

For Better For Worse

By

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Original Drama based on the real lives of Thomas and Emma
Hardy during the period when Hardy was writing his
controversial fiction Tess of The D'Urbervilles

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SUPERIMPOSE: LONDON OCTOBER 1889 - THOMAS HARDY,an established writer(49)is sitting in the reception area of a publishing house,nervously.A RECEPTIONIST approaches him

RECEPTIONIST

Mr Tillotson will see you now Mr Hardy

HARDY

Thank you

Hardy enters an office-TILLOTSON(30's ambitious)sits behind his desk-stands and offers his hand to Hardy who looks to be uncomfortable with the physical contact.

TILLOTSON

Welcome to London Sir,and thank you for your regular written correspondence.It is a pleasure to meet you in person at last.Please sit down

HARDY

I have to say I was deeply sorry to here of your father's death.I was always struck by the sincerity of his character and hope that we may have a similar friendship

TILLOTSON

I hope so too.Now,as you know Mr. Hardy we are a Christian publishers and yes, we have accepted your contributions on many occasions before but unfortunately this time we will be unable to serialize your story

HARDY

Unable? You have read only the first chapters so how can you say that so emphatically

TILLOTSON

Sexual references,inferences, rape,babies born out of wedlock,need I say more?

HARDY

(standing)

This is an outrage Sir,you are obviously not realizing the true nature of the story

(CONTINUED)

TILLOTSON

I am afraid that is exactly what we are realizing Mr Hardy. May I suggest that you rewrite it omitting ...certain scenes that I have noted here

Tillotson hands Hardy a sheet of paper which Hardy scans

HARDY

No, I cannot do that, I will change nothing of my story unless it be my will to do so

TILLOTSON

Now you are making me anxious. We have our readership to consider.

HARDY

Precisely, no changes

TILLOTSON

Then what? They will call **you** subversive and call into account **my** firm's reputation and integrity. I am sure my father would agree if he were alive.

HARDY

I doubt so

TILLOTSON

Look, perhaps in the mean time you could provide us with a short story while you reconsider

HARDY

No changes, this is unmitigated censorship Mr Tillotson

TILLOTSON

Advice Mr Hardy. That is all

HARDY

The serial will remain as I intend it

TILLOTSON

Then I have no alternative Sir, but to cancel the contract. I hope that we can do so... amicably. But if you were to think again?

HARDY

I will not. I shall find myself another publisher

Hardy picks up the drafts and goes to leave. Tillotson sits

2 EXT. MAX GATE - MORNING

2

SUPERIMPOSE: DORSET SIX MONTHS EARLIER- HARDY in pensive mood puts on his hat-closes the front door-walks down the path.He doesn't notice either EMMA his wife (late 40's with a noticeable limp, very plain features) playing excitedly with their dog MOSS or BERNIE (mid 20's -their gardener)and A NEIGHBOUR digging. A cold wind is blowing

3 EXT.UNMADE TRACK - SAME

3

SUPERIMPOSE:TITLES OVER -HARDY walking -A COURTING COUPLE pass Hardy and a PRETTY GIRL(20's,) runs up from behind. HARDY stops,smiles and they walk on together for a while. They disturb a buzzard tearing at the carcass of a fox.HARDY shakes his head disapproving

PRETTY GIRL

That's horrible,the bird eating
the poor fox

HARDY

'Tis right and natural for the
bird but against the natural
order of things for the poor
animal to be hunted and killed by
man and dogs

PRETTY GIRL

Do you hunt yourself Sir?

HARDY

It would not be my pleasure nor
my wife's

PRETTY GIRL

Nor mine.You live in the new
built house don't you? I must run
on now.I be fetching the eggs

Hardy watches her as she runs on ahead,he smiles

4 INT. ARCHIVE READING ROOM - COUNTY MUSEUM - LATER

4

HARDY enters the reading room and settles down in his usual place.FLORENCE,(20's,robust,pretty) puts '**The Dorset Chronicle**' on the table and opens it

FLORENCE

I found that story about the
accident with that horse Mr
Hardy,here it be

HARDY

Thank you Florrie

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE

That were four year ago, me mam
ran back home after she saw it.
Out of her wits she be at sight
of so much blood.

HARDY

Your mother is very sensitive?

FLORENCE

Fainthearted. Why do you want to
know it Mr Hardy, is it because
you are writing another book?

HARDY

It is Florrie. You know accidental
deaths, no matter how bloody, are
not to be feared. It's unnatural
ones brought about by foul means
that should really concern us

FLORENCE

Is Mrs Hardy coming today? She
was going to show me some of her
paintings, I think she be a good
artist and a very kindly person

HARDY

It is too cold for her today, she
suffers a good deal from ill
health. I haven't seen her with
her paints much lately she's more
often helping me now

FLORENCE

With your book?

HARDY

Yes, my book

FLORENCE

She be a softhearted wife. I think
you be very lucky to have her

HARDY

I think so too Florrie

FLORENCE

Oh and I think you be a good
writer Mr Hardy too

Florence skips off. HARDY smiles and reads the article

HARDY (V.O)
taking the reins in her own hand
Tess jogged on as before..

TESS DURBEYFIELD (17, a beautiful innocent country girl) with her brother ABRAHAM (9) next to her is driving their horse PRINCE and a wagon which is loaded with bee hives

ABRAHAM
 I wanna sleep, Tess why
 can't father take Prince and the
 bees?

TESS
 Because he ain't fit Abe, being
 sick with liqueur. Market opens
 shortly and we can't miss it,
 swarming be over soon then there
 wouldn't be any point in going

ABRAHAM
 Sis, ain't you glad you're going
 to marry a gentleman?

TESS
 What? Who has put that in your
 head? Now go to sleep

ABRAHAM
 Father said that we've a rich
 lady in our family who lives over
 at Trantbridge and she's going to
 find a gentleman for you to wed.
 I heard them all talking.

TESS
 Nonsense Abe, now please sleep

They both drift asleep lulled by the movement. A mail-cart with MAN approaches at speed from the opposite direction.

MAIL CART MAN
 Hoi There ! Look out!!

He crashes straight into PRINCE. A shaft drives into the horse's breast. Instantly, TESS jumps down, she tries to stop the flow of blood with her shawl. ABRAHAM jumps down

TESS
 Prince! oh Prince! Prince

MAIL CART MAN.
 You was on the wrong side. The
 wrong side Miss....

The sun is rising now. TESS is shocked, confused

(CONTINUED)

MAIL CART MAN

Now, unfortunately I'm bound by law to go on with the mail bags. So it be best for you two to bide here with your load and I'll send someone to help as soon as I can.

The mail cart man continues on his way.

ABRAHAM

Oh Tessy, what can us do now? How can we go on with the hives?

TESS

We can't Abe. We have to bide her 'til help comes. Prince is killed and it's all my doing. How will mother and father live now?

ABRAHAM

What will become of us all Sis?

TESS

Oh, I have been such a fool .

TESS holds ABRAHAM tightly, they sit in a pool of blood.

10

INT. HARDY'S UPSTAIRS STUDY - SAME

10

HARDY is sitting. We hear LILIAN (9yrs) and GORDON (7yrs) run up the staircase, shouting. Lilian immediately followed by Gordon appear in the doorway, excited and breathless

LILIAN

Uncle Tom, Bernie and the man have dug up a huge big stone

GORDON

And found lots of skeletons underneath in the hole

LILIAN

Lots of bones, all burned black, they might have been a sacrifice Aunt Emma says, a long time ago, and then she told us to go inside

GORDON

Because it was no sight for a child's eyes but we saw it

HARDY

Well well, I must come and see for myself

(CONTINUED)

GORDON
Come now Uncle Tom

HARDY
When I finish my work.It might be
another burial perhaps.We found
three a few years ago in the
garden.You both go and find
Nell and tell her all about it

Lilian and Gordon run off excited. Hardy dips his pen

11

TESS: EXT. THE DURBEYFIELDS' GARDEN - AFTERNOON

11

HARDY (V.O)
*John Durbeyfield worked harder in
digging a grave for Prince than
he had worked for months to grow
a crop for his family*

JOHN DURBEYFIELD(38)rough and ready,still hung over from
the night before and JOAN DURBEYFIELD (37) tie a rope
around the DEAD HORSE and with TESS, LIZA-LU (12,younger
version of Tess)and ABRAHAM'S help, he is dragged along a
path and tumbled into the hole. HOPE (7),carrying a BABY,
MODESTY (5) and ANOTHER BROTHER (3) follow them.They all
stand around the hole and stare at the DEAD PRINCE

ABRAHAM
Is he gone to heaven,Ma?

JOAN DURBEYFIELD
Of course Abraham,Prince was a
hard working horse and a good
honest one and all

HOPE
When we getting a new Prince,Ma?

LIZA-LU
Hush now Hope...poor Prince,'twas
a way to go to heaven,and poor
Tess,what a thing to happen!

TESS
It just happened,Liza Lu
(whispering to herself)
I am nothing but a murderess

12

INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY - SAME

12

HARDY blots the word '*murderess*'.NELLIE enters

NELLIE
Mrs Hardy,wishes to know if you
are ready for supper.She's had
quite a day of it she says

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Tell my wife I am busy, she must dine with the children of course but tell her I would appreciate some help later, if she so wishes

NELLIE

I will Mr Hardy and I'll ask Cook to bring your supper up

HARDY

Thank you Nell. What has been done with the stone that was found?

NELLIE

It be still there, 'tis far too heavy to move, it be such a weight

HARDY

A Druid Stone I fancy.

Nellie smiles and goes, Hardy tries to see if he can see the stone through the window

13

INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY - NEXT DAY -MORNING

13

NELLIE is making up another fire. Through the window we see there has been a harsh frost. HARDY is writing. EMMA comes in holding a small brown parcel in one hand

EMMA

You write for too many hours Thomas. You look tired!

HARDY

You didn't come last evening!

EMMA

My leg was hurting, I sensibly retired to bed early as you should have done

HARDY

I was absorbed, engrossed..

EMMA

You are becoming too self-occupied for your own good Tom

HARDY

What is good? You know I do not believe that goodness exists

EMMA

I know I believe that our life here on earth is only the spiritual path we tread until we meet our maker in a better life

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Em,if a way to the better there be,then it must exact a full look at the worst,that is precisely why I am making my new heroine suffer from the very worst that this life can throw at her

EMMA

That is dreadful.Why?

HARDY

Because I suffer.Like myself she will never understand all that conspires against her or against the natural order of things

EMMA

Nothing conspires Tom

HARDY

Everything does.Man and his blessed imposed conventions,

Emma is puzzled,she puts the parcel down on the desk like religion Em they are full of falsities,double standards and injustice.I cannot sit easily with it anymore and be buried under such hypocrisy

EMMA

You are tired,I can see

Emma straightens out the papers,tidies the desk

HARDY

I will have Tess brought down in the end,destroyed by it all

EMMA

Meaning religion then? You speak like a pagan Tom.I wish you were not always so pessimistic

HARDY

Well at least that way I do not suffer disappointment and am not fooled. Pessimism is playing the sure game. You cannot lose at it but you might gain.

Nellie looks puzzled by the conversation,she leaves

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Thank you Nellie.

HARDY

Another first class fire!

EMMA

This new novel is filling with gloom even more so than your others. Why is it you always want to create the worst possible circumstances?

HARDY

Because when the worst circumstances as you put it are reckoned with then when better arise, as they may, well then life will become child's play.

Emma shakes her head and sorts the manuscripts
Look Em, is not the cure or at least relief from a disease to actually understand it?
Understanding can ease the pain and suffering

EMMA

So when I suffer pain in my legs it's because I don't understand what causes it?

HARDY

In simple terms but what I mean to say is perhaps by exploring and reading tragedy in fiction it may help people to escape the worst forms of it in real life.

EMMA

I see, (though she doesn't). That parcel arrived for you earlier

HARDY

Yes I see it

Hardy now intrigued by the package, opens it. Emma goes

EMMA

Sometimes, you are too far away

HARDY and EMMA are in relaxed mood with the CATS and MOSS

EMMA

How long do you think we should have to stay at a Hotel when we're in London?

HARDY

Until we can find something more permanent. I am currently looking into the possibility of renting two furnished floors in Bayswater

EMMA

Oh dear, dirty furniture, other people's dust, we will get ill I'm sure, like we inevitably do
(She recoils in disgust)
Are you looking forward to the season this year?

HARDY

As much as you can with London being little more than four million forlorn hopes which float aimlessly through the fog

EMMA

It will be nice to be amongst proper society people again

HARDY

Where you feel more relaxed and most comfortable?

EMMA

I look forward to it, yes. What was the package?

HARDY

This little book of poems

EMMA

Who was it from?

HARDY

A young aspiring writer who asks me my opinion. The poetry is quite agreeable from what I have read already

EMMA

Who wrote them?

HARDY

Rosamund Thomson although she goes by the name of her husband Mrs Graham Thomson

EMMA

How ridiculous. I would not attribute any of my poems or my paintings to Mrs Thomas Hardy, I sign mine Emma Lavinia Gifford. Is it good poetry because the poems merit being good or because they are written by a woman?

HARDY

I admit I am flattered, I believe she is quite fashionable in London. The sensuous abandonment of youth that she writes about is fresh, reminds me of my cousin

EMMA

Ah Miss Sparks! she who you yourself were in youthful abandonment with before we met. She married someone else didn't she? And was highly fortunate and blessed to have her very own children

HARDY

Em, that is not fair

EMMA

I expect Mrs Graham Tomson is happily married, she whose poems you do read and advise upon when you are always too busy to pass comment on mine, your wife's

HARDY

Dearest Emmie now I believe you are jealous.

EMMA

Not at all, well perhaps a little I just wish that we could discuss the poets like we used to when we were courting. You encouraged my work all the time then as I always encouraged you

HARDY

You did, and for that I am thankful Em, for I always had my own doubts

Hardy is aroused and approaches Emma, she shies away

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

I must feed the pets now Tom, they
must be hungry

HARDY

Yes, I suppose they must be

Hardy is embarrassed, frustrated. Emma, embarrassed, strokes a cat. Hardy pats Moss. Hardy leaves with Rosamund's poems he smiles at Emma to reassure her but she doesn't look up

15

EXT. MAX GATE DRIVEWAY - TWO WEEKS LATER - MORNING

15

BERNIE, COOK(30's) and NELLIE pile trunks on to a waiting coach. The COACHMAN helps EMMA into the carriage. HARDY stands contemplating the garden.

HARDY

Now you know where I want all the
seeding done Bernie. And don't
forget mesh to keep the birds off

BERNIE

'twill be all in order Sir, they
be all up and growing by the time
you be back

EMMA

Watch out to Moss. I could not
bear it if anything were to
happen to him

NELLIE

Don't you worry so Mrs Hardy

HARDY

Perhaps next season we will be
able to afford to take you all
with us, rent a town house

Hardy smiles to himself, Emma shakes her head doubtfully, Hardy climbs in, the coach draws off

COOK

Do you know what his new book be
about Nell?

NELLIE

I think it be about playing a
game called 'Sure' and that the
girl in it loses

BERNIE

I don't know that game, do you?

COOK

Well 'tis none of our
business. That I do know

NELLIE

No, but I do know that Mr and Mrs
Hardy do disagree about nearly
everything these days

They watch as the coach and horses disappear out of sight

16

INT. COACH - SAME

16

EMMA is happy now. HARDY is apprehensive, he stares out the
window, deep in thought

EMMA

Penny for your thoughts Tom?

HARDY

I was thinking about ...

EMMA

Who?

HARDY

No matter

EMMA

Mrs Tomson I expect

HARDY

No, my story, Tess

17

TESS: EXT. THE DURBEYFIELD COTTAGE - DAY

17

HARDY (V.O)

*Seeing their mother put on Tess'
bonnet, the younger children
clamored to go with her.*

A horse and cart with DRIVER, loaded with a single box of
TESS' possessions stands a way up a track. Her whole family
surround TESS who is dressed in her best clothes

HOPE

I don't think I want to walk with
you Sissy, now you be going to
marry our gentleman-cousin and
wear fine clothes!

TESS

Oh dearest Hope, 'tis not true,
did our ma put that in your head?

LIZA LU

I too wish you wasn't going away
to be a lady Tess

TESS

I'm going away to work, that's
all, taking charge of the chickens

ABRAHAM

Sissy, please stay here with us

JOAN DURBEYFIELD

Going to work for our rich
relation and helping to get
enough money for a new horse is a
blessing for the family and don't
you all forget it

They say their goodbyes and Tess walks alone towards the
waiting cart. Suddenly from out of nowhere comes a classy
horse drawn gig which pulls up right beside Tess

MODESTY

Is that the gentleman-kinsman
who'll make Sissy a lady?

LIZA-LU

I believe it could be. He do look
very handsome and I wish it were
me now, not Tess going off

ALEC D'URBERVILLE (24, well-dressed, educated, charming,
cigar between his teeth) beckons TESS to ride with
him. Hesitating, she looks back briefly then mounts the gig.
Alec drives off at considerable speed

18 **INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE - SAME -LATER**

18

HARDY is still thoughtful but content. EMMA plays with a
little GIRL. The steam from the engine obscures the passing
landscape from time to time. The urban sprawl of buildings
encroaches on the pastoral, the train draws into Waterloo.

19 **EXT. THE THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE - LONDON - SAME -EVENING**
19

EMMA stands talking and laughing with SOCIETY FRIENDS.
HARDY is watching a WOMAN and GENTLEMAN who is driving a
carriage fast and dangerously. The woman is alarmed, the
gentleman laughs. PEDESTRIANS scramble out of the way

ALEC D'URBERVILLE is recklessly driving the gig very fast down steep slopes. TESS is terrified. The gig stops.

TESS

You will go down the next slope slower, I hope, much slower

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Why I always go down at full gallop. There is nothing like it to raise the spirits and besides the horse do have quite a temper about him if I go to slow him

TESS

Don't try to frighten me

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Honestly, only I can handle him

He cracks his whip. Tess grabs Alec's rein arm
Don't touch my arm we shall be
thrown out, hold on around my
waist

Tess grabs his waist and they reach the bottom of the hill

TESS

Safe, thank God, in spite of your fooling

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

And once again my Beauty...

TESS

No!

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Let me have one little kiss then.
On the lips or on your cheek?

TESS

Oh dear will nothing else do?

Alec shakes his head

Oh very well... I don't mind

But as he goes to kiss her she dodges aside. Alec is rebuffed, he tries again, she jumps down
But really Sir, I don't want
anyone to kiss me

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Come on jump up Tess, please

TESS

I'll walk

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

But it's miles

Tess sets off, Alec turns the gig and pins her between it and the hedge.

TESS

You should be ashamed of yourself. I don't like you at all. I hate you

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Well I like you all the better, come let there be peace. I promise I'll never do it anymore.. not against your will

They drive off more slowly this time

21

EXT. THE THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE - SAME - EVENING

21

Most of the friends have dispersed except MARY JEUNE (45yrs amiable society hostess) and daughters, MADELEINE (10yrs) AND DOROTHY (12yrs) They get into a cab. HARDY is distant

EMMA

Tom! Mary is leaving. Goodbye dears, we both look forward to calling on you tomorrow.

The cab drives off, the girls shout to Hardy

MADELEINE AND DOROTHY

Good bye Uncle Tom

EMMA

I don't know what becomes of you at times. I do feel so awkward.

HARDY

Mary and her daughters know me well enough. Did you enjoy Carmen?

EMMA

Yes I did, very much

HARDY

I'm somewhat surprised

EMMA

Why?

HARDY

No Matter

They get into a cab, the horse trots off into the night

22

INT. MARY JEUNE'S HOUSE - WIMPOLE STREET - NEXT DAY

22

MARY sits with guests HARDY, EMMA, EDITH WHARTON, MABEL ROBINSON, MONA CAIRD. MADELEINE and DOROTHY play chase. Mary grabs Madeleine who shrieks. Mary is full of motherly love

HARDY

(smiling affectionately)

Ah, the irrepressible Mrs. Jeune!

MADELEINE

Uncle Tom it's your turn to catch me, come on

HARDY

Not now Madeleine dear

DOROTHY

I expect Mother wishes to speak quietly with Uncle Tom, Madeleine

HARDY

Why don't you both sit here!

Emma sits disengaged from this 'family' atmosphere. She looks doleful but is pleased with Hardy's improved mood

MARY JEUNE

Tell me Tom, you said in your letter you had a new commission

HARDY

From Tillotson and Sons. One thousand guineas for the serialization of a new novel

MARY JEUNE

What is it about? this novel

EDITH WHARTON

Yes my dear, what aspects of society are you attacking this time? I am willing to bet the story revolves around the female of our species

HARDY

Her name is Tess Durbeyfield

EDITH WHARTON

And what does Miss Durbeyfield set out to challenge

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Nothing. She will be a victim of all that challenges her, society's values and rules, mainly hypocrisy

MARY JEUNE

Risky Tombut exciting

HARDY

You see Mary, instinctive behaviour should be the principle force guiding us in life not behaviour which is continually modified by some other person's strict moral conventions.

EDITH WHARTON

A provocative view Mr Hardy

HARDY

Decisions which are assumed as legitimate ones say by religion for example inevitably create stigmas that in the end are both repressive and coercive

EMMA

Tom, you surely cannot dispute the Bible teachings. Conventions laid down by God raise us quite above what you call natural instinct

HARDY

And there lies the complication. Tess' ultimate fate will lie in the hands of dark and malignant outside forces not natural ones

EMMA

I beg you not to speak such things, Tom... I must apologize for my husband, he is too frank

MABEL ROBINSON

It is strong sentiment Mr Hardy and more than likely will cause great offense

EMMA

Yes Tom!

HARDY

Perhaps? But I want my readers to see Tess' misfortune as a warning

MONA CAIRD

A Warning?

MARY JEUNE

What then is her misfortune?

23

TESS: EXT. THE CHASE - COPPICE - LATE EVENING

23

HARDY (V.O)

*Tess was silent, and the horse
ambled along for a considerable
distance*

A HORSE appears through the thick fog ridden by ALEC D'URBERVILLE. TESS, sitting behind ALEC clings to his waist.

TESS

Please set me down and let me walk home Sir! I did not need to be fetched. I was happy to walk back from market with the others

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

You cannot walk home now darling even if the air were clear. We are miles away from the house

TESS

Where are we then? You have deliberately passed our turn

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

The oldest wood in England, a bit they call The Chase...

TESS

I beg you put me down. I am weary

ALEC dismounts, helps Tess off, holding her very close for an unnecessary long time, he steals a cursory kiss and hitches the horse to a tree.

TESS (CONT'D)

You really do not know where we are do you?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

To tell you the truth owing to this fog which disguises everything, no I don't. Sit here and I will go and seek out our whereabouts. Stay patient and keep an eye to the horse. Are you cold?

TESS

Not very...a little

(CONTINUED)

Alec takes off his overcoat and buttons it around her shoulders, again taking a long time and kisses her head

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Nights grow chilly in September,
now my pretty, rest there I shall
soon be back.

He disappears through the trees calling back
By the bye Tessy, your father has
a new cob today. Somebody gave it
to him.

TESS
Somebody? You!

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
And your sisters new dolls.

TESS is distressed, fearful of ALEC, she cries

24

INT. MARY JEUNE'S HOUSE - WIMPOLE STREET - SAME

24

MADELEINE
Why does she cry? He's a kind man
to give presents to her sisters

HARDY
Madeleine, if you were left all
alone, unable to see in the night
as the thick fog envelops you and
you do not know what dark forces
slowly creep in, would you cry?

MADELEINE
Yes I would be afraid

DOROTHY
Let him carry on Madeleine

THOMAS
Fortunately or maybe you may not
think so.. the man soon returned

25

TESS: EXT. THE CHASE - COPPICE - LATE EVENING

25

TESS is asleep, ALEC moves with outstretched hands to avoid
the boughs. He cannot find Tess at first then catches his
foot on the sleeve of the overcoat

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Tess..... Tess.....

Alec seduces/rapes Tess. The ambiguity between whether it
is seduction or rape is paramount, whatever the case it
is gentle and non-threatening

EVERYONE is silent,uncomfortable,a little shocked,even the children,though they do not understand exactly why

EMMA

(ashamed embarrassed)

Edith dear,what writing are you engaged in at the moment? I have been making a few jottings myself

EDITH WHARTON

(impressed)

Bravo Mr Hardy.

MARY JEUNE

Oh Yes,daring, what you are saying is that in a natural world without opinion or dogma Tess' experience would have been merely an education.

HARDY

Alec was simply obeying a natural law to which Tess in a sense was sacrificed

MABEL ROBINSON

But because of societies' rules and conventions it will damn her

HARDY

Yes and so social law not natural law holds the greater blame.

MONA CAIRD

Fascinating

Hardy enjoys the attention.We hear a doorbell chime,a door close and the beautiful ROSAMUND TOMSON(28yrs,tall and slim) enters followed by a MAID who takes Rosamund's cape

ROSAMUND

Thank you my dear

MABEL ROBINSON

Mrs Tomson,darling, come and join the gathering

Hardy immediately stands up,he is delighted

HARDY

Mrs Tomson, Rosamund,it is such a pleasure to meet you face to face you look absolutely charming

(CONTINUED)

ROSAMUND

Well thank you Mr Hardy, Thomas. I am flattered. It was very kindly of you to write to say that you were 'pleased' to receive my gift of poems. It is lovely to meet you

HARDY

Come and sit here

ROSAMUND sits first then HARDY next to her

MARY JEUNE

Thomas was just explaining something of his new heroine

HARDY

Yes and the unfortunate, tragic predicament she finds herself in

ROSAMUND

Mr Hardy I was wondering if you could get me elected to the Society of Authors, now that I have had some writings in magazines. Maybe if you could...

HARDY

Of course my dear. I will write a letter of recommendation right away. In the mean time may I have the pleasure of inviting you as my guest to the annual dinner in case membership is not through by then

EMMA is annoyed yet resigned, she glares at Hardy

ROSAMUND

It would be a pleasure Thomas, to be in the company of such a renowned and respected author, thank you very much

HARDY is absorbed by ROSAMUND. They flirt with each other. EMMA accepts this but clearly does not feel comfortable

27

INT. EDMOND GOSSE'S HOUSE - TWO WEEKS LATER - AFTERNOON 27

EDMOND GOSSE, (40's friendly, fellow writer) his wife NELLIE GOSSE (small and plain) are entertaining HARDY, EMMA and the stunningly beautiful AGATHA THORNYCROFT (30's) HARDY is infatuated by AGATHA

AGATHA

My dearest husband Hamo is away..

(CONTINUED)

EDMOND GOSSE

Promoting his sculptures in Italy

HARDY

Well we must see that you enjoy yourself as best you can in his absence Mrs.Thornycroft

AGATHA

Agatha.. that is what I intend to do Sir,do you have any recommendations for outings?

HARDY

The picture galleries are some of my favourite places.I am Thomas Hardy and this is my wife Emma

AGATHA

Delighted to meet you.Last January Hamo and I visited the exhibition at the Royal Academy.

HARDY

What a coincidence so did we.Agatha,you must come to the Author's Dinner.It will be charming to have you attend and besides Edmond is giving a talk.

EMMA

Thomas you cannot take it upon yourself to invite every new woman you meet.

NELLIE GOSSE

I think Emma and I will withdraw to the dining room. Come along Agatha, you must tell us about your husband's latest commission

The three women leave

EDMOND

You seem disappointed the ladies have left us Thomas, a drink?

HARDY

Perhaps.Yes.I do hope they will excuse Emma her directness

EDMOND

They already have my friend.Women are the loveliest and most forgiving of creatures,that is why we cannot exist without them

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

My wife misinterprets my meaning
a lot of the time. She doesn't
wholly understand men

EDMOND

I admit I do not find Emma that
easy to talk to, but I like
her innocence and enthusiasm

HARDY

When we first met we talked so
passionately about all sorts of
things. Then it was her very lack
of life experience that I loved
most about her

EDMOND

Ah! romance, a different kind
of love altogether

HARDY

An exciting state of being but
sadly one which always ends with
marriage. Edmond, do you remember
your first love?

EDMOND

Now there's a stimulating thought

HARDY

Quite rejuvenating. When I was
fourteen I fell madly in love
with a very pretty girl that
passed me, on horseback. She did
but smile at me once, that's all!

EDMOND

A woman's smile is very potent

HARDY

Then there was the daughter of
the game keeper who had bay red
hair and Louisa, daughter of a
local farmer

EDMOND

You have a poet's memory?

HARDY

I never forget a woman's beauty
and.... what it can do to a man..

Hardy drifts into a melancholy thoughtfulness. Edmond pours
himself another drink. Hardy declines this time

And me still no more than a boy
when I became totally transfixed
upon another woman

(CONTINUED)

EDMOND

What was her name?

HARDY

Martha

28 **EXT. SCAFFOLD PLATFORM- DORCHESTER PRISON 1856 MORNING** 28

MARTHA BROWN'S body hangs from the rope. The white hood over her face is wet from the rain and reveals her beautiful marble, statuesque like features. Her wet dress clings to her body and defines her womanly shape. THE YOUNG THOMAS HARDY (16 yrs) sits in a tree, completely transfixed

29 **INT. EDMOND GOSSE'S HOUSE - SAME** 29

HARDY

Martha Brown - a murderess. I watched her hanged body though I am not proud of it. The point is I couldn't stop looking Edmond, couldn't move from the spot so fixed and hard I be.

EDMOND

My friend, beautiful faces and the female body will always be sent to haunt us. Did you know her?

HARDY

There is the thing, I never knew her at all until that day but I feel as if her heart were mine then and always will be.

EDMOND

Hanging is such a cruel end and in public as well

Agatha reappears and affectionately slides her arms around Hardy's shoulders. He flinches momentarily

HARDY

How are the ladies?

AGATHA

They eagerly await your company, dinner is being served gentlemen

Hardy rises, puts his arm around Agatha's waist as if to make amends. Edmond whispers to Hardy

EDMOND

We must talk again Thomas

AGATHA

Emma has been telling us about
your new heroine. She is quite the
unconventional girl I understand?

They take their seats at the dining table

HARDY

Could be seen as so. Susceptible I
say, given certain circumstances

30

TESS: EXT. COUNTRY TRACK -MORNING

30

TESS with some belongings is hurrying towards her home
village. ALEC comes up behind her in his gig.

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

'Tis but four months since
you have been with me and now
you slip away by stealth like
this. Why so? We have been happy?

TESS

I cannot bide the looks and the
whispers any more. I am no longer
content Alec, I am going home

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Come, it is not necessary for you
to toil along on foot. I followed
like a madman when I heard that
you had left. Climb up, let me
drive you the rest of the
distance at least

Tess stops and stares towards her home village which we
see nestling in the valley ahead, she climbs up on the gig

TESS

I honestly wish I had never been
born

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Oh Tessy!

TESS

I wish I had no care for what
people think or say

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Come Tess do you not love me just
a bit. I love you

TESS

If I had loved you, if I had ever
sincerely loved you, if I loved
you still, I should not loathe and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TESS (cont'd)
 hate myself for my weakness. I did
 not know your meaning 'till it
 was too late, my eyes for a while
 were dazed by you, that was all

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 (smiling)
 That's what every woman says

TESS
 How dare you. Does it not strike
 your mind that what every woman
 says some women may really feel.

ALEC D'URBERVILL
 Well dear Tess I can say no more.
 I was born bad and I have lived
 bad and I shall die bad in all
 probability. But upon my soul I
 promise I will not be bad towards
 you again. Hear me Tess if ever
 there is anything, and I mean
 anything that you need you must
 write to me, promise.

TESS
 Sir, there is no need to drive me
 further.

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 Promise me Tess

Alec lifts Tess off the gig but won't let her continue on
 her way until he steals a last kiss.

31 **EXT. MAX GATE DRIVE - EARLY EVENING - ONE MONTH LATER** 31

HARDY AND EMMA are being greeted by NELLIE and BERNIE,
 MOSS is jumping around. It's a jovial welcome home. Emma
 looks weary, Hardy looks pleased, content, re-vitalized

32 **INT. THE HARDY'S BEDROOM - 10PM** 32

EMMA brushes her hair, studies her looks in the mirror, she
 is sad. CATS sit on the bed. HARDY comes in

EMMA
 For them to have so much beauty..
 is unfair. I see why you think
 them so.....

HARDY
 Who?

EMMA

Agatha Thornycroft and Rosamund Tomson ..but do you have to make your feelings so obvious Tom?

HARDY

Do I?

EMMA

Especially when I am often seated so near.It is indiscreet of you

HARDY

Em, I merely flatter them because that is what they want.

EMMA

In front of Edmond and Nellie too. Rosamund aims to raise her own heights through you but you cannot see it

HARDY

I am sure she is a genuine young woman.I am expecting her to visit us both at Max Gate very soon.

EMMA

You have invited her here?

HARDY

Yes and now you are sour again and it does not become you..

Emma stands and picks up and cradles a cat

EMMA

Is it because she is young? If perhaps we had a child of our own then ...

HARDY

Oh Emmie

Emma has tears in her eyes.Hardy tries to sooth her but any affection is awkwardly shown

HARDY

I'll come to bed in a while I have some letters to attend to

33 INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY - A WEEK LATER -MIDDAY 33

HARDY looks out the window. We see Emma galloping on horseback. She is happy, exhilarated. We see Lilian and Gordon playing. A field close by is being harvested. Corn chaffs fly into the air, Hardy dips his pen and writes

34 TESS: EXT. CORN-FIELD - SUMMER - MIDDAY 34

HARDY (V.O)
*the reaping machine drawn by
 three horses worked its way back
 and forth*

TESS and other BINDERS tie up the bundles of corn then we see the WOMEN rest. We see HOPE crossing the stubble carrying a bundle. LIZA-LU walks behind observing with interest one YOUNG MAN drinking from a cider jar. They arrive at the gathering and HOPE gives a BABY to TESS

TESS
 Thank you little sis. Give him
 here and go and play a while

Unashamed Tess feeds her baby, plays with it, kisses it

LIZA-LU
 He's been a bit poorly at
 breakfast Tess. Poor baby

TESS
 Such a sad nameless child, what
 kind of world do I bring him into

1ST WOMAN
 She's fond of that child, though
 she might pretend to hate it

2ND WOMAN
 That's right, I've heard her say
 she wishes the baby and herself
 dead and buried in the church
 yard

3RD WOMAN
 Ah well she'll soon leave off
 saying that. Lord 'tis wonderful
 what a person can get used to

JENNY
 A little more than persuading had
 to do with the coming of it I
 reckon.

WOMAN
 Well, 'twas a thousand pities
 that it should have happened to
 she, of all others

(CONTINUED)

3RD WOMAN

But 'tis always the comeliest,
the plain ones be as safe as
churches

2ND WOMAN

Ah, 'tis a pity all right.

35

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE- SAME

35

LILIAN and GORDON are playing chase. MOSS runs with them. We see HARDY watching them from his study window. LILIAN drops her doll, GORDON clumsily treads on it. LILIAN cradles it and shouts at GORDON who is bewildered. HARDY appears

HARDY

Now what's all this crying and
raising our voices?

LILIAN

Uncle Tom, Gordon has killed
Suzy. Do something bad to Gordon.

HARDY

I am sure Suzy is not too damaged

LILIAN

She is, I think she's dead

HARDY

Just hold her close and comfort
her like this...when people are
hurt they like to be held close

GORDON

Why does Lilian cry? It's not
a baby so it can't be dead

Hardy gives back the doll to LILIAN but she lets it drop. Moss grabs it, the children then laugh and run after Moss. Hardy smiles and returns to the house

36

INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY - SAME

36

HARDY glances at a framed photo of Lilian and Gordon on the side table, shakes his head sadly. He dips his pen

37

TESS:INT. THE CHILDREN'S BEDROOM -NIGHT

37

HARDY (V.O)

*Everyone is asleep except Abraham
who is kneeling by Tess.*

TESS is pretending to sleep, HER BABY cradled in her arms looks pale and lifeless. ABRAHAM looks concerned

(CONTINUED)

ABRAHAM

Sissy,wake up baby is sick he be
not breathing proper,Tess wake up

Tess places him on a pillow,lights a candle,fills a bowl
with water.She wakes LIZA- LU,HOPE AND MODESTY but leaves
the YOUNGER SIBLINGS sleeping. Tess collects her baby and
gives a prayer book to Hope

TESS

If the church won't baptize him
then we will, right here

HOPE

Be you really going to christen
him Tess?.

Tess nods gravely
What's his name gonna be?

TESS

((pondering))
Sorrow, I baptize thee in the
name of the Father and the son
and of the holy ghost..say AMEN
children

She sprinkles the water over baby's head

CHILDREN

Amen...

TESS

We receive this child and do sign
him with the sign of the cross...
our father who art in heaven

Tess is calm,Sorrow dies shortly after.Tess weeps
silently,cradles him in pity for them both

HOPE

Can you have another pretty baby
boy soon Tess?

38 **EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - SAME** 38

LILIAN is burying her doll.GORDON is throwing grass over
the mound.We see HARDY smiling behind his study window

39 **INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY -SAME** 39

Hardy returns to his desk,sits and dips his pen

40

TESS: EXT. CHURCHYARD - NIGHT

40

HARDY (V.O)

Tess wrapped in an old shawl is carrying a small wooden box

TESS, bag slung over her back, carries a lantern and the box. She approaches the SEXTON and gives him a jug of beer

THE SEXTON

Thank you Mam. You can have a small bit of our God's allotment where them nettles grow at the far end

TESS

Where all the other damned are laid you mean. Take this shilling and don't drink your beer too quickly.

Tess digs a hole, buries the box, makes a cross from two twigs and binds it with some honeysuckle.

41

INT. HARDY'S FRONT STUDY - NEXT DAY

41

EMMA puts flowers in a vase. She is happy which instantly changes when she notices HARDY clutching Rosamund's poems

EMMA

Thinking about her?

Hardy quickly puts aside the book of poems

HARDY

Who?

EMMA

Mrs Tomson

HARDY

Emmie! You can see I am writing

EMMA

You have been reading her poems. No doubt thinking of Agatha as well. Why do you think on them so?

HARDY

I don't.

EMMA

Your mind is always fixed on women

HARDY

Women are so vulnerable Em, susceptible to becoming preyed

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
upon. I seem to feel consonant
with their own minds

EMMA
But not with mine

HARDY
I did not say that

Hardy starts writing, Emma picks up a loose page of
manuscript off the desk and reads a little

EMMA
Dear God, you gave Tess a son,
how could you do that Tom?

HARDY
Yes and see also she buried him

EMMA
Why do you write it that way?

HARDY
Because in my present mood I see
no future in humanity

EMMA
Oh Tom! Let me copy for you
today? That way I shall be less
apart from you

HARDY
If you would Em, I have promised
Tillotson the first chapters as
soon as possible and there are
new corrections to put in

EMMA
Give them here then

They both settle separately to work. Hardy writes

42

TESS: INT. THE MILKMAIDS SHARED BEDROOM - NIGHT

42

HARDY (V.O)
*Tess now felt obliged to abandon
home and family and secure some
temporary work as a milkmaid*

IZZ, MARIAN, RETTY AND TESS are preparing for bed

MARIAN
You be liking your new work as a
milkmaid Tess?

(CONTINUED)

TESS

It occupies me, I have no choice, I
had to leave my home

MARIAN

Why?

TESS

"tis no matter

IZZ

Mr Clare, he that is learning the
milking, and that plays the harp,
never says much does he?

MARIAN

That's 'cause he's a parson's son
and too much taken up with his
own thoughts to notice us girls.

IZZ

Aye he be quite the gentleman
born, his father be the Reverend
Mr. Clare from Emminster.

TESS

I think I recognized him from a
time past

IZZ

They say that all the reverend's
sons, except Angel, be made parsons
too so I be especially glad he's
here with us, learning the milking

RETTY

I know you be glad as I saw you
kissing his shadow on the wall

TESS

Did you Izzy?

MARIAN

Oh Izz Huett!

IZZ

Well! there was no harm in it. And
if I be in love with him so be
you Retty Prindle and you Marian

MARIAN

I would marry him tomorrow if he
asked

IZZ

So would I..... and more

(CONTINUED)

RETTY

Me too

IZZ

We can't all marry him,
besides, he likes Tess best, by
the looks he gives her

TESS

Don't you all be silly, none of
us will marry him, not with him
being a gentleman's son and all.

43

INT. DINING ROOM - A WEEK LATER - EVENING

43

LILIAN AND GORDON are excusing themselves from the table.
NELLIE is clearing away the plates. HARDY is entranced by
the rain streaming down the window. EMMA is watching him.

EMMA

Boo! penny for your thoughts.
Come back to me Tom!

Emma shakes Hardy out of his trance like state

HARDY

What? Look Em, the rain, it is such
a temptress, it beckons me outside
to bathe in its wholesomeness

EMMA

You know if you go out in wet
weather you always catch a chill

HARDY

Where's your heart Em? You just
do not understand me do you?

EMMA

No, rather you don't understand
me. You only connect with the
women you create

We hear the storm intensify

HARDY

That is not true

EMMA

And that only makes you morose
and introspective

HARDY

I am what I am

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Are the first installments ready?

HARDY

Yes, almost

EMMA

I feel uneasy about this book Tom
you seem more strange, more angry

Emma gets up to leave

I am going to see Lilian and
Gordon to bed

We hear the heavy rain on the windows

HARDY

(to himself)

I hear the impending tempest Tess

44

TESS: EXT. FLOODED PATHWAY - MORNING

44

HARDY (V.O)

*By the morning the storm had
abated leaving in its wake a path
of destruction*

HETTY, IZZ, MARIAN AND TESS are struggling through mud to
get to church when the pathway becomes an impassable river

MARIAN

Who would have expected such a
rise in the river in summer?

RETTY

Well if we walk round the
Turnpike way, we will be late

MARIAN

Oh dear, I do colour up so red,
walking into church late and all
the people staring

TESS

Never mind that, what about all
these flies trapped in our skirts

The girls are laughing, insects tickle their ankles, caught
in their petticoats. ANGEL CLARE (24 yrs, strong
build) is discreetly watching and then appears on the path

ANGEL CLARE

Are you trying to get to church?

IZZ

Yes, sir and 'tis getting late

(CONTINUED)

MARIAN

And I do colour up so when we
arrive and everyone is there

ANGEL CLARE

I'll carry you through this
pool, all of you, now Marian
attend, Hold on

Angel carries Marian across the flood
There that's well done.

Angel in turn carries Izz and Retty across. They both fall
into a dreamy swoon, they are excited. Angel collects Tess

TESS

(Her heart throbbing)
I may be able to climb along the
bank perhaps?

ANGEL CLARE

No, absolutely not Tess

He scoops her up
Three Leahs to get one Rachel

TESS

They are better women than I Mr.
Clare.

ANGEL CLARE

Not to me. I have undergone three
quarters of this labour entirely
for the sake of the fourth.

Their journey through the muddy water is sexually charged
although neither says anything

45 **INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY -NEXT DAY**

45

HARDY is packaging up the finished first half of his
manuscript to post to Tillotson and Sons London Office

HARDY

Well Tesswe shall see

ACT TWO

46 **INT OFFICE -TILLOTSON AND SONS- LONDON - OCT 1889 DAY**

46

TILLOTSON

Please Mr Hardy, give this some
more thought, I say this only in
your best interests

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

No changes.Good Day Mr.Tillotson

47

INT. SAVILE CLUB - 5 DAYS LATER - AFTERNOON

47

HARDY is with EDWARD CLODD (late 40's extravagantly dressed,a free thinker)Edward is smoking and drinking

HARDY

Edward,we are friends,have been for some time now I am not one to be impulsive am I?

EDWARD CLODD

What have you done?

HARDY

Upset my publisher.I have been compelled to stop writing my book unless I make drastic changes

EDWARD CLODD

And you said No

HARDY

Yes,and now they want me to placate their newspaper with an interim short story. This is all so soul destroying Edward

EDWARD CLODD

Did you try Murray's Magazine?

HARDY

I did, the next day,I saw Mowbray himself and in short he also said that he couldn't accept so many references to moral situations

EDWARD CLODD

Ah, What does he know?

HARDY

He was emphatic,said that my story was sexually immoral and contained improper explicitness

EDWARD CLODD

It will be a mighty battle to fight prudishness,censorship. Mowbray is establishment

HARDY

When I contested with him he proceeded to go on about the freeness of the way I use Tess'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
seduction and pointed out how
many times I used the word
succulent, rather too much
succulence he said for his
magazine

They share smiles

EDWARD CLODD
Do you think he might think his
readership is not ready.

HARDY
No, although I know he lives in
fear of the magazine not
selling. No, he makes it quite
clear it is his own thoughts

EDWARD CLODD
Well then the dear man has a
profound revulsion for sexuality.
Macmillan?

HARDY
The same

They share a smile again

Edward, do you think it pertinent
of me to risk financial decline
by refusing to make those changes

EDWARD CLODD
I know you can be very shrewd
when it comes to money matters

HARDY
I try to be

EDWARD CLODD
How substantial is the financial
reward for publishing first as a
serial?

HARDY
Eight hundred pounds

EDWARD CLODD
A lot to lose

HARDY
I should think about
Emma shouldn't I?

EDWARD CLODD
How is she Tom?

HARDY

Uneasy

EDWARD CLODD

You know Tom there is a way that you could still keep your novel in its original form while gaining a financial reward in the mean time ...but it must be on your own terms.

HARDY

On my own terms- Yes you're probably right

48

INT. ARCHIVE READING ROOM - COUNTY MUSEUM -DAY

48

EMMA arrives at the desk. FLORRIE approaches her

FLORENCE

It's nice of you to come Mrs Hardy.Mr Hardy said you've been sick and I be worried about you

EMMA

Does he? Well he is out of town at the moment.I am returning the **chronicle** he borrowed months ago

FLORENCE

I have some very good news.

EMMA

And what may that be my dear

FLORENCE

I am to be wed shortly to my young man,Bertie

EMMA

(hesitantly)

That is ...fine news

FLORENCE

But?

EMMA

I hope you are sure,that's all

FLORENCE

Why would I doubt it Mrs Hardy?

EMMA

Oh Florence,I've lately come to think that men are incapable of proper love,they seem to weary in the end of the most suitable perfect wife they chose once

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE

Not my man, he be kind and
generous and honest

EMMA

Expect little that's all.

FLORENCE

What do you mean?

EMMA

You are still young

FLORENCE

I am sure Mr Hardy don't weary of
you if that's what you mean. He be
a fine, considerate kind person

EMMA

Yes I suppose.

FLORENCE

You should rest Mrs Hardy

EMMA

Yes I should rest. Goodbye dear

Emma leaves. Florence goes off holding the '*chronicle*'

49

INT HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY -CONTINUOUS

49

We see HARDY altering his original manuscripts in black ink and EMMA copying the originals in red ink. They write, copy, re-work and edit the two versions. We see Hardy write *A Group of Noble Dames* on a fresh title page

50

INT DRAWING ROOM -MAX GATE -CHRISTMAS EVE

50

HARDY is reading a letter and holding a greeting card. EMMA is decorating a Christmas tree. We hear Cook, Bernie and Nellie singing a carol from the kitchen area

EMMA

Who is the letter from?

HARDY

Em, she's been exploiting me, not
in an unpleasant way but do you
know she gives my letters to
others to read and passes me off
as her admirer.

EMMA

Ah Rosamund Tomson. Well you are!

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

I have never led her to believe

EMMA

Maybe not overtly but she gratifies her own vanity I suspect by mentioning you

HARDY

She never once visited us in Dorset did she?

EMMA

Did you visit her?

HARDY

I thought she was one of those new enfranchised woman. I wonder now whether I can ever trust these society women.

EMMA

Who is the Christmas card from?

HARDY

Mona Caird. She wishes us both a prosperous new year and then asks me to give her an introduction to Percy Bunting

EMMA

From The Contemporary Magazine?

HARDY

Yes, she informs me she has written an article about Evolution and Marriage.

EMMA

Will you?

HARDY

Yes, I think I will. You know I have been thinking about writing my own article too

EMMA

On Marriage?

HARDY

What do I know of matrimony? No, about the importance of a novelist to be candid

Emma smiles, continues decorating the tree. Hardy in good spirits, helps her. They share a deep friendship at least

SUPERIMPOSE: FEBRUARY 1890-HARDY walks with EDWARD CLODD who is smoking.Moss runs with them.It is snowing

EDWARD CLODD

Your article 'Candour in English Fiction' has caused quite a stir

HARDY

It was my intention. I have a difficult relationship with my editors.

EDWARD CLODD

I am not surprised

HARDY

All I have done is criticize the magazine publishers for their ridiculous censorship of an artist's work

EDWARD CLODD

Your work,you mean!

HARDY

Well yes.... indirectly

EDWARD CLODD

I commend you Thomas,but you must admit you can hardly avoid giving offense with the such detailed way you present sexuality.The public simply are not ready

HARDY

But it is such a powerful determinant in human actions and reactions.

EDWARD CLODD

I agree

HARDY

Would you believe I have been called decadent and subversive

EDWARD CLODD

And you are not?

HARDY

It is not in my nature Edward

They laugh and walk together towards Max Gate.Moss follows

NELLIE is serving tea. EDWARD is drinking gin and smoking.
HARDY warms himself in front of the fire. Emma is painting

HARDY

My wife thinks I am in a
particularly disagreeable mood

EMMA

If you make those awful
criticisms of the magazines then
you must expect criticism back.

EDWARD CLODD

Criticism is one matter but
censorship is quite another?

EMMA

I have some sympathy for what
they say about the significance
that immorality plays in
literature

HARDY

And who judges what is immoral?

EMMA

Our Lord. If you found and
believed in God yourself..

HARDY

Emmie dearest, I have been looking
for God for fifty years and I
think that if he had existed I
should have discovered him by now

EMMA bends over to pat MOSS, she quietly moans with the
pain in her legs. She shows distaste at Hardy's remark
Edward, I have had my stories
Group of Noble Dames accepted in
the States

EDWARD CLODD

That is good. By whom?

HARDY

Harpers

EDWARD CLODD

You have decided to use
Harpers. Well I suppose under
the circumstances that is very
wise

HARDY

I am going to appease Tillotson
too though by letting The Graphic
have the stories here.

EDWARD CLODD

And what of the novel?

HARDY

We are going to London in a day
or so to discuss some ideas then
I shall resume my writing

EMMA

We shall resume he means

HARDY

It has generally been going well,
writing the serial version while
preserving the original but I do
find it a rather tedious and
tiresome task much of the time

EDWARD CLODD

Necessary though

HARDY

Of course

EMMA

I may not go with you to London
this time Tom. My legs are bad

HARDY

As you wish my dear

Edward lights another cigarette. Emma resumes painting
while Hardy and Edward continue talking

There will be all manner of
trickery at play for Tess soon

EDWARD CLODD

Trickery?

HARDY

She is torn between two strands;
her total love for Angel, and the
unbearable pain which prevents
her from marrying him

EDWARD CLODD

But you do not deny her love?

HARDY

Natural law cannot withhold it
from her?. And there lies the
tragedy. Instinct facilitates it
and so it cannot be stopped

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL CLARE

I do dearest

TESS

And you are hardly able to keep
alive without me, whatever my
offenses,I feel that I
ought to say I will

ANGEL holds her protectively,kissing her between his words

ANGEL CLARE

You will! you do say it.You will
be mine for ever and ever

TESS

Yes

They kiss.Tess shows a fearful sense of foreboding.ANGEL
wipes away what he thinks are her tears of happiness.

55

INT.HALL MAX GATE - AFTERNOON

55

HARDY brushes by EMMA.When on the stairs he turns his head

EMMA

Did you miss your Emmie Tom?

HARDY

Yes

EMMA

Did Tillotson say anything?

HARDY

No,there was nothing for him to
say.He accepts the story ideas

EMMA

Shall I get Nellie to fetch you
some tea

HARDY

I am tired Em,I need to rest
before supper

EMMA

A telegraph came yesterday,it's
on your desk

Hardy ascends the stairs,Emma is disappointed,rebuffed

HARDY reads the telegraph. He is numb, sits down, takes a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket. Emma enters

HARDY

(reading aloud)

*Not a line of her writing have I,
not a thread of hair*

I cannot believe it Em. On the train I started composing this poem for her. I was quite ignorant of the fact she was dying and now here she is, dead

EMMA

Who Tom?

HARDY

My cousin... Phena

EMMA

Oh Tom I am so sorry

HARDY

My beloved Phena

EMMA

Not beloved, don't call her ...

HARDY

I was thinking of her, I wrote this. Seems such an odd incident of sympathetic telepathy

HARDY passes the verse to EMMA who reads as Hardy speaks
How can that be so? That I should be writing about her while she was in fact dying.

EMMA

Your lost prize? Is that how you think of her?

HARDY

She was the epitome of all I believe in, lived according to the rules of nature, we knew and understood each other so well.

EMMA

So why then did you not marry **her**....

Hardy doesn't hear, he is in shock. Emma glances towards the Tess manuscripts strewn across his desk

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)
and why does Tess agree to marry
when it would be morally wrong
for her to do so,tell me that Tom

HARDY
She feared it might be wrong but
she trusted Angel's love

EMMA
She should have trusted in God

HARDY
In her heart and innocence I did
I suppose,that was the fault

Emma picks up the telegraph,turns her back on Hardy and
reads it.Hardy sits motionless in the chair watching Emma

57 **TESS: INT. MILKMAIDS SHARED BEDROOM - NIGHT** 57

The MILKMAIDS are asleep.TESS' head is buried in a pillow

TESS
It was such a wrong to you Angel
to have said yes when I be
'married' in the true sense of
it, to another.

Tess shakes her head and cries

58 **INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY- SAME** 58

HARDY is watching for Emma's response

HARDY
She was so young to die

EMMA loses her composure.

EMMA
Who? Your heroine or your cousin?

HARDY
Tryphena

EMMA
Why didn't you marry her?

HARDY
I married you Em,because that is
what I wanted,is that not enough?

EMMA
Tell me you have not stayed in
love with her.That is why you are
so protective of Tess,of her,you
love them,her,not me

HARDY

Emma! you rant.You are not well

EMMA

How can you say I am not well.
You are the one with the eye for
beautiful women.I have but a very
small part in your heart now.

HARDY

That's not true

EMMA

You thought me lovely once now
you take no interest in me,my
poems, my painting,you barely
greet me when you return from
London.You recoil from me.

HARDY

Em it is you who doesn't want to
be loved,as if you think yourself
too saintly.You become more and
more like your mother.

EMMA

Do not condemn my dearest mother?

HARDY

Emma you just cannot give way to
the natural instinctive way men
and women should behave when
their passion is aroused.

EMMA

We are not animals,though you
know I am dearly fond of them.

HARDY

That at least we have in common

EMMA

But God created us higher
beings,reckless passion has no
place in our hearts,only pure
absolute love Tom

HARDY

All this god fearing religion,it
has destroyed any softness you
once had

EMMA

I still have softness Tom, **I**
do,it's you who are so bleak

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

And too troublesome to live with

EMMA

It is hard to live with you, I
don't know you anymore

EMMA leaves angry and upset. Hardy lowers his head defeated

HARDY

Nor I you

59

INT. KITCHEN - MAX GATE - SIMULTANEOUS

59

We hear the raised voices from the upstairs study and Emma's heavy footsteps. NELLIE, BERNIE AND COOK look upwards

NELLIE

I don't know what's got in to Mr
and Mrs Hardy these past weeks

BERNIE

Maybe his writing ain't going so
good

NELLIE

I never seen so many crossings
out on his papers lately. It looks
a very mess I can tell you

COOK

You ain't supposed to nose around
Nellie, they be private writings

NELLIE

I don't like it when they quarrel

COOK

That be a part of being married

NELLIE

But I should love to be married, I
know I wouldn't ever quarrel

COOK

Well, I be glad I ain't

BERNIE

My pa says women are fickle and
temperamental in particular my ma

COOK

And why shouldn't a female be,
with marriage being nothing more
than a trap and punishment, Mrs
Hardy do know it, I know

Lilian and Gordon rush in

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

Aunt Emma is crying so I put my hands around her like Uncle Tom said to do when someone is hurt

COOK

That's a kind thing to do Gordon

Cook gives Gordon a fresh baked cake

LILIAN

I put my arms around her first

GORDON

No you didn't.

LILIAN

Uncle Tom showed **me** how to comfort a person, he knows how to, you don't Gordon

COOK

Do you want a cake too my dear?

Cook gives Lilian a cake

NELLIE

Come on, let's go see if Mrs Hardy do want anything. Bring some cake with you Lilian. That always helps

Nellie, Lilian and Gordon go out.

COOK

Poor Mrs Hardy, she do put up with a lot

BERNIE

That's what my ma do often say

COOK

What would you know Bernie

60

EXT. RAILWAY PLATFORM DORCHESTER STATION - ONE MONTH LATER
60

EMMA and NELLIE are waiting with LILIAN AND GORDON, who each carry a little case. The platform has many PASSENGERS

GORDON

Why didn't Uncle Tom come? He always waves us off for our holiday

LILIAN

He's still very sad because his sister is dead

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

It wasn't his sister, it was his wife but that was long ago

LILLIAN

They couldn't be wed silly because Aunt Emma is wed to Uncle Tom. She's the wife

GORDON

Who was his sister then?

NELLIE

Step back children

Train pulls in, the children board with Nellie. We see them hanging out the window

LILLIAN

Say goodbye to Uncle Tom and tell him I am sad because he is sad.

EMMA

We will miss you my dears. Lilian take care of your brother.

GORDON

Bye Aunt Emma

EMMA

Give my regards to your father. Safe journey Nellie

The train pulls out the station, everyone is waving

61

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - NEXT DAY - AFTERNOON

61

The sun shines. The HARDY'S are entertaining, among their guests are EDWARD CLODD, EDMOND and NELLIE GOSSE. MARY SHERIDEN, (50's) THACKERAY TURNER (40's, local politician)

NELLIE GOSSE

It is very quiet without the children running to and fro

EMMA

We miss them when they are not here. They are visiting their father

NELLIE GOSSE

They spend a lot of time here

EMMA

My brother is convinced that his children do not thrive in London and need to have country air.

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Walter is a worrier but as it is
we are both glad that he is so

MARY SHERIDEN

It is very generous of you both
to look after them

HARDY

It's our pleasure. I take charge
of their literary education and
my wife attends to their
spiritual upbringing

EMMA

Of course I must

HARDY

However I am not convinced it has
any place in a child's upbringing

EMMA

You say that just to provoke,
invite dispute again Tom.

THACKERAY TURNER

Do you really not think so?

EMMA

He doesn't think that at all. He
merely likes to irritate me

EDWARD CLODD

(sarcastically)

Tom you would do better not to
irritate your wife

Edward lights a cigar and smiles at Hardy

EDMOND

Edward enough!

MARY SHERIDEN

Well, I happen to think that Emma
is right. We have a duty to raise
our children righteously

THACKERAY TURNER

True, a rounded education is very
necessary if one is to make one's
way in the world and become a
success

EMMA

(agitated)

You know I overheard two women in
the bookshop last week. They must

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)
have known who I was, spoke for my
benefit

MARY SHERIDEN
You cannot be sure Emma?

EMMA
One of them wondered why that
man, referring to you Tom, could
not try some useful work in the
world

HARDY
Does she indeed and what knows
she of usefulness?

EDWARD CLODD
They feign intellect, Thomas!

Hardy and Edward share a smile

EMMA
And the other questioned why you
could not have done building work
like your father instead of
writing rubbish that no one wants
to read

EDWARD CLODD
You lack a rounded education then
my friend

The company go silent for a while, awkwardness

MARY SHERIDEN
You surely protested Emma?

EMMA
I left immediately, I know they
were laughing at me

EDWARD CLODD
The predictable small mindedness
of parochial provincials. They
know not nor understand your
husband's genius Mrs Hardy

EMMA
I thought at the time they were
probably absolutely right

NELLIE
You cannot mean that Emma. Surely
it was you in the first place who
persuaded Tom to give up
architecture as a career and
become a writer?

EMMA

Then, I was naive. I didn't know him as I do now.

HARDY

Ah, now she does know me!

Emma looks defeated, she is on the verge of tears
What my wife means is that I failed to provide the fame and grandeur she hoped for, coming as she does from such a privileged background

EMMA

I never hoped nor expected anything yet I am disappointed

EDMOND

You can only be disappointed if you expected differently

EMMA

Well ask him who he's thinking of now for it is surely as always some other woman, not me

NELLIE GOSSE

He has a poet's heart Emma

EDWARD CLODD

Which wanders. He must be forgiven

EMMA

Ask him about his fantasies?

EDMOND

It is not unusual to have a private world, private loves, to imagine how things might be. That is not being unfaithful

NELLIE GOSSE

I should not like you Edmond to be always imagining another woman

EMMA

He called his cousin his lost prize which makes me simply the consolation

MARY SHERIDEN

Emma you must not torment yourself, you will become bitter

EMMA

I am bitter.He never credits me for the work I do for our books my ideas.I wonder just who I am?

HARDY

You are my wife Emma and my friend.You know that I much appreciate your help.

MARY SHERIDEN

Understandably she is upset,she is such a delicate soul

HARDY

Upset,again and again and again!

EMMA

I am not upset!

EMMA stamps her way back to the house.The sun disappears behind dark clouds

HARDY

I apologize for my wife's disposition.I'm afraid her moods are as changeable our weather, although not perhaps as inconsequential.

EDWARD CLODD

The sun hides behind a cloud

NELLIE GOSSE

Perhaps she feels she is losing you as you become more known. We are all vulnerable especially when the heart is involved.

HARDY

Ahh! Matters of the heart!

NELLIE the Hardy's maid approaches quickly

NELLIE

Mrs Hardy be very upset Sir,she be bumping around upstairs just like our Lilian does when she's angry with Gordon.I thought you should know

HARDY

Thank you Nell,do not concern yourself,could you bring us some more lemonade

EDWARD CLODD

And a gin my dear, thank you

NELLIE GOSSE

Where matters of the heart are
concerned Tom, our wills and
resolve can be easily shaken

Hardy smiles knowingly

EDMOND

Your novel Tom, it goes well?

HARDY

The somewhat dull serialization
continues, but the final volumes
at least are my easement. They
remain intact, the truth will be
told

THACKERAY TURNER

I hear you can be quite
forthright with the truth Tom

HARDY

That is my occupation Thackeray

MARY SHERIDEN

And what exactly is so truthful?

HARDY

Wait and see Mrs Sheriden, but I
anticipate it will not sit
comfortably with you

62

TESS: INT. WELLBRIDGE FARMHOUSE - PARLOUR - EVENING

62

ANGEL and TESS sit in front of a glowing fire. ANGEL puts
a necklace around TESS' neck.

ANGEL CLARE

My dearest Wife

TESS

Husband

ANGEL CLARE

Oh Tess how beautiful you are! If
you were to appear now in a
ballroom all heads would turn. But
no, I think I do love you best in
your wing bonnet and cotton frock

Tess smiles, they kiss

Oh my Tess do you remember what
we said this morning about
telling our faults. I want to make
a confession

(CONTINUED)

TESS
 (surprised but pleased)
You have something to confess?

ANGEL CLARE
 Put your head there Tess because
 I want you to forgive me.

TESS
 Forgive you? **You** seek
 forgiveness?

ANGEL CLARE
 Oh,I have such terrible
 remorse.Years back when in
 London,in the midst of all my
 fine aims and morals I myself
 fell.It was a stranger too and
 for no more than 48 hours I
 swear.Oh Tess,I am truly
 sorry,please forgive me.

TESS
 Angel of course.I am almost glad
 because now you can forgive me

They join hands as the fire embers fade
 I too,years before,fell.I had a
 child, though I not be wed,I was
 taken in,like you Angel,like you.

ANGEL CLARE
 (shocked)
 Is he still alive?

TESS
 The baby lived but a short while

ANGEL CLARE
 (coldly)
 No,**Him**

TESS
 Oh,Yes

Silence then ANGEL stirs the embers of the fire.It is
 obvious he does not forgive her

63

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

63

EMMA is returning to the guests in better spirits and
 dressed differently.She carries a cat,MOSS follows

EMMA
 Apologies for my tantrum,I suffer
 such pain at times,it affects my
 manner,I am recovered now

(CONTINUED)

EDWARD CLODD

And the sun returns too in all
its splendor

HARDY

Here Moss! Edmund you have your
new Kodak? Come ..

EDMUND takes various photographs of everyone, of MOSS too.

NELLIE GOSSE

Shall we organize a trip to the
seaside, the weather is quite warm
now and it would be rather lovely

EDMOND

It would indeed my dear

EMMA

Oh yes we must show you Weymouth
Promenade, the sands and the sea

HARDY

And there is a very good hotel
where we can luncheon, will you
and Mrs Turner join us Thackeray?

THACKERAY TURNER

Thank you, we would be delighted

EMMA

Yourself Mary and your husband?

Mary nods pleased to be invited

HARDY

Edward?

EDWARD CLODD

No I think perhaps not, married
couples will surely be merrier
without a bachelor around

HARDY

(very quietly to Edward)
Married couples? But as you
said before Edward marriage need
not be binding

Hardy and Edward smile. NELLIE brings out drinks, the
atmosphere is relaxed. HARDY wanders around the garden with
Edward. We see the others laughing, in the background

EDWARD CLODD

Keeping the peace Thomas?

HARDY

It is not betrayal Edward is it?

EDWARD CLODD

No

HARDY

Double standards?

EDWARD CLODD

No, not that either

64 **TESS: INT.WELLBRIDGE FARMHOUSE - PARLOUR - NEXT MORNING** 64

TESS

I suppose you are not going to live with me now are you Angel?

ANGEL CLARE

I cannot, without despising myself and what is worse despising you. At present whatever I feel I do not despise you. There are just too many difficulties while **HE** is still alive.

TESS

I have thought it all over too. You are right, you must go away

ANGEL CLARE

But what will you do?

TESS

I can go home. I want to go home. I was wrong and must be punished but please Angel do not make my punishment more than I can bear

We see Tess' betrayal by Angel as indeed unbearable

65 **INT. HARDY'S FRONT UPSTAIRS STUDY - THE NEXT DAY - MORNING**
65

HARDY, EMMA, NELLIE and BERNIE are moving everything from the front upstairs study into the spare back bedroom where the furniture within is taken to the old study which becomes Hardy's new bedroom. MOSS is running about excited

66 **INT. HARDY'S OLD STUDY/NEW BEDROOM - AFTERNOON** 66

NELLIE AND BERNIE are making up HARDY'S bed, whispering

BERNIE

It be a strange thing for Mr Hardy to sleep alone now

(CONTINUED)

NELLIE

I reckon it be something to do
with when we heard them arguing.
They be offish with each other
ever since

BERNIE

You be right. I've not seen him in
such a mood before

NELLIE

And then yesterday I told you
about Mrs Hardy being uppity and
in a rage with all that banging
about in the bedroom

BERNIE

Still an odd thing for Mr Hardy
to sleep on his own.

NELLIE

'Tis quite a modern thing in
marriage these days they do say.

BERNIE

Off the blankets Moss!

67

INT. NEW STUDY - NEXT DAY - MORNING

67

EMMA, tired, places books on shelves. HARDY parcels up the
draft of A Group of Noble Dames. Emma copies some of Tess

HARDY

I shall eagerly await the
inevitable return of these
stories. The young Tillotson will
demand changes I dare say

EMMA

Why did you allow them to wed?

HARDY doesn't respond. EMMA looks particularly unattractive
but as usual is making the best of the situation. 'd)

Tom, why did you let them wed?

HARDY

Who?

EMMA

Tess and the parson's son. It
could never be a basis for a
happy marriage?

HARDY

I have explained this before. They
had no choice because their souls
stirred so inexplicably. It could
neither be helped or resisted

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

(puzzled and bemused)

The soul is spiritual, immortal.
It cannot stir as you put it

HARDY

Then we will not call it a soul. I
merely imply that instinctive
feelings can be so strong that
they cannot be denied. And though
the feeling may be maddening and
distracting it will ultimately
change things

EMMA

You are too dark, you think too
deeply. I cannot fathom you

HARDY

Then let it be Em

They continue arranging the new study

EMMA

Did you sleep well last night?

HARDY

No...some... then I wished never
to wake at all, and yourself?

Emma doesn't reply, just turns away, continues re-arranging

68

INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY - ONE MONTH LATER

68

HARDY locks the Tess manuscripts away. The book of poems
lies on the recently returned draft copy of Noble Dames
from Tillotson. Hardy appears irked, picks up his bag and
leaves. EMMA enters. She looks at the poems throws them
into a rubbish basket just as NELLIE enters

EMMA

Ah Nellie, will you give my
husband's study a good spring
clean when we are away.

NELLIE

I will Mrs Hardy, Mam, enjoy the
trip

69

EXT. WATERLOO STATION DAY

69

PASSENGERS AND PORTERS bustling back and forth. We hear the
noise of the busy station. We see HARDY AND EMMA get off a
train. They are met by EDMOND AND NELLIE GOSSE. A PORTER
collects their luggage and follows the four of them.

70

INT. MARY JEUNE'S HOUSE -WALPOLE STREET -2ND JUNE -MORNING
70

MARY JEUNE and HARDY sit opposite each other, relaxed, comfortable in each others company

HARDY

And my short stories 'A Group of Noble Dames' has offended as well, I sent the collection to The Graphic foolishly

MARY JEUNE

Yes probably against your better judgment Tom

HARDY

And within no time back comes a whole heap of criticism

MARY JEUNE

How bothersome. First your serialization rejected and now the same with your short stories.

HARDY

Not totally rejected, will just have to smooth down those directors yet again

MARY JEUNE

I don't see how readers could be offended by tales of aristocracy

HARDY

Ah but you see my 'Noble Dames' are apparently a pageant of confessed and un-confessed adulteries, illegitimate births, sudden deaths, broken marriages..

MARY JEUNE

Well when you put it as they do Tom, I am not surprised the public, society would be offended.

HARDY

You are smiling

EMMA

Thomas, you are incorrigible. I think you do it on purpose

HARDY

Well I take no notice. I give them what they want now but I do mean to maintain my autonomy and when

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
Tess is eventually published in
volume form it will be as I
intended it to be.

MARY JEUNE
And does it go well?

HARDY
Emma helps me with the copying
which I appreciate

MARY JEUNE
Could she not visit today?

HARDY
She insists on resting before the
party this evening. I know by the
looks she gives, she disapproves
of Tess as much as any other

MARY JEUNE
So much extra work though for you

HARDY
This ridiculous censorship is as
hypocritical as the double
standards and self-righteousness
shown by Tess' husband

HARDY shakes his head, despairing

MARY JEUNE
I can see you are not happy

HARDY
Am I ever happy Mary?

MARY JEUNE
You take on too much

HARDY
There is much that is wrong, I
struggle with it all. Even my own
marriage is not exempt from
scrutiny

MARY JEUNE
Why should it be?

HARDY
I feel an overbearing
hopelessness at times. I should be
able now I've reached fifty years
to accept how things are but I
seem to only get worse

(CONTINUED)

MARY JEUNE

You can and you will, one day

HARDY

(smiling)

Maybe when I am too old but now I
am so bleak in thought I allow
Tess to be deserted by everyone,
her husband, her family, society.
It's like her punishment is mine

Mary puts an arm around Hardy and comforts him

71

TESS: EXT. FOOTPATH- EDGE OF WOODLAND - LATE AFTERNOON

71

HARDY (V.O)

*Tess is at her lowest
ebb, penniless*

TESS walks along a footpath, dressed poorly, bag over her
shoulder. A gentleman comes up behind her.

MAN

Good-night my pretty maid

TESS

Good night Sir

MAN

Why surely 'tis the young wench
who's fancy man squire
D'Urberville was so uppity about
when I called you a ...

TESS

No, not me. I have a husband, Mr
Clare, I am on my way to meet him

MAN

I know a face 'specially a pretty
one like yours. You ought to beg
me pardon for that blow he gave
me

Tess is scared, she takes flight and shelters in a
plantation. She makes a bed of leaves and settles to rest

TESS

(quietly to herself) Was there
ever another such wretched being
as me in the world?

72

INT. MARY JEUNES HOUSE WALPOLE STREET -SAME

72

The moment is disturbed as MADELEINE AND DOROTHY leap on MARY. They throw their arms around HARDY'S neck.

MADELEINE AND DOROTHY
Happy Birthday Uncle Tom. Uncle
Tom is fifty years old today.

MADELEINE
Where is Aunt Emma?

HARDY
Resting. So how are my special
girls?

MARY JEUNE
Growing up Thomas, too fast, to be
ladies too soon

We see and hear the group chattering and content

73

INT. LARGE GRAND DINING HALL - SAME - EVENING

73

The room is bustling with SOCIETY FRIENDS. HARDY AND MARY talk separate from the others, MISS BALESTIER (a pretty young American) seeks them out

MISS BALESTIER
Mrs Jeune, of course, you are here

MARY JEUNE
Thomas do meet Miss Balestier,
she hails from America and I do
believe this is your first visit
to London, is it not?

MISS BALESTIER
Indeed it is, pleased to
make your acquaintance Mr Hardy

HARDY
And how do you find it here in
London?

MISS BALESTIER
Very reposeful, you know in
America at night I feel that I
must be quick and sleep, as there
is not much time to give to it

HARDY
I should not like that intensity.
London is too hectic for me

Miss Balestier is quickly ushered off by ANOTHER
LADY. Hardy catches sight of AGATHA THORNYCROFT

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)

You know Mary, these women are a picture to behold. Surely Agatha is the most beautiful woman in England

Hardy smiles to himself.

MARY JEUNE

She is and she seems to have put you in a more jovial mood

HARDY

She looks absolutely exquisite

MARY JEUNE

Surely someone like you Thomas will always see through this finery. The country girls in Dorset must be just as handsome

HARDY

True, in fact where would these beauties here be if put into rough wrappers in a turnip field. They could not survive

MARY JEUNE

So no surrendering for Tess then?

HARDY

No surrender, natural survival

They share a smile

74

TESS: EXT. THE PLANTATION - EARLY NEXT MORNING

74

TESS sleeps. We hear the sounds of palpitations, flutters, gasps. Dying pheasants, feebly twitching, contorted, writhe in agony. TESS wakes, puts them out of their misery by gently wringing their necks

TESS

(quietly to herself)
Poor darlings, you escaped yesterday's carnage but are still doomed. And I suppose **myself** to be the most miserable being on earth.

Tess ashamed of her gloom, picks up the last dying pheasant
I am not mangled, I am not bleeding and I have two hands to feed and clothe me

She wipes the blood off her hands with dried leaves and emerges cautiously upon the highway

HARDY AND MARY are joined by AGATHA, her husband HAMO and EDITH WHARTON

AGATHA

Many Happy returns Mr Hardy

HAMO

Yes my man fifty is indeed a milestone

HARDY

I must admit I have been in a rather melancholy mood of late but I am cheered up now. It is hard to find any optimism these days. It seems that for every bad moment there is a worse

EDITH WHARTON

Pessimism, must be the burden we endure for being artists

HARDY

Probably so Miss Wharton, have you seen my wife?

EDITH WHARTON

She is in good spirits, talking with Mrs Rudyard Kipling to be. You should join her and the lady, her name is Miss Balestier

HARDY

We have already been introduced but I fear that when in my wife's company conversation will very quickly turn religious

EDITH WHARTON

And does that rile with you?

HARDY

Can I be bold Edith and say that I do not believe in God

EMMA unannounced comes up behind HARDY

EMMA

He doesn't mean it of course. My husband has no manners. He just enjoys being antagonistic.

HARDY

Well you believe who you will!

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

How are you Hamo? How was Italy?

HAMO

Very profitable. I'm pleased to say

HARDY

With such suffering as there is in the world how can you say God exists? Religion is purely man-made, life's scapegoat

EMMA

I shall pray for you Thomas

HAMO talks with the righteous EMMA. HARDY walks with Mary

MARY JEUNE

She is quite enjoying herself

HARDY

She preaches nice enough but in all earnestness it means nothing

They join another group. Hardy is now quiet and circumspect

76

TESS: EXT -VILLAGE CENTRE - MIDDAY

76

TESS looks neater, walks holding her head high. She stops, stares at a SMALL CROWD listening to a preacher who she recognizes as ALEC D'URBERVILLE so hurries on her way

77

TESS: EXT-COUNTRY LANE - AFTERNOON

77

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Tess, Tess wait, it is I, Alec

TESS

((Coldly))

I see it is

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

I can see by your eyes you think me ridiculous dressed like this

TESS

I do rather and I wish with all my heart that you had not followed me

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Oh Tess I felt that of all the persons in the world I was to save from wrath it was surely my duty and desire to save the woman whom I had so grievously wronged

(CONTINUED)

TESS

Have you saved your self first?
Charity begins at home they say

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

I, have done nothing, **Heaven** as
I tell my congregation has done
all

TESS

A fine thing then when the likes
of yourself, when you know the
harm you've done me, take your
fill of earth causing nothing but
sorrow and blackness. Then when
you wish to secure your pleasure
in heaven too, you, like so many
others become converted

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

God forbid that I should say I am
a good man Tess

They both momentarily find themselves staring at each
others familiarity and good looks

It is perhaps better that I
should not look too often on you.
It might be dangerous

TESS

Why?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Well, woman's faces have had too
much power over me already not to
fear them and yours reminds me of
times I would forget. Oh Tess I
must go away

TESS

You **must** go away. I want nothing
from you Alec. I have had too much
trouble already from which since
I have learned a great deal

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

What trouble ?

TESS

A child was born Alec..he died

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Tess, I knew nothing of it why
didn't you send me word. I would
have helped you.

Alec looks at Tess, sees only sorrow in her eyes

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEC D'URBERVILLE (cont'd)
I must go.I must go.I will pray
for you Tess

TESS
Yes do,now please go

78

INT. LONDON RENTED ROOMS - ONE MONTH LATER - MORNING

78

EMMA is crying and dusting.An open telegraph is on a table

EMMA
I cannot abide living with other
people's furniture,they take so
little care,the shelves have not
been dusted,there are creatures
in the closet,everything is dirty

HARDY
You mustn't fret about such
things,Em.It is enough to have
received the news of your father

EMMA
Yes,I must start to prepare, the
funeral will have to be arranged
I must go to Plymouth.Will you
come?

HARDY
I have promised Mary that I would
write an epilogue for that
special production of 'The Shrew'

EMMA
(sarcastically)
Oh Yes, her Holiday Fund for poor
city children,much more important

HARDY
He never liked me Emma,I haven't
seen him for years,he always
thought I was not good enough for
you and too often made it known.

EMMA
That is not true

HARDY
He called me a low born churl
once, who presumed to marry into
his family.It would be hypocrisy.

EMMA
In God's name then I would rather
you did not attend

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

I promise that I will return to
the country as soon after.

EMMA

I must pack some things

Hardy helps.He lifts Emma's black dress into a trunk

79

INT. THEATRE AUDITORIUM- 5 DAYS LATER EVENING

79

We see many empty seats.The performance of The Taming of
the Shrew ends,there is some applause,MARY walks on stage

MARY JEUNE

Thank you very much for your
generosity.It is,however,with
much regret that Mr Thomas
Hardy,our highly praised author
and composer of our closing words
this evening has a prior
engagement and so sadly cannot be
with us.Ladies and Gentlemen
please a big hand for Miss Rehan

MISS REHAN steps up on stage,the sparse audience applaud

80

INT. SAVILLE CLUB - SIMULTANEOUS

80

HARDY is talking with EDMOND GOSSE and HAMO THORNEYCROFT

EDMUND GOSSE

Please pass on my condolences to
your wife, Thomas.I wonder she
did not expect you at the funeral

HARDY

She would have liked that but I
think she understands

EDMOND GOSSE

Ah .. such morbid affairs, I
don't blame you Thomas for
staying away. Old age sneaks up
on us I'm afraid,we do not like
to be reminded of our mortality

HARDY

Mortality I can welcome.False
sincerity I cannot.Emma's father
and me did not like each other.

HAMO

Quite right then Thomas

HARDY

You know that I find it so fascinating that our actual day of birth we know but one day also must be the day of our death?

HAMO

Cheerful as always!

HARDY

A day which lies sly and unseen among all the other days of the year, giving no sign or sound when we annually pass over it but none the less so surely there.

HAMO

You have an extraordinary yet singular perception of life and death Thomas

HARDY

'Tis one and the same

EDMOND GOSSE

I hope Mary's event is going well? Should you have been there?

HARDY

No. She puts a great deal into her causes, I admire her

HAMO

A wonderful woman

HARDY

She is and a good friend

The men continue to talk. We hear the applause at Mary's charity event and the funeral bells for Emma's father

81 INT. DRAWING ROOM - MAX GATE - TWO WEEKS LATER - EVENING 81

EMMA dressed in black sits quietly in a chair. MOSS is panting from the summer heat. HARDY is unpacking documents

HARDY

I hope everything passed with ease?

EMMA

Yes it did, thank you. Did the charity performance go well?

HARDY

I believe so. Miss Rehan read my verses very well. Some critics

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
used the word spirited whereas
The Globe referred to my work as
being rather poor stuff...

EMMA
Oh Tom! I'm sorry.

HARDY
Well it was rather hurried

EMMA
How is Mary?

HARDY
I told her of your father's death
and she was very sympathetic.

EMMA
That's kind. Have you heard back
about the short stories?

HARDY
The proofs required some
additional changes which I've
revised. They are now ready for
the Christmas Edition. I can now
return to dismembering my novel

EMMA
It must be done Tom. I am well
enough again to copy if you wish

HARDY
I have promised my brother Henry
that I would accompany him on a
trip to Paris first.

EMMA
You are traveling to Paris?

HARDY
I appreciate of course that you
could not possibly undertake such
a trip so soon after your..

EMMA
No, I could not think of it.

Hardy shows relief. Emma fingers her black beads
You haven't asked after mother?

HARDY
Is she well?

EMMA

Obviously she is not well. My father was her the most fondest husband, married for a long time

HARDY

Of course, I forget the importance that some of us place on marriage

82

TESS: EXT. TURNIP FIELD- MIDDAY

82

TESS is collecting turnips from an earth mound, passes one to the MAN operating a slicing machine. Busy FIELD WORKERS everywhere. ALEC is crossing the field and approaches Tess

TESS

You should not have come. Why do you trouble me so?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Believe me Tess I had no idea of what had resulted from our affair until you told me. Scamp that I was to foul that innocent life.

TESS

Is that what you have come to say?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

I wish to say that the whole blame was mine, I say in all earnestness that it is a shame for parents to bring girls up in such dangerous ignorance of the gins and nets the wicked may set for them. I want to make amends..

He takes a piece of paper out of his jacket pocket

TESS

What is it?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

A marriage license

TESS

Oh Alec I cannot

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Why not? I can put things right for us, in the name of God

TESS

No, no you cannot

(CONTINUED)

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Why is that so?

TESS
I do not love you. I love someone
else

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
But you travel alone, where is
he? He has deserted you has he
not, then no matter Tess you must
marry me, I will look after you.
Please allow me to make amends

TESS
I said that I cannot

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Why? you will forget about him

TESS
No, I am married to him!

Tess starts to cry Alec comforts her

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Then so it must be. But Tess in
the true sense are you married?

TESS
He left me before our wedding
night if that is what you mean.
Because of you Alec, because I
told the truth about you

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Then I am more of a husband to
you than he is

83 **EXT. PARIS - CONTINUOUS** 83

HARDY and his brother HENRY enjoy the freedom of Paris
without Emma. They watch the 'can can' at the Moulin Rouge
Rouge, enjoy watching the girls and visit some landmarks

84 **INT. MAX GATE - SIMULTANEOUS** 84

EMMA in black, reads the Bible. She limps about in pain,
tries to paint, abandons it, she looks alone and rejected

85 **INT. -HIGH STREET - AFTERNOON** 85

EMMA AND FLORENCE are buying flowers at a stall. THE FLOWER
SELLER is occupied with other CUSTOMERS

FLORENCE

Its nice of you Mrs Hardy to come with me. My ma says flowers are an unnecessary extravagance and will not have them in the house

EMMA

I think flowers are quite delightful. I am on my own at the moment and appreciate the company These are pretty. How much Madam?

FLOWER SELLER

They be a penny a bunch Mam

FLORENCE

I'll buy them, thank you

EMMA

Mr Hardy is in Paris with his brother

FLORENCE

I be surprised he takes a trip so soon after your father passed on

EMMA

My husband feels little sympathy for the passing of human life, now if it were an animal or bird

The flower seller gives the wrapped bunch of flowers to Florence who in turn gives the flower seller a penny

FLOWER SELLER

I expect they be for your ma? 'tis a lovely thought

Florence shakes her head and smiles. The women walk on

FLORENCE

I think my Bert will like these. Is it silly to fetch flowers for a man? He often brings me flowers

EMMA

Not at all, are men and women so different Florrie, I don't know!

FLORENCE

You seem sad today. Is it because you be missing Mr Hardy?

EMMA

I do... but I rather suspect he does not miss me in the same way

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE

I be sure he loves and misses
you.I know he do.

EMMA

He loves all woman Florrie and
that is something I must endure.

FLORENCE

But only you are his wife Mrs
Hardy

EMMA

True, I must make the best of it

86

INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY - ONE WEEK -LATER AFTERNOON

86

HARDY and EMMA are working on the final changes to the
Tess serialization.They are both writing.Emma pauses

EMMA

You say nothing of Paris

HARDY

There is nothing much to say

EMMA

There must be something Tom

HARDY

If I must say something then yes
I was struck by the eerie
contrast between the ardent young
men in the dance hall so full of
life and hope and their dead
forgotten counterparts who lay
buried in the cemetery opposite

EMMA

Typically morbid and mournful
when there is so much beauty in
the city.Did you think of me?

HARDY

I have arranged the annuities for
Lilian and Gordon as you asked

EMMA

Thank you.You look tired Tom, all
this extra re-writing, re-working
is becoming quite an onerous task

HARDY

I am indifferent to the critics
Emma,the bowdlerizing of my Tess
is no hardship and not tiring now
because she remains perfectly in
tact in my heart and head

(CONTINUED)

Emma looks at the sheet which he is writing on

EMMA

And in red

HARDY

Exactly. It's like re-assembling
the limbs of a murdered body.

EMMA

I really don't like you sometimes

ACT THREE

87

TESS EXT. FIELD

87

HARDY (V.O)

*Tess' business was to untie every
sheaf of corn handed on to her*

TESS stands on the threshing machine platform. IZZ HUETT on the rick. MARIAN, HETTY AND OTHER WORKERS work hard. ALEC now in tweed suit, stands and watches Tess from the boundary hedge. Izz and Marian notice Alec.

IZZ

Who is that?

MARIAN

Somebody's fancy-man, I s'pose

IZZ

I'll lay a guinea he's after
Tess.

HETTY

O no. 'Tis one of them ranter
parsons who's been sniffing after
her lately, not a dandy like this.

IZZ

Well this is the same man. He have
left off his black coat and white
neckerchief and have cut off his
whiskers but he's the same man

HETTY

Well, I don't think it at all
right for him to be courting a
married woman, even though her
husband be abroad, and she in a
sense, a widow.

The whirling of the machine ceases, Tess leaves her post, exhausted, she sees Alec coming over, she trembles

(CONTINUED)

IZZ

You do look so very white Tess,
you be needing a quart to drink
to make 'ee feel any better now

Alec comes up behind Tess

TESS

Oh, I'll eat my dinner here Izzy
I'll stay on the rick, you go...

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

I am here again, as you see

TESS

Why do you trouble me so!

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

I trouble **you**? I think I may ask,
why do you trouble me?

TESS

I don't

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

You do! you haunt me. The
religiousness in me has gone now
and it is you who are
responsible. I am done with God

TESS

You have given up your preaching?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

Entirely. I have broken every
engagement since you said you
could not marry me.

TESS

But your brethren, what must they
have thought?

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

No doubt the brethren pray for me
for they are kind people in their
way. But what do I care? How could
I go on with the thing when I had
lost my faith in it, it would have
been hypocrisy

TESS

But it must not be on my account.

ALEC D'URBERVILLE

But it is, your pretty face and
shapely figure. I saw it before
you saw me, that tight pinafore

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEC D'URBERVILLE (cont'd)
 thing sets it off, and that
 wing-bonnet, you field-girls
 should never wear those bonnets
 if you wish to keep out of
 danger.

He moves towards Tess
 Well, here I am, my love, as in
 the old times

TESS
 Never as then... O why didn't you
 keep your faith if the loss of it
 has brought you here like this.
 It is wicked and cruel of you

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 It is written that she shall
 follow after her lover, but she
 shall not overtake him and she
 shall seek him, but shall not find
 him, then shall she say, I will go
 and return to my first husband,
 for then was it better with me
 than now! Tess, my trap is waiting
 Leave your husband, come

Tess furiously picks up one of her leather gauntlets and
 strikes Alec on the face drawing blood

TESS
 Now you can punish me, go on whip
 me, crush me, you need not mind my
 fellow workers I shall not cry
 out. Once victim, always victim,
 that's the law!

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 No Tess. I can make full allowance
 for this. Yet you most unjustly
 forget one thing, that I would
 have married you if you had not
 put it out of my power to do so.

He grabs her shoulders harshly

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 Did I not ask you to be my wife,
 did I not!

TESS
 You did

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
 And you cannot be. But remember
 one thing my lady, I was your

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEC D'URBERVILLE (cont'd)
 master once I will be your master
 again.If you are any man's wife
 you are mine.I will come again

The threshers return to work and Alec leaves

88

INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY -NEXT DAY - MORNING

88

HARDY screws up the sheet of paper he was writing on.EMMA remains calm and busy.MOSS sits listless by the grate

HARDY

Why is everything such a useless
 struggle.I cannot fathom marriage
 Why should it be so punishing

EMMA

You make it sound like it is some
 kind of retribution

HARDY

Requital an old custom propped
 up by theological superstition

EMMA

What is the matter with you this
 morning? Now you are blaming God

HARDY

I don't feel well. I think I have
 another cold coming on

EMMA

Here Moss,let us walk

Emma makes to coax Moss out,she is reluctant
 You know Tom she doesn't seem
 herself lately,she's much like
 you,tired and despondent

Emma leaves with Moss

EMMA

(calling back)

Don't forget the children are
 coming home tomorrow

Hardy glances at the photograph of them - hint of a smile

89

INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY - SAME - AFTERNOON

89

EMMA is sitting at HARDY'S desk putting manuscripts into envelopes.Hardy is in the chair,feeling sorry for himself

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

So we are sending The Midnight
Baptism chapter to the
Fortnightly Review

HARDY

Yes

EMMA

And Saturday Night in Arcady to
the National Observer

HARDY

Yes

EMMA

As independent episodes. It is a
clever idea to send those deleted
scenes elsewhere, that way we
shall reap more financial benefit

HARDY

I think I'll ask Bernie and the
children to help me plant those
young pine trees later along the
boundary fence, you'll like that
Em, you won't feel quite so
exposed and unprotected

EMMA

I'll be an old woman before they
are all grown up, I wish you had
found a plot in town to build on

HARDY

Remember we only have the
pleasure of the children because
we live in the countryside

EMMA

I suppose, they certainly need to
get some colour back in their
cheeks after London.

HARDY

Where are they now?

EMMA

Looking for Moss with Nellie

Bernie rushes in

HARDY

Ah Bernie, I was wondering....

BERNIE

Mr Hardy, Mrs Hardy come quick
'tis Moss we can't find her any
where though we be searching hard

They leave quickly

90

TESS: INT. HALLWAY LODGING HOUSE SANDBOURNE MORNING

90

HARDY (V.O)

*Angel is ill and on his return
from abroad he searches for Tess
and finds her living with Alec*

ANGEL, looking pale sits nervously on an old church
pew. TESS comes hesitantly down the staircase, stops half
way down, dressed in a fine dressing gown and slippers

TESS

Angel!

ANGEL CLARE

Tess!, I couldn't find you. Until
now, can you ever forgive me for
going away

TESS

It is too late Angel

ANGEL CLARE

Can't you come to me? How do you
get to be like this?

TESS

Too late, too late, don't come
close to me, keep away

ANGEL CLARE

Tess I know I did not think
rightly of you but ...

TESS

Stay away

ANGEL CLARE

Say you do not still love me. I
love you Tess

TESS

I waited and waited, I wrote, but
you never came, I wrote again

ANGEL CLARE

I am here now my love

(CONTINUED)

TESS

He told me you would never come,
that I was a fool,he won me back

ANGEL CLARE

Him?

TESS

Yes.I am well looked after now,
please you must keep away

ANGEL CLARE

Do you still love me?

TESS

Oh I do so much and I hate him
upstairs,he lied he said you
would never come, please go Angel

Tess retreats back up the stairs, crying

ANGEL CLARE

'Tis nothing but my own fault

91

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - SAME

91

LILIAN, GORDON, and NELLIE are standing around a lifeless
Moss.They are crying.

NELLIE

'tis no welcome return for you
young uns

LILIAN

It wasn't our fault?

GORDON

Was it Nellie? We were
playing,that's all

HARDY,EMMA AND BERNIE rush into view.

BERNIE

Let Mr and Mrs Hardy see.'Twas no
one's wrong doing.Moss ain't been
so well lately

Emma kneels to hold Moss close.Hardy stands to one side

EMMA

Our good Lord has called her my
dears.It is God's will,nothing to
fear.She is in a better place now

Hardy is visibly suffering

92

EXT. GARDEN -PET CEMETERY-MAX GATE -LATER

92

BERNIE digs a hole and MOSS is buried.EMMA,THE CHILDREN,NELLIE,COOK are gathered together.HARDY is apart

GORDON

Poor Moss!

EMMA

Dear God,receive unto heaven what we have only borrowed here on Earth.We live but a short time but our souls live on forever

LILIAN,GORDON,NELLIE,BERNIE AND COOK

Amen

GORDON

Poor Moss

Hardy watches and shakes his head. He dislikes the prayer

93

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - NEXT MORNING

93

HARDY,BERNIE,LILIAN AND GORDON help plant the young pine trees.It is a solemn activity.

LILIAN

It's just like when we buried Suzy,we make a hole and bury the grass

GORDON

They are trees silly not grass and they are alive not dead.I wish Moss were not buried

HARDY

They will grow tall and strong over time and make your Aunt Emma very happy and safe

LILIAN

Shall we go and find Susy,Gordon see if she's still alive

Hardy smiles.Lilian and Gordon run off. Hardy and Bernie continue with the planting, more optimistically

94

INT. THE SAVILLE CLUB - LONDON -2 MONTHS LATER - AFTERNOON

94

MEN reading, chatting, smoking, HARDY and EDMOND sit at a small table near a window overlooking the street.We see a variety of indefinable shapes obscured by the fog

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Emma asks me to tell you that she greatly values the photographs you sent. So do I. It was such a fortunate chance you managed to capture one of our dear Moss when you visited in the summer

EDMOND

I was so sorry to hear the news but I am pleased to see you in Town again though 'tis wonder you can see to get here with this thick fog

HARDY

I trusted to a cab today, though you know I prefer to walk

EDMOND

The passing of the Copyright Bill by the American House of Reps is quite a surprise

HARDY

To everybody. I assume that it will become law next July

EDMOND

One wonders what difference it will make to us English Authors

HARDY

Quite significant I hope. That's why I intend to delay the copyright of Tess in America at least until then

EDMOND

Thomas you deserve to get a decent financial reward the way you have struggled with that novel. I am sure it will be received very well there...not so sure about here though

HARDY

I think you are probably right but we shall see. The savagely cut serialization is to appear first, it will pave the way

EDMOND

Soon?

HARDY

Next spring I believe. You and Nellie must come and visit us again at Max Gate before then

EDMOND

We would love to

HAMO joins them carrying a tray of drinks.

HAMO

Splendid news about copyright in America!

They settle down and talk to each other

95

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MAX GATE - CHRISTMAS EVE - DAY

95

EMMA and HARDY are taking afternoon tea in front of the roaring fire with cats stretched out. We see snow falling

EMMA

How was London?

HARDY

The fog was very dense. I only had to get to Mary's though which was easy and the club of course

EMMA

While here we have all this snow. I'm glad that you came home when you did, before it gets any worse. How is Mary?

HARDY

She inquires after you. I explained about your knees and she has recommended a specialist. Moreover she says that if you have to come to Town about the lameness you are to stay with her and her only.

EMMA

She is very kind

HARDY

Yes she is, a remarkable woman

EMMA

I suppose you saw Rosamund and Agatha and probably other pretty women when you visited her

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Emma, I thought you were trying to
better understand me

EMMA

I do understand you Tom, I know
you too well, that is why I said
it, you met with them I know it!

HARDY

Your jealousy is becoming
overbearing. I'm going into the
garden for a change of air

EMMA

Its cold out there.

HARDY

(quietly to himself)
No more so than inside

Hardy puts on his coat and hat and leaves

EMMA

(calling after him)
You will catch a chill again!

We hear the front door close

96

EXT. MAX GATE- GARDEN BOUNDARY FENCE -SAME

96

Snow falls gently. Hardy walks the boundary of the
garden. The young pine trees are covered in snow.

HARDY

Smothered, restricted, stifled. 'Tis
no better with us than with the
rest of creation.

Hardy shivers and continues walking. He stumbles on a dead
rabbit, whose spilled blood is conspicuous against the
white earth. We hear the distant inaudible shouts of
men rabbiting. Hardy stands and stares.

97

TESS:INT. PARLOUR -LODGING HOUSE - SANDBOURNE - MIDDAY 97

We hear a front door close and footsteps on the
stairs then another door closes and we hear raised voices

HARDY (V.O)

*From an upstairs room there came
muffled sounds.*

MRS. BROOKS, the landlady is reading, she is disturbed by
the voices and looks to the ceiling

98

TESS: INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM - LODGING HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS 98

Alec has hold of Tess and he pushes her against a wall.They physically struggle with each other

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
And so Mr Righteous Angel Clare
deserts you for a second time

TESS
You said my husband would never
come back.You taunted me said
what a simpleton I was to expect
him and I believed you.I gave
way,came back to you as a wife

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
And then that deathly looking
interloper comes back and spoils
everything

TESS
You lied and now he is gone, gone
a second time. I have lost him
now for ever. Because of you..

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
Oh Tessy.. you know he will not
love you the slightest bit now
you are with me.In fact he will
hate you. Hate you Tess

TESS
Don't say that. I cannot bear
it.... I can't bear this....

ALEC D'URBERVILLE
He hates you ..

TESS grabs a knife and as if with no self-control murders
ALEC with a single forceful thrust through the heart. She
quickly changes her clothes and hurries out of the room

99

INT. HALLWAY -LODGING HOUSE- SANDBOURNE - SAME 99

We hear a door slam upstairs. We see MRS BROOKS poke her
face around a door she glimpses TESS who is hurrying down
the stairs.Their eyes meet briefly,MRS BROOKS' face
withdraws we see her door close abruptly.Tess hurries out

100

TESS: INT. PARLOUR - LODGING HOUSE- SANDBOURNE - SAME 100

MRS BROOKS sits and picks up her book, some blood drops on
the open page,she looks up at a heart shaped stain on the
ceiling with blood seeping through.She jumps up, afraid

101

INT. FRAMPTON COURT - EVENING

101

SUPERIMPOSE: JANUARY 1891 THOMAS AND EMMA are at MARY SHERIDEN'S country house. It is heaving with LOCAL DIGNITARIES who have been invited to her Annual Ball. HARDY AND EMMA stand with THACKERAY TURNER

THOMAS

Look at him waltzing around with that face of ambition

EMMA

He is having fun, I do so wish I could dance, it would be such fun

HARDY

No it would not, not the slightest Em. They merely say to themselves this has to be done.

MARY flounces towards the trio

MARY SHERIDEN

Good Evening Thomas, Emma, Thackeray. Are you enjoying yourselves?

HARDY

Ah, we are all inveterate joy makers Mrs Sheriden but I must say that the actual fabrication is hardly pleasure

MARY SHERIDEN

(taken aback)

Oh ..

EMMA

Please Thomas, Mary is our host and our friend

HARDY

I cannot pretend, it would be dishonest of me

THACKERAY TURNER

Some do though, pretend that is, and some are more successful at it than others

HARDY

Yes you are right there Thackeray

THACKERAY

When does your serial materialize? It must be soon

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS

March I believe if there is no
more contention over it

Thomas and Thackeray continue in conversation

MARY SHERIDEN

Emma my dear you must come and
visit again,more informally,I see
you have much to contend with

Emma looks puzzled
Your husband?

Emma and Mary share a knowing smile

EMMA

I will ride over the next week,it
will be lovely to talk honestly

Mary flounces away as light footed as she arrived then
stops to talk to other guests.

THACKERAY

I was meaning to ask you if you
could put your name to this
petition to save Stratton House
Thomas,as you are now a highly
regarded author

THOMAS

I have little influence here. I
am afraid I am not rated highly
in Dorset.But as an architect I
support your cause and so will
certainly make my thoughts known

MAN

May I have the pleasure Mam?

EMMA

It is with genuine regret Sir I
must decline.I fear my knee will
not stand up to it

MAN

My apologies Mam,I didn't know

THACKERAY

Excuse me Thomas,Emma,I need to
speak with Lord Digby

Thackeray parts company

HARDY

Let us take a seat dear and sit
and watch the notability swagger

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
and swank their way around the
ballroom. Your gown looks
lovely Em, you are quite a lady

EMMA
One day Tom I should like to be a
genuine Lady...Lady Emma Hardy

Tom is pleased with himself. Emma is flattered. ROBERT
EDGCUMBE, approaches and interrupts a moment of affection

ROBERT
Would you write something on the
question of Ireland Tom?

EMMA
Oh I have never been to Ireland,
but they say it's such a
beautiful place to visit, we hope
to very soon, much like my
own Cornwall I am led to believe

Tom smiles at Emma's remark

THOMAS
Robert, you know I do not take
any part in politics and even if
I did, lately I have so many
doubts about the situation our
politicians have led us into that
I couldn't comment without
offending

ROBERT
I understand Thomas. I hope though
you will be able to cast your
vote for me in the local election

THOMAS
You are a friend Robert

ROBERT
Thank you then, Friend

Robert walks away confident and sure of his status

THOMAS
It keeps him happy to think I
will vote for him

EMMA
It does, but you told him you took
no part in politics?

THOMAS

I did and... I don't, but he
evidently doesn't equate the two
situations as being similar

Two dancers brush close by them which makes Thomas
uncomfortable. Emma is happy in this social environment

102 **EXT. COUNTRY LANE FRAMPTON - DAY**

102

EMMA is riding her horse to Frampton Court. A train
crosses a bridge over head, causes the mare to rear. With
great effort and skill Emma manages not to be thrown. She
turns back unable to go on, shaken and shocked.

103 **EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - NEXT DAY**

103

A group of strong LOCAL MEN are pulling the large Druid
Stone, using ropes. They bring it to an upright position and
secure it in a chosen place HARDY, EMMA, LILIAN GORDON watch

HARDY

Fifteen hundred years buried
undisturbed by the plough

GORDON

Why has the stone been moved and
standing up now Uncle Tom?

HARDY

Ancient townsfolk once stood on
this same earth burying their own
kin. It is proper it should stand
again as once it was so placed

LILIAN

Are we going to put the bones
back underneath?

HARDY

No Lilian they are going to stay
at the museum.

LILIAN

Why?

HARDY

To lay with their ancestors

GORDON

What's an ancestor?

HARDY

Family; fathers, mothers, uncles,
aunts, sisters

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

Are there more skeletons buried here?

HARDY

There was, when Max Gate was being built three graves with skeletons all curled up tight within, were found

LILIAN

And they were put in the museum?

HARDY

Yes

GORDON

That is sad Uncle Tom, they should be buried with Moss

HARDY

You are right, in the earth where we all belong, dust to dust

EMMA

'Twas not a Christian burial so it does not matter. I find it all rather disturbing, burning people.

GORDON

I like the Druid Stone, it's big

HARDY

So do I Gordon, it gives a sense of constancy

EMMA

Well it's there now, that is what your Uncle Tom wanted

LILIAN

Can we go and see Moss's stone now? She must be so lonely

HARDY

Of course

104

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MAX GATE - TWO MONTHS LATER- DAY

104

EMMA sits at a cluttered table, painting a delicate, exquisite butterfly. She is very pleased with herself. HARDY is reading a letter. The fire burns hot

EMMA

Have you seen any of the magazines yet? Do you think we should purchase some copies?

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

I cannot bring myself to look,
several issues of The Graphic
have arrived already, they remain
as they should, bound up.

EMMA continues to paint, HARDY is also absorbed

EMMA

There 'tis done. I am pleased with
this painting. Would you look Tom?
Give your opinion?

A cat walks across the table and knocks a jar of water
over the painting spoiling it. Emma is naturally upset

HARDY

(half jokingly)
Perhaps when you have another
ready!

EMMA

That is unkind of you. You make
no attempt ever to pass a comment
or give advice on my work

HARDY

Now you are being unkind. I have
often done so..

EMMA

Once, one time and then
you criticized my
perspective. You are glad my work
is ruined aren't you?

HARDY

You're being silly Em

EMMA

You always make me feel I
shouldn't disturb you, like now,
you are deeply engrossed. What
are you reading? Who is she?

HARDY

She's of no interest to you. Some
recent jottings from an aspiring
young poet who seeks my approval

EMMA

I have a poem Tom

She almost hysterically searches through the mess on the
table and produces a neatly written verse, damp

Read this, go on, read **my** poem,
give **me** your approval. Read it!

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

Emma dear now you are being ridiculous, you are upset because your painting is spoiled and I should not have wished to upset you further. I ask forgiveness it was unthinking of me... Let me get Nell to help you clear up

EMMA

No, I can do it, go and write your book or something

HARDY

You should take up riding again, it's been long enough since the accident, and it would help calm your nerves

EMMA

I will never mount a horse again, never...

HARDY leaves the room. The letter from the young poet is on his chair. EMMA screws it up and tosses it into the fire, she throws her paintings, her poems into the fire too

105

INT. ARCHIVE LIBRARY- COUNTY MUSEUM - NEXT DAY

105

FLORENCE

Mr Hardy where have you been? I wanted to thank Mrs Hardy for going to the florist with me. Tell her my Bertie loved the flowers. I am to be wed quite soon now, did she tell you?

HARDY

No she didn't Florrie. But I am pleased, you deserve a good man

FLORENCE

Oh he is. A real gentleman like yourself and always so sensitive

HARDY

Unfortunately my wife does not see me as such. No matter, she is not herself at the moment. In fact she is particularly irritable ..

FLORENCE

Oh dear. I be sorry to hear that..

Florence is unsure how to react, she is embarrassed
I've been reading your story in
The Graphic, I like it very much

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE (cont'd)
 but me mam doesn't like it at
 all. She be quite offended she
 says

HARDY
 And what is your honest opinion?

FLORENCE
 I think it romantic especially
 when the farmer takes all the
 milkmaids 'cross the river in a
 wheelbarrow after that storm.

Hardy smiles knowingly
 But it be quite sad as well

HARDY
 Expect even stronger sentiments
 Florrie when the actual volumes
 are published. I fear that the
 true nature of my story has been
 compromised.

FLORENCE
 I will, though I be not sure that
 I know what compromised means?

HARDY
 I was obliged to change many
 scenes for the magazines to make
 them more agreeable

FLORENCE
 Why?

HARDY
 Enjoy the installments first, we
 shall see what everyone thinks
 soon enough

Hardy moves to his usual table

FLORENCE
 I will. Tell Mrs Hardy that I
 hope she be feeling better soon

HARDY
 Thank you Florrie

HARDY is irritated, restless. EMMA is sat at the desk, calm

HARDY
 I cannot find the red originals

EMMA

They are here, you do not look

HARDY

I must ensure Tess is not lost
You must copy them now in black
as I make the final alterations
There is much restoring to do

EMMA

Tom, the serial is being well
received, you could leave it the
same. Why risk harsh criticism?

HARDY

Of what? Sexual
improprieties? Or is it that you
cannot bear yourself to copy such
stuff out

EMMA

It's not that Tom, it's more the
irreverence contained within

HARDY

Oh, I see

EMMA

For a woman to suffer such a
tragedy in life

HARDY

How is that irreverent?

EMMA

Having a child is a blessing from
God but when not wed to the
father it is a terrible sin

HARDY

No, it's the most right and
natural thing in the world for a
child to be born from such
intimacy between a man and woman

EMMA

How cruel of you Thomas. To bring
up how it is with us

HARDY

I didn't mean ...

EMMA

Well no matter, one should never
be allowed to see an own child
grow up and become a man anyway

Hardy regrets what he said and now feels sorry for Emma

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

We have children,Lilian,Gordon

EMMA

Yes I know,Lilian and dear Gordon

107 **INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

107

EMMA sits at her dressing table,tired and sad.She unlocks a drawer,takes out a newly purchased notebook,dips her pen and writes on the first blank page

EMMA (V.O.)

My husband is the cruelest ever a man could be

108 **INT.HARDY'S NEW STUDY- NIGHT**

108

HARDY is at his desk.He writes

109 **TESS: EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - SUMMER - AFTERNOON**

109

HARDY (V.O)

*It was a human figure running.
Clare waited,with a dim sense
that somebody was trying to
overtake him.*

TESS runs after ANGEL,catches up with him. He turns,sees her,they fall into an urgent embrace

TESS

Angel. Angel I have killed him...

ANGEL CLARE

What!

TESS

I have done it, I don't know how... I owed it to you, and to myself. Why did you go away when I loved you so much. Say you do love me, now I have killed him

ANGEL CLARE

I do love you Tess, O I do,I do but how do you mean you have killed him

TESS

I mean that I have

ANGEL CLARE

What bodily, is he dead?

TESS

Yes

ANGEL CLARE

Oh Tessy

Angel unsure whether to believe, kisses her passionately

110 **INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY - SAME** 110

Hardy crosses out the word '*passionately*' in his script and writes in '*endlessly*'. Then he writes it again in Red ink. He selects a clean sheet of paper and writes

111 **TESS INT. BRAMSHURST COURT -NEW FOREST - NIGHT** 111

HARDY (V.O)

Like sightless eyeballs, the shuttered windows excluded any possibility of watchers

We see TESS and ANGEL arrive tired and weary at the deserted house, they climb through a lower open window.

ANGEL CLARE

From the grass growing on the drive I assume this mansion has been shut up for quite some time

TESS

At last somewhere to rest. I am so tired Angel

They cautiously make their way to an upstairs bed chamber, share some food, consummate their marriage at last

112 **INT HARDY'S NEW STUDY - NEXT DAY** 112

HARDY passes the page to EMMA who reads. She looks at HARDY and for the first time imagines his possible sexual intimacy with other women. HARDY begins searching drawers

HARDY

Where are Rosamund's poems?

EMMA

Why do you want them now?

HARDY

I remember she wrote something about a sunset...

EMMA

Did she?

HARDY

I liked the female perspective
the sensuous response that she
evoked, it could be

EMMA

Rosamund's?, Agatha's? Tryphena's?

HARDY

Tess's on her last ever night on
this Earth

HARDY is agitated, EMMA hands him back the offending page

EMMA

You will not get away with this
Tom

HARDY

I have not finished yet

Emma leaves disgruntled. Hardy dips his pen and writes

113

EXT. STONEHENGE -SUMMER - EVENING

113

HARDY (V.O)

*The sun sets quickly over the
ancient pagan monument of Stone
Henge.*

ANGEL AND TESS lie side by side resting under the
stones. Angel covers Tess with his overcoat

TESS

Here at last I am content...why
should all this happiness end?

ANGEL CLARE

Oh Tess, what must come will
come. We must get away tomorrow

TESS

I like it here with nothing but
the sky above my face. Angel if
anything happens to me will you
watch over Liza Lu for my sake.
Will you take her as your wife.
She is so good, simple and pure.

ANGEL CLARE

I cannot think about losing you

TESS

Did they sacrifice to God here?

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL CLARE
To the Sun I believe

TESS
Do you think we shall meet again
after we are dead?

ANGEL kisses her to avoid a reply
I fear that means no!

Tess and Angel make love one last time

114 **INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM- SAME** 114

Emma takes out her diary and writes
*My husband is debauched and
immoral and cares not a jot for
my feelings*

115 **INT. HARDY'S NEW STUDY - NEXT DAY** 115

EMMA's legs hurt she is fidgety. She is reading some of the
final instalment

HARDY
What do you think?

EMMA
You know that Angel Clare would
never be able to marry Liza Lu.
It would be against the law

HARDY
Now what's the matter Em?

EMMA
You want to wrap it all up to
suit yourself. Do you really have
the woman's interests at heart as
you always say you have. You
could still alter Tess's course

HARDY
I may amend this last page for
the serialization but not for the
novel

EMMA
You do what you will then with
your novel. I will never like it

HARDY
Look Em, I am ready for whatever
criticism comes. I have to believe
in the minds of man and woman,
that the things which everybody
is thinking but nobody is saying
must be taken up

EMMA

I fear the response Tom

HARDY

It has to be said.I have given them what they want for the magazine.My honest story of Tess of the D'Urbervilles is what truly matters

116

INT.EDWARDS CLODD'S HOUSE - SUFFOLK - 1 WEEK LATER

116

HARDY is sitting with EDWARD.Other GUESTS include WILLIAM BESSANT, JAMES M BARRIE.They are drinking and smoking except for Hardy

WILLIAM BESSANT

Your serialization in The Graphic looks to be very successful

HARDY

My mutilated Tess you refer to, cut,butchered,dismembered

J M BARRIE

Angry words Thomas

BESSANT

Almost violent,which suggests that you are not happy with it?

HARDY

No, I am not happy

EDWARD

But it was necessary, we agreed

J M BARRIE

Do you still believe that Tom?

HARDY

I suppose I do.I feel much better now that I am piecing back together the body and limbs and it will be whole again

EDWARD

You're very perturbed Tom, what is wrong?

HARDY

All and all this has been a very emotional experience and you are right,I am perturbed.My wife..

(CONTINUED)

EDWARD

Ah your wife?

HARDY

Despairs at me speaking out, fears that when the novel is published it will damage her prospects, her precious position in society

EDWARD

She lies at the heart of the matter my friend. Emma is not your intellectual equal and now that you aspire to her own class, she is resentful

HARDY

Her parents, all her family in fact warned me off marrying her. They did not consider me good enough.

EDWARD

It is no surprise then that your marriage is problematic

BESSANT

But you were content once

HARDY

In the past but now there is more bickering on her part, we see matrimony in quite different ways

EDWARD

The fact that there should always be peace between husband and wife and so called sanctity in marriage is simply superstition

J M BARRIE

Edward says that there should never be any question of marriage being unalterable

HARDY

I remember, we have had this conversation before?

EDWARD

Before you all went off to the seaside!

HARDY

Emma's Christian ideology always puts myself in the wrong. I find this difficult to contend with

EDWARD

Religious beliefs can be calmly
and quitly dispensed with, if you
do not believe yourself

BESSANT

That's right without anguish or
regret

HARDY

I know and do so but..

EDWARD

There you are then.

BESSANT

You did not want Emma to visit
here even though she was invited
so you are already changing the
terms of your marriage Tom?

HARDY

I cannot keep up appearances
anymore,for her on anyone

EDWARD

Then keep them up no more Thomas
if it is to make you more happy

J M BARRIE

Can one ever be happy?

HARDY

Never I think as a continuum.I
see happiness as just a brief
episode in the general drama of
pain,nothing more

EDWARD

Heavens,we are all so glum.Come
we need some fresh air and some
rigorous exercise before supper

Edward coaxes them out of the room

117

INT. NEW STUDY MAX GATE - A MONTH LATER

117

HARDY AND EMMA collate and package up the volume editions

EMMA

The manuscripts look very grand
all bound up in their volumes

HARDY

They do and now it is done,though

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

What Tom?

HARDY

Something still feels missing

EMMA

How so? You have had your very
 outspoken say about marriage and
 religion and society and ...

HARDY

One more addition

Hardy moves past Emma takes the title page out, dips his
 pen and writes under the title, **TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES**
A Pure Woman faithfully presented
by Thomas Hardy

Now it is done

HARDY smiles with satisfaction. EMMA looks worried, uneasy

EMMA

You must be aware that now you
 are assuredly waving a red rag to
 a bull

HARDY

To the delicate minded, yes! We
 will travel tomorrow and deliver
 it in person, you like London!

EMMA

Well I look forward to that part

118

EXT. GARDEN - MAX GATE - NEXT DAY

118

BERNIE loads the bags into the waiting cab. EMMA and HARDY
 carry the volumes. A MAIL DELIVERY MAN pulls up by NELLIE

DELIVERY MAN

Mrs Hardy! telegraph for you, it
 arrived at the post office a
 short while ago

EMMA

Oh, thank you

The Delivery man leaves. Emma reads the telegraph. She
 collapses, is supported by Bernie, Hardy scans the telegraph

HARDY

My poor Em, both parents within a
 year. It was only to be expected
 You must stay here now. I will go
 alone to see Osgood. Nellie!

(CONTINUED)

NELLIE

Yes Mr Hardy

HARDY

Take my wife to the drawing room,
bring her some tea and stay with
her for a while. Bernie!

BERNIE

Yes Mr Hardy

HARDY

Take a message to George Frith's
residence and tell him to arrange
a meeting with Judge Cave and the
others for the earliest date
convenient to us all

BERNIE

I will Sir

Nellie sympathetically takes Emma away. Hardy sighs and
gets in the cab. Bernie watches the cab drive away

119

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE -ON ROUTE TO LONDON - SAME

119

HARDY sits with his novel on his lap. He notices the
ancient monument of Stone Henge pass by. He sees an image
of The Druid Stone. He opens the last volume and reads

120

TESS: EXT .STONEHENGE ANCIENT MONUMENT - EARLY MORNING 120

HARDY (V.O)

*They all closed in with evident
purpose. Her story then was true!*

The sun is rising. SIXTEEN POLICE OFFICERS come into view
on the horizon. ANGEL sees them and gently wakes TESS up

ANGEL CLARE

They're here Tess

TESS

Have they come for me?

ANGEL CLARE

Yes, dearest, they have come.

TESS

As it should be. Angel I am
almost glad, yes glad. This
happiness could not have lasted. I
have had enough and now I shall
not live for you to despise me

TESS is arrested and led away

I am ready

Angel follows, heart-broken

121 INT. PRINTING ROOMS LONDON 121

SUPERIMPOSE: JAMES OSGOOD AND McILVAINE & CO NOV 1891

Tess of the D'Urbervilles goes to print. The room is noisy, the machines clank, EVERYONE is busy. We see a close up of the cover page and full title

122 INT. GEORGE FRITH'S RESIDENCE- -DAY 122

HARDY visits Sir GEORGE FRITH (Barrister) Sir LEWIS CAVE (Judge), CHARLES BROWN JP and HENRY MILLER JP

GEORGE FRITH

Thomas, what can I say, the more I read, the more my sympathy for the girl grows, a remarkable woman

HARDY

I am glad that Tess has won your affections. I too lost my heart to her as I went through her history

GEORGE FRITH

May I introduce Sir Lewis Cave

HARDY

Pleased to make your acquaintance

LEWIS CAVE

I understand you are a much respected justice of the peace Mr Hardy and I am pleased the reviews of your novel are good

HARDY

Early days Sir Lewis

GEORGE FRITH

And you know Charles and Henry?

Hardy nods, they smile at each other
I don't think the general public would have received it any sooner and there may still be objections to the frankness of the tale

HARDY

Most of my novels have suffered objections over the years and almost always because of misrepresentation and misinterpretation

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS CAVE

I must say The Daily
Chronicle's review was
particularly good

CHARLES BROWN JP

What made you have the girl
receive the ultimate punishment
at the end?

CHARLES BROWN JP

Yes, for something that you were
clearly intimating all the while
she was not culpable of

HARDY

The injustice, intolerance and
hypocrisy in my story was better
emphasized by a senseless
execution

GEORGE FRITH

That poor wretched girl!

George is nodding. Hardy becomes distressed

LEWIS CAVE

Are you alright Thomas?

HARDY

In my head, it haunts me still.

LEWIS CAVE

What does Thomas?

HARDY

I witnessed it, I'm ashamed to
say, a woman's life wiped out

HENRY MILLER JP

A public hanging!

HARDY

I was just a boy of sixteen.

HENRY MILLER

Who was she?

HARDY

Martha Brown.... convicted of
murdering her husband. But it was
not justice as I in later years
found out, she was the victim too

Hardy wipes his brow, looks genuinely affected
My father told me about a young
girl who was hanged just for

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
being in the vicinity of a fire
during the agricultural riots.

GEORGE FRITH
Wasted lives, my friend, victims

CHARLES JP
When Henry and myself were
young struggling lawyers we went
to the Old Bailey to see a man
hanged.

HARDY
In case you become judges
yourselves one day?

HENRY MILLER JP
That was the thinking, to see how
exactly the last sentence of the
law is carried out

CHARLES BROWN JP
It was important but why a brutal
hanging for your girl

HARDY
That too was important, she was
just as much a victim of
injustice as Martha Brown and all
other women and girls since

LEWIS CAVE
Why did you want this meeting
with us today Mr Hardy?

HARDY
We are friends are we not?

GEORGE FRITH
Most certainly

HARDY
What I said about that matter of
misrepresentation, I may require
your services gentleman if some
people do not see my book the
same way as yourselves

GEROGE FRITH
Understood, Thomas A toast!

Drinks are poured.

GEORGE FRITH
To the trouble free success of Mr
Hardy's new novel

HARDY

To a better look at justice

LEWIS CAVE

To justice

123 **TESS:EXT.FIELD- OUTSKIRTS WINCHESTER-EARLY MORNING** 123

A black flag is hoisted over the prison and the death bell tolls. The back view of ANGEL and LIZA LU are on a hillock outside town looking towards the prison.

124 **INT. THE WESTERN CHRONICLE OFFICE - WEYMOUTH -DAY** 124

SUPERIMPOSE: JANUARY 1892 The newsroom is small and claustrophobic. We hear the printing presses clanking nearby and distant voices of men at work. An INTERVIEWER is sat opposite HARDY. The INTERVIEWER is scribbles notes

INTERVIEWER

Mr Hardy, thank you for coming in and talking to the Western Chronicle. I appreciate that you do not give interviews normally but there has never been so much controversy over one publication

HARDY

Good morning

INTERVIEWER

Mr Hardy, your book is being called immoral and profane.

HARDY

I have heard some have said that

INTERVIEWER

And there seems to be one specific outrage because of the added subtitle A Pure woman

HARDY

faithfully presented by Thomas Hardy, faithfully I wrote and faithfully was my intention

INTERVIEWER

Is not 'pure' the highest term of approval that can be given a woman. An accolade for a virgin or chaste wife. Surely this then is misusing the word, bearing in mind

HARDY

If you read the title in its entirety and within the context

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARDY (cont'd)
of the story and its natural
surroundings, the meaning should
be absolutely plain for any
reader to understand. Have you
read it yourself?

INTERVIEWER
No...but your story certainly
seems to be coming between
people, friends have been fighting
over the dinner table. It is
becoming a matter of do you
support her or not?

HARDY
A writer's job is to stimulate
debate

INTERVIEWER
Some say that she deserved
hanging, calling her a harlot, a
wicked murderer and then
others say she is a wronged
innocent.

HARDY
It is for the individual reader's
interpretation, to consider
and appreciate the aesthetic.

INTERVIEWER
A controversial story though?

HARDY
Only the truth Sir.

INTERVIEWER
What do you personally want
then from your readers?

HARDY
I hope they will see that it was
the worst injustice of all that
which was done to Tess

INTERVIEWER
Is this a statement then against
capital punishment?

HARDY
I present the truth, that is all

INTERVIEWER
And what about your attack on
Christianity? Justice was done by
what you call the President of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

127

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MAX GATE A MONTH LATER

127

Hardy is reading the Quarterly. He looks angry but in control. Emma appears in the doorway carrying the mail

HARDY

Emma listen to what Mowbray says in the Quarterly 'This is a clumsy sordid tale of boorish brutality and lust. Mr Hardy has deliberately chosen to tell an extremely disagreeable story in an extremely disagreeable manner Mmm...easy to be smart and amusing if a man will forgo voracity and sincerity

EMMA

You cannot entirely blame Mr Mowbray. You deliberately tried to be controversial. I did warn you.

HARDY

Emma you will never know me and are certainly not in any position to pass comment on my work

EMMA

That is unfair after I helped you

HARDY

You helped and I am grateful but you copied that's all

EMMA

That's all is it?

HARDY

Yes, then not without complaint

Emma places the mail on Hardy's desk

EMMA

You are always grumpy when your work is criticized and I as I always have to, put up with it

Hardy stands and folds the Quarterly

HARDY

Well if this sort of thing continues then no more novel writing for me.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

I wish that were so, then things might be easier with us like it was before

HARDY

A man must be a fool to stand up and be deliberately shot at.

EMMA

You do not listen even now. I've brought the mail

EMMA walks out. Hardy sieves through the many letters

128

INT. LIBRARY ARCHIVE - COUNTY MUSEUM - DAY

128

HARDY is researching. FLORENCE approaches him

FLORENCE

We don't see you so often now Mr Hardy. Is that because you be a popular person now?

HARDY

I think not Florrie, I've just been very occupied lately

FLORENCE

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is my favourite book and I be specially glad that you wrote it

HARDY

And I'm glad that you like it. Your mother knows you have it?

FLORENCE

No. She says that it is not proper or decent, even though she hasn't read it herself. I had to get my copy from Weymouth since bookshop and library refuse to stock it

HARDY

I know I am not as popular' as you put it in my home county. I am misunderstood, too modern for them

FLORENCE

Is Mrs Hardy pleased with you?

HARDY

I think maybe not quite as much you

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE

You be going to London a lot now?

HARDY

Probably a bit more often

FLORENCE

It must be very different there
with all those high class woman
and them lovely dancing girls

HARDY

Those dancing girls are all
skeletons,you can see all the
lines and puckers in their flesh.

FLORENCE

Don't you like girls like that?

HARDY

Florence my dear,they should be
penned and fattened for a month
to round out their beauty.

FLORENCE

You talk like your book now

Hardy laughs and they both share an understanding

129

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MAX GATE - NEXT DAY -AFTERNOON

129

HARDY is looking out the window.We see EDWARD CLODD,arrive
by coach,hear the door bell.EMMA looks up from her bible

NELLIE (OS)

Good afternoon Sir,please go
through to the drawing room

Edward enters

EDWARD CLODD

Thomas!

Edward puts his arm on Hardy's shoulder.Hardy shrugs it
off.Edward walks towards Emma,she holds her arm out to him
It is charming to meet you again
Mrs Hardy.

EMMA

Please do sit down,Edward

HARDY

Edward I must say your review of
Tess was very generous and quite
incisive,you put it so well

(CONTINUED)

EDWARD CLODD

What? that the motive as a
constant is everything, the deed
as a passing accident, nothing

HARDY

Contains the whole gist of the
story. It could stand as its motto

Nellie brings in afternoon tea

EMMA

Tea Edward?

EDWARD CLODD

Thank you Emma

HARDY

You obviously haven't read the
article in the Saturday Review?

Edward shakes his head

EMMA

Tom is very upset and cross

HARDY

Who wouldn't be.

EDWARD CLODD

What is so bothering about it?

HARDY

They only alter my preface, omit
the second part of the title
which is absolutely necessary to
show its meaning and indulge
themselves in innuendoes of
indecent intentions on my part.

EMMA

Tom you must calm yourself

HARDY

It is natural to be angry,
misinterpreted yet again. But at
least it is being read

EMMA

Strangely enough that
review actually quickened the
sales

HARDY

True. Osgood wrote to say they
were reprinting because all
copies had sold out

EMMA

Frantically reprinting they said. My husband is gaining quite a reputation. At last I am going to be a famous novelist's wife, so all is not bad after all

HARDY

Emma, don't be ridiculous

EDWARD CLODD

'Tis an enviable position to be in though Tom

EMMA

Please have a scone Edward?

EDWARD CLODD

I am pleased you took my advice, one can never be too controversial if only to force society to open its eyes

We see Hardy thinking 'your advice but my risk" but he smiles. LILIAN and GORDON come bounding in excited

LILIAN

Uncle Tom, Nellie says we will all be going to London next summer for the holiday. I want to stay here

GORDON

And she says that you are mighty rich because your book is famous

LILIAN

And Aunt Emma is going to be a Lady! Will I be a Lady?

EMMA

I am sure I don't know where she gets that from

HARDY

You're both ladies enough for me, go and ask Nellie Lillian to bring us some more tea and lemonade you can join us

Hardy smiles at them affectionately. Lillian and Gordon go

EDWARD CLODD

They are fine children Tom

HARDY

'Tis probably all my wife's doing

Lilian and Gordon rush back in and sit down.

130 **INT. EXT. LONDON - A WEEK LATER-CONTINUOUS** 130

HARDY is having his beard shaved off, his moustache shaped, his hair cut. EMMA buys new clothes in fashionable shops. Hardy is at his tailors. Both appear confident, happy

131 **EXT. OPERA HOUSE - COVENT GARDEN-DAY** 131

HARDY is surrounded by JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS. He looks comfortable and wealthy. He has fashioned up and looks more dapper. WOMEN are seeking out his attention. Hardy is a celebrity, EMMA hovers in the background, unnoticed, ignored

REPORTER

What do you say Mr Hardy to causing so much offense by your novel?

ANOTHER REPORTER

Yes how do you respond?

YET ANOTHER REPORTER

Mr Hardy do you regret being so forthright in your ideas

ANOTHER

Mr Hardy

HARDY

If people are offended by the truth then it is better they suffer being offended than the truth be covered up or not said at all. Good day.

Hardy followed by Emma is led towards a waiting coach

132 **INT. MARY JEUNE'S HOUSE - HARLEY STREET -NEXT DAY** 132

MARY JEUNE, HAMO AND AGATHA THORNYCROFT, EDITH WHARTON, MABEL ROBINSON, EDMOND AND NELLIE GOSSE and many other GUESTS surround HARDY who is the centre of attention. LILIAN AND GORDON sit with MADELEINE AND DOROTHY and EMMA

EDMOND

Your new book is truly inspiring Thomas, this is your finest so far. Tess is a true and honest woman

HARDY

I am pleased that you like her, though I must admit I have not been able to put on paper all that she is or was to me.

NELLIE GOSSE

Why is that so Tom?

HARDY

It was becoming so painful

EDITH WHARTON

Mothers are telling me that they are actually putting copies into their daughters hands in order to safeguard their futures

HARDY

That is more than I could hope for

MABEL ROBINSON

And women are praising your courage and say that you have done our whole sex a service

HAMO

Still quite a scandal though. I actually heard someone whisper that your book is nothing but a piece of high class pornography

EDITH WHARTON

It would seem then that is just what an author needs to guarantee the utmost in sales

EMMA

And it still continues to sell, abroad as well

NELLIE GOSSE

Your husband deserves this Emma

EMMA

I always said that he did

DOROTHY

Are you rich now Uncle Tom?

EDMUND GOSSE

You must be greatly rewarded financially by Tess's success, but then as my wife says, without any doubt, it's justly warranted

(CONTINUED)

HARDY

It can be a burden at times
though, making more of an
impression upon the public than I
ever thought I would

EDITH WHARTON

But that is what we set out to
do, make that impression

HARDY

True but both men and women are
now confiding in a stranger..
they feel such is their need to
tell me their revelations

MADELEINE

What do they tell you Uncle?

HARDY

Wives speak of having a past like
Tess's but who had not told their
husbands. Husbands who had similar
experiences to Mr. Clare.

AGATHA

Extraordinary?

HARDY

I even had one educated woman of
a very good position begging a
meeting with me in private so she
could actually tell her story to
me rather than write it

EDMUND

Thomas, you did not!

HARDY

No, Yet I cannot help feel sad
that I didn't, because if she were
an honest, sincere woman
in trouble then I should have
helped

MARY JEUNE

Emma my dear how does it feel to
be the first in all the world to
discover the genius in Mr Hardy?

We see Emma hurt and feeling unrecognised in her own
right, she is disappointed at getting no attention
Was he not a mere poor clerk when
you first discovered him?

(CONTINUED)

HARDY
(smiling)
Poor?

EMMA
Yes I suppose he was

Emma is sad, alone, even Lillian and Gordon play with
Madeleine and Dorothy but she still remains loyal
(quietly to herself)
And now the public have stolen
him away

HARDY
Well whether Henry James calls
her 'vile' or Irving Howe calls
her one of the greatest triumphs
in civilization. I am done and
Tess will always have a very very
special place in my heart

Emma gives an exaggerated false smile. Hardy is content and
satisfied. He pays special attention to all the women
present but unconsciously, unintentionally not to Emma