the navy because "he had made her feel warm. It seemed the days would be colder since he had gone" (PO 47). This warmth is all the more valued because the vicar's children "grew up healthy, but unwarmed and rather rigid" (PO 41). When money gets tighter the daughter's "hearts were chilled and hardened with the fear of this perpetual, cold penury". Mr Massey is a man of "cold, reasonable assertion" (PO 48), all mind. He is "always set apart in a cold, rarified little world of his own" (PO 49). When he proposes to Mary, in a scene not present in 'Two Marriages', Lawrence notes several times the coldness, hardness, stoniness, and shut-offedness the proposal creates (PO 54-5). But Mary marries for financial security, sacrificing the body in the process. It is Louisa who unwraps her sister's baby and "expos[es] the child to the fireglow" (PO 61). In contrast to the two reverends, Alfred, back from the navy to see his dying father, has "sun-burned skin" and "sun-scorched hair" (PO 52). His neck is "tanned firm". Louisa thinks of

his face “ruddy with the sun”, and his “golden-brown eyes”, and his nose “tanned hard by the sun” (*PO* 53). (In the corresponding scene in ‘Two Marriages’, Alfred is merely ruddy [*PO* 217]). When she visits the Durant home she sees “the scarlet glow of the kitchen, red firelight falling on the brick floor and on the bright chintz curtains. It was alive and bright as a peepshow” (*PO* 64). The climactic scene in Alfred’s house, when they commit to each other, is conducted by a roaring fire. In contrast, when Alfred goes to the vicarage the next day to ask for her hand, the little study into which he is ushered is “fireless” and the vicar’s voice is “cold” (*PO* 84).

Both Janice Hubbard Harris, in her examination of Lawrence’s short fiction (1984), and Michael Black, in his study of the early fiction (1986), refer to Louisa’s courage in making her desires clear to Alfred.²² This is in contrast to Alfred’s “cowardice” in distancing himself from her because she is his superior in station (*PO* 54). One could say that Louisa is willing to take the risk – a very different kind of risk than that stated by Louisa’s father the vicar in referring to Alfred’s joining the navy: “I prefer to know he is safe in the navy, than running the risk of getting into bad ways here” (*PO* 47). It might well be less of a risk for a higher born woman to approach a lower born man than the other way around, but the risks are prominent nonetheless in terms of social disapproval and ostracism as well as psychological and material adjustment. Gender issues are surely in play here in addition. In ‘Daughters of the Vicar’, one senses that Louisa is taking the bigger risk of being repudiated, especially in a society that frowns on and stigmatizes female initiative. Many of Lawrence’s female protagonists take great risks; some of them don’t like risk – fear it – yet they risk being “forward” anyway. We are told that Louisa is “covered with confusion” when Alfred enters his father’s sickroom (*PO* 52). As Janice Hubbard Harris says of Louisa’s proposal, “her pain and embarrassment are evident; and at the same time the story’s approbation of her victory is unequivocal. What we have here ... is a sleeping prince, awakened by a courageous princess ... The Sleeping Beauty myth has been transformed ... [I]t releases

Lawrence from the idea that a powerful female must be cast in the role of mother".²³ John Worthen quotes Lawrence in October 1913, "It seems to me that the chief thing about a woman – who is much of a woman – is that in the long run she is not to be had" (2L 94), and adds, about Lawrence's revision of his play *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*, "that remarkable new formulation of female independence also suggests the direction 'The Sisters' was taking".²⁴ The same can be said of the revisions to 'Two Marriages' undertaken a few months earlier.

Of course, risk might be said to be relative. Peter Bernstein has surveyed the literature on risk and states that "[t]he most influential research into how people manage risk and uncertainty" has been conducted by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, who began their long partnership investigating "how people make choices when faced with uncertain outcomes".²⁵ A person can be risk-averse in one setting and then risk-seeking when offered the same choice in a different setting. "Kahneman and Tversky [have done experiments to demonstrate] that people are not risk-averse: they are perfectly willing to choose a gamble when they consider it appropriate. But if they are not risk-averse, what are they?" They are *loss-averse*, this research has shown. People do not like to lose; "losses loom larger than gains".²⁶ Applying this theory to Lawrence's story, we see that Louisa is willing to gamble on Alfred – on his response to her proposal; on their marriage – because she has a great deal to lose if she does not take this initiative. Likewise, Mabel in 'The Horse-Dealer's Daughter' and Ciss in 'The Lovely Lady', to name only two of Lawrence's other risk-taking female characters, have a great deal to lose if they do not compel Dr Fergusson and Robert Atwater, respectively, into acknowledgment of and relationship with them.²⁷

In 'Daughters of the Vicar', as in the middle and late stories 'The Horse-Dealer's Daughter' and 'The Lovely Lady', the main female character renounces attachment to the parent figure and the past; she rescues herself from dependence by rescuing another, forcing him to into greater emotional risk.²⁸ The endings are

tentative, however, with no fairy tale happily-ever-after resolutions: the “princesses” may have made the first move toward their “princes”, escaping in the process from their imprisoning environments, but their fates are unsecured and unknown. Indeed, Lawrence modified the ending of ‘Daughters of the Vicar’ considerably over the course of its development between 1911 and 1914. A deleted manuscript portion of 1911 has Alfred dreaming of and grieving for his mother long after his marriage to Louisa (*PO* 280, 243:14). Lawrence substituted an oblique reference to Alfred’s grief for his mother, when the character talks in his sleep and is “evidently suffering again a little delirium of grief”. Yet in this early version of the story, the ending conveys the unity between the couple, and the last line states that Louisa “was not disappointed” in the “real home” created by them together (*PO* 246). Lawrence revised the ending in 1913. In this manuscript version, Louisa tells her own mother that she has “plenty to be thankful for. I chose my man myself, mother—and he wanted me. I was no fool” (*PO* 281); no children are mentioned, but “she found she had a love that would wear”. The final, published version of the tale, now called ‘Daughters of the Vicar’, has the couple not yet married and planning to emigrate to Canada. Louisa is still the active one, with Alfred more passive. Their happiness is hoped for – by protagonists and readers alike – but not secured. Lawrence has more truck with the risk-taking adventure than with the happy resolution.

Of Louisa Burrows, Lawrence had written to Garnett in February 1912, shortly after he broke off the engagement, that “she had decided ... that she had made herself too cheap to me, therefore she thought that she would become all at once expensive and desirable” (*IL* 365). All this said, unless he was being disingenuous (and I don’t think he was) in his letter to Louie of November 1912, after he had run off with Frieda, Lawrence felt very bad that he had been a “rotter” to Louie by ditching her; “I wish I could make up for what I did to you” (*IL* 479), he wrote. Perhaps by giving Louisa Lindley the backbone to act in contradiction to her vicarage upbringing – to make herself cheap, in the parlance of the time –

Lawrence did in a way make it up to her namesake, re-imagining her risk-taking in the same way he would do with Ursula in *The Rainbow*. Although 'Daughters of the Vicar' is not a Modern Girl novel, contributing in the same way as *The Rainbow* to "the complex Edwardian dialogue about modern womanhood", to quote Janice Hubbard Harris in her essay on 'Lawrence and the Edwardian Feminists',²⁹ the long story marks a step in the direction of the more complex exploration of female emancipation that Lawrence undertook in that novel. To paraphrase Lawrence on 'The Sisters', in 'Daughters of the Vicar' lies the germ of a central idea in *The Rainbow*: "woman becoming individual, self-responsible, taking her own initiative".

¹ James T. Boulton, *Lawrence in Love: Letters to Louie Burrows* (Nottingham: U of Nottingham P, 1968).

² Martin Kearney, *Major Short Stories of D. H. Lawrence: A Handbook* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 67.

³ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴ J. C. F. Littlewood, 'D. H. Lawrence's Early Tales', *Cambridge Quarterly*, 1.2 (Spring 1966), 107-24; Brian H. Finney, 'D. H. Lawrence's Progress to Maturity: From Holograph Manuscript to Final Publication of *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*', *Studies in Bibliography*, xxviii (1975), 321-32; Mara Kalnins, 'D. H. Lawrence's 'Two Marriages' and 'Daughters of the Vicar'', *Ariel*, 7.1 (January 1976), 32-49.

⁵ Keith Cushman, *D. H. Lawrence at Work: The Emergence of the 'Prussian Officer' Stories* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1978).

⁶ Emile Delavenay, *D. H. Lawrence: The Man and His Work* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1972), 200.

⁷ Martin Kearney, in *Major Short Stories of D. H. Lawrence: A Handbook*, provides a comprehensive reference companion to critical approaches to the story from the late 1950s to the late 1990s. Many of the earlier reviews and studies concentrated on the elements of class warfare and societal strictures, and that focus has informed a good deal of the criticism ever since. Kearney usefully discusses the approaches by category.

⁸ James T. Boulton, *Lawrence in Love*, xii.

⁹ Brenda Maddox, *D. H. Lawrence: The Story of a Marriage* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 67.

¹⁰ John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 153.

¹¹ As the Explanatory Notes to the Cambridge edition of *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories* indicate, the story, because of its reference to the Queen's Navy, is set before 1901 (*PO* 254) and not in the era when Lawrence created it. This is approximately the same time period in which the mature Ursula lives in *The Rainbow*.

¹² In the Cambridge edition, the Explanatory Notes relevant to this passage quote Lawrence's letter about his troth to Louie Burrows, revealing that she had led him to the realization that he might wish to be married (*PO* 277, 241:11; *IL* 193).

¹³ Brenda Maddox, *D. H. Lawrence: The Story of a Marriage*, 63.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁵ Keith Cushman, *D. H. Lawrence at Work*, 92.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁷ In 'A Portrait of Miriam: A Study in the Design of *Sons and Lovers*', rpt. in *New Casebook: Sons and Lovers*, ed. Rick Rylance (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 49-72, Louis Martz writes compellingly of Miriam as "overpainted" by Mrs Morel's view of the girl, which informs her son's perspective and, indeed, the narrator's attitude as well (57). Martz explores the many situations in which the timid Miriam exerts herself, pushes herself beyond her boundaries of comfort, to please Paul. Miriam may be more of a risk-taker than Paul gives her credit for (especially because it does not come naturally to her), but the fact remains that she is incapable of achieving the gold at the end of her rainbow, namely Paul Morel.

¹⁸ In contrasting 'Daughters of the Vicar' with 'Two Marriages' in *The Worlds of D. H. Lawrence's Short Fiction, 1907-1923* (Prague: Carolinum Press of Charles University, 2001), Anna Grmelová states that "class considerations between [Alfred and Louisa] can be left behind" because Lawrence has developed a "mature love ethic" in which "the lovers are in the grip of a force which is bigger than themselves" (77). As I have suggested, Lawrence has intensified Alfred's capitulation to his class in the final version, and it is up to Louisa to help that bigger force get a grip.

¹⁹ Keith Cushman, *D. H. Lawrence at Work*, 115.

²⁰ Mara Kalnins, *Ariel*, 7.1 (January 1976), 42.

²¹ The back cover of the 2004 Hesperus paperback edition of 'Daughters of the Vicar', with an introduction by novelist Anita Desai, features just this quotation, in its complete version, with the word *will* trumpeted four times as a kind of encapsulation of the story, with its triumphant assertion of entitlement and determination.

²² Janice Hubbard Harris, *The Short Fiction of D. H. Lawrence* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1984), 59; Michael Black, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986), 202.

²³ Janice Hubbard Harris, *The Short Fiction of D. H. Lawrence*, 59. Anthony Burgess makes the opposite case in his study of Lawrence, *Flame into Being: The Life and Work of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Heinemann, 1985), 72, when he says that the only strong, non-submissive women in Lawrence's life were all mothers: his own, Frieda's, and Frieda herself. In addressing 'The Horse-Dealer's Daughter', Harris takes a similar tack to her approach to 'Daughters of the Vicar', noting "that a staunch, unlovely woman can claim her mate as urgently as Mabel does – without earning the tale's opprobrium, rather earning its praise". This is all the more remarkable given that "[t]he years during which Lawrence was writing 'The Horse-Dealer's Daughter' were bitter. During them he writes some of his strongest essays about the need for males to dominate, females to submit" (129).

²⁴ John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider*, 141.

²⁵ Peter L. Bernstein, *Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 270-1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 273-4.

²⁷ Students in my seminar on Lawrence have recently become rather cynical about Mabel's forwardness with the doctor, seeing it as a manipulative attempt to regain financial status. If there is any element of truth in this view – a view that could also be applied to Ciss' status in 'The Lovely Lady' – it certainly does not pertain to the situation in 'Daughters of the Vicar'. In any case, I see the potential losses as more truly emotional than financial.

²⁸ As noted earlier, the vicar has warned Mrs Durant of Alfred's running risks, but of course an emotional risk is not the sort he has in mind. He expresses gladness that Alfred has joined the navy because in the military he will be "safe ... [rather than] running the risk of getting into bad ways here" (PO 47). Little does he know at this point in the story that the "bad ways" in which Alfred will get involved are with the vicar's own

daughter. “Bad ways”, like “doing the right thing”, only superficially reference alcohol consumption in this story.

²⁹ Janice Hubbard Harris, ‘Lawrence and the Edwardian Feminists’, in *The Challenge of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Michael Squires and Keith Cushman (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1990), 62-76, 62.



The Katherine Mansfield Society is pleased to announce its first annual prize essay competition, open to all, and which for 2010 will be on the subject of:

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Comparative studies in English, of approximately 5000 words, should address any aspect of the literary relationship between Mansfield and Lawrence and consist of original, previously unpublished research.

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The judges will comprise:

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Figure 1. The bookshop at
75 Charing Cross Road.



Figure 2. Cyril Beaumont.

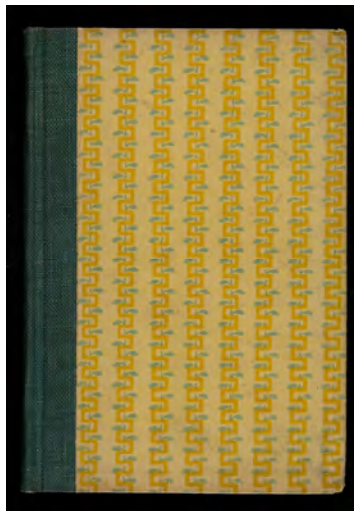


Figure 3. The front board of *Bay*.