

and his thirst to comply with expectations. Despite a passionate love for Giovanni, David follows his expected path and proposes to a woman that he sees fit to “love”. In this sense, David’s question of masculinity and self-identity immediately doom their relationship. Their love develops into a hypocritical travesty because he cannot break free from his own confusions.

The novel’s plot develops because of the dishonesty David has with himself. He avoids the blunt realities of his homosexuality to pacify his desire to be what he believes is a true man. He cannot tell Giovanni about Hella, he walks away because life with Giovanni would be impossible, and he grabs every opportunity to trick Hella into thinking he loves women. As David continues to make claims throughout the novel, he drowns himself in self-deception and pity instead of becoming vulnerable to achieve happiness. His struggle to attain the pitted definition of manhood ultimately leads to his demise as an individual who is capable of accepting the love he deserves. Although it is too late to save Giovanni, David exits the novel finally knowing that within his flesh is the “key to my [his] salvation.”