

The Grass is Singing Quotations

Writer: Doris Lessing | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Quotes

"There was a feeling of misery over all the house." – (Part I, Chapter 2 – Narrator-
Personification) Atmosphere of the house

Explanation: This line describes the unhappiness in the Morel household. Walter's drinking and quarrels create an atmosphere of constant misery. It sets the tragic tone of family life.

"Each forgot everything save the hatred of the other." – (Part I, Chapter 1 – Narrator –
Conflict)

Explanation: This line shows Walter and Gertrude's failed marriage. Their love turns into pure hatred. It highlights man-woman conflict at the heart of the novel.

"His [Paul] soul seemed always attentive to her [Gertrude]." – (Part I, Chapter 4 – Narrator –
Mother-fixation)

Explanation: This line captures Paul's deep attachment to his mother. His soul is bound to Gertrude, showing the Oedipus Complex theme.

"He could not be free to go forward with his own life, really love another woman." – (Part
II, Chapter 13 – Narrator – Tragedy of Paul)

Explanation: This line shows Paul's failure in love. His mother's hold prevents him from truly loving Miriam or Clara. It reveals the tragic effect of mother-fixation.

"Her [Gertrude's] proud, honourable soul had crystallised out hard as rock." – (Part I,
Chapter 1 – Narrator – Simile, Character of Gertrude)

Explanation: This line shows Gertrude's strength after losing faith in her husband. Her soul becomes hard, proud, and withdrawn.

“He was a master of skittles and of dominoes.” – (Part I, Chapter 1 – Narrator – Morel’s Weakness)

Explanation: This line highlights Walter Morel’s careless love for pub games. It symbolizes his neglect of family and waste of life.

“They wanted genuine intimacy, but they could not get even normally near to anyone.” – (Part II, Chapter 7 – Narrator – Theme of failed intimacy)

Explanation: This shows the tragic struggle for real closeness in relationships. Characters long for intimacy but fail, blocked by pride, fixation, or fear.

“She had borne so long the cruelty of belonging to him and not being claimed by him.” – (Part II, Chapter 15 – Narrator on Gertrude – Marriage conflict)

Explanation: Gertrude feels trapped in marriage. She belongs to Walter by law, but he does not value or cherish her. This highlights the cruelty of failed love.

“Recklessness is almost a man's revenge on his woman.” – (Part II, Chapter 8 – Narrator – Metaphor, Gender conflict)

Explanation: Lawrence shows male recklessness as a form of revenge on women. It reflects the deep battle between man and woman in love.

“Night, in which everything was lost, went reaching out, beyond stars and sun.” – (Part II, Chapter 9 – Narrator – Symbolism, Loneliness)

Explanation: This poetic line symbolizes emptiness and despair. Night becomes a metaphor for Paul’s inner darkness and loss.

“He always ran away from the battle with himself.” – (Part I, Chapter 2 – Narrator on Paul – Inner conflict)

Explanation: Paul avoids confronting his inner struggles, his divided love, guilt, and fixation. This shows his psychological weakness.

“Sleep is still most perfect, in spite of hygienists, when it is shared with a beloved.” – (Part I, Chapter 4 – Narrator – Theme of intimacy)

Explanation: This line shows Lawrence's belief in the natural closeness of love. Real intimacy is found in physical and emotional sharing.

LxNotes