

Return of the Native Book Notes

Return of the Native by Thomas Hardy

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Author/Context

Thomas Hardy was born in Upper Bockhampton, Dorset, England on June 2, 1840. An extremely gifted child, Hardy attended Mr. Last's Academy for Young Gentlemen in Dorchester, where he studied Latin, English and French, and even attempted to learn German by himself. In 1855, at age fifteen, Hardy began teaching at Stinsford Church Sunday School.

Hardy entered John Hicks's architectural firm at age sixteen. He did not especially enjoy being an architectural apprentice, but felt it was a sensible thing to do. His specialty was Gothic churches. He traveled to London in 1862 and ended up staying there for five years, working for Arthur Blomfield, an architect and church-restorer. Although Hardy was successful in London, earning several prizes, including an essay prize and a medal awarded by the Royal Institute of British Architects and the honor of the publication of his "How I Built Myself a House" in *Chambers' Journal*, creative writing was the more important activity on his mind. The great success of Charles Swineburne's poems fascinated Hardy and attracted him to the idea of writing for a living. He studied poets such as Shelley, Browning and Wordsworth diligently and imitated their style and diction. Hardy submitted a manuscript of his poetry to *Chambers' Journal*, the same company that published his "How I Built Myself A House", but the manuscript was rejected.

His intensive devotion to poetry resulted in a loss of enthusiasm for architectural work. Hardy left Blomfield's firm and returned to John Hicks's firm in Dorset in 1867, again working on church restoration. Here he truly began to devote much of his time to writing fiction, progressing with his first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, which he submitted to Macmillan but was never published. He also tried sending his second novel manuscript, *Desperate Remedies*, to Macmillan, but the company rejected his work yet again. Hardy was so desperate that his work be published that he paid for the costs himself: Tinsley Brothers published *Desperate Remedies* in 1871. Hardy's next two works, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), introduced one of his central themes: the comic and tragic conflict between the simple life of the countryside and the glamorous sophistication of the city.

While traveling in Cornwall for business under Blomfield's firm, Hardy met Emma Lavinia Gifford and they fell in love. After four years of friendship and courtship, Hardy married Emma on September 17, 1874. Hardy had to ensure that he had enough of a salary from his writing to marry Emma. The Hardys lived in several locations over the next few years, traveling to Germany and Holland and various homes in Dorset, before settling in Max Gate, the home Hardy designed and had built in Dorchester.

The Hardys' marriage was never easy, as Emma thought her status superior to her husband's. Hardy had always felt more at ease at home in the countryside, and Emma's aristocratic city ways were unbearable for Hardy at times. Emma was said to be so snobbish that she refused to let Hardy's parents visit them at the beautiful Max Gate.



Hardy published a number of novels and poems in his extensive literary career: *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Trumpet-Major* (1880), *A Laodicean* (1881), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), *Wessex Tales* (1888), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895), and *The Well-Beloved* (1898). He drew upon his memories and experiences as a youth growing up in rural Dorset for many of his novels, incorporating many customs and myths native to the land and culture.

The terrible public reception of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and later of *Jude the Obscure* (critics and the audience considered both too scandalous) caused Hardy to abandon fiction for poetry and history. Hardy had always felt that poetry was his one true calling and he returned to composing poems. His *Wessex Poems* and *Poems of the Past and the Present* were published in 1898 and 1901, respectively. He later became famous for his epic drama of the Napoleonic War, *The Dynasts* (Part 1 was published in 1904 and Part 2 in 1906).

Emma's death in 1912 left Hardy feeling extremely sad and lonesome. Even though they had their share of problems, he had lost his companion of many years and his great love. Adding to his grief and pain was the number of frequent callers who wished to visit the famed author. Hardy, very much valuing his privacy and solitude, needed someone whose stability and reassurance could lift his spirits - and he found that someone in Florence Dugdale, his secretary and longtime friend. Florence later became Hardy's second wife, marrying him in 1914, and eventually finishing his autobiography, *The Life of Thomas Hardy*, after his death on January 11, 1928.

Thomas Hardy is buried in Westminster Abbey. His legacy to the literary canon is his portrayal of the people, language and customs of the English countryside in his novels. From *Far From the Madding Crowd* to *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy gave voice to the people of his fictional Wessex.

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Plot Summary

Eustacia Vye, a beautiful, sensual nineteen-year-old "Queen of the Night," has one desire: to be loved to madness by a man who is worthy of her and who will take her to exotic places. Living in desolate, barren Egdon Heath, Eustacia considers only one man worthy enough to love--Damon Wildeve, a former civil engineer turned owner of an inn. She and Wildeve share a passionate, wild nature and enjoy toying with each other's affections. However, the sweet, simple Thomasin Yeobright has also caught Wildeve's attentions and is engaged to him. On their wedding day, the marriage license is discovered to be invalid, either by Wildeve's intent or mistake, leaving Thomasin utterly humiliated and Eustacia, who believes that Wildeve loves her more than he loves Thomasin--utterly joyous.

Thomasin's aunt, Mrs. Yeobright, tries to get Wildeve to marry Thomasin to save her niece from public disgrace, even though she has made it clear to her niece that Wildeve is not worthy enough. Diggory Venn, the heath reddleman, also vows to get Thomasin and Wildeve together, but secretly tells Mrs. Yeobright that he would like to marry her niece. Venn is in love with Thomasin, even though she had refused his marriage proposal two years ago. He is determined that Thomasin will marry the man she loves, Wildeve.

Meanwhile, Wildeve has proposed to Eustacia, but Eustacia believes that Wildeve is not good enough for her and rejects him. She is too proud to accept the marriage proposal of a man whom Thomasin, a rival she considers inferior, has rejected and who asked Thomasin to marry before he asked her. Eustacia then sets her sights on Clym Yeobright, Mrs. Yeobright's son and Thomasin's cousin and former sweetheart. Clym has returned to Egdon from Paris, where he's been making a living in the diamond trade. Eustacia believes that educated, genteel, handsome Clym is her match--and her ticket out of the heath.

However, Eustacia has to ensure that Clym does not fall for Thomasin again, so she joins Mrs. Yeobright and Venn in bringing about the wedding of Thomasin and Wildeve. She tells Venn that she does not want Wildeve, so Thomasin can marry him. Mrs. Yeobright turns to Wildeve and informs him that another suitor would like to marry her niece. Wildeve, faced with a romantic rival for Thomasin and rejected by Eustacia, proposes to Thomasin.

Thomasin and Wildeve marry. Wildeve believes that he is getting revenge on both Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright--Eustacia for rejecting him and Mrs. Yeobright for believing him not worthy of Thomasin. Eustacia is satisfied that Thomasin and Wildeve are married, for Thomasin is now free from Clym's affections. She and Clym each scheme to meet each other; after a period of courtship, they marry despite Mrs. Yeobright's deep objections to their marriage. Mrs. Yeobright is opposed to Clym and Eustacia's marriage, for she thinks that Eustacia is not good enough for her son and that the villagers tend to think ill of her.



Although Clym makes it known that he plans to stay on the heath and become a schoolteacher, Eustacia does not believe that Clym's plan will go through. Despite his mother's and wife's wishes, Clym prepares for teaching by staying up late to study. When Clym's eyesight deteriorates, he takes on a furze-cutting job to keep him busy. His new job humiliates and shames Eustacia and shocks his mother. Both Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia are horrified that Clym would degrade himself so as to be a furze-cutter, but he finds the job to be useful and comforting.

Venn manages to thwart Wildeve in his attempts to avenge Eustacia and cause ill for Thomasin. He wins back the money Mrs. Yeobright had sent over to Thomasin and Clym by a heath-boy, money that's been gambled from the heath-boy to Wildeve to Venn, and gives the money to Thomasin, not knowing that half the money belongs to Clym. Mrs. Yeobright mistakenly believes that Wildeve has given Eustacia half the money as a gift and demands to know why Eustacia never told Clym about the money. An enraged Eustacia declares that she does not have any money belonging to her husband and certainly not any money Wildeve has given her. Although the subject of the money is later cleared up, their argument is the climax of Eustacia's volatile, estranged relationship with her mother-in-law and leads to Eustacia and Clym's separation.

Mrs. Yeobright, determined to make up with her son, goes to call on Clym and Eustacia. Through a misunderstanding, no one answers the door when she knocks, even though she knows that Clym, Eustacia, and another man are inside. Feeling cast off by her son, Mrs. Yeobright heads back home in the sweltering heat, growing extremely exhausted and weary from the length of the walk and heat. When Clym finds his mother, she is exhausted and her weak heart is suffering, and she dies with Clym present. Her last words are that she is a, "broken-hearted woman cast-off by her son."

Ill and grief-stricken for weeks, Clym struggles to come to grips with his mother's death. He does not understand why his mother believed he would cast her off, until he learns from a neighbor that it was Eustacia who shut his mother out because she had another visitor. Outraged, Clym demands to know who the other visitor was, but Eustacia does not give in to his inquiries. Eustacia then accuses Clym of deceiving her, and Clym suddenly realizes that Eustacia wants to leave the heath. Eustacia then leaves Clym, returning to her grandfather's.

Eustacia meets with Wildeve, who agrees to help her escape the heath. He agrees to drive her to Budmouth, where she can find her way to Paris, but he really plans to flee with her. Having inherited a large amount of money, he plans to elope with her.

Thomasin suspects that Wildeve is eloping with Eustacia and tells Clym, so that he might stop them. Clym still cherishes a hope that Eustacia will return to him. He hurries to catch up with Wildeve, while Thomasin seeks the help of Diggory Venn to take her to Clym and Wildeve. When Thomasin and Venn arrive, they discover that Eustacia has fallen into the weir and Clym and Wildeve are trying to save her. Venn jumps in to help and drags in Clym's, Wildeve's, and Eustacia's bodies. Only Clym is revived; Eustacia and Wildeve are dead.



A year after the deaths of Eustacia and Wildeve, Diggory Venn comes to call on Thomasin and Clym, who live together at Blooms-End. Venn is no longer a reddleman, but a dairy farmer. He proves his love for Thomasin, who finally recognizes Venn as a worthy romantic suitor. Venn proposes to Thomasin, and she accepts. At first, Clym is against the idea of Thomasin and Venn marrying because he has contemplated marrying Thomasin himself, but he decides that Thomasin should marry who she loves.

Thomasin and Venn marry. Clym ends up alone, but he is content with his life: he finds his vocation as an wandering preacher.



Major Characters

Egdon Heath: The setting of the novel, the heath is as important to the structure and plot of the novel as the human characters. The heath is a driving force in itself, a force that goes by its own free will and nature. The characters' attitude toward the heath shows their moods and concerns, from those who look at the heath as a distainful and dreary place to those who consider Egdon Heath their home.

Diggory Venn: The handsome, young reddleman in love with Thomasin Yeobright. He is Thomasin's guardian angel, thwarting several of Wildeve's attempts to take advantage of Thomasin's sweet nature. Even though he is not considered a suitor for Thomasin in Mrs. Yeobright's eyes, Venn continues to love Thomasin as ardently as he had two years before and vows to do whatever it takes to make her happy, even if her happiness means being married to Wildeve. Venn pulls the bodies of Clym, Wildeve, and Eustacia from the weir. The sixth book of the novel was added at the demand of Hardy's public, and has Diggory Venn finally be rewarded with marriage to the woman he loves, Thomasin. Venn knows the heath well and is accustomed to it, using the landscape to his advantage to thwart Wildeve. He can run through the familiar heath at night and during bad weather.

Thomasin Yeobright: Mrs. Yeobright's niece and Clym's cousin (and former sweetheart). She is a fair, sweet girl with simple tastes and needs. She thinks very highly of her family's opinions--she asks her aunt and Clym if she should marry Venn, but she also has an independent mind and free will. Thomasin declares that she will marry Wildeve, even though her aunt does not approve, and she tells Clym that she is going to marry Venn whether he approves or not. Thomasin is practical and thoughtful, a good listener and advisor to Mrs. Yeobright and Clym. Having been born and raised on the heath, Tomasin, unlike Eustacia and Wildeve, is content living here. The heath means to her a 'nice, wild' place where she can raise her baby and teach her to walk, but also a place where she might catch cold.

Mrs. Yeobright: The middle-aged, proud mother of Clym and aunt to Thomasin. She is genteel and educated, a curate's daughter. She feels superior to the heath-folk and looks down on them with condescension, though her opinion is not taken lightly--her approval and rejection of Clym's and Thomasin's lovers matter to them. She is appalled and shamed that Clym is a furze-cutter, and wonders how he can possibly degrade himself with a job connected to the bushes of the heath. The heath is her death--Mrs. Yeobright dies from heat and exhaustion. Her last words express her belief that she is a 'broken-hearted woman cast off by her son.'

Damon Wildeve: The handsome, young man who enjoys playing with women's affections. Formerly a civil engineer, he becomes the owner of an inn. He and Eustacia take pleasure in tormenting each other, but they also share a hatred for the heath and a desire for glamorous cities and travels. Wildeve marries Thomasin to get revenge on both Eustacia (for rejecting him) and Mrs. Yeobright (for thinking him not worthy of her niece). He enjoys taking advantage of Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright, but Diggory Venn



thwarts several of his attempts. Wildeve also enjoys having money. He privately schemes with Eustacia to flee the heath, but he plans to elope with her, with the fortune he inherits from a dead uncle. He ultimately dies, trying to rescue Eustacia in the weir.

Eustacia Vye: The nineteen-year-old sultry, sensuous beauty whose passionate, uncurbed nature is uncontrollable. She desires to love a man worthy of her, a man and who will take her from the dreary, miserable world she knows living on the heath. She loves Wildeve because he is the only one she thinks is worthy of her, but when she hears that Clym Yeobright is arriving from Paris, she sets her sights on him, scheming to meet and later marry him. She marries Clym because she believes he will eventually return to Paris. Eustacia is proud of her class; she feels superior to the heath-folk. She rejects Wildeve because of his class and feels humiliated running away with him. She is disgraced beyond humiliation when Clym becomes a furze-cutter; she cannot believe that her husband would actually consider taking a job so intimately connected to the heath she hates. Her hatred and disgust of the heath is as ardent and bitter as Clym's love for the heath is tender and affectionate. Eustacia feels that the heath will be her death: she feels as if she cannot survive in a place that cannot accept her and that she cannot accept. She ultimately dies by drowning in the weir.

Clym Yeobright: The 'native' who 'returns' to Egdon Heath from Paris. Clym is well-educated and well-to-do, intelligent and thoughtful. The only son of Mrs. Yeobright, Clym is devoted to his mother, even when she violently opposes his marriage to Eustacia. Clym is glad to return to the heath. He feels that his business in Paris is shallow and idle and wants to do something significant with his life, unlike his wife Eustacia. But he is attracted to Eustacia for her beauty and her passionate nature and is drawn to the mysterious and dangerous aura she exudes. When Clym's eyesight weakens, he takes a furze-cutting job, which shames his wife and mother but is quite consoling for him. He is glad to work on his beloved heath, and he wants to feel useful. He is so devastated by his mother's death that he drives Eustacia away. Clym tries to make up with Eustacia by writing a letter, but he writes it too late and the letter does not reach Eustacia before she dies. Clym feels responsible for the deaths of Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia. He secretly thinks about marrying Thomasin, but he decides that Thomasin should marry the man she loves, Venn. Clym finally finds his vocation as a wandering preacher.

Minor Characters

Captain Vye: Eustacia's grandfather, a retired naval officer. He is somewhat erratic and offbeat. He does not know how to control Eustacia's passionate, wild personality. He is sometimes tactless; he does not think before he speaks, and says what he feels, unbothered about offending people. It is Captain Vye who first suspects that Thomasin and Wildeve are not married when he sees Diggory Venn's van traveling to Blooms-End.

Grandfer Cantle: The heath-man who serenades newlyweds and Christian's father. Grandfer Cantle plans to serenade Thomasin and Wildeve when they return to Egdon; he later sings to Thomasin and Venn on their wedding-day.



Christian Cattle: The young heath-boy who works for the Yeobrights. He tells Clym that Mrs. Yeobright had gone to see him on the day she died.

Susan Nunsuch: The mother of Johnny who believes that Eustacia bewitches her son. She sticks a needle in Eustacia at church and she later makes a wax effigy of Eustacia to burn.

Humphrey: The furze-cutter who advises Clym. Humphrey talks about Clym in front of Eustacia. He suggests to Clym that he become a furze-cutter to earn extra money. He also tells Clym that he believes Clym and Thomasin would make a good couple.

Timothy Fairway: The heath-man who seems to be in charge of many heath activities. The weekly hair-cutting, the bucket-raising, and parties are administered by him.

Olly Dowden: The woman with whom Mrs. Yeobright walks to the Quiet Woman Inn. She tells Mrs. Yeobright that she does not think Wildeve and Thomasin are a good match. She later helps out at the inn when Eustacia's and Wildeve's bodies are pulled out of the weir.

Johnny Nunsuch: The little boy who believes in curses and myths of the heath. He keeps Eustacia's bonfire lit on November 5th until she tells him to stop. He is scared of the reddleman because he believes the reddleman is connected to the devil. Johnny is the last person Mrs. Yeobright talks to before she dies, and he repeats her words that she is a mother cast off by her son for the villagers, especially Clym, to hear.

Sam: The heath-man who tells Clym about Eustacia.

Charley: The lovesick boy infatuated with Eustacia who works for the Vyes'. He willingly allows Eustacia to perform his role one night at the Yeobrights', so that she can meet him. He loves her so much that he helps her get inside her grandfather's locked house and tries to comfort her, bringing her food and lighting a fire for her. He also lights a bonfire for her as a surprise, thus summoning Wildeve unknowingly. When Eustacia dies, Charley is devastated. Clym gives him a strand of Eustacia's hair, which he cherishes lovingly.

Rachel: Thomasin's nurse. She wears Thomasin's gloves to the May-pole festivities and loses a glove. When Venn learns that the glove belongs to Thomasin, he gives Rachel money to buy a new pair of gloves, but he still searches for the lost one.



Objects/Places

Rainbarrow: The largest barrow on the heath--the villagers refer to it as 'Rainbarrow.' Eustacia is first seen standing on top of its summit in the beginning of the novel, and later Clym preaches from this same place, using the summit as his pulpit. The heath-folk light the first bonfire here on the 5th of November.

Budmouth: The fashionable seaport city where Eustacia is from. She misses the vitality and the excitement of life there--the music, the dancing, the various cultures of the officers passing through. Venn offers Eustacia a job in Budmouth as a paid companion, but Eustacia refuses, as she is too proud to accept a job. She later schemes to escape the heath and flee to Budmouth.

Paris: Eustacia longs to escape the heath and settle in Paris. When she learns that Clym Yeobright is arriving from Paris--the most cosmopolitan and modern city in her eyes--Eustacia schemes to marry him. Clym, however, is frustrated and disgusted by the shallow, superficial business he runs in Paris and rejects the idea of returning. He hates the life of glamour and socializing that Paris represents, the life that Eustacia longs for. The more Eustacia yearns to live in the glittering world of Paris, the more Clym is determined to stay in the heath and do something significant with his life.

Blooms-End: Mrs. Yeobright's home is located here. Eustacia catches her first glimpse of Clym when he passes by her on his way here and later meets him again at the Yeobrights' Christmas party when she performs as a mummer. Mrs. Yeobright lives here alone after Clym moves out to marry Eustacia. Later, Clym moves back into his mother's home when Eustacia leaves him, and Thomasin joins him after Wildeve's death. Thomasin and Venn celebrate their marriage here.

Mistover Knap: Captain Vye's home is located here. Eustacia lives with him until she marries Clym and later returns when she and Clym argue. The Christmas mummers practice at the Vyes' fuel-house because the Vye property is roughly the center of the heath. Captain Vye chooses this spot to live because he can see the English Channel in the far distance.

Quiet Woman Inn: Wildeve is the owner of the inn. The heath-folk gather here many times, to gossip and gamble.

Shadwater Weir: The dam in the pool of water where Eustacia falls and drowns. Clym and Wildeve jump in to save her, but they, too, get caught in the current. Venn pulls all three out, though only Clym is revived.

Mrs. Yeobright's money: Mrs. Yeobright divides the 100 pounds of guineas her husband left between Thomasin and Clym. She does not trust Wildeve to pick up Thomasin's share and instead sends both Clym's and Thomasin's shares by a heath-boy, who promptly gambles the money away to Wildeve. Upon hearing that Wildeve has the money and that Clym did not receive his share, Mrs. Yeobright mistakenly accuses



Eustacia of having Clym's share. Meanwhile, Venn wins the money back, and believing that the money belongs to Thomasin, gives it all to her.

Wax effigy of Eustacia: Susan Nunsuch, believing Eustacia has caused her son's illness, responds by making this effigy, a voodoo doll. She molds it from wax, dresses it like Eustacia, sticks pins in it, and burns it with satisfaction.

Wildevve's bank-notes: Wildevve inherits a fortune of eleven thousand pounds from a relative. He does not tell Thomasin that he is now a wealthy man; instead he schemes to flee the heath with Eustacia and elope with her. When he takes the bank-notes and runs, Thomasin suspects that her husband may be eloping with Eustacia, for he would not take so much money if he was only going on a short trip. After Wildevve's death, Thomasin inherits the fortune and spends all the money on their daughter.

Thomasin's glove: Thomasin's nurse loses one of Thomasin's gloves at the May-revel. Thomasin, unaware that the nurse wore her gloves, sees Venn searching for a missing glove belonging to his lover. When the nurse tells Thomasin that Venn had been searching for her missing glove, Thomasin knows that she must be the object of Venn's affections.

Eustacia's hair: After Eustacia dies, Clym gives Charley a strand of her hair, which the lovesick boy cherishes. Clym keeps several strands of Eustacia's hair, as they are his only reminder of his wife.



Quotes

Quote 1: "The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the villages, and the people changed, yet Egdon remained." Book 1, Chapter 1, pg. 3

Quote 2: Wildeve asks Eustacia if he should marry Thomasin; he declares, "I wish Tamsie were not such a confoundedly good little woman so that I could be faithful to you without injuring a worthy person." Part 1, Chapter 9, pg. 64

Quote 3: "She had loved him partly because he was exceptional in this scene, partly because she had determined to love him, chiefly because she was in desperate need of loving somebody after wearying of Wildeve." Book 2, Chapter 6, pg. 108

Quote 4: Clym's stay in Egdon has made him realize that his business in Paris is the "idlest, vainest, most effeminate business that a man could be put to." Book 3, Chapter 1, pg. 130

Quote 5: Clym speaks with passion, "I would give it up and try to follow some rational occupation among the people I knew best, and to whom I could be of most use." Book 3, Chapter 1, pg. 130

Quote 6: It is painfully evident to Eustacia that although Clym is embarrassed of the heathmen, he cares very much for his home--"It is the most exhilarating, and strengthening, and soothing. I would rather live on these hills than anywhere else in the world." Book 3, Chapter 3, pg. 142

Quote 7: "Though I should like Paris, I love you for yourself alone. To be your wife and live in Paris would be heaven to me; but I would rather live with you in a hermitage here than not be yours at all." Book 3, Chapter 4, pg. 152

Quote 8: Eustacia explodes, "If I had known then what I know now, that I should be living in this wild heath a month after my marriage, I--I should have thought twice before agreeing." Book 4, Chapter 1, pg. 185

Quote 9: Mrs. Yeobright asks Johnny Nunsuch to tell his mother that he had seen a "broken-hearted woman cast off by her son." Book 4, Chapter 6, pg. 220

Quote 10: Eustacia hears Johnny Nunsuch cry out, "She said I was to say that I had seed her, and she was a broken-hearted woman and cast off by her son." Book 4, Chapter 8, pg. 232

Quote 11: Clym furiously yells at Eustacia, "The day you shut the door against my mother and killed her." Book 5, Chapter 3, pg. 249

Quote 12: "She would have to live on as a painful object, isolated, and out of place. She had used to think of the heath alone as an uncongenial spot to be in; she felt it now of the whole world." Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 267



Quote 13: Eustacia feels degraded and humiliated that she is fleeing with Wildeve as his mistress: "He's not *great* enough for me to give myself--he does not suffice for my desire!" Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 271

Quote 14: "I have no money to go alone! And if I could, what comfort to me? I must drag on next year, as I have dragged on this year, and the year after that as before. How have I tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot! O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!" Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 271

Quote 15: "To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough. The drops which lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain; Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground. Her fears of the place were rational, her dislikes of its worst moods reasonable. At this time it was in her view a windy, wet place, in which a person might experience much discomfort, lose the path without care, and possibly catch cold." Book 5, Chapter 8, pg. 278

Quote 16: Clym believes that he has done an unforgivable deed and his regret is that, "... for what I have done no man or law can punish me." Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 289



Topic Tracking: Fate

Fate 1: By chance, Captain Vye and the reddleman, Diggory Venn, walk on the same road. Captain Vye suspects that Thomasin Yeobright is in Venn's wagon, and unmarried. He will later tell his granddaughter, Eustacia, that Thomasin and Wildeve are not married.

Fate 2: It is a combination of fate and scheming that brings Eustacia and Clym together. Eustacia hears from Charley that the Christmas mummers will be performing at the Yeobrights', and she schemes to meet Clym by performing as a mummer.

Fate 3: Clym also takes advantage of fate to meet Eustacia. He learns from Sam that Captain Vye's bucket has fallen and that the heath-men are convening to fetch his bucket. Clym joins the rescue team so that he might meet Eustacia.

Fate 4: By chance, Venn is at the inn when Christian tells Wildeve and the other heath-men that he has Thomasin's and Clym's money. Venn will later win the money back from Wildeve after Wildeve ruthlessly gambles against the naïve heath-boy.

Fate 5: Venn sees Wildeve and Eustacia together. When he asks Thomasin where her husband is, she answers that he's left to buy a horse. Venn tells Thomasin that he saw her husband leading a beauty, but he means he saw Wildeve with Eustacia. Venn suspects that Wildeve might be seeing Eustacia.

Fate 6: It is fate that both Wildeve and Mrs. Yeobright call on Clym and Eustacia at the same time, and it is fate that Clym is asleep when the visitors call. Mrs. Yeobright believes that Eustacia ignores her for her other visitor, Mrs. Yeobright believes that her son has cast her off, and Eustacia believes that Clym will awaken and let his mother in.

Fate 7: Clym dreams that his mother is crying for him to help her inside her house, but in the dream, she cannot allow him in her house. His dream makes him resolve to reconcile with his mother, but it also symbolizes the trouble and turmoil his mother really is in. Clym's dream comes too late, for he never gets the chance to reconcile with her before she dies.

Fate 8: Charley lights a bonfire for Eustacia on the 5th of November as a surprise. Wildeve comes to call on her, thinking that he was summoned. Eustacia explains that she did not want him to come, but she easily falls into conversation with Wildeve and they scheme to flee the heath.

Fate 9: Clym writes Eustacia a letter begging her to return to him - but he sends the letter too late. Eustacia does not see the letter before she leaves to flee with Wildeve. If she had, she might have stayed on the heath to be with Clym.

Fate 10: Captain Vye places Clym's letter in the parlour, assuming that Eustacia will read it in the morning. He believes that Eustacia is asleep when he checks on her



closed bedroom door, but when he sees the light flashing on the flagpole, he knows that she must be awake. He calls to her that she has a letter, but finds that she has already left.

Fate 11: Eustacia bemoans her desperate life and pleads with the heavens to change her life. She exclaims that she has done nothing to deserve her miserable fate - lonely, isolated, out of place, with nowhere to go and no one to turn to. She asks why fate is so miserable to her.

Fate 12: Thomasin stumbles upon Diggory Venn's wagon by chance when she is blown off course. She asks Venn to take her where Clym and Wildeve are; Venn intimately knows the heath and can head in any direction, undistracted by heavy rains or harsh winds. It is fate that Thomasin finds Venn, for he pulls Clym, Wildeve, and Eustacia out of the water - and manages to save Clym's life.

Fate 13: Clym is devastated by the deaths of his wife and mother, believing that he drove them to their deaths. He thinks that fate is cruel to him, for taking his life in this direction, but he manages to calm himself by taking walks on the heath. Being on the heath comforts him, and he is thankful that he is where he belongs.

Fate 14: Venn's search for a missing glove arouses curiosity and jealousy in Thomasin. It is fate that she catches him finding the missing glove and kissing it. Unbeknownst to Thomasin, it is one of her gloves that is missing. That she sees Venn holding the glove affectionately makes her wonder who Venn loves - and wish that she might be the one.



Topic Tracking: Heath Customs

Heath Customs 1: On the night of November 5th, the heath-folk gather furze and make them into bonfires. All across the heath, bonfires can be seen, the light from the fire shining brightly against the night sky. Once the heath-folk light the first bonfire on Rainbarrow, the other heath inhabitants light their own fires.

Heath Customs 2: The villagers gather around the bonfires, sing, and dance wildly. The tradition of lighting bonfires on November 5th is a holiday for the heath-folk. This holiday tradition is a celebrated custom of Egdon Heath, a custom which Eustacia Vye detests.

Heath Customs 3: Some children of the heath believe that reddlemen have connections to the devil. Johnny Nunsuch is no exception; he is scared of Diggory Venn and gives as much information as he can about Eustacia Vye before he can finally leave and feel safely out of the reddleman's reach.

Heath Customs 4: Another heath custom is the Christmas mummers' play performed every year. Eustacia usually despises the Christmas mumming, as she does with every heath custom, but this year she is interested in it, once she hears that the first Christmas performance is at the Yeobrights'. That the mummers are masked completely means that Eustacia can scheme to find a way to perform as a mummer and spy on Clym.

Heath Customs 5: Thomasin braids her hair in seven strands on her wedding day. She and the other heath-women braid their hair according to the importance of the day (the more important the day, the more strands in the braid).

Heath Customs 6: The heath-men gather at Timothy Fairway's place for their weekly hair-cutting. The hair-cutting custom is another tradition that the heath-folk cherish and value.

Heath Customs 7: Susan Nunsuch believes that Eustacia is bewitching her son. To exorcize the bad spirit of Eustacia, she sticks a needle in Eustacia's arm during church.

Heath Customs 8: The bucket-fetching process is yet another important heath custom. When Captain Vye's bucket has fallen into the well, the heath-men gather rope from their homes and lower the men into the well with the rope tied around them.

Heath Customs 9: The raffle at the Quiet Woman Inn is a heath tradition the men participate in. They each put a shilling in the raffle and one man wins the money for his sweetheart.

Heath Customs 10: Furze-cutting is an important tradition to the heath-folk. Many men cut and gather furze for bonfires, but Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright are horrified and ashamed that Clym becomes a cutter.



Heath Customs 11: The gipsying is a custom the villagers enjoy heartily. The heath-folk very much enjoy singing, dancing, and socializing; this gipsying, which is a picnic and dance, allows them the chance to take advantage of the heath landscape.

Heath Customs 12: The villagers make a remedy for Mrs. Yeobright's adder wound. The remedy consists of boiling the oil of a freshly-killed adder and applying it to the wound. Clym is doubtful that the remedy will work, but applies it because he trusts the villagers.

Heath Customs 13: Susan Nunsuch makes a voodoo effigy of Eustacia and inflicts pain on the effigy by sticking needles in it and then melting it--with satisfaction. Susan wants to counteract the evil curse she believes Eustacia set on her ailing son.

Heath Customs 14: The May-pole revel is a favorite tradition of the heath-folk. Thomasin especially takes delight in the beautiful flowers and the sight of the May-pole. Thomasin's delight and happiness at the May-pole revel coincides with her uplifted and cheerful spirits.

Heath Customs 15: The heath-folk celebrate Thomasin and Venn's wedding with certain heath customs: they make a fresh feather-bed for the newlyweds and they serenade them.



Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature

Man Against Nature 1: The setting of the novel, Egdon Heath, never changes--it is as forbidding and desolate as it may be toward its inhabitants and its visitors. The heath never yields to anyone.

Man Against Nature 2: The reddleman notices the lone figure standing on top of Rainbarrow, watching for something or someone. He also notices that the figure departs as soon as the turf- and furze-cutters and gatherers make their ascent to the top of Rainbarrow. The reddleman sees that the solitary figure does not want to talk to the heath-folk, and is therefore rebelling against the customs and nature of the heath.

Man Against Nature 3: Eustacia hates everything connected to Egdon Heath--especially the turf and furze-gatherers and cutters. She feels that any job or object connected to the heath is degrading and miserable. Eustacia's rejection of the heath shows her rebellion against nature.

Man Against Nature 4: Eustacia and Wildeve both share a deep disgust for the heath. They both yearn for exciting, cosmopolitan cities where excitement and mystery attract them, rather than the isolated, barren landscape of the heath.

Man Against Nature 5: Knowing how much Eustacia yearns to escape the heath, Venn offers Eustacia a job as a paid companion to get her out--and away from Wildeve. Eustacia, however, has too much pride to take a job, even if the job would get her out of Egdon. She declares that she would rather live on the miserable heath than work.

Man Against Nature 6: Eustacia believes that Clym Yeobright is the answer to her prayers--if he marries her, she will be able to escape the heath for Paris, where Clym is from. She is sure that Clym's love will elevate her from the drudgery of the heath and change her life forever.

Man Against Nature 7: Eustacia declares that she would be content being married to Clym and living with him on the heath, if they are not able to return to Paris soon. She wants to believe love is worth more than anything, even her desire to leave the heath. However, her words are untrue; her deep hatred for the heath will reveal itself to Clym.

Man Against Nature 8: Clym and Eustacia argue about Clym's new job as a furze-cutter. While Clym is content with his job, Eustacia is bitterly shamed by it. She cannot fathom working at a job so intimately connected with the heath. When Clym asks if she regrets marrying him, now that he is a furze-cutter, Eustacia cannot deny her true feelings and admits that she still dreams of leaving the heath for a better life.

Man Against Nature 9: Mrs. Yeobright dies after walking with a weak heart in the sweltering heat. Her death shows the insignificance of the human world against the expansive, forbidding heath.



Man Against Nature 10: When Eustacia and Clym argue about his mother's death, Clym suddenly realizes that Eustacia has never been and will never be happy with him, as long as they continue to live on the heath. He is hurt that his wife does not share his love for the heath; he had believed that Eustacia had reconciled herself with the idea of living there.

Man Against Nature 11: Eustacia feels that her life is meaningless and worthless, now that she has left Clym and is still on Egdon Heath. She knows that he will never return to Paris for her. Eustacia contemplates killing herself, to escape the futility of her life.

Man Against Nature 12: Eustacia's vision of the heath as repulsive and isolated now broadens to the whole world; she feels that the world, not just the heath, is against her. Eustacia feels that she never can or will belong to anyone or anything. She feels defeated and resigned to her fate; she knows she can never win as long as the heath rejects her.

Man Against Nature 13: Eustacia feels that fate has been unjust. She asks the heavens what she has done to deserve such a terrible fate, to be bound to the heath forever without any chance of escape, in desperation and bitterness. The heavens and the heath are indifferent to Eustacia's tragic life.

Man Against Nature 14: Venn pulls Eustacia's cold, lifeless body out of the water. Whether she purposely fell in or slipped, Eustacia has drowned. Because Eustacia could not accept the heath, the heath has rejected her for all eternity.



Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 1: The heath is comfortable for those who live there. The inhabitants of the heath are accustomed to its forbidding, wild landscape.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 2: The Yeobrights are content living on the heath. Captain Vye tells Eustacia that she might find them to be too "countrified," for they enjoy what the heath offers.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 3: Clym, having been born and raised on the heath, loves Egdon. He is a "product" of the heath--he understands and appreciates it for what it is. Clym is accustomed to the country ways and customs of the heath and would rather live simply than live in a flashy, glamorous environment like Paris. He is glad to return, to Eustacia's surprise.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 4: Clym wants to make a significant contribution to the home and the people he loves rather than work and make a large fortune. He is as passionate about staying on the heath and giving back to the land as Eustacia is desperate to leave Egdon.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 5: Although Mrs. Yeobright is comfortable living on the heath, she wishes that Clym would return to his flourishing diamond trade occupation. She feels that the heath is degrading for Clym, but he does not view it that way.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 6: Eustacia is shocked when Clym tells her that the heath soothes and inspires him. She cannot imagine how anyone can think the heath has a positive influence on them. Also, Eustacia is floored when Clym remarks that he would not like to live anywhere else but Egdon.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 7: Eustacia is greatly shamed by Clym's furze-cutting job. Although Clym views the job as an occupation that makes him feel useful and earns him money, Eustacia feels that the job is the lowest form of degradation and humiliation possible. She cannot deny her hatred for the heath when Clym asks if she regrets marrying him, now that he is a furze-cutter.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 8: The heath landscape helps Venn in thwarting Wildeve. Venn rigs a trap for Wildeve, using two tufts of grass. The dark bushes and furze also camouflage him from Wildeve's sight. Venn, a native of the heath, knows it as well as Clym does and the heath rewards him.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 9: Wildeve is surprised to hear that Thomasin is comfortable living on the heath. While he has made it known that he greatly dislikes the heath, Thomasin tells him that she is used to the heath and does not mind its isolated,



wild. She, like Clym and Venn, is a product of the heath and can live on it with satisfaction and pleasure.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 10: To Thomasin, the heath on a dark, stormy night is not malicious or disturbing--it is simply land and bad weather that might lead to a cold. She does not believe the land to be against her, as does Eustacia.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 11: Venn knows the heath so well that he is not distracted by high winds or heavy rains. Venn understands and accepts the heath as much as Clym does.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 12: Thomasin uses the heath, taking her baby out on it to practice walking. The grass and turf provide a soft cushion for the baby to walk on and fall against. Thomasin's acceptance of the land is in accordance to her matter-of-fact manner about the heath: the heath is a comfortable place where she can raise her child, but it is also a place where she might fall ill.

Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 13: Clym uses the summit of Rainbarrow to serve as his pulpit when he preaches. The barrow is his agent for reaching out to the heath-folk; at all points of the heath, the villagers can see and hear him.



Book 1: The Three Women, Chapters 1 - 4

The setting is the isolated, desolate, wild land called Egdon Heath on a cold November evening. Nighttime brings the heath to life, awakens possibilities for its inhabitants. The people of the heath live and work comfortably here, even though it is overgrown and obscure, untouched for ages except by the wide road that now travels its length: "The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the villages, and the people changed, yet Egdon remained" Book 1, Chapter 1, pg. 3.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 1

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 1

As he's walking along the road, Captain Vye, a retired naval officer, sees a van in the distance, heading the same way he is. The van and its driver are completely covered with red coloring, and Captain Vye--frail, hunched, and white-haired--knows that the driver must be a reddleman, a person whose job is to supply farmers with red coloring for their sheep. The old man notices that the reddleman is young and handsome, and he wonders why a good-looking, well-to-do man would choose such a tiring, tedious profession. The reddleman ignores the old man at first, but after he attracts the attention of Captain Vye by looking repeatedly into the van, he tells Vye that there is a young woman inside his van. The young man is very protective of and concerned about this woman, and will not allow the old man to see who she is. The old man has a guess, but does not say. The two men part ways, the young man settling down to rest and the old man continuing his walk.

Topic Tracking: Fate 1

The reddleman, whose name is Diggory Venn, surveys the topography of the heath, his gaze resting on the sight of a barrow against the darkening sky. The barrow is the highest summit on the heath, a great sight to behold. Venn notices that a figure is standing on top of the barrow, a figure as still and motionless as the barrow and the heath below it. When the figure turns abruptly to leave, Venn realizes it's a woman and that her disappearance was caused by the sudden approach of men climbing the barrow. The men stay, and the woman, the reddleman realizes, will most likely not be returning as long as the men are there.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 2

The men on the barrow are furze-gatherers. They gather all the furze they have cut and build a huge pyramid on the summit of the barrow, which the villagers refer to as Rainbarrow. As soon as they set fire to the driest bushes of furze, other bonfires across the heath can be seen, lighting up the dark night.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 1



Women and children also gather on the barrow. Grandfer Cattle starts singing native songs. The villagers then talk about the Yeobright family: how Mrs. Yeobright's niece, Thomasin Yeobright, is supposed to be married to Damon Wildeve, and how her son, Clym Yeobright, is supposed to return home for Christmas and keep his mother company now that her niece has gotten married. The villagers are upset that Thomasin and Wildeve have not gotten married in town and plan to serenade them. They also remark that Damon Wildeve, although not as smart and clever as Clym Yeobright, wasted his chance of having a good job by taking the ownership of the Quiet Woman Inn instead of using his engineering skills. Christian Cattle, Grandfer Cattle's youngest son, remarks sadly that no woman will want him for a husband.

Although most of the fires are slowly being extinguished, the fires in the far distance are still going strong because the vegetation and soil are different from that of the heath's. The only exception is one fire near them, which continues to burn as steadily as when it started. The villagers realize that the fire is from Mistover Knap, where Captain Vye's home is located. The villagers, especially Susan Nunsuch, then remark on how strange Captain Vye's granddaughter is, living by herself, never wanting to know anyone, never participating in heath activities. The villagers then dance and sing wildly.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 2

The reddleman interrupts the villagers festivities, asking them for directions to Mrs. Yeobright's home on Blooms-End, and then setting off in that direction. One of the villagers, Humphrey, seems to recognize the young reddleman, although he cannot remember who he is. No sooner does the reddleman leave when a well-liked and well-respected widowed woman, Mrs. Yeobright, arrives. She is genteel, but she looks at the villagers with a bit of condescension. Timothy Fairway informs her that a reddleman was inquiring about her. Mrs. Yeobright tells them that she is heading toward her niece's new home and that she would like Olly Dowden to accompany her. Olly tells her that the light coming from Thomasin and Wildeve's home will help them find their way through the heath.

Olly and Mrs. Yeobright are accustomed to the harsh, wild landscape and weather, so they are not delayed as a stranger would be. As they walk, Olly speaks of Thomasin and Wildeve's marriage and Mrs. Yeobright's opposition to it. Olly tells her that she has thought before that Wildeve is not suited for the Yeobright family, and Mrs. Yeobright agrees with her that they cannot undo the marriage. Olly asks Mrs. Yeobright to remind Wildeve about the bottle of wine he had promised her sick husband.

Near the inn, Mrs. Yeobright sees a reddleman, and realizes that it must be the reddleman who was asking for her. She recognizes him as Diggory Venn, whose father had been a dairyman. Venn informs Mrs. Yeobright that her niece, Thomasin Yeobright, is in the van--the niece had seen him in Anglebury and asked him to take her home. They had known each other since childhood, and she had immediately recognized him. The young woman, beautiful, sweet, and fair, once happy and hopeful, was now humiliated and grief-stricken. Venn, out of consideration, leaves the two of them alone in his van, and Mrs. Yeobright awakens her niece. When she hears they are near home,



Thomasin insists that she'll walk. When Mrs. Yeobright asks Venn, who's returned, what made him pass up on the dairy profession; Venn can only look at Thomasin. The reddleman is reluctant to let Thomasin and her aunt walk the rest of the way home, but eventually leaves them.



Book 1, Chapters 5 - 9

Thomasin, who's humiliated, explains to her aunt that she is not married because the marriage license Wildeve had gotten is invalid and the parson would not marry them. Although Thomasin regrets that she had loved him and vows not to marry him, Mrs. Yeobright thinks otherwise--she is determined to confront Wildeve and walks them toward the Quiet Woman Inn. Thomasin explains that she had run away from her fiancé because she had been humiliated by the fact that they had not gotten married and had asked Diggory Venn to take her home.

At the inn, Wildeve--a handsome young man--greet's Thomasin with affection. He explains that their marriage license is made out for Budmouth, not Anglebury. Thomasin asks her aunt for a few minutes alone with Wildeve, and apologizes desperately to him. With dignity, Thomasin tells him that she can live without him, but she cannot risk the humiliation of her aunt and cousin if she does not marry him. Thomasin becomes angry when Wildeve says Mrs. Yeobright's demand that they marry is unreasonable, since it's only being done now for the family to save face. But Wildeve seems to feel obligated to go through with the marriage. When Thomasin asks Wildeve for his hand in marriage, he consents, but with a clearly careless attitude about it all.

Meanwhile, the crowd of loud, boisterous villagers has arrived at the inn to serenade the supposedly-married couple. Mrs. Yeobright remains in the back room with Thomasin, while Wildeve goes to see the crowd. After the crowd of men joins Wildeve inside for food and drink, they talk about Thomasin Yeobright's father, who was a renowned musician before he died. The talk then turns to the subject of Captain Vye's granddaughter, and how the fire she had lit earlier is still burning steadily. Wildeve gives a significant look at this news, a look that the villagers miss because they are distracted by Timothy Fairway and Christian Cantle, who reason that the fact she keeps the fire burning so long might have a certain meaning: she might be a witch. When the men leave, Wildeve also sees that Mrs. Yeobright and Thomasin have left. He decides to take the bottle of wine to the Dowdens', when the fire on Mistover Knap catches his eye. He drops the bottle of wine off at the Dowden house and heads the opposite way from his home. The fire on Mistover is evidently a signal light intended for him. Resignedly, Wildeve goes to see Eustacia.

The figure Diggory Venn spots on top of Rainbarrow is Eustacia Vye, who returns to the summit of the barrow, waiting and watching for the man she loves and hates, Damon Wildeve. She had returned only when she was sure the villagers had left the barrow. Tall and proud-looking, she stands alone and still. She looks through a telescope in the direction of the Quiet Woman Inn, and seeing nothing in the windows, closes the telescope. She seems to be waiting for someone to arrive. She leaves Rainbarrow, anxious and despondent, and heads for home.

The small fire on Mistover Knap is still burning when she arrives. Her home on Mistover Knap is kept by her grandfather, the elderly naval officer who was walking up the path earlier. A large pool of water is next to their home. Johnny Nunsuch, Susan Nunsuch's



little boy, keeps the fire going with hard branches of wood. Captain Vye asks Eustacia to come inside and get ready for bed, but she refuses to put out the fire and demands that Johnny continue burning branches for the fire. She tells him to listen for a frog jumping into the pond, as she tells him the frog is a sign of rain. Impatiently waiting, Eustacia is restless and moves about. When Johnny hears a frog jump in the pond, Eustacia hurriedly sends him away with sixpence (money) and waits for the man she's been expecting--Wildevé, her lover.

Although both Wildevé and Eustacia have feelings for each other, each of them toys with the other's feelings. Wildevé asks her to leave him alone, to stop summoning him with bonfires. After all, Eustacia had lit a bonfire last November for the same purpose, and he had come to see her under Rainbarrow. Eustacia has a triumphant tone in her voice when she speaks to Wildevé; she declares that she knew her bonfire would bring him to her. She passionately declares that she knows he loves her more than Thomasin, for he has not married Thomasin. Eustacia tells him she forgives him for leaving her, thinking that he's returned to her. Wildevé asks her how she knows that he is not married. He will not give her an answer to her questions about his and Thomasin's marriage. Angered by his words, Eustacia sends him away, refusing to let him kiss her hand. They part with no real confirmation of their relationship, although Eustacia knows in her heart that she will never admit that she still loves him.

Eustacia, as the "Queen of the Night," is described as strikingly beautiful; her eyes are dark, her hair is lustrous, and her features are made for emotion. She despises Egdon Heath--she wants to live somewhere more exotic, more worldly, more exciting. The only daughter of a Corfu musician and an English mother, Eustacia has been living with her grandfather, her only living relative after the death of her parents, moving from fashionable Budmouth to dreary Egdon. She hated the idea of moving to Egdon, and feels it a kind of exile from the happier days of her adolescence, when she was surrounded by music, people and activity. She abhors the various customs of the heath, especially that the heath inhabitants work as furze-gatherers and turf-cutters. She does not try to enjoy life on the heath; she knows that she will never be content living in Egdon.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 3

Eustacia loves Wildevé because there is no one better on the heath for her to idealize. "To be loved to madness" is her greatest wish. She feels that love is the only thing that might lift her depressed and lonely spirit, and deep, passionate love absorbs her soul.

Johnny Nunsuch runs into Diggory Venn, the reddleman, on his way home. At first, Johnny is afraid of Venn, as children fear reddlemen from old legends that they're connected to the devil, but eventually he warms up to the young man.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 3

When Venn asks him why Eustacia needed him to light her bonfire for so long, Johnny explains that she had been waiting for a man, who is her lover. The man had told



Eustacia that he loved her more than the woman he was supposed to marry, and that the two of them would meet again under Rainbarrow. When Venn has received all the information he can get from Johnny, he sends the boy away.

Diggory Venn has been in love with Thomasin Yeobright since two years ago, when he was still in the dairy trade. He reads a letter she had written him back then, when he'd proposed to her and she had gently refused, because her aunt did not approve of his low class. Thomasin is the reason he changed occupations and is now a reddleman. Although he does not see Thomasin when traveling around the heath, selling redden, he takes pleasure in the fact that she is nearby. He is proud that Thomasin has entrusted him with bringing her home. Although he does not believe Wildeve's feelings to be honest, Venn wants Thomasin to be happy even if her happiness means marriage to Wildeve.

Now that he knows that Eustacia is the cause of Wildeve's not marrying Thomasin, he considers her an enemy to Thomasin. He decides to spy on Eustacia and Wildeve at their secret meeting place and eavesdrops on their conversation. Wildeve asks Eustacia if he should marry Thomasin, saying, "I wish Tamsie were not such a confoundedly good little woman so that I could be faithful to you without injuring a worthy person," Part 1, Chapter 9, pg. 64. He did not marry Thomasin, he says, because of their invalid license and because she had run away; he also hints that Thomasin's aunt is another good reason for marrying Thomasin. Eustacia, who wants him to say it was her who swayed Wildeve from Thomasin, declares that he will always love her more than Thomasin and will always want to marry her. Wildeve agrees, expressing both of their desires to leave the heath forever. They both abhor the heath, and its mournful and lonely landscape.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 4

Wildeve asks her to go to America with him, but Eustacia is hesitant. She finally has her chance to leave the heath forever, but her pride gets in the way--she cannot marry a man she considers herself to be superior to. As the two of them leave, Venn returns to his van, troubled and worried. He vows to see Eustacia as soon as possible.



Book 1, Chapters 10 - 11

Diggory Venn sets out for Captain Vye's cottage on Mistover Knap to call on Eustacia. The Vyes are the only genteel people in their district, with the sole exception of the Yeobrights, and they look down upon the lower and working class people of the heath. They are unfriendly and reserved, and Captain Vye has mood swings. When Eustacia comes out, they walk together as Venn carries out his plan to bring Thomasin and Wildeve together. Venn tells Eustacia his fear that Wildeve might not marry Thomasin because of another woman he will never marry. He suggests to Eustacia that she use her power over men to ask Wildeve to give up the other woman and marry Thomasin. When Eustacia denies her influence over men, Venn quickly appeals to her beauty to influence Wildeve's will. However, when she coldly insults Thomasin, Venn decides to be open about his reason for calling on her: he knows that the woman who comes between Wildeve and Thomasin is herself. Venn begs Eustacia to give up Wildeve, for she is superior to him. Eustacia swears that she will never give in to a woman as inferior as Thomasin and tells Venn in a fit of rage that Wildeve has always loved her the best. Venn finally uses Eustacia's hatred of the heath as another diversion. He gets her to admit that even Wildeve's love does not make up for the loneliness of the heath. Venn explains to her that if she really wants to leave, he can fix her up with a job in Budmouth as a paid companion to a rich woman he knows. Too proud to stoop to this, Eustacia refuses the offer.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 5

Venn again begs for Thomasin's happiness but Eustacia scornfully dismisses him. Later Eustacia walks to the bank and gazes in the direction of Wildeve's house. She vows to herself that she will never give him up.

Diggory Venn encounters Mrs. Yeobright walking in the direction of the Quiet Woman Inn. Mrs. Yeobright is going to see Wildeve for the same reason he went to see Eustacia, Venn realizes. He asks her to give up her plan and tells her that he would like to marry Thomasin. Mrs. Yeobright is surprised, but says that she wants Thomasin to marry the man she loves. Telling her that even he tried to get Thomasin and Wildeve to marry but with no results, Venn offers Mrs. Yeobright his hand in marriage to Thomasin. Mrs. Yeobright politely refuses Venn's offer, fueled now with a new way to lure Wildeve into marrying Thomasin--the competition of a romantic suitor.

Calling on Wildeve, Mrs. Yeobright tells him that Thomasin has another suitor who would like to marry her and that she intends to encourage him if Wildeve does not wish to marry her niece. Once Wildeve hears of a romantic rival, he asks Mrs. Yeobright to give him time to think the situation over. Mrs. Yeobright agrees, but only if Wildeve does not talk to Thomasin about her other suitor.

Wildeve then calls on Eustacia, asking her to marry him. He tells her that Mrs. Yeobright wishes him to give up Thomasin because another man wants to marry her. Eustacia considers Wildeve's offer, but she decides that she cannot marry a man that Thomasin,



whom she considers a lower class than she, has rejected. As Wildeve pleads her to leave the heath with him, she asks him to give her time. He agrees to give her a week to think about his offer. The situation gets even more complicated when Eustacia's grandfather tells her that Clym Yeobright will be returning home next week for the Christmas holidays. When Eustacia asks where Clym has been living all this time, Captain Vye replies that Clym has been in Paris.



Book 2: The Arrival, Chapters 1 - 4

Two heath-men, Humphrey and Sam, are working with Captain Vye on furze-cutting outside the Vyes' home, talking about the imminent arrival of Clym Yeobright, which Eustacia overhears. They all recall when Clym left home for Paris. The two heath-men remark at how clever and intelligent Clym is and how he is more educated than the usual heath-man. They also remark that Eustacia has unconventional ideas in her head, like Clym does. Captain Vye replies that at age nineteen, Eustacia is too young to have strange ideas. Privately, Sam and Humphrey believe that Eustacia and Clym would make a good couple--both are smart, genteel and of good lineage. Eustacia dreams of marrying Clym, how he just might change her bleak, miserable life by taking her back to Paris.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 6

She decides to take a walk to Blooms-End, where the Yeobrights' home will soon be occupied by the cosmopolitan Clym.

Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright prepare for Clym's arrival, setting out his favorite foods and decorating the house for the holidays. Mrs. Yeobright wishes that Thomasin would love Clym in the romantic way he used to love her. Although Thomasin is more worried about how the rumors about her and Wildeve will affect Clym, she assures her aunt she will come along to see Clym arrive. Thomasin staunchly defends her desire to marry Wildeve, despite her aunt's skepticism. Mrs. Yeobright tries to get Thomasin to admit that her feelings for Wildeve have changed, but Thomasin remains firm in her desire to marry Wildeve. Mrs. Yeobright then confides to her niece that Wildeve may propose to her soon, now that Thomasin has another suitor. Thomasin begs her aunt not to tell Clym of her relationship with Wildeve, for she wants to tell him herself if the rumors do not die down.

Eustacia, standing near Mrs. Yeobright's cottage, awaits Clym's arrival. She hears the voices of Mrs. Yeobright, Thomasin, and an unfamiliar man. The voice of the man fascinates her; she tries to catch a glimpse of him but it is too dark to see. When the voice wishes her "good-night," her imagination and dreams are fired-up. She is drawn to the mystery of the man from Paris, and his voice feeds her wild dreams and fantasies. Eustacia immediately loves Clym for the mystery, the intrigue, and the romance he brings, even though she hardly knows him.

Eustacia asks her grandfather why they have never been friendly with the Yeobrights. He replies that she might have found them to be too "countrified" for her fancy taste--the Yeobrights are content with sitting at home on the heath, simply drinking and eating common heath favorites.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 2



Captain Vye then recalls how he once offended Mrs. Yeobright and has never seen her since. After she hears Clym's mysterious voice, Eustacia takes daily walks in the direction of Blooms-End, hoping to encounter Clym again.

On the 23rd of December, Eustacia is home alone, thinking about the voice that has awakened her to new and exciting places. She tries thinking of a way to meet Clym, for a simple visit to the Yeobrights would be unlikely, and she doubts that Clym would attend church, for the heath inhabitants do not usually attend church during the holidays. Charley, a heath-boy, knocks on the door and asks if he and the other Egdon mummers (masked actors in a play) may practice their lines for the Christmas play in the Vyes' fuel-house, as they have done in previous years. Eustacia gives her consent and practice for "Saint George" begins at seven o'clock the next day. Eustacia does not care for mummers and mumming at all; in fact, she condemns it, as she condemns every heath activity.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 4

Sam, Humphrey and Timothy Fairway discuss their upcoming first performance, and when Eustacia hears that it will be at the Yeobrights' (Clym's), she decides to think of a way to be at the Yeobrights' on that night. Naturally, she is not invited, as she never attends local gatherings, and she bemoans the fact that she'll miss the perfect opportunity to meet and talk to Clym. When Charley returns the key to the fuel-house, a shrewd Eustacia takes advantage of Charley's infatuation with her and, upon learning what the mummers' play is, asks him if she can play his role, the Turkish Knight, for one night--the performance at the Yeobrights'.

Topic Tracking: Fate 2

Eustacia offers him money in return for taking over his role, but all Charley wants is a half hour of holding her hand. He compromises to a quarter of an hour, but only if he may kiss her hand as well.

The next day, Charley brings his uniform and gear to Eustacia, who in turn gives her hand to the lovesick Charley. Charley tenderly holds her hand, and decides not to use up all his minutes that night. Eustacia then changes into the outfit and she goes over the role again with Charley. When Charley asks to hold her hand again, Eustacia gives it to him willingly--only she lets him hold it for longer than he intends. Charley is sorely disappointed when he learns his minutes are up.



Book 2, Chapters 5 - 8

The mummers, gathered at the Vyes' to meet before their first performance, wonder where Charley is. Eustacia, disguised in her costume, announces herself as Miss Vye's cousin who is filling in for an absent Charley. The mummers set out for Blooms-End. When they arrive, they hear music and dancing going on inside the house, and have to wait for this to cease before they can go inside. A few of the mummers figure out that the Turkish Knight is really Eustacia, but she lets them believe whatever they want. When they at last go inside the cottage and perform, Eustacia, as the Turkish Knight, is able to lean against the clock-case and observe the room for Clym.

As Eustacia glances around the room, she sees that Thomasin is not present. She spots Grandfer Cantle sitting by the seetle (part of the chimney), and near him, an unfamiliar man, who is Clement Yeobright, better known as Clym. She is pleased with Clym's appearance--he is a handsome man, with an intense gaze. After the play is done, Clym and Mrs. Yeobright offer the mummers food and drink, but Eustacia refuses, for she would have to unmask herself. Clym insists that the lone mummer drink wine, which she finally accepts. As she drinks, she feels mixed emotions about her position--Clym is paying her attention, but this is not the person she wants Clym to see. She wants Clym to be intrigued by her alone, not a phony mummer. Of her emotions, the narrator says:

"She had loved him partly because he was exceptional in this scene, partly because she had determined to love him, chiefly because she was in desperate need of loving somebody after wearying of Wildeve." Book 2, Chapter 6, pg. 108

At the same time, Clym observes the Turkish Knight with interest and wonders if the Knight is really a woman. Eustacia watches jealously as Clym and Thomasin, who suddenly appears, go into a nearby room and talk to each other with great concern and care. She chastises herself for dressing up as a mummer, when Thomasin is right next to Clym, looking as beautiful as she always does. When Clym returns to the main room, he gazes at Eustacia again, this time with intensity and curiosity--even attraction. She feels that she needs to leave the house, which is getting too uncomfortable. Clym follows her and bluntly asks her if she is a woman. Eustacia replies that she is indeed a woman, who dressed up as a mummer to shake off her depressed state of mind. However, she does not reveal her identity to him when he asks. She then leaves.

As Eustacia passes by Rainbarrow, she suddenly remembers that this is the night she was supposed to meet Wildeve and give him her answer. She knows that Wildeve has waited so long in vain for her to appear, but does not care. She angrily scolds herself for hindering Thomasin and Wildeve's marriage--if Thomasin were married to Wildeve by now, Thomasin would not be a potential wife for Clym.

When Eustacia takes her usual walk the next day, she runs into the reddleman, who informs her that Wildeve waited for her last night in their meeting spot under Rainbarrow. Eustacia suspects that Diggory Venn is the other suitor who wants



Thomasin's hand in marriage. Venn is shocked when Eustacia declares she wants Wildeve to marry Thomasin. She sends Venn with a note to give to Wildeve. Eustacia is equally surprised when Venn declares he will do whatever it takes for Thomasin to be happy, even if her happiness means marriage to Wildeve. Eustacia does not reveal why she is no longer interested in Wildeve.

That night, Venn gives Eustacia's note to Wildeve, who is shocked and outraged by Eustacia's declaration that she no longer cares for him. Wildeve then sets Venn up. He lies to Venn, saying that Mrs. Yeobright has agreed to Venn's marrying Thomasin. A surprised but happy Venn hurries back to his van to get ready to see Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright. At the same time, having decided to ask Thomasin to marry him since Eustacia does not want him, Wildeve rushes to the Yeobrights'--he cannot risk being rejected by two women. Before Venn can propose to Thomasin, Wildeve tells him that he has already asked Thomasin to be his wife--and she has agreed.

Thomasin tells her aunt that she is to marry Wildeve the day after the next at his church. They agree that she must marry as soon as possible, for Clym has heard of the rumors and has written to his mother about the humiliation of Thomasin's jilted wedding (Clym is not home--he has gone to visit a friend). Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright are discussing the wedding when Diggory Venn arrives. To Thomasin's surprise, Venn has come to propose to her, but Mrs. Yeobright tells him that he is too late.

On the day of Thomasin's wedding, she takes great care with her appearance; she braids her hair in seven strands (the more important the day, the more strands the heath-women braid their hair in) and dresses in her fancy blue silk dress.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 5

Thomasin decides to go to the church alone, to Mrs. Yeobright's great reluctance. Mrs. Yeobright weeps at the painful separation from her niece. However, Mrs. Yeobright is distracted from the thought of Thomasin's wedding when she spots Clym far in the distance on his way home. Clym, upset that neither Thomasin nor his mother has told him of Thomasin's relationship with Wildeve, decides to go to the church and offer his congratulations to the married couple. He feels terrible that no one in their family has gone to support Thomasin on her wedding day. However, Clym is stopped along the way by Diggory Venn. He tells the Yeobrights that Thomasin and Wildeve are indeed married--he has witnessed the wedding. Mrs. Yeobright is surprised to hear that Eustacia Vye had given Thomasin away. Clym asks who Eustacia is; his mother tells him that she is from Budmouth and some of the heath inhabitants believe that she is an evil witch. Venn explains to them that Eustacia had been the only person available to give Thomasin away. What he does not know about the wedding is that Eustacia is perfectly satisfied that Thomasin is married (and therefore no longer a rival for Clym) and tells Wildeve in private that he deserves Thomasin.



Book 3: The Fascination, Chapters 1 - 4

Clym Yeobright is an intelligent young man, destined for greatness. The heath-men are awed that Clym has been making a fortune in Paris and are fascinated by his literary and artistic achievements. However, Clym has always loved the heath and was reluctant to leave Egdon when a neighbor sent him to Budmouth, then London and finally Paris. Clym understands and appreciates the heath for what it is and brings to life. He said to be a "product" of the heath. His first toys were rocks of the heath, his friends were the flowers and furze. Clym's fondness for the heath is as strong as Eustacia's hatred of it.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 3

Clym's stay in Egdon arouses curiosity in the heath-men, for he has stayed past the length of a regular holiday. When the heath-men gather at Timothy Fairway's home on Sunday morning for their weekly hair-cutting, they discuss Clym's staying at home so long.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 6

Clym walks by and Fairway admits that they have been talking about him. Clym informs the heath-men that he has longed to return home. His stay in Egdon has made him realize that his business in Paris is the "idlest, vainest, most effeminate business that a man could be put to." Book 3, Chapter 1, pg. 130 He speaks with passion: "I would give it up and try to follow some rational occupation among the people I knew best, and to whom I could be of most use." Book 3, Chapter 1, pg. 130

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 4

Clym tells them of his intention to start a school for Egdon inhabitants. The heath-men think him good-hearted for dreaming of teaching, but they doubt his chances of success.

Clym tells his mother that he will not be returning to Paris, that he is going to stay on the heath and become a schoolteacher. Mrs. Yeobright is disappointed in her son for wanting to pursue the education business, which she considers futile. She asks him to reconsider his job as a manager to a Paris diamond mine. Christian Cantle interrupts their discussion to inform the Yeobrights of the latest heath news: during church, Susan Nunsuch stuck a needle in Eustacia Vye's arm for bewitching her children. Clym is concerned for Eustacia and is embarrassed for the behavior of his fellow heath-men.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 7

Mrs. Yeobright vows to her son that she intends to see that Clym escapes the heath for a better life and not waste his life trying to become a schoolteacher.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 5



Sam comes by to borrow rope from the Yeobrights--Captain Vye needs rope to fetch his bucket in the well.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 8

Sam provides Clym with information about Eustacia: how she hardly socializes with heath-men, how good-looking she is, how some heath-men believe she is a witch. Mrs. Yeobright is uneasy about Clym's interest in Eustacia. Clym, intrigued by this mysterious woman, asks Sam if Eustacia might like to teach children, but Sam doubts it. However, Sam tells Clym that he can see her when the heath-men help Captain Vye with his bucket later that evening. Clym agrees to join them, to his mother's chagrin, in hopes of meeting Eustacia.

Topic Tracking: Fate 3

Clym joins the throng of heath-men in fetching the captain's bucket, and Mrs. Yeobright unhappily expects that Clym and Eustacia will meet. Clym is leaning over the well when he hears a voice call from inside to tie a rope around him. He immediately recognizes the voice as the unknown mummer--and knows it is Eustacia Vye. He thinks her thoughtful to say so. When Eustacia comes outside, he is taken with her and offers to bring her water the next morning, as the Vyes' bucket is still knocked down. She thanks him, but declines his offer. Although she and her grandfather can drink from the pool of water next to Vyes' home, Eustacia is too proud to drink pool water. Eustacia and Clym try to fetch the bucket, but Eustacia's hand is burned from holding the rope. When Clym speaks of her wound from Susan Nunsuch's needle, he is embarrassed by the actions of his fellow heath-men. It is painfully evident to Eustacia that although Clym is embarrassed, he cares very much for his home--of it he says, "It is the most exhilarating, and strengthening, and soothing. I would rather live on these hills than anywhere else in the world." Book 3, Chapter 3, pg. 142

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 6

Eustacia tells Clym that she cannot endure the heath and longs for bigger and more glamorous cities.

Clym admits to his mother that he has been seeing Eustacia. Mrs. Yeobright is annoyed and even despairs at the news of Clym's involvement with Eustacia. Clym continues to meet Eustacia day after day, week after week. One day in March, Mrs. Yeobright confides to her son that she fears that he is wasting his life spending time with Eustacia. She does not believe that Eustacia is good enough for her son and thinks him to be blinded by Eustacia's beauty. Mrs. Yeobright declares that she will save him from that "hussy", as she refers to Eustacia. Clym refuses to listen to his mother's jealous, angry words. This argument is the beginning of their estrangement.

Clym and his mother hardly speak to one another after the argument. If Clym is not seeing Eustacia, he is studying. Every night, he goes to meet Eustacia on Rainbarrow, and one night she voices her fears that Mrs. Yeobright will influence Clym against her. Clym assures her that his mother will not stop him from seeing her, as she knows that



they are romantically involved. Clym proposes to Eustacia; she asks for time to think it over and begs him to talk about Paris. She tells him that she will marry him if he will take her back to Paris. Clym is destined to do far greater things with his life than staying on the heath, Eustacia believes, although Clym disagrees. He has vowed to stay on the heath and become a schoolteacher. Eustacia suddenly decides to marry him, as she does not believe his education scheme will pan out. She says,

"Though I should like Paris, I love you for yourself alone. To be your wife and live in Paris would be heaven to me; but I would rather live with you in a hermitage here than not be yours at all." Book 3, Chapter 4, pg. 152

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 7

As the two of them walk back to Mistover, Clym thinks about three obstacles to his future happiness: his mother's trust in him, his plan to become a schoolteacher, and Eustacia's own happiness.



Book 3, Chapters 5 - 8

Mrs. Yeobright finds out about Clym and Eustacia's engagement from village gossip and tearfully confronts her son. Upset that Clym is engaged to Eustacia and upset that he did not tell her, Mrs. Yeobright tries to dissuade him from marrying Eustacia, telling him that Eustacia will be a bad wife. When Mrs. Yeobright declares that she will not accept her son's marriage, Clym replies that his decision to marry Eustacia is final.

Clym had wanted his mother to meet Eustacia before he told her of their engagement, but Mrs. Yeobright's deep dislike of Eustacia prevents him from arranging this meeting. Clym walks alone to the place where he and Eustacia had planned for her meeting with Mrs. Yeobright. Seeing that Clym is alone, a disappointed Eustacia fears that Mrs. Yeobright will never like her and she will lose Clym forever. Suddenly, Clym decides that he and Eustacia should marry as soon as possible. Eustacia agrees to marry him if he promises that they will spend the next six months on the heath before relocating to Budmouth. They agree to marry in two weeks.

Clym moves out of his mother's house and into a small cottage five miles away. He plans to live there alone until Eustacia can join him once they are married. Before he leaves Blooms-End, Clym tells his mother the date of his wedding and asks her to come visit them in their new home. Staunchly refusing, Mrs. Yeobright breaks into tears as Clym bids her a final farewell and leaves her home. Mrs. Yeobright believes that she is forever estranged from her son.

When Thomasin visits her aunt, Mrs. Yeobright asks her if Wildeve is treating her well. Thomasin replies that her husband is usually kind, but he does not give her money when she asks for it. Mrs. Yeobright tells her niece that her husband (Clym's father) had laid aside money for her to divide between Clym and Thomasin when they become of age. When Thomasin asks for her share, Mrs. Yeobright requests that Thomasin ask Wildeve for money and see what he does. Thomasin agrees. She also confesses that she has come to see how her aunt is dealing with Clym, for she has heard of Clym's engagement and departure. Thomasin tries to comfort her aunt, but Mrs. Yeobright is not to be soothed by Thomasin's words. Saddened by her cousin and aunt's estranged relationship, Thomasin promises to visit her aunt more often. Meanwhile, Wildeve learns of the impending marriage between Clym and Eustacia from a passing vendor who is headed toward the Vyes'. An upset Wildeve longs for Eustacia--mostly because another man intends to make her his wife.

On the day of Clym and Eustacia's wedding, Mrs. Yeobright is at home, expecting Thomasin's arrival. Thomasin had arranged with her aunt to pick up her share of the guineas. Hearing the church bells ring, announcing the marriage of Clym and Eustacia, Mrs. Yeobright thinks to herself what a mistake the marriage is. She gets an unwelcome surprise when Wildeve comes to pick up the money--but he does not know that what he is receiving from Mrs. Yeobright is money, only that he is picking up a parcel for Thomasin. Mrs. Yeobright learns that Thomasin was wanted to participate in Clym and Eustacia's wedding and therefore could not pick up her share of the guineas. However,



Mrs. Yeobright does not trust Wildeve, so she dismisses him. Remembering that Thomasin and Clym are both at Mistover, she decides to send the money to both of them by way of Christian Cantle, who is told strictly to hand the money to Clym and Thomasin.

Along the way to Mistover, Christian runs into other heath-men who invite him to a raffle (a gambling match) at the Quiet Woman Inn. In the raffle, every man puts in a shilling apiece, and a man wins a gown-piece for the woman he loves.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 9

Christian wins the raffle. Inspired by his good luck, he tells Wildeve about the money he is carrying for a relation of Wildeve. Once he hears that Christian has Thomasin's money, Wildeve decides to gamble with Christian for the money. Outside, the two of them gamble privately, with Wildeve winning all of the guineas. Christian is anguished when he loses the money and he has to admit that half of the money belongs to Clym. The two men leave, when the reddleman approaches Wildeve. Venn was at the Inn when Christian said he had Mrs. Yeobright's money. He admits to eavesdropping on Wildeve and Christian's conversation and places a bet with Wildeve for the money. Believing the money to be all Thomasin's, he is determined to win the money back. Venn and Wildeve gamble, and Venn proceeds to win all of the guineas, to Wildeve's outrage.

Topic Tracking: Fate 4

They each depart, Wildeve leaving in disgust, but stopping at the sight of Clym and Eustacia's carriage coming up the road. When Venn sees them down the road, he asks for Thomasin. He is told that she will be approaching soon and waits for her; Thomasin approaches with Charley driving her carriage. Venn gives her the guineas, telling her it is from Mrs. Yeobright.



Book 4: The Closed Door, Chapters 1 - 4

The passing summer days are pleasant for the newly married Clym and Eustacia. A few weeks after their wedding, Clym resumes his studies, while Eustacia ponders the best way to get Clym out of the heath. Her dreams of leaving for Paris are unbeknownst to Clym, for she has never mentioned them to him since they married. Meanwhile, Thomasin sends a thank-you note to her aunt for the guineas. Mrs. Yeobright wonders why Clym has not mentioned the guineas. Clym has no idea that he has money coming his way and it's unlikely he'll find out, for Thomasin has been instructed by her aunt not to say anything about the guineas, and neither Wildeve nor Christian will admit the truth about the money.

Mrs. Yeobright decides to see Eustacia about the guineas. Upon hearing Mrs. Yeobright's decision to visit Eustacia, Christian finally admits to Mrs. Yeobright that Wildeve had won the money, both Thomasin's and Clym's share. Christian suggests that perhaps Wildeve will give half the guineas to Eustacia. Fueled by this new suggestion, Mrs. Yeobright goes to see her daughter-in-law. Mrs. Yeobright bluntly asks Eustacia if Wildeve had given her money as a gift; Eustacia vehemently denies that she has the money and is deeply insulted at the implication that Clym needs guarding against her and that she is committing adultery with Wildeve. Eustacia then accuses Mrs. Yeobright of having hated her all this time for no reason. When Eustacia furiously proclaims that she married beneath her, Mrs. Yeobright hotly retorts that her son's lineage is far better than Eustacia's. Eustacia explodes, "If I had known then what I know now, that I should be living in this wild heath a month after my marriage, I--I should have thought twice before agreeing" Book 4, Chapter 1, pg. 185. The two women part in silence and anger.

Clym notices that Eustacia is deeply upset and asks her why. He is confused when his wife mentions the money. Eustacia expresses her anger and frustration at the fact not only Mrs. Yeobright, but also Clym himself, would accuse her of having a relationship with Wildeve. She passionately declares that she hates the heath and desperately needs to escape. Clym is shocked and hurt that Eustacia has not reconciled herself to the idea of living in Egdon. The next day, Thomasin brings Clym's share of the guineas. Thomasin tells Clym that his mother had visited her after seeing Eustacia. She also tells him how disturbed and angered his mother had been. Clym regrets that the argument between his mother and wife happened, and fears they will never be friendly.

Greatly disturbed by his mother and wife's argument, he immerses himself in his studies. Clym's eyesight weakens from his staying up late at night to study. He is devastated when the surgeon informs him he must give up reading for a while. Clym is nearly an invalid--he can hardly see. A sad Clym goes out for a walk one day, meeting Humphrey, who is cutting furze. When Humphrey tells Clym that furze and turf-cutting would be an ideal occupation for Clym, as his poor eyesight would not conflict with the work, Clym seriously contemplates the job and then decides to become a furze-cutter.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 10



When Eustacia hears of Clym's new job, she is devastated and humiliated. Clym finds furze-cutting useful and actually rather comforting--he enjoys being on his beloved heath. He is content with his job, which consumes most of his time. One afternoon, Eustacia sees her husband cutting furze and weeps bitterly. She feels that her husband's job is degrading and her pride is wounded by the working-class status furze-cutting implies. Watching Clym sing while working, Eustacia confronts him angrily. They argue about the job, and Clym asks if she is sorry she married him. Eustacia does not deny that she wanted a better life than the one she now leads on the heath.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 7

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 8

Eustacia, despondent about Clym's job, becomes forlorn and listless. Clym tries to comfort her by promising he will cease furze-cutting as soon as he finds something better. Wanting to cheer her up, Clym agrees that she should attend the village picnic and dance, called a 'gipsying'.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 11

The gipsying is in full swing when Eustacia arrives. She only attends the gipsying because she does not want anyone to think that she is suffering and miserable. Eustacia is not enjoying herself until Wildeve approaches her, to her surprise. He asks her to dance, and she gladly accepts. Eustacia and Wildeve have mixed feelings about the dance--for Eustacia, the dance lifts her spirits and gives her much-needed pleasure and excitement; for Wildeve, the dance makes him long for Eustacia even more. After they dance, they confide in each other. Wildeve admits that he is miserable without her. He also has heard of Clym's weak eyesight and new job as a furze-cutter and offers his sympathy. Eustacia weeps when Wildeve mentions that he thought Clym would have taken her back to Paris by now. He offers to walk her to Throope Corner, the area near Clym and Eustacia's home, where Eustacia is to meet Clym. However, when they see that Clym is accompanied by Diggory Venn, Wildeve leaves in a hurry.

As Eustacia and Clym walk toward their house, Venn heads in the direction of the Quiet Woman Inn. He had seen a man leaving Eustacia's side just before she met him and Clym at the corner, and he is sure that the man is Wildeve. He arrives at the inn to find Thomasin alone and asks where her husband is. When Thomasin tells him that Wildeve has gone to buy a horse, Venn cryptically replies that he had seen her husband leading a "beauty with a white face and a mane as black as night." Thomasin wonders what she can do to keep her husband at home more. Hearing that Venn has talked to Thomasin about the "beauty with a white face and a mane as black as night," Wildeve knows that Venn must be suspicious of his involvement with Eustacia.

Topic Tracking: Fate 5

Venn decides to thwart Wildeve from seeing Eustacia. Knowing that Wildeve will head toward Mistover to see Eustacia, he sets up a trap for Wildeve in the path, tying two tufts of grass so that Wildeve may get caught in the trap and fall down.



Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 8

Wildeve does fall in Venn's trap, and he realizes that Venn and Mrs. Yeobright must be plotting against him and Eustacia when he sees reddish color in the grass. He decides to see Eustacia despite Venn's efforts to prevent him. He sends a moth in the Vyes' window to fly around Eustacia's candle. Eustacia immediately recognizes the moth as her and Wildeve's signal and is about to meet him outside when she hears a loud knock on the door. Clym answers the door himself before Eustacia can and finds no one there. Meanwhile, Wildeve is heading home when he is shot at from the bushes. He tries to ask the constable for help, but the constable is not home. Hurrying home, Wildeve decides to see Eustacia during the daytime. At the same time, Venn goes to see Mrs. Yeobright and tells her that Wildeve may be seeing Eustacia again and persuades her to make up with Clym, just as Clym decides that he must try to reach out to his estranged mother.



Book 4, Chapters 5 - 8

On August 31st, a very hot, excruciatingly sunny day, Mrs. Yeobright heads for Clym and Eustacia's cottage, intending to make up with her son. Her unfamiliarity with the area results in her getting lost and having to ask for directions. She finally asks a furze-cutter, who tells her to follow the path of another furze-cutter heading the same way she is. Recognizing the gait of the man she is following, she realizes it is her son. Mrs. Yeobright is shocked and pained to see that Clym is actually a furze-cutter. She decides to sit down near Clym's house to rest. By this time, Mrs. Yeobright is thoroughly exhausted and weary, after having walked over five miles under the hot sun. She sees a second man approach the house and enter--it is Wildeve.

Eustacia opens the door for Wildeve. Clym is sleeping, as he is accustomed to do after work, so he does not know that they have a visitor nor does he hear their conversation. Eustacia is struck by the difference in appearance between Clym and Wildeve--Wildeve looks elegant in his suit and Clym looks like a low-class heath-man, dressed in his furze-cutting uniform. Wildeve tells her that Clym has a far greater fortune than he does--the fortune that is Eustacia. He also tells her he has surprising news, but he does not let on what this news is. Declaring his love for her, Wildeve guesses that Eustacia only married Clym so that he might take her out of the heath. She denies his charge, claiming that she loves Clym for who he is. When Mrs. Yeobright knocks on the door, Eustacia, having seen her mother-in-law through the window, is fearful of their meeting. Instead of letting Mrs. Yeobright in, she leads Wildeve to the back door, assuming that an awakened Clym will open the door for his mother. Eustacia tells Wildeve that they should no longer be romantically involved and bids him farewell. When she goes inside, she expects to hear the voices of Clym and his mother, but she finds that Clym is still asleep--and Mrs. Yeobright gone.

Topic Tracking: Fate 6

Mrs. Yeobright is heading home in the hot sun, feeling utterly devastated and betrayed by her own son. She believes Clym to have refused her, as she knows that Clym was inside the house and assumes that he allowed Eustacia to shut her out. Johnny Nunsuch joins Mrs. Yeobright, who wonders why she looks so exhausted and sad. Johnny waits with her for a while, bringing her water and waiting until he becomes impatient and leaves. Mrs. Yeobright asks him to tell his mother that he had seen a "broken-hearted woman cast off by her son" Book 4, Chapter 6, pg. 220. Mrs. Yeobright begins her walk alone, walking slowly until she is in too much pain from the heat and the length of her journey to walk and has to sit down on a soft spot to rest.

Clym wakes up, having dreamt that that he had taken Eustacia to his mother's house but they could not get in, despite his mother's crying for help. As a result of the dream, he resolves that he must see his mother as soon as possible.

Topic Tracking: Fate 7



Eustacia suggests that she go herself, intending to talk to Mrs. Yeobright about that afternoon, but Clym turns her suggestion down. Later that evening, Clym walks in the direction of Blooms-End and hears someone moaning in pain. He is anguished to see that it is his mother who is moaning. Clym sees that his mother is so ill and weak that she cannot walk or talk. Carrying his mother in his arms, Clym intends to head to his mother's place but she becomes so restless that he takes her into a small shed for refuge. He then runs to Timothy Fairway's for help and many villagers run back with him. The villagers discover that Mrs. Yeobright has an adder bite. While they wait for the doctor to arrive, they prepare a remedy using the oil of a freshly-killed adder. Clym applies the remedy to his mother's wound.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 12

Meanwhile, back at Clym and Eustacia's home, Eustacia prepares to walk in the direction of Blooms-End to meet Clym on his return from his mother's. Before she can leave, her grandfather arrives to tell her important news--that Wildeve has suddenly inherited a fortune of eleven thousand pounds in bank-notes from a dead uncle. Eustacia guesses that Wildeve's inheritance is the surprising news he wanted to tell her earlier. Captain Vye tells her that she should have married Wildeve and asks if she needs any money. Eustacia proudly refuses, telling her grandfather that Clym has money and that he is only furze-cutting as a pastime. Thinking about Wildeve's inheritance, Eustacia is so immersed that she forgets to wonder where Clym is. When Wildeve appears suddenly, Eustacia congratulates him on his fortune. Wildeve tells her that he meant to sound indifferent about his inheritance, because Clym has Eustacia instead of money. Wildeve tells Eustacia of his plans to travel around the world before finally settling in Paris.

They walk further down the heath until they see that a hut is occupied. Seeing that Clym and his mother are inside, Eustacia asks Wildeve to spy on them. At that moment, Mrs. Yeobright is near death. The doctor tells Clym and the villagers that it was the long walk in the heat that has exhausted Mrs. Yeobright's weak heart, although the adder bite does contribute to her suffering.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 9

Mrs. Yeobright dies, with Clym and Thomasin weeping. When Eustacia hears Johnny Nunsuch cry out, "She said I was to say that I had seed her, and she was a broken-hearted woman and cast off by her son" Book 4, Chapter 8, pg. 232, she also hears Clym gasp in surprise and sob. Eustacia does not dare to enter the hut; she feels terribly guilty and remorseful. She feels that she is to blame for Mrs. Yeobright's death, for she had not admitted her mother-in-law into the house.



Book 5: The Discovery, Chapters 1 - 3

Three weeks after Mrs. Yeobright's funeral, Humphrey visits Eustacia, and ask how Clym is. She tells him that Clym is ill and grief-stricken, and that he berates himself for not seeing his mother before she died. Eustacia cannot bring herself to tell her husband that his mother did come to see them. Later that evening, Thomasin comes to see her ill cousin. She tries to comfort him, but all she can do is listen to his anguished tears. Clym bemoans that he would have allowed his mother into his home if she would have come. Still, Eustacia says nothing. Wildeve comes to pick up Thomasin, who asks Eustacia to tell him to wait while she gives Clym last words of comfort. Wildeve sees how distressed Eustacia is about Mrs. Yeobright's death and its affect on Clym, and advises her to tell Clym the truth about Mrs. Yeobright, though to leave out the part implicating him.

Clym is able to walk around the house and garden now. One evening, Christian Cantle comes to call on Clym and Eustacia's house to tell them that Thomasin has had her baby and that both are doing well. Christian mentions that he saw Mrs. Yeobright on the day she died. Clym is shocked to hear that his mother was planning on visiting him that day and demands to know why. Christian replies that he does not know why Mrs. Yeobright wanted to see him, but assures Clym that Venn would know, as the reddleman had talked with Mrs. Yeobright the day before she died.

Clym goes to his mother's house to look over the household and check on the Yeobrights' things. When he is there, he receives an unexpected visitor--Diggory Venn--who has come to call on Mrs. Yeobright. Clym tells him that his mother died and asks if he knows why she wanted to call on him on the day she died. Venn firmly tells Clym that Mrs. Yeobright had forgiven her son and her son's wife, and wanted to make up with them, but Clym is confused: he does not understand what would make his mother believe that he would cast her off, if she had forgiven him. Greatly confused, Clym decides to see the Johnny Nunsuch, the little boy who was the last person to talk to Mrs. Yeobright before she died. Susan Nunsuch, Johnny's mother, is reluctant to let Clym see her son, for she believes Eustacia to be a witch and Clym to be the husband of a witch, but she finally allows Clym to see Johnny. Clym learns that Mrs. Yeobright was sitting outside Clym's house when Johnny first saw her; that an unknown man entered the house; that Mrs. Yeobright had knocked when she saw Eustacia at the window; that Mrs. Yeobright had left because she was not admitted inside and walked off with Johnny. Clym realizes that Eustacia must have shut out his mother, leading his mother to believe that he didn't want to see her.

Enraged, Clym returns home the next day and confronts Eustacia, demanding to know the identity of the male visitor she had seen on August 31st. When Eustacia replies that she does not remember dates well, Clym furiously yells at her, "The day you shut the door against my mother and killed her" Book 5, Chapter 3, pg. 249. Clym is rampaging, violent, even brutal as he tries to get Eustacia to confess. After he finds an envelope with 'Wildeve' written on it, he mistakenly believes that she is seeing Wildeve. As much as he is outraged and maddened, she defies him by not giving in to his inquiries. She does not admit that the man was Wildeve. She is frustrated and bitter at Clym and



almost wishes that he would kill her, to get her out of the heath. Eustacia accuses Clym of deceiving her, and Clym suddenly realizes that she is in so much pain because they have stayed on the heath.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 10

As Clym berates himself for falling in love with a woman the villagers dislike, Eustacia breaks down in tears and begs for mercy. She confesses that she did not open the door for his mother the first time, but would have the second time, if she had known that Clym was still asleep. Eustacia declares with as much dignity as she can that she will leave him. As she prepares to leave, Clym tells her that he might be able to pity her if he knew who the man was. Proudly refusing to tell him, she leaves abruptly. A little while later, Clym learns that Thomasin has named the baby 'Eustacia Clementine'.



Book 5, Chapters 4 - 6

Eustacia returns to find her grandfather's house locked up. Charley tells her that Captain Vye has left for a day trip and will not be returning until later that night. Seeing how anguished Eustacia is, an infatuated Charley cannot resist helping her get inside the house through a window, after which he bustles about, trying to comfort her. He brings her food and builds a fire in the fireplace. When he catches her looking at Captain Vye's collection of pistols, he locks the guns up. Charley refuses to unlock them, though he promises that he will not reveal what he saw to anyone.

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 11

When Captain Vye returns, he is surprised to see Eustacia but asks no questions.

A week passes before Eustacia can leave the house, if only to wander around the property. She sees a wagon, filled with her furniture, and realizes that Clym must have sent it over. Her grandfather confirms that Clym has moved back to Blooms-End.

As a surprise for Eustacia, Charley lights up a bonfire for her on the 5th of November. She watches the fire die down and hears a splash in the pool; she is surprised that Wildeve has actually come, thinking she summoned him.

Topic Tracking: Fate 8

Eustacia explains to him that she did not light their signal, that it was a surprise for her. But Wildeve has heard of her separation from Clym and he is full of pity and sympathy for her. He declares that the burden of Mrs. Yeobright's death and her removal to Mistover are killing her very soul. As Eustacia sobs, Wildeve begs her to forgive him, and offers to assist her in leaving Egdon. Eustacia asks him to help drive her to Budmouth, where she can find her way to Paris. Although she proposes the idea, she is unsure if Wildeve should accompany her. Finally, she accepts his help and plans to send a signal at eight o'clock in the evening that she is ready to leave, and he must be ready at midnight to pick her up and drive her to Budmouth. Wildeve agrees to the plan.

Clym is living at Blooms-End, wishing that Eustacia would return to him. On the 5th of November, Clym resolves not to dwell on the idea of his wife and decides to visit Thomasin and her husband. He finds that Thomasin is home alone; Wildeve has left suddenly and did not tell his wife where he went. Thomasin is disturbed to hear that Clym and Eustacia have parted and that he is living at Blooms-End. She persuades him to reconcile with Eustacia.

Returning home, Clym writes Eustacia a letter, begging her with all his heart to return to him and assuring her that he will welcome her with open arms. He decides to send the letter the day after next if she does not come by her own will.

Topic Tracking: Fate 9



Meanwhile, Thomasin is anxiously waiting for Wildeve to come home, as she has been waiting for him every evening. When Wildeve arrives, she tells him that she worries about him walking around the heath at night, when he really dislikes living there. Wildeve is surprised to hear Thomasin reply that she is comfortable and content living on the heath. She tells him that she had been born and raised there; she is accustomed to it.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 9

When Thomasin mentions the heath-folk's rumors of Wildeve and Eustacia's relationship, Wildeve gets mad and they argue.



Book 5, Chapters 7 - 9

On the 6th of November, as Eustacia prepares to flee Egdon, she has fleeting memories of Clym that lift her hopes, but she finally decides that he will never want her again.

"She would have to live on as a painful object, isolated, and out of place. She had used to think of the heath alone as an uncongenial spot to be in; she felt it now of the whole world." Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 267

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 12

After signaling Wildeve at eight o'clock, Eustacia waits impatiently in her room for the midnight hour to arrive. While Eustacia is upstairs, Timothy Fairway drops by the Vyes' to bring Eustacia Clym's letter. Captain Vye leaves the letter in the parlour, when he sees that Eustacia's room is dark and believes her to be sleeping. He is about to go to bed himself when he notices a flash of light on the flagpole and realizes that Eustacia must be awake. He goes to tell Eustacia of the letter she has received, but he finds that she has already left.

Topic Tracking: Fate 10

Eustacia sets out to meet Wildeve, discovering that it has begun to rain. She stops at Rainbarrow to think; she suddenly realizes that she has forgotten to bring money with her. She feels degraded and humiliated that she is fleeing with Wildeve as his mistress: "He's not *great* enough for me to give myself--he does not suffice for my desire!" Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 271 Feeling that the whole world is against her, she bemoans her fate as a woman destined for cruelty from the moment she was born. She realizes the futility of her fate:

"I have no money to go alone! And if I could, what comfort to me? I must drag on next year, as I have dragged on this year, and the year after that as before. How have I tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot! O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by thins beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!" Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 271

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 13

As Eustacia bitterly cries out against the turn fate has dealt her, she echoes the turbulent, desperate sentiments of the raging, crushing storm.

Topic Tracking: Fate 11

Meanwhile, Susan Nunsuch has seen Eustacia pass by her house and believes her to be bewitching her son Johnny, who is ill. Looking at Eustacia with disgust and hatred, Susan prepares to counteract the curse she believes Eustacia has set on her son by



making a wax effigy of Eustacia. Susan molds the little effigy from wax, dresses the voodoo doll as Eustacia, from her red ribbon to her sandals. Taking the little effigy in hand, Susan mercilessly sticks pins in it and burns it with great satisfaction.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 13

Clym waits impatiently at home alone, hoping that Eustacia will return to him when she receives his letter. He is uneasy about the violent storm outside. About to head to bed himself between ten and eleven o'clock, he is surprised and disappointed to see Thomasin, not his wife, at the door. A worried Thomasin has come with her baby to tell him her fear that Wildeve may be eloping with Eustacia that night. She explains that Wildeve has told her he had to go on a short trip suddenly, but has taken a large amount of bank-notes with him. The money convinces her that Wildeve perhaps did not plan on returning to the heath for some time.

Clym leaves to dissuade Wildeve from leaving Thomasin, but before he can leave, Captain Vye comes to ask Clym if Eustacia is there with him. When Clym informs him that Eustacia may be eloping with Wildeve, Captain Vye hopes that Eustacia's reason for leaving is only elopement and nothing more. He tells Clym that Eustacia has been looking at his pistols and fears she may be thinking about killing herself. Clym ignores the captain's tactless words of scorn directed at him for driving Eustacia away, and invites the captain to accompany him to Wildeve's. Captain Vye decides to return home, believing that Eustacia will come home, and Clym rushes off.

Thomasin cannot stand being in the house alone when she fears that there may be trouble brewing. Wrapping the baby warmly, she leaves the house in a great hurry. She is anxious to know what happened with her husband and Eustacia. The storm does not frighten her, nor does the landscape of the heath disturb her as it does Eustacia:

"To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough. The drops which lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain; Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground. Her fears of the place were rational, her dislikes of its worst moods reasonable. At this time it was in her view a windy, wet place, in which a person might experience much discomfort, lose the path without care, and possibly catch cold." Book 5, Chapter 8, pg. 278

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 10

However, Thomasin loses her way because the winds blow her in the wrong direction. She stumbles upon Diggory Venn's van.

Topic Tracking: Fate 12

When Venn asks her why she has returned, Thomasin is confused until Venn explains that he has seen a woman pass by. Thomasin realizes that it must have been Eustacia who passed by on her way to meet Wildeve and she decides to leave to find them. Venn accompanies her, leading the way to the inn. The storm does not distract him from walking in the right direction; he knows the heath well.



Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 11

Thomasin sees a light in the direction of the inn, but Venn tells her that the light is not from the inn. He points out that the light comes from a place below the inn, on the marsh. Thomasin asks him to lead her to the light.

At the same time, Wildeve is waiting for Eustacia anxiously at their meeting spot beside the Shadwater Weir. He knows the storm might have detained her, so he waits patiently. He is surprised to find Clym approaching, not Eustacia. They argue until they hear the deadly sound of a body fall into the water and fear it might be Eustacia. They discover that Eustacia did fall into the water and both jump in to rescue her. Venn and Thomasin arrive to find all three in the weir; Venn also jumps into the water to save them. Venn finds the two men first, a submerged Wildeve clinging to Clym's legs. Other heath-men join the rescue team and they all search for Eustacia. Venn finally finds the cold, lifeless body of a woman, all that is left of the "desperate Eustacia."

Topic Tracking: Man Against Nature 14

Taking all three bodies to the inn, the villagers manage to revive Clym, but Eustacia and Wildeve are dead. Venn leaves the grief-stricken scene and returns home; he feels out of place there, as he believes he is a stranger to them. When he thinks about the emotional turmoil Thomasin must feel, he decides that he must see her and try to help her in this sorrowful time.

When Venn arrives at the inn, the servants and neighbors are bustling about. Thomasin's nurse finds the wet bank-notes in Wildeve's pocket and hangs them to dry. Venn figures that Wildeve must have planned not to return to Egdon for some time. Charley then arrives, having been sent by Captain Vye to inquire about Eustacia. Venn tells the lovesick boy that Eustacia is dead; Charley is horrified and anguished. Clym enters the room, and seeing Charley's bereaved face, invites Charley and Venn to see the dead Eustacia. As Clym says wistfully, Eustacia looks even more beautiful and dignified in death. Clym then shows them Wildeve's body.

Clym confides to Venn that he killed Eustacia by driving her away from him and wishes that he were dead instead. No matter how much Venn comforts him, Clym believes that he has done an unforgivable deed and his regret is that, "for what I have done no man or law can punish me" Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 289.



Book 6: Aftercourses, Chapters 1 - 2

The story of Eustacia and Wildeve's deaths travels across the heath and beyond. Thomasin busies herself with little Eustacia so as not to think about the death of her husband. The spring and summer months calm and soothe her bereaved spirits. Even though she has inherited all of Wildeve's fortune, she decides to save the money for her daughter and live simply, settling at Blooms-End at Clym's invitation.

Clym has become a reserved, bitter man, reproaching himself harshly for the death of his wife and mother. At times, he thinks that fate has dealt him a terrible lot, but soothes himself by taking long walks on his beloved heath or studying. The scribes of ancient tribes who have lived and died on that very land inspire him that education can transcend immortality and time and motivate him to study.

Topic Tracking: Fate 13

A year after the deaths of Eustacia and Wildeve, Diggory Venn calls on Thomasin and Clym. They are surprised to see an elegant, handsome Venn, no longer a reddleman but a dairy farmer. Thomasin is struck by how good-looking Venn is, and compliments him. He has come to inquire if the heath May-pole may be placed outside their house. Clym and Thomasin give their consent.

Thomasin is delighted when the May-revel day arrives. She takes pleasure in seeing the fragrant blossoms around the May-pole. She dresses in her summer best, but Clym does not join in the heath festivities. Instead, he leaves as the celebration begins and returns when the dancing is over. Thomasin notices that Venn is still outside strolling around the May-pole when the heath-folk have left, and invites him inside. Venn refuses politely, explaining that he is searching for a missing glove belonging to a maiden he loves. Later that evening, a jealous Thomasin watches from her window as Venn finds a glove on the ground, kisses it, and places it in the pocket nearest his heart.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 14

Thomasin wonders about the woman who Venn loves. She asks her nurse, Rachel, if she knows where her missing glove is. Rachel confesses that she has worn Thomasin's gloves to the May-pole and lost one of the gloves. Rachel also informs Thomasin that once Venn had found out that Thomasin's glove was missing, he had given her money to buy another pair of gloves, but wanted to keep searching for the missing glove. Thomasin now knows that she is the woman who Venn loves.

Topic Tracking: Fate 14

The next day, Thomasin takes her baby on the heath to practice walking--the soft grass and turf make a cushion to protect the baby when she falls.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 12



Venn comes by on horseback; Thomasin immediately asks her for glove back. Returning the glove to her, Venn tells her that he feels the same way about her, only that it is harder to win her love, as she is now a rich woman. Thomasin explains that all of the money will be used for the baby, not for herself. Venn is glad to hear that.



Book 6, Chapters 3 - 4

Clym ponders the idea of a relationship with Thomasin. He knows his mother cherished a dream of Clym and Thomasin marrying, but he feels that his love for Eustacia has exhausted him. He also doubts that Thomasin would marry a man who is totally weary and exhausted from love. Clym finally decides to let Thomasin decide what to do. Before he can ask her, Thomasin asks him a question: if Clym, as her "guardian", should approve if she marries Diggory Venn. Clym is against the idea at first. When Clym hesitates, Thomasin declares that Venn is worthy of her now, seeing that he is no longer a reddleman, which is why Mrs. Yeobright had earlier objected to their marriage.

Knowing that Thomasin will not back down in her desire to marry Venn, Clym decides that Thomasin's happiness must come before his. He tells her that Mrs. Yeobright would have agreed to the marriage, now that Venn is a dairy farmer. After their talk, Clym hears from Humphrey that Thomasin and Venn are spending much of their time together. Clym dismisses Humphrey's claim that he try to win Thomasin's love, insisting that he cannot think about marrying after the deaths of his mother and wife. Clym tells Humphrey of his plan to start a night school and to preach. Thomasin later informs her cousin that she and Venn are to be married next month.

On Thomasin and Venn's wedding day, the villagers gather at Blooms-End and make a feather-bed as a present for the newlyweds. Grandfer Cattle sings them a song he plans to serenade Thomasin and Venn with later that night. They hear the wagon carrying the newly married Venns, and Clym and Venn's relatives from Budmouth come from the church and congratulate them.

Topic Tracking: Heath Customs 15

Everyone is cheerful and exuberant at Blooms-End, celebrating Thomasin and Venn's marriage, with the exception of a despondent Clym. His eyesight has improved, but he feels alone in the world. Taking a walk to Mistover, he sees Charley, also mournful. Clym realizes that Charley did genuinely care for Eustacia and recognizes Charley's pain. He agrees to give Charley something belonging to Eustacia. Clym leads him back to his home, where he gives Charley a cherished strand of Eustacia's black hair. Charley accepts the hair gratefully. Clym walks Charley back and, returning home, finds that the Thomasin and Venn are ready to leave with the baby and nurse. Thomasin and Clym bid each other a loving, if sad, farewell. Clym goes inside his empty house and sits in a chair opposite his mother's favorite chair, thinking about his mother.

The next Sunday after the wedding, the villagers gather again, this time at Rainbarrow. Standing at the summit of Rainbarrow, Clym is preaching a sermon, the first of a series of lectures called the Sermons on the Mount. Although Clym looks weary and thin, he speaks with great fervor and passion, stirring the villagers' spirits. Clym has found his vocation as a wandering preacher, speaking anywhere that will receive him.

Topic Tracking: Natives' Attitude Toward Heath 13