



# די לעצטע ליבע

Last Love

Recording in Yiddish:

<https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/collections/audio-books/smr-chava-rosenfarb-di-letste-libe-000>

***Di letste libe***

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Last Love - Chava Rosenfarb

## Last Love

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For the first two weeks of her stay in Paris, Amalia felt quite well. For hours on end, day after day, she would sit between the tall, shuttered casements of the open hotel room window with her knees resting against the black wrought-iron railing that was molded as fine as a piece of filigree. From there she would gaze down into the Tuileries Gardens across the street. The pills she was taking had completely dulled her pain, and if she happened to feel an ache in her chest, Gabriel would double the dose of her medicine.

Ever since the Second World War she had suffered from tuberculosis. She had spent time in a number of sanatoria and had thought herself cured—especially during the years she lived with her former husband—when suddenly, for some mysterious reason, she suffered a relapse. Now she was in the last stage of her illness, from which, the doctors said, there was no hope that she would recover.

Gabriel had brought her to Paris to grant her what she wanted.

# The structure of the story

- pp. **15-25 Introduction** (the story of love between Amalia and Gabriel)

We know: “she wished to embark on her journey into Eternal Darkness from the City of Light, the city where she had gone directly after the war, the city where **she had been young**, where her beauty had come into bloom, and where she had fallen in love for the first time” s. 15

“He called her ‘my white Dame aux Camélias’ or ‘my white geisha.’” p. 21

- pp. 24-25: “I would like to discover what was the strongest force propelling me through life. What was my **most powerful passion?**”

# The structure of the story

- p. 26 **revelation**

"Do you know, Gabriel, what the most powerful forces were that shaped my life? They were love and the fear of death"

- pp. 26-37 **solution** Jean-Pierre, Rosa, Gabriel
- pp. 37-39 **culminating point**
- pp. 39-44 **resolution**: Jean-Pierre and Amalia/ Gilgulei HaNeshamot

# Questions:

1. How would you interpret the affection/love(?) shared by Amalia and Gabriel?
2. Do elements such as war, trauma, and past experiences play a role in their narrative? If so, how do they manifest?
3. Who is Jean-Pierre, and what insights can you derive from his character?
4. What was the central passion in Amalia's life?
5. The meaning of the title, what is “di letste libe”?



# Meanings: Autumn

Jardin des Tuileries: *The role of the Autumn?*



# Meanings

Amalia:

Amalthea, which originated from the Greek name  
"tender goddess"

The role of sculptures in Gabriel life?  
(the studio filled with Amalias)

Flowers , *La Dame aux Camélias*

Gabriel:

Gabriel is a given name derived from  
the Hebrew name, meaning "God is my  
strength"

גַּבְרִיאֵל



# Memory and Holocaust

- Frankl noted that within the confines of the concentration camp, survivors were distinguished by their ability to find a sense of purpose to cling to, which imbued them with a sense of positivity. They would often immerse themselves in envisioning this purpose, such as engaging in imagined conversations with a loved one. Frankl posited that a prisoner's longevity was influenced by how they envisioned their future.

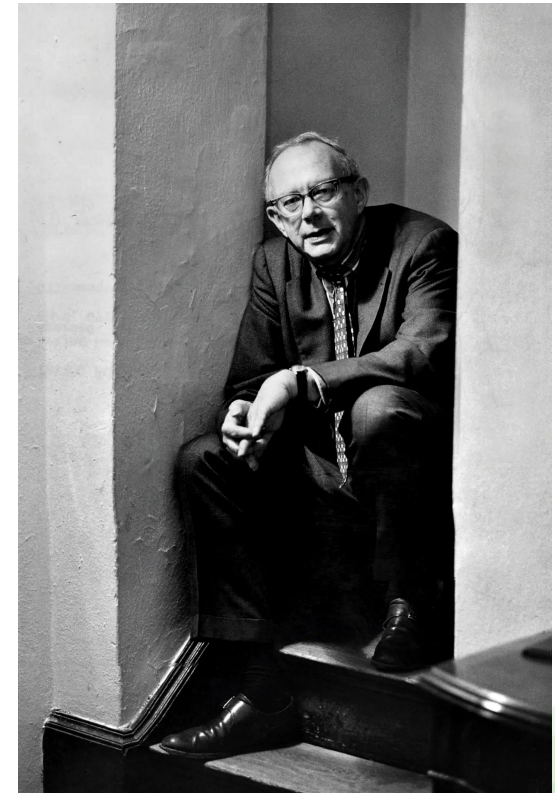


## Our subject resists the usual capacities of mind

- “Whatever was unique took place in the death camps, forming a sequence of events radically different from all previous butcheries in the history of mankind. Revenge, enslavement, dispersion, and large-scale slaughter of enemies, all are commonplace of the past; but the physical elimination of a categorized segment of mankind was, both as an idea and fact, new. “The destruction of Europe’s Jews,” Claude Lanzmann has written, “cannot be logically deduced from any . . . system of presuppositions. . . . Between the conditions that permitted extermination and the extermination itself — the *fact* of the extermination — there is a break in continuity, a hiatus, an abyss.” That abyss forms the essence of the Holocaust.” Writing and Holocaust 1986

- **A Voice Still Heard Selected Essays of Irving Howe by Irving Howe, 2014**

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In a poem entitled “Written in Pencil in the Sealed Freight Car,” the Israeli poet Don Pagis writes:

Here in this transport  
I Eve  
and Abel my son  
if you should see my older son Cain son of man  
tell him that I

Cry to heaven or cry to earth: that sentence will never be completed.