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D.H. Lawrence

*Lady  
Chatterley's  
Lover*

Read by **Maxine Peake**

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1	Chapter 1	5:53
2	Both Hilda and Constance had had their tentative love-affairs...	7:05
3	However, came the war, Hilda and Connie were rushed home...	5:27
4	In 1916 Herbert Chatterley was killed...	3:59
5	Chapter 2	6:05
6	Clifford left them alone, and she learnt to do the same...	6:53
7	It was in her second winter at Wragby...	5:23
8	Chapter 3	6:12
9	There was something about him that Connie liked.	5:19
10	Breakfast was served in the bedrooms...	5:22
11	When he rose, he kissed both her hands...	5:02
12	Connie was in love with him...	5:59
13	Chapter 4	4:42
14	Hammond looked rather piqued.	6:05
15	Silence fell.	6:48
16	Clifford made big eyes: it was all stuff to him.	7:00
17	Chapter 5	7:13
18	Connie was not keen on chains, but she said nothing.	6:05
19	She was watching a brown spaniel that had run out...	7:08
20	'Who is your game-keeper?' Connie asked at lunch.	6:13

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21	Michaelis had seized upon Clifford as the central figure...	6:01
22	He spoke it almost in a brilliancy of triumph...	5:31
23	Chapter 6	5:26
24	On one of her bad days she went out alone...	5:19
25	It was nearly a mile to the cottage...	6:08
26	So she plodded home to Clifford...	5:31
27	It had rained as usual, and the paths were too sodden...	4:41
28	Connie had received the shock of vision in her womb...	6:12
29	Chapter 7	5:11
30	So she hardly ever went away from Wragby...	5:55
31	Tommy Dukes was at Wragby...	6:01
32	Down posted Hilda from Scotland...	6:21
33	Michaelis heard they were in town, and came running....	4:13
34	Hilda posted off to Dr Shardlow...	4:56
35	For the first week or so...	5:48
36	Chapter 8	6:20
37	The next afternoon she went to the wood again.	6:06
38	So Connie watched him fixedly.	4:38
39	She found Mrs Bolton under the great beech-tree on the knoll...	6:59
40	The weather came rainy again.	7:43

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41	Chapter 9	7:23
42	But no sooner had she gone, than he rang for Mrs Bolton...	6:14
43	Nevertheless, one got a new vision of Tevershall village...	7:40
44	Under Mrs Bolton's influence...	3:51
45	It was Mrs Bolton's talk...	7:45
46	Chapter 10	6:31
47	She fled as much as possible to the wood.	5:47
48	One evening, guests or no guests, she escaped...	6:04
49	She lay quite still, in a sort of sleep...	6:50
50	He stood back and watched her going into the dark...	6:27
51	Constance, for her part, had hurried across the park...	5:49
52	The drizzle of rain was like a veil over the world...	7:10
53	He shut the door, and lit a tiny light...	8:23
54	The next day she did not go to the wood.	5:03
55	The baby was a perky little thing of about a year...	5:21
56	She started out of her muse, and gave a little cry...	8:13
57	Connie went slowly home...	6:34
58	Connie would not take her bath this evening.	5:35
59	She had drifted to the door.	4:37
60	Connie was in bed, and fast asleep all this time.	7:31

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61	He went to the hut, and wrapped himself in the blanket...	7:15
62	Chapter 11	6:44
63	Then one afternoon came Leslie Winter...	6:26
64	It was already May...	6:50
65	As she rose on to the high country...	6:39
66	England, my England!	5:41
67	Squire Winter, a soldier, had stood it out.	6:26
68	Connie was glad to be home...	4:45
69	It was a sunny day, and Connie was working in the garden...	7:41
70	Chapter 12	6:55
71	'Are you sad today?' she asked him.	5:26
72	There was a long pause of silence, a cold silence.	5:37
73	And she went with him to the hut.	5:52
74	He took his hand away from her breast...	6:25
75	And now in her heart the queer wonder of him was awakened.	5:38
76	He rose, and turned up the lantern...	4:03
77	Chapter 13	6:57
78	Connie listened, and flushed very red.	5:52
79	In front of them ran the open cleft of the riding.	4:53
80	She found Clifford slowly mounting to the spring.	4:48

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81	The keeper appeared directly.	6:02
82	The chair began slowly to run backwards.	4:01
83	'I'm going to push too!' she said.	4:18
84	At lunch she could not contain her feeling.	6:04
85	Chapter 14	6:21
86	He twisted round again and looked at the enlarged photograph...	7:18
87	'Then came Bertha Coutts.'	5:33
88	There was a silence.	7:28
89	He held her close, in the running warmth of the fire.	8:10
90	Then he woke up and looked at the light.	6:30
91	And afterwards, when they had been quite still...	5:36
92	After a while, he reached for his shirt and put it on...	3:03
93	Chapter 15	5:52
94	Another day she asked him about himself.	6:40
95	Connie laughed, but not very happily.	6:17
96	There fell a complete silence.	6:12
97	When she came with her flowers...	5:45
98	'You don't mind, do you, that I'm going away?' she asked...	5:11
99	The curious gulf of silence between them!	5:26
100	He had brought columbines and campions...	6:04

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101	Chapter 16	4:21
102	They went onto the house. Connie marched in...	5:44
103	She listened with a glisten of amusement.	4:57
104	And the day came round for Hilda to arrive.	6:45
105	It was true, Hilda did not like Clifford...	5:08
106	They were soon at Mansfield...	5:31
107	He unlocked the door and preceded them...	5:00
108	The three ate in silence.	6:17
109	It was a night of sensual passion...	5:18
110	Till his rousing waked her completely.	4:03
111	Silent, he put his plate on the tray and went downstairs.	4:47
112	Chapter 17	6:18
113	Connie found herself shrinking and afraid of the world.	6:35
114	The Villa Esmerelda was quite a long way out...	5:27
115	It was pleasant in a way. It was almost enjoyment.	6:56
116	She had been at Venice a fortnight...	3:22
117	She had a letter from Mrs Bolton.	5:22
118	She could not help confiding a little in Duncan Forbes.	3:30
119	A few days later came a letter from Clifford.	5:39
120	However, everybody listens...	4:47

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121	The irritation, and the lack of any sympathy...	4:55
122	Chapter 18	6:10
123	She found a letter from Mellors.	4:41
124	In spite of himself, little flames ran over his belly...	5:47
125	'Then why are you afraid of me?' she said.	5:06
126	She was quite determined now that there should be no parting...	5:27
127	Connie confided in her father.	4:12
128	Poor Sir Malcolm! He was by no means keen on it.	4:45
129	The following day he had lunch with Connie and Hilda...	4:27
130	Duncan, when approached, also insisted...	5:01
131	Chapter 19	6:01
132	So Mrs Bolton began to weep first.	6:37
133	His behaviour with regard to Connie was curious.	4:26
134	Clifford and Connie sat in silence when she had gone.	5:54
135	He was speechless, and the queer blank look of a child...	5:08
136	The Grange Farm, Old Heanor, 29 September	6:24
137	'I'm sure you're sick of all this.'	6:44

**Total time: 13:21:18**



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**D.H. Lawrence**

**(1885–1930)**

# *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

*Lady Chatterley's Lover* is all about sex. Lady Chatterley's husband returns from the War paralysed from the waist down, and therefore unable to have intercourse with his wife. She turns initially to a friend of theirs, a dramatist, who is an eager lover but selfish and unsatisfactory. She then discovers herself involved with the gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors, and has something akin to an epiphany. Their sexual involvement is not about illicit passion or releasing tensions or satisfying cravings; it is a tender, physical demonstration of their humanity. That is why the graphic and largely explicit nature of the sex scenes is not pornography (despite nearly a century of sniggering schoolboys and po-faced academics); there is a deeper purpose at work.

Sex formed a part of that deeper

purpose as well, of course. Lawrence wanted to discuss as frankly and openly as he could the nature of the relationship between men and women, but this was part of a broader concern. His overarching thesis was the idea that mankind was despoiling Nature (both the landscape and human nature itself), creating people with no drive other than the quest for money, and who were becoming dehumanised and mechanised in the process. For the ruling elite in the novel, this shows itself in the conversations between the guests at the Chatterley 'seat', Wragby. These guests are epitomes of various types of desiccated intellectualism. The working man is no less guilty though, sacrificing his honourable independence of thought and action to become a slave and a drone. The result is a loss of contact with both

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the sensual and sensuous parts of his nature, which find expression in, among other things, sex. Expressing these ideas through unambiguous descriptions of the sexual act was always going to raise the hackles of the conservative establishment in England; but then, almost anything Lawrence did had that effect.

David Herbert Richards Lawrence was born in Nottinghamshire to a family of miners, and lived a childhood that seems clichéd to us because he wrote with such unnerving honesty and openness about it later, especially in *Sons and Lovers*. His father was a drunkard whom Lawrence hated and feared, and the family lived in often appalling poverty and uncertainty, their lives dominated by the mines and the violent anger between the parents. But Lawrence's mother was better educated than her husband, and inspired the sickly child (he suffered from poor health all his life) to begin his interest in the arts.

But for her, he might have stayed in the surgical appliance factory where he was a clerk. Prosthetics' loss was literature's gain as the gifted, intelligent, sensitive man (known by a school-friend as 'a right

cissy') went to university and then on to become a teacher. Lawrence's mother died in 1910, helped in part by Lawrence himself who gave her an overdose of painkillers. By then he had had poems published in Ford Madox Hueffer's *The English Review*, but she did not live to see his first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911). By this time Lawrence's health meant that he had to give up teaching, and he decided to become a professional writer.

It was not an easy choice since his income could rarely be guaranteed, and poverty is no friend to the tubercular. England was no friend to it either, and for the rest of his life after the War Lawrence wandered the world searching for climates that suited his lungs as much as his temperament, neither of which was predictable. In 1912 he met Frieda Weekly (née von Richthofen), who was married at the time and had three children. They eloped together and in 1914 began a marriage that was tempestuous and complex. Katherine Mansfield, one of the London literary set who championed Lawrence, wrote that she didn't know which was worse: "when they are loving

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and playing with each other, or when they are roaring at each other and he is pulling out Frieda's hair."

They originally moved to Cornwall where their unorthodox manners and her German ancestry made them subjects of considerable suspicion during the War. Singing German folksongs didn't help either, and suspicions increased as Lawrence's reputation began to emerge. *The Rainbow* (1915) was banned in Britain for over a decade because of its treatment of sex and sexuality, and it took six years for the sequel (*Women in Love*) to find a publisher because of the furore. By that time Lawrence, who had nearly died during the influenza epidemic of 1919, was in Europe.

He stayed there for three years, but there was restlessness about his nature and the couple travelled around the world, finally settling – up to a point – in Taos, New Mexico. But once again Lawrence was forced to move by near-fatal illness, and he relocated to an area near Florence in Italy. Throughout this apparently unstable and insecure time, he was writing – short stories, novels, essays, travel writings and

of course his brilliantly pared poetry – with a fierce, rather humourless, yet glittering realism. At a time when the general thrust was to imagine a more and more entirely intellectual and mechanical future, he pushed the other way, championing a more complex morality. His descriptions of the physical landscape are often beautiful and meticulous, his absorption into the inner world of his characters seems on occasion absolute, and his engagement with the moral issues of his day intense.

He was by nature something of a pedagogue, though, and his morality can seem proscriptive. He recognised that his enemies were not just those who sought to ban his work, but equally the new generation who would take his calls for moral liberation further than he desired. This former nonetheless deeply angered him, partly because he recognised in their efforts a spineless hypocrisy – the established authority banning something it did not understand – but also because they cost him money. He published *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) himself and quickly made a decent amount from it; but it was soon being pirated, especially

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once it was banned. This angered him almost as much as the ban itself, which was after all to be expected given the nature of the book.

The ban led to a trial that redefined social mores in England in 1960, when the jurors decided that the book could be published in its entirety. Initially this saw Lawrence, who had died thirty years previously, being given an almost demagogic status as a sexual liberator, even a kind of literary pornographer. It is an inaccuracy that has bedevilled the book ever since. Nothing in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is lascivious, prurient or titillating. It is a story about trying to be morally, physically and truthfully engaged with one's human-ness. There was a backlash in the 70s when feminists in particular reacted against Lawrence's phallo-centric attitudes, pointing out that although the book may be told in large part from a woman's point of view, the sex is from a male perspective, and that Lawrence seems simply to dismiss other life-choices for women than marriage and children.

This criticism was at least a considered response to the underlying morality of

the work, a book which forever changed publishing, writing and reading habits. Whatever *Lady Chatterley's Lover's* demerits, it challenged the prevailing intellectual orthodoxy, it questioned the benefit of mechanisation and the profit-motive, it emphasised the power of tenderness, and it sympathised profoundly with a woman in a male world. One thing is certain: it's not just about sex.

### **Notes by Roy McMillan**



After training at RADA, **Maxine Peake** made her mark initially in TV comedy with two key roles in *Dinner Ladies* and *Shameless*. She demonstrated her virtuosity with other varied TV roles, including a memorably disturbing performance as the child murderer Myra Hindley, and roles in *The Devil's Whore* and *Little Dorrit*. Key London theatre highlights have included *The Cherry Orchard* and *Miss Julie*. Her radio roles include Laurencia in *Fuente Ovejuna*.

## Credits

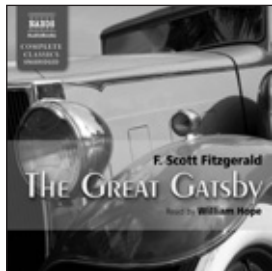
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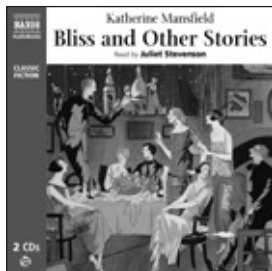
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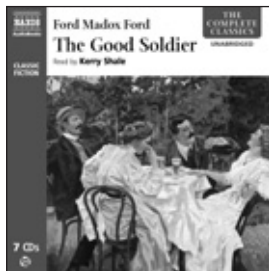
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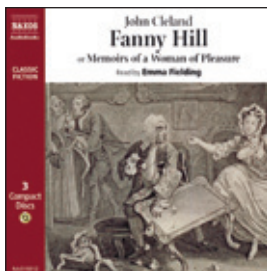
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**D.H. Lawrence**

# *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Read by **Maxine Peake**

Lady Chatterley's husband returns from the War paralysed from the waist down. Frustrated by his attitudes as much as his disability, she begins a love-affair with the gamekeeper, Mellors. She realises that to be fully alive she must live the life of the body as well as the mind, but in doing so she angers the conventions of her day.

Banned for over 30 years for the explicit nature of its language and descriptions of sex, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* also exposes the dehumanisation of the mechanical age, and underlines the profound power of tenderness.



After training at RADA, **Maxine Peake** made her mark initially in TV comedy with two key roles in *Dinner Ladies* and *Shameless*. She demonstrated her virtuosity with other varied TV roles, including a memorably disturbing performance as the child murderer Myra Hindley, and roles in *The Devil's Whore* and *Little Dorrit*.

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