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**LOVE AND TRAGEDY  
IN  
*FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD***

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## **Dedication**

- This research work is dedicated to my grandmother, Damienne Padonou, for her daily prayers for me.

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## Introduction

Love refers to a variety of different feelings, states, and attitudes ranging from pleasure to interpersonal attraction. Love may specifically refer to the passionate desire and intimacy of romantic love, to the sexual love, to the emotional closeness of familial love, to the platonic love that defines friendship, or to the profound oneness or devotion of religious love, or to a concept of love that includes all of those meanings. This diversity of uses and meanings combined with the complexity of the feelings involved, makes love unusually difficult to define compared to other emotional states. Love may be understood as part of the survival instinct, a function to keep human beings together against psychological threats, and make easy the continuation of the Human race.

Thus, love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment. More commonly, love is a feeling of intense affection, of attraction resulting from sexual desire. When somebody is attracted by a woman's beauty or character, and accordingly has kind feelings towards her, we say that he loves that woman. Through this aspect a genuine love inevitably leads to a legal union of a man and a woman as husband and wife. This union is what is called "marriage". As far as tragedy is concerned, it is a disastrous event, especially one involving distressing loss or injury to life. It is an event causing great suffering, destruction, and distress, such as a serious accident, crime, or natural catastrophe. It is a very terrible or sorrowful fate or end. Thus, a tragedy is a story about a hero or heroine who is destroyed by a personal weakness or character flaw such as envy, greed, dishonesty, selfishness. It is a play dealing with tragic events and having an unhappy ending, especially one concerning the downfall of a main character. So, how can one deal with love and tragedy at the same time or what makes both terms closer? Choosing to put a stress

on “love and tragedy” is not at all fortuitous. The reasons for this choice may seem apparently trivial but deep in meaning. The theme of love is unquestionably universal. Many authors have dealt with it indeed, but in different ways. Hardy’s viewpoint of love seems particularly surprising in that it highlights human pessimism and needs clarification and analysis.

Deciding to analyze love and tragedy in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, I mean to show that the basis of human tragedies as viewed by Hardy is love. The conflicts which are developed between the different protagonists of the novel originate from sexual desire, most of them being unable to satisfy their lust. Bathsheba is an unhappy character. She suffers throughout the novel because circumstances don’t allow her to know easily her true love. Troy gets killed because he does not want to lose his wife Bathsheba. Boldwood has become Troy’s murderer out of jealousy. What one is likely to find in this work is how the incapacity to appease one’s desire may be creating frustrations leading to tragic fate.

However, the study is achieved through readings of printed books and websites about love and tragedy in *Far From the Madding Crowd*. But, before starting the reading, I stick to my topic. During my research or reading, I discover all kinds of interesting facts about related topics. But, I stick to my topic in writing, and avoid throwing in random factoids, regardless of how interesting they may seem. Otherwise, the essay becomes too long and disjointed. It can be frustrating to not use what seems to be a good bit of information, but unless I can work it into my topic well, I will have to learn to set such things aside. Now that I have my topic and have selected a good set of sources, it is time to read and take note. Some sources have only selected paragraphs, pages or chapters that fit my topic. So, I manage my time

by reading the relevant information first. My personal interest in the topic leads me to read more.

I read many printed books related to my topic. Next, I look for key items related to it. As I have read, I wrote the useful information I have discovered down in my notes as possible. For every note that I have got from a book or a source, I include where I found the information so I can quote it properly later. Because it is incredibly frustrating to be halfway through writing an essay, and want to make use of quotation I have noted, but I cannot because I did not write down where I have got it from. Then, I include the page number beside each note. I use quotation marks for quotations to distinguish them from my own ideas and I put the title of books in italics and as the study is related to literature, I use the qualitative approach.

What I have achieved throughout my research work revolves around four main parts. The first part deals with the life and works of Thomas Hardy and a literature review about the study. The second part deals with how the themes of love and tragedy are described in the novel. As far as the third part is concerned, it deals with other literary views about love and tragedy in one part and my personal view of the theme in other part.

# **Chapter One: General Background to the study and Literature Review**

## **2.1 General Literary Notes**

The reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) coincided with some tremendous changes in the British social setting: positive as well as negative. In literature, the emphasis shifted from pure versification to the story of social issues written in novels. Therefore, a number of writers called “romantic poets” “the industrial or social novelists” started writing some of the social changes brought about by the development and growth of wealth which began in the nineteenth century. The novel, then, became the well-known and the most popular literary genre. The problem was that, the end of the Aristocracy meant the beginning of a new dominant and exploiting class that was referred to as the Bourgeoisie with the social injustices it generated. Under such circumstances, the new task which was assigned to the Victorian writers was to denounce such social problems by depicting difficult lives in which hard work, perseverance, love and luck win out in the end; virtue would be rewarded and wrongdoers are suitably punished; they also improve nature with a central moral lesson at heart. Two literary trends could be found during the Victorian period. In fact, the early half of the century was dominated by romanticism, which encouraged writers to emphasize their imaginations. Romantic writers, as a rule, focused on individual expression, and thus produced works that often featured elements of the supernatural and almost always showed the world as a projection of the individual’s emotions. In response to the excesses of romanticism, which some writers felt took literary works too far from the way that most people actually experience world, realistic fiction began in the 1840s. As romantic writers often presented the world as being changeable and therefore, were inclined toward happy

endings, realistic writers tended to show the harsher aspects of life. Thomas Hardy presents through his novel *Far From the Madding Crowd*, a clear example of the Victorian romanticism.

At the same time, his depiction of farmers' lives and the ranchers in rural area makes him a forerunner to the realistic tradition in literature. Wessex, the location for *Far From the Madding Crowd* is an imaginary English country that Hardy coloured with fine details throughout the course of his writing career. It is similar to Dorset, where Hardy lived most of his life, but its fictitious nature gave the author freedom to describe the landscape at will. Hardy wrote *Far From the Madding Crowd* in the same Dorset cottage in which he was born. Though fictional, the residents of Wessex, farmers, land owners, labourers, servants, and the like are considered as true representations of people living at the time the novel was published.

## **2.2 Bio-Bibliography of the Writer**

Thomas Hardy was born in Dorchester on Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1840. He was from a poor family. His father's name was Thomas II. He was a stonemason and was fond of music. His mother's name was Jemina and she loved reading, which probably influenced the future novelist. She had long expected her eldest son to follow in his father's footsteps as a mason but she may have other ambitions for him. Martin Seymour informed

He was only eight when she gave him Dryden's Virgil, Johnson's *Rasselas* and the novel *Paul and Virginia*, a French Rousseau's tale, by Bernadin de Saint-Pierre, which appeared in *Etudes de la nature* (1787) and was translated into many languages<sup>1</sup>

All this had some influence on young Tom, who at that age was engaged in what may fairly be called the first love affair of his life. This love affair was with Julia

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Seymour. *Thomas Hardy*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.. 1994. P. 21.

Augustina Martin, the wife of the owner of the Kingston Maurward estate. She was childless and was fond of Tommy (Hardy), who is said to have been an attractive little fellow at that time. She had been accused of taking him in her lap and kissing him until he was quite a big child. Martin Seymour argued "One does not need to be a Freudian to see what frustrated Julia was unconsciously up to"<sup>2</sup>. This contact with Julia aroused some emotions in the child. And everything happened as if there were something abnormal in his interest in sexual matters as he kept remembering this erotic experience throughout his life. As Robert Gitting put it in his eighties, "Hardy still indulged himself in daydreams about love passages with her"<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, fate seems to drive Hardy towards Mrs. Martin Julia maybe for the consolidation of their love. Indeed, he was fatefully sent to her school. Mrs. Martin Julia paid for the building of the Church of England school for Parish, on the property bought by her husband in 1884. There was a school in lower Bock Hampton. But it was to the new school that Tom was sent in 1848 when he was eight. This school was run by Sir Thomas Fuller and his wife. As we can see it, Tom had caught the attention of Mrs Martin long before he attended her school. Although he did well at school, his parents decided to send him to another school led by Isaac Last. That second school was said to be a good one for a child who went to a village school but did well. Moreover, Isaac was a good teacher of Latin. But this decision led to a quarrel between Mrs Martin and Tom's mother. As a student, he used to play piano during celebrations. The education he received was a Victorian type unknown today. Isaac Last gave a good appreciation of him. At school, he was taught Latin, German, and French. Many commentators referred to him as an autodidact to mean that the education he acquired at Last's school apart from, including elementary drawing, advanced

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<sup>2</sup> Martin Seymour. Thomas Hardy. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc..1994. P. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Seymour, Ibid., P. 22.

arithmetic, geometry and algebra was not so important. Thomas Hardy rejected all the time this point of view and Martin Seymour was rather precise reporting that in 1911, when in a thesis, Hardy was described as an autodidact, he protested.

Thomas Hardy had some ambitions for a university education, but unfortunately his family lacked the means for a university education according to its social position, and his formal education ended at the age of sixteen when he became apprenticed to James Hicks, a local architect. There, he and his fellows used to argue on life, philosophy and religion. He met the poet William Barnes and succeeded in knowing him well. At the age of twenty-three, he finished his training and went to London where he worked for Arthur Bloomfield, a young architect who helped to introduce the Gothic revival in England. He has been taken ill and came back home to work for Hicks again. Then, he met a beautiful and young teacher named Tryphena to whom he might have become engaged, but nobody could tell the nature of their relationship. Besides, Tryphena was his cousin and unfortunately, law did not allow marriage between cousins. F.E. Halliday's words are clear about this "it was not well for cousins to fall in love"<sup>4</sup>. In 1870, Hardy went to Cornwall to supervise the repair of Saint Juliot Church. There, he met Emma Gifford, the rector's sister-in-law and both fell in love with each other. In 1872, he published *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Far From the Madding Crowd* in 1874. This publication enabled him and Emma to get married in 1874. After some wanderings in Europe and England, the couple settled down at Sturminster Newton, a village not far from Shaftesbury. This period was the happiest one in the author's life, the only disappointment being that the couple had no children. In 1878, *The Return or Native* was published and Hardy decided to return to London. Despite this apparent success, Hardy went through

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<sup>4</sup> Frank Halliday. *Thomas Hardy: his life and work*. London: Panther Books, Canada Publishing Ltd.. 1978. P. 121.

much private suffering. First, his work was not accepted by all critics, particularly his novel *Jude the Obscure* brought upon him accusations. Second and worse, his wife whom he had loved to distraction and to whom he always proved loyal abruptly changed her attitude towards him. In fact, she came to be aware that Hardy didn't suit her and was publicly rude to her husband. This brought a disagreement between them until her sudden death in 1912. Accordingly, Hardy began to write his recollections of their love in poetry. And in 1914, he married another woman whose name was Florence Dougdale. She was younger than him but charming and sympathetic. She used to transform his confused home life into order. Hardy died on January 11, 1928 at Dorchester.

Hardy's first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, finished by 1867, failed to find a publisher. He showed the novel to his mentor and friend, the Victorian poet and novelist, Meredith who felt that *The Poor Man and the Lady* would be too politically controversial and might damage Hardy's ability to publish in the future. So Hardy followed his advice and gave up publishing it. Later, he destroyed the manuscript. After he abandoned his first novel, Hardy wrote two new ones that he hoped would have more commercial appeal, *Desperate Remedies* in 1871 and *Under the Greenwood Tree* in 1872 which he decided to publish anonymously. In 1873 *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was published under his own name. Hardy wrote then *Far from the Madding Crowd* in 1874 which is his fourth but first major literary success. It originally appeared anonymously as a monthly serial in *Cornhill Magazine*, where it gained a wide readership. Critical notices were numerous and mostly positive. Later, he wrote *The Return of the Native* in 1878, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in 1886, *The Woodlanders* in 1887, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1891. Published in 1895, *Jude*

the Obscure received negative outcries from the Victorian public for its frank treatment of sex, and was often referred to as "Jude the Obscene".

In 1898 Hardy published his first volume of poetry, Wessex Poems, a collection of poems written over 30 years. Hardy claimed poetry as his first love, and after a great amount of negative criticism erupted from the publication of his novel Jude The Obscure, Hardy decided to give up writing novels permanently and to focus his literary efforts on writing poetry. After giving up the novel form, Hardy continued to publish poetry collections until his death in 1928. Although he published The Well-Beloved in 1897, it had actually been written prior to Jude the Obscure. Although his poems were not initially as well received by his contemporaries as his novels were, Hardy is now recognized as one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century. Most of Hardy's poems, such as "Neutral Tones" and "A Broken Appointment", deal with themes of disappointment in love and life, and mankind's long struggle against indifference to human suffering. In poems such as "Ah, Are You Digging On My Grave", Hardy employed twist endings in the last few lines or in the last stanza to convey irony. Some, like The Darkling Thrush and "An August Midnight", appear as poems about writing poetry, because the nature mentioned in them gives Hardy the inspiration to write. His compositions range in style from the three-volume epic closet drama The Dynasts to shorter poems such as "A Broken Appointment. He also writes numerous short stories.

### **1.3 Literature Review**

The theme of love has been a recurrent one in the history of literature. Love is an interesting subject in literature because love, unlike other themes, has many twists and turns and many different endings. Love has been present in early works of literature, such as Greek and Roman mythology, and has continued through Victorian and contemporary times. Love is unique in that it is a constant: while it goes on through different decades and different centuries, the elements stay the same. In addition, love is used in literature in a way to complement other themes, such as violence or sadness. It is useful as it gives common ground to otherwise unrelatable individuals. Many times, literature exhibits love in an unrealistic manner, usually portraying a happy ending, but it has been said that this occurs as the author wishes to exhibit to the reader what love would look like in a perfect world.

It has been said that early medieval writers and poets used the term "love" to suggest "moral, ethical and social phenomena which were deeply connected with friendship and the development of morals." In the 12th century, love is seen more as a bond between the genders and an emotional force. It has been suggested that by this time, writers were using love as a way of exhibiting freedom from enemies of that time and to show that there was now a "leisure class" who could enjoy the pleasures of love.

However, a tragedy is a story about a hero or heroine who is destroyed by a personal weakness or character flaw such as envy, greed, dishonesty, selfishness or a play dealing with tragic events and having an unhappy ending, especially one concerning the downfall of the main character. According to Babylon English, it is a dramatic composition with an unhappy ending portraying a conflict between the protagonist and destiny or circumstances. As far as Britannica Word Language

Standard Dictionary is concerned, tragedy is defined as the form of drama in which the protagonist, having some quality of greatness comes to disaster through some flaws which may be noble fault in his nature to bring about his inevitable downfall to produce pity and fear in the spectator and failure to affect a catharsis of these feelings. Furthermore in Oxford Dictionary, it is a play, film, television program, or other narrative work that portrays or depicts calamitous events and has an unsuccessful end.

In fact the term "tragedy" is used in a common parlance, and yet it cannot be reduced to a formula, for it has so many shades that it actually defies a logical analysis. An American critic has summed up tragedy in courage and inevitable defeat. Nowadays one can never think of a tragedy without an unhappy ending. But the Greeks did. *Philoctetes* by Sophocles, for example, has no unhappy ending.

Classical tragedy according to Aristotle involves a protagonist of high estate who falls from prosperity to misery through a series of reversals and discoveries as a result of a "tragic flaw," generally an error caused by human frailty. Aside from this initial moral weakness or error, the protagonist is basically a good person; the downfall of an evil protagonist is not tragic. According to his view of tragedy, action generally involves *revolution* or unanticipated reversals of what is expected to occur and *discovery* in which the protagonists and audience learn something that had been hidden. It also includes all destructive actions and evokes pity and fear in the audience, leading finally to catharsis.

Medieval tragedy concerns how a person falls from high to low estate. In the middle ages, there was no tragic theater *per se*: tragedy was found not in the theater but in collections of stories illustrating the falls of great men. For example, Boccaccio's *Falls of Illustrious Men*, Chaucer's *Monk's Tale* from the *Canterbury Tales*, and

Lydgate's *Falls of Prince*. These narratives owe their conception the Latin tragedies of *Seneca*, in which Fortune and her wheel play a prominent role.

Renaissance tragedy derives less from medieval than from the Aristotelian notion of the tragic flaw, a moral weakness or human error that causes the protagonist's downfall. Unlike classical tragedy, however, it tends to include subplots and comic relief. From *Seneca*, early Renaissance tragedy borrowed the violent and bloody plots, resounding rhetorical speeches, frequent use of ghosts. In his greatest tragedies as *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, Shakespeare transcends the conventions of Renaissance tragedy, imbuing his plays with a timeless universality.

As far as modern theorists are concerned, they build upon the Aristotelian notions of tragedy. Two examples are the Victorian critics Andrew Cecil Bradley and Northrop Frye. In fact, Bradley divides tragedy into an *exposition* of the state of affairs; the beginning, growth, and vicissitudes of the *conflict*, and the final *catastrophe* or tragic outcome. Bradley emphasizes the Aristotelian notion of the tragic flaw: the tragic hero errs by action or omission; this error joins with other causes to bring about his ruin. According to Bradley, the idea of the tragic hero as a being destroyed simply and solely by external forces is quite alien to him; and not less so is the idea of the hero as contributing to his destruction only by acts in which no flaw is seen. Bradley's emphasis on the tragic flaw implies that characters bring their fates upon themselves and thus, in a sense, deserve what they get. It should however be noted that in some of Shakespeare's plays as *King Lear*, the tragedy lies less in the fact that the characters deserve their fates than in how much more they suffer than their actions or flaws suggest they should. However, Northrop Frye distinguishes five stages of action in tragedy: the first stage is Encroachment and include that the protagonist takes on too much, makes a mistake that causes his/her fall. This mistake is often

unconscious (an act blindly done, through over-confidence in one's ability to regulate the world or through insensitivity to others) but still violates the norms of human conduct. The second stage is Complication. Here, the building up of events aligning opposing forces that will lead inexorably to the tragic conclusion. Just as comedy often sets up an arbitrary law and then organizes the action to break or evade it, so tragedy presents the reverse theme of narrowing a comparatively free life into a process of causation. The third stage is Reversal. At this point it becomes clear that the hero's expectations are mistaken, that his fate will be the reverse of what he had hoped. At this moment, the vision of the dramatist and the audience are the same. The classic example is Oedipus, who seeks the knowledge that proves him guilty of murdering his father and marrying his mother; when he accomplishes his objective, he realizes he has destroyed himself in the process. The fourth stage that is Catastrophe exposes the limits of the hero's power and dramatizes the waste of his life. Piles of dead bodies remind us that the forces unleashed are not easily contained; there are also elaborate subplots for example, Gloucester in *King Lear* which reinforces the impression of a world inundated with evil. The fifth and last stage is Recognition. Here, the audience sometimes the hero as well recognizes the larger pattern. If the hero does experience recognition, he assumes the vision of his life held by the dramatist and the audience. From this new perspective he can see the irony of his actions, adding to the poignancy of the tragic events.

Nevertheless chance and coincidence play a vital role in all the novels of Hardy. While character is certainly responsible to a large extent for the undoing of human lives in Hardy's fiction, chance and coincidence often operate as the deciding factors. Hardy felt that an evil power ruled the universe, defeating every endeavour of man to better his fortune or to find happiness. He could not believe in a benevolent

Providence; events were too plainly ironical, so they must have been contrived by a supernatural power. He believed that fate or destiny was sometimes indifferent, but most often hostile, to human happiness. One manifestation of the hostility of fate is to be found in the irony of circumstances that we meet with in Hardy's novels. In other words, when human beings are not themselves responsible for the frustration of their hopes, or when their own temperaments and mutual conflict do not wreck their happiness, fate intervenes in the shape of chance or accident or coincidence to contribute to, or to complete their ruin. Early in the story, Prince, the horse of the Durbeyfield Family is killed in an accident. Tess' father being in no condition to undertake an important journey, Tess offers to take his place. As she is driving the wagon carrying a load of beehives to be delivered in a distant market, the mail van coming from the opposite side collides against Tess' wagon and Prince is fatally wounded. This accident has a profound influence on the life of Tess. The family business having become suddenly disorganized by the death of the horse, it becomes necessary for Tess to contract the D'Urbervilles living at "The Slopes" for help, and the meeting between her and Alec which follows leads to consequences which are disastrous. Alec's seduction of Tess is a direct, though not immediate, result of the death of Prince. A sheer accident is responsible for this seduction which eventually proves the undoing of her marriage with Angel Clare. This is also true in *the Return of the Native*. In this novel also there are many things which happen at the wrong moment, when they are least expected to happen, and the result is sorrow, suffering, and tragedy for all concerned. For example, Clym's coming across Eustacia by chance as he returns home with his mother and Thomasin, leads to their sad and tragic love.

## Chapter Two: Hardy's View about Love and Tragedy in *Far From the Madding Crowd*

### 2.1 Love in the writing

In *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Thomas Hardy deals with love throughout his characters. In fact the central character of the novel is Bathsheba Everdene. She is a young woman helping to tend her aunt's farm. When her uncle dies, she takes control of his farm. She is described as a beautiful woman and her beauty plays an important role in the novel. For example, it is her beauty that interests Gabriel Oak, a skilful, hardworking, and honest young farmer. Gabriel Oak is Bathsheba's first suitor in the novel. Both characters are described in the first chapter of the novel. This description is significant. The narrator uses the term "handsome girl" to refer to Bathsheba and he (the narrator) informs that Oak is a bachelor. It means the two characters will have to share something together in the novel. In the same chapter, in spite of being the first time that Gabriel Oak meets Bathsheba, he decides to pay her fares. That is to say that he is interested in the young woman. Later, there is a scene between the two characters where Oak says "Come, give me your hand"<sup>5</sup>. In that scene, Bathsheba gives her hand to Gabriel and she adds "I suppose you are thinking you would like to kiss it? You may if you want to"<sup>6</sup>. Now, it is clear that Gabriel is trying to get the affection of the young girl and Bathsheba in return understands him. That is why at the end of the third chapter, it is clearly read "Now find out my name"<sup>7</sup>. The following chapter shows that Gabriel Oak has begun to love the young girl whom he knows nothing, even her name. I can say that Gabriel Oak's love is natural. In the same way he misses the young lady during the days that he does not see her. He

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 179.

<sup>6</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 177.

<sup>7</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 180.

becomes unable to control his feelings towards Bathsheba. That obliges him to make her an offer of marriage that she rejects. Thus, love is not mutual at this stage. There is a possible unseen factor that is making control of the character of the young girl as Oak makes his research and finds that the woman has many men wanting to gain her heart but she is not engaged with any of them. In fact, Bathsheba desires a good lover able to tame her and she thinks that Oak cannot. Despite all that the young man has done to prove his attachment for her, she remains on her position but some of her reactions betray her. For example it can be read at the bottom of a note that she sends him “do not desert me Gabriel”<sup>8</sup>.

This “Do not desert me” is meaningful; there is an invitation to patience, for it seems there is something in Oak apart from his qualification in farming which attracts the woman and it is quite predictable and believable that Oak’s patience expressed though his acceptance to stay with Bathsheba despite her apparent rejection of his love, will probably have something positive in the story for him. So, Oak’s patience and endurance will be at their height precisely when it becomes that his role consists not only in shearing the animals, but worse, he becomes a mere house boy doing almost all domestic chores in her place. This evidence is shown by Hardy when he writes:

Among the multifarious duties which Bathsheba had voluntarily imposed upon herself by dispensing with the services of a bailiff, was the particular one of looking round the homestead before going to bed, to see that all was right and safe for the night. Gabriel had almost constantly preceded her in this tour every evening, watching her affairs as carefully as any specially appointed officer of surveillance could have done<sup>9</sup>.

Thomas Hardy creates another episode through which Bathsheba, in Oak’s presence, shuts herself with a new lover named Boldwood in the room promising to

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 191.

<sup>9</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 213.

possibly marry him. This evidence could have degenerated if Oak had reacted in one way or another. But he witnesses such without reacting. In fact, Bathsheba meets Boldwood at Farmer's meeting where she falls in love with him. She does everything to seduce him but he is reserved. Despite Boldwood's indifferent and reserved attitude towards her, she happens to declare her love for him. Here, Bathsheba's hopeless longing for love is clearly pointed out by the author himself who writes that "Boldwood's not caring for her had become troublesome"<sup>10</sup>. a clear account is given about Bathsheba's suffering in this regard "I wonder why he is so wrap up and different, and so far away from all he sees around him"<sup>11</sup>. Bathsheba goes beyond and sends Boldwood a valentine to asking him to marry her, as stated here "marry me".

These two words have introduced something in the whole story. This "marry me" shows the role played by destiny in characters' life as well as their own flaws. Why can this "marry me" not go straight to Gabriel the honest man? It is noticed that the valentine troubles him; a man whose only obsession is symbolized by his contemplation of a valentine and the end-result shall be seen. Once Boldwood has been sexually disturbed, he cannot return to his normal. As he lies in bed, he imagines the changing mouth of the unknown woman as she has written out his name and address; but he does not love, he has not, like Oak, been smitten, he has never once told her that she is beautiful. Yet, in the long run, Boldwood's love, forced by Bathsheba as it is said above, becomes a passion. He is completely possessed by that love and consequently resolves to marry her. One may say that his love for Bathsheba has become a psychological disease. He says to Bathsheba "my life is not my own since I have beheld you clearly, Miss Everdene. I come to make you an

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas, Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 142.

<sup>11</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 143.

offer of marriage”<sup>12</sup>. A confirmed bachelor as he calls himself, Boldwood’s situation has become a critical one. But can any man alter his destiny as he pretends to do? Despite Boldwood’s sad words about his being a confirmed bachelor, Bathsheba surprisingly and paradoxically is going to reject his offer of marriage. I indeed read “Mr. Boldwood, I am afraid I can marry you, as I respect you. You are too dignified for me to suit you”<sup>13</sup>.

Another important figure is Francis Troy. He is a sergeant. He is a strange kind of character created by Hardy maybe on purpose. Through his character, no love affair likely to succeed is predictable. His personal philosophy of life in general and about womankind in particular based on bare pessimism, is applied to his disbelief in future and past. For him, if the past does exist, it should be reduced to yesterday and the future will be reduced to tomorrow. Hardy insists that “with him the past was yesterday; the future tomorrow; never the day after”<sup>14</sup>. As it is shown here, Troy does not believe in the past and neither does he in the future. What a bizarre conception about life! What progress can be possible without man’s clear understanding of the past? With regard to womankind, Troy is more than a misogynist. He advocates that one should fear woman, that no one can trust them. By this way, Troy advises:

The only alternative to flattery in dealing with womankind was cursing and swearing. There was no third method. Treat them fairly, and you are a lost man<sup>15</sup>.

Sergeant Troy’s conception as expressed above is perfect illustration of Hardy’s pessimistic attitude in love matters. Moreover, Troy never treats women seriously. He is presented as an unscrupulous sexual adventurer, ready to move from woman to woman; he is as ready to ruin his wife’s reputation as he is a farmer to use

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas, Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 177.

<sup>13</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 178.

<sup>14</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 219.

<sup>15</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 221.

fraudulent methods to get quick profit. Fate and misunderstanding are seen to frustrate his single decent impulse. His character attracts this kind of fate. The beginning of his relationship with Bathsheba foreshadows all this.

In effect, it is in chapter twenty-five that I learn about Troy and Bathsheba's relationship. Bathsheba's vanity and carelessness are clearly seen here. She accepts to love Troy without any worry. In the thirtieth chapter of the novel entitled, *Hot cheeks and tearful eyes* Bathsheba's true emotions for Troy are clearly exposed when speaking with Liddy. I can read:

Oh, I love him to very distraction and misery and  
agony\_ And don't you know that a woman who loves  
at all thinks nothing of perjury when it is balanced  
against her love?<sup>16</sup>

This quotation is the very proof that Bathsheba is already in love with Troy and she couldn't control her emotions. There is also the phenomenon of kissing that is present in the novel. The importance of Bathsheba's love toward Troy is that it leads to marriage. Troy as it is said above is a womaniser. There will be a misfortune among the two protagonists. The character of Troy is inserted in the novel in order to add another dimension to love. In fact, he marries Bathsheba for her financial security. During his wedding time, he could realise that the way he deserted Fanny Robinson may have cost her, her life. So, he takes money from Bathsheba and gives Fanny. In fact Fanny Robinson is Bathsheba's former servant. Troy had promised to marry her but, on the Wedding Day, the luckless girl goes to the wrong church. She explains her mistake, but Troy, humiliated at being left waiting at the altar, angrily calls off the wedding. When they part, unbeknownst to Troy, Fanny is pregnant.

At the moment that Fanny died, Troy, having felt guilty and unable to bear Bathsheba's jealousy, is obliged to reveal the truth to her. I can read Troy's severe

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 227.

words addressed to Bathsheba as “you are nothing to me. A ceremony before a priest doesn’t make a marriage. I am not morally yours”<sup>17</sup> this said, he begins his romance towards the dead body. He rushes to Casterbridge in search for the most magnificent tombstone for Fanny in order to pay a tribute to the dead body. He precisely declares: “I want a good tomb; I want as good as you can give me for twenty- seven pounds”<sup>18</sup>. Moreover, as an attempt to show his sympathy to the departed girl, he has some words printed and deposited on her grave written as follow: “Erected by Francis Troy in Beloved Memory of Fanny Robinson”<sup>19</sup>. It is clear that by those words, Hardy ironically portrays Troy, observed with making amends to the woman he had wronged when it is too late to do her any good. The irony is intensified by the consideration that it is with Bathsheba’s money that he makes his sentimental gesture to the dead body of Fanny Robinson. Psychologically affected, Troy is obliged to desert his legitimate wife.

That circumstance allows Bathsheba to come back to Oak, the first man to love her. She is persuaded that he is the best friend that she could have. By his name being associated with the Guardian Angel Gabriel, he protects and helps Bathsheba although she refuses his proposal of marriage. For example, when Bathsheba's farm was on fire Gabriel helps her. They were not coping with the fire and Gabriel took control of the situation. He made the people stand in a line to pass the water and this helped to save her farm. There was another occasion when Bathsheba's sheep escaped and became ill by eating some poisonous plants. Gabriel was the "One person in the country" who could save them. The sheep were full of gas and it required Gabriel's precision to cure them. Gabriel tries to protect Bathsheba from the knowledge that Fanny Robins had a child by rubbing off its name

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<sup>17</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 316.

<sup>18</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 371.

<sup>19</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 381.

from the coffin. He knew she would be upset because she would have known that the child was Troy's. In one word, Oak assists Bathsheba throughout the novel. The following quotation illustrates what have been said

You've been with me so long — through bright times and dark times — such old friends that as we are — that it seems unkind almost. I had fancied that if you leased the other farm as master, you might still give a helping look across at mine.<sup>20</sup>

Finally Gabriel and Oak got married.

## 2.2 Tragedy in the Book

The fall down of a virtuous man would merely shock us, as would the success of a bad man. Therefore, the tragic hero should be a man not pre-eminently good, whose misfortune is brought about by some “error or frailty”. Tragic flaw could simply mean a mistake or a defect because it is a device which is ever present in the development of the tragedy. The question as to whether *Far From the Madding Crowd* is a tragic novel is a controversial one. Of course, the novel seems to end happily. It also carries some tragic overtones as well as some tragic undertones. As a matter of course, there are a number of psychological factors: pride, lust, jealousy, ambition, etc., which are the data of the action of the protagonists in *Far From the Madding Crowd*. They provide a context in which the forces of destruction operate. To that effect, tragedy can be considered as dramatisation of man's sense of humanity and society as constantly under threat from the arbitrary chances of fate, and his own innate savagery. As far as Hardy is concerned, his characters also show signs of these features peculiar to the pattern of tragedy. Indeed, Bathsheba appears to be a woman of ambition as much as Troy is a man of “pride” and of lust, and Boldwood, a man of stubbornness and jealousy. Thus, the plot, which is the soul of tragedy, helps understanding the working of the tragic flaw, and most characters in

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<sup>20</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 392.

Hardy's works in general and in *Far From the Madding Crowd* in particular are never flawless. There is always a flaw in their characters which leads them to their tragic end. Bathsheba can be held responsible for all happenings in the novel. She is the very important person who uses her love as fishhook set among such single men as Oak, Boldwood and Troy, who unconsciously think she is the only woman to have existed in the world. No one knows what drives them. Altogether, they get drunk and blinded by the unique woman's beauty, and threatening one another, they become naïve victims of psychological disease and murder. Certainly, there are some tragic flaws in Bathsheba which make her a tragic character. Her actions are largely shocking since the beginning of her experience in farm-management. Indeed, when she inherits her uncle's estate and proposes to manage it herself, it brings about agitation in the rural community of Weatherbury. But strong-minded and independent, she shows to be more than equal to the challenge. She all the more becomes a tragic character when loved by the sturdy and dependable Oak, recklessly encouraging the lonely bachelor farmer Boldwood, and mesmerized by the dazzling charms of Sergeant Troy, she creates a wave of scandals and violence on the placid surface of village life. She is the centre of a well planned story in which such evil deeds as jealousy, betrayal, suspicion, sex, seduction, lust and suffering live together.

Fanny Robinson is a slim girl. She had been seduced by Troy who appeared at the first time to be well intentioned towards her. Later, he had put off indefinitely the meeting of his obligation. The whole story reaches its climax with the death of Fanny in a child birth at the Casterbridge "Union" and the bringing of the bodies of mother and baby for burial at Weatherbury. Although Fanny makes only a few minor appearances in the story, her role has an important connecting link with the major

characters in the plot since she affects their actions. She is a suffering character; disappointment and betrayal lead her to sorrow. Her misfortune begins the day Troy knows Bathsheba, for had Troy not known Bathsheba, he would have married Fanny, and had he married her, she would not have died either. As a matter of fact, dying of sorrow is dying tragically.

The tragic sense of Fanny's death lies in its sadness and in its unexpectedness. It creates much pain for the major characters. It negatively affects the lives of Troy and his wife Bathsheba. Each element of the couple therefore suffers from a psychological uneasiness: Troy suffers a trauma. As Hardy views the situation himself, Troy, seemingly, is run after by the spirit of the woman he wronged. There is thus, a kind of revenge which is taken toward Troy. Psychologically affected, Troy is obliged to desert his wife to make tragedy follow its process. For years then, Troy is doomed to wander in nature. Nobody knows what he had become. Some say that he had got drowned. At the same time, Bathsheba not only has to survive loneliness, but also she eventually has to observe the necessary rules which are prescribed by the Victorians for a widow.

The fact that a woman was not allowed to remarry before seven years after her husband's death is a very good example. Such was Bathsheba's own case who has to face Boldwood's whims. As I have mentioned above, Troy's deserting his wife has a tragic sense. If Bathsheba and Troy's marriage had not known any dislocation, the situation would not have degenerated so as to encourage Boldwood to come back to Bathsheba and the tragic trend aimed at could not be reached. In effect, Boldwood, the stubborn character, decides once more to turn the situation into his own profit. He wants, at all cost, to renew his relations with the woman who is now supposed to be a widow. Actually, he has no sincere love for unhappy and sorrowful

Bathsheba. He is just using the Victorian male power to flirt her. He declares: "I am a middle aged man willing to protect you for the remaining of our lives"<sup>21</sup>.

Indeed, a Victorian woman who is supposed to be the weaker sex in these specific situations needs male protection; but Boldwood would rather advocate pity than love. He appears ruthless that way. He contrasts Gabriel Oak who is able to feel pity for others. With the pitying attitude, Oak regularly calls on Bathsheba without pretending any renewal of love although his heart is constantly filled with an intense love for her. He is aware of Bathsheba's suffering which includes anguish, loneliness and desolation. Despite Boldwood's pressures, Bathsheba proves to be a person who has some principles and wants to respect them. Contrary to Maggie Tulliver who, in *the Mill on the Floss*, returned to St Ogg's to face her society's reaction after her escaping with Stephen Guest, Bathsheba prefers conformism to breaking the laws of her society. She is aware of the scandal and the shock she would create for her society if she accepts to remarry immediately. So, she replies through the following lines:

Even where I am half persuaded that I shall see him no more, I am far from thinking of marriage with another. I should be very contemptible to indulge in such a thought<sup>22</sup>.

As it can be clearly seen, tragedy is going through its normal process, connected with the impossibility of a Victorian woman to remarry before seven years of her husband's disappearance or death and Boldwood's non-conformism to this social order. All that will lead Boldwood to murder; he kills Troy by shooting him when the latter reappears to conquer his legitimate wife Bathsheba. Boldwood is sentenced to death as punishment for murdering Frank Troy. It is indeed written "Boldwood, as everyone supposed he would do, had pleaded guilty, and had been sentenced to

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 413.

<sup>22</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 412.

death"<sup>23</sup>. Through this quotation, one understands that Boldwood is never going to be released and for human passion's sake one may have a pity for him. Oak is one among others who feels pity for him and Hardy makes this clear when he writes:

Gabriel's anxiety was great that Boldwood might be saved, even though in his conscience he felt that he ought to die; for there had been qualities in the farmer which Oak loved<sup>24</sup>

I notice through this quotation that Oak is a strange character. He feels pity for people. Moreover, this human dimension which consists in feeling for others despite their tragic flaws is intensified by Casterbridge's inhabitants, who advocate a mental disease as the cause of the crime committed through a petition sent to justice:

A petition was addressed to the Home Secretary, advancing the circumstances which appeared to justify a request for a reconsideration of the sentence. It was not "numerously signed" by the inhabitants of Casterbridge, as is usual in such cases, for Boldwood had never made many friends over the counter<sup>25</sup>.

It is noticed here that in great democracies like that of Great Britain, public opinion can even have an influence upon the decision of the judicial power. The result in Boldwood is that, instead of being sentenced to death, he is just going to be put into jail for a number of years and be released.

Yes--'tis come. He's not to die. 'T is confinement during Her Majesty's pleasure". "Hurrah!" said Coggan, with a swelling heart. "God's above the devil yet"<sup>26</sup>.

Another important example of tragedy in the novel is the downfall of Gabriel. His sheep dog herds all his sheep over the cliff. This completely destroys Gabriel's prosperity because he now has to work for someone else.

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 447.

<sup>24</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 449.

<sup>25</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 447.

<sup>26</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 449.

# Chapter Three: A Critical Analysis of Hardy's Views in the Book

## 3.1 Comment on his View about Love

To the question: what are Hardy's novels and poems about? My answer would be that they are about love and marriage. But, what is the cause of the unsuccessfulness of most character's love and marriage in Hardy's works? Hardy's naturalism and his philosophy will certainly help me to clarify the situation. My understanding of *Far From the Madding Crowd* allows me to argue that Hardy's view about love and people's desires in general, is a pessimistic one. In my attempt to explain this philosophy, I shall first refer to what Butler calls the theory of the possible and the actual, to mean that, these are the two elements that essentially underlie that philosophy. So, the basic issue of the possible and the actual appears to Hardy most forcibly not in social or economic life, but in the realm of love.

Among all creatures, only human beings have a view of the possible in so far as they can express some ideas consciously. For example, Bathsheba thinks that it is possible for a woman to manage an estate, she always dreams of a good lover to marry. Boldwood's desire is to get rid of his bachelorhood. As Troy, what he thinks possible, is to cheat women that is, to treat them unfairly. Contrary to humans, the other creatures live by one law: the law of nature, evolution, and that is what Hardy calls the *immanent will*. Although people are aware of the possible they do not escape the immanent will that is, the actual. So, people live by two laws: the law of nature and the love of their own desires and inspiration. But the law of nature does not stop at the boundaries of something called the natural world; it runs for people and society as well as for other creatures. So, there is a kind of tension between the possible and the actual. This conflict between the two notions appears as much

within people as between them and the hostile external force. The causes of such event as the failure of marriage and love are unimaginably complex. For example, Fanny Robin fails to marry Troy. Gabriel has longed for Bathsheba for a time but in vain. Beautiful Bathsheba has real difficulties in knowing a stable matrimonial situation. The immanent will is, therefore, the energy that sustains the universe and is as much responsible for the aforementioned characters' difficulties to get married and be loved as it is for their disappointment.

In the same way, when Gabriel Oak is ruined in the early chapter of *Far From the Madding Crowd* because his sheep run over the cliff to their deaths, it is a perfect example of the natural law in action. Here, I can clearly see the true meaning of Hardy's pessimistic view of things and mainly in love and marriage. The problem is that we do not always get what we want or desire: Oak's desire is that the sheep should grow fast and healthy to improve or increase his income, but nature decides otherwise. I will just link this incident to natural facts.

It has to be clear, that on some occasions people's will coincides with the immanent will while on other occasions people may propose what they want but the will disposes that quite different things should come about. Surely people have some desires; yet what thwarts them apart from the will itself? The remark is that the will is quite unaware of people's ambitions and in the face of that fact people's best choice is withdrawal, resignation, learning, not to desire. The importance of this disparity between the possible and the actual varies according to the strength of the will and the desire thwarted. I wanted brown bread but the baker had only white is a trivial example. I had an aptitude as a scholar but society would not admit a stonemason to oxford is another such considerable and more important example.

In short, and to be nearer Hardy's view of love, let's put the following question: what is a man's highest and strongest desire, then? And what is his greatest thwarting? Surely his experience of love is described in the preface to *Jude the Obscure* as the strongest passion known to humanity. According to Hardy, love can kill; it can also destroy (Boldwood), torture (Fanny) and elevate its objects to the highest level; it can even do the lover himself (Gabriel Oak). As I shall see in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Hardy also approves the possibility of love based on affection and on natural involvement in a joint enterprise. Oak is certainly passionately attached to Bathsheba but his final union with her, promises permanence and satisfaction precisely because it is more than passion or infatuation. I have only to think of the situation just before storm, in chapter thirty-six, to see this point. Troy, on the contrary, is drunk, careless; Oak is working on the Ricks beside Bathsheba, working because he cares. And he cares not merely about the woman (Boldwood does not) but about the corn too.

Being thwarted, particularly in love is the stuff of Hardy's works. This novel is a fair example of how these thwarting and disappointment are brought about. In reporting Hardy's complete thought, Butler mentions "the causes of action are thought unimaginably complex, and among them must be numbered the protagonist's own doings"<sup>27</sup>. This operates at the fundamental level at which all action is an offering of hostages to fortune: Oak only fails as a sheep farmer because he tries to be sheep farmer. It also operates at the level familiar to us from the traditions of tragedy: Bathsheba, Boldwood, Troy and even Oak have some tragic flaws in their characters. Most of them are impetuous, headstrong and overfond. They sow the seed of their own disasters. But then, they are as they are because of a long and

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<sup>27</sup> John Butler. *Thomas Hardy*. London: Cambridge University Press. 1978. P. 6

many-stranded web of cause and effect constantly brought by the immanent will. This largely determinist view of human action led Hardy to describe people's freedom as being the freedom of the pianist's fingers to move. The analysis of this image will make clear that it leaves nothing at all of human freedom; elsewhere, Hardy suggested that we have freedom to change the course of events when everything else is momentarily equal or in balance.

The main area in which people struggle in their losing battle against their will, is love. As mentioned above, Hardy apparently was not concerned mainly with economic, social, dimensions of human life, nor was he concerned with the description of Wessex as such. But his concern is to show through the characters, how people's desires being thwarted make them suffer. To summarise this philosophy, I will say that the responsibilities in the thwarting of people's desires are shared between the so-called the immanent will and people's own weakness.

Let us come back to how imposing nature is to the characters in *Far From the Madding Crowd*. I will explain it by selecting some episodes from the chapters to illustrate my point of view. But, I will not deal with the chapters in their logical order; neither shall I take them all into account. In this case, chapter 18, Entitled "Boldwood in meditation-regret" is the point at which the novel turns. To start with, I shall simply say that the earlier chapters have introduced us to the characters and their pastoral world where they are seen in their daily lives with the belief that they have no inner-will, but that, their fate shaped by nature. Indeed, as far as the central theme which is love is concerned, I have only been given a general view of probable areas of conflicts. The impression one has is that those characters are made to follow or to obey natural order. For example, when Oak's fortunes have risen and fallen, this proves to be a natural fact and does nothing to challenge his fate. Similarly, when

Boldwood was sent a valentine, he takes it for granted and blindly proves ready to start running after a woman he has never loved before. From this point of view, he seems to be an involved figure and undergoes his lot. At the specific spring season when he is seen completely out of his former reserve to start seeking Bathsheba, it is deduced that he is compared to the spring, and that he is thought to change when the season changes: "I was now early spring and the year has suddenly and unexpectedly melted, like Boldwood's winter reserve"<sup>28</sup>. Here, the description can be seen as analogous to the stirring forces in Boldwood. So, in one way or another, there is a subconscious connection between the seasons and Boldwood whose behaviour is probably determined by the sudden arrival of spring. Symbols are drawn from nature by Hardy to illustrate the failure of love and marriage. Let me take the willow tree as an example to show my point of view. It has been said that Boldwood is overhung by a willow tree, which is a sign for unsuccessful love and marriage between him and Bathsheba. Butler (1978) informs us: "the willow branch was traditionally worn in the hat by rejected lovers"<sup>29</sup>. Besides, when Bathsheba looks up and reveals her face to Oak, he regards this as "the uncertain glory of an April day"<sup>30</sup> which probably stands for a Shakespearean synonym for youth and changeable. In short, the uncertain glory here refers especially to the changeableness of love.

Another way of accounting for Hardy's naïve and passive characters as seen in their rustic world is that there are some naturalistic features in his major fictions. Unquestionably indeed, Hardy's merit as a naturalistic writer is revealed through his adherence to nature in literature. His system of thought forcibly rejects the supernatural and divine revelation to reveal that natural causes and laws are the basis of the explanation of all phenomena. Really, Hardy is attached to nature, and

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<sup>28</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 72.

<sup>29</sup> John Butler. *Thomas Hardy*. London: Cambridge University Press. 1978. P. 16.

<sup>30</sup> Hardy, Op. Cit., P. 174.

that is what makes him claim to have dealt with naturalism, a literary conception which states that, man is the product of his environment. Naturalists state that a person is what his environment makes him. Therefore, human beings almost reduced to slaves of their environment, have no more power than showing neutrality before different events that confront their existence. Such is the case of Hardy's characters in their rural area. They are so weak vis-à-vis natural forces that they are simply led by them. Naturalistic writers often display naïve and passive characters; they reveal the tragic aspects of human kind. They mostly feel concerned with the sordid and horrible aspects that human are endowed with; they usually make it their job to deal with shocking human attitudes. The description made of Oak in Chapter four is an example. Indeed, before going to ask for Bathsheba's hands, we see him putting oil on his hair to smarten himself

He used all the hair-oil he possessed upon his usually dry, sandy, and inextricably curly hair, till he had deepened it to a splendidly novel colour, between that of guano and Roman cement, making it stick to his head like mace round a nutmeg, or wet seaweed round a boulder after the ebb<sup>31</sup>

Through these comparisons, Oak is regarded as an unconscious object. It is essentially through him that the follies of love are clearly seen, and one may feel affections for his bizarre attempt to make himself sexually attractive here. It is also noticeable that the immanent will at work is revealed by Hardy, whose comments apply not only to his characters but also to all humankind. In chapter one for instance, Hardy shifts from the particular to the universal, limiting himself to a comment or two. When Oak pays the two pence for Bathsheba to pass through the turnpike, Hardy comments that

She might have looked her thanks to Gabriel on a minute scale, but she did not speak them; more

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<sup>31</sup>Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 75.

probably she felt none, for in gaining her a passage he had lost her point, and we know how women take a favour of that kind<sup>32</sup>.

These words show that not only Bathsheba's behaviour is portrayed here, but that of the womankind in general. There are, of course, the instances on the individual's conditioning by the environment, that is, determinism which forms a basic part of naturalist's conception of human being and his environment. Thus, nature is too imposing to almost all the characters so much so that one may think that they are part of nature itself. Oak has not changed throughout the story; he is and he has remained a farmer and a goat shearer; Bathsheba is and has remained a rural woman.

Moreover, Hardy describes the wind as if it were a human being suffering. I can read:

How the trees on the right and the tree on the left wailed or chanted to each other the regular antiphonies of a cathedral choir; how hedges and other shapes to leeward then caught the note, lowering it to the tenderness sob; and how the hurrying gusts then plunged into the south, to be heard no More<sup>33</sup>

Here, the wind is referred to as the impersonal choir has become able to make the tenderness sob is then impatiently torn away from the association with human kind, and rushes into the darkness. As a matter of course, the world "sob" here represents the disappointed lover's distress. In few words, love is a force which causes suffering in the world of Thomas Hardy. The women-folk, specially, are its chosen victims. As we are told in *Tess*, the cruel cause of things has hardened them with the powerful sex-instinct which they have neither desired nor welcomed, and as a result of which they have to pass sleepless nights.

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 56.

<sup>33</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P.58.

Nevertheless, there are significant references to the moon in Thomas Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd*. The essence in Hardy's use of the moon, though, lies not in its feminine symbolism, but rather in its representation of love. The relationship of the characters and the way in which love presents itself to each may be associated with, and analyzed by, observing the presence or absence, as well as, the phase of the moon. Each primary character's position toward love is depicted throughout the novel by Hardy's use of the moon. The relationship between the moon, love, and Hardy's characters is evident upon a closer examination of the text. For example, the first sighting of Bathsheba, by Oak, takes place in the morning during the absence of moon and stars. After the first sighting of Bathsheba, but still before any feelings on Oak's part, two references are made about Oak and the stars each noting the clearness and high placement in the sky, "The sky was clear remarkably clear and the twinkling of all the stars seemed to be but throbs of one body, timed by a common pulse"<sup>34</sup> and later, I can read

The Dog-star and Aldebaran, pointing to the restless Pleiades were half way up the southern sky, and beneath them hung Orion which gorgeous constellation never burnt more vividly than now as it swung itself high above the rim of the landscape<sup>35</sup>.

The absence of the moon and the solid placement of the stars represent Oak's autonomy as well as his stableness of character. Oak's curiosity is piqued when he notices a light that he had mistaken for a low lying star; he goes to investigate and finds Bathsheba and her aunt tending to a calf who had recently been birthed. It is at this point that Oak first becomes infatuated with Bathsheba, not yet to the point of love, but generating the notion that love is on its way; the calf mistakes Bathsheba's lantern for the moon and Oak having then for within him, his position moreover

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<sup>34</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 9.

<sup>35</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 12.

affording the widest scope for his fancy, he straightway paints her a beauty. The moon from this point begins to play an increasingly important role as an indicator of the characters' feelings. Bathsheba and Oak begin to associate with one another. They share several interludes in the days to follow, but their love is not yet to be. After Oak declares his desire to marry Bathsheba and is denied; the next mention of the moon is placed in its waning period going into the new moon phase where shortly it will be absent. When Bathsheba sends a valentine to Boldwood; the moon is then described in a manner that helps to define the nature, character, and feelings that lie within Boldwood, "The moon shone to-night, and its light was not of a customary kind"<sup>36</sup> it is further described as "Over the west hung the wasting moon, now dull and greenish-yellow, like tarnished brass"<sup>37</sup> Boldwood's love for Bathsheba is not an ordinary love, nor is it healthy. The state of the moon as previously described sets in motion a warning as to the events that will follow concerning Bathsheba and Boldwood.

The relationship between Boldwood and Bathsheba becomes increasingly sicker, ending with Boldwood's complete obsession for Bathsheba and his own destruction. Before the actual demise of Boldwood, there is a brief expectation that maybe things will work out for the two of them. After Troy's disappearance, Boldwood becomes ever more persistent in gaining a promise of marriage by Bathsheba. She has reached a point where she feels remorse for having sent the valentine that encouraged his desire for her. It appears that they will come to an agreement on marriage which could with their combined emotions, his overzealous love for her and her lack of love for him, end in a type of balance or compromise, "For the moon and

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<sup>36</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 88.

<sup>37</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 89.

the hill it flooded with light were in appearance on a level”<sup>38</sup>. The moon’s presence has so far been used in each example as an indication of how each character feels about love in concern to one of the other characters. Hardy’s use of the moon for this purpose continues as I examine Troy, Fanny and Bathsheba. Bathsheba’s encounter with Troy, her first husband, during his demonstration of the sword-exercise is indicative to the idea that their marriage will be a loveless one of misfortune. This may be shown in the absence of the moon (the exercise takes place while the sun is still up), and in the reference to the falling stars. I can read “In short, she was enclosed in a firmament of lights and sharp hisses, resembling a sky-full of meteors close at hand”<sup>39</sup>. The doomed marriage and lack of true love is also displayed when Oak looks at the moon on the night of Troy and Bathsheba’s wedding celebration. The night is described as “sinister” and “The moon as seen through these films had a lurid metallic look”<sup>40</sup>. The metallic reference brings to mind Troy’s love of Bathsheba’s money. The woman who is truly in love with Troy, that is Fanny, is now without her lover. She has become miserable and sick, left alone in the world with no one to love. The description of who is a woman that wakes “To find herself in the depths of a moonless and starless night”<sup>41</sup>. The reaction and feelings of all three characters in this triangle can be predicted by Hardy’s use of the heavenly bodies. It can be seen that Bathsheba is only infatuated with Troy, not in love, due to the moon’s absence and the falling stars. Troy is preoccupied with Bathsheba’s money, the metallic moon, and Fanny has lost all that is important to her, the total absence of moon and stars.

Does true love ever come about in Hardy’s novel and is there an indication of it in his use of the moon? After all is said and done, Bathsheba and Oak are united in

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<sup>38</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 306.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 162.

<sup>40</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 209.

<sup>41</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 229.

marriage but nothing is clearly defined for the reader as to how that marriage will be. There are, however, signs from Hardy that I can use, which may lend an answer to the question of whether the pattern of the moon continues. Revamping the earlier view of where Bathsheba and Oak left off; it had been sunrise when they first met. The waning moon was out after the initial marriage rejection. Subsequently, the natural phase of the moon after the waning crescent is the new moon. This could be interpreted as the time that Bathsheba and Oak's love had been kept in the dark, or their separated state of relationship. Hardy sets up the novel's end when Bathsheba goes to see Oak "Just after sunset, guided on her way by the pale primrose rays of a crescent moon a few days old"<sup>42</sup>. There are a couple of indications in this line that lead one to the conclusion that Oak and Bathsheba will be entering a true love stage of their relationship. First, Bathsheba goes to Oak at sunset, this being representative of a full day's passing since the first meeting at sunrise; they have now reached a point of closure. Second, the moon is now waxing; it has left the new moon phase and is progressing into the full moon phase. If the new moon phase has represented the time that Bathsheba and Oak were separated in their love, then the full moon phase would represent a time where their love is spent together. Both of these signs explained that Bathsheba and Oak will now be living a fulfilling life together.

Furthermore love is clearly described as unrequited in the novel. The novel is driven, from the first few chapters, by Gabriel Oak's love for Bathsheba. Once he has lost his farm, he is free to wander anywhere in search of work, but he heads to Weatherbury because it is in the direction that Bathsheba has gone. This move leads to Oak's employment at Bathsheba's farm, where he patiently consoles her in her troubles and supports her in tending the farm, with no sign he will ever have his love

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 345.

returned. Oak's feelings for Bathsheba parallel Boldwood's feelings for Bathsheba. Given the fact that Bathsheba sends Boldwood a provocative valentine, sealed with the strong message "Marry Me," Boldwood has good reason to believe she might love him. On the other hand, she tries to extinguish any such belief, telling Boldwood repeatedly she will not marry him. Unlike Oak, who is willing to take Bathsheba at her word, Boldwood looks for the slightest sign in what she says that there may be a chance she may change her mind. Since she is not strong or strict in her refusal of him, there is always room for him to believe that she is softening. Bathsheba herself suffers a similar unrequited love for Sergeant Troy. She feels he is mistreating her once they are married.

To add more to the comment that one shall make after reading *Far From the Madding Crowd*, it is necessary to say that love is a strong affection that knows no boundaries. Love is blind so that a rich can love a poor; an older can love a young and time does not destroy one's love, but can make it grow deeper.

### **3.2 Comment on his View about Tragedy**

The pangs of tragedy scratch Bathsheba's existence. The male characters too seem only lightly touched by the tragic. Gabriel's successive disappointments with his beloved might destroy him however he remains a dignified character, repeatedly praised by those around him. His constancy and loyalty lead him to silence his feelings in the text. During the shearing, he feels content because Bathsheba is near him although he cannot woo her. He so effaces himself that his desire and sadness can be felt but are eventually hardly remembered. In spite of the numerous allusions to Gabriel's love for his mistress on pages 115, 150 and 190, his position is typified by self-forgetfulness as this short exchange with Coggan, one of the rustics, highlights.

"What difference does it make whose sweetheart she is, since she can't be yours?"<sup>43</sup>

He, therefore, is not tragic in a classical meaning. His tragedy would be a tragedy of silence, a tragedy of extinction and of the loss of the object. He is more of a 'pastoral king' than a hero in a tragedy.

On the other hand, Troy, after Fanny's death, could appear like Romeo in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, to those who believe him dead. Yet the reader is informed without delay that he does not attempt to kill himself after his Juliet's death. His drowning, had it been fatal, might have acquired tragic undertones. Suppose that Troy had followed Fanny into another world. Had he done this intentionally, yet contrived to make his death appear like an accident. There is no lofty intention behind Troy's desire to plunge into the sea. The two possible readings of Troy and Fanny's story are suggested by Bathsheba as she contemplates her husband's watch containing a lock of Fanny's hair. But, she clearly declares:

He was hers and she was his; they should be gone together,' she said. 'I am nothing to either of them, and why should I keep her hair?' She took it in her hand, and held it over the fire. 'No—I'll not burn it—I'll keep it in memory of her, poor thing!' she added, snatching back her hand<sup>44</sup>.

In the highly dramatic scene in which Troy is shot dead by Boldwood, the text may seem to gain "certain cathartic, Aristotelian qualities" to quote Hardy. The spectacular events not only recall Aristotle's discourse in his *Poetics*, but they also enact Boldwood's menacing words to Troy in chapter XXXIV. The notion of fate seems adequate to describe the final consequence of Boldwood's rage against Bathsheba's husband. For after having been tricked by Troy, Boldwood expresses his fury in terms that foreshadow the end of the novel. Troy seems doomed to die

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 114.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 252.

from that moment and his death may function as purification from what is evil. I could read

Boldwood shook his clenched fist at him. You juggler of Satan! You black hound! But I'll punish you yet; mark me, I'll punish you yet!' in. Throughout the whole of that night Boldwood's dark form might have been seen walking about the hills and downs of Weatherbury like an unhappy Shade<sup>45</sup>

Troy's satanic laughter is silenced and order is restored after his death. Gabriel can at last marry Bathsheba who arranged her hair this morning as she had worn it years ago on Norcombe Hill, she seemed in his eyes remarkably like a girl of that fascinating dream, which, considering that she was now only three or four-and-twenty, was perhaps not very wonderful. Such apparent recovery of the past and restoration of order could become markers of the tragic in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Nevertheless the reader receives the fact of Troy's death as mere justice. It is at best a mock-catharsis. The notion of catharsis, understood as the purification of those emotions which are pity and fear for the reader, does not function properly. If Bathsheba's predicament is fearful and awe-inspiring, our pity for Boldwood is checked by his insensitivity and even cruelty in his treatment of his beloved before the murder scene. As for Troy, he has become such a highly despicable character at that point of the narrative that his death is but the necessary wiping out of the narrative of a disruptive element.

Similarly, catharsis as the purging of the protagonist's guilt does not function either for Troy has achieved no heroism. His death is so sudden that he is not even aware of the punishment he received and is never allowed to express his guilt and is significantly depicted in a way that makes him a figure of evil, dressed up in

a heavy grey overcoat of Noachian cut, with cape and high collar, the latter being erect and rigid, like a girdling wall, and nearly reaching to the verge of a

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 182.

travelling cap which was pulled down over his ears and laughing “a mechanical laugh<sup>46</sup>

The only male character who can be deemed tragic in the text is Boldwood. He was a gentleman with full and distinctly outlined Roman features. After sending him the valentine, he discovers love and his devouring passion for Bathsheba makes him suffer unspeakable pain. I can read:

those who have the power of reproaching in silence may find it a means more effective than words. There are accents in the eye which are not on the tongue, and more tales come from pale lips than can enter an ear. It is both the grandeur and the pain of the remoter moods that they avoid the pathway of sound. Boldwood's look was unanswerable<sup>47</sup>.

His passion for Bathsheba will make him commit a murder. His murderous act is a way for him to achieve some heroism as he frees the woman he loves from her bondage to her unworthy husband. Tragedy brushes his name, but then the tale drifts away from the tragic again towards irony, as Boldwood is denied the relief and grandeur of death. Having failed to take his own life he declares: “There is another way for me to die”<sup>48</sup>. Such could be his tragic end but of this he is deprived too. Tragedy is displaced again: this ironic, even sarcastic obstinacy of the narration in refusing to let Boldwood die brings him to discover and undergo a tragedy of emptiness and absence.

Furthermore, tragedy in terms of digenesis is abortive in ***Far from the Madding Crowd***. The characters are not given the depth and greatness of either Tess or Jude. However, there is something tragic in the text which announces Hardy's later novels. “The most tragic woman is cowed by a tragic man” says the narrator about Bathsheba and Boldwood. Bathsheba is not the most tragic woman,

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<sup>46</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 280-289.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 156-157.

<sup>48</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 290.

but the expression is significant. First, it points to the link between the notion of tragedy and the question of gender. Second, the generalizing tone of the narrative comment allows for wide interpretation: the man in question is Boldwood but it could also be understood that her other men, including Gabriel, overawe Bathsheba. While the protagonist's name evokes the archangel, his role in the novel so evolves as to become disquieting. Boldwood's silenced will, for instance, is mainly Gabriel's doing. The latter takes care to visit the convict in Casterbridge and is anxious to prevent Boldwood from being sentenced to death. The text does not say so clearly but it may be assumed that Gabriel is one of the main actors in the signing of the petition that aims to soften the sentence because of Boldwood's alleged insanity. The narrator suggests Gabriel is acting so because of his sympathetic feelings for Boldwood. But Liddy points out that Bathsheba's own physical and mental health depends on the sentence: "I do so hope his life will be spared" said Liddy "If it is not, she'll go out of her mind too"<sup>49</sup>. Both Bathsheba's and Boldwood's fates are literally in Gabriel's hands. Tragedy is brought to a halt and death stops its course because of Gabriel, the right man at the right place. He sets things right by depriving Boldwood of his voice and ultimate desire. Similarly, he silences Bathsheba: "she becomes Gabriel's wife and he speaks for her – me and my wife"<sup>50</sup>. Boldwood's consuming, destructive desire has been quenched. Troy's evil spirit has been eliminated. The angel-like Gabriel, on the contrary, goes against the tide. At the beginning of the novel, he is subjected to Bathsheba who has the power to choose her men – as lovers or workers – and who has the money. He is even feminised, as we have suggested, and appears almost as weak and poor as Fanny when he first meets her. As his rivals come in the foreground, his character fades and becomes fairly dull in the course of

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 296.

<sup>50</sup> Hardy, *Ibid.*, P. 306.

events. But when he emerges again as a protagonist because the rivals have been eliminated, he appears suddenly manlier. His patience is rewarded a hundredfold and the irony of the tale looms up again. There is something excessive in the itinerary of the modest and ruined shepherd, the awkward bachelor, who becomes a powerful landlord and contented husband. Bathsheba's fate is even more ironic. Her newly acquired freedom from Troy's evil power and Boldwood's fearful desire soon vanishes with her union to Gabriel who now owns her and her property, as Troy had done before. From the moment Bathsheba and Oak get marriage, her property is his, her person is his. Like Troy earlier, Gabriel can now rule in the room of his wife, in agreement with nineteenth century custom. She stops speaking. She is not even heard laughing: "Bathsheba smiled for she never laughed readily now"<sup>51</sup>. The tone, however, is not tragic: she took the first step toward that wedding, she admires Oak's example, she is happy. But it is pathetic in that it stages the slow invasion and empowerment of patriarchal order into a sphere that seemed to allow for feminine freedom. The tragedy, therefore, is the tragedy of femininity. The voice of woman is silenced – just like Boldwood's voice which, for being *other* and discordant in the end, can be called *feminine*.

The ultimate embodiment of the feminine in the text is Fanny. She stands for woman at a loss about her position in human society, confronted with the impossibility to know where she belongs for she belongs nowhere. Fanny's death is like the logical and smooth continuation of her shadowy half-existence. In the scene of the barracks she looks like an element of the natural setting, a mere spot on a dark background. She is always on the margin and objectified by the other's gaze: she is not "she" but "it" in this passage; she is the lock of hair in Troy's watch; she is the

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<sup>51</sup> Thomas, Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 308.

dead body lying in her coffin and offered to Bathsheba's intrusive gaze. Fanny is a lonely suffering figure isolated from the rest of the world on the night of the fire she is reportedly missing; Gabriel later meets her near the churchyard outside Weatherbury without knowing who she is; Troy will never manage to see her at the appointed time, either on the occasion of the failed wedding or on her return to Casterbridge. Her uncommon beauty, like Antigone's, makes her fall in love with evil, incarnated by Troy. Combined to her youth, innocence and extreme suffering, Fanny's death has a tragic ring and causes Bathsheba to run away, thus achieving a form of catharsis for her and, consequently, for the reader:

Oh-h-h!' she [Bathsheba] said, and the silent room added length to her moan. Her tears fell fast beside the unconscious pair in the coffin: tears of a complicated origin, of a nature indescribable, almost indefinable except as other than those of simple sorrow. [...] The one feat alone—that of dying—by which a mean condition could be resolved into a grand one, Fanny had achieved. [...] In Bathsheba's heated fancy the innocent white countenance expressed a dim triumphant consciousness of the pain she was retaliating for her pain with all the merciless rigour of the Mosaic Law: 'Burning for burning; wound for wound; strife for strife'<sup>52</sup>

The tragic is decentred onto Fanny whose silent burden points to the condition of woman without bringing it to the foreground. The ending of *Far from the Madding Crowd* focuses instead on the return to a previous order in a pastoral world and reassures the reader as to Bathsheba's fate for she is never dishonoured: the female protagonist starts again with a clean slate, having been given no child by Troy whose existence is carefully wiped out. The time that has elapsed too is reduced to nothing. It is this disappearance of what has been, the denial of past errors and emotions, as well as the muffling of female voices that is tragic. Only with Tess will Hardy dare to give full voice to and shed a crude light on the tragedy of

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<sup>52</sup> Thomas Hardy. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. England: Penguin English library. 1978. P. 228.

femininity. Tragedy as a genre is abortive in ***Far from the Madding Crowd***, although most of its characters experience “life’s little tragedies”. Yet the text is already disturbing in its treatment of the gender question. This is in fact what characterizes Hardy’s style and vision. Even in ***Under the Greenwood Tree***, a gentle pastoral novel, the question is dealt with in a fairly subversive manner. The unconfessed lie stands for the flaw in the marriage that creeps into the last pages, ruffles the smooth surface of the tale and disturbs the reader.

The appearance of normality at the end of ***Far from the Madding Crowd*** is not more satisfactory. The reward Gabriel receives for his patience and loyalty seems a high price to pay for Bathsheba. Deprived of her feminine, “double, deceptive, contradictory” voice, she is now a silent object in the collection of her husband’s possessions. Bathsheba stands for the woman subjected to the univocal voice of her master and of patriarchal law. Thomas Hardy’s forthcoming writings, both poetical with the “She to Him” poems, and fictional with the characters of Eustacia, Tess and Sue, will be repeated attempts to give woman her voice back. The intrusion of the feminine will gradually overshadow the novels and overpower the seraphic male characters such as Angel or Gabriel, giving way to the flamboyant darkness of *Jude the Obscure*.

## Chapter Four: Personal View about Love and Tragedy

Love is conceived in different ways. For some it's passion, for others love means loyalty, compassion, giving, friendship. It is like a wind that you cannot see but you can feel. It is patient. It is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast. It is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. It does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. It never fails. In fact, love is dependent on what a person experienced. For those who are happy beings in love, they might define it as the best feeling they've ever felt. But for others who always need to fix their broken heart, Love hurts! It is an emotion that cannot be controlled. . It cannot be bought, sold or traded. It makes you smile. It makes cry, and makes you feel alive.

Love brings your heart into relationship and when the heart is in relationship there is always pain. If you avoid the pain, you will miss all pleasures of life. With love you become human; you stand erect on earth. All lovers feel a little miserable. They would like to disappear completely, but it is not possible in human relationships. Human relationship is limited. But one learns from it. . Love is a training ground, a school, to learn first lessons of the beauty, of the blessing and benediction of disappearance; to learn that pain is blessed. So when you are in love, or when love arises, cooperate with it, don't try resisting. People come to a compromise. The basic problem that I have been looking at is that lovers by and by come to a compromise. The compromise is: Don't hurt me and I will not hurt you. That's what marriage is. Then people become settled. They become so afraid of pain that they say, "Don't hurt me and I will not hurt you." But then when pain disappears, love also disappears. Love and pain exit together. When you are in love, love hurts. It hurts terribly. But

never resist, never create any barrier for pain. Allow it. And by and by you will see that it was a wrong interpretation. It is not really pain. It is just that something is going so deep in you.

Love and suffering are inseparable companions; one cannot be radically open to love without being radically vulnerable to suffering. They are two aspects of the same experience, two sides of the same coin. So much of what is defined as love is based on an unspoken law of reciprocity. True love offers itself not expecting or needing anything in return. True love is willing to suffer for the sake of the other person. I am called at times to suffer as I love. Love requires sacrifice. It takes its eyes off and puts them on another. It offers itself even if rejected; even if exploited.

## Conclusion

To put an end to this research work about love and tragedy in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, I confirm that it is a wide and complex issue, an issue which corresponds to the width and complexity of life itself. So, Hardy's novels can be classified into three groups: *Far From the Madding Crowd* belongs to the first group that is the novels of character and environment; the second group which is romances and fantasies includes *A Pair of Blue Eyes*; the third and last group to which such novels as *Desperate Remedies* belongs is known as the novels of ingenuity. Each group deals with human condition apparently and indifferent to sufferings that rules the human world. But not human aspects are dealt by Hardy.

As a whole, love seems to be Hardy's concern throughout his novels; what is obvious is humour related to love. The remark one makes is that, Bathsheba, Boldwood and Troy are faced with a moral choice but they all go astray. The failure of a good choice has brought each of them sufferings of all kinds. Thus, Bathsheba fails to understand that Oak can make a good husband and prefers sexual satisfactions with Troy to honesty and protection from Gabriel Oak. At the outset, she undergoes the tragic consequences of her wrong choice. She is the flattering of the shallow and self-indulgent Troy. As to Boldwood, his stubbornness and jealousy unmans him, and his emotions aroused by Bathsheba's magic words "*Marry me*" overpower his reasons. At the end, he kills his rival Troy and is sent to jail. His tragic end is the result of his own flaw although there seems to be fate behind each character's deed.

There is a kind of pessimism which apparently is the basis of the thwarting of the character's desire because no love has known success apart from Gabriel Oak's love for Bathsheba. Yet Hardy's philosophy about love does not advocate a "negative pessimism". Far from declaring all loves unsuccessful, Hardy has a careful attitude

vis-à-vis any love. Oak is the only character that preserves his judgement despite his expression of pastoral jealousy. Although *Far From the Madding Crowd* is planned to be but a tragedy, it ends happily. Oak survives and marries Bathsheba, who finally understands that a stable marriage or affection between “tried friends” must be based on common interests over romantic idealizing.

Furthermore, the narration of this novel is very interesting. Although it is written in the third person, its objectiveness changes from time to time. At some times, the narrator is very objective, looking at the subject from his own point of view. Everything is well explained but is not told from a certain character’s perspective. This can help the reader see everything in the scene because if it was explained from a certain character’s point of view, it is possible that he or she misses something. Hardy’s explanation of scenes and characters are mostly done in this matter. However, the narrator is subjective and views the subject from a character’s perspective. This narration makes it easy for the reader to understand what a certain character is thinking and this type of narrative is mostly used within dialogues. These two types of Third Person narration is used simultaneously and makes the reader understand the story.

Hardy’s view on love is very interesting and the characters from *Far from the Madding Crowd* each react differently to love which helps show us their personality. He takes a close look at marriage and the reasons for it. The story shows us marriage for three different reasons: for physical desire, for guilt, and for supportive love.

The concept of love involves many other concepts such as happiness, well being, joy, and beauty while the concept of tragedy implies suffering, unhappiness, and death. The two concepts seem contradictory. Normally, there should be no

tragedy in love matters. But it occurs sometimes. When it occurs one should consider that as an accident. So, tragedy in love is an accident.

If I love someone, do I need to kill myself or kill him because he decides to desert me? My answer is no because in *Far From the Madding Crowd* there is an episode where Bathsheba rejects Oak despite his true love for her. Another episode depicts Troy abandoning his legal wife Bathsheba. Although Oak and Bathsheba suffer a lot, they pay attention to what is going on in their environment. They behave according to the ethics of the society in which they are living. That is to say that there should be place for rationality in love matter.

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