

DHL LONG

"Spud" Johnson, writer
Dr. F.W. Roberts (U. Texas)
Hon. Dorothy Brett, artist
Frank Waters, writer
Joe Foster, author, DH Lawrence in Taos
Bill Hawk, Lawrences' neighbour at the ranch
Trinidad, Pueblo Indian, friend of the Lawrences
Saki Karavas, owner of Lawrence's paintings
Tinka Fechin, friend

Narr: DH Lawrence had met Frieda in Nottingham when she was the wife of a university professor. They had fallen in love, married, and started on the restless traveling that lasted till Lawrence's death in 1930. In September 1922 they came to New Mexico, in the south-west United States.

Narr (as Lawrence): The moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning sun shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fe, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend.

Narr: Lawrence wrote that this was "the greatest experience from the outside world that I have ever had". Much of his time between 1922 and 1925 was spent in or near the little town of Taos. He didn't die there, but his ashes are in the mountains there, and there he's remembered, first as a man, then as a writer.

Johnson: (Laugh) And, I've never seen travelers who had so much luggage. The entire studio was full of packages and hampers and you know, all different-sized things. Including a - the back-end of a Sicilian cart that they'd hauled all the way from Taormina. All the way to Indian, and then Australia, and then San Francisco. Which is still there, in that house.

Narr: Since the turn of the century, Taos had become a haven for artists. The Santa Fe railroad never came here, so it never grew very big. In Lawrence's time, as now, it had a mixed population of Spanish-American farmers, Pueblo Indians, and American artists and art-collectors. In 1922, a rich, much-married American woman reigned over this mixed community. She offered Lawrence lodgings, scenery, the Indians, and herself. Her name was Mabel Luhan.

Roberts: They came to America in the first place in response to an invitation from Mabel Dodge Luhan, who was a patroness of the arts and farts, and ended up in Taos after a very vivid career in New York and Florence, and she had read Lawrence's *Sea and Sardinia*, and thought that he was the proper person to write about New Mexico. She loved the country of New Mexico very much, as a matter of fact I think she came there to teach the Indians their old handicrafts, this was her point of entry into the Taos place, sort of a member of this international colony of artists and things.

Waters: Mabel was a very warm, perceptive woman. She had gone through the gamut of life in the United States, in the metropolitan centres, she had been all through Europe, and she was fed up with the values of this extroverted materialism of the western world.

Narr: Overlooked by the Sacred Mountain, the Indian reservation lies just outside Taos township. Mabel acquired land right on the edge of the reservation and built a fine adobe house there. There she was close to her beloved Indians, and could initiate into their mysteries the painters and writers and actors for whom she kept open house. She filled her home with live doves and unalive cockerels, artefacts collected from the Old World and the New. For a while, the Lawrences became part of this Mabeltown collection, and endured her patronage.

Brett: Mabel was a very intelligent woman. Very intelligent. Very bossy, very determined. But extremely generous. Very, very attractive woman. Very attractive. And extremely generous, generous to all kinds of people. And she married Tony. And Tony was a very, very tall, dignified Indian. A very remarkable man. And just what she needed, she just couldn't budge him. She couldn't boss him.

Waters: I think the thing that attracted her to Tony, to Taos, and to these Indians was that she believed that she had found values that were outside and probably superseding this materialistic world, so her whole memoirs

amounted to a very honest exposé of her experiences in the world she had left behind. She was chiefly concerned with these mystical or we might say union values in Indian life, which is why she wanted Lawrence to come.

Narr: The parties Mabel gave were famous. She got Tony's friends to play and dance for her. The guests joined in the Round Dance or the Friendship Dance, just as they were danced at the Pueblo. Lawrence did take to the Indians, though not in Mabel's way. In a letter to the *New York Times*, Lawrence campaigned against the Bursum Bill, which was designed to carve up the Pueblo land, and divide it among Anglos and Spanish-American squatters. While taking a side-swipe at people like Mabel - "those white highbrows", Lawrence wrote, "these Pale-faces who love the dear Indian, the poor Indian, who would like to see all America restored to him," Lawrence yet wanted the Indians left alone. "The Indians keep burning an eternal fire, the sacred fire of the old dark religion. Let us have the grace and dignity to shelter these ancient centres of life, so that if die they must, they die a natural death."

Roberts: Mrs. Luhan, she thought Lawrence should write about the New Mexican landscape, which he did, not precisely as she might have expected. He did *The Woman Who Rode Away*, *St. Mawr* and *The Princess*, novellas, and some short stories and essays and portraits. But he never managed to write a complete novel about it.

Foster: They did start a book together, a a a very beautiful book, about Mabel's life, they were to collaborate, but of course Lawrence did all the writing. But very quickly, as a matter of fact the book lasted only twenty pages, and then Lawrence had had an insight into Mabel, and they began to quarrel.

Narr: In the manuscript, Lawrence described Mabel thus: "She was a sturdy woman with a round face, like an obstinate girl of fourteen. Childlike, and yet a woman approaching forty. So naive-looking, softly full and feminine.

Foster: He was attracted to upper-class women, Lady Ottoline Morell and Lady Asquith, but he made the mistake of thinking that in America a woman with money was also a cultured woman. And he found very soon that Mabel was not.

Waters: Mabel was a strange woman, she insisted always on putting her worst foot forward. And the good things, the good part of her, I think, only a few friends knew. But I think they would all agree to that.

Roberts: She was a head-hunter really, I think. She liked to surround herself with artists, with writers, and in Lawrence's case she wanted to be an inspiration to him, and of course this was a source of conflict between her and Frieda, for example.

Narr: Mabel wrote that when she first saw Lawrence, "the womb in me roused to reach out and take him." One day she told Frieda that she didn't think Frieda was the right woman for Lawrence. Frieda replied "Try him yourself, living with a genius. See what it's like, and how easy it is."

Foster: Frieda was jealous, Frieda saw that the whole relationship was upsetting Lawrence.

(Dance sequence): "...I don't care if you married sixteen times, I'll get to yer..."

Johnson: Oh, he was er, he was certainly interested in Mabel, and fond of her in a way, but he found her very difficult as a - she was too possessive, wanting to - always wanting to manage everybody's lives, so of course he rebelled violently against that. And he was certainly abetted by Frieda, because she was kind of jealous, I mean she realized that Mabel was kind of in love with him, in a way, it wasn't that there was any affair there at all, and she was still certainly very fond of Tony, but she was, she was fascinated by Lawrence, and sort of wanted him, you know, as one of her lions (laugh) more than a lover, I'm sure. So he didn't want that, didn't want to be possessed like that, you see.

Foster: Mabel realized very quickly that she had lost Lawrence, and she didn't quite know why. I think she lost him because she tried to impose her will on Lawrence, she tried to tell Lawrence how write, she thought she would know, she thought she knew better about the way his life should take. The break between Lawrence and Mabel was rather ugly, and there was recrimination, letters back and forth and they told each other what they thought of each other.

Johnson: Quite often when they did meet, they were great friends, and certainly were very affectionate with one another, and then he would get awfully angry with her, and in the same day that he would write a letter to her which was very affectionate and friendly, then he would write someone else saying nasty things about her.

Narr: In one such letter, Lawrence described Mabel as a "culture carrier, likes to play the patroness, hates the white world and loves the Indian out of hate. Is very generous. Wants to be good, and is very wicked. Has a terrible will to power, you know. She wants to be a witch, and at the same time a Mary of Bethany at Jesus's feet."

Foster: Mabel was not a large enough person to realize that she hadn't as big a place in Lawrence's life as she would have liked to, and so instead of retaining him as a friend - she had a terrific ego - she cut him off completely, and in cutting him off of course she lost him forever. But not before they had voiced their anger, and it was a very very ugly parting. Lawrence continued to try to be friends with Mabel, because he didn't believe in angers, he said "angers were our other selves, angers were not our real selves", and he wanted to continue as a friend of Mabel, but Mabel would have none of it, her pride was so great that she said "I cut him off, I threw him away".

Roberts: Although perhaps it's not quite so melodramatic as it comes out in the memoirs sometimes. For example I think Mrs. Luhan's book is not quite so reliable always as some of the others. But I think Lawrence in the end probably despised, or came as close to despising her as he ever could come, perhaps to despising anyone. I don't think he liked her very much, she annoyed him, and she had people around her that he didn't like. He much preferred to go up in the mountains and stay, and not stay in Taos in the middle all of its people.

Johnson: So it was very sensible of him to go on off to the ranch instead of attempting to stay in one of the houses. But they came down again, and spend a weekend, met some people here in Taos, and then would go back to the ranch again.

Hawk: They got to Taos, and he didn't like living in Taos, he came up here. And stayed here that winter. Right here in this cabin. It was empty, and Rachel and I were living in the big house. Rachel didn't like him, you know. He'd describe parts of the world so I sure could see 'em. He'd been all over. He'd talk, and describe countries, and we'd go on picnics together. I enjoyed him. Terribly fond of Frieda. When she ever went out, when she came back, she'd always bring a piece of goods for Rachel to sew. She brought us stuff all the time. Lawrence gave our children such wonderful Christmas presents.

Narr: To make the journey up to the mountains and back to Taos in one day was well-nigh impossible unless done by car. And almost everyone traveled on horseback. This was the isolation that Lawrence needed, and absence from Mabel made the heart more tolerant, if not fonder.

Johnson: We were always being asked up here, and that winter we all came up. But we planned at that time this trip to Mexico. They wanted to go later, and we, Bynner and I, planned to go too, so we planned to go together. And we left in April, I guess, and spent all spring and summer there. He started to write *The Plumed Serpent* in Mexico that first winter that we were there together. And those first few chapters are almost exactly, just photographic, of what we were doing. Except he left himself out. Frieda is Kate, and Bynner he called Owen, and I was called Villiers. And we went to our first bull-fight together. And that whole description is verbatim what happened.

Narr (as DHL): "The bull, giving a little bound, like a dog, ducked its head, and dived its horns upward into the horse's belly, rolling him over with his rider as one might push over a hat-stand."

Johnson: Except that, as I say, he left himself out. He put his own feelings and thoughts in Frieda's mouth. I was very much amused at these few chapters in which he pictured me, it wasn't very flattering, and yet I didn't have any feeling that it was unfair, in fact it was rather accurate, in a way. But I didn't take it personally. And we had very nice times together, I was typing those first chapters of *The Plumed Serpent* as he was writing them. And I was also typing all that Bynner was writing, some of which were attacking Lawrence, so it was a very amusing situation of being kind of a middleman in between, because Lawrence and Bynner had quite a clash of ideas. And er - so they were always arguing, on almost every subject they were on different sides. And yet they were fond of each other too, in spite of this.

Narr: Lawrence described Bynner as "a sort of belated mosquito". But Bynner remained a lifelong friend and confidant of Frieda.

Waters: I'm a great admirer of Lawrence's work in Mexico, but in his book *The Plumed Serpent*, all that he knew of Indians in Mexico for this quite wonderful descriptive book were all transplanted from Taos Pueblo to Mexico. He did not know the real meaning of the Aztec or the Toltec myth of Quetzocoatl, but he had transplanted bodily from New Mexico, Taos Pueblo. The Indians were always the Red Indians of the North, as he called them, which were simply his friends Trinidad, and so on, the people here at Taos Pueblo. *The Woman Who Rode Away*, laid in the Sierra Madres of Chihuawa, and this wonderful cave and the sacrifice of the woman, was simply the cave right here in back of my own back pasture, the cave here transplanted to Mexico.

Narr: Frieda left America for Europe, drawn by her children. Lawrence followed after some months. There he resumed his friendship with the daughter of the Viscount Esher, the Honourable Dorothy Brett, a shy, deaf painter.

Brett: I met him in Hampstead, when he had a little house in Hampstead. In 1914, just when the war had started. I was scared, I was always scared of those people, but anyhow I went there to tea. It was a tiny little house, tiny. It seemed incredible that Frieda could get into it even. She was huge. But, we had tea there, and that started the whole thing. He sort of took me under his wing. Oh, we just clicked, immediately, immediately. We sat on a little bench in front of the fire, and we had a wonderful time. I think he had a great feeling of protection for me, I don't quite know how to explain that. Then he went to Australia, and we didn't see him until he came back in 1924, it must have been. He wanted to collect me and Gertler and Murray and Kotiliansky. And they all agreed to come, and they all backed out except me.

Roberts: Brett came back to the United States with Frieda and Lawrence the second time they came. And of course, I suppose you'd say she came as a sort of a member of Lawrence's Rananim, this er, little colony that he always wanted to found for a group of choice friends.

Brett: You know, one of those idealistic colonies. Up at the ranch, here. But of course, it failed. It would have failed anyhow, you know, those things always do. They never succeed.

TEXT: Lawrence's illustration to Mabel's autobiographical poem *Ballad of a Red Girl*
Narr: Within watching distance of her tower, Mabel set up the Lawrences in a pretty house. Admitting guilt, she made some kind of a peace with them. Lawrence left his phoenix symbol on a door there, and other handiwork. Lawrence was the old Adam, but now, with Brett, there were two Eves too many.

Brett: What happened was, that everything went smoothly for a little while, but needless to say, as usual with Mabel, and anybody like Lawrence and Frieda, things didn't remain smooth.

Narr: Once more, the situation would become intolerable. The Lawrences had to put a distance between themselves and Mabel.

Brett: Lawrence said he was going, and of course, she didn't want him to go completely. So then, Mabel offered them the ranch, and we went up there.

Roberts: Lawrence refused to be beholden to anybody, so he gave her the manuscript of *Sons and Lovers* as a payment for it. But this ranch, I think, was a place that he loved. There's a wonderful picture of the ranch at the end of St. Mawr, where Lou Witt brings the stallion finally to this ranch. And somehow the country, and the horse, perhaps, the country supplies the answer which in other stories that Lawrence wrote is supplied by the dark characters, so to speak, this woman didn't find her destiny in a man, she found it in the country.

Narr: Lawrence described the ranch in letters. "About 150 acres, in the mountain foot-slopes, mostly pine-trees, but two clearings. Not much water, though. It's a lonely spot here, beautiful scenery. Altitude 8,500 feet. We have two little log-houses, and a tiny cabin. We've been a month working, building up one house, which was falling down, and shingling the others. We have four Indians working on the job."

Trinidad: He boughted the place and he's told me to have to take me up to work. From there, I stayed about fifteen years, to work with Frieda. Building the houses - it's kind of ruined already. We had to fix'm up inside, we have to make a cupboard and everything. After that my wife came on up, we stayed with him all the time.

Narr: Brett had the tiny cabin only a glance away from the three-roomed ranch-house where Lawrence and Frieda lived. She joined in the work like a man. Only Frieda was idle. Even visitors worked.

Johnson: I came up here and stayed with them at the ranch. And we did things together, when he was building the little porch on the ranch, why, I was helping, you know, one on either side of the big crosscut saw. One of us pulling, the other pulling, in turn like that. It was very nice to work with him in that way.

Foster: This is the porch that Lawrence himself made, it's made very crudely, very crude carpentry, but he loved it, and he loved so sit on the porch and talk to you, strangely enough he would read American magazines, adventure magazines he would read, he was happy in this particular spot, this is the spot where Lawrence spent most of his life. He would look at the mountains twenty, thirty miles away, and there was a sort of reverie in his eyes as he talked. The huge tree just a few feet from me, now of course it's grown, double, treble its size, it was then a small pine-tree, but now it's fifty or seventy-five feet high. That tree was Lawrence's tree, he thought of it as his tree. To the left of us is the kitchen-door, where Frieda used to cook all her meals. We spent a great deal of time in the house in the evenings when it was cold, sitting around the fire-place, and Lawrence liked to act, to imitate. Then when stopped acting, why, he would sit in the rocking-chair and fold his hands, and er rock back and forth, as though his little act was over.

Johnson: I remember one time I did tell him I'd just been reading one of his stories in which he began with an almost exact description of himself and Frieda, in one of their conversations, /a situation in a certain phrase. And then the story would gradually get away from that realistic point of view, the exact description of something that actually happened, and gradually build these two characters into somebody else. Um - which I suppose is alright, to someone who doesn't know, but the person who knew knew knew the people, knew the people, knew him, and knew Frieda, knew the situation, it's very upsetting to have it begin in a factual way and then suddenly branch off into fiction. And then to build up the characters in a completely different way from these two original people he had. *The Woman Who Rode Away* was really Mabel, vaguely. But not, not specifically, not really. Just as some of the characters in *St. Mawr*, er one of the characters is Brett, yet it isn't an exact picture at all. He just used people always as a sort of a springboard in his characters to go on to a quite a delineation of quite a different character, but which he started with a real person. He did that a great deal.

Foster: He also like to er harangue you. He liked to tell you what your life was all about, how you ought to work out your life, he was very good at doing that, and when he told you something, you would er you would take it to you, and years and years later you would remember what he had said. He had a strange presence, when you got near Lawrence suddenly something happened to you, ordinary people are just ordinary people, but life passed across from Lawrence to you, and er, depths within you which had never been alerted before suddenly came to life.

Narr: For Lawrence, it was a period of complete living. He made and baked bread for Frieda, Brett and himself in the adobe oven. He tended the animals at the ranch, who took on personalities of their own.

Brett: Susan the black cow, she was just terrific. Because what happened was, you see, she belonged to Bill Hawk and Rachel Hawk, and she was miserable being separated from the other cows. She was lonely, she was miserable, so her whole endeavour was to get back to DeMonte, down to the other cows. So we were always chasing after her. And you have no idea how a cow can hide. She would go into the bushes - you couldn't see her. She would remain absolutely still, not even twitching her ears. But we went on horseback, and the horse knew - the horse knew exactly where she was. That's how we used to find her. They could tell her immediately. Otherwise we never would find her. And I can remember one time Lawrence got a rope around her neck, and I can see her now, galloping down the road, dragging him down the road.

Narr: In a letter to Spud Johnson from England, Lawrence had written, "Horse, horse, be as hobby as you like, but let me get on your back and ride away again to New Mexico."

Brett: It was lovely, we rode, we had, we had the horses, ^{moved} ~~I had a very nice horse, a red sorrel.~~ And Lawrence had a rather inferior horse, called Aaron, a black one. ~~And Frieda had a great big grey horse. And we rode, we used to ride a great deal. Frieda was amazing on a horse, I must say. She had no fear at all. And I was dreadful, I hadn't ridden since I was five or six years old. And I was sort of clutching onto a little horse called Chiquita. She was absolutely crazy. Crazy. Lawrence had absolutely no fear of it, he had no fear of it at all.~~

Hawk: He liked to ride horseback, but he didn't have any feelings for the horse. He'd make the horse go too fast.

Foster: He always wanted to be ahead. Ah - but he was also very awkward on a horse. As Frieda said, "There you have him, at his best and at his worst".

Johnson: He was so high strung that little things would er - he would just explode over them, you see, said terrible things to Frieda, which were, was, very embarrassing indeed to people who were there, who weren't particularly involved in what was going on, to have him suddenly turn on Frieda, and say these revolting things, direct abuse at her, you know, things like that. Violent. You just didn't know what to say, didn't know what to do, because you weren't involved.

Hawk. I remember how he and Frieda fought. They were, they moved up there at the ranch, they would ride horseback down here to get milk. And sometimes we would hear 'em several minutes before they got here, yelling at each other.

Johnson: One day we were all riding down the trail, and er Frieda was so careless, not paying much attention to what she was doing, enjoying herself, and the big white horse Azul suddenly shied at something on the trail, threw her off. And she came tumbling down (laugh) which was quite a fall, I mean, she was a big woman, and er - then she wasn't hurt. But Lawrence was very much upset at this, and er - because he was very high-strung, and nervous, so afterwards, when we were all back at the ranch, and Frieda was stimulated by it, the fact that something like that had happened, kind of violent, and yet nothing happened, she felt perfectly all right. And she was very exuberantly going over the story of how careless she'd been to fall easily, and not been hurt, and quite ??? he turned on her and began to attack her, and say what a bitch she was, and that the minute she had another male companion, she sat there with her legs spraddled, and playing up to him, and so forth, which had nothing whatever to do with what was going on, we felt. And Frieda was very much annoyed, and turned indignantly and said, "Why, it's not so, Sprudel, tell him it isn't so, how ridiculous!" And then of course as soon as the outburst was over, life went on just as though nothing had happened, and he went on cooking, and was very sweet and gentle. But these sudden outbursts had to - he had to get it off his chest, apparently.

Hawk: And another vivid recollection: Rachel and I came up here for a meal. And Frieda cooked it. And he didn't like the way it was cooked. He got up, and picked up the chicken and took it to the kitchen, and said, If anything was ever done right in cooking, he'd have to do it. He and Frieda fought a lot.

Brett: He said that with Frieda, he knew what he had. And, if he left her and got another woman, he wouldn't know what he was getting. (Laugh) How right he was! So he stayed with her. And also a kind of moral thing, that English Midland moral thing. They have that rather rigid kind of morality. And he had some - a great deal of that. A great deal of it.

Brett: (Laugh) Lawrence never thought a woman could really do anything, you know. So, whenever I painted, he had to paint too on the same painting, because he didn't feel somehow that a woman could achieve anything, because she was just female.

That we all painted on, because again, he had to paint on that I had done the original painting, you see, I had got it all going, and then he had to paint over it, you see, he had to make an improvement on himself, and an improvement on Frieda, on the horses, and everything. And Frieda painted the white chickens. That's the only thing she was allowed to paint. And who he painted the porcupine? and so on. That started him painting when he was in Italy. And that's when he painted those big paintings that are down in the hotel now.

Visitor 1: We've come to see the Lawrence paintings.

Karavas: Yes.

Visitor 1: May we come in please?

Karavas: Make yourself at home. ??? Begin at your left, and go around.

Visitor 1. Where did you acquire these paintings?

Karavas: I bought these paintings from Angelino Ravagli, who inherited as last husband of Frieda Lawrence.

Visitor 1: Is there a story behind these paintings?

Karavas: These paintings were the original collection which was exhibited at the Warren Galleries in 1929. And after two weeks, Scotland Yard confiscated the show.

Visitor 1: On what grounds?

Karavas: Being pornographic.

RENTAL
STAMP

Visitor 1: Are the paintings pornographic?

Karavas: Well, I leave that up to the individuals. They're still banned in England. I will read you an excerpt of the letter Mr. Pollinger, who manages the estate of DH Lawrence, this excerpt you might find interesting: "DH Lawrence gave an undertaking to the authorities here that the paintings would never come back to this country. It was, if my memory serves, on these conditions that Scotland Yard and the Home Office returned the paintings to DH Lawrence after they had seized and closed down the exhibition of them here. Yours sincerely, Mr. Pollinger." And Professor Bacon, of the University of Nottingham, requested the collection on a loan, but unfortunately I could not loan them because of the contents of the letter that I just read to you from Mr. Pollinger. The only thing I know is they were considered pornographic at the time of the banning in London, during the exhibition at the Warren Galleries.

I believe that very few people ever knew that Lawrence painted. How do you find them?

Visitor 2: Oh, interesting. Interesting.

Narr: Despite their quarrels, in August of 1924, Mabel and Tony and Frieda and Lawrence took Mabel's Model-T Ford, and headed off into the desert. They were bound for Arizona, to see the Hopi Indian Snake Dance. Lawrence used this trip as the basis for an essay in which he contrasted the White Man's god with that of the Indian. "We have undertaken the scientific conquest of forces, of natural conditions. It was comparatively easy, and we are victors. We and our little gods are gods of the machine only, our cosmos is a great engine. The Hopi solved the conquest by means of the mystic living will that is in man, pitted against the living will of the dragon cosmos. We dam the Nile and take the railway across America, the Hopi smoothes the rattlesnake and carries him in his mouth to send him back into the dark places of the earth, an emissary to the inner powers."

(Indian music)

Narr: "White Americans hurry back to their motor-cars, and soon the air buzzes with starting engines, like the biggest of rattlesnakes buzzing."

Brett: He was here for - for the summer. And then that winter, we went to old Mexico. And you know, in old Mexico, they were frightened of him. If we went into remote villages, and walked out of Oaxaca, or drove out, and then walked into a little village, the people were afraid of him. They would run away and hide, they were afraid, they would call "Cristo, Cristo", and they would run away and hide. Lawrence of course was furious. Upset by it. In old Mexico, at Oaxaca, he painted on my other paintings out there. We would go outside town a little way. We weren't allowed to go very far because of the bandits in the mountain.

1925

Foster: The Brett and Lawrence used to go out in the country and paint. Frieda resented that. She became violently jealous, and she demanded that the Brett leave.

Brett: Frieda got mad because we went out painting in the afternoon. And she made the most frightful row. And I had to come back, I said, it's no good, we can't go on like this.

Foster: She imagined more in their relationship than actually existed, the relationship was very innocent between Lawrence and the Brett. But the Brett finally had to leave, Lawrence didn't like it, but the Brett came back to the ranch.

Brett: Well, I came back ahead of them. Then he was terribly sick - I think he got something - some of these Mexican soldiers would come up from the interior with fearful diseases. And he caught a very bad form of malaria. He was terribly sick.

Narr: From Mexico, Lawrence wrote to Brett "friendship between a man and a woman as a thing of first importance to either is impossible. And between you and me there is no sensual correspondence."

Foster: Even though Frieda contradicted almost everything that Lawrence said, Frieda was the great thing in Lawrence's life. When he was dying in Oaxaca, he said, "You, and only you, are the only thing that has counted".

Brett: He came back - he was absolutely pale green, I've never seen such a colour. And when he was in the - to get across the border, you know, they have these doctors, you have to go through not only the Customs, but a doctor to get into this country. And he rouged his face, got through it like that. But you've no idea what this climate did for him. It was remarkable, his recovery when he got back from old Mexico. One month, he was riding. And yet he couldn't stay.

Roberts: She stayed with him a while, but as always when there was a third person around, she and Frieda sometimes had a difference of opinion. I think not in the ordinary sense of one woman being jealous of another woman at all, I think it was more a case of somebody being under foot all the time.

Brett: We never had a quarrel. Never. Never! You see, Frieda stirred him up. Frieda liked to quarrel. You know. And I don't like those things ~~?? I never stirred him up.~~ If stirred him up, and he got mad with me, I could always quiet him down in about five minutes.

Johnson: Brett, Brett adored Lawrence, I mean she just hung on every word he had and wanted to be with him all the time, and of course that was another thing, Frieda, Frieda got jealous, she was just annoyed, I mean, it wasn't that they were having an affair either, it was not, not that kind of thing. But just to have this other woman around all the time was extremely annoying to Frieda.

Brett: She was jealous because I, I had some er - what would you call it? contact with him that she didn't have. Because she didn't understand the psychic, spiritual thing. She just didn't understand it. And was jealous of it, of course. And also jealous of the fact that we built things together, we played around together in the afternoon whilst she was lying on the bed smoking. So there you have it. So what can you do. That time I was down on the Hawk ranch, because Frieda had got, you know, just like women get, you know, she just didn't want me around.

Foster: The Brett was required to live below, and was allowed to come up to the ranch only three days a week, and before she came across the clearing she must blow her whistle. If she came on the wrong day, Frieda was enraged. The Brett of course was on the outskirts of the friendship, because Frieda would have it no other way. Frieda could not bear the Brett, and of course Brett to this very day doesn't like Frieda. I don't know whether this was just two women fighting over Lawrence or not, but the antagonism remains in the Brett.

Brett: Well, he said he'd never never in his life go to a lonely place and be alone with Frieda, he was so bored. Utterly bored. Because that's one of the reasons he brought me over, was to break that intense boredom. She was a very boring woman. She was one of these great big motherly people, you know. But boring. And terribly jealous, and terribly bossy. Frieda was antagonistic to human beings. She never liked anybody. Never. And that was the problem with him. He was one of these people, naturally as a writer, who was intensely interested in people. And she wasn't, she always wanted to be isolated, always wanted to be just alone, you see, and also, she was immensely jealous of the fact that he was the er - flame - that attracted people. And she wasn't. She had to play second fiddle. She couldn't get over that.

If he had stayed here, I think he would be alive now. But they can't, they can't stay put, those people. TB people, they never can. They are always looking for the perfect spot, and they never will stay in the perfect spot when they find it. I don't know what it is. They wander and wander and wander.

Narr: In September 1925, Lawrence left New Mexico for the last time. And in a few weeks was in Italy staying in the villa rented from Angelino Ravagli, whom Frieda was to marry twenty-five years later in Taos.

Brett: And Frieda, who always had a glad eye, you see, started this kind of business. He came over to Capri and had a terrible row with Frieda and her two daughters, who tormented him. I had gone to Capri because he had friends there, and he wanted me to see Italy. He said "Everybody should see Italy", he loved Italy.

Roberts: She painted a portrait of Lawrence in Capri - she told me once that she painted, she started this portrait during their time in Capri, and people made so much fun of it, she destroyed it, and she has only recently done this painting again. This was a portrait of Lawrence in two guises, one as Pan, and one as Christ, each of course with Lawrence's face, facing each other across a field of flowers. Very, very amusing.

Brett: Oh, he was so sick. He was, he was just a wisp, and pale-green again. And he stayed with friends, and then I had to go back to England because of my citizenship, and I had to come back to this country to get it, you see. I came down here, and I stayed at Mabel's, and then in the summer I went to look after the ranch.

Roberts: For a time she took care of the Lawrence ranch, and the Lawrence manuscripts there, Lawrence apparently had er charged her with the responsibility of caring for it in his absence, and she accepted this responsibility very willingly, and did take care of it.

Brett: They were always coming back. Always. Then when he wanted to come back, Frieda didn't, and when

Frieda wanted to come back, he didn't. And then he left it too late. He went to Vence, and he was too sick. And I went to New York, and I was in the Shelton Hotel, and I got a telegram from Frieda, saying "Come over - " oh - "Lawrence very sick. Come over and make him well as you did before." He was dead before I got the telegram. Even so, it would have been hopeless. He just went out, you know - and he faded out.

Narr (reading Lawrence): "And the pine-trees make little noises, subtle and stealthy, as if they were walking about. And the place heaves with ghosts, that place, the ranch heaves with ghosts. But when one has got used to one's own home ghosts, be they never so many and so potent, they are like one's own family, but nearer than the blood. It is the ghosts one misses most, the ghosts near the Rocky Mountains, that never go beyond the timber and that linger like the animals round the water spring. I know them, they know me. We go well together. And they reproach me for going away. They're resentful, too."

Roberts: He liked Taos - not the village of Taos, he liked the country. And I think if he'd been well, toward the end of his life, he probably would have come back and lived here - Frieda did, you know. She came back about 19 - around 1935 or 6, I think. And she lived here until she died, 19 - 1956. She certainly liked it. She found the country very um - she found it compatible, somehow. Brett adapted herself to Taos very easily, apparently, and I think she's been there ever since, except for a few odd visits to England now and then. She's become a member of the colony and she paints pictures of Indians, the sort of thing Lawrence wrote about.

Brett: Then, when he died, she came back with Angelino, because she could not be alone, she couldn't be without a man. They lived down here opposite, on the side of the road here, and they also lived up on the ranch in summer - you couldn't live up on the ranch in wintertime. She gave me the land here to build on.

Fechin: After Lawrence, of course, was gone, there was nothing to quarrel about, ??? going around, and they seemed to be quite good friends. But they never lived together, because Brett lived in the ??? and Frieda stayed at the ranch. So they weren't too close. Some kind of mistrust was there on both sides, I think.

Brett: Frieda was a very helpless woman, and when Angi would go for a vacation to Italy, I had to look after her, she couldn't drive, she couldn't get anything. So I looked after her.

Fechin: But Frieda was a very very nice person. She could be sometimes a little bit of ?? I even used to get a irritated a little with her, but still she was a very genuine person, very open, and some kind of sunshine came from her. It was just bursting out of her.

Brett: Frieda, in spite of everything, was a very warm, jolly, jovial kind of a person too. She had those qualities. Sort of motherly. She really was. She did have that side. I'm not so motherly as she was, I don't think, I'm not so female as she was, she was essentially female. A female of females, you know what I mean? So - and I don't think I've ever been quite that. (Laugh)

Narr: Mabel was still in Taos for a time, and there was a general truce.

Brett: We all three got along, that's what nobody could understand. Mabel, and Frieda and I got along perfectly. Perfectly. Isn't that ridiculous?

Narr: But they had not forgotten Lawrence, buried in Vence, in the south of France, so the sleeping phoenix was dug up, and burned to ashes, in accordance with his destiny. And the three women's struggle for possession of him went on.

Brett: It was thought that he wanted to be brought over, to here, to the ranch, and have his ashes scattered, you see. So, when Frieda came, he was cremated, and his ashes put in an urn. And Frieda and Angi brought them over. But by some strange error, they forgot them in New York. And there they were, lost, in New York. Where were Lawrence's ashes? Well, Stieglitz, that is, Georgia O'Keefe's husband, was alive then, and he found the ashes - I think they had been left, somehow, either in a hotel or or in his gallery, I'm not quite sure which. So, the ashes were recovered, and then they were brought, they brought them down here. And when they got here, they again left them in Tinka's.

Fechin: And then we got the news that Angelino was coming from Europe, and we went to this - er to meet him at the station, and he gave me a little bit of a coffin, like a child's coffin, and said, This is Lawrence, you take care of him, I have other things to do." So Angelino said, and Frieda too, "Why don't you take the ashes with you,

because we have so much other luggage." They had a little convertible car. When they left in the car, they forgot the ashes in my house here. And I didn't know how to get Frieda - so I went even to the er to the er newspaper office, and asked the man there, I knew the editor, Spud Johnson, "Oh," he said, "never mind - do you mind leaving Lawrence with you?" I said, "No, I don't." (Laugh) Then he said, "Alright, keep it, until they come back."

Brett: And when they got up to the ranch, no ashes. They'd lost the ashes again. But Tinka had got them in her house, Tinka Fechin, and she had made a little shrine for them, ~~she~~ she put a couple of candles in front of it, and she kept them until she could get word to them that she had them.

Fechin: But when finally they did come back, Frieda said "You know, I remembered it halfway to the ranch, but I don't think Lawrence would mind to stay with Tinka, so let him stay with Tinka for a while." Because the chapel wasn't ready either.

Brett: Then they were brought up to the ranch, and instead of scattering them, Angi built that little cold stone chapel in which they have been put, which of course he would hate if he ever saw it. Loathe it! He made a curious, rather fascinating little dove that sits on the top of it, a little bird, a little phoenix, as a matter of fact, which has been now replaced by a very handsome phoenix with a great big large bosom, have you seen it? (Laugh)

Fechin: it was quite a ceremony to finally put the ashes into the place, in the chapel, I think there were about 85 people, from all over, his friends from Santa Fe and Albuquerque, and Indians made big bonfire and sang something, and then there was an actress here, Shakespearian actress, she read his last poems which was all was very very nice.

Brett: Oh - then there was a plot hatched - I won't mention the people in it, at least, not all of them. But Mabel was in it, and er Mabel and a few others were to steal the ashes out of the chapel and scatter them. Frieda got hold of this story, and all the blame was put on me. All the rest of the people simply disappeared, and pretended they knew nothing about it, and left it all on me! And she wouldn't speak to me for a whole year or more. She was furious. They're still there. They're still there in that miserable little place. Frieda is there outside. He's in the chapel, and she's just outside, which seems to me ironical, somehow rather just. (Laugh) There she is in that large grave with that ornate stone over her. Oh - oh dear.

END

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