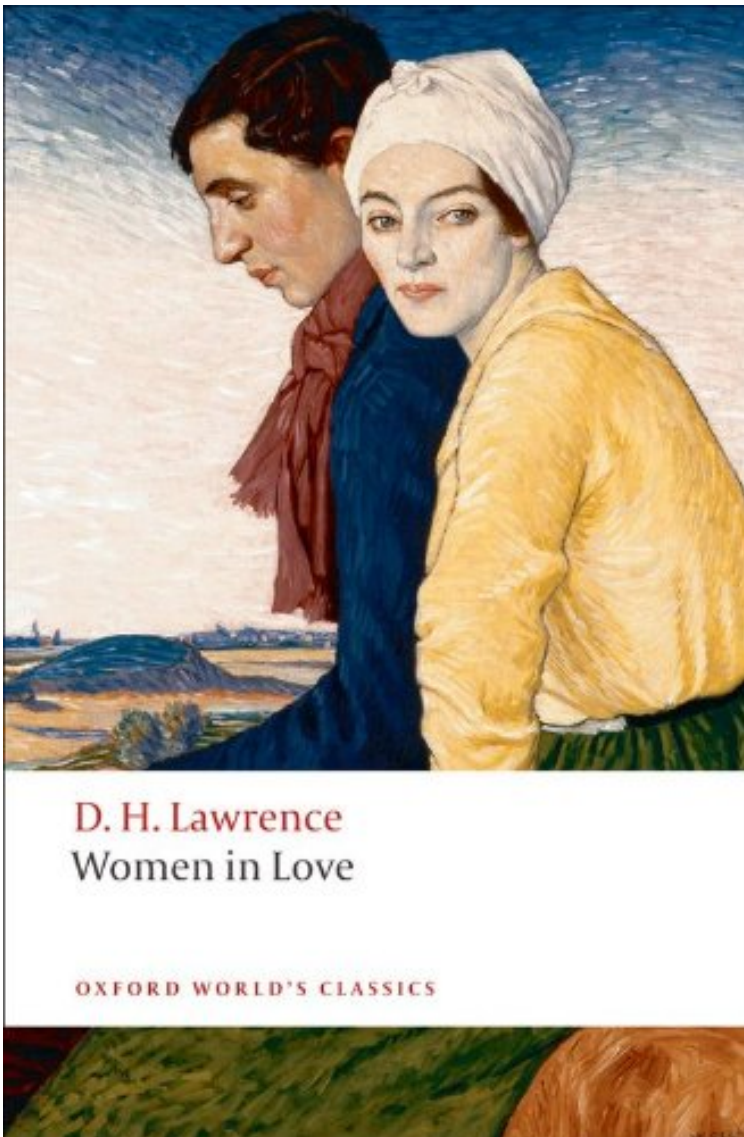


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Women in Love



Par D. H. Lawrence
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Description : Description du produitWritten in 1916, Women in Love brings to life the intimate attractions of a circle of friends and lovers and was described in an early review as an "analytical study of sexual depravity." Exploring the very nature of physical and emotional love, Lawrence masterfully intertwines the lives of the novel's principal characters, Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen (who were first introduced in Lawrence's The Rainbow) and their respective lovers, Rupert Birkin and Gerald Crich. Perhaps owing its sources to real-life attachments that Lawrence and his wife, Frieda, shared with John Middleton Murry and his wife, Katherine Mansfield, the novel creates a startling, almost incantational mix of ideas, emotions, and symbolism. When Lawrence was unable to find a publisher for this, his favorite novel, it was privately printed in New York in 1920 and appeared in England a year later.

Prsentation de l'diteur`New eyes were opened in her soul. She saw a strange creature from another world, in

him. It was as if she were enchanted, and everything were metamorphosed. In *Women in Love* (1920), Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen, who first appeared in Lawrence's earlier novel, *The Rainbow*, take centre stage as Lawrence explores their growth and development in their relationships with two powerful men, Rupert Birkin and his friend Gerald Crich. A novel of regeneration and dark, destructive human passion, *Women in Love* reflects the impact on Lawrence of the First World War in the potential both for annihilation and salvation of the self. Quintessentially modernist, *Women in Love* is one of Lawrence's most extraordinary, innovative and unsettling works.

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Extrait *Sisters Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen* sat one morning in the window-bay of their father's house in Beldover, working and talking. Ursula was stitching a piece of brightly-coloured embroidery, and Gudrun was drawing upon a board which she held on her knee. They were mostly silent, talking as their thoughts strayed through their minds. "Ursula," said Gudrun, "don't you really want to get married?" Ursula laid her embroidery in her lap and looked up. Her face was calm and considerate. "I don't know," she replied. "It depends how you mean." Gudrun was slightly taken aback. She watched her sister for some moments. "Well," she said, ironically, "it usually means one thing!--But don't you think, anyhow, you'd be--" she darkened slightly--"in a better position than you are in now?" A shadow came over Ursula's face. "I might," she said. "But I'm not sure." Again Gudrun paused, slightly irritated. She wanted to be quite definite. "You don't think one needs the experience of having been married?" she asked. "Do you think it need be an experience?" replied Ursula. "Bound to be, in some way or other," said Gudrun, coolly. "Possibly undesirable, but bound to be an experience of some sort." "Not really," said Ursula. "More likely to be the end of experience." Gudrun sat very still, to attend to this. "Of course," she said, "there's that to consider." This brought the conversation to a close. Gudrun, almost angrily, took up her rubber and began to rub out part of her drawing. Ursula stitched absorbedly. "You wouldn't consider a good offer?" asked Gudrun. "I think I've rejected several," said Ursula. "Really!" Gudrun flushed dark.--"But anything really worth while? Have you really?" "A thousand a year, and an awfully nice man. I liked him awfully," said Ursula. "Really! But weren't you fearfully tempted?" "In the abstract--but not in the concrete," said Ursula. "When it comes to the point, one isn't even tempted.--Oh, if I were tempted, I'd marry like a shot.--I'm only tempted not to." The faces of both sisters suddenly lit up with amusement. "Isn't it an amazing thing," cried Gudrun, "how strong the temptation is, not to!" They both laughed, looking at each other. In their hearts they were frightened. There was a long pause, whilst Ursula stitched and Gudrun went on with her sketch. The sisters were women, Ursula twenty-six and Gudrun twenty-five. But both had the remote, virgin look of modern girls, sisters of Artemis rather than of Hebe. Gudrun was very beautiful, passive, soft-skinned, soft-limbed. She wore a dress of dark-blue silky stuff, with ruches of blue and green linen lace in the neck and sleeves; and she had emerald-green stockings. Her look of confidence and diffidence contrasted with Ursula's sensitive expectancy. The provincial people, intimidated by Gudrun's perfect sang froid and exclusive bareness of manner, said of her: "She is a smart woman." She had just come back from London, where she had spent several years, working at an art-school, as a student, and living a studio life. "I was hoping now for a man to come along," Gudrun said, suddenly catching her underlip between her teeth, and making a strange grimace, half sly smiling, half anguish. Ursula was afraid. "So you have come home, expecting him here?" she laughed. "Oh my dear," cried Gudrun, strident, "I wouldn't go out of my way to look for him. But if there did happen to come along a highly attractive individual of sufficient means--well--" she tailed off ironically. Then she looked searchingly at Ursula, as if to probe her. "Don't you find yourself getting bored?" she asked of her sister. "Don't you find, that things fail to materialise? Nothing materialises! Everything withers in the bud." "What withers in the bud?" asked Ursula. "Oh, everything--oneself--things in general." There was a pause, whilst each sister vaguely considered her fate. "It does frighten one," said Ursula, and again there was a pause. "But do you hope to get anywhere by just marrying?" "It seems to be the inevitable next step," said Gudrun. Ursula pondered this, with a little bitterness. She was a class mistress herself, in Willey Green Grammar School, as she had been for some years. "I know," she said, "it seems like that when one thinks in the abstract. But really imagine it: imagine any man one knows, imagine him coming home to one every evening, and saying 'Hello,' and giving one a kiss--" There was a blank pause. "Yes," said Gudrun, in a narrowed voice. "It's just impossible. The man makes it impossible." "Of course there's children--" said Ursula, doubtfully. Gudrun's face hardened. "Do you really want children, Ursula?" she asked

coldly. A dazzled, baffled look came on Ursula's face. "One feels it is still beyond one," she said. "Do you feel like that?" asked Gudrun. "I get no feeling whatever from the thought of bearing children." Gudrun looked at Ursula with a mask-like, expressionless face. Ursula knitted her brows. "Perhaps it isn't genuine," she faltered. "Perhaps one doesn't really want them, in one's soul--only superficially." A hardness came over Gudrun's face. She did not want to be too definite. "When one thinks of other people's children--" said Ursula. Again Gudrun looked at her sister, almost hostile. "Exactly," she said, to close the conversation. The two sisters worked on in silence, Ursula having always that strange brightness of an essential flame that is caught, meshed, contravened. She lived a good deal by herself, to herself, working, passing on from day to day, and always thinking, trying to lay hold on life, to grasp it in her own understanding. Her active living was suspended, but underneath, in the darkness, something was coming to pass. If only she could break through the last integuments! She seemed to try to put her hands out, like an infant in the womb, and she could not, not yet. Still she had a strange prescience, an intimation of something yet to come. She laid down her work and looked at her sister. She thought Gudrun so charming, so infinitely charming, in her softness and her fine, exquisite richness of texture and delicacy of line. There was a certain playfulness about her too, such a piquancy of ironic suggestion, such an untouched reserve. Ursula admired her with all her soul. "Why did you come home, Prune?" she asked. Gudrun knew she was being admired. She sat back from her drawing and looked at Ursula, from under her finely-curved lashes. "Why did I come back, Ursula?" she repeated. "I have asked myself, a thousand times." "And don't you know?" "Yes, I think I do. I think my coming back home was just reculer pour mieux sauter." And she looked with a long, slow look of knowledge at Ursula. "I know!" cried Ursula, looking slightly dazzled and falsified, and as if she did not know. "But where can one jump to?" "Oh, it doesn't matter," said Gudrun, somewhat superbly. "If one jumps over the edge, one is bound to land somewhere." "But isn't it very risky?" asked Ursula. A slow, mocking smile dawned on Gudrun's face. "Ah!" she said, laughing. "What is it all but words!" And so again she closed the conversation. But Ursula was still brooding.

From *Library Journal*

The published editions of *Women in Love*, probably Lawrence's greatest novel, have always been remarkably corrupt due to a lengthy, complex process of revision and transcription, a threatened libel suit, and numerous unauthorized bowdlerizations. The editors of this new Cambridge Edition have labored scrupulously to produce an authoritative text. What emerges, if not dramatically different, is fresher and more immediate. The introduction provides a valuable history of the novel's composition, revision, publication, and reception, and though the elaborate textual apparatus is strictly for advanced students of bibliography, the notes are splendid. Lawrence's 1919 Foreword and two early discarded chapters are also included. The recovery of a modern classic. Keith Cushman, Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro

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