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THE DESIRES WITH DISILLUSIONMENT AND DESTINY OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THE  
NOVEL THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

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ABSTRACT

Man has the earnest desires to gain what they want. The desire of human is unlimited no one knows where is the end of people login to gain more. But to approve the desires certainly there is an authority and the supreme authority is fate or destiny. Individual desires are banished by fate. If any collision occurs between free will and fate, definitely fate will win; fate is insurmountable where no other thinks will work. The Return of the Native is the realistic novel, it images the ordinary people who have all the regular feature of ordinary village life except one thing they have free will which is not permitted by the fate. This novel depicted the common life of the village but the lucrative charms of great cities and towns like London and Paris. In the no free will is present human are the puppet of fate powers those who struggle against fate, they face trouble and unhappiness in their life, so people should remain submissive to fate. The first scene of the novel is Egdon Heath; this valley is the nature of earth that exists for everything, the heath is the dark, immemorial environment whose influences control obscurely the lives and destinies of those, who dwell contentedly amid its wildernesses and those who feel themselves cruelly out of their element there. Egdon Heath symbolizes the whole cosmic order in which man is an insignificant one. It seems to be alive, to be impassively aware of what these men and women are doing and suffering.

Introductions

In The Return of the Native three things fate, desires and disillusionment created a tremendous effect upon the whole story. Eustacia the heroin in her fate is very cruel upon her, her all desires for a life of Paris, escape the boredoms of Egdon heath and have a great life with Clym become an end. Her disillusionment at first with Wildeve love, then getting married to a great-hearted, simple living man Clym makes her mourn. She is proud, but when Clym became furze cutter she feels humiliated to be a wife of the laborer. Clym love Eustacia in thinking she is village lady will help him in his project of Heath but the reality was different his disillusionment makes him broken so shoddily that he became a lonely man with unsatisfied desires for his rest of life. Wildeve the villain definitely knows about his evil scheme, but still desires for more and lastly died. Mrs. Yeobright a rigid woman has bad relationships with a son and daughter –in- law. No compromise was

possible at the end she took attempt, but bitten by an adder and died. She may play the role of councilor for her son and niece, but her nature just ruins everything. Thomasin (Tamsin) and Diggory Venn have also experienced a bitter fate due to other character faults. Both of them are honest, simple and loving in nature at last Thomasin realizes her love for Wildeve was a wrong and disaster for her. Diggory Venn out of courage can manage to marry Thomasin and started a new life after a long bitter journey.

Taylor, Richard, (1980) find out that , Pessimism and fatalism have freely been used by critics and readers to describe Hardy's philosophy of life, the writing of Hardy's principally put into words this viewpoint and this approach. He is pessimistic because he deems that man is born to endure pain, and he is fatalistic because he believes that destiny is antagonistic to man and that it presides over human life, the little free will of human beings often entail agonizing suffering upon them. Hardy merely is not a misanthropist. He does not regard man as essentially mean and wicked.

In his novel's villains are persons who all have obliterated the equilibrium of life, but Hardy mull over on the whole that there are more kindness and graciousness in human nature than malevolence and that man has heroic patience for a tolerance of misfortune. Furthermore, Hardy may call a determinist because determinism implies the logic of cause and effect. In Hardy's novels, the logic of cause and effect is as much at work as an arbitrary supernatural power.

Hardy believed that "happiness is an occasional episode in a general drama of pain." He thinks life is not a souvenir of bliss. The Life of each person in his novels, excluding the impervious rustics, is desolate, despondent, a state almost of damnation. Hardy's conception of life is essentially tragic: the conflict is one in which there is only the remotest chance of escape. The Man suffers from a lack of foresight and from an inability to subdue his own insubordinate nature; he must, therefore, be discontented; and the circumstances are aggravated by the operation of a mysterious, spiteful power which manifests itself through accidents and coincidences which promote to man's gloom. Nature is always masqueraded the supreme power where fate executes all its resolution. The tragedy in *The Return of the Native* is due largely to the flaws and slip-up of the characters themselves, and to that extent "character is fate", but the tragedy is also due partly to fate working through hostile accidents and coincidences, and through the forces of Nature here embodied in Egdon Heath.

Joseph Warren Beach (1922) said that Individual imperfection essentially resolves the itinerary of incidents in this novel and are, to a substantial degree, conscientious for the misery of the various characters. Clym has a noble temperament; he would like to serve his fellow human beings by educating them; he is not a materialistic or worldly type of man; in fact, he develops an aversion for worldly pursuits and, leaving the chic life of Paris, returns to Egdon Heath. We should not expect such a man to be discontented with life. But Clym has his constraint. He fails to recognize Eustacia's incongruity as a wife for a man like himself. He is incapable of adjudicator Eustacia's worldliness and love of jauntiness and even her passionate nature which render her utterly unfit to be a good wife to a man of his personality and temperament. She warns him that she does not have the makings of a "good home-spun wife", and his mother fervently tells him that he will lament his marriage with Eustacia whom she rightly illustrates as "an idle, voluptuous woman." But Clym does not heed these admonitions. Having fallen in love and married her, he next fails to keep her happy which perhaps he could have done by indulging some of her whims, responding in some way to the demands of her passion, trying to keep her in good humor; but he is not that sort of man, being too sober and even sedate. He fails, too, to wallop equilibrium between his mother and his wife, at first inclining enormously towards his wife and later very entirely towards his mother. Clym is, indeed, as incongruous for Eustacia as she for him. Eustacia's own disposition is immensely conscientious for her calamity. She has a yearning to reside in Paris, and though she had acknowledged that she could live with Clym even in a hermitage, she is not proficient to pacify this craving and therefore feels dejected on Egdon Heath. She cannot reconcile herself to Clym's inconspicuous occupation as a furze-cutter, or to Clym's stoical acceptance of his misfortune. She has, besides, a fervent temperament which does not find the satisfaction it craves. She is inconstant and fickle-minded; she is even on the verge of becoming unfaithful to Clym when tempted by Wildeve. Nor does she endeavor at any phase to appease her mother-in-law in order to make Clym contented.

Mrs. Yeobright, reputable matron for whom we feel a great tribute, is yet an unyielding and obdurate type of lady. Being sophisticated and shrewdly, she is unable to comprehend the working of Clym's mind and feels absolutely unsympathetic to his humanitarian projects. She conveys a firm opposition to Clym's educational plans and thus creates a wall between herself and him. The barrier, thus created becomes even stronger by her opposition to Eustacia. In this matter, we cannot blame her, because her judgment is sound and her warning proves to have been perfectly justified. But her unrelenting attitude towards Eustacia shows certain obstinacy towards human kindness. Nor do we understand how she could have trusted an ignorant yokel like Christian Cantle with a large sum of money.

Wildevie is the villain of the novel. He is the author of much of the depression that the various characters endure. He is an unscrupulous man, with a superficial nature and shifting loyalties. He fluctuates between one woman and another, marries one, but keeps pursuing another with ill motive, bringing uncertainty and despondency into the life of both. He's trying to revive his intimacy with Eustacia even after she has become the wife of another man merely complicates matters.

Hornback, Bert G (1971) fined that, the conscientiousness of the assorted characters for their anguish and affliction is thus obvious. We repeatedly have a percussion of wills and a divergence of purposes amid the various persons concerned, each pulling in a pole apart direction, No understanding or alteration is feasible among them. One speculates whether it is not after all the working of a hostile destiny which has placed these persons close to one another, making it impossible for them to attain melodious relationships. But destiny shows its authority in a yet more glaring form, namely in the form of mishap and happenstance. It is just when Mrs. Yeobright has at last gritty to take the greatest step towards reconciliation that the demon of mischance begins its game. Mrs. Yeobright's death is the outcome of a series of ironic accidents and coincidences. She arrives at her son's house at a time when Wildevie is having a cherished banter with Eustacia inside, and when she cannot instantaneously open the door. Mrs. Yeobright flip side and, on her homeward expedition, is bitten by an adder, the sting proving fatal. But before she is bitten by the adder, she tells the boy Johnny, whom she has met by pure chance, that her son had redundant her. Soon after Clym has driven out Eustacia, fate resumes its flippant jests. He writes a letter to her to come back, but the letter miscarries by a few minutes. Clym, unacquainted with this, sits in his house, lonely, waiting for Eustacia to knock. The night is the worst imaginable: the heath is beaten by wind and rain. At length, a woman's footstep is heard. He feels thrilled; thinking that it must be Eustacia He opens the door and finds Thomasin, who has come to tell him of Eustacia's departure with Wildevie, the flight that ends in their drowning. We must remember also that almost all Eustacia's meetings with Wildevie after her marriage with Clym have been accidental—the meeting at the village festival, the meeting on Egdon Heath when Mrs. Yeobright lies dying in a nearby hut, the meeting at her grandfather's house when Charley has, solely by likelihood without any directives from Eustacia, lighted a bonfire. While all these accidents are unquestionably liable to a great degree for the tragic events, they are supplemented by human unscrupulousness or blemish—dilatatoriness, stubbornness, wants of resourcefulness. Nevertheless, the grand satire lies in the fact that, whatever the cause, at the very moment the well-intentioned step is taken, events take such a course that the consequences prove demoralizing.

In The Return of the Native Nature has been always a grandee which is representing Egdon Heath. The heath is the murky primitive environment whose authority controls inexplicably the existing, fortune and destinies of those who reside cheerfully amid its wildernesses and also those who feel themselves cruelly out of their element here. Egdon Heath stands for the supreme power where nothing can keep their free will, in which man is but a trifling element. Eustacia gazes upon Egdon Heath as a great foe. She considers it as her "cross", as her "shame", and as the latent cause of her death. The blazing fire of her mysterious, beautiful soul is exaggerated by a great hatred of this austere monster that holds her back from the indulgence of her violent passions. On the night of her escape, the heath is flounce by rain and storm, thus providing a fit setting for Eustacia's death. Egdon Heath proves to be Mrs. Yeobright's enemy too, by killing her with a venomous creature from its own bosom. (To Clym, its chosen son, however, it is kinder. If Clym is the child of Egdon, the spirit is reddleman.

## Literature Review

Malton, Sara A. (2000) said that this novel is the reflection of people and how they adjust their misfits' fate. In the rustic Egdon Heath, especially women were very complicated, eccentric Eustacia, adamant Mrs. Yeobright believes that Eustacia is the worst match for her son and Susan Nunsuch, considers Eustacia a witch and at the end burn her wax image. The hero Clym also considers her a murderer and adulteress. She died to prevent her image as a degraded woman.

Asquith, Mark. *ibid.* Egdon Heath is the place of setting all the events and it is also a living character. It is mysterious and ancient. All the pagan lives dwell here without any hesitations. It has devoured so many lives without any remorse. To Thomasin, Clym, rustics' people and Diggory it is a stunning natural setting for a better life but for Eustacia, it is a place of hell and at the end it destroyed her.

Asquith, Mark. (2013) said that Thomas Hardy has chosen the most modern topic for his novels like erotic politics, disillusioned desire, the contradictory claim of nature and human society. These all characteristics make him modern writer, consciously he has a sense of classical tragedy. Hardy meticulously scrutinizes the three unities of time, place and action advocate that all the characters are striving to run away destinies and it will only accelerate their annihilation.

Hillis Miller (1970) In the Return of the native Hardy started with a set of ancient Heath where the heroin Eustacia constantly maneuver fate in hope that she can leave a poor life of heath and have a gorgeous life in Paris but her desires were terminated by fate. Wldeve shares Eustacia's dream and love in the same way his desires also come to an end with her. Clym with all good qualities can escape the ill fate but have a lonely, regretful life.

From the literature review, it is justified that all the works of other researchers or the articles are based on only one theme like fate or nature, other works on human society or on characters but not in full concentration on their desires, disillusionment, and destiny in the novel. So it is very significant to study these themes and focused on entire criticism. The widespread study of the characters' position will irradiate the main concern of writing.

## Methodology and importance of the Study

This is secondary research, where all the data have been collected from existing journals, articles, books, websites and research publications, seminar papers and so on. This research is an endeavor to discover the desires, disillusionment, and destiny of human beings in the novel *The Return of the Native*.

### The objectives of the study

- a) To find out the desires and disillusionments of women and men
- b) To identify the omnipresence of fate and nature
- c) To know the women and man's devotions in the relationship

### Book One: The Three Women

Brooks, Jean R (1987) presented that, *The Heath*, at this hour, was a place corresponding to human nature-neither ghastly hateful nor ugly; neither commonplace and unmeaning nor tame; but like man, slighted and enduring. It was singularly colossal and mysterious in its dark monotony. Its face suggested tragically possibilities Egdon Heath's Ancient Permanence Egdon was always at war with society, an untamable thing. Civilization was its enemy and its soil always looked the same. This great inviolate place had an ancient permanence which could never be claimed by the sea. The sea changed, changing the fields, rivers, villages and the people, yet Egdon remained the same. An old highway crossed its lower levels and a more aged barrow (mound) stood prominently over it.

In *The Return of the Native*, Hardy has given a significant title to this chapter. Human beings appear on the scene and are surrounded by troubles. We are introduced to a retired naval officer (Captain Vye), and

to a reddleman (Diggory Venn). The reddleman, described in favorable terms here, as a man with a prepossessing exterior, is basically a businessman who supplies red color to the farmers to dye their sheep. In his van, he hides a lady, he is a man not much inclined to talk, as he does not disclose the girl's identity and by doing so he shows a certain delicacy of feeling and certain decency. This has aroused our curiosity about the identity of the girl and her predicament.

The crowds are from neighboring villages furthermore made a pile of their furze faggots and set them on fire. The bonfires are the direct remnants of ancient druidical rites and Saxon ceremonies. The fire also symbolizes a spontaneous, Promethean rebelliousness against the coming of winter, the season that brings coldness, Misery, and death.

Another important character is introduced Wildeve and his failure to marry Thomasin. His behavior towards Thomasin is rather untailored. He doesn't seem to be profoundly in love with Thomasin. When the crowd had left the site of the bonfire on the barrow, a lone female, closely wrapped, approached the barrow. She was tall and straight in build and gracefully ladylike in her movements. She did not, at all, feel bothered by being alone in a lonely place at that time of the night. As she reached the top, the woman gave a deep sigh; Wildeve Answered the Signals

Eustacia was impatiently waiting for something for too long. A little later, the boy called out to her saying that he had heard the sound of a frog jumping and Eustacia at once gave him the coin. Now, the figure of a man seen near the pond and the man was Wildeve.

Much of the mystery surrounding Wildeve is solved in this chapter. We now understand why his attitude towards Thomasin was casual and indifferent. There was another woman, namely Eustacia, in his life and, even though he had decided to marry Thomasin and give up Eustacia, he cannot resist the temptation to come and meet Eustacia as soon as he sees the signal. As for Eustacia, she does not show much of self-respect in dealing with this man. He talks to her in the same casual manner in which he had been talking to Thomasin. Knowing full well that he had made up his mind to marry the other woman, Eustacia still shows an interest in him on learning that he has not married her after all. She does not, however, know the actual reason for his not having married Thomasin. She thinks that he has not carried out his promise to Thomasin because he prefers her (Eustacia) to the other woman. Eustacia is a superficial and vain type of girl. She is proud of her beauty and she feels pleasure in the fact that she has succeeded in drawing Wildeve to this place by lighting a bonfire.

Eustacia failed to appreciate the subtle beauties of Egdon Heath. She idealized Wildeve only to fill up the idle hours of her life and because there was no one better than him. Sometimes her pride made her wish to be free of him, but that could happen only with the appearance of a better man.

Hawkins, Desmond, (1965) said that in this chapter, we see the reddleman's true devotion to Thomasin. He is not at all a selfish lover. His chief desire now is to make Thomasin happy by bringing about her union with Wildeve. However, he fails in his purpose as Eustacia, far from responding to his suggestion, becomes angry with him.

This chapter also throws more light on the character of Eustacia. She is a vain and proud girl. Instead of feeling sympathetic towards Thomasin, she gives vent to her feeling of jealousy and resentment by saying that Wildeve was hers before he became Thomasin's and that he liked her best. "I will not be beaten down by an inferior woman like her", she says with reference to Thomasin 's desire to marry Wildeve. She becomes almost arrogant towards the reddleman when she says: "but I lose all self-respect in talking to you:' we also learn that Eustacia is not much concerned about people's opinion regarding her. The reddleman's hint that Eustacia might get a bad name by her association with Wildeve has no permanent terror for her: "She was as unconcerned at that contingency as a goddess at a lack of linen. As far as social ethics were concerned, Eustacia approached the savage state, though in emotion she was all the while an epicure." Nor does she wish to lose her independence for the sake of shifting to a more congenial environment. She certainly wishes to

leave Egdon Heath, but not at the cost of her independence. She would not like to go to Budmouth if she has to satisfy the whims of a woman who would hire her services.

Mrs. Yeobright shrewdly decided to use Diggory's offer of marriage for her own purpose. Arriving at Wildeve's inn, she told him that another man had asked for her permission to, marry Thomasin, Wildeve, then replied that if Thomasin was willing to marry the other man, he would not come in their way. Mrs. Yeobright is very much capable of employing diplomacy to gain her purpose. This chapter shows her diplomatic attitude. It also shows Wildeve's fickle mindedness and Eustacia's casual and ignorant nature. This chapter even shows the reddleman's continuity in love and his deep feelings for Thomasin. Mrs. Yeobright is an honest woman who employs a dishonest method in order to fulfill her purpose; Wildeve appears to be a man of shifting loyalties. Eustacia now becomes conscious of her social superiority over Wildeve.

### **Book II BOOK TWO: "THE ARRIVAL"**

In a fine and quiet afternoon, Eustacia from indoors overhears the conversation that was going on between her grandfather and the two workmen. They were talking about Clym Yeobright who had settled in Paris and been working as a manager for a diamond merchant. Clym was a studious man who had some strange notions.

Aunt and Niece Together Mrs. Yeobright and her niece Thomasin were now making preparations to receive Clym. They were collecting different eatables which Clym liked. Eustacia seemed to be very excited at Clym's arrival. That afternoon she had high imaginations about Clym who had come from Paris familiar with its charm. She was more excited as this man had already greeted her.

That night, amidst the circumstances of Eustacia's life, the experience of having seen Clym was as beautiful as a dreamy affair for her, even though she failed to see his face. She was now half in love with the man.

Some of the rustics were attending the rehearsal in the fuel-house. Eustacia over-heard their conversation and learned that the play would be enacted as a part of Christmas celebrations at Mrs. Yeobright's house in honor of her son.

She called Charley, who was to play the part of the Turkish Knight in the play and promised him five shillings if he would let her disguise herself as a boy and take his place in the performance of the play. But Charley refused to receive money and instead wanted to hold her hand for half an hour and kiss it.

Clym Yeobright's full appearance created a very good impression on Eustacia. Clym's face was really "one of those faces which convey less the idea of so many years as its age than of so much experience as its store

In the Christmas party, Clym was going around socializing and serving drinks and food to everybody. He even forced Eustacia to try some wine, then have a word with Thomasin and Eustacia seeing them talking felt jealous of Thomasin.

Diggory delivered the letter and the parcel to Wildeve, after reading the letter Wildeve was puzzled, Wildeve Ready to Marry Thomasin Wildeve now felt that the only way he could save his position decently was by marrying Thomasin and they would become the reason of Eustacia's jealousy.

### **BOOK III the Fascination**

Clym Yeobright always believed in simple living and high thinking. He preferred mild and meager living in many respects and brotherliness with his kind. He was thoroughly familiar with Egdon Heath, its' scene, its' substance and with its' odds. He was born and brought up there. He is said to be a product of the heath, and his limits of life had been painted by the heath.

The story now takes a good turn where we see Clym and Eustacia getting closer to each other. Mickelson, Anne Z (1976) mentioned that, we also see Mrs, Yeobright's prejudice against Eustacia and her disapproval of his son's interest towards the woman. This chapter also tells about Clym's plan to marry

Eustacia who would help him in the school. But our readers are surprised to see how Clym could come to this conclusion when Eustacia has already expressed her hatred in teaching. Clym is either blindly in love with Eustacia, or thinks of molding her mind to suit his purpose.

To Go to Paris Eustacia started encouraging Clym by asking him all sorts of questions about Paris so that Clym would take her there. But Clym was stubborn and decided to remain in the Heath. Eustacia assured Clym that she would make a perfect wife and she was so deeply in love with him that she could even sacrifice dreaming of Paris for his sake. But she expressed her wish to go to Paris with him always. She longed to go to the French capital secretly.

The gap between Clym and his mother widened as he became more intimate with Eustacia. The situation had turned very difficult for Clym: "Three antagonistic growths had to be kept alive: his mother's trust in him, his plan of becoming a teacher and Eustacia's happiness." It was difficult for him to tackle all the three together.

When Wildeve heard about Eustacia's marriage, his mind again turned towards her. Wildeve had a nature of always of disliking the near ones and yearning for the difficult. He was really a man of sentiments. After Wildeve had departed, Mrs. Yeobright called Christian Cantle and handed over two small bags of fifty guineas each to him. She then directed him to go and give one bag to Thomasin and the other to Clym. On the way Wildeve tempted cantle to gamble with him in which Cantle lost all of his money. This whole incident was being seen and overheard by the reddleman and he rescued the money. This chapter moves the plot a bit more where we see Mrs. Yeobright's depression on her son's marriage and her money being gambled away by Christian Cantle. Wildeve after winning the money in the gamble thought himself to be lucky to have taken an act of revenge on Mrs. Yeobright who had disturbed him.

#### **Book IV: The Closed Door**

Clym and Eustacia were now living in their small house at Alderworth beyond East Egdon. After three or four weeks of their marriage Clym started studying seriously to compensate the lost time, wishing to enter his new profession without delay. Sumner, Rosemary, (1981) said that Eustacia had dreamt always, that after their marriage, she would be able to persuade Clym to return to Paris but all was in vain. The strain Clym was exerting on his eyes by studying till late night had a disastrous effect on his eyesight. Clym wanted her mother to come at this moment but felt that his condition would only make her unhappy. He abandoned his project of teaching and started cutting faggots as an occupation; Eustacia was utterly distressed at Clym's decision to become a furze-cutter as this would lower her social status. She cried a lot, but she was helpless.

The reddleman once again intervenes in the lives of the principal characters. Wanting to help Thomasin, he frightens away Wildeve from Eustacia's door. He then calls upon Mrs. Yeobright and apprises her of the danger threatening both Thomasin and Clym. We heartily approve of the steps that the reddleman is taken in this context. Mrs. Yeobright has already been thinking of calling upon Clym while Clym too on his side decides just then to seek reconciliation with his mother. The revival of Wildeve's interest in Eustacia is significant. While it is true that Eustacia has no intention at this stage to prove unfaithful to Clym, yet we do not like her giving encouragement to Wildeve in the fresh advances he makes to her. She does not resent the signal which Wildeve makes to her by introducing a moth into her room through the window in order to attract her attention, as he used to do in the past. The closing lines of the chapter emphasize the disappointment of Eustacia's hopes in Clym, When he says that his return to Egdon Heath from Paris has altered the destinies of three people, (meaning himself, his mother, and Eustacia), she inwardly thinks that five persons have been affected (meaning Wildeve and Thomasin in addition to the other three). On the way of her return, she has been bitten by an adder and died.

The Night of the Sixth of November, Eustacia lastly settles on to accept Wildeve's assistance in going to Paris. It was raining heavily. Insecurity snatches her body to crouch towards the earth almost as though she is being pulled compulsorily into the heath. At that same time of night in her cottage, Susan Nunsuch is making a wax image and her aim is to destroy Eustacia's influence over her son. She pops in long pins into the doll and

throws it into the fire and she mumbles an incarnation of the Lord's Prayer repeated backward. The figure is almost destroyed after the third repetition of the words. Clym and Wildeve Both of them jump into the water to rescue her

#### Book VI

At the end of the novel, Thomasin and Venn get married. Clym took the preaching project of moral lessons to local people.

One striking aspect of Hardy as a novelist is his portrayal of women. Conspicuously successful as he is in portraying men (though within a narrow range), he is even more eminently successful in his delineation of women (though here also the range is limited). Within his limitations, Hardy's portraits of women are superb. The figures of women are perfectly realistic and convincing, as are those of men. Marty, Bathsheba, Eustacia, Mrs. Yeobright, Thomasin, and Tess are among his most successful creations. Hardy's sensibility to feminine charm and his power to discriminate its distinguishing quality are the chief means by which he makes his heroines live: whether it be Fancy's willful innocent coquetry, or Bathsheba's ardent glowing smiles and tears, or Anne's demure rural neatness, or Eustacia's somber gorgeousness. Through that portrayal the desires, disillusionment, and destiny of human beings in the novel became clear.

The three important women characters in *The Return of the Native* are Eustacia, Mrs. Yeobright, and Thomasin. A minor woman character who also deserves some notice is Susan Nunsuch, a member of the rustic group. The three principal women offer interesting studies in contrast. Eustacia and Thomasin are as unlike each other as any two women could be; and as for Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright, the contrast between them is striking too.

The portrait of Eustacia drawn by Hardy is highly impressive, besides being elaborate. Hardy gives us a set description of this woman, and the description is undoubtedly thoroughly. We have the first succession of the usual light touches that bring her gradually forward out of the unknown—a motionless figure in the distance on the peak of a gloomy barrow on the vast Egdon Heath, a profile against the clouds suggesting Sappho and Mrs. Siddons. After this Hardy enters upon a full chapter, which is marvelous in the richness and splendor of its description, of which every phrase is salient and arresting. The method of conveying Eustacia's splendor is suggestive, like that adopted by Marlowe in conveying to us the exquisite loveliness of Helen in his play *Doctor Faustus*. Hardy tells us less what Eustacia is like than what she suggests and what she stands for. He does not say that her hair is black; he tells us that a whole winter does not contain darkness enough to form the shadow of her hair; as for her eyes, they are Pagan, full of nocturnal mysteries. She is not described as a handsome brunette, but her presence brings memories of Bourbon roses, rubies, and tropical midnights. She is not languidly passionate, graceful, and sweet-spoken; but her moods recall the lotus-eaters and the march in "*Athalie*", she motions the ebb and flow of the sea, her voice the viola. Hardy's description of Thomasin stands no comparison at all with this portrait of Eustacia which glows with color and poetry. Thomasin has a simple, rural charm and grace, having none of the glamour and splendor of Eustacia. Thomasin is a lovable person in her own way. She is described as having a fair, sweet, and honest country face reposing in a nest of wavy chestnut hair. Here is a face "between pretty and beautiful:" the groundwork of this face is "hopefulness". Hardy lends a poetic touch even to this description when he says that Thomasin seemed to belong rightly to a madrigal—to require viewing through rhythm and harmony. Thomasin is a living figure to us from the way Hardy's description conveys her characteristic attraction to us. The sweetness of her personality is fully conveyed to us.

These two women are entirely different from each other in their temperaments, their outlook upon life, and their reactions to persons, situations, and events. Eustacia is haughty, proud, vain of her beauty, reserved, somewhat mysterious, and indifferent to public opinion. Thomasin is gentle, modest, humble, affectionate, and very sensitive to the opinions of her neighbors' and others. When Wildeve failed to marry Thomasin at the outset of the story, Thomasin was brokenhearted, the chief reason for her sorrow being her fear of what people will say. Thomasin is hardly able to endure the situation and is almost on the verge of collapse at the turn of events. In Thomasin's place, Eustacia would have flared up and created a furor when the

marriage plans went awry. Thomasin is, on the whole, a passive kind of character, even though she shows a lot of firmness, and even rebelliousness against her aunt, in her decision to marry Wildeve despite her aunt's opposition. Eustacia is always self-assertive, and vehemently so. To take only one example, she refuses to budge an inch from her position when the reddleman urges her not to stand as a wall between Thomasin and Wildeve. She is highly conscious of her social prestige too, as when she tells the reddleman that it is beneath her dignity to talk to him, and as when, later in the story, she feels humiliated by Clym's having adopted the occupation of a furze-cutter. She even thinks it beneath her dignity to have Wildeve as a lover, and it is always as a last resort, for want of a better man, that she allows him to make love to her. Thomasin, though not much lower than Eustacia in the social scale, has much less of this snobbery, even though she thinks that the reddleman does not have enough social respectability to be acceptable to her as a suitor.

Eustacia's aspirations are widely different from those of Thomasin. Eustacia's mind is constantly obsessed with thoughts of Paris. She would like to share in the joys and pleasures of the fashionable life of a big city, her life in a village is a kind of prison for her. She has no love for her fellow-creatures, as she herself says. She is self-centered and her unfulfilled longing for city-life deepens the natural gloom of her temperament. Thomasin, on the other hand, is the product of the country, is fully satisfied with her environment, has no aspirations beyond the village of Egdon, and has a naturally hopeful and cheerful temperament.

Thomasin is a good, sincere, faithful, honest, and dependable girl. Wildeve is not wrong when he describes her as "a confoundedly good little woman". Indeed, he finds her such an excellent creature that he would not like to deceive her. When Eustacia asks Wildeve if he thinks Thomasin to be more beautiful, he replies that he cannot really decide between her and Thomasin. This shows that Thomasin does have certain qualities which raise her to a higher moral position than that which Eustacia occupies, even though Thomasin is devoid of Eustacia's glitter and glamour. By comparison with Eustacia, Thomasin is certainly a homely girl cut out to make an excellent "home-spun" wife which Eustacia can never be. Thomasin loves Wildeve steadfastly and it is only after she has become a widow that she can entertain the notion of marrying the reddleman. Eustacia, on the other hand, is a wavering, vacillating, and fickle-minded woman. She gives up Wildeve as soon as Clym appears on the scene. She turns to Wildeve again when her hopes of going to Paris are dashed to the ground and when Clym chooses to become a furze-cutter. She leaves Clym when Clym rebukes her for the manner in which she had behaved towards his mother. She decides to run away from Egdon Heath with Wildeve's assistance and is even willing to consider the possibility of having Wildeve as a lover once again. This kind of behavior should arouse our disgust for a woman who is perfectly devoid of any scruple where her own caprice and her ambition are concerned, and who proves faithful neither as a sweetheart nor as a wife. She is thoroughly selfish, undependable, and even dishonest. That we are still fascinated by her and remain under her spell till the end is due to the fact that Hardy loves her despite all her faults and lavishes all his resources of language to build up a personality whose charm is irresistible.

Davidson, Donald,(1963) presented that The contrast involving Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright is implicit in the antagonism which exists between the two females at the very outset. Mrs. Yeobright has an enormously unsympathetic opinion about Eustacia whom some people think to be a witch and who seems to Mrs. Yeobright to be an "idle and voluptuous" kind of woman. Mrs. Yeobright cannot reconcile herself to her son's resolution to marry Eustacia, and her firm opposition to the proposed marriage alienates her from her son. Subsequently, there is a furious quarrel between the two women, leading Eustacia firmly to tell her husband that she would never again like to meet his mother. There can be no question of any comparison between these two women on moral grounds. Mrs. Yeobright is a highly orthodox, seasoned, shrewd, practical woman with a sound knowledge of human nature and character which she shows in her handling of Wildeve after he has failed to marry Thomasin on the first occasion, and which she shows also in the warning that she gives to her son that he will never be happy with Eustacia. Her analysis of Eustacia's character is perfectly sound because, shorn of the magnificence with which Hardy invests her in his description of her personality; Eustacia is wholly unworthy to be the wife of any decent, reputable gentleman. In one respect, however, these two women are similar: they are both rigid and obstinate in the positions they have taken up, and they are both

disinclined to yield to any external pressures. Eventually, it is Mrs. Yeobright who does yield, but that is chiefly due to the internal pressure of her maternal love for Clym.

These women differ from one another in their attitudes to Egdon Heath also. Eustacia feels a keen hatred for Egdon Heath. Egdon Heath is her Hades, and she remains always unreconciled to it. The subtle beauties of the heath are lost to her. This environment makes her "saturnine". She is no Nature-lover. She longs to live in a fashionable city and her enforced stay on Egdon Heath makes her miserable. When Wildeve points out that she hates the heath as much as ever, her reply is: "I do. It's my cross, my shame, and will be my death." As for Mrs. Yeobright, she feels perfectly at home on Egdon Heath. Her journey across the heath, when she goes to her son's house for reconciliation, is spectacularly illustrated. The description includes references to the living creatures which Mrs. Yeobright, an observant woman and a lover of animals, sees on the way—those maggoty things wriggling in the muddy pond, the sleeping cat, the drunken wasps on the fallen fruit, the ants' nest, the heron flying into the sun. It is another matter that Egdon Heath proves hostile to the old woman at this point in her life and kills her with a poisonous creature from its bosom. The incident only serves to show Hardy's view about the ironies of life. As for Thomasin, she finds Egdon Heath to be her natural habitat. Even though she calls it "a ridiculous old place", she is yet quite happy there, because any other environment is inconceivable to her.

### Conclusion

Everywhere in the novels of Hardy human beings appear to us crushed by a superior force: that of Nature, at first, and of an indifferent, most often a hostile, chance; then, that of the errors implied in the victims' own desires. Whether his creed is fatalism or determinism, Hardy is haunted by the vision of necessity. He shows us the sad consequences of a conflict of contradictory wills, and the development of this conflict is crossed at every moment by accidents which interrupt them. Ironical, malevolent, fatal chance is an invisible third party in all the relationships of human beings; now it seems to express obscure cruelty lurking in the universe; now it is the experimental revelation of laws which individuals in their self-deception ignore, and against which probability demands that they should be someday crushed. Whether one aspect or the other is predominant, the repeated working of that inimical luck is largely responsible for the tragic atmosphere of Hardy's novels.

Hardy shows a persistent and bitter preoccupation with the sorrows of life. We certainly cannot deny the littleness and sordidness of human life and the overwhelming pain and suffering which exist in this world. But with Hardy, this view becomes a habit of mind and a philosophy. He practically excludes from his writings any sense of the sublimities, the splendor, and the beauty of human life, concentrating mainly upon its depths, and its sorrows. Not content with picturing a tragic household, he attributes the tragedy to "an unsympathetic First Cause"; and assures us that "the President of the Immortals had ended his sport with Tess". The Return of the Native shows man as the helpless plaything of invisible powers, ruthless and indifferent. The characters here have no such thing as free will. Those who are too passive to struggle against the invisible powers are less unhappy than those who assert themselves or their wills. The novel tells the history of a small group of persons each of whom seems to be conscious of the dilemma in which Nature has placed him or her and who try now and again to play their own parts in the life to which they have been condemned; a sorry drama it is. Every assertion of individual will ends in futility. No free will is accepted by destiny.

Eustacia Vye is a young woman with romantic dreams of love and social brilliance, who marries under the illusion that her husband, Clym Yeobright will fulfill her dreams and help her to escape from her remote and isolated life on Egdon Heath. Disillusionment, conflict with her mother-in-law, and a violent quarrel with her husband lead her to attempt a desperate flight with a former lover, Damon Wildeve. On her way to meet him, she gets drowned, and Wildeve, in an attempt to rescue her, gets drowned also. Hardy never tells us whether Eustacia's drowning is an accident or a suicide, but suicide is the inevitable explanation since she considers herself trapped between the intolerable alternatives of staying on Egdon Heath or living with a lover she thinks considerably inferior to herself. Shallow, sensuous, rebellious, defiant, she is keenly aware, so far as she herself is concerned that she is a victim of the perverse dispensation of things. Circumstances have

put her in the wrong place; juxtaposition with the heath is the bane of her existence, and by that token everything is wrong. "How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot!" she cries, in a frenzy of bitter revolt. "O the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much, but I have been injured and blasted and crushed by things beyond my control!" Who but Destiny can be held responsible for the incongruity of the situation in which a woman, who had the makings of a model goddess, has been placed in an environment which offers absolutely no scope for the fulfillment of her longings and dreams? Surely we cannot condemn her for snatching at every opportunity to achieve the sort of life in which alone her temperament can find fulfillment. She has no wish to make other people unhappy; only forced by the pressure of her nature, she brushes aside anything that hinders her. Fate is her enemy, and it effectively frustrates her desire to taste the joys and pleasures of the fashionable life of Paris, driving her ultimately to commit suicide. She demanded "life—music, poetry, passion" which for her existed in Paris, but her wish was not to be granted.

But *The Return of the Native* is not the tragedy of Eustacia alone. It is also the tragedy of Clym, Clym's mother, and Wildeva too (because Hardy, as a rule, emphasizes the fact that even those characters whom the world would call wicked are so much the creatures of circumstance that they are far more to be pitied than to be blamed). There is nothing impractical or impossible or ignoble about Clym's decision to start a school at Egdon Heath. His educational project is, indeed, commendable. He starts working hard to qualify himself for his new occupation. But Destiny must intervene to prevent him from succeeding in his purpose. In the first place, his mother is firmly opposed to his project, but though he disregards her opposition, the maliciousness of Destiny shows itself in his becoming semi-blind, a mischance which forces him to give up the project altogether and become a humble furze-cutter. Clym himself is not in the least responsible for the shattering of his dream. But it is not only that his dream is shattered; his new occupation as a furze-cutter alienates Eustacia to whom furze-cutting is a degrading occupation and who feels that her social status has greatly been lowered by Clym's choosing to become a day-laborer.

Add to these circumstances the conflict of wills between Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia. Clym finds himself in a difficult situation for which he is in no way deliberately responsible.

The incongruity between Clym and Eustacia, between Clym and his mother, between Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright. All these persons have their own individual natures and temperaments, and the irreconcilability and incompatibility of their temperaments are the principal factors which bring about the tragedy, even though someone might say that both Clym and Eustacia acted blindly in marrying each other because, if they had properly understood each other's nature, they would have realized that their marriage was foredoomed.

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