

# ROUGH NOTES ON *LOVE STORY*

## MAJOR CHARACTERS

- OLIVER BARRETT IV. NARRATOR
- JENNIFER CAVILLERI
- OLIVER BARRETT III, FATHER
- PHIL CAVILLERI, FATHER

## PLOT LINES

[A PLOT IS A STORY WITHIN A NOVEL OR FILM THAT HAS A BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND AN END.]

JENNY AND OLLIE -- LOVE BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN

OLLIE AND FATHER -- LOVE BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

## AUDIENCE

CLASS: MIDDLE

RACE: WHITE

AGE: TEENS--UP, BUT FOCUS ON 16-21

GENDER: FEMALE

ORIGINAL PLACE OF PUBLICATION: LADIES HOME JOURNAL

ORIGINAL PUBLICATION DATE: 1970, CO-ORDINATED WITH FILM VERSION THAT ALSO CAME OUT IN 1970. SEGAL WORKED WITH FILM.

## MAJOR TOPICS

CLASS AND MONEY. AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF A RICH BOY'S ATTEMPT TO FIND INDEPENDENCE FROM HIS FAMILY TRADITIONS, THERE IS HIS LOVE FOR A POOR ITALIAN GIRL.

OLIVER IS THE PRINCE WHO IS TRYING TO FIND HIS OWN WAY AND BECOME INDEPENDENT OF THE KING, HIS FATHER, BY TAKING A POOR GIRL <CINDERELLA> AS HIS BRIDE. IN SO DOING, HE MAKES HER HIS PRINCESS.

THE STORY OF OLIVER'S STRUGGLE TO GAIN THE RESPECT OF HIS FATHER BEGAN BEFORE THE STORY OF JENNY AND OLIVER AND CONTINUES ON AFTERWARDS.

NOTE: IT IS THROUGH HIS FATHER THAT OLIVER MAINTAINS HIS TIES TO MAJOR (SERIOUS) WEALTH AND FAMILY TRADITIONS (HIS BARRETT NAME). THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT <TO THE AUDIENCE> THAT MARRYING THE POOR GIRL DOES NOT CAUSE THE PRINCE TO LOSE HIS WEALTH.

THE MAJOR CONFLICTS BETWEEN JENNY AND OLLIE AFTER THEY ARE MARRIED DEAL WITH HIS RELATIONSHIP TO HIS FATHER, NOT WITH THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER OR HER RELATIONSHIP TO HER FAMILY/COMMUNITY OR HER PERSONAL MUSICAL GOALS.

ONCE AGAIN, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SEGAL AND HIS AUDIENCE THAT OLLIE'S MARRYING JENNY DOES NOT TURN HIM COMPLETELY AWAY FROM HIS WEALTH <FATHER>.

THIS IS A STORY OF UPWARDS MOBILITY FOR JENNY, NOT DOWNWARDS MOBILITY FOR OLLIE.

**QUESTION: WHY DOES JENNY LOVE OLLIE?**

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NOTE: *LOVE STORY* THE NOVEL IS A PRODUCT. IT WAS WRITTEN WITH ONE GOAL IN MIND: SALES.

"LOVE STORY" THE FILM IS ALSO A PRODUCT: IT WAS ALSO PRODUCED WITH ONE GOAL IN MIND: SALES.

SINCE SEGAL WAS INVOLVED IN BOTH THE BOOK AND THE FILM, WE CAN REASONABLY ASSUME THE FILM IS AN ACCURATE DEPICTION OF HOW SEGAL WANTED HIS NOVEL TO BE READ AND UNDERSTOOD.

THEREFORE, IT IS CRITICAL TO SEE THE WAYS IN WHICH THE FILM DIFFERS FROM THE WRITTEN TEXT AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHY SEGAL WANTED <ALLOWED> THESE CHANGES.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE BOOK IT IS CLEAR THAT SHE ALREADY KNOWS WHO HE IS WHEN SHE FIRST STARTS AFTER HIM IN THE LIBRARY.

IS THIS CLEAR IN FILM OR IS THERE THE SUGGESTION THAT SHE ONLY FINDS OUT WHO HIS AFTER THEY ARE HAVING COFFEE?

THIS DISTINCTION IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING HER MOTIVES.

OLLIE SAYS THAT HE <LOOKS RICH> AND THAT JENNY HAS <PRETTY EYES>. THE COMMENTS HE MAKES SHOWS OLLIE SEES HER AS A <SNOTTY RADCLIFFE BITCH> -- HE SEES HER WAY OF SPEAKING (SWEARING) AND ACTING IS SEEN AS PART OF HER BEING A 'CLIFFIE, NOT AS AN ASPECT OF HER LOWER CLASS BACKGROUND. IT SHOWS SHE IS A <TRUE RADCLIFFE GIRL.>

ON THE OTHER HAND, WE LATER SEE HER SPEECH IS VERY SIMILAR TO PHIL'S. SO WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO THINK?

IN THE BOOK, OLLIE SAYS JENNY IS <BEAUTIFUL AND BRILLIANT> BUT DRESSES TOO <BOHO> (BOHEMIAN) FOR HIM.

HE ASSIGNS AN A- TO HER LEGS, BUT DIDN'T LIKE HER <COSTUME>. "I ESPECIALLY LOATHED THAT INDIAN THING SHE CARRIED FOR A HANDBAG" WHICH HE LATER FINDS SHE DESIGNED HERSELF.

WHAT IS THE AUDIENCE SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL OF THESE SEEMINGLY INCONSISTENT ELEMENTS?

WHAT HAPPENS TO THESE IN THE FILM? HOW MANY OF THESE INCONSISTENCIES DISAPPEAR?

## NOVEL/FILM AS ESSAY

LET'S LOOK AT THE NOVEL AND THE FILM AS AN ESSAY. LET'S SUPPOSE IT IS AN EDITORIAL ESSAY IN WHICH SEGAL IS TRYING TO PROVE HIS THEME.

THEME STATEMENT: LOVE CONQUERS ALL OF LIFE'S PROBLEMS (EXCEPT DEATH.)

IN OTHER WORDS, THE MESSAGE TO THE TARGET AUDIENCE IS THAT IF A MAN AND A WOMAN LOVE EACH OTHER THEY CAN CONQUER ALL OF LIFE'S PROBLEMS -- WHETHER THEY ARE BASED ON CLASS, RACE, GENDER OR AGE.

THIS IS WHAT THE NOVEL IS SUPPOSED TO PROVE.

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS RELATE TO CLASS AND RACE/RELIGION.

AS EVIDENCE, JENNY AND OLLIE OVERCOME A SERIES OF CONFLICTS, EACH OF WHICH IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT SPECIFIC ARGUMENTS.

USE YOUR PW/CT MODELS WHENEVER THEY APPLY.

THE LOGIC OF THE FILM/NOVEL IS BASED UPON WHAT KIND OF LOGIC THE MIDDLE CLASS TEEN FEMALE AUDIENCE WILL ACCEPT TO ACCEPT THE THEME.

THIS "LOGIC" MAY BE BASED ON DIFFERENT MODELS FROM THAT USED IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (PW/CT).

HINT: LS IS THE ONLY NOVEL/FILM WE ARE DOING THAT IS ADDRESSED TO A MIDDLE CLASS AUDIENCE.