

Silas Marner Book Notes

Silas Marner by George Eliot

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Author/Context

George Eliot, christened Mary Anne Evans, was born on November 22, 1819. Mary Anne was the third child of Robert Evans and Christiana Pearson, after Chrissey and Isaac, and before the boy twins, who died in infancy. Mary Anne spent her childhood and adolescence between her family's farm, Griff House, in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, and the two boarding schools she was sent to. Mary Anne idolized her older brother, Isaac, and despaired when he began to distance himself from her. Turning to books and reading for comfort, Mary Anne also found solace in the Evangelical preachings of her teacher, Miss Maria Lewis. Miss Lewis's teachings provided Mary Anne with the religious devotion that permeated most of her adolescence.

After her mother died of breast cancer on February 3, 1836 and her older sister, Chrissey, married in 1837, Mary Anne took charge of her father's household. Mary Anne and her father moved to a house near Coventry. It was during this time that Mary Anne changed her name to 'Mary Ann' and became known as 'Miss Evans.' Mary Ann nursed her father during his last years, especially when he fell sick with kidney disease. She was very much devastated when her father finally died on May 30, 1849.

Mary Ann changed her name yet again, this time to 'Marian' in 1851. She travelled to London, where she embarked on an adulterous affair with the married Mr. John Chapman. Her residence at 142 Strand gave her access to the literary and artistic circles in London at the time - most importantly, she began to associate with the men from the *Westminster Review*. Chapman bought the *Westminster Review* and gave the editorship to Marian Evans. Chapman's wife, Susanna, and mistress, Elisabeth Tilley, were jealous of Chapman's attention to Marian and made her leave London.

However, Marian returned to London later that year, with her dear friend Cara Bray at her side. They met G.H. (George Henry) Lewes, the charming, intelligent writer and philosopher. Lewes was married, but his wife had left him, and a divorce was impossible. Although Cara Bray and Marian's other friends severely disliked Lewes, Marian became fond of him and even began to love him, but she could not tell her friends of her growing affection for him. She loved his knowledge of literature, his fluency of languages, his confidence, and his intelligence; they both shared a love for literature, especially German literature, religion, and philosophy. In 1854, they prepared to live together openly in Germany, settling in Weimar and then Berlin. News of their relationship shocked many of their friends and their family back home in England and they shunned Marian and Lewes. However, both Marian and Lewes made it clear that their relationship was no ordinary affair and that they intended to be with each other. In 1855, they returned to England, where Marian was anxious how society would receive them. Marian had stopped editing for the *Westminster Review* because the job was unpaid, but continued to write articles.

As Marian and Lewes continued to live together as man and wife, people generally began to accept them as a married couple. Lewes encouraged Marian to write fiction. She sent off her first work, "Amos Barton," to the English publisher John Blackwood in

1856 under the pseudonym 'George Eliot.' She wanted critics to judge her on merit alone and not by her relationship with Lewes, taking the name 'George Eliot,' as George was Lewes's first name. Later that year, George Eliot worked on *Scenes of Clerical Life*, published in 1858. Not even her close friends, John Chapman, the Brays, and Bessie Parkes, knew what Marian was doing for a living.

In 1858, Lewes and Marian set off for Munich and Dresden, where Marian focused her energy on her fiction. *Adam Bede* (1859) was based on Marian's memories of her childhood and youth in Nuneaton and became an immediate success. *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Eliot's first great novel, was by far Eliot's most autobiographical, focusing on her relationship with her beloved brother, Isaac, in Maggie and Tom Tulliver. Published in 1861, *Silas Marner* soon followed the success of *The Mill on the Floss*, also based on Marian's childhood in Warwickshire as a young girl. Eliot's other works include *Romola* (1862-1863), *Felix Holt* (1866), *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868), and *The Legend of Jubal and other Poems* (1874). Her greatest masterpiece, *Middlemarch*, was published in 1871.

Lewes's death in 1878 left Marian more devastated than she had ever been in her life, losing a friend, a companion, and a lover. Marian married J.W. Cross, a friend of hers and an American banker twenty years her junior. Soon after she married Cross, George Eliot died on December 22, 1880.

Adam Bede, *Silas Marner*, and *The Mill on the Floss* focus especially on Marian's childhood memories of the rural countryside in Warwickshire: the landscape and its inhabitants. She also recalled her religious views and integrated them into the stories.

"She shocked family and friends more than once with her actions - losing her faith and refusing to attend church, pursuing a journalistic career in London, living with a married man, and finally marrying a man so much younger than herself - but her desire was always to please, to conciliate to conform if she could. In her novels she dramatized these and similar paradoxes in a variety of ways, skilfully and sympathetically putting difficult choices before her characters and showing their human frailty and the sometimes disastrous consequences of dubious actions undertaken out of mixed and confused motives." (Ashton 381).

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Plot Summary

Before Silas Marner had settled in the village of Raveloe, he had lived in Lantern Yard. Silas had left Lantern Yard because he had been falsely accused of stealing - and because his friend, William Dane, had betrayed his trust by accusing him and marrying Silas's fiancée, Sarah.

When Silas settles in Raveloe, he is isolated from the village. That he is a weaver and that his cottage is on the edge of town, next to the Stone-pits, make Silas very different from the rest of the village. Also, the townspeople believe that Silas is connected with the devil because they think he can set curses and charms. The townspeople generally stay away from him, except for the curious children who are interested in the unusual sound of the loom and are frightened by Silas's glaring face. Deprived of human companionship and love, Silas only has love for the gold that he hoards. Silas remains alone and cold for fifteen years.

Dunsey Cass, Squire Cass's younger and reckless son, does not pay back the rent money that Godfrey has given him. Dunsey threatens that if Godfrey does not pay the money himself, then he will reveal Godfrey's dark secret that he was married to a drunk named Molly Farren. Godfrey is forced to sell his beloved horse, Wildfire, and against his better judgement, allows Dunsey to take the horse to the hunt and sell it. He would rather pay the money than have Dunsey expose his marriage to their father, for he wants to win Nancy Lammeter's love. News of his marriage would surely jeopardize any chance of marrying Nancy.

Dunsey takes the horse and finds a buyer, but he accidentally kills the horse when he enters the horse hunt and jumps over a stake, stabbing the horse. Dunsey manages to sneak away without anyone seeing him and walks home. As he nears Silas Marner's cottage, he thinks about the money problem and remembers that Silas supposedly has a pile of gold stocked in his home. Without a conscience in his soul, Dunsey sneaks into Silas's home, finds the gold in its hiding place, and runs off into the night.

When Silas returns home, he finds that his gold is stolen. Devastated and horrified, Silas is shocked at the thought that someone had robbed him and runs to town to report the robbery, although he does not wish for anyone to be punished. Silas runs into the Rainbow and tells the townspeople there about the robbery. After Silas accuses Jem Rodney of stealing his gold, the villagers demand that Silas tell them how he found the gold missing. Because Silas is so distraught and serious, the villagers believe his story to be true. The next day, Godfrey goes to the Stone-pits area, as with other villagers, to discuss the robbery. Nearby Silas's cottage, they find a tinderbox, which makes a townsman recall that a peddler who'd come to town recently carried a tinderbox. The townspeople are divided on the subject of Silas's stolen gold. However, Dunsey's name does not come up as a suspect because he is known to disappear for a long period of time. When Godfrey learns that Dunsey has killed the horse, he realizes that he must tell their father about the missing rent money and the horse. Squire Cass is enraged

about the money and tells Godfrey that he is as spineless and weak-minded as his mother was.

Dolly Winthrop visits Silas and begs him to join the church festivities on Christmas Day. She tries to make him see the connection between the town church ceremonies and the Christmas holidays, but Silas fails to recognize that the church is associated with Christmas. The Lantern Yard services he learned are not the same as the Raveloe customs. Instead, Silas spends the holidays by himself, as he had every year for the past fifteen years.

The Christmas and New Year's holidays are spent with joyous festivities for the townspeople. Squire Cass throws a lavish New Year's party for Raveloe high society. Nancy Lammeter is chagrined that Godfrey still wants her for his wife, for she has made it clear that she does not want to marry. The villagers remark at how wonderful Godfrey and Nancy look as a couple. Nancy is cold to Godfrey when he asks for her forgiveness.

On her way to the Squire's party, a drunken Molly Farren, Godfrey's wife, walks with their baby girl in her arms. She plans to crash the party and reveal that she is Godfrey's wife so that she can avenge Godfrey's desertion. Before she can make it to the Squire's, Molly falls asleep from the opium and falls onto the snow, the little girl escaping Molly's arms. The child follows the path of a bright light, all the way to Silas Marner's cottage and through the open door. Silas does not see the child enter because he has an unconscious fit. When he regains consciousness, he sees something gold on the floor and thinks that his gold has returned to him. However, he finds that the gold on his floor is not money, but the golden hair of a sleeping child. Silas manages to think beyond the beautiful sight of the little girl to go outside and see the dead body of Molly Farren.

Silas brings the child with him to Squire Cass's house to fetch the doctor. Godfrey recognizes the child in Silas's arms as his own. He fears that Molly is alive, but when he and the doctor rush to Silas's cottage and finds Molly's body, he sees that the woman Silas had found is indeed his wife, and that she is dead.

The villagers are surprised by Silas's statement that he wants to keep the child, but they feel warmer toward him. Dolly Winthrop gives Silas old clothes of her youngest son Aaron and advises him on how to care for the little girl. Vowing that he will make sure that she is taken care of, Godfrey is happy to see that his child is content with Silas, and gives Silas money for the girl.

Silas names the girl Hephzibah, after his mother and sister, and calls her Eppie for short. Raising Eppie brings Silas more joy and happiness than he could ever imagine. For the first time, Silas feels a reciprocated love, a love that is deeper and more affectionate than his love for gold. She teaches him that there is goodness in this world, and Silas couldn't be more happy than he is now. Silas is kind to the villagers, who are kind and warm in return.

Sixteen years have passed since Eppie entered Silas's life. Eppie is now a beautiful, sweet girl, who loves nature and animals. She and Silas have a very happy life together in Raveloe; Eppie has loved Silas as her father and cannot bear the thought of being separated from him. Eppie tells her father that she would like to marry Aaron Winthrop, who has proposed to her, but only if Silas lives with them as well. Also watching Eppie's welfare is Godfrey Cass, who is now married to Nancy Lammeter. He and Nancy are childless; their one child died in infancy. Godfrey is especially giving and considerate to Eppie and Silas. Godfrey had suggested adopting Eppie before, but Nancy had refused, on her belief that adopting would be against Providence.

When the Stone-pits are drained, Dunsey's skeleton is found with the gold he had stolen from Silas Marner. Godfrey finally confesses to Nancy that he had been married and that Eppie is his child. When he learns that Dunsey's body has been found, he knows the truth will always reveal itself eventually. A disappointed Nancy, fearful that she has been a horrid wife, tells him that he should have told her earlier, so that they might have had a child to raise. They agree to ask Eppie if she would like to live with them as their daughter.

Godfrey and Nancy visit Silas's cottage, where they ask Eppie if she wants to become their daughter, learn how to be a lady, and live with them at the Red House. Godfrey intends to save Eppie from the hard life as a working-class girl, but Eppie replies that she does not want to be rich and that she would rather remain in the countryside. When Godfrey angrily tells Eppie and Silas that Eppie is his daughter, both Eppie and Silas declare to Godfrey that Eppie's true paternity does not change the fact that Godfrey did not acknowledge her as his daughter sixteen years ago. Repeating firmly that she wants to marry a workingman and that she will not part from Silas, Eppie refuses the Casses' proposal to Godfrey, who, when thinking about Eppie's refusal, decides sadly that it is punishment for deserting her. He decides to do all that he can for Eppie.

Silas decides to return to Lantern Yard, to see the minister and try to clear his accused name. With Eppie accompanying him, Silas finds a horrid, grim-looking town in place of the Lantern Yard he knew. To his horror, in place of the chapel is a factory, and no one knows what happened to the chapel or the minister. Silas talks to Dolly about the disappointment of not finding the chapel and the minister and fears that his dark past might never be cleared. However, Silas agrees with Dolly in that there is goodness and right in this world, as long as he trusts.

Eppie and Aaron are married on a beautiful day with their family present. Nancy's sister and father accompany her to the wedding, for Godfrey is suddenly out of town. The villagers agree that Silas has brought a blessing to himself by taking in a lone, abandoned child. Eppie and Aaron live with Silas on his property, which has been enlarged by Godfrey.

Major Characters

Silas Marner: The protagonist of the novel, a linen-weaver. As a young man in his hometown of Lantern Yard, Silas is accused of killing a town deacon by not being by his side on his deathbed and accused of robbing the deacon's money. When his knife, purposely placed by William Dane, his most trusted friend, in the drawer of the money, is found instead of the money, William wrongly accuses him of stealing the money and killing the deacon. Having been hurt and betrayed by his faith in his religion, Silas leaves his hometown and settles in Raveloe. For fifteen years, he is feared by the townspeople, as he has a reputation of being connected with the devil. He is isolated from the rest of the village, living at the edge of town, working as a weaver, and not attending church. The money he earns from weaving fills him with happiness and satisfaction that is lacking from his lack of human companionship and communication. When his money is stolen, the villagers feel sorry for him. What changes his life is the child that he finds sitting in front of his fireplace, the child he believes is sent from above. Eppie brings him more happiness and joy than he ever received from the gold. He finally experiences reciprocated companionship and affection. Having the girl in his life makes him love and trust. At the end, the villagers agree that he brought a blessing to his life when he took Eppie in as his child. With Eppie in his life, Silas is able to unite his old faith with his new one, and believe that there is goodness and justice in this world.

William Dane: Silas's so-called dear friend in Lantern Yard whom he admired and revered so much. William frames Silas for a robbery he did not commit and is the reason the drawing lots declared Silas guilty of all charges. William deliberately places Silas's knife in the drawer when he steals the money. When Silas is accused of killing the ill deacon for not being by his side on his deathbed, Silas is framed for stealing the money. When Silas leaves Lantern Yard, William marries Silas's former fiancée, Sarah.

Sarah: Silas's fiancée who breaks off their engagement when Silas is declared guilty. She later marries William Dane.

Squire Cass: The most respected and wealthiest man in Raveloe, but a selfish, self-centered man. Known for his temper and his condescending attitude, the Squire does not seem to care very much for his sons, only for his money. He allows his sons to do pretty much whatever they please, because he does not care what happens to them as long as his tenants are not involved.

Dunstan (Dunsey) Cass: The Squire's younger son, a reckless, manipulative man who will do anything or say anything to get what he wants. He is attracted to greed and wealth, and has no conscience whatsoever. Dunsey blackmails Godfrey with the secret of Godfrey's marriage to the drunk Molly and steals poor Silas Marner's money. He is thought to have disappeared somewhere, but his dead body is found drowned in the Stone-pits when drained. Dunsey is found with Silas's money.



Godfrey Cass: The Squire's eldest son, a weak, spineless man. He is Molly's husband and Eppie's father, but refuses to acknowledge them, lest he lose the love of Nancy Lammeter, the woman he truly loves. Only does Godfrey confess his past marriage to Nancy when Dunsey's dead body is found sixteen years later. He and Nancy ask Eppie if she wants to be their daughter and live with them as a lady. Godfrey angrily tells Silas and Eppie that he has a natural claim to Eppie as her father. Eppie's refusal to leave Silas makes Godfrey very angry, but he realizes that her refusal to be with him is his punishment for not taking Eppie in as his daughter sixteen years before. On Eppie's wedding day, Godfrey is conveniently out of town on business. He gives Silas and Eppie more land for Eppie's garden.

Nancy Lammeter: The beautiful younger daughter of Mr. Lammeter and niece to Mrs. Osgood. Godfrey Cass loves her, but she will not marry him until he can prove that he is the man she wants him to be. Nancy is unlike Raveloe women - she actually does chores herself. She tries to make him happy when they are married, but she feels that she somehow is lacking in her duties as a wife. She had adamantly refused to adopt a child after their one child dies in infancy. When Godfrey tells her that Eppie is his child, Nancy willingly agrees to take Eppie in as their own. Nancy tries to persuade Eppie to come live with them at the Red House, but Eppie does not care to be a lady. Nancy buys Eppie her wedding gown.

Molly Farren: The miserable, vengeful wife of Godfrey Cass, who is addicted to opium. Molly is determined to reveal herself to the Squire with her and Godfrey's child in her arms, but she freezes to death before she can expose herself to all of Raveloe high society. The wedding ring she wears is kept by Silas and given to Eppie.

Priscilla Lammeter: Nancy's older sister, a cheerful and wise spinster. She is practical and smart, for she manages their father's farm and dairy. At the end of the novel, Priscilla wishes that Nancy might have had a child to raise as Silas had raised Eppie.

Dolly Winthrop: The kind, patient woman who aids Silas greatly. She first visits him, bringing him a plate of cakes with the initials I.H.S. on them and begging him to at least give up weaving on Sunday. When Silas starts caring for Eppie, Dolly advises him how to care for a child. Later, she is Eppie's godmother and Silas's trusted advisor in religion and life. Silas goes to seek her advice whenever he has a problem, whether it concerns Eppie's welfare or his past. Dolly makes him see that he should trust the world.

Aaron Winthrop: The Winthrops' youngest son. At age seven, he visits Silas Marner with his mother and sings a Christmas carol for him at his mother's request. Later, as a twenty-four-year-old, Aaron is Eppie's suitor. He offers to help her and Silas make a garden. He and Eppie marry.

Eppie: The biological daughter of Molly Farren and Godfrey Cass, but raised as Silas Marner's daughter. She enters Silas's life when she follows a bright light to the door of his cottage and straight in front of the fireplace. Silas and the townspeople think she has been sent to Silas from Him above. Her full name is 'Hephzibah,' after Silas's mother and sister. She is very beautiful, with blond hair and fair skin. Eppie brings so much



goodness, warmth, and joy to Silas's life that he finally sees what Dolly has been telling him all along - to trust and to love. Eppie dearly loves Silas, the only family she has ever known, and will not leave him when Godfrey and Nancy ask her to live with them. Eppie does not care to be a lady; she tells them that she wants to live with Silas and marry a workingman, Aaron Winthrop. A married Eppie declares that she is perfectly happy with Silas at her side.

Minor Characters

Jem Rodney: The Raveloe poacher. Silas at first suspects him of stealing his gold.

Sally Oates: The wife of the town cobbler. Silas passes by their house and sees that Sally is suffering from heart-ache and dropsy. He gives her medicine made from herbs. Silas's knowledge of herbs lead to the villagers' suspicion that he knows charms and curses.

Bryce: Dunsey sells Wildfire to him. Bryce tells Godfrey of the news that Dunsey killed the horse before he paid for it.

Mrs. Osgood: The sister of Mr. Lammeter and aunt to Nancy and Priscilla.

Mr. Lammeter: Nancy and Priscilla's father.

Mr. Macey: A respected working-class man. He visits Silas soon after the gold is stolen and tells him that his money will turn up. Later, an elderly Mr. Macey witnesses the bridal party and is glad to see that his words came true. Mr. Macey also has a brother, Solomon, who is a fiddler and lives in another village.

Mr. Snell: The landlord of the Rainbow. He recalls that a peddler had come to Raveloe carrying a tinderbox like the one found outside Silas's cottage.

the peddler: A suspect in the mystery of the stolen gold because of his tinderbox.

Fowler: Squire Cass's tenant. He had paid his dues to Godfrey, who'd given the money to Dunsey.

Ben Winthrop: The town wheelwright. He is husband to Dolly, and father to Aaron. He is a jovial, happy man.

the Gunn sisters: The unmarried, plain Gunn sisters find Nancy to be very pretty and charming despite her rough hands. They are offended by Priscilla's blunt words that they are ugly.

Mr. Crackenthorp: The town minister.

Dr. Kimble: The town apothecary, although not a real doctor. He is Godfrey's uncle.

Objects/Places

Raveloe: The name of the village where the novel is set. Upper-class members of society in Raveloe include Squire Cass's family, the Osgoods, the Kimbles, and the Lammeters; the working-class villagers include the Winthrops, Mr. Macey, Mr. Snell, and the butcher. The villagers generally enjoy themselves excessively; they often have parties and gather at the Rainbow.

The Stone-pits: The deep body of water next to Silas's cottage. The villagers try not to walk near the edge of the water, lest they might fall in and drown. Dunsey does, however, drown in the Stone-pits after he steals Silas's money. Sixteen years after Dunsey steals the money, Godfrey drains the Stone-pits for land and Dunsey's skeleton is found.

Lantern Yard: Silas's hometown. He was born here and he had a happy life, even once engaged. Although he was happy here, he is later forced to leave because he is falsely accused of stealing. Thirty years after he leaves Lantern Yard, Silas returns with Eppie to see if he can talk with the chapel minister and clear his name. The Lantern Yard Silas knew no longer exists; in its place is a grim, dirty factory with no chapel.

Silas's gold: The gold that Silas receives from his weaving. He hoards his pile of money and loves to look and touch his gold. It is his one companion in Raveloe. When his money is stolen, Silas is devastated and becomes even more isolated until he finds Eppie in his home. The little girl takes the place of the gold in Silas's heart. When Eppie is all grown up and the money is returned to him, Silas believes that Eppie has brought him more love and joy than the money could ever have given him.

Wildfire: Godfrey's beloved horse. He is forced to sell the horse when he has to pay up his father's money. Against Godfrey's wishes, Dunsey takes the horse to sell and finds a buyer, but kills it accidentally on a stake before he can get the money.

Godfrey's whip: Dunsey carries Godfrey's whip with him when he is walking back to Raveloe from the horse hunt. The whip gives him a powerful feeling. The whip has Godfrey's name engraved on it. Later, when Dunsey's body is found in the Stone-pits, the villagers also find Godfrey's whip.

The Rainbow: The local pub in Raveloe, owned by Mr. Snell. The working-class men gather here often to talk with each other and gossip about the high-society class of Raveloe. Silas comes here to tell the villagers that his gold has been stolen.

The tinderbox: The villagers find a tinderbox near Silas's cottage and believe that the robber who'd taken Silas's gold must have left the box behind. Mr. Snell recalls that a peddler had recently visited Raveloe, carrying a tinderbox.

Dolly's lard-cakes: Dolly brings Silas some lardcakes she'd made. They have the initials I.H.S. on them. Although Dolly herself cannot read what the letters say, she

knows that the letters are associated with the church, and that fact alone is good enough for her. Silas recognizes the letters but does not comprehend that they might symbolize the church.

Eppie's garden: Eppie asks Silas if they can have a garden in their yard. Aaron offers to help them build the garden, as he is a gardener and can get soil from the Red House. At the end of the novel, Eppie and Silas have a beautiful garden on the land that Godfrey has given them.

Silas's knowledge of herbs: Silas inherits his mother's knowledge of medicinal herbs. When he saves Sally Oates's life by administering a medicine made from an unusual herb, the townspeople question if he is devil-sent.

Quotes

Quote 1: "It came to pass that those scattered linen-weavers - emigrants from the town into the country - were to the last regarded as aliens by their rustic neighbours, and usually contracted the eccentric habits which belong to a state of loneliness" Chapter 1, pg. 10

Quote 2: His fainting fits were seen as messages from the Holy One: once he had fallen into an unconscious trance of some sort, which made it clear that he was a "brother selected for a peculiar discipline" Chapter 1, pg. 15

Quote 3: When the church drawing lots declared Silas Marner guilty, Silas told the church that William had set him up and declared that "there is no God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent" Chapter 1, pg. 20

Quote 4: To Silas, "the Power in which he had vainly trusted among the streets and in the prayer-meetings, was very far away from this land in which he had taken refuge, where men lived in careless abundance, knowing and needing nothing of that trust, which, for him, had been turned to bitterness" Chapter 1, pg. 23

Quote 5: Dolly advises that "it's niver too late to turn over a new leaf, and if you've niver had no church, there's no telling the good it'll do you" Chapter 10, pg. 102

Quote 6: Silas is relieved when Dolly leaves: "her simple view of life and its comforts, by which she had tried to cheer him, was only like a report of unknown objects, which his imagination could not fashion" Chapter 10, pg. 105

Quote 7: Silas feels that the child is a "message come to him from that far-off life" Chapter 12, pg. 136

Quote 8: "I can't part with it, I can't let it go...It's come to me - I've a right to keep it", Silas says feelingly. Chapter 13, pg. 140

Quote 9: He knows that he should reveal that Molly was his wife and that he should claim the child and raise it, but he does not have the "moral courage enough to contemplate that active renunciation of Nancy as possible for him: he had only conscience and heart enough to make him for ever uneasy under the weakness that forbade the renunciation" Chapter 13, pg. 142

Quote 10: Silas feels an emotion so different from any other emotion he has ever felt when he holds the little girl; "thought and feeling were so confused within him, that if he had tried to give them utterance, he could have only said that the child was come instead of the gold - that the gold had turned into the child" Chapter 14, pg. 150

Quote 11: "The gold had kept his thoughts in an ever-repeated circle, leading to nothing beyond itself; but Eppie was an object compacted of changes and hopes that forced his



thoughts onward, and carried them far away from their old eager pacing towards the same blank limit - carried them away to the new things that would come with the coming years" Chapter 14, pg. 153

Quote 12: "There was love between him and the child that blent them into one, and there was love between the child and the world" Chapter 14, pg. 159

Quote 13: "He would never forget it; he would see that it was well provided for. That was a father's duty" Chapter 15, pg. 162

Quote 14: Silas reflects on how his life has changed since Eppie entered his life: he is now viewed as an "exceptional person, whose claims of neighbourly help were not to be matched in Raveloe" Chapter 16, pg. 170

Quote 15: Silas agrees with Dolly; he declares that "there's good in this world - I've a feeling o' that now; and it makes a man feel as there's a good more nor he can see, in spite o' the trouble and the wickedness. That drawing o' the lots is dark; but the child was sent to me" Chapter 16, pg. 175

Quote 16: Silas says reflectively, "The money doesn't [take no hold on me]. I wonder if it ever could again - I doubt it might, if I lost you, Eppie. I might come to think I was forsaken again, and lose the feeling that God was good to me" Chapter 19, pg. 199

Quote 17: Silas says, "God gave her to me because you turned your back on her, and He looks upon her as mine; youv'e no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in" Chapter 19, pg. 203

Quote 18: Eppie declares that "we've been used to be happy together every day, and I can't think o' no happiness without him. And he says he'd nobody in the world till I was sent to him, and he'd have nothing when I was gone. And he's took care of me and loved me from the first, and I'll cleave to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me" Chapter 19, pg. 206

Quote 19: Godfrey and Nancy agree that it would be useless to try to separate Eppie from Silas, for as Nancy says, "It wouldn't be right to want to force her to come to us against her will. We can't alter her bringing up and what's come of it" Chapter 20, pg. 209

Quote 20: Silas says, "Since the time the child was sent to me and I've come to love her as myself, I've had light enough to trusten by; and now she says she'll never leave me, I think I shall trusten till I die" Chapter 20, pg. 215

Topic Tracking: Light

Light 1: Silas's former home, Lantern Yard, is seemingly a warm, kind town, a town where Silas is well liked and respected. His devotion to religion and friendship with William Dane are what Silas enjoys most in Lantern Yard.

Light 2: The gold Silas hoards gives him satisfaction and joy, but the gold is a false cover for genuine happiness. He takes pleasure in counting his money, the only companion he has. The gold is a false friend.

Light 3: Attracted by a bright light, the little girl follows it straight to Silas's cottage and through his open door. The light enchants her and she is immediately comfortable in front of the fireplace. Light and warmth are associated with the girl.

Light 4: Silas thinks that his gold is returned to him, but to his amazement, he finds that the gold is not his money but the golden hair of a sleeping child. He actually marvels at the sight of the little blond girl, for he thinks that she looks like his sister, and loves the sight of her. His tenderness for the girl is genuine.

Light 5: Silas's love for Eppie is reciprocated. For the first time in his life, Silas feels love, warmth, and happiness. His emotions are far deeper than his emotions for his gold. Unlike the gold, Eppie can return his love and affection.

Light 6: At age eighteen, Eppie is a beautiful, radiant young woman whose affections for the people she knows and trusts illuminate in those around her. Not only do her feelings reveal her warm and giving nature, her blond good looks also emphasize her goodness.

Light 7: Eppie's love enables Silas to appreciate their life together in Raveloe, remember his old religion, and unite them in a coherent vision that provides him with an optimistic outlook. The good feelings in Eppie transfer to Silas, who benefits from Eppie's warm and giving nature. Silas, too, has become a friendly, generous person.

Light 8: Silas declares to Eppie that he would not exchange her for his money. Eppie has turned his life around for the better, and he is grateful to God for giving Eppie to him. Her love has warmed his spirit and his soul.

Light 9: The Lantern Yard Silas and Eppie visit is not the Lantern Yard he once knew. A grim-looking, depressing, dirty place lives up to the false meaning of its name. A town that would falsely accuse an innocent man of stealing has to be corrupt and base, and Silas is horrified and disgusted at the change in Lantern Yard.

Light 10: Silas declares that Eppie's avowal to stay with him has given him reason to trust and love the world despite its evils. Her pure and just outlook on religion has secured his trust on her and the world. Eppie's love restores trust to Silas.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs

Raveloe Customs 1: Silas Marner, a linen-weaver, comes from a town into the country. His lifestyle is unusual to the villagers of Raveloe. Weavers, for one thing, are uncommon in England. The villagers believe him to be connected with the devil, for his knowledge of herbs is unmatched by anyone in Raveloe.

Raveloe Customs 2: The townspeople also think that Silas's unusual lifestyle spent in solitude and isolation is odd. He never wants to socialize with anybody in Raveloe, nor does he seem to care that he has a reputation of being a repulsive recluse.

Raveloe Customs 3: Because Silas has an extensive knowledge of herbs - he saves Sally Oates's life by administering a medicine made by a special herb - the villagers assume that he knows charms and curses as well. His refusals to cure people of illnesses and curses make the people believe that he is connected to the Dark side, for if he were a Dark supporter, he would not want to share his knowledge of the Dark arts with them.

Raveloe Customs 4: The social classes of Raveloe have their own set of activities: the working-class men gather at the Rainbow while upper-class members enjoy themselves at lavish parties given by the wealthiest families in Raveloe. Both classes, however, talk about the same subject - Raveloe news and memories.

Raveloe Customs 5: Dolly only knows religion the way Raveloe preaches. Her knowledge of the church, its teachings, and its customs is limited, but she is devoted and pious through and through. Silas sees that Dolly, as with other Raveloe villagers, is representative of the Raveloe church and appreciates her kindness, but does not agree with her view of religion.

Raveloe Customs 6: The upper-class society of Raveloe always congregates at Squire Cass's Red House for the New Year's Eve party. Godfrey expects Nancy Lammeter to be there, as her family is one of the most prominent and wealthiest in town. Raveloe high society expects its members to act and think a certain way - the way the members have been brought up and raised.

Raveloe Customs 7: Dolly advises Silas to have Eppie christened, as babies always are in Raveloe. Silas questions the christening, but he goes along with the idea because Dolly assures him that christening Eppie would do her good. Silas's agreement to christen Eppie shows that he is beginning to accept Raveloe customs.

Raveloe Customs 8: Eighteen-year-old Eppie and Silas are seen leaving the town church after the Sunday service. Silas has been devotedly attending church services since Eppie's christening. That he takes Eppie to church as well shows that he accepts Raveloe customs for both his and Eppie's good.

Raveloe Customs 9: Silas smokes a pipe daily; the sages of Raveloe have recommended that smoking would benefit his health. Silas's daily habit of smoking shows that he listens to and adheres to the local Raveloe customs.



Topic Tracking: Religion

Religion 1: The social center of Raveloe is its church. There, the villagers congregate and live by the preachings of God. Religion influences Raveloe inhabitants' lives: they work according to their religion, they think according to their religion, and they act according to their religion.

Religion 2: In Lantern Yard, Silas is known for his devotion to his chapel and religion. The people believe that his fainting fits are messages sent from God. Silas trusts and reveres everyone and everything involved with his church that he fails to see the faults in people - especially William Dane.

Religion 3: That Silas is considered guilty by his beloved church, by his friend William Dane, and his fiancée Sarah, makes him lose faith in what he believes in and who he trusts. Silas feels persecuted by everyone in Lantern Yard and believes that there must be darkness and injustice in this world, if he, an innocent man, can be found guilty. He feels as if his God has deceived him.

Religion 4: Shunning the careless attitude of Raveloe villagers, Silas feels that his God hides from him. He eventually starts to feel resentment and bitterness toward religion and God.

Religion 5: Silas fails to recognize the connection between religion and Christmas when Dolly visits him and begs him to attend church. He had not been taught the religious meaning of the Christmas holidays as a man in Lantern Yard, so he does not know why church bells ring on Sundays nor why Christmas carols are sung. Before Dolly leaves, she begs Silas not to work on the loom on Sundays, as he always does.

Religion 6: Silas feels that the child he finds in his home must be a message sent from a distant memory of his dead sister. Looking at the child in his arms, he believes that God sent her to him at a time when he needed companionship and love the most.

Religion 7: Silas is doubtful about Eppie's christening, but he declares to Dolly that he will abide by the Raveloe church to do whatever is needed for Eppie's welfare. Silas's wish to set things right for Eppie shows that he is slowly learning to accept a new set of religious beliefs for the good of another human being.

Religion 8: Silas is seen leaving the town church after Sunday services. Sixteen years have passed since he had Eppie christened, but Silas still is devoted to the Raveloe church. He has accepted the Raveloe religion for Eppie and for himself.

Religion 9: Silas and Dolly talk about the robbery in Lantern Yard. They both agree that there is darkness and evil in this world, but they also recommence that there must be morality and humanity as well, for Eppie would not have been sent to him if there weren't.

Religion 10: Silas angrily tells Godfrey that God recognizes Eppie as his daughter because Godfrey abandoned her years ago and Silas took her in as his own. That Godfrey turned Eppie away at a time when she needed him shows how unfeeling and unkind he was to her and how Silas brought a blessing to himself by taking her in.

Religion 11: Silas sadly tells Dolly that maybe his name in Lantern Yard may never be cleared, now that the chapel or the minister are no longer there. He fears that his past will always remain dark, but Dolly tells him that for every injustice is integrity and righteousness.

Topic Tracking: Trust

Trust 1: Silas does not see that William Dane is not the pious, giving man Silas thinks he is. Blinded by his faith in his friends and his religion, Silas sees only the best in all people. His friendship with William is genuine and pure, unlike William. Silas trusts William explicitly.

Trust 2: Betrayed by William's false accusation and Sarah's broken engagement, Silas feels that he can never trust anyone nor his religion again. He leaves Lantern Yard to escape all the injustices Lantern Yard has brought upon him.

Trust 3: In Raveloe, Silas feels that God hides from him. Feeling incredibly betrayed, and that God has wronged him, Silas is bitter in trusting his religion again.

Trust 4: Silas leaves his door unlocked because he trusts that no one would be outside walking in this snowy, misty weather and therefore would not come in and steal his gold. However, Dunsey takes advantage of Silas's trusting nature and shamelessly runs off with Silas's gold.

Trust 5: Silas rushes off to town to report his stolen money. He does not wish for anyone to get punished, and all he wants is his gold returned. His faith in people makes him believe that people will return his money, because it is the right thing to do.

Trust 6: The townspeople trust Silas's explanation of the stolen money, for they feel sorry for him and pity that he has been robbed. That the villagers trust Silas indicates to him that people are capable of trusting and feeling.

Trust 7: Godfrey has faith that Silas can take care of the little girl, which makes him happy. Entrusting his daughter to Silas, Godfrey is free to concentrate on winning Nancy's love. He feels comfortable leaving the girl in Silas's care and has no qualms in acknowledging the girl as his own daughter.

Trust 8: Silas trusts Dolly's advice when caring for children, so he goes along with her idea to have Eppie christened. He is doubtful of the idea, but Dolly's conviction that good will come to Eppie once she is christened assures him.

Trust 9: Silas believes that Eppie's love has made him accept the power of trust again. Now that Eppie is staying with Silas, Silas knows that he can trust religion and the world. He must trust a God that sent Eppie to him.

Part 1, Chapter 1

"It came to pass that those scattered linen-weavers - emigrants from the town into the country - were to the last regarded as aliens by their rustic neighbours, and usually contracted the eccentric habits which belong to a state of loneliness." Chapter 1, pg. 10.

Silas Marner, a linen-weaver, is distrusted and disliked by the people of Raveloe, the village where Silas now resides. Silas's home is located on the edge of the village and next to a body of water referred to as the Stone-pits. Drawn to the unusual sound of Silas's weaving, the young village boys would sneak to his house and peep into the windows to see the machinery and Silas would turn around and gaze at them fiercely for interrupting his work. The young Raveloe boys are not the only ones whose minds are piqued with curiosity and mystery of Silas's abilities; the adults themselves believe that Silas has magical powers.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 1

Raveloe is a country village where its inhabitants stay true to traditional customs and ideas. The villagers take pride in their farms, fields, and grounds. Isolated from nearby towns, Raveloe townspeople are content to stay within the village. The social center is the church and the churchyard in the middle of town.

Topic Tracking: Religion 1

Silas Marner has been living in Raveloe for the past fifteen years, and he still is considered an outsider to Raveloe. His home region and his way of living are uncharacteristic to Raveloe standards, for the town where he lived is different from the countryside village where he now resides. He has never invited anyone to his home; he never socializes with anyone. All the young ladies of Raveloe are convinced that he is not in the least interested in marrying one of them, and he never attends church.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 2

Jem Rodney, the town poacher (mole-catcher), convinces the townspeople that Silas has strange powers from the time that he sees Silas blacking out into unconsciousness one time. The townspeople wonder at his extensive knowledge of herbs and charms; they were intrigued by Silas's ability to cure Sally Oates's heart trouble with herbs.

The town's attitude toward Silas does not change as the years pass by; the only thing that is worth noting to the townspeople is that Silas has somehow acquired a pile of money.

Before he had come to Raveloe, Silas Marner was a respected young man in his town of Lantern Yard, well liked and respected for his devotion to his religion and his church.

Topic Tracking: Light 1

His fainting fits were seen as messages from the Holy One: once he had fallen into an unconscious trance of some sort, it was made it clear that he was a "brother selected for a peculiar discipline" Chapter 1, pg. 15. Silas had inherited from his mother knowledge of medicinal herbs, but he was sure the herbs would not work without prayer. He often took delight in searching fields for these exotic herbs.

What he loved about Lantern Yard was that he had a very close companion and trusted friend in the older William Dane. The two of them were so close that the Lantern Yard people referred to them as "David and Jonathan." They shared a love for religion and its sentiments: sin, salvation, and redemption. Silas liked his good friend William Dane so much that he failed to see any faults in him; Silas's inexperienced, naive and trusting nature led him to believe that William could do no wrong.

Topic Tracking: Trust 1

Topic Tracking: Religion 2

Silas was engaged to a woman named Sarah; the delay to their marriage was caused by low funds. It was during the time of their engagement when William declared that Silas' fit was a visitation by Satan. Silas, deeply hurt by his friend's accusation, was interrogated and ostracized when William later accused him of stealing money from the senior deacon of the church and killing the ill deacon by not being by his side on his deathbed. William plotted so that Silas's own knife was found in place of the missing money, and would not support Silas's pleas that he was innocent of all charges. Knowing that William purposely planted the knife in the spot of the missing money, Silas was convinced that his name would be cleared by God's will. When the church drawing lots declared Silas Marner guilty, Silas told the church that William had set him up and declared that "there is no God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent." Chapter 1, pg. 20. Shattered in his belief of his church and his friends, Silas knew that he could not stay in Lantern Yard any longer - especially after the marriage of Sarah and William Dane.

Topic Tracking: Trust 2

Topic Tracking: Religion 3

Chapter 2

Silas has come to live in Raveloe because it is so unlike Lantern Yard: the townspeople of Raveloe are lazy and seem to take pleasure in living excessively. They care about good times more than anything else.

To Silas, *"the Power in which he had vainly trusted among the streets and in the prayer-meetings, was very far away from this land in which he had taken refuge, where men lived in careless abundance, knowing and needing nothing of that trust, which, for him, had been turned to bitterness."* Chapter 1, pg. 23. Silas feels that his God hides from him.

Topic Tracking: Religion 4

Topic Tracking: Trust 3

Silas hoards the money he earns from his weaving. He earns more money in Raveloe than he had previously in Lantern Yard. Silas's gold fills him with more happiness and satisfaction than anything or anyone else in Raveloe.

Topic Tracking: Light 2

He remembers the time he saved Sally Oates' life. He had been walking to town when he passed by the cobbler's house and saw Sally Oates, the cobbler's wife, screaming and writhing in pain. Having recognized her symptoms as heart disease and dropsy because they led to his mother's death, he knew what could relieve her pain and gave her a medicine made from a special herb called foxglove. Once news of Silas's knowledge of herbs was out, the townspeople immediately assumed he knew curses and charms.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 3

Irritated by the throng of people wanting cures for illnesses and curses, Silas drove people away with his angry refusals. He then became more isolated when people, believing that he deliberately set curses, stayed away from him. It is no wonder why Silas enjoys watching his pile of money accumulate, for his money is his only form of companion. Silas hides his money in an iron pot in a spot underneath the floor where his loom is placed. He continues his way of living, weaving and hoarding money, without real human companionship and expression of feeling, until even he feels that his life has no meaning.

Chapter 3

Squire Cass is the most revered and respected man in town. The townspeople live in excess, enjoying themselves at parties thrown by Squire Cass at his home, the Red House, and by Mr. Osgood, at his place. Squire Cass's younger son, Dunstan (called Dunsey) is notoriously known for his gambling and his recklessness, and is an all-around selfish, contemptuous, and rude person, while Godfrey, Dunstan's older brother, is a good-natured, honest man. The people of Raveloe fear that Godfrey will become vile under Dunsey's influence, especially if he were to lose the love of Nancy Lammeter, one of the most beautiful and wealthiest daughters of Raveloe and the woman he had been courting.

One November day of Silas's fifteenth year in Raveloe, Dunsey and Godfrey are arguing. When Godfrey asks Dunsey to pay back the money the Squire's tenant had given Godfrey, who'd given the money to Dunsey, Dunsey blackmails Godfrey. He tells him to pay the money himself, or else he would tell their father about Godfrey's illicit former marriage to Molly Farren, a poor woman. Rather than have his marriage broadcast to their father and the town, Godfrey feels that he has no choice but to come up with the money himself, although he has no money to his name and does not know how he will come up with a hundred pounds. Dunsey suggests that Godfrey sell his horse, Wildfire, for the money. An angry Godfrey tells him that he (Godfrey) might as well as tell their father about his marriage, for Molly has been threatening to come forward with the news herself. The more Godfrey thinks about telling his father, the more he does not want to come forward - he decides that he cannot risk losing his inheritance and the love of Nancy Lammeter. He also cannot risk being the disinherited son of a squire. Godfrey is left to allow Dunsey to sell his horse, Wildfire, after the hunting race. Godfrey needs stability, which Squire Cass's home lacks after his mother's death, and Godfrey is sure that Nancy Lammeter would bring permanent love and order to his home. He fears tomorrow's hunting race for two reasons: that Dunsey is riding Wildfire, and that the race is held near the town Batherley, where Molly lives.

Chapter 4

Dunsey heads for the hunt when he passes by the Stone-pits and then Silas Marner's home. He wonders to himself why he or Godfrey had asked the old miser for a loan. He decides that he would rather see Godfrey sweat out the deal of having to pay the money himself than suggest asking Marner, and he still wants the satisfaction of having Godfrey's horse to sell. A man named Bryce buys Wildfire for one hundred and twenty pounds, but he will only pay the full amount when he sees that Wildfire is delivered to his stables safely. Following the hunt, instead of riding the horse over to Bryce's, Dunsey takes a jump on the horse and kills it on a stake. Because no one has seen him fall, Dunsey sets off for home without having to tell anyone at the hunt of the horse's death. As the weather has turned cold and misty, he carries Godfrey's whip for protection, when he passes by Silas Marner's house and sees gleams of light shining from it. With thought of Silas's money in his mind, Dunsey decides to ask the old man about a loan. He thinks of a plan to get him inside Silas's cottage - asking Silas if he could borrow a lantern - when he realizes that the cottage is empty, for Silas has gone somewhere. Dunsey is able to enter the cottage because Silas has left the door unlocked. The meat cooking on the fire shows Dunsey, however, that Silas will be returning home soon, but he thinks that the weather might have delayed or even killed the old man by obstructing his view of the road and the Stone-pits. Dunsey easily finds Silas's precious money in a hole in the floor and hurries out of Silas's house into the dark evening.

Chapter 5

Silas is walking home, thinking about his hot supper of meat, which Priscilla Lammeter had given him for the linen he had made her. He had gone to town to buy a piece of twine that he would need for his weaving the next day. He had left the door to his home unlocked because no one had ever attempted to rob him before in all the years he lived in Raveloe. Certainly the bad weather would prevent anyone from walking out so far as his home to steal his money.

Topic Tracking: Trust 4

The very thought of his money gives him reason to look at his pile and admire it while eating his supper. To his great horror and despair, he finds the money gone. Terribly frightened that his eyes might be deceiving him, he starts searching his house. When he at last admits that the money is not in his house, he lets out a wild cry of desperation and desolation. Silas decides to go to town to report the robbery. He does not want to punish anyone for the crime, for all he wants is his money back.

Topic Tracking: Trust 5

Chapter 6

The working-class townspeople are gathered at the Rainbow, while the upper-class are enjoying themselves at Mrs. Osgood's birthday party. The groups of men gathered at the Rainbow are discussing the subject of a cow, which the butcher had chopped up the previous day. The subject of the cow leads to its ownership by Mr. Lammeter and general conversation of the Lammeter family and their origin in Raveloe. Mr. Macey, the town fiddler, recalls that Mr. Lammeter's father had settled in the Warrens part of Raveloe, bringing with him his sheep, and had married the sister of Mr. Osgood.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 4

Chapter 7

Silas is suddenly spotted in the Rainbow, to the townspeople's surprise: they think at first that he is a ghost. He tells the group that his money has been stolen, and he accuses Jem Rodney. When Jem denies that he had taken Silas's money, the townspeople demand that Silas tell them the events leading up to the theft. When he finishes his story, he apologizes to Jem. The townspeople immediately feel sorry for Silas, who is clearly devastated.

Topic Tracking: Trust 6

Chapter 8

Godfrey, as with other Raveloe townspeople, is eager to discuss Silas's stolen money. He goes to the Stone-pits and Silas's cottage, where the townspeople agree that it would be hard to solve the mystery. The rain from the previous night has washed away all footprints in that area, except for a tinderbox lying there. Mr. Snell, the landlord of the Rainbow, remembers that a peddler who had come to Raveloe earlier that month carried a tinderbox. Other townspeople remember the peddler, but they all think that the idea of the peddler stealing Silas's money is useless, as Silas generally ignores the activities of the people around him and would not notice if the peddler were lurking around his house. Worried about Dunsey's disappearance because of the money from Wildfire, Godfrey decides to go to Batherley himself to see what is taking Dunsey so long to sell Wildfire. On the way to Batherley, he encounters Bryce, who informs Godfrey that Dunsey had killed his horse. Not surprised as to Dunsey's disappearance when he hears of Wildfire's death, Godfrey chides himself for allowing Dunsey to sell the horse alone. Rather than have Dunsey tell their father the whole story, he decides to come clean with the truth. Later, Godfrey hopes that if Dunsey does not return within a few days, their father might not care about the money.

Chapter 9

Godfrey talks with his father the next morning, admitting that Dunsey had killed Wildfire before he could get paid. Squire Cass is enraged to hear that his tenant, Fowler, had paid his share, but had given the money to Godfrey, who in turn had given it to Dunsey instead of the squire. The squire scolds Godfrey mercilessly for having the gall to give the money to the reckless and ruthless Dunsey. When the squire asks why Godfrey had given Dunsey the money, Godfrey after some hesitation replies that the money is a part of a trivial matter between them. Squire Cass tells his son that he does not have the courage to ask for Nancy Lammeter's hand in marriage, and snidely offers to ask her for him. Godfrey replies uneasily that he can ask Nancy on his own and asks his father not to mention their conversation to anyone else. Squire Cass firmly tells him that he will do whatever he wants.

Chapter 10

Dunsey's disappearance does not concern anybody, for he had disappeared before for a period of six weeks. The mystery of Silas's stolen money is still argued by the townspeople: some believe that the thief is the peddler, others are certain that the mystery is unexplainable. While the townspeople argue, Silas is grieving over the loss of his precious gold, feeling even more lonely and isolated than before.

The townspeople feel more kindly toward the crotchety man after they hear of his great loss. Mr. Macey visits him, advising him to buy a new Sunday suit and attend church, for church will make him feel good. Next to visit Silas is Mrs. Dolly Winthrop, the wife of Ben Winthrop, the town wheelwright. Dolly is a good-hearted, kind, and patient woman, a woman who is loved and admired by all in Raveloe. She and her youngest son, Aaron, bring a plate of lard-cakes for Silas. The cakes have the initials I.H.S. on them. Dolly always makes the initials on her cakes even though she cannot read them and has no idea what they mean. She knows that the letters are associated with the good name of the church, and that fact alone is good enough for her to put them on all her cakes. Dolly pities that Silas does not attend church and that he works even on Sundays. She, too, advises him to attend church and is surprised to hear that he did not go to church - Silas had attended a chapel. Dolly advises that "it's niver too late to turn over a new leaf, and if you've niver had no church, there's no telling the good it'll do you." Chapter 10, pg. 102. Aaron sings a Christmas carol at his mother's request, but Dolly's efforts in convincing Silas to attend church is useless, for Silas does not recognize that the Christmas carol is religious nor does he associate the ringing of the church bells with Sunday service. As Dolly and Aaron prepare to leave, Dolly begs Silas to give up weaving on Sunday. Silas is relieved when Dolly leaves, "her simple view of life and its comforts, by which she had tried to cheer him, was only like a report of unknown objects, which his imagination could not fashion." Chapter 10, pg. 105.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 5

Topic Tracking: Religion 5

On Christmas Day, Silas spends the day alone and sad, while Raveloe is full of happy, cheerful people singing and laughing at parties and in church. The biggest party of the season is not the Christmas party, but the glamorous New Year's Eve celebration Squire Cass throws. Members of high society of Raveloe and the neighboring town of Tarley congregate at the party. Godfrey Cass is looking forward to spending time with Nancy Lammeter there.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 6

Chapter 11

Beautiful Nancy Lammeter is chagrined to see that Godfrey Cass is waiting for her arrival at the Red House for the New Year's party. She had made it clear that she did not want to marry him, let alone anybody else. In the ladies' bedroom, Nancy's aunt, Mrs. Osgood, introduces her to the plain but fashionable Gunn sisters, who find Nancy to be exceptionally pretty when she is all dressed up, with the exception of her hands, which look as if they have been heavily involved with chores. The Gunns are surprised that Nancy is so unrefined and without class, as she is the daughter of a rich country gentleman. Nancy's elder sister, Priscilla, enters the room and immediately offends the Gunns and Mrs. Osgood with her bluntness. Priscilla refers to the Gunns as ugly, and cheerfully admits that she is plain and ugly as well. She is resigned to her life as a spinster, but she tells Nancy to marry someone. At Nancy's insistence, Priscilla and Nancy wear the same dress. Nancy's place at dinner is between Godfrey Cass and Mr. Crackenthorp, the rector. She wonders fleetingly what it would feel like to be mistress of the Red House as Godfrey's wife. Mr. Crackenthorp remarks at how beautiful Nancy is, and Squire Cass and Dr. Kimble tease her. Both Nancy and Godfrey are uncomfortable with the table's attention, even more so as Godfrey is forced to ask Nancy to dance. As the dancing begins, a group of privileged villagers are allowed in as spectators. The villagers gossip about Godfrey and Nancy's relationship, and speculate as to why Nancy and Godfrey leave the dance early. They leave the dance not for a romantic interlude, but a rip in Nancy's dress. Accompanying Nancy to a side parlor where they wait for Priscilla to help Nancy with her dress, Godfrey asks if she can forgive him for the horrid things he has done to hurt her. Nancy is cold to him in return.

Chapter 12

While the Red House party is going on, Molly, Godfrey's wife, is walking to Raveloe with their child in her arms. She plans to crash Squire Cass's New Year's Eve party so that she can reveal that she is Godfrey's wife and that the child is Godfrey's to the Squire himself. Ever since Godfrey had told her that he would rather die than admit her as his wife, she has been planning to avenge his words. Exposing herself at the Squire's party would be a double humiliation to Godfrey - one, because she is his wife, dressed in rags, and two, because she is heavily drugged. She has been taking opium to relieve her emotional and physical pain in the cold, snowy weather. Unable to walk any longer because of her craving for opium and her weak, exhausted state, Molly drops onto the snow and falls into a deep sleep, which turns into death. The child in her arms cries for her mother when Molly's limp, lifeless hands allow the child to escape her mother's grasp and is attracted to a bright light on the ground. Following the light to Silas Marner's cottage, where the fire gives off the light she sees, the little girl walks through the open door, settles herself easily on the hearth and falls asleep promptly.

Topic Tracking: Light 3

Silas has left the door open at alternate times, as he has made it a habit of checking to see if his gold has somehow returned. He does not see the child enter his home because he is in one of his fits. When he regains consciousness and closes the door, to his astonishment, he sees gold on the floor in front of the fireplace. The gold seems to be larger and brighter than usual; to his deep disappointment, he sees that the gold is not money but the golden hair of a sleeping child.

Topic Tracking: Light 4

Remembering that his younger sister, who had died when he was a boy, looked very similar to this sleeping child also makes him recall memories of his childhood and his home in Lantern Yard. Silas feels that the child is a "message come to him from that far-off life" Chapter 12, pg. 136, and loves her immediately.

Topic Tracking: Religion 6

She is indeed his first connection to Lantern Yard since he arrived in Raveloe. When the child awakens, Silas comforts her cries by holding her in his arms and feeding her. He takes off her wet boots, which tell him that she had been walking in the snow and that someone must have brought her there. Going outside with the child, Silas finds the body of Molly, the child's mother.

Chapter 13

Godfrey is watching Nancy from a distance at the party when he is startled by the figure of Silas Marner, carrying a child. Immediately, Godfrey knows that the child is his and that his dark secret has come to haunt him. When Silas says that there is a dead woman lying on the snow near his house, Godfrey fears that his wife might not be dead as Silas believes. The people remark at how pretty the child is, and offer to take the child off Silas's hands, but Silas staunchly refuses. "I can't part with it, I can't let it go...It's come to me - I've a right to keep it," Silas says with feeling Chapter 13, pg. 140. Dr. Kimble and Mr. Crackenthorp rush to Silas's cottage, while Godfrey goes to fetch Dolly Winthrop. Dolly tells him that he isn't needed, as he is not wearing heavy shoes, but Godfrey insists that he wants to stay.

Walking around Silas's cottage, Godfrey wonders what his next action should be. He knows that he should reveal that Molly was his wife and that he should claim the child and raise it, but he does not have the "moral courage enough to contemplate that active renunciation of Nancy as possible for him: he had only conscience and heart enough to make him for ever uneasy under the weakness that forbade the renunciation." Chapter 13, pg. 142.

All Godfrey can think about is the possibility or impossibility of marrying Nancy Lammeter if Molly lives or dies. Dr. Kimble comes out of Silas's cottage and tells him that the woman has been dead for a while. Godfrey sees the face of his dead wife one last time, then turns his attention to the child in Silas's arms. The child looks and evokes a serene, calm presence that awes Godfrey. Although Godfrey feels somewhat jealous when he looks at the little girl in Silas's arms, the little girl only has eyes for Silas. When Silas informs Godfrey that he would like to keep the little girl as his own, Godfrey gives him money for the girl's care.

When Godfrey returns to the party, he thinks about how he can win Nancy's heart by telling her all that she wants to hear, by promising her that he will be what she wants him to be. Now that Molly is no longer a threat to his marrying Nancy, Godfrey feels unusually confident and secure in his future. Even the thought of Dunsey's blackmail plot does not faze him - he figures that he can win Dunsey over, now that the past cannot hurt him. Godfrey promises to himself that he will ensure that the child will be taken care of - but he will see to it that he will not jeopardize his happiness by acknowledging that the girl is his own daughter.

Topic Tracking: Trust 7

Chapter 14

Molly is buried that week, but all the villagers can talk about is Silas Marner and his new child. The townspeople of Raveloe, especially the mothers, are more sympathetic to Silas, now that he is caring for the little girl.

Silas feels an emotion so different from any other emotion he has ever felt when he holds the little girl; *"thought and feeling were so confused within him, that if he had tried to give them utterance, he could have only said that the child was come instead of the gold - that the gold had turned into the child."* Chapter 14, pg. 150.

Dolly Winthrop is a trusted advisor and helpful aide to Silas in showing him how to care for the child. She gives Silas her son Aaron's old baby clothes, frayed but clean and neat, and shows him how to bathe and dress the girl. The two of them talk about the girl's entrance into Silas's cottage; Dolly admits that the child must have been sent to him. She advises him to be careful when watching her, and she tells him that small children tend to crawl into places where they shouldn't be. Dolly then declares that if Silas wants to do the right thing, he must get the child "christened," as Dolly refers to it. Dolly reproaches him gently when an embarrassed Silas has to ask her what that means. Silas finally confesses that he does know a great deal about the church, but not the way the people of Raveloe practice, and declares that he will do whatever good the Raveloe church does for the child.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 7

Topic Tracking: Religion 7

Topic Tracking: Trust 8

A joyful Dolly is surprised by Silas's knowledge of the Bible when he comes up with a name for the girl: Hephzibah, which was his mother's and sister's name. They call her Eppie for short, as Silas and his family had called his sister.

Eppie is christened and Silas goes to the Raveloe church for the first time. He has no idea what the baptism is for, but he takes Dolly's word that it is for Eppie's good. Sure enough, Silas sees more happiness and joy with Eppie in his life than he ever had. Unlike the gold, which he admired and worshipped by himself, Eppie is full of love and warmth, and has such a warming affect on Silas that he becomes friendlier and kinder. Silas is able to express his affection for his adopted daughter and have his love returned to him, unlike the gold.

Topic Tracking: Light 5

"The gold had kept his thoughts in an ever-repeated circle, leading to nothing beyond itself; but Eppie was an object compacted of changes and hopes that forced his thoughts onward, and carried them far away from their old eager pacing towards the same blank limit - carried them away to the new things that would come with the coming years." Chapter 14, pg. 153.

Silas discovers that Eppie is prone to mischief and impishness. Dolly advises him to either spank her or put her alone in the coal-hole if she is naughty; Silas is reluctant to punish Eppie; he might hurt her by accident. One time, Eppie cuts off the string, which binds her to Silas's loom so that she will not run away and get into mischief and be under Silas's eye, and runs outside. Silas sees that she has left, fearful that she might have fallen into the Stone-pits, and finds her playing in the fields. He knows that he should punish her for running away, but he is so happy to have found her that he ignores Dolly's heeding for a short time. He finally puts her in the coal-hole with an unexpected result: Eppie finds the coal-hole as much fun as the fields. Silas decides to raise her without resorting to punishment.

Silas takes Eppie with him wherever he goes. The villagers witness a change in Silas when he is with Eppie, and they, too, change their attitude about him. Smiles and cheerful inquiries now greet Silas. The elderly people of Raveloe admire Silas for rearing Eppie by himself as an older man. Even the children who had been so scared of Silas before, now approach him happily; he is not the mean, scolding man he once was when he is with Eppie. "There was love between him and the child that blent them into one, and there was love between the child and the world" Chapter 14, pg. 159.

The gold that Silas once loved so much does not compare to the deep love, affection, and tenderness for the little girl who changes Silas's life. Eppie gives Silas something more to live on beyond money: hope and joy.

Chapter 15

Godfrey watches Silas's loving care of Eppie more carefully than anybody else in Raveloe, but he does not regret acknowledging that she is his daughter. He sees that Eppie is content with Silas, and he is happy knowing that she is cared for so well. Adding to his happiness is that Dunsey still has not returned to Raveloe, and he feels that he will get all of what he wished: Nancy's love and the approval of the townspeople. Godfrey envisions a life with Nancy at his side and their beloved children, as he promises to himself that he will see that Eppie is well taken care of. "He would never forget it; he would see that it was well provided for. That was a father's duty." Chapter 15, pg. 162.

Part 2, Chapter 16

It has been sixteen years since Silas found the little girl in his house. Villagers are leaving the church after that Sunday's service. Godfrey Cass leaves the church with his wife, Nancy Lammeter, at his side. Godfrey looks the same as he had when he was twenty-six. However, Nancy has changed; she is now looking even more beautiful and womanly than she had before. Also leaving the church are Silas Marner and Eppie.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 8

Topic Tracking: Religion 8

Silas looks older and frail at age fifty-five, while Eppie has become a beautiful blond girl of eighteen years. As time has been good to Nancy, Eppie has transformed into a radiant young woman, cheerful and content.

Topic Tracking: Light 6

Eppie asks Silas if they can have a garden. Silas readily agrees to Eppie's garden, and Aaron Winthrop, Eppie's suitor, offers to dig in the yard for the garden. Aaron tells Silas that he needn't do any of the work, as it is heavy and tedious for the older man. When Aaron suggest getting some soil and flowers from the Red House, Silas tells him that they would be imposing on Mr. Godfrey Cass, who he has already done so much for them - supplying them with furniture, and adding a new section to the cottage.

Silas and Eppie's home is now filled with animals: a dog, a donkey, and a kitten. Silas reflects on how his life has changed since Eppie entered his life: he is now viewed as an "exceptional person, whose claims of neighbourly help were not to be matched in Raveloe." Chapter 16, pg. 170. Silas also smokes a pipe - the sages of Raveloe had recommended it two years ago for his health. Although he does not enjoy smoking that much, he continues to do so because the townspeople believe it to be a beneficial remedy, and anything that is good he will do so for Eppie.

Topic Tracking: Raveloe Customs 9

Life with Eppie makes him appreciate the good in his current life, remember his old faith, and blend both past and present together in his life to create a hopeful outlook.

Topic Tracking: Light 7

Silas tells Dolly the whole story of his life in Lantern Yard; Dolly cannot believe that there is man as horrid and unpious as William Dane. When talking about the drawing of lots, Dolly believes that the wickedness of one man, Silas's so-called friend, William Dane, must have prevented the truth in the drawing lots from happening. She remarks to him that perhaps if he had trusted more he would not have left Lantern Yard and been so alone, for there is goodness around them.



Silas agrees with Dolly; he declares that "*there's good in this world - I've a feeling o' that now; and it makes a man feel as there's a good more nor he can see, in spite o' the trouble and the wickedness. That drawing o' the lots is dark; but the child was sent to me*" Chapter 16, pg. 175.

Topic Tracking: Religion 9

Eppie has been told of her mother's death, but as Silas does not know who her biological father is, he cannot supply her the information on her father. Eppie is perfectly happy and content with her life with Silas, though, and does not care to know her real father. The wedding ring found on Molly's finger, which Silas has kept for Eppie and shown to her many times, makes her think about her mother. Eppie asks Silas if they can move the furze bush where he had found Molly years ago, into their garden, so that she can remember her mother. She remarks at how low the water level in the Stone-pits has gone down; Silas tells her that Mr. Godfrey Cass has taken possession of the land now and is draining the Stone-pits for land. Eppie tells Silas that she has been thinking of marrying since Aaron Winthrop had proposed to her last week. She and Aaron would like to live together with Silas, as Aaron knows that Eppie and Silas cannot be separated. A sad Silas believes that Eppie is too young to get married, but decides to ask Dolly Winthrop's advice in doing the right thing.

Chapter 17

At the Red House, Godfrey, Nancy, her sister Priscilla, and their father are eating dessert after they have come from the Sunday services. Priscilla and Nancy step outside for a private talk. Now managing their father's farm, Priscilla tells Nancy that she should have started a dairy, to take her mind off things - namely, children. Nancy tells her sister that Godfrey was very disappointed that they are childless, but he seems to be good-natured about it now.

As Godfrey leaves to see how the draining at the Stone-pits is going, Nancy is by herself, contemplating the years of their marriage. She asks herself if she has been a good wife to Godfrey all these years. Nancy wonders if the fact that they have no children has made him so unhappy, thinking about their one child who died when it was just a baby. She questions if she had been right in refusing Godfrey's request to adopt a child; it is her belief that adopting a child would be like changing what Providence means to happen. When Godfrey had suggested that they adopt Eppie, Nancy denied his suggestion. Godfrey had not the faintest idea that Eppie might be perfectly content with Silas. Reflecting over her marriage and Godfrey's desire to have children, Nancy wonders where her husband might be. When Nancy's servant informs her that there is an unusual amount of activity going on outside, she feels uneasy.

Chapter 18

Godfrey returns home just then with startling news: Dunsey's skeleton has been found in the Stone-pits, now that the Stone-pit has suddenly gone dry from the draining. Dunsey had fallen into the waters and drowned; he was the robber of Silas Marner's money.

Unable to keep his secret past to himself, Godfrey finally confesses his past to Nancy, for Dunsey's death makes him realize that the truth will always come out, one way or the other. He tells her that the dead woman Silas had found in the snow was his wife, and that Eppie is his child. Godfrey admits shamefully that he should have taken the child in, but he was scared that he might lose Nancy's love if he did so. When Nancy speaks, she is not angry, only regretful. She tells him that she would not have refused to take Eppie in, if she had known that she is his daughter. She then becomes angry with him for not telling her sooner - she might have had a daughter to love, and Godfrey might have been happier with her. Godfrey declares that they can still take Eppie in, now that he does not mind if the town knows the truth. Nancy acknowledges that it will be different for them and for Eppie, as she is a young woman fully able to make her own choices and go by her own free will. They decide to see Silas Marner that very night.

Chapter 19

Silas and Eppie are at home, talking about the gold that has been returned to Silas. Silas tells Eppie how sad and desolate his life had been when all he had was his gold, and how his life changed when she was sent to him. He says that Eppie is a blessing to him and that the money can never compare to the love he has for her.

Silas says reflectively, "*The money doesn't [take no hold on me]. I wonder if it ever could again - I doubt it might, if I lost you, Eppie. I might come to think I was forsaken again, and lose the feeling that God was good to me.*" Chapter 19, pg. 199.

Topic Tracking: Light 8

Godfrey and Nancy visit the cottage to Silas and Eppie's surprise. Godfrey tells Silas that he feels that he owes Silas something - not just for the gold that Dunsey had stolen all those years ago. He and Nancy try to approach the subject of Eppie's true paternity with tact, using Eppie's desire for a garden to get her to come live with them at the Red House. Telling Silas that he would like to help him in his old age, Godfrey suggests that Eppie live with him and Nancy as their lawful daughter, for she is his natural daughter. After all, Eppie would greatly benefit from the wealth that will come her way, Godfrey tells Silas. He only wants to save Eppie from a hard life, marrying a workingman and living so poorly. Silas bitterly tells Godfrey that he should have taken Eppie sixteen years ago when she was found and before Silas could love her so deeply.

Silas tells Godfrey, "*God gave her to me because you turned your back on her, and He looks upon her as mine; youv'e no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in.*" Chapter 19, pg. 203.

Topic Tracking: Religion 10

As Godfrey attempts to explain that Silas is unreasonable in his demand to keep Eppie, he declares that Silas is putting Eppie's welfare in danger and that he, as Eppie's natural father, intends to see to it that she is under his care.

To Godfrey and Nancy's surprise, Eppie staunchly refuses to leave Silas's side, speaking that she cannot leave Silas, the only family she has ever known, nor does she want to live like a lady. When Nancy reminds Eppie that she has a duty as a daughter to her father, Eppie replies that she only has a duty to the father who has raised her and loved her all these years. She adds that she cannot think of any other home than the home and the lifestyle she has now, and that she will marry a workingman.

Eppie declares that "*we've been used to be happy together every day, and I can't think o' no happiness without him. And he says he'd nobody in the world till I was sent to him, and he'd have nothing when I was gone. And he's took care of me and loved me from the first, and I'll cleave to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me.*" Chapter 19, pg. 206.

An enraged Godfrey leaves abruptly, with Nancy close behind him.

Chapter 20

Godfrey and Nancy agree that it would be useless to try to separate Eppie from Silas, for as Nancy says, "It wouldn't be right to want to force her to come to us against her will. We can't alter her bringing up and what's come of it." Chapter 20, pg. 209. Godfrey decides that there is no reason that they should let the truth of Eppie's paternity be known to Raveloe. However, he ponders putting it in his will, and he guesses correctly that it is Aaron Winthrop whom Eppie means to marry. Godfrey knows that Eppie dislikes him now, but he believes that it is his punishment for deserting her. He tells Nancy that she is one of the best things in his life.

Chapter 21

Silas decides to return to Lantern Yard. He wants to talk to Mr. Paston, the minister, about the robbery and the drawing of the lots. Eppie is glad to accompany him, for she would have to tell Aaron about her trip to Silas's old country. For once, she would have to explain something to him. Dolly Winthrop agrees heartily with Silas's plan, for she believes that if he can be cleared from the wrongful accusation, he might live easier knowing his name in Lantern Yard is innocent.

Silas and Eppie arrive at Lantern Yard. Silas is surprised by the many changes thirty years have brought to Lantern Yard. He manages to find the old jail on Prison Street, which brings back painful memories, but the jail is the only place that remains of the Lantern Yard Silas knew. The dirty, grimy condition of the place and the sallow faces of the people horrify Eppie. Silas is equally horrified when he discovers that in place of the chapel lies a factory. Silas asks people if they know what happened to the chapel and the minister, but no one knows.

Topic Tracking: Light 9

Silas sadly tells Dolly that the town he once knew no longer exists. He fears that his past will always haunt him and will always be dark, now that nothing of the real Lantern Yard exists. Dolly agrees with him, but she is quick to add that even though the "rights" do not tell the truth, it does not mean that there is no goodness or justice.

Topic Tracking: Religion 11

Silas says, "*Since the time the child was sent to me and I've come to love her as myself, I've had light enough to trusten by; and now she says she'll never leave me, I think I shall trusten till I die*" Chapter 21, pg. 215.

Topic Tracking: Light 10

Topic Tracking: Trust 9

Conclusion

The day of Eppie's wedding is beautiful and warm. Eppie tells Silas that she will always be with him, and Aaron will be with Silas as well. She looks ethereal and angel-like in her wedding gown, provided by Mrs. Godfrey Cass. Mr. Lammeter and Priscilla accompany Nancy to the wedding, for Godfrey is suddenly out of town. Priscilla wishes that Nancy might have had the chance of having and raising a child as wonderful as Eppie. Both high-class society and the workingclass see Eppie and Aaron's bridal party. Mr. Macey is happy that he has lived to see Silas's stolen money returned to him. The bridal party is all in agreement that Silas has brought a blessing to himself by being a father to a lone, deserted child. Silas and Eppie declare that their home at the Stonepits is the best place for them.