



## EPHEMERAL LOVE AND QUEST FOR MEANING: A LOGOTHERAPEUTIC ANALYSIS OF DOSTOYEVSKY'S *WHITE NIGHTS*

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### Abstract

To comprehend how the unnamed dreamer's ephemeral love becomes a source of meaning, this study examines *White Nights* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky through the lens of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. Although the novella's themes of loneliness, imagination, and existential conflict have been the subject of numerous studies, very few have specifically examined them within Frankl's theoretical framework. This lack of investigation forms the central gap that this study aims to address. The main goal of the study is to examine how, despite the relationship's brief duration, a brief emotional encounter changes the dreamer's mental state and gives him a new sense of purpose. The study takes a qualitative approach and uses textual analysis of Dostoyevsky's novellas as the primary source. It also draws on relevant secondary sources, including scholarly articles, literary criticism, and psychological studies of meaning making. The guiding theory is logotherapy, with an emphasis on personal transformation, emotional connection, and experiential values as means of finding meaning. Findings indicate that the dreamer's short-lived relationship with Nastenka functions as a powerful existential experience. Even though the love remains unfulfilled, it grants the dreamer emotional clarity, hope, and a deeper understanding of human connection. This suggests that temporary experiences can hold lasting significance and can act as catalysts for inner development. The study concludes that ephemeral love in *White Nights* is not merely a romantic episode but a meaningful psychological event that closely aligns with Frankl's concept of meaning derived from fleeting yet profound encounters.

**Keywords:** *Dostoyevsky, Ephemeral Love, Logotherapy, Meaning-Making, Qualitative Analysis, White Nights.*

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## 1. Introduction

The Romantic era is represented in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *White Nights* (1848), which captures the aspirations and hardships of the day. Russia saw tremendous urbanization and social transformation during the nineteenth century, and people frequently wondered where they fit in. The story's backdrop, St. Petersburg, is bustling but emotionally detached. This background demonstrates how profound loneliness can still occur in a densely populated metropolis. The "*White Nights*," when darkness never fully descends, contribute to this atmosphere by symbolizing beauty tinged with melancholy and suggesting that happy times in life are fleeting. The conflict between reality and fantasies is examined in the piece. To avoid loneliness, people often create imaginary interior worlds, but when these dreams go unfulfilled, they can become painful.

This struggle highlights a reality about human psychology: while unmet hope can cause severe pain, it is essential for survival. The story also depicts loneliness and the need for connection. A single act of kindness can change someone's life, yet losing that connection may be just as painful. Happiness seems brittle, indicating that intimacy is both necessary and dangerous. Additionally, memory is crucial. Short moments might sometimes linger in our memories more than lengthy stretches of regularity. These recollections can be both consoling and depressing. *White Nights* illustrates how our feelings and desires may shape our experiences. It also looks at how our dreams, memories, and imaginations can both make life meaningful and painful.

### 1.1. Research Objectives

The aims and objectives of this research are;

- To investigate how the narrator's fleeting love in *White Nights* transforms his inner emptiness into a meaningful existence.
- To interpret how Dostoevsky portrays love and suffering as a contrast to provide meaning even in agony.
- To explore whether temporary human bonds, as shown in the novella, can create lasting purpose.

### 1.2. Research Questions

1. How does the narrator's fleeting love in *White Nights* transform his inner emptiness into a meaningful existence?
2. How does Dostoevsky portray love and suffering in contrast to suggest that meaning can exist even in agony?
3. Can temporary human bonds, as depicted in the novella, create lasting purpose for individuals?

### 1.3. Problem Statement

*White Nights*, a short novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, depicts the inner turmoil and loneliness of a St. Petersburg dreamer. The narrative demonstrates how a person's life can have profound significance even from a fleeting experience of love. The work captures the universal human urge for meaning and belonging through its emphasis on loneliness, hope, and the pursuit of connection. *White Nights'* relationship to Viktor Frankl's logotherapy has not been extensively or directly examined, despite numerous literary studies that have examined it in terms of romanticism, psychology, and existentialism. The novel has rarely been analysed through the particular lens of logotherapy, although a few studies discuss relevant psychological problems. Logotherapy emphasizes that if people discover a sense of purpose in life, they can bear pain and emptiness. This thought is reflected in *White Nights'* dreamer, whose brief experience with love alters his perception of life. By examining *White Nights* through the lens of logotherapy, the current study seeks to close this gap. It aims to highlight how literature may reveal psychological truths about human resilience and how the novel exemplifies Frankl's conviction that meaning can be found even in fleeting or traumatic events.

#### 1.4. Research Significance

The present research is significant for comprehending human emotions and the pursuit of meaning because of its straightforward yet impactful narrative. Numerous previous analyses of *White Nights* have focused on the narrator's loneliness, the distinction between dreams and reality, or broader philosophical issues. While some described the narrator's inner world, others concentrated on its romantic aspect. However, not much has been done to relate this book to the logotherapy of Viktor Frankl. This method has not been used to investigate whether even a fleeting love can give life direction and purpose. The purpose of this study is to emphasize that point. Logotherapy explains how *White Nights'* short lived love can still provide the dreamer's life significance and worth. The research is distinctive because it integrates literature and psychology in a way that has never been done before. Future researchers and students who want to apply psychological theories to novels and learn how literature reflects the human search for meaning can benefit from this work.

#### 2. Literature Review

According to Yousefvand & Tatari (2015), Dostoevsky's *White Nights* portrays love as a profound and significant human experience, rather than a mere emotion. According to the authors, the novel *tackles* two types of love: one based on selflessness and personal progress, and the other confined and dependent. The narrator's affection for Nastenka is revealed to be genuine and generous; he loves her without demanding anything in return. This love allows him to mature emotionally and spiritually, transforming his loneliness into understanding. Nastenka's love, on the other hand, is

stuck in the past and does not result in growth or progress. Yousefvand and Tatari further connect this concept to Erich Fromm's philosophy, which holds that genuine happiness and morality stem from a focus on being rather than having. Dostoevsky appears to admire the type of love that instills moral fortitude, kindness, and selflessness. Through the narrator's experience, the novel demonstrates that true love is about becoming a better person rather than owning someone. In this way, *White Nights* connects love with inner development, showing how a brief emotional experience can lead to long-term self-discovery (Yousefvand & Tatari, 2015).

Agapov (1999) states Dostoevsky frequently employs the environment not only as a physical backdrop, but also as a reflection of his characters' inner feelings and spiritual states. This concept can also be extended to *White Nights*, where the St. Petersburg setting plays an important symbolic role. The peaceful bridges, bright sky, and dreamy light of the "*White Nights*" reflect the narrator's state of mind, marked by loneliness, longing, and hope. Nature here reveals thoughts that words cannot convey. The light nights are beautiful yet melancholy, much like the dreamer's love for Nastenka. Agapov explains that Dostoevsky's landscapes frequently occur during emotional or moral crises, exposing reality through spiritual strain. Similarly, the mood of *White Nights* portrays the dreamer's internal tension between imagination and reality. The city becomes a living representation of his soul, demonstrating how Dostoevsky relates the outside world to the human desire for meaning. Dostoevsky's emotional environment transforms St. Petersburg into more than just a setting; it becomes a reflection of isolation, love, and the quiet sorrow of living (Agapov, 1999).

According to McCoubrey (2004), Dostoevsky believes that human misery is caused by our own selfishness, rather than by God or fate. He believes that only love, kindness, and honesty will help individuals overcome their grief. This theme resonates with *White Nights*, in which the narrator suffers greatly due to his loneliness and his habit of living in dreams rather than reality. His sadness stems from being isolated from others and focusing solely on his own emotions. When he eventually encounters love, even if only briefly, it opens his heart and changes his perspective on life. Though his love story ends tragically, it allows him to grow as a person and find meaning in his suffering. In this way, Dostoevsky demonstrates that love can heal and guide a person toward self-discovery. The narrator discovers that true happiness stems not from abandoning the world, but from connecting with others through compassion. As McCoubrey proposes, love acts as a cure for selfishness, teaching us to care, forgive, and find meaning even in the midst of suffering. *White Nights* beautifully captures the notion of emotional and spiritual rejuvenation (McCoubrey, 2004).

Oliveira (2020) investigates how Dostoevsky and Poe employ their characters to portray the hidden side of the human mind—the unconscious realm of guilt, dread, and

desire. Dostoevsky's characters frequently fight between reason and emotion, demonstrating how internal conflict influences their actions and identities. This psychological conflict is also evident in *White Nights*, where the narrator exists in his mind rather than reality. His dreams, loneliness, and emotional confusion reflect the conflict between his aware self, which craves connection, and his underlying anxieties, which keep him apart. When he meets Nastenka, his emotions surface, pushing him to confront the truth about himself. The novel becomes a voyage into the dreamer's inner world, similar to Dostoevsky's earlier writings, which investigate the unconscious as a source of both sorrow and self-awareness. Oliveira's perspective helps explain how Dostoevsky employs the mind's underlying urges not just to create tension, but also to demonstrate that actual growth comes from understanding and accepting one's inner nature. In *White Nights*, the dreamer's transformation from delusion to self-awareness symbolizes Dostoevsky's idea that confronting the unconscious leads to emotional healing and a deeper understanding of reality (Oliveira, 2020).

Crank (2020) investigates Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and also references his earlier work, *Notes from Underground*. The analysis concentrates on the scenario in which Ivan converses with the devil, revealing profound psychological and philosophical concepts. This encounter with the devil symbolizes the inner Self and marks a watershed moment in Ivan's mental and emotional journey. Crank explains that fever, dreams, and hallucinations demonstrate Ivan's spiritual and meaningful reality, despite his overthinking and emptiness. The study sees this as part of Dostoevsky's "inner work," which depicts a process of personal transformation and healing. The study also discusses Alyosha and the emblem of the divine child, which signifies balance and wholeness by connecting opposing elements within a person. Crank applies Jungian concepts to describe how Dostoevsky investigates human nature, evil, and self-development. The study finds that Ivan's experience teaches us that confronting our inner challenges and concerns is essential for growth. Dostoevsky's writing depicts a quest to understand life, human nature, and spiritual problems. Overall, the analysis portrays *The Brothers Karamazov* as a novel that teaches readers how to address inner conflicts and create personal significance, demonstrating Dostoevsky's relevance today (Crank, 2020).

Ivantsov (2017) examines the concept of the underground in Russian literature and counterculture, tracing its emergence and explaining why it remains relevant. He contends that Dostoevsky, particularly in *Notes from Underground*, established the intellectual and psychological basis for this notion. Dostoevsky's subterranean characters are sensitive, rebellious, and frequently torn between logic and emotion. They battle with absurdity and seek meaning through actions such as aggressiveness, irony, and self-contradiction. According to Ivantsov, underground locations like basements or cemeteries represent an inward battle, where pain can lead to spiritual progress or

transformation. He also demonstrates how succeeding writers and artists, such as Leonid Andreyev, Vladimir Makanin, and Siberian punk musician Egor Letov, upheld this legacy. These figures exploited the underground concept to convey their opposition, revolt, and individualism against social standards. Ivantsov believes that the subterranean is not only a physical location, but also a mental state that embodies human bewilderment, spiritual search, and opposition to conformity. Through this concept, Russian literature and counterculture convey profound concerns about existence, morality, and identity, demonstrating that the subterranean remains a potent symbol for examining the meaning of human life (Ivantsov, 2017).

### 3. Theoretical Framework

Viktor Frankl (1940) established logotherapy, a psychological and existential theory focused on the human desire for meaning. It states that the primary drive in life is not pleasure or power, but the pursuit of a purpose. Individuals can find meaning in their lives despite hardship and loss. Frankl's thesis emphasizes that human existence always has the capacity for significant growth, regardless of circumstances. Logotherapy explores the spiritual, emotional, and moral components of human experience from various angles. It emphasizes personal freedom, responsibility, and the desire for meaning as fundamental facets of existence. The idea is similar to Existentialism in that it focuses on self-awareness and human purpose, but Logotherapy distinguishes itself by presenting a cheerful, optimistic perspective. It has elements of psychoanalysis, such as concern with inner conflict and motivation, but shifts the emphasis from disease to purpose. The scholar Viktor Frankl developed Logotherapy based on his own experiences in Nazi concentration camps. He discovered that individuals with a cause to live love, faith, or a goal were more likely to survive. His perspective mixes psychology and philosophy, demonstrating that meaning is the most powerful human motivation.

This theory's fundamental concepts include freedom of choice, the desire for meaning, and finding purpose through love, employment, or pain. Logotherapy is most suited to this study because Dostoevsky's *White Nights* explores the quest for meaning amid loneliness, which aligns well with Frankl's notion of hope and purpose. Several theorists have discussed and endorsed Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. Existential psychologists Rollo May and Irvin Yalom liked Frankl's emphasis on human freedom and responsibility. They agreed that purpose provides the fortitude to tackle life's problems. Carl Rogers presented a similar view, emphasizing personal growth and self-awareness, which are closely related to Frankl's concept of finding meaning. Abraham Maslow, famed for his hierarchy of needs, praised Frankl's idea that self-actualization and a sense of purpose are critical to mental health. Furthermore, Paul Wong, a modern psychologist, developed Logotherapy by inventing Meaning-Centered Therapy, demonstrating that Frankl's theories are relevant in today's environment. These thinkers

all emphasize that logotherapy is about more than just surviving pain; it is also about living a meaningful and fulfilling life. Their perspectives increase the theory's application in comprehending characters such as Dostoevsky's lonely narrator, who seeks meaning, love, and hope in *White Nights*.

According to Marseille (1997), logotherapy and transpersonal psychology are inextricably linked because they both investigate various aspects of human existence. He defines logotherapy as the outward search for meaning, whereas transpersonal psychology emphasizes the interior spiritual part of being. Together, they demonstrate the interconnectedness of personal and spiritual experiences and how this link leads to deeper inner freedom, love, and understanding (Marseille, 1997). According to Längle (2015), Logotherapy evolved into Existential Analysis, which empowers people to live freely, honestly, and responsibly. It focuses on self-awareness and meaningful choices, helping individuals toward a tranquil and purposeful life. As a result, Frankl's Logotherapy became a complete and distinct therapeutic approach (Längle, 2015).

Wong (2016) improves on Frankl's Logotherapy by proposing the concept of selftranscendence (ST), which integrates meaning, virtue, and enjoyment in a continuous cycle. He argues that this process promotes spiritual growth by shifting the attention away from selfish interests and toward love, service, and connection with others. Through selftranscendence, a person can overcome emptiness and discover a more profound, more meaningful sense of meaning and purpose in life (Wong, 2016). Weisskopf-Joelson (1958) stresses that logotherapy differs from psychoanalysis in that it is founded on values and meaning rather than psychological principles. She contends that mental health is dependent not just on identifying hidden causes, but also on building a healthy life philosophy that provides people with direction and stability. Logotherapy, she believes, provides this necessary sense of purpose, particularly during periods of cultural or spiritual emptiness, making it a viable alternative to established therapies (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1958).

According to Winarso (2025), Islamic education and Logotherapy both help people discover meaning in life's struggles, which promotes mental and spiritual recovery. Logotherapy lowers anxiety, depression, and inner emptiness by assisting people to find their purpose and achieve a higher level of emotional balance (Winarso, 2025). According to Schulenberg (2008), logotherapy is a powerful, meaning-centered method that can be utilized to address a wide range of mental health conditions. It complements other therapeutic approaches and emphasizes spirituality and human experience, which many clients identify strongly with. The authors emphasize that therapists should not only use Logotherapy procedures but also embody its concepts, assisting both themselves and their clients in finding meaning in everyday life (Schulenberg, 2008).

#### 4. Analysis and Discussion

This study examines Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *White Nights* 1918 through the prism of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy to examine how the desire for meaning manifests in love, pain, and human connection. The primary goal of this analysis is to answer three central research questions: first, how the narrator's fleeting love transforms his inner emptiness into a meaningful existence; second, how Dostoyevsky portrays love and suffering as opposing but complementary forces that provide meaning even in pain; and third, whether temporary human bonds, as depicted in the novella, can create long-term purpose. Previous chapters established the theoretical framework and literature review, indicating a need for further study to understand *White Nights* as more than just a romantic or psychological story. This study uses Logotherapy to fill that gap by interpreting the text as a symbol of Frankl's belief that meaning can be discovered even amid suffering and emotional loss. Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *White Nights* 1918 investigates how loneliness and short connections can alter a person. Even brief interactions can arouse emotions, fill voids, and give life meaning. Dostoyevsky demonstrates that even brief ties can make a lasting impression on our hearts and minds.

In *White Nights*, Dostoyevsky depicts the life of a lonely dreamer whose inner emptiness rules his daily existence. The narrator lives almost entirely alone, separated from the outside world, until a brief meeting with Nastenka stirs his heart. Dostoyevsky's transient love demonstrates how even fleeting human relationships may transform isolation into emotional fulfillment, giving life meaning and purpose. At the beginning of the novella, the narrator dwells on his profound loneliness. He has lived in Petersburg for years but has few acquaintances or meaningful social contact. "It suddenly occurred to me that I was lonely, that everyone was abandoning me and moving away from me. Of course, anyone has the right to ask who 'everyone' was. For, although having lived in Petersburg for nearly eight years, I had barely made any acquaintances." (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 9). This conveys the narrator's profound sense of emptiness. Dostoyevsky demonstrates that without human connection, life becomes hollow and meaningless. The loneliness he feels lays the groundwork for recognizing the transformational power of ephemeral love when it finally enters his life.

The narrator accentuates his seclusion by stating how thoroughly secluded he has become, both socially and emotionally. "Completely without any history! I've lived, as they say, keeping myself to myself, which means completely alone—alone, fully alone. Do you understand what it means to be alone?" (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 25). This helps the reader understand the narrator's inner vacuum. His sheer solitude leaves him vulnerable to emotional awakening. Dostoyevsky argues that the more profound the emptiness, the more powerful the impact of even a brief, genuine connection. After meeting Nastenka, the narrator sees minor shifts in his emotions, recognizing that his

feelings of discomfort and emptiness are gradually giving way to new sensations of joy. "And that one had left, and what had happened to the other? and at home, I didn't feel like myself either. For two evenings, I was racking my brain to figure out what was wrong with my corner and why I felt so uneasy in it. I looked out the window, but it was in vain. I was not any better for it." (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 11). Dostoyevsky captures the narrator's restlessness as his emotions begin to flare. The momentary love he feels defies his previous sense of emptiness, indicating the beginning of metamorphosis. Even the sense of longing signals the emergence of emotional depth. The narrator's contact with Nastenka fills him with joy and excitement, as if he were a child discovering freedom, demonstrating how love begins to revive his creativity and inner existence. "He was pleased because till next day he was released from business irksome to him, and happy as a schoolboy let out from the class-room to his games and mischief." (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 31). This demonstrates the narrator's emotional resurrection. Dostoyevsky depicts transitory love as a force that breaks the monotony of his lonely life, transforming even minor observations into moments of joy. Love stimulates his senses and adds color to his inner world. His mind is fully stimulated by the experience of love, opening up new possibilities and allowing him to dream, even if only briefly. "His imagination is again stirred and at work, and a new world, a new fascinating life, opens up before him. A new dream brings new happiness! A new rush of delicate, voluptuous poison!" (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 33). This displays the complete metamorphosis. Through transitory love, the narrator's inner emptiness is replaced by imagination, optimism, and emotional depth. Dostoyevsky presents love, even when fleeting, as a potent agent that transforms misery and loneliness into meaning, giving life purpose and depth.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *White Nights* 1918 effectively combines the concepts of love and suffering to demonstrate how sorrow can become meaningful. For Dostoyevsky, love is more than just enjoyment; it is also the source of deep pain, which aids in the discovery of truth and compassion. Through the narrator's brief and terrible love for Nastenka, the novel demonstrates that even amid heartbreak, one can discover purpose, self-understanding, and spiritual progress. When the narrator glances at a man on the street, he imagines his inner loneliness, echoing his own emotional solitude and need for love.

"Just look at him, and you'll be convinced! Would you think, looking at him, darling Nastenka, that he has never met her whom he loves in his euphoric dreams?" (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 35). This statement exemplifies Dostoyevsky's deep connection between love and sorrow. The man's hidden sorrow reflects the narrator's inner emptiness. His "ecstatic dreams" represent the kind of love that exists in the mind, born of loneliness. Dostoyevsky contends that even unfulfilled love can provide emotional depth and purpose, transforming suffering into spiritual insight. When an elderly guy

speaks gently to Nastenka, he exhibits care and sympathy, reminding the reader that love may be shown via kindness and moral concern even under challenging conditions. “Listen,” he said. “You’re a good girl. Excuse me for speaking to you in such a manner, but please know that” (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 46). Here, love is compassionate rather than romantic. Dostoevsky contrasts emotional suffering with moral compassion. In this moment, he demonstrates how love conveyed through empathy may heal emotional wounds. Suffering, rather than killing a person, becomes the means by which humanity and kindness are shown. The narrator’s confession of love demonstrates his deep hope and vulnerability, despite knowing that his ideal of bliss may never come true. “I pledge to you that if I ever get married, you will make me happy. I guarantee you that you are now the only person who can make me happy” (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 50). This confession combines joy and sorrow. Dostoevsky depicts love as both a gift and a hurt. The narrator’s comments are both honest and reflective of grief. The promise he makes demonstrates how love and sorrow coexist, giving meaning via wanting rather than fulfillment. At the end, when the narrator accepts Nastenka’s love for another man, he remains grateful. His suffering leads to emotional development and peace. “Thank you, certainly, for your affection! For it will live in my mind like a pleasant dream that stays long after awakening; for I will remember for all time the moment when you extended your heart to me like a brother and so generously received the gift of my shattered heart to care for, nurse, and mend it.” (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 77). This closing scene encapsulates the essence of Dostoyevsky’s vision: love provides significance even when it ends in agony. The narrator’s pain is compassionate and redeeming. Through heartbreak, he learns the value of appreciation and forgiveness. Dostoevsky demonstrates that the highest type of love is one that transforms anguish into understanding.

The narrator eventually meets Nastenka after waiting and expecting to find someone wonderful. This scene demonstrates how even a brief meeting can elicit significant emotions. “At this moment, Nastenka, when we have met at last after such a long separation—for I have known you for ages, Nastenka, because I have been looking for someone for ages, and that is a sign that it was you I was looking for.” (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 30). This demonstrates how a brief contact may quickly make someone feel whole and understood. The narrator feels a strong connection, showing that even fleeting interactions may give life significance. Nastenka loves someone else, yet the narrator recognizes her genuine concern and compassion. “No, Nastenka, no,” I replied; “it shows that you love him more than anything in the world, and far more than yourself.” (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 61). The narrator learns empathy and emotional development from witnessing her altruistic devotion. This demonstrates that, even if love is not reciprocated, momentary attachments can teach valuable life lessons and provides meaning. The narrator imagines the warmth and gratitude that come with a genuine

connection, comprehending the long-term impact. "You would only feel every minute that at your side was beating a grateful, grateful heart, a warm heart ready for your sake." (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 66). This demonstrates how even a short link can have a significant emotional impact. Feeling respected and loved can provide a sense of purpose and direction in life. The narrator reflects on how his feelings have developed and changed as a result of his relationship with Nastenka. "At first, it was just like, Nastenka, but now! I am in exactly the same situation as you were when you went to him with your bundle" (Dostoyevsky, 1918, p. 67). This demonstrates that transient partnerships can cause someone to search within themselves and grow emotionally. Even momentary contacts can teach lessons, give meaning, and have a lasting impact.

## 5. Conclusion

In *White Nights*, Dostoyevsky shows how a short passion can profoundly transform a lonely spirit. The narrator's interaction with Nastenka transforms his emptiness into a meaningful emotional existence, demonstrating that even brief human relationships can spark delight, imagination, and a deeper understanding of life. Despite its fleeting nature, love becomes a way to discover purpose in solitude. In *White Nights*, Dostoyevsky depicts love and sorrow as two sides of the same human experience. He demonstrates how suffering may purify the heart and offer meaning to life through both brief happiness and long-term misery. Love, even when unsatisfied, becomes the light that transforms suffering into meaning. *White Nights* demonstrates the potential of short-term human ties. Even a fleeting love or friendship can stir emotions, prompt self-reflection, and give life purpose. Dostoyevsky demonstrates that fleeting contacts are not trivial; they can actually transform a person.

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