

## THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)



### Biographical notes

1840 Born at Higher Bockhampton (the fictional Casterbridge) near Dorchester; His father ran a masonry business and he also played the music for a local church. His mother a cook and servantmaid.

1848 Hardy attends village school at Bockhampton. His mother encourages him to read his first books and he visits London for the first time. Thomas was a sensitive and intelligent child; he progressed diligently through his studies.

1849-56 His mother was determined he should be well-educated and sent him to school at Dorchester to learn Latin. Begins learning French and German.

1856-61 Apprenticed to one of his father's employers. Started writing verse. His first poem *Domicilium*.<sup>1</sup> He reads Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). His morbid curiosity led him to witness several hangings, a common sight in Dorchester. The most memorable to Hardy was that of Martha Brown, who killed her husband in a crime of passion. This memory inspired *Tess*.

1862-7 Moves to London where he worked for an ecclesiastical architect. Attends operas and theatre, explores London, visits National Gallery almost daily. Read extensively: Spencer, Huxley, J.S. Mills, Shelley, Browninf, Scott and Swinburne. In 1865 publishes his first article, *How I Built Myself a House* at the *Chambers Journal*. Begins sending poems to periodicals but they are rejected. Became agnostic.

1867-70 Returns to Dorchester. Begins his first novel (now lost) *The Poor Man and the Lady*. May have an

<sup>1</sup>

*It faces west, and round the back and sides  
High beeches, bending, hang a veil of boughs  
And sweep against the roof...*

*Red roses, lilacs, variegated box  
Are there in plenty, and such hardy flowers  
As flourish best untrained. Adjoining these  
are herbs and esculents; And further still  
a field; then cottages with trees, and last  
the distant hills and sky.*

*Behind the scene is wilder. Heath and furze  
are everything that seem to grow and thrive  
Upon the uneven ground...*

A detailed picture of the cottage as Tranter Dewy's House appears in *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

understanding with his cousin Tryphena Sparks, the model for Sue Bridehead in *Jude the Obscure* (she went to London to train as a teacher in 1870, married seven years later and died in 1890). Hardy, it has been claimed, fathered a child (called "Randy") by Tryphena, but was prevented from marrying her by the revelation, made to him by his mother, that Tryphena was not his cousin, as he had supposed, but his niece. The resulting guilt and anguish he experienced, it is further claimed, accounts for the profoundly pessimistic view of life expressed in the novels.

1871 Publication of *Desperate Remedies*.

1872 *Under the Greenwood Tree*

1873 *A Pair of Blue Eyes*

1874 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, serialized by Leslie Stephen in *The Cornhill Magazine*. Marries Emma Lavinia Gifford and encouraged by her (she was also an aspiring writer) abandons architecture for novel-writing. They take a short continental honeymoon.

1878 *The Return of the Native*. Hardy joins Savile Club and becomes a well-known literary figure in London.

1880 *The Trumpet-Major*. Falls seriously ill and is bedridden for six months.

1881 *A Laodicean*

1882 *Two on a Tower*. Visits Paris.

1883 Moves to Dorchester.

1886 *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

1887 *The Woodlanders*

1888 *Wessex's Tales*, his first collection of short stories. Hardy and his wife travel extensively. He meets Browning and Arnold.

1891 *A Groups of Noble Dames & Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

1893 Hardy's father dies. He visits Dublin.

1894 *Life's Little Ironies*

1895 *Jude the Obscure*; its publication caused a scandal and his wife was now moved to a fury. One of the main thrusts of the novel was a sustained attack on her deeply-held religious beliefs. Hardy turned to poetry; he wrote that he had reached "the end of prose". Hardy had suffered the first of many bouts of rheumatism and felt keenly the physical burden of writing long novels. This kind of writing also tended to become alarmingly self-revelatory; Poetry lent itself more readily to obscurity and ambiguity.

1898 *Wessex Poems*

1902 *Poems of the Past and the Present*

1903-8 *The Dynasts*

1912. Awarded the Order of Merit. His wife dies suddenly.

1913 Makes a pilgrimage to St. Juliot and his wife's birthplace at Plymouth. Receives Honorary degrees from Cambridge and Oxford.

1914 Marries Florence Dugdale, his secretary and assistant since 1912. *Satires of Circumstance*.

1916 *Selected Poems*.

1922 *Poems of Vision, Late Lyrics and Earlier*.

1923 *The famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall*, a verse play. During these years he works at his autobiography, published posthumously in 1928. His obsessive concern to conceal his lowly background led to a virtually fictional account of his early life.

1928 Died in Dorchester. His ashes were laid in Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey, his heart buried with his first wife and his parents. The gulf between his humble origins and his exalted status remained with him even in death.

Born just as an age was ending, Hardy looked back to the past and summed up in his fiction a life that was dying when he was a child, a life cut off from the main stream of national life, more primitive.

Hardy was attempting something very different from the aims of most novelists. The art of the novelist who sets out to display human beings in the context of social life must be one of constant differentiation and

discrimination between characters. But social life as we find it depicted variously in Jane Austen, Thackeray, Trollope, George Eliot... scarcely exists in Hardy. His characters stand in relation to other things: the weather, the seasons, a traditional craft.

He sees his characters much as Scott does his, first in their generic aspects: thus, before he is anything else Gabriel Oak is the good shepherd, Tess is the dairymaid... Individuality as such is not at all what he is after; what concerns him most in human beings is their response to the deep-rooted passions, above all sexual love.

Loss of faith compelled G. Eliot to stress, far beyond orthodox Christianity, the individual's responsibility for his or her actions. For her, the choice between right and wrong was open for every human being to make; the basis of her ethics is the belief in the freedom of the will. But Hardy was scarcely a moralist at all, because in his universe morals were beside the point: between the forces of nature and man's aspirations there could be no reconciliation; they were eternally opposed, and from the human point of view the workings of nature must appear hostile and malign.

Hardy was a devoted reader of philosophy, scientific texts, the Bible, and Greek literature, and he incorporated much of his knowledge into his own works. One of the most profound influences on his thinking was Charles Darwin, particularly Darwin's emphasis on chance and luck in evolution. Though brought up to believe in God, Hardy struggled with a loss of faith suffered by many of his contemporaries; he increasingly turned to science for answers about man's place in the universe.

One of Hardy's central concerns in all of his writing was the problem of modernity in a society that was rapidly becoming more and more industrial. One of his projects as a writer was to create an account of life in the swiftly changing Dorsetshire as it had once been. He was particularly interested in the rituals and histories of that part of England, as well as the dialect of its locals. The title *Far From the Madding Crowd* suggests avoidance of the life of a city, modernized government, crowds and industry; in it, Hardy tries to fashion a portrait of what he saw as an endangered way of life and to create a snapshot for future generations.

### **The Novels.**

Hardy wrote 14 novels in all (12 for serialization), and three volumes of short stories. They are all, in very different ways, love stories, and concern themselves with what Hardy calls in his Preface to *Jude* "the strongest passion known to humanity": sex.

Sex was a subject that no publisher of the time, if he wished to remain in business, dared to mention. Hardy explores blind passion and unwise marriages, and as his relationship with his own wife became increasingly strained, even questioned marriage itself. In *Tess* marriage is "an arbitrary law of society which has no foundation in Nature" and in *Jude* it is seen as a "sordid contract based on material convenience".

His career as a novelist may be said to begin with the anonymous publication of his novel *Desperate Remedies* in 1871. The plot has a lot of Gothic elements in it, although Hardy characteristically rejected the supernatural. *Under the Greenwood Tree* is a tale of rustic life, a woodland pastoral.

### **Wessex: the later novels.**

*Far from the Madding Crowd*. In this novel Hardy first used the term Wessex as the name for the section of southern England in which he set his work. It corresponds mainly to his native Dorset. In this novel he tells the story of the love of Gabriel Oak for Bathsheba Everdene, who eventually marries him after a disastrous marriage to Troy.

*The Return of the Native* is a tragic love story, like almost all his fiction, and it is extremely simple in plot.

*The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In this novel Hardy reflects the new spirit of science and industry. Casterbridge, however, is not like many manufacturing towns that were springing up. It maintains an intimate

relationship with the surrounding countryside. It tells the story of Henchard, a man who attempts to scape his past and whose past actions come back to destroy him. Hardy rejects the convention that good qualities will lead to prosperity and bad ones to ruin. Character is fate, but not in the Christian sense that people "get what they deserve".

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. In the Preface he wrote: "*a novel is an impression, not an argument*". An intense study of human nature, personal emotions, and the meaning of man's existence. It tells the story of a country girl whose parents discover that they are related to a noble family. She is seduced by one of the members of this family, Alec d'Urbervilles, and has an illegitimate child who dies. Tess eventually finds work as a dairymaid in a peaceful and rural setting but continuous to be haunted by her past. She falls in love with Angel Clare and marries him without confessing her past. When he learns the truth he deserts her and she ends up living with Alec again. He told her that Angel would never take her back again, but when Tess discovers that he lied to her, she kills him. She is briefly reunited with Angel but justice must be done and she is hanged. In a way, the tragedy of Tess, "a pure woman" (subtitled added by Hardy at the last moment), is also the story of "pure" Wessex from which she comes. Both are corrupted and betrayed by the modern world.

*Jude the Obscure* is Hardy's last novel. It tells the story of a country boy who leaves his village and goes to Christminster hoping to study at the University. He has married a coarse, sensual girl who leaves him and goes to Australia. Jude falls in love with his intellectual cousin Sue Bridehead. She brings up his son with Arabella and they have children themselves. Arabella's son finally hangs his stepbrother and stepsister, leaving a laconic note: "*Done because we are too menny*". In the end Jude kills himself by walking in bad weather. Jude's tragedy lies in that he is not an ordinary man. What brings him down are his intellectual ambitions; he is trapped between the physical and the intellectual, between social propriety and the unconventional, between one class and another, between religious belief and freethinking, between the old world and the new.

Over the 21 years that separates *Far From the Madding Crowd* from *Jude the Obscure*, he shows a growing pessimism. After Jude's son "Little Father Time" has killed his half-brothers and then himself, Jude reflect upon "*the coming universal wish, unknown to the last generation, not to live*".

Hardy's later heroines and heroes such as *Tess and Jude* are conspicuously alone. They are individuals isolated from the rest of society because they reject conventional patterns of behaviour and belief. Tess has borne an illegitimate baby; Jude lives in unmarried union with his cousin Sue. But their tragedy is not just a result of their breaking of society's rules; they have both broken away from their roots, left the rural communities of their birth, and so lost touch with Nature.

### **Hardy's Wessex.**

Higher Bockhamton lies three miles east of Dorchester, the country town of Dorset. At the end of a narrow lane, known as Cherry Alley, stands Hardy's Cottage. In the autumn of 1873, Thomas Hardy was living here with his parents, helping with the cider-making and immersed in writing *Far From The Madding Crowd*. In the novel, cottages such as this, 'long low cottage', with a 'hipped roof of thatch', tucked between 'a heath and a wood', punctuate the 'Weatherbury' landscape inspired by scenes familiar to him from childhood. Hardy continually drew on the Dorset countryside, his family and neighbours in writing the book. Almost every scene or setting was based on personal experience -incidents of local life recollected and recounted to him by his mother, or on his own close observation of nature and people during this period.

This 'partly real, partly dream-country' covered an area larger than that of the country of Dorset and as Hardy suggests, was closer to ancient Wessex (the kingdom of the West Saxons) because it contained six counties: Berkshire ("North Wessex"), Hampshire ("Upper Wessex"), Wiltshire ("Mid-Wessex"), Dorset

("South Wessex") and Devon ("Lower Wessex"). Cornwall is adjacent and is referred to as "Off Wessex".

Hardy was unique in applying his own system of place names to a fictional area based in fact. He did so comprehensively. To help readers identify the real place names he had disguised, Hardy produced a map of Wessex complete with 'county' boundaries, natural features, coastal resorts, towns, villages and hamlets. It's evident that his Wessex took a shape and form that extended the boundaries of his real world.

Once created, the fictional name for a real place in one book was usually carried over to another. The 'Weatherbury' in *Far From The Madding Crowd* appears throughout the Wessex novels as the name of Puddletown, or Piddletown as it was called before the reign of Queen Victoria. Dorchester, the heart of Wessex is referred to as 'Casterbridge'. Dorset's scenic coastline features in many of his novels. His fictional place names echo now-forgotten folklore elements.

The ancient monuments loom large in Hardy's novels. The landscape bore all the signs of a history stretching back to pagan times. Stonehenge remains as a monument to it, and appears as a potent symbol in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

Despite being an imagined world, the Wessex novels contain descriptions of life in the region which are completely authentic. During Hardy's childhood Dorset in particular had remained relatively remote and old-fashioned. The railway only reached Dorchester in 1847, when Hardy was seven. His earliest memories were of 'men in the stocks, corn-law agitations, mail coaches road-waggon, tinder-boxes and candle-snuffing'. Condemned, for the most part, to a life of poverty and squalor, the farm labourers of Dorset - among whom Hardy could count close cousins and uncles - were the worst paid and worst housed in the country. To maintain a reasonable family income, the women and children also sought work on the land. So, though picturesque, his settings were not sentimentalized, real hardship and poverty were too evident during the agricultural depression. At Corfe Castle in 1868, for example, a family of eight lived in an outhouse built for a calf. Hardy called the castle ruins 'Corvsgate'.



## ***Jude the Obscure***

### **Context**

It was not until the publication of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Hardy's fourth novel, that Hardy won widespread popularity as a writer, and he was able to give up architecture. The book was published serially in 1874, in *Corn Hill Magazine*, a journal edited by Leslie Stephens, the father of Virginia Woolf. The novel was published in short sections, and as you read it, you can see that they intentionally leave the reader in suspense; this was a device to motivate readers to buy the next issue of the magazine. Early reviewers compared Hardy's writing to that of George Eliot and recognized him as an important new voice in English fiction.

Hardy had a deep sense of moral sympathy for England's lower classes, particularly for rural women. He became famous for his compassionate, often controversial portrayal of young women victimized by the self-righteous rigidity of English social morality; perhaps his most famous portrayal of such a young woman occurred in 1891's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the story of the title character's unjust suffering following her premarital sexual encounter with the son of an upper-class merchant.

This novel and its successor, 1894's *Jude the Obscure*, engendered widespread public scandal with their comparatively frank look at the sexual hypocrisy of English society. Hardy was enraged by the controversy caused by his work, and finally abandoned novel writing altogether following 1897's *The Well-Beloved*.

*Jude the Obscure* attacked the institutions Britain held the most dear: higher education, social class, and marriage. It called, through its narrative, for a new openness in marriage laws and commonly held beliefs about marriage and divorce. It introduced one of the first feminist characters in English fiction: the intellectual, free-spirited Sue Bridehead.

### **Plot**

Jude Fawley dreams of studying at the university in Christminster, but his background as an orphan raised by his working-class aunt leads him instead into a career as a stonemason. He is inspired by the ambitions of the town schoolmaster, Richard Phillotson, who left for Christminster when Jude was a child. However, Jude falls in love with a young woman named Arabella, is tricked into marrying her, and cannot leave his home village. When their marriage goes sour and Arabella moves to Australia, Jude resolves to go to Christminster at last. However, he finds that his attempts to enroll at the university are met with little enthusiasm.

Jude meets his cousin Sue Bridehead and tries not to fall in love with her. He arranges for her to work with Phillotson in order to keep her in Christminster, but is disappointed when he discovers that the two are engaged to be married. Once they marry, Jude is not surprised to find that Sue is not happy with her situation. She can no longer tolerate the relationship and leaves her husband to live with Jude.

Both Jude and Sue get divorced, but Sue does not want to remarry. Arabella reveals to Jude that they have a son in Australia, and Jude asks to take him in. Sue and Jude serve as parents to the little boy and have two children of their own. Jude falls ill, and when he recovers, he decides to return to Christminster with his family. They have trouble finding lodging because they are not married, and Jude stays in an inn separate from Sue and the children. At night Sue takes Jude's son out to look for a room, and the little boy decides that they would be better off without so many children. In the morning, Sue goes to Jude's room and eats breakfast with him. They return to the lodging house to find that Jude's son has hanged the other two children and himself. Feeling she has been punished by God for her relationship with Jude, Sue goes back to live with Phillotson, and Jude is tricked into living with Arabella again. Jude dies soon after.

## Characters

Jude Fawley - A young man from Marygreen who dreams of studying at Christminster but becomes a stone mason instead.

Susanna Bridehead - Jude's cousin. She is unconventional in her beliefs and education, but marries the schoolmaster Richard Phillotson.

Arabella Donn - Jude's first wife. She enjoys spending time in bars and in the company of men.

Aunt Drusilla - The relative who raised Jude.

Richard Phillotson - The schoolmaster who first introduces Jude to the idea of studying at the university. He later marries Sue.

Little Father Time (Little Jude) - Jude and Arabella's son, raised in Australia by Arabella's parents. He is said to have the mind of an old man, though he is a young child.

## Overall Analysis and Themes

*Jude the Obscure* focuses on the life of a country stonemason, Jude, and his love for his cousin Sue, a schoolteacher. From the beginning Jude knows that marriage is an ill-fated venture in his family, and he believes that his love for Sue curses him doubly, because they are both members of a cursed clan. While love could be identified as a central theme in the novel, it is the institution of marriage that is the work's central focus. Jude and Sue are unhappily married to other people, and then drawn by an inevitable bond that pulls them together. Their relationship is beset by tragedy, not only because of the family curse but also by society's reluctance to accept their marriage as legitimate.

The horrifying murder-suicide of Jude's children is no doubt the climax of the book's action, and the other events of the novel rise in a crescendo to meet that one act. From there, Jude and Sue feel they have no recourse but to return to their previous, unhappy marriages and die within the confinement created by their youthful errors. They are drawn into an endless cycle of self-erected oppression and cannot break free. In a society unwilling to accept their rejection of convention, they are ostracized. Jude's son senses wrongdoing in his own conception and acts in a way that he thinks will help his parents and his siblings. The children are the victims of society's unwillingness to accept Jude and Sue as man and wife, and Sue's own feelings of shame from her divorce.

Jude's initial failure to attend the university becomes less important as the novel progresses, but his obsession with Christminster remains. Christminster is the site of Jude's first encounters with Sue, the tragedy that dominates the book, and Jude's final moments and death. It acts upon Jude, Sue, and their family as a representation of the unattainable and dangerous things to which Jude aspires.

## Part I - At Marygreen Summary

Everyone in Marygreen is upset because the schoolmaster, Richard Phillotson, is leaving the village for the town of Christminster, about twenty miles away. Phillotson does not know how to move his piano, or where he will store it, so an eleven-year-old boy suggests keeping it in his aunt's fuel house. The boy, Jude Fawley, has been living with his aunt Drusilla, a baker, since his father died. Drusilla tells him that he should have asked the schoolteacher to take him to Christminster, because Jude loves books just like his cousin Sue.

Jude tires of hearing himself talked about and goes to the bakehouse to eat his breakfast. After eating he walks up to a cornfield and uses a clacker to scare crows away. However, he decides that the birds deserve to eat and stops sounding the clacker. He feels someone watching him and sees Mr.

Troutham, the farmer who hired him to scare the crows away. The farmer fires him and Jude walks home to tell his aunt. She mentions Christminster again, and he asks what it is and whether he will ever be able to visit Phillotson there. She tells him that they have nothing to do with the people of Christminster. Jude goes into town and asks a man where Christminster is, and the man points to the northeast.

Jude walks two or three miles toward Christminster and climbs a ladder onto a roof where two men are working. He says he is looking for Christminster, and they tell him that sometimes it is visible, but not today. Jude is disappointed and waits, hoping he will see it before going home. Finally he sees it off in the distance and stares at its spires until the view disappears. He goes home. He decides that he wants to see the night lights of the city and goes back at dusk one day. On the road he meets men carrying coal and asks if they are coming from Christminster. They tell him that the people there read books he would never understand, and go on to describe the town. Hearing this, Jude decides that it is a "place of light" where the "tree of knowledge grows," and that it would suit him perfectly.

He runs into Physician Vilbert, a quack-doctor, on his way home and asks him about Christminster. Vilbert says that even the washerwomen there speak Latin, and Jude expresses a desire to learn Greek and Latin. Vilbert promises to give Jude his grammar books if Jude advertises his medicines in the town for two weeks. After two weeks, Jude meets Vilbert and asks for the grammar books, but the doctor does not have them. Jude is very disappointed, but when Phillotson sends for the piano, Jude has the idea of writing to the schoolmaster to ask for grammar books. Phillotson sends them, but when the books arrive, Jude is surprised to discover that there is no easy way to learn Latin, that each word has to be learned separately. He thinks that it is beyond his intellect.

Jude decides to make himself more useful to his aunt and helps her with the bakery, delivering bread in a horse-drawn cart. While he drives the cart he studies Latin. At the age of sixteen, he decides to devote himself to Biblical texts and also to apprentice himself to a stonemason for extra money. He still dreams of going to Christminster, and saves his money for this possibility. He keeps lodgings in the town of Alfredston, but returns to Marygreen each weekend. One day, when he is nineteen, he is walking to Marygreen and planning his education and his future as a bishop or archdeacon when he is struck in the ear by a piece of pig's flesh. He sees three young women washing chitterlings. He asks one of the girls to come get the piece of meat, and she introduces herself as Arabella Donn. He asks if he can see her the next day and she says yes. He thinks of studying Greek the next afternoon, but decides it would be rude not to call on Arabella as promised and takes her for a walk. He meets her family afterward and is struck by how serious they perceive his intentions to be. The next morning he goes back to where they walked together and overhears Arabella telling her friends that she wants to marry Jude. Jude finds his thoughts turning more and more to her.

Their romance continues, and two months later Arabella goes to see the quack-doctor Vilbert. Jude begins to say that he is going away, but Arabella retorts that she is pregnant. Jude immediately proposes, and they marry quickly. Jude does not believe Arabella to be the ideal wife, but he knows he must marry her. Once they are living together, Jude asks when the baby will be born, and Arabella tells him it was a mistake, that she is not really pregnant. Jude is shocked. He feels depressed and trapped by the marriage, and even considers killing himself. He goes home one day to find Arabella gone and receives a letter saying she is planning to move to Australia with her parents.

## **Commentary**

Early on in the novel, the village of Marygreen is set in opposition to the university town of Christminster. The young Jude sees Christminster as an enlightened place of learning, equating it with his dreams of higher education and his vague notions of academic success. Yet while Jude lives quite close to Christminster and knows a man who is going to live there, the city is always only a distant vision in his mind. It is nearly within his reach but at the same time unattainable, and this physical

distance serves as an ongoing metaphor for the abstract distance between the impoverished Jude and the privileged Christminster students.

At the start of the novel, Jude is portrayed as an earnest and innocent young man who aspires to things greater than his background allows. He resists succumbing to the discouragement of those around him and does not fear the gap he is creating between himself and the other people of his village. He is seen as eccentric and perhaps impertinent, and his aspirations are dismissed as unrealistic. It is this climate, in part, that leads him to marry Arabella. All through his young adult life, he avoids going to Christminster. Perhaps he is afraid of the failure he might encounter there. In Arabella, he sees something attainable and instantly gratifying, as opposed to the university life, of which he fears he may never become a part. In this way Jude avoids disappointment, but finds that he cannot live within the confines of an unhappy marriage.

Confinement--particularly in regard to marriage--is a major theme in the novel. Jude feels trapped by a youthful mistake and Arabella's manipulation. He finds that the decision is irreversible and resigns himself to living with the consequences. The freedom he receives after Arabella leaves is only partially liberating: It lets him be independent in a physical sense, but because he is still married, it forbids him from achieving legitimate romantic happiness with someone else.

## Study Questions

1. What role does Christminster play in the novel?

### Answer for Question 1

Christminster is a distant paradise in Jude's mind, the symbol of the academic life to which he aspires. It is also the meeting place for Sue and Jude, and the site of their children's tragic ends. Given Jude's obsession with the place, Christminster functions almost as a character in the novel, taking on human dimensions as it threatens and taunts the two lovers.

2. Why does Jude maintain a relationship with Arabella?

### Answer for Question 2

Despite his love for Sue, Jude still retains some tenderness for Arabella and once even spends the night with her rather than meeting Sue. Knowing that he cannot have Sue while she is married, Arabella may represent the familiarity and accessibility of marriage to Jude. She is also the solution to the repression of his sexuality enforced by his legal marriage and separation.

3. Why does Hardy emphasize that Little Father Time seems older than his years?

### Answer for Question 3

Jude and Arabella's son is different from most children in both his appearance and manner. He seems to see beyond what is normal for his age, feeding Sue's belief that he is acting as an agent sent by God to punish her for her sins.

4. Why does Sue return to Phillotson after the children's death despite her love for Jude?

### Answer for Question 4

Sue tells Jude she feels that in order to make amends for her sins against the institution of marriage, she must return to the man she first married in the eyes of God. However, on another level, she might feel that she needs to punish herself for the suffering of her children by forcing herself into a life of unhappiness.

5. Why does Jude abandon his attempts to study at Christminster so easily?
6. Why does Sue marry Phillotson when she finds him repulsive?
7. What opinion does Thomas Hardy appear to hold in regard to marriage laws?
8. Why does Jude marry Arabella? What is her role in the novel?
9. What is the role of religion in the novel?
10. . Social class and lineage are powerful forces for determining character in the novel. What role do they play? How does social class function in the novel? Is Jude confined only by his socioeconomic background, or by other factors as well?
11. Discuss the role of landscape in the novel. How do descriptions of place match the development of the story? Does the passing of the seasons play any symbolic role?
12. The story is full of omens; tragedy is largely prefigured by all the bad omens that occur throughout the story. What are some of these omens? Are they an effective device--do they build suspense, or are they simply a kind of heavy-handed foreshadowing?
13. Think about Hardy's writing style. Hardy's style has been praised as rhythmic and imaginative, and criticized as clunky and rough-edged. What do you think about Hardy's writing? What are some of its characteristics?

## Quiz

1. Who raises Jude?

- (A) His aunt Drusilla
- (B) His mother
- (C) Phillotson
- (D) Dr. Vilbert

2. What does Jude do for a living?

- (A) He is a teacher.
- (B) He is a stonemason.
- (C) He is a writer.
- (D) He sells medicines.

3. What is Christminster?

- (A) A large church
- (B) A university town
- (C) Hardy's birthplace
- (D) The name of Drusilla's bakery

4. What is Sue's relation to Jude?

- (A) His sister-in-law
- (B) His school friend
- (C) Drusilla's sister
- (D) His cousin

5. What do Jude and Arabella butcher together?

- (A) A flock of sheep
- (B) A rabbit
- (C) A pig
- (D) A young man

6. Where is Jude from?

- (A) London
- (B) Marygreen
- (C) Christminster
- (D) Cardiff

7. What does Jude recite in a pub in Christminster?

- (A) "God Save the Queen."
- (B) His manifesto
- (C) A Greek epic
- (D) A Latin oration

8. Who is Little Father Time?

- (A) Phillotson's son

- (B) Sue's child by a former lover
- (C) Arabella's son
- (D) Jude's younger brother

9. What does the university dean tell Jude?

- (A) He should study at the university, but they cannot give him a scholarship.
- (B) He speaks excellent Latin.
- (C) He is too old to study at the university.
- (D) He should stay at his current job.

10. What business do Jude and Sue take up?

- (A) Smelting
- (B) Farming
- (C) Baking
- (D) Teaching Latin

11. Where does Arabella go after leaving Jude?

- (A) Australia
- (B) America
- (C) Amsterdam
- (D) Armenia

12. Why does Sue jump out of Phillotson's window?

- (A) She stole his silver.
- (B) She was meeting Jude.
- (C) She saw a rabbit.
- (D) She was worried Phillotson was about to enter her bed.

13. When do Sue and Jude get married?

- (A) Right after they meet
- (B) Right after Arabella leaves for Australia
- (C) Never

(D) After Jude's son arrives

14. What are Christminster cakes?

(A) Baked goods invented by Jude and Sue

(B) A traditional Christminster dessert

(C) Pancakes

(D) A slang term for books

15. What is Sue's last name before she marries?

(A) Fawley

(B) Phillotson

(C) Scully

(D) Bridehead

16. What is Jude warned against by Highridge?

(A) Suicide

(B) Alcoholism

(C) Obesity

(D) Illness

17. How does Jude die?

(A) He kills himself.

(B) Illness

(C) Arabella kills him.

(D) Phillotson kills him.

18. What does Little Father Time's note say?

(A) "Thy will be done."

(B) "Because we are too mummy."

(C) "Ad noctum."

(D) "Now in peace."

19. Where does Sue go after the children die?

- (A) To live with Drusilla
- (B) Australia
- (C) Her parents' house
- (D) Phillotson's house

20. How does Jude know Phillotson?

- (A) He was his student.
- (B) He worked for him.
- (C) They are cousins.
- (D) Sue introduced them.

21. What does Sue tell Little Father Time the night before he kills himself?

- (A) That she wants him to die
- (B) She is not his real mother.
- (C) Jude is dying.
- (D) She is pregnant.

22. How does Little Father Time kill himself?

- (A) Hanging
- (B) Jumping out the window
- (C) Jumping in front of a train
- (D) Drinking lye

## **Movies**

*Jude (1994)* Directed by Michael Winterbottom. Starring Christopher Ecclestone, Kate Winslet, Rachel Griffiths, Liam Cunningham

Jude (Ecclestone) wishes to be a scholar, but as a poor stone worker he has little hope. He marries Arabella (Griffith) rather rashly, then when she leaves him he falls for his cousin Sue (Winslet). However, she marries and it seems as if Jude will never have either the learning or the love he wants. The performances are all excellent in different ways. Ecclestone does grim and humourless strength well, Winslet is perfect in the light and frivolous scenes, but also convinces as Sue struggles against the odds. Rachel Griffiths is a lively and dynamic actress.

## **Further Reading**

Bayley, J. *An Essay on Hardy*, 1978.

Cecil, Lord D. *Hardy, the Naturalist*, London 1956  
Friedman, A. *The Turn of the Novel*. Oxford Unive. Press, 1966  
Gatrell, S. *Hardy the Creator*, 1988.  
Gittings, R. *Young Thomas Hardy*, 1975.  
                                  *The Older Hardy*, 1978.  
Goode, J. *Hardy: The Offensive Truth*, 1988.  
Hardy, Thomas. "The Dorsetshire Labourer," in *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*. Wichita, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1966.  
Hardy, Thomas. *Far from the Madding Crowd*. A Norton Critical Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986.  
Ingham, P. *A Feminist Reading of Hardy*, 1989.  
Milgate, Michael. *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist*. New York: Random House, 1971.  
--- ., *The Life and Works of Thomas Hardy*, 1985.  
--- ., *Thomas Hardy: A Biography*, 1982.  
Miller, J. Hillis. *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970, 57-70.  
Scarry, Elaine. *Dreaming by the Book*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.  
Scarry, Elaine. *Resisting Representation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

## **Internet**

### **E-Texts**

Thomas Hardy Online Society  
Bibliomania.com  
*Victorian Poetry*  
Electronic Text Center University of Virginia

### **Biografía**

Thomas Hardy  
Victorians  
Thomas Hardy Society.  
The Thomas Hardy Association (TFHA) Yale  
University 300 enlaces