

' T E S S '

screenplay by

GERARD BRACH

ROMAN POLANSKI

JOHN BROWNJOHN

Based on the novel by

Thomas Hardy

"Tess of the d'Urbervilles"

1 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE

A wide expanse of rolling countryside presents the eye with a harmonious range of colours and contours. Moving slowly along a road in the distance, preceded by a small band of MUSICIANS, comes a procession of FIGURES clad all in white.

2 EXT/DAY COUNTRY LANE

The procession turns out to consist of GIRLS wearing white dresses of varying shades: some are dazzlingly white, others of a bluish pallor, others yellowed by years in a clothes-pres. Each GIRL holds a peeled willow-wand in her right hand and a bunch of white flowers in her left. A few OLD MEN and CHILDREN accompany the procession, which is traditionally held each May Day by the maidens of Marlott village.

3 EXT/DAY COUNTRY LANE

JOHN DURBEYFIELD, with an empty egg-basket in the crook of his arm, is staggering along the worse for drink. The nap of his hat is ruffled and bears a worn thumb-print on the brim. He gives an occasional vigorous nod as though confirming some unspoken opinion.

An elderly PARSON comes riding along in the opposite direction. JOHN accosts him hoarsely as he passes.

JOHN

Good night t'ee.

PARSON

Good night, Sir John.

JOHN takes another few steps, looking preoccupied. Then he pauses, turns and hails the PARSON again.

JOHN

Begging your pardon, sir!

The PARSON reins in his mare. JOHN approaches him while speaking.

JOHN (contd)

We met on this self-same road
t'other day, and I said 'Good night'
and you replied 'Good night, Sir
John'.

3 Continued

PARSON

I may have.

JOHN

And did so again tonight.

PARSON

So I did.

JOHN

Why call me 'Sir' John when I be
plain Jack Durbeyfield the
haggler?

PARSON

Oh, it's just a whim of mine.
I'm Parson Tringham, by the way.

JOHN respectfully raises his hat.

PARSON (contd)

I made a discovery about you while
tracing some family trees for the
new county history. I'm an
antiquarian, you know.

JOHN raises his hat again.

PARSON (contd)

You, Durbeyfield, are directly
descended from the knightly
house of the d'Urbervilles. Did
you really not know that?

JOHN

Never heard it afore, sir!

PARSON

Raise your head a little and
let me see your face from the
side,

JOHN complies.

PARSON (contd)

Yes, that's the d'Urberville nose
and chin ... A trifle coarser than
of old, but still ...

JOHN

Well daze my eyes!

3 Continued

PARSON

According to the Battle Abbey records, your line goes back to Sir Pagan d'Urberville, who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror.

JOHN is thunderstruck by this information.

JOHN

Never!

PARSON

It's true.

JOHN

And yer've I been a'slaving away and living rough all these years!

The PARSON is disquieted by the drunkard's sudden fit of resentment.

PARSON

I thought you might already know something about it.

JOHN

'Tis true I have an old silver spoon and a graven seal at home, but I never paid them much heed. Where do we d'Urbervilles live today?

PARSON

You don't live anywhere. You lie buried in your family vault at Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill, laid out in lead coffins with your effigies under marble canopies.

JOHN

And where be our family mansions?

PARSON

You haven't any.

JOHN

No land neither?

The PARSON shakes his head.

JOHN (contd)

None at all?

3 Continued

PARSON

You owned an abundance of land in the old days. The d'Urbervilles maintained estates at Kingsbere, Sherton, Millpond, Lullstead, Wellbridge ...

JOHN is gripped by a terrible sense of injustice.

JOHN

But what can I do about it, sir?

The PARSON raises his eyes to heaven.

PARSON

Ah, as to that ...

JOHN

Can I do nothing?

PARSON

Nothing whatever, save possibly chasten yourself by thinking: 'How are the mighty fallen.' Good night, Sir John.

The PARSON rides leisurely on. JOHN is suddenly fired with enthusiasm.

JOHN

Won't you take a quart of beer with me, sir? There's a grand brew to be had at 'The Pure Drop'.

The PARSON declines with a wave of the hand. JOHN's concluding remarks are addressed to himself.

JOHN (contd)

Though not so good as at 'Rolliver's'.

Exhausted by all these revelations, the tipsy wayfarer deposits his basket in front of him, sits down on the grassy bank and stares into space.

JOHN (contd)

Sir John d'Urberville. That's who I am.

4 EXT/DAY MEADOW

Nearly all the GIRLS in the procession have paired off and are jigging gaily to the strains of a small village BAND. It is now late afternoon, and the dancers' shadows are lengthening. A few of their COMPANIONS have not joined the dance and are watching instead. One of them is TESS, John Durbeyfield's daughter.

Other interested spectators of these girlish cavortings are leaning over a gate. They include OLD MEN, CHILDREN and two or three VILLAGE LADS.

5 EXT/DAY ROAD PAST MEADOW

Three YOUNG MEN in middle-class attire, armed with knapsacks and walking-sticks, approach at a steady hiker's pace. They are brothers. In descending order of age: FELIX, CUTHBERT and ANGEL.

6 EXT/DAY MEADOW

The three BROTHERS also lean over the gate. ANGEL accosts EMMA, the girl nearest him.

ANGEL

What is this?

EMMA

'Tis our Club dance, sir!

FELIX

Club dance!

ANGEL

But where are your partners?

EMMA

They've not finished work yet.
They'll be here by and by. Will you
join us till then, sir?

ANGEL

With pleasure, but one partner won't
go far among so many.

There is a temporary lull in the music and dancing.

EMMA

One's better than none. 'Tis sad
work a-footing it wi' no one to give
you a squeeze.

6 Continued

Emma's FRIEND nudges her.

FRIEND

Ssh! Don't be so forward!

ANGEL unstraps his knapsack and lays it on the ground with his stick.

CUTHBERT

What are you doing?

ANGEL

I've a mind to enjoy myself. Come on, you two.

FELIX

No, no, what nonsense! Suppose someone sees us!

ANGEL

All right, you go on. Don't wait for me - I'll catch you up in five minutes.

The music strikes up again. ANGEL vaults the gate and chooses a GIRL at random. His BROTHERS pick up his knapsack and walk on.

Encouraged by ANGEL's example, two VILLAGE LADS also vault the gate. One of them starts dancing with EMMA, whom ANGEL has ignored.

TESS is still standing apart and alone. Her eyes meet ANGEL's several times when he happens to dance past her.

ANGEL is obviously smitten with the solitary girl's remarkable beauty.

ANGEL leaves the dancers and climbs back over the gate not far from TESS.

7 EXT/DAY ROAD

ANGEL hurries off. Suddenly he turns and stares in TESS's direction as though half-inclined to retrace his steps, but no. He sets off after his brothers.

8 EXT/DAY MEADOW

TESS, who is still staring after ANGEL, receives a tap on the shoulder.

EMMA

Lord O Lord, if it isn't your father a-riding home in his carriage!

8 Continued

TESS turns. She sees:

9 EXT/DAY ROAD

A FARM-HAND is driving a cart along the road.
JOHN is sprawled inside. He brandishes one arm above his head and proclaims to the world at large:

JOHN

I've got a vault! ... A great big
fam'ly vault at Kingsbere! Rows
and rows of knightly ancestors I've got!
There bain't a man in the whole o'
Wessex wi' finer skellingtons than I!

10 EXT/DAY MEADOW

A knot of DANCERS has paused to look. They burst out laughing.
TESS pales with anger and rounds on them.

TESS

Father's tired, that's all. He
only sent for the cart because our
own horse died - you know that very
well.

EMMA shakes her head in commiseration.

EMMA

Lord love you, Tess, how simple
you are!

More scattered laughter. The dancing resumes.

11 EXT/EVENING COTTAGE

The Durbeyfields' cottage stands by itself on the outskirts
of the village, windows glinting in the sunset.
TESS makes her way towards it.

12 INT/EVENING COTTAGE:- MAIN ROOM

JOAN, Tess's mother, is still a handsome woman. She is busy
kneading some laundry in a tub resting on a cask.
Poised on one foot, she uses the other to tread the rockers
of a cradle in time to the tune she is humming.
Apart from THOMAS, who is in the cradle, the room is occupied
by four other children: LIZA-LU (eleven), ABRAHAM (eight),
MODESTY (six), and OLIVER (four).
TESS enters. JOAN's greeting is brisk and cheerful.

12 Continued

JOAN

Ah, I'm glad you've come.

TESS starts up the stairs.

JOAN (contd)

Where are you off to?

TESS

I thought to take off my frock
and help you.

JOAN stops rocking the cradle.

JOAN

You bide there! I want to tell
you what's happened. We've been
found to be the greatest gentlefolk
in the county, reaching back long
before Oliver Crumble's time - back
to the days of the pagan Turks ...

TESS has come downstairs again. She goes over to her MOTHER,
who perseveres with her garbled explanation.

JOAN (contd)

... with momuments and vaults and
crests and coats of arms and the
Lord knows what all!

TESS

Is that why Father made such a
momet of himself in that cart?

JOAN, with the soap-suds trickling down her forearms, replies
with conviction.

JOAN

Our true name is d'Urberville.
That's why he rode home in style,
not because he'd been drinking.

TESS

Where is he now?

JOAN dodges the question, wiping her hands.

JOAN

'Twas a parson told him the
pedigree of the matter.

TESS

But where is he now?

12 Continued

JOAN

The truth is, he felt that upset
he went off to Rolliver's for a
bit to get up his strength.

TESS mutters darkly:

TESS

Much strength he'll find at the
bottom of a pint pot!

JOAN slips on her coat, which has been surreptitiously left
on a chair beside her.

JOAN

Very well, I'll go to fetch him.
We'll be back afore you know it.

She makes for the door.

JOAN (contd)

Be a good girl and put the little
ones to bed for me.

She goes out. TESS remains dreamily pensive.

13 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE - CHILDREN'S FIRST-FLOOR BEDROOM

A fairly spacious room containing three beds. TESS has her
own, LIZA-LU and MODESTY share the second and ABRAHAM and
OLIVER the third.

The CHILDREN take advantage of TESS's temporary absence to
indulge in some boisterous horseplay.
A moment later the door opens and TESS appears holding a candle
stick.

TESS

Come now, children, that'll do!
'Tis time for bed.

The CHILDREN retire to their beds. ABRAHAM, who was the rowdi
of all, asks:

ABRAHAM

Tess, are you glad we've become
gentlefolk?

TESS

Don't talk nonsense. Now go to
sleep.

She shuts the door.

14 INT/NIGHT ROLLIVER'S ALEHOUSE

The tavern is a dimly illuminated chiaroscuro, noisy and thick with smoke. Uncouth FARM LABOURERS with huge hands and ruddy faces drink and converse while others ruminate in silence. JOHN and JOAN are seated at a table with three BOON COMPANIONS, temporarily unspeaking. JOHN produces a handkerchief from his pocket and extracts a small silver spoon with an engraved crest. He deposits it reverently in the middle of the table.

JOHN

There 'tis!

One BOON COMPANION picks up the spoon and examines it with a sceptical air.

BOON COMPANION

Thaaat?

The spoon passes from hand to hand. JOHN drunkenly proclaims:

JOHN

That spoon may be small, friend,
but my family was great!

JOAN tugs at his sleeve and whispers in his ear.

JOAN

Jack, I've got a projick!

JOHN pays no attention.

JOHN

We owned carriages and estates
and mansions wi'out number!

JOAN

Listen! Listen to me.

BOON COMPANION

Is there any money in it?

JOHN

'Tis well to be kin to a coach,
even if you don't ride in one.

JOHN retrieves the spoon and carefully replaces it in his handkerchief. JOAN seizes her chance to speak to him privately

JOAN

I've been a-thinking since you
brought me the news. I've got a
projick.

JOHN

Which reminds me. You'd better find that danged seal or I'll do you a mischief.

JOAN

Listen! There's a great lady by the name of d'Urberville living out by Tantridge. .

JOHN

Pooh! She's nothing compared to us - a younger branch of the family, no doubt. I'll wager they don't go back to King Norman's day.

JOAN

That's as may be, but she's rich.

JOHN

A lot o'good her money is to us!

JOAN

It could be. We must send our Tess to claim kin.

JOAN's plan still escapes her HUSBAND's full comprehension.

JOHN

Claim kin? What do you mean, woman?

JOAN

Why shouldn't two branches of the same family be on visiting terms?

JOHN

I don't fancy my children a-bowing and a-scraping. I be the head of the fam'ly. 'Tis the others should come to me.

JOAN

It would certainly put her in the way of a grand marriage. You should ha' seen her today. Lord, how pretty she looked! Her skin's as smooth as any lady's.

Neither of them notices that TESS has just entered the tavern and is peering across the tap-room in search of her parents.

JOHN

Then she ought to go there tomorrow morning. Let's drink to that. Mrs Rolliver!

14 Continued

At that moment he catches sight of TESS approaching. He puts one hand on JOAN's shoulder and heaves himself erect.

JOAN

Ah, there you are, my poppet!
We were just on our way.

15 EXT/NIGHT ROAD - COTTAGE

JOHN staggers on ahead of his WIFE and DAUGHTER, who follow him arm in arm. TESS is looking aggrieved.

JOAN

It don't do to be too proud in
this life.

TESS replies in a voice trembling with agitation.

TESS

But you're asking me to go
a-begging!

JOAN releases her arm and comes to a halt. TESS follows suit.

JOAN

Begging! What are you saying?
'Tis all in the family!

She walks on. So does TESS.

JOAN (contd)

If they were in need I should take
'em in wi'out a word. We all have
to take the ups with the downs,
Tess. You must go to see her and
ask for some help in our trouble.

They gradually draw abreast of JOHN, whose progress is erratic and intermittent.

TESS

If the lady received me at all,
'twould be enough if she were
friendly. You must not expect
her to help us.

JOAN

Come, come, my dear, with your
pretty face you could coax her
into anything.

TESS

I'd rather try to get work.

15 Continued

JOAN
Durbeyfield, you decide. If
you say she must go, she'll go.

JOHN halts and tries to focus on his daughter's face.

JOHN
Well, girl, do you want to go
a-visiting this grand kinswoman
of ours?

TESS
I'd much sooner not, Father.

JOHN makes a sweeping gesture.

JOHN
There, she doesn't want to. I
don't like my children making
themselves beholden to strange
kin. I'm the head of the noblest
branch of the family. I've got
my pride to think of.

Exhausted by this proclamation, he has to lean on JOAN in order
to continue on his way. JOAN's retort is very down-to-earth.

JOAN
All this bragging about your
ancestors! It isn't them as'll
buy us a new horse.

16 INT/EXT/DAY HORSE-DRAWN VAN

TESS, wearing a summer frock and a beribboned straw hat, is
demurely perched on one of the van's bench seats.

17 EXT/DAY VAN - COUNTRY ROAD - WOODS

The van pulls up at a crossroads in a wooded area. TESS
alights, carrying a small basket.
The van, drawn by two horses, moves off at a slow trot.
A drive can be seen in the distance, flanked by majestic plane
trees. TESS sets off towards it.

18 EXT/DAY ESTATE - RAILINGS - LODGE

TESS almost tiptoes through the gates, gazing timidly and
respectfully about her. There is no one in sight and the lodge
seems deserted.

18 Continued

Rounding a bend in the gravelled drive, TESS glimpses a manor house of recent construction through a screen of trees. She mutters to herself in surprise.

TESS

But this is all new!

As she draws nearer, she catches sight of a handsome ornament tent pitched on an expanse of green lawn. Its triangular entrance is facing her.

TESS pauses to survey this unaccustomed scene with wondering. We sense her powerful urge to turn tail and the pride that compels her to resist it.

At this moment a tall young MAN emerges from the tent smoking a cigar. There is something arresting about his handsome face and bold eyes.

Then he catches sight of TESS. After an appraising stare, he hails her as he walks towards her.

ALEC

Well, my beauty, and what can I do for you?

TESS does not answer. When they are near enough, she says shyly:

TESS

I ... I came to see Mrs d'Urberville, sir.

ALEC

I'm afraid that's impossible - she's an invalid. What was your business with her? I'm her son.

TESS falters again.

TESS

It wasn't business, it was ... I can hardly say what. No, not business, sir.

ALEC

Pleasure, then?

TESS

Oh no, sir. 'Tis so very foolish I fear I can't tell you.

ALEC

Never mind, I like foolish things. Try again, my dear.

18 Continued

TESS takes her courage in both hands and embarks on a confused explanation for her unwonted visit.

TESS

Mother asked me to come, and to tell the truth, I was minded to do so myself, but I never thought it would be like this ...

A faint smile hovers round ALEC's mouth. His eyes continue to dwell on her face.

TESS (contd)

I came, sir, to tell you that we are of the same family as you.

ALEC

Aha! Poor relations?

TESS

Yes.

ALEC

Stokes?

TESS

No, d'Urbervilles.

ALEC quickly corrects himself.

ALEC

Yes, yes, I meant d'Urbervilles. Tell me, do you like strawberries?

TESS

Yes, when they're in season.

ALEC takes TESS's arm between his fingertips and steers her along beside him.

ALEC

Here they already are.

19 EXT/DAY GREENHOUSE

They walk towards a greenhouse while TESS blurts out a hurried and bashful explanation.

TESS

Our name has become Durbeyfield, but we have several proofs that we're d'Urbervilles ...

19 Continued

They enter the greenhouse. ALEC tosses his cigar away at the door.

20 INT/EXT/DAY GREENHOUSE

All manner of flowers and fruit are growing in the moist heat of the greenhouse, which muffles sounds and voices.

TESS (contd)

... that's who the antiquarians hold we are, so Mother said we should make ourselves bekown to you as we've lost our horse and we're the oldest branch of the family.

ALEC, who has never stopped eyeing her strangely, gives another white-toothed smile.

ALEC

I see. So you've come to pay me a courtesy call, as one relation to another.

TESS

I suppose I have.

ALEC

Well, there's no harm in that.

He stoops, then straightens holding a large strawberry delicately by the stem. He dangles it in front of her mouth. TESS puts her fingers between her lips and ALEC's hand.

TESS

I'd rather take it from my own hand.

ALEC insists.

ALEC

Don't be so coy, my pretty cousin.

Frowning, TESS opens her mouth. ALEC pops the strawberry in and tweaks the stem away, leaving her reluctantly holding the fruit between her teeth.

21 EXT/DAY ROSE-GARDEN

TESS's little basket, which is already laden with strawberries has now acquired some roses as well. ALEC snips another bloom with his rose-scissors and prepares to slip the stem down her bodice. TESS is consumed with embarrassment.

21 Continued

ALEC

Come, this one too ... It's the
perfect place, believe me.
You'll look like a regular posy!

TESS reluctantly surrenders yet again. ALEC slips the rose
into her bodice.

TESS

Ah!

ALEC

What is it?

TESS

A thorn.

ALEC

Ah, cousin, beauty has its price.

22 INT/DAY TENT

TESS, now lavishly bedecked with roses (in her hat, bodice and basket), is standing in front of a garden table bearing an array of cold food. There is even a ham flanked by a large and formidable carving-knife. Filtered by the tent's canvas sides, the diffused sunlight seems to have transformed TESS into a living Gainsborough portrait. After a pause:

TESS

I'm not very hungry, truly I'm
not.

ALEC

You must eat before you go. It's
no mean ride from here to your
village.

Purely for politeness' sake, TESS moistens her ripe lips with a glass of champagne. ALEC lights a cigar and watches TESS through the skeins of smoke that curl across the tent. There is a protracted silence during which TESS's uneasiness is heightened by the intensity of ALEC's searching gaze.

ALEC (Contd)

I shall see if I can do something
for you. But listen, Tess, no more
of this d'Urberville nonsense.
Plain Durbeyfield, understand? It's
quite another name.

22 Continued

TESS looks him straight in the eye and answers crisply:

TESS
I wish for no better, sir.

23 INT/EXT/DAY VAN

TESS is seated inside, still musing on her recent encounter with her self-styled cousin. Several COUNTRYFOLK are staring hard at the profusion of roses in her basket, hat and bodice. TESS, who suddenly grasps the cause of her neighbours' curiosity, removes the roses from her bodice and secretes them in the basket, which she covers with a kerchief.

24 INT/DAY COTTAGE - MAIN ROOM

JOHN, sprawled in his armchair, is taking little puffs at his pipe. From time to time he nods approvingly at the contents of a letter which JOAN is reading aloud. TESS and the other CHILDREN are present.

JOAN
... Further to her visit, we write to inform you of our willingness to consider engaging her services in managing a poultry-farm of modern character.

JOHN gives a contented nod.

JOAN (contd)
If, after a suitable period, your daughter proves satisfactory, we should guarantee her comfortable accommodation and a good wage.

JOHN gives an even more contented nod and exchanges a glance with his WIFE.

JOAN (contd)
Your earliest reply would be appreciated.

She stops reading and cocks a knowing eye at TESS.

JOAN (contd)
So you charmed them after all, did you?

TESS
Let me see that letter. Who wrote it?

24 Continued

JOAN

Who? Mrs d'Urberville, of course! Look at the signature.

TESS scrutinizes the letter doubtfully.

TESS

Me, manage a poultry-farm? I truly don't think I should go.

JOAN reacts vigorously to this lack of enthusiasm. TESS puts the letter on the table beside JOHN, who also examines it.

JOAN

Poultry! 'Tis just her way of getting you there wi'out raising your hopes too much. She's going to own you as kin, but she wants to make a show of something to occupy you, so you won't feel beholden to her.

JOHN gives a sudden exclamation.

JOHN

The seal! There 'tis, just the same as ours.

ABRAHAM

Father, father, show us the seal!

JOHN

There you are, boy: a ramping great lion with a castle on top.

He eyes TESS admiringly.

JOHN (contd)

There's no denying it, girl, you've made a conquest of the younger branch. Mrs d'Urberville recognised her own flesh and blood.

TESS

But she never even saw me.

JOAN

You couldn't expect her to throw her arms round your neck, her being an invalid, but her son made you welcome. He called you cousin, didn't he?

24 Continued

TESS pours cold water on the general excitement.

TESS

I'd rather bide here with you.

Dejected eyes converge on her. JOAN throws up her hands.

JOAN

This is a gift from God, child.
Why in heaven's name refuse it?

TESS

I truly couldn't say. Indeed,
I don't quite know myself.

25 INT/EVENING COTTAGE - MAIN WINDOW

TESS is perched on the window-sill with her back against the frame, gazing pensively out.

26 EXT/DAY FIELD-PATH

TESS is taking a solitary, melancholy stroll.

27 INT/DAY COTTAGE - FIRST-FLOOR BEDROOM

TESS is wearing the white dress she wore during the May Day dance. Her BROTHERS and SISTERS gaze at her in mute admiration. JOAN carefully finishes tying a pink ribbon in her hair. TESS addresses her in a gloomy tone.

TESS

I'm sure there's a hole in my
stocking-heel.

JOAN adjusts a few folds in her DAUGHTER's dress.

JOAN

When I was a young maid, so long
as I had a pretty bonnet the devil
could have seen my heels and
welcome.

Like a painter at his easel, she steps back a couple of paces and surveys the general effect of her handiwork. It prompts a rapturous exclamation.

JOAN (contd)

You should see yourself!

27 Continued

Swiftly, she drapes a black shawl behind the panes of the open window, creating an improvised mirror in which TESS can admire herself at leisure.

28 INT/DAY COTTAGE - MAIN ROOM

JOHN, slumped in his usual armchair, is dozing comfortably. We hear footsteps descending the stairs. TESS, followed by her MOTHER, BROTHERS and SISTERS, walks over to JOHN.

TESS

Goodbye, Father.

JOHN laboriously opens his drink-bleared eyes and raises his head.

JOHN

You're off, then?

TESS

Yes. Goodbye, Father.

JOHN

Goodbye, girl. You're a comely sight. This young cousin of yours - tell him that, being so come down in the world, I'll sell him the title - yes, I'll sell it ... for a fair price.

JOAN

Not less than a thousand pound, mind!

Agonized, TESS listens mournfully to the rest of her FATHER's commercial proposition.

JOHN

That's right, tell him I'll take a thousand pound ... Well, now I come to think on it, he can have it for a hundred ...

His own words jolt him fully awake.

JOHN (contd)

No, I won't stand on trifles! He can have it for fifty - twenty, tell him, but not a penny less. Family honour is family honour.

JOAN

Come, it's time to go.

28 Continued

MODESTY tugs at her MOTHER's dress.

MODESTY
I want to walk a little ways wi'
Tess.

ABRAHAM
So do I, now she's leaving to
marry our gentleman cousin.

TESS blushes violently.

TESS
I'll hear no more o'that!
Mother, how could you have put
such nonsense into their heads!

JOAN pacifically explains to the CHILDREN.

JOAN
She's going to work for a rich
relation, my dears, and help us
get enough money for a new horsy.

29 EXT/DAY CART

The monotonous motion of the cart, which is ascending a slope
seem to lull TESS's melancholy like a rocking cradle.
Beside her lie a small trunk and a travelling-bag.
TESS turns and sees:

30 EXT/DAY COUNTRY ROAD

Beside the road, the distant figures of JOAN and the CHILDREN
stand outlined against the sky.

31 EXT/DAY FAMILY GROUP

Quite as rooted to the spot as her CHILDREN, JOAN watches the
cart recede. A little voice utters aloud what all of them
are feeling in their heart of hearts.

MODESTY
Oh Mother, I wish our Tess
hadn't gone to be a lady!

Suddenly, far along the road, an unexpected incident dispels
the sadness of the moment.

32 EXT/DAY ROAD

Just as the cart is breasting the rise, the graceful silhouette of a dog-cart appears from the opposite direction, also outlined against the sky.

To the extent that distance allows, we see a handsome young man wheel his spirited horse, execute a perfect turn and dash off in pursuit of the cart.

33 EXT/DAY FAMILY GROUP

JOAN claps her hands in delight. So far from deceiving her, her maternal instinct arouses a sense of euphoria.

JOAN

Did you see what a handsome couple they'd make?

LIZA-LU

Is that the gentleman who's going to marry our Tess?

JOAN

If God be willing, my girl, that's the one.

34 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE - DOG-CART

TESS is seated beside ALEC. An immense vista of countryside surrounds them as they drive downhill.

ALEC handles the reins nonchalantly, casting sidelong glances at his beautiful passenger, whose eyes sparkle in the shade of her straw hat.

The hill grows steeper but ALEC pushes his horse to the limit. He is now driving at a dizzy pace. The wheels spin like tops. The dog-cart rocks to and fro and veers a little off its line of advance.

Each wheel seems to leave the ground for yards at a time. Clearly visible in the daylight, sparks fly from the flinty road as the horse's hoofs pound along it.

The straight road stretches ahead like an ever-receding ribbon. The wind knives through TESS's white muslin frock and plaster it to her body. Her hair streams out from under her hat, which is tied beneath her chin.

Suddenly TESS clutches ALEC's rein-arm. He shouts:

ALEC

Leave my arm alone! Grab me
round the waist!

TESS clings to him until they reach the foot of the hill. Cheeks aflame, she draws away from him as soon as the horse starts to ascend the opposite slope.

34 Continued

ALEC

Ungrateful little minx! Why abandon me as soon as you feel safe?

TESS

The danger came of your foolishness.

ALEC

I say, what a temper! When people are on top of a hill they have to get down somehow.

TESS

But not at a gallop, surely?

ALEC

Fancy being asked that by a brave little beauty like you! I always go down at full gallop. There's nothing to beat it for stirring the blood.

They are approaching the brow of another hill.

TESS

But perhaps you needn't do so again.

ALEC

Perhaps not. It all depends.

TESS gazes anxiously at him.

ALEC (contd)

One little kiss on those ruby lips, or even on that satin cheek, and I'll drive at a snail's pace - word of honour.

Taken aback, TESS edges still further along the seat.

TESS

But I don't want to be kissed, sir.

ALEC cracks his whip. TESS is panic-stricken and surrenders.

TESS (contd)

Stop, stop, I beg you!

ALEC promptly draws rein.

TESS (contd)

Very well, do as you wish. I don't mind.

34 Continued

Lips trembling in an effort not to cry, she adds:

TESS (contd)

But I thought you'd protect me,
being a kinsman.

ALEC

Kinsman be hanged!

He kisses her on the cheek. TESS instinctively wipes the spot with the back of her hand.

ALEC (contd)

You're mighty sensitive for a
village lass.

He angrily whips up his horse again. Just at that moment, TESS's hat conveniently escapes the hand that has been holdin it in place. ALEC pulls up at once, but TESS jumps smartly down and walks back along the road. ALEC, who is watching her over the top of the dog-cart, calls to her.

ALEC (contd)

You look even prettier without it.

TESS sets off on foot. ALEC keeps abreast of her.

ALEC (contd)

Now then, up you get.

TESS

No, sir.

ALEC

You won't ride with me?

TESS

No, I shall walk.

ALEC

But it's three miles to Trantridge
at least.

TESS

I wouldn't care if it were twenty.

The group recedes along the dusty road.

35 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE - JOHN AND JOAN'S BEDROOM

JOHN and JOAN are in bed with THOMAS in his cradle beside th
JOAN sighs and fidgets so much that JOHN starts growsing.

35 Continued

JOHN

Why so restless, in heaven's name?

JOAN

I can't sleep a wink.

JOHN

Is it that pease-pudding lying heavy on your stomach?

JOAN

I don't rightly know. I was thinking ... Perhaps Tess would ha' done better not to go.

JOHN

You should ha' thought o' that afore. There's no profit in losing sleep over it.

JOHN turns over to resume his interrupted slumbers. JOAN addresses herself in an undertone.

JOAN

She'll make her way all the same. If he don't marry her afore, he will after ...

36 INT/EXT. HEN-HOUSE

TESS, in working clothes (apron, bonnet, stout shoes), is ha at work.

Together with CAR, a young woman bursting with health and vitality, she is scraping up the droppings of the fowls clus on their perches.

The hen-house is populated by superb and rare specimens: Hamburgs, bantams, Dorkings. CAR chatters away briskly wh working.

CAR

You watch out for Dollop the bailiff - he's a devil. Mr Alec spends half his time on horseback and the rest of it chasing the likes of us. His mother's a queer old soul but no real trouble. 'Tis a mercy for us she's blind, poor thing.

TESS is dumbfounded by this information.

36 Continued

TESS
Mrs d'Urberville blind?

CAR continues airily:

CAR
Stone-blind. Their real name
is Stoke.

TESS looks bemused.

TESS
How's that?

CAR
'Twere Mr Alec's father had the
notion. He bought the name of
an old extinguished family to
make himself important.

At this moment another young woman arrives, out of breath.
She is Car's sister, NANCY.

NANCY
Whatever are you doing? Missus
is waiting for her birds!

CAR
Quick, quick, it had slipped my
mind entirely. Tess, you catch
hold o' Phena there - and that
one.

She herself grabs a cockerel with both hands.

37 INT/DAY MANOR-HOUSE - CORRIDOR

TESS, with a cockerel under each arm, follows CAR, who is also holding a bird.
The two YOUNG WOMEN walk down a corridor and reach the open door of a drawing-room.

38 INT/DAY DRAWING-ROOM

Huddled in a large armchair with her back to the light and a lace cap on her white hair, MRS D'URBERVILLE turns her sightless face in the newcomers' direction.
Standing beside her is DOLLOP, her bailiff.
TESS approaches with one feathered charge perched on each arm.

MRS D'URBERVILLE

So you're the new young woman.
Well, how are my birds?

At a signal from DOLLOP, TESS proffers the birds. MRS
D'URBERVILLE feels them all over from head to tail, examining their beaks, combs, wings and claws with nimble fingers.

MRS D'URBERVILLE (contd)

Ah, this is Strut. He doesn't seem
so lively today, does he? He's

38 Continued

MRS D'URBERVILLE (contd)
alarmed at being handled by a
stranger, I suppose. And Phena
too ... Yes, they are a little
frightened - aren't you, my dears?
Never mind, they'll soon get used
to you. Can you whistle?

TESS looks momentarily at a loss.

TESS
Whistle, Ma'am?

MRS D'URBERVILLE
Yes, whistle tunes.

She whistles two or three notes to illustrate her meaning.

TESS
A little.

MRS D'URBERVILLE
Then you will have to practise
every day. I think a lot
of my fowls, but there are
also my bullfinches to consider.
I had a young lad who whistled to
them very well, but he has left ...
They've been neglected for days.

DOLLOP
Mr Alec whistled to 'em this
morning, Ma'am.

The BLIND WOMAN's face creases with irritation.

MRS D'URBERVILLE
Oh, him. Pooh!

39 EXT/DAY ROSE-GARDEN

TESS is practising whistling in the scented seclusion of the
rose-garden. She thrusts out her lips, purses them and blows.
No clear note emerges, just a travesty of a sound.
She puffs and blows without a break. Suddenly - as if by magic
the air vibrates to a cascade of crystalline notes.
TESS looks up and sees:

40 EXT/DAY GARDEN WALL

ALEC is perched like a pixy on top of the wall, smoking a
cigar. He hails TESS in a faintly mocking tone.

40 Continued

ALEC

Nor art nor nature ever created
a lovelier thing than you, cousin
Tess. To see that pretty mouth
pouting and puffing away without
producing a single note!

TESS is mortified by his sarcasm and embarrassed at having been
spied on.

TESS

'Tis all a part of my work, sir.

ALEC jumps down off his improvised perch.

ALEC

Never mind, I'll teach you.

TESS instinctively recoils. ALEC pauses and dusts his trousers
down.

ALEC (contd)

I won't lay a finger on you. See,
I'll stay exactly where I am.
Now watch me. You must not screw
up your lips too tight. Do it like
this.

He purses his lips demonstratively and whistles a verse from
"Saw You not My Lady"/"Drink to me Only". The romantic allusion
is lost on TESS, who remains defensive. He gently perseveres

ALEC (contd)

Now you try.

TESS strives to look distant. Her face takes on a sculptural
severity. She puts out her lips as instructed, but her own
mimicry and the ludicrous noise she produces make her laugh in
a rueful way. As for ALEC, he preserves a sternly school-
masterish expression.

ALEC (contd)

Try again.

TESS complies.. Moments later a fully rounded note emerges from
her lips, which ALEC has been watching intently. The momentary
pleasure of success inspires a change of mood. TESS's eyes
widen and she involuntarily smiles at ALEC.

ALEC (contd)

There, you'll manage splendidly
now I've started you off.

He follows this up with a question which throws TESS into
confusion again.

40 Continued

ALEC (contd)

Tell me, Tess, don't you find my mother a little odd?

TESS

I hardly know her, sir.

ALEC

I 'm not in her good books at the moment, but you should find favour if you treat her livestock well.

He walks off but turns after a few paces.

ALEC (cont)

If you meet with any difficulties here, don't go to Dollop, come to me. Au revoir.

TESS watches him go.

41 INT/DAY MRS D'URBERVILLE'S BEDROOM

Bullfinches are fluttering in six cages arrayed side by side near the window.

Through the bars of a cage we see the bedroom and its four-poster bed. TESS, who has evidently made progress, whistle a neat snatch of melody to the first bullfinches.

She moves on to the next cage, whistles again for about the same length of time, and repeats the process until she comes to the last cage of all.

42 EXT/NIGHT BARN

The night is fine and warm. TESS, seated on the shaft of a cart outside the barn, is dozing. Her head droops. She rouses herself with an effort, then relapses into semi-slumber. Music billows from the barn's open door. In the dimly lit interior, dancers can be seen jigging past in silhouette, haloed with dust. Shouts, laughter and singing mingle with sound of the fiddles.

A YOKEL emerges from the barn, rather unsteady on his feet. He catches sight of TESS and accosts her in a gruff voice which makes her jump.

YOKEL

What! Don't you fancy a dance, then?

TESS

I'm mortal tired. When are you all going home?

42 Continued

YOKEL

Soon enough, soon enough.

So saying he turns on his heel and lurches off to urinate, drunkenly clinging to a wall.

ALEC (OFF)

Well, my beauty, what are you doing here at this time of night?

TESS swings round and sees ALEC, who has silently approached her from behind, his face punctuated by the glowing tip of a cigar.

TESS

I'm waiting for the others, sir, not being acquainted with the road home.

ALEC

I only have a saddle-horse, I'm afraid, but come along to the inn with me and I'll hire a trap for us both.

TESS

No, no. Thank you, but I promised to wait for them.

ALEC

Very well, you silly girl. Please yourself.

He strolls casually off, leaving a trail of cigar-smoke to disperse in the balmy night air.

43 EXT/NIGHT LANE - FIELDS

TESS is with a group of five MEN, three WOMEN including CAR and NANCY, and an old CRONE. They are walking down a narrow country lane bleached by moonlight. Some of the party are staggering along with the aid of sticks others prop each other up. CAR is in the lead with a basket of provisions on her head. The party reaches a gate. Somebody opens it to let them strike across the fields. Suddenly a MAN says, indicating C

MAN

What's that a-creeping down your back?

43 Continued

EVERYONE looks. Something dark and viscous is leaving a trail down CAR's pale print frock.

NANCY

Well I declare! 'Tis treacle!

Laughter rings out.

On closer inspection, we see that a stream of molasses is escaping from Car's basket. She puts it down, feels the back of her neck and peers at her hand.

Agitatedly, she flings herself flat on her back in the grass and starts rubbing herself like a sow against a scratching-post then drags herself across the turf on her elbows.

The laughter grows wilder. Some of the party cling helplessly to the gate, others to their sticks. TESS, silent until now, starts laughing too.

CAR scrambles furiously to her feet.

CAR

You dare to laugh at me, you hussy!

TESS

I can't help it, no more than the others.

CAR becomes more and more infuriated.

CAR

You think you're the queen of Trantridge, don't you, just because you're first favourite with him!

A YOUTH intervenes.

YOUTH

Leave her be, she meant no harm.

His attempt to mediate only maddens CAR. She starts stripping off her bodice in preparation for a fist-fight with TESS.

CAR

I'll show you! I'm worth two of your sort, for all your airs and graces!

TESS scornfully retorts:

TESS

And if I'd known what sort you were I'd never have lowered myself by accepting your company.

43 Continued

This ill-judged remark causes universal offence. Words fly thick and fast. The whole party turns threatening.

VARIOUS VOICES

Our company, eh? Who does she think she is? We'll all show her what sort we are!

TESS backs away until she is brought up short by the gate behind her. At that moment, almost unheard, a horseman rounds a bend in the hedge. ALEC spurs his mount between TESS and her COMPANIONS, who stop short.

ALEC

Hey there, work-folk! What's all the row about?

His peremptory question is greeted by an abashed silence. He takes advantage of the hush to bend down and whisper to TESS.

ALEC (contd)

Quick, jump up beside me!

TESS's panic gets the better of her. Using the gate as a mounting-block, she scrambles up behind him as best she can. ALEC spurs his horse into a gallop before the quarrelsome REVELLERS grasp what has happened. The old CRONE raises her quavering voice in a sarcastic observation.

CRONE

Out of the frying pan into the fire!

Her verdict is unanimously confirmed by a burst of coarse laughter.

44 EXT/NIGHT FOREST

ALEC's horse, still steaming and lathered with sweat, is advancing at a steady walk along a track which leads through a majestic forest. Luminous fingers of moonlight pierce the branches of its mighty trees, and everything is steeped in a silence only heightened by the occasional cry of a nightbird. TESS has her arms clasped round ALEC's waist and her cheek pillowed against his back. Each respects the other's silence as they proceed on their way. At last, TESS speaks.

TESS

Where are we?

ALEC

Passing through The Chase.

44 Continued

TESS's response carries a hint of uneasiness.

TESS

The Chase? 'Tis out of our way,
surely?

ALEC replies very gently, very reasonably.

ALEC

This forest is one of the oldest
and loveliest in England, Tess.
Don't you think it deserves to
be seen on a glorious, God-given
night like this?

TESS

Yes, but ...

He cuts her short.

ALEC

No buts, there's a good girl.
I'll be honest with you: I'm
happy and I'm trying to prolong
the moment ... You were shivering
a while back - now I can feel
your warmth against me ... Are
you still cold?

TESS

No, not now.

ALEC

I'll let my animal walk a little
further. We'll make better
progress once she's rested.
Tell me, what news of your
parents' horse.

TESS straightens up and draws away from him.

TESS:

They have no horse.

ALEC

They have since Monday last.

TESS

Did you ...?

He breaks in.

ALEC

Forgive me for having mentioned
it. I thought they would have
written you.

44 Continued

TESS

I don't know what to say ...

He cuts her short again.

ALEC

It's nothing. I knew how important it was for your father to have a new horse. Really, it's you he should thank.

TESS

I'm grateful to you, truly I am, but ... I almost wish you hadn't done it - yes, I almost do!

ALEC reins in his horse and turns to look at her.

ALEC

Is that a reproach?

TESS

Oh no! 'Tis very kind of you, I'm sure.

He turns away, shoulders drooping in apparent dejection, then mutters:

ALEC

I've been in torment ever since you came to us.

We see - as TESS cannot - that his face belies this confession.

TESS

Then I'll leave tomorrow, sir.

ALEC

That's absurd!

He withdraws one foot from the stirrup and turns sideways to look into her face.

ALEC (contd)

I don't want you to leave - that's the last thing I want! Is there really no hope for me? None at all? Oh Tess, I'm dying for you, can't you see?

He seizes her hand and carries it passionately to his lips. TESS does not resist until ALEC tries to press home his advantage by putting his arms round her. Then she thrusts

44 Continued

him away with such unexpected violence that he loses his precarious balance and falls heavily from the saddle.

Alarmed by her over-reaction, TESS slides to the ground and flings herself on ALEC, who seems half-stunned.

TESS

Forgive me, oh-forgive me!
Are you hurt?

ALEC gets to his knees.

ALEC

It's nothing, nothing.

TESS notices some blood trickling down ALEC's forehead.

TESS

You're bleeding! My God, how
ever could I have done such a
thing!

Tears spring to her eyes. ALEC holds her close to comfort her tenderly strokes her hair and, in the end, kisses her gently on the lips. TESS's very first kiss leaves her powerless - transfigured.

ALEC slides his hand beneath her dress. TESS struggles and tries to push him away, but her seducer proves too strong for her. She is pinned to the ground, groaning under the pressure of his embrace.

45 INT/DAY HEN-HOUSE

TESS is at work. She doesn't hear ALEC's stealthy approach. He picks up a feather and tickles her ear with it. TESS swings round in surprise and laughs. ALEC kisses her.

46 INT/DAY TENT

Bathed in the diffused light of the tent, TESS finishes opening a parcel tied with ribbon. She removes a new hat from the cardboard box and puts it on. Then, half shamefaced, she kisses ALEC on the cheek.

ALEC's attire suggests that he has just returned from a trip. Other parcels are arrayed on a divan.

47 EXT/DAY RIVER

TESS is seated in a skiff staring absently at the water while ALEC idly wields the oars. She is wearing the new hat and new dress - both of them obviously gifts from her lover.

47 Continued

The skiff glides, dreamlike, into a watery inferno of reflected sunlight.

48 INT/NIGHT BEDROOM

TESS, wearing an elegant nightgown, stands by the open window. Rain is falling and thunder rumbling in the distance. Someone knocks at the door. TESS turns slowly without replying. An attempt to open the door fails because she has bolted it. ALEC's muffled voice is heard.

ALEC (OFF)

It's me! Don't be so foolish -
open the door!

TESS walks silently to the door as if spell-bound.

ALEC (OFF) (contd)

You'll force me to make a noise!
My mother has sharp ears, Tess,
she'll hear ... Enough of this
nonsense, darling - open up!

TESS puts her hands over her ears. Silence falls. She sits down on the bed, pale and motionless.

49 EXT/MORNING COUNTRY ROAD

Early morning in autumn. TESS is trudging along, weighed down by a large bundle and a basket. She reaches the brow of a hill, puts her belongings on the ground and pauses to catch her breath. Mechanically, her eyes turn to survey the long stretch of road she has already covered. She sees the dog-cart approaching at a gallop. ALEC soon pulls up beside her. His voice is reproachful.

ALEC

Why sneak away like a thief -
and at this hour of the morning?
Nobody would have prevented you
from leaving. At least let me
drive you home ...

He jumps down and gazes at her.

ALEC (contd)

Unless you care to come back?

TESS

I shan't come back.

49 Continued

ALEC stows her baggage in the dog-cart and helps her up. He climbs back into the driving-seat, sets the horse in motion and lights a cigar. TESS sits beside him looking apathetic.

50 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE NEAR MARLOTT

The outlying houses of the village can be seen in the distance. ALEC notices tears trickling down TESS's wooden face. He questions her gently.

ALEC

What are you crying for?

She sadly shakes her head before replying.

TESS

I was only thinking ... I was born over there.

ALEC

Well, we all have to be born somewhere.

TESS

I wish I'd never been born - there or anywhere else.

ALEC

You're absurdly melancholy, Tess. You can hold your own for beauty against any woman, queen or commoner. I tell you that as a practical man who wishes you well. If you're wise, you'll give the world a clearer sight of that beauty before it fades ... Why not make the most of life? We didn't fare so badly together, did we?

TESS

I was blinded for a while, that's all.

ALEC shrugs.

ALEC

That's what all women say.

TESS impetuously turns on him with her eyes flashing. ALEC is dumbfounded by her sudden transformation.

50 Continued

TESS

How dare you talk like that!
Has it never struck you that
what all women say some women
may feel?

ALEC

All right, all right ... I was
wrong, I admit it.

TESS reverts to her normal tone of voice.

TESS

Please stop. I should like to
get down here.

ALEC

I'm a bad lot, I suppose - a
damn bad lot. I was born bad,
and I warrant I'll die bad.

He pulls up. TESS jumps to the ground. He unloads her bags
and takes her hands in his. She surrenders them passively.

ALEC (contd)

Look, Tess, if circumstances
should arise ... you understand ...
If you're ever in the least
trouble, the least difficulty,
send me one line and you shall
have whatever you need by return.

He releases her hands and imprints a kiss on her marble cheek
then adds softly:

ALEC (contd)

You really won't come back?

TESS picks up her things and walks off. ALEC stares after
and calls:

ALEC (contd)

Goodbye, my four months' cousin,
goodbye!

He leaps aboard the dog-cart and whips his horse into a spi
turn.

51 EXT/DAY PATH

A tall thin MAN armed with a brush and a pot of red paint i
just daubing a fence with the final letter of the following
inscription: THY, DAMNATION, SLUMBERETH, NOT.

51 Continued

TESS has paused in surprise behind him. The MAN turns round and accosts her brightly.

MAN
'Tis early to be astir on a
Sabbath morning.

TESS
Yes.

MAN
When most folk are still abed.

He completes the T of NOT.
TESS walks off, but the MAN catches her up with long-legged strides, still holding his paint-pot.

MAN (contd)
May I help you, Missy?

Without waiting for a reply he seizes TESS's bundle and launches into a fanatical monologue.

MAN (contd)
'Tis today I perform my best
work. All week long I labour
for the glory of man and on
Sundays for the glory of God,
rousing sinners to the error
of their ways. A soldier of
heaven, that's what I am. I
paint and paint the word of the
Lord without mercy.

He has just spotted a promising stretch of wall.

MAN (cont'd)
Will you wait? I shall not be
long.

He puts down TESS's bundle, hurries over to the wall and paints with a speed born of long practice: THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ...
TESS doesn't linger. She picks up her belongings and beats a discreet but hasty retreat.

52 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE - CORNFIELDS

Distantly silhouetted against an expanse of corn is a horse-drawn reaper. Beyond it, HARVESTERS can be seen toiling in the relentless summer sun.

53 EXT/DAY FIELDS

Three horses are pulling the reaper, whose arms plunge rhythmically into the undulating golden corn. Behind the machine, the cut corn is promptly tackled by SHEAF-BINDERS. The majority are WOMEN wearing drawn cotton bonnets, also gloves to protect their hands against the stubble. One of them has her bonnet pulled down so low over her face that none of it can be seen. The other WOMEN often look round, but not this one. She performs her work with clockwork regularity. When she straightens up to retie her apron we recognise her as TESS - a TESS with a sterner face and harder eyes.

Several CHILDREN appear over the stubbly brow of the hill. They are bringing food for the HARVESTERS, who stop work and sit down with their backs against the shocks, sweating and exhausted.

TESS is the last to come and sit down. She half-turns away from her COMPANIONS, who eat and drink from a cup which passes from hand to hand.

A MAN in a rabbit-skin cap offers TESS a cup of ale over the top of a shock. TESS shakes her head in refusal, then glances meaningfully at a GIRL carrying a nondescript bundle. It is LIZA-LU with a baby wrapped in a shawl. She comes over and hands it to TESS.

With a strange blend of stealth and courage, TESS unbuttons her frock and starts to suckle the child.

The MEN sitting next to her turn their heads away.

After a while, a WOMAN remarks:

WOMAN

'Tis no use her pretending she
hates it and wishes it in the
churchyard - and herself beside
it. She loves that child of hers.

MAN

Poor little mite! It don't look
long for this world.

TESS, frozen-faced, seems to hear and see nothing.

53A INT/DAY COTTAGE - FIRST-FLOOR ROOM

Seated beside the open window, TESS is knitting a baby's vest in sky-blue wool. There is a cradle on the floor at her side. She rocks it gently in time to her work.

53B EXT/EVENING MEADOW

TESS is pacing slowly through the flower-strewn meadow with her baby wrapped in a shawl and clasped to her breast. The setting sun strikes the trees and projects their long shadows across the landscape, which recalls a painting by Millet.

53C INT/NIGHT FIRST-FLOOR ROOM

The tremulous flame of a candle lights TESS's face from below as she leans anxiously over her baby's cradle.

54 EXT/NIGHT ROAD TO COTTAGE

It is raining. Sheltering beneath a large umbrella, the VICAR makes his way to the Durbeyfield cottage and knocks. There is a pause before the door opens to reveal JOHN, drunk.

VICAR
Good evening, Durbeyfield.

JOHN
What's your business?

The VICAR is disconcerted by this question. He lowers his umbrella and prepares to enter.

VICAR
My business? What else but the child? I must baptize it before the Lord gathers it to his bosom.

JOHN
What child are you speaking of?
All my children are baptized -
you ought to know.

The VICAR tries to intimidate his stubborn parishioner with an air of severity.

VICAR
Durbeyfield, don't play games
with the Almighty!

JOHN is stung by this.

54 Continued

JOHN
I don't play, sir! I work like
a beast of the field, and you
can tell the Almighty that from
me.

So saying he slams the door in the VICAR's face.

55 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE - MAIN ROOM

TESS is standing on the stairs, very pale - almost trembling.
She calls to JOHN, who has just turned the key in the lock.

TESS
Father, I beg you! My baby's
dying.

JOHN
You ought to ha' been more
careful.

JOAN intervenes in an attempt to make her HUSBAND see reason.

JOAN
Like it or not, Jack, that child
was born. 'tis here, under your
own roof!

JOHN
Not true!

This surprising assertion reduces JOAN to silence. TESS walks
over to her FATHER and hurls her next words in his face.

TESS
Father, come to your senses - for
pity's sake let the Vicar in!

56 EXT/NIGHT COTTAGE

The VICAR is struggling to reopen his umbrella. He hears JOHN bellowing inside:

 JOHN (Off)
He shan't set foot inside this
house! There's enough disgrace
on my name as it is!

The VICAR fails to open his umbrella and stomps off through the downpour, which redoubles.

57 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE - CHILDRENS BEDROOM

The CHILDREN are asleep in spite of the storm raging outside. From downstairs comes the muffled, intermittent thud of a loose shutter. TESSA, wearing a nightgown, is kneeling with her forehead resting against a chest of drawers and her hand clenched on top of it. She is muttering distractedly, as though reciting a litany.

 TESS
O Merciful God, take pity,
take pity on me. Send down your
anger on me but have mercy on my
child! My child ...

A feeble whimper makes her turn. She gazes despairingly at something in the room.

We see the CHILD. It is lying in its mother's bed, whimpering and groaning incessantly.

58 EXT/AFTERNOON VICARAGE GARDEN

Birds are twittering in the trees.

The VICAR, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and bee-keepers veil and wielding a smoke-gun operated by a miniature bellows, is busy smoking bees from a hive to extract the combs.

58 Continued

He is so engrossed in his labours that he fails to notice TESS until he straightens up and raises his veil. The black shawl over her head and shoulders intensifies the pallor of her exhausted face. Her voice does not seem to belong to her

TESS

I should like to ask you something, sir.

VICAR

Speak, girl. I'm listening.

But TESS says nothing. The VICAR, suddenly embarrassed by his headgear and veil, laboriously removes them before bowing his head and composing his face as behoves someone about to deliver some hackneyed words of consolation.

VICAR (contd)

Each of us shares in your sad affliction, my child. We are all members of the suffering body of Christ.

TESS

My son was baptized.

The VICAR is puzzled. He registers professional resentment.

VICAR

Baptized? By whom?

TESS

By me, last night.

Conscious of his prerogatives, the VICAR starts worrying about the technique employed.

VICAR

What procedure did you follow?

Poor TESS embarks on a harrowing account of her presumptuous act.

TESS

I ... I woke my little brothers and sisters and made them kneel down to pray. Liza-Lu held the prayer-book open and I lit a candle.

She gulps and breaks off, close to tears.

VICAR

And then?

58 Continued

TESS

Then I held my child like this
(she demonstrates)
over the basin ...

The VICAR prompts her with slight movements of the head.

TESS (contd)

... and I ... I poured some
water on his forehead, and I said:
I baptize thee in the name of the
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

VICAR

Did you make the sign of the Cross?

TESS

Yes, I did that too. Will it be
just the same as if you'd baptized
him - in the sight of God, I mean?

The VICAR thinks hard. The man and the cleric wrestle within
him, and the man wins.

VICAR

Yes, my dear girl, it will be the
same.

TESS's face lights up with joy.

TESS

Then you'll give him a Christian
burial?

This time the cleric replies with no hesitation and a touch
of complacency.

VICAR

Ah, that's quite another matter.

TESS

Another matter ... But why?

VICAR

Because that would concern the
village as a whole, not just the
two of us. Do you understand?

In a sudden excess of touching naivety, TESS cries:

TESS

Won't you do it, sir - just this
once?

58 Continued

The VICAR's response is like a slap in the face.

VICAR

I'm sorry.

TESS seizes his hand and raises it fervently to her lips, imploring him in a whisper:

TESS

I beg you.

The VICAR brusquely withdraws his hand.

VICAR

I told you, it's out of the question.

Dejection gives way to rebellion. TESS almost shouts at the VICAR, who is paralysed and perturbed by her sudden fit of hatred.

TESS

Then I don't like you. I shall never come to your church again. Never, never!

59 EXT/NIGHT CHURCHYARD

The numerous headstones in the old churchyard stand out against the night sky. A shadowy figure furtively encroaches on this peaceful scene. It is TESS, carrying a bunch of white flowers and something bundled up in a knotted shawl. She reaches a spot where freshly turned soil marks the site of an unidentified grave. She kneels and unties the shawl. Inside are two pieces of wood, a length of string and a glass jar. She ties the pieces of wood together to form a cross. Then she arranges the flowers in the jar, which bears the inscription 'Keelwell's Marmalade'.

60 EXT/DAY GRAZING LAND - FARM BUILDINGS

The landscape is a green and harmonious expanse of lush pasturage. In the distance, cows are making their leisurely way into a yard enclosed by farm buildings. TESS, whose face, clothes and general appearance convey that she must have walked far, gazes at this scene as though imprinting it on her heart. She picks up a travelling-bag and heads for the farm.

61 INT/DAY COW SHED - DAIRY

Polished brass knobs gleam on the horns of cows lined up for milking in the pleasant dimness of the cow-shed. MILKMAIDS and FARMHANDS, each seated on a stool with cheek or forehead resting against an animal's flank, are working in silence. Spurting from the teats, white jets of milk purr softly against the sides of the milkers' pails. TESS stands silhouetted against the light from outside. After a moment, a voice issues from beneath a cow near the doorway.

VOICE (OFF)

Mister Crick!

Master-dairyman CRICK, a jovial-looking man with a long white apron over his clothes, walks towards TESS as he speaks.

CRICK

What, here already? We didn't expect you afore tomorrow. 'Tis quite a step from here to Wetherbury.

TESS

Marlott, sir. I come from Marlott.

CRICK

Ah yes, Marlott. That's even further.

He looks TESS doubtfully up and down while speaking.

CRICK (contd)

Quite sure you can stand it here? 'Tis comfortable enough for rough folk, but we don't live in a cowcumber frame.

TESS replies firmly:

TESS

I'm accustomed to that.

CRICK seems pleased by this response.

CRICK

I used to know your part o' the county when I were a lad ...Good, right you are. Would you care for a rest and a mossel o' food?

TESS

I'd rather begin now, to get my hand in.

CRICK is definitely satisfied with his new recruit.

61 Continued

CRICK

Come now, you must be famished!

TESS

No, thank you. A little milk
will suffice.

CRICK

Ah well, if you can swaller that,
so be it.

He picks up a pail and offers it to TESS, who takes a long
drink.

CRICK (contd)

'Tis what I hain't touched for
years. It lies in my innards
like lead.

62 INT/DAY COW SHED (LATER)

TESS, who has exchanged her bonnet for a hood, is seated on
a stool and sending rhythmical spurts of milk into her pail
from the udders of a cow.
Abrupt exclamations are heard from time to time as the MILKERS
urge their beasts to turn or stand still.
CRICK rises from one cow and moves to the next, carrying his
pail in one hand and his stool in the other. He grumbles:

CRICK

To my thinking, the beasts
aren't giving all they should.

JONATHAN, a little old man with a falsetto voice, chimes in:

JONATHAN

'Tis because there's a new hand
come among us.

Old DEBORAH adds:

DEBORAH

I've known it happen afore.

JONATHAN

They do say the milk goes up into
their horns at such times.

This statement evokes male laughter from someone beside the
entrance.

62 Continued

ANGEL (OFF)

Anyone would think we were
back in the Middle Ages!

A pause. Then the same voice resumes.

ANGEL (OFF) (contd)

I don't appear to be making
much progress.

CRICK

Take it gentle, sir, take it
gentle. 'Tis skill that does it,
not strength.

ANGEL (OFF)

So my aching fingers tell me!

A young man emerges from the serried cows and comes into view. It is ANGEL. He is bearded and moustached and does not dress like a farmhand, though he wears a white apron. He stretches then walks out of the cow shed without a backward glance.

63 INT/EVENING MILKMAID'S DORMITORY

TESS is lying in a small bed with some of her personal belongings on a table beside her. Three other MILKMAIDS share the large dormitory with her. They are MARIAN (buxom and ruddy-cheeked), IZZ HUETT (slim and brown-haired), and RETTY PRIDDLE (a red-head with a milky complexion). MARIAN occupies the bed next to TESS. Although the light has not entirely faded, IZZ and RETTY are already asleep. Seated on her bed in a shift and brushing her hair meanwhile, MARIAN is chatting to TESS in a whisper. TESS, struggling to keep awake, blinks at MARIAN against the light and listens as best she can.

MARIAN

... Mis'ess Crick's too proud to
come a-milking with us, and that's
a fact. Still there's little enough
to wherrit about and we eat like
gamecocks. No, you'll like it here.
Mister Crick - he's a very kindly man.

After a brief and meditative pause, she adds:

MARIAN (contd)

Just fancy, he has his own family
pew in church!

She intones with mock earnestness:

63 Continued

MARIAN (contd)

All the week, Dairyman Dick.
On Sundays Mister Richard Crick!

Somewhere in the house, a flute strikes up a simple, melodious tune. MARIAN puts her hairbrush on the bedside-table and starts to climb between the sheets.

TESS

Who's that playing?

MARIAN

Mister Clare.

TESS

Mister Clare?

MARIAN

Him that's learning to milk.
Angel Clare, he's called. Angel ...
'Tis an uncommon name.

She sighs, trying to settle herself comfortably for sleep.

MARIAN (contd)

He never says much to us, more's
the pity.

TESS is surprised.

TESS

Why, does he scorn common folk?

MARIAN

Quite the opposite. He often makes
mock of old families ...

TESS is piqued by this information.

MARIAN (contd)

... 'Tis quite simple. He's a
pa'son's son wi' a mind to be a
farmer. He's already tried his
hand at sheep-farming ... Now
he's learning dairy-work wi'
Mister Crick.

After a pause, TESS asks uneasily:

TESS

But what does he hold against
old families?

MARIAN replies in a voice already blurred with sleep.

63 Continued

MARIAN

He says they're worm-eaten.

She falls silent and starts snoring softly. TESS shuts her eyes.

64 INT/NIGHT DAIRY

Brass and copper utensils gleam faintly in the semi-darkness. Whey drips from the cheese-presses with a high, clear note that seems to measure the passing of the night hours.

65 INT/DAWN KITCHEN

ANGEL is seated near the fireplace, engrossed in a book and sipping tea. The dawn air is chill enough to warrant the log fire crackling on the hearth.

The big farmhouse kitchen resounds to the hubbub and clatter of a communal breakfast. Present are: CRICK, MRS CRICK, Old JONATHAN, Old DEBORAH, MARIAN, IZZ, RETTY, TESS and two FARMHANDS.

Busily chomping jaws are silhouetted against the window. Suddenly, a violent hiccup shakes the buxom MARIAN on her stool.

JONATHAN

That be your soul a-trying to escape.

Poor MARIAN shakes her head and pats her chest.

MARIAN

'Tis bread, that's all ...

Old DEBORAH is quite categorical on the subject.

DEBORAH

No, 'tis when you sneeze you're like to blow your soul away.

CRICK swallows a mouthful before earnestly announcing:

CRICK

As I see it, no soul can leave its mortal shell afore a body dies.

JONATHAN

What if you fall down in a faint, sir?

CRICK

That's a different matter.

65 Continued

He swallows another substantial mouthful to allow himself time for reflection.

CRICK (contd)

The spirit bides there inside you
but you cannot feel it.

Speaking softly, TESS voices a surprising opinion which draws every eye in her direction.

TESS

But we can sometimes make our
souls leave our bodies ...

She promptly regrets having spoken, but CRICK, with his mouth full and his knife and fork-laden fists planted on the table, wants to know more.

CRICK

How's that, then, maidy?

Forced to explain herself, TESS reluctantly continues.

TESS

You only have to lie on the grass
at night and look straight up at
some bright star ...

ANGEL closes his book (we see it is Marx's 'Capital' - Vol.1, 1st English edition of 1886), then focuses his eyes and ears on TESS, whose beauty has suddenly dawned on him.

TESS (contd)

Stare at it with all your might,
and by and by you'll feel you're
falling into the sky, miles and
miles from your body, which you
don't seem to need at all ...

She concludes her recital in an oppressive hush. To save face she draws some imaginary pictures on the table with her forefinger.

Another explosive hiccup from MARIAN triggers a general outbreak of cathartic laughter.

66 EXT/EVENING GARDEN

The garden is an overgrown, damp and luxuriant place where the least touch sends up clouds of pollen. Blossoming weeds create a dazzling polychrome effect. The limpid notes of a flute hover in the midst of this exuberant tangle of vegetation.

66 Continued

TESS steals closer to the sound, soft-footed as a cat, until she catches sight of ANGEL sitting on a worm-eaten bench with his back to her. She freezes and listens to the tune with evident enjoyment.
After a while ANGEL stops playing and gets up.
Fearful of being detected, TESS starts to make a discreet withdrawal. Her movements attract ANGEL's attention.

ANGEL

Tess, why run away like that?

TESS stops and turns, blushing. ANGEL strolls towards her.

ANGEL (contd)

Are you afraid?

TESS

Oh no, sir... Not of outdoor things.

She stands quite still. ANGEL has halted some distance away.

ANGEL

But you have your indoor fears, eh?

TESS

Heavens, yes!

ANGEL

Of what?

TESS

I couldn't rightly say.

ANGEL chuckles.

ANGEL

Of the milk turning sour?

TESS laughs too.

TESS

No.

ANGEL

Fear of life in general?

TESS

Yes, sir.

ANGEL

So have I, very often. Life's a puzzle, don't you think?

66 Continued

TESS

Perhaps, now you put it that way.

ANGEL gives TESS a smile and a friendly nod, then walks slowly back into the garden and out of sight.

67 INT/EXT/DAY DAIRY

Outside the window we see a young BOY leading a horse round and round the yard.

Inside, consternation reigns round the massive churn (which the horse is turning).

CRICK, MRS CRICK, MARIAN, IZZ, RETTY, TESS, Old JONATHAN and Old DEBORAH all stare at the contraption as if their gaze could alchemize milk into butter.

CRICK

'Tis no use - it won't take!

He shakes his head dispiritedly.

CRICK (contd)

If this continnys I shall have to call on Conjurer Trendle. I don't say I believe in him, mind, but if nothing else works I shall have to try him, shan't I?

MRS CRICK

Somebody here's in love, I'll be bound. That can cause it, so I've heard.

Old JONATHAN brings the conversation back to white magic.

JONATHAN

Conjurer Fall, t'other side o' Casterbridge - he used to have the knack when I were a lad. 'Tis a pity - he must be feeding the worms by now.

CRICK

My granfer used to go to Conjurer Mynterne out at Owlscombe, but there's no such folk as him these days.

MRS CRICK

Somebody's in love, I tell you.

67 Continued

ANGEL comes in. The circle of lugubrious faces intrigues him.

ANGEL
What's the matter?

CRICK
The butter won't come.

ANGEL
Why's that?

CRICK makes a helpless gesture which conveys his inability to answer this question.

TESS
How warm it is today ...

This remark makes her the cynosure of all eyes including those of her precious ANGEL. Very pale, she adds faintly:

TESS (contd)
I think I'd be better out o'doors.

68 EXT/DAY DAIRY YARD

TESS emerges from the dairy-house and passes in front of the horse, which continues its monotonous gyrations.

69 INT/EVENING MILKMAIDS' DORMITORY

MARIAN, IZZ and RETTY, all barefooted and in nightgowns, are grouped at the window, watching something in the garden below. Streaming from beneath the ominous cloud-castles that presage a summer storm, the last red rays of the setting sun impart a warm reflected glow to their necks and faces and the white walls around them.

RETTY
Don't push!

The three GIRLS are careful not to be seen by the object of their interest. TESS is already in bed but still awake.

69 Continued

She watches the endearing young conspirators and listens to their whispered remarks.

MARIAN

He looks so sad! What ever
can he be thinking of?

IZZ

Not of us, you can rely on
that.

MARIAN and her FRIENDS glance back at TESS's bed. TESS feigns sleep. The GIRLS turn back to the window.

RETTY

You're a fine one to talk,
Izz. I saw you!

IZZ

What did you see?

RETTY

'Twas t'other day. I saw you
a-kissing his shadow.

IZZ blushes and preserves a nail-biting silence.

MARIAN

Ah, here he comes again!
Dear eyes, dear face, dear
Mister Clare!

All three GIRLS blow their unattainable love a silent kiss and follow him with their eyes.
In a low, tremulous voice, IZZ murmurs:

IZZ

'Tis terrible to think he'll
never wed any one of us ...

MARIAN

More likely he'll ask us to
milk his cows for so much a
year!

70 EXT/EVENING GARDEN

ANGEL is strolling meditatively along a shadowy path in the silent garden. A few fat drops of rain start to fall, followed by a summer cloudburst. ANGEL raises his face to the sky and lets the rain stream down his cheeks.

71 EXT/DAY CROSSROADS - COUNTRYSIDE

Mirrored in a calm expanse of water are the inverted reflections of MARIAN, TESS, RETTY and IZZ. The four COMPANIONS, all in their Sunday best, have been halted at the crossroads by a wide, deep pool of flood-water bordered by banks and tall hedgerows.

MARIAN

What are we going to do?

IZZ

We shall have to take the Stone-bridge road.

MARIAN

We'll be late!

Lifting the skirts of her best dress, MARIAN tries to sidle along the steep bank. Church bells ring out in the distance. MARIAN almost slips and hurriedly abandons her attempt. Splashing can be heard round a bend in the road: someone is wading through the water. ANGEL comes into view, his jacket slung over one shoulder. He is returning from a stroll, slashing the air with his stick.

TESS

Doesn't he go to church?

MARIAN

No, never.

IZZ

I wish he would.

ANGEL has just caught sight of the four charming GIRLS in their summer dresses. He calls to MARIAN, the nearest, but glances at TESS.

ANGEL

You look like cats afraid of water.

MARIAN

Only on account of our Sunday best, sir.

71 Continued

ANGEL

Very well, I'll carry you just
as you are ...

He tosses his jacket on to the bank and picks up MARIAN, who
struggles feebly.

MARIAN

No, no, I'm far too heavy!

ANGEL

Nonsense, I could carry all four
of you at once. Keep still - hold
on to me - that's it.

ANGEL splashes off, staggering under his burden.
IZZ treats herself to some muttered encouragement.

IZZ

I shall put my arms round his
neck and look into his eyes.

TESS simulates total indifference.

TESS

There's nothing in that.

IZZ

There's a time for everything
under heaven - a time to kiss
and a time to cuddle!

TESS

Shame on you, Izz! That's
Scripture!

IZZ

I know, I always heed the
prettiest verses in church.

ANGEL returns. He picks up IZZ and moves off at a steady pace
avoiding the deepest of the submerged ruts.
RETTY, the lightest of the four, is also the most nervous.
ANGEL has more trouble with her than he had with plump MARIAN.
At last it is TESS's turn. She suggests the opposite of what
she so desperately desires.

TESS

If you helped me, perhaps I
could climb along the bank.

ANGEL gazes at her, slightly out of breath, his eyes filled
with a love he can hide no longer.

71 Continued

ANGEL

Oh Tess ... I've gone to three-quarters of this trouble for your sake alone.

He picks her up. She melts against him with her arms round neck.

Their journey is accompanied by the sound of his footsteps on the water. Their faces are so close that their breath mingle. Each is on the verge of fainting at the touch of the other's body.

MARIAN, IZZ and RETTY watch them approaching in this fashion. ANGEL sets TESS down beside her COMPANIONS. Then, with a wave to all four, he turns away to conceal his emotional turmoil. MARIAN, IZZ and RETTY glance enviously at TESS before transferring their wistful gaze to ANGEL, who strides off without looking round.

72 EXT/EVENING MEADOW

The air is warm despite the lengthening shadows. Several cows are being stripped where they graze.

TESS is milking in the shade of a hedge with her temple against the flank of one such animal, dreamily staring into the distance.

ANGEL is seated some yards away, absently milking another beast and watching TESS as he does so.

He contemplates TESS's fine profile, which stands out like a cameo against the cow's brown hide.

After a while, ANGEL gets up and walks over. Whether or not TESS notices, she gives no sign.

ANGEL kneels down beside her and takes her in his arms. They kiss passionately and remain entwined, alone in the world.

The cow turns her head. Annoyed by the twin figures resting against her, she irritably raises one hind-leg. Her hoof grazes the pail.

This movement brings TESS down to earth. Fearful that someone will see them she gently tries to free herself, exclaiming:

TESS

She's angry - she doesn't understand - she'll kick over the bucket!

ANGEL's surge of tender folly subsides too. He blushes deeply and murmurs:

ANGEL

Forgive me, darling Tess. I ...
I didn't know what I was doing.
There's only one excuse for it.
I love you - yes, I love you.

72 Continued

He rises, still dazed by his quasi-stolen kiss, and leaves TESS trembling with happiness.

73 EXT/DAY EMMINSTER VILLAGE

ANGEL is riding into the village at a broken-winded trot. His mount is anything but a thoroughbred. Coming in sight of the church he sees a group of LITTLE GIRLS outside the vestry door, apparently waiting for someone. Just at that moment a girl emerges from the vestry carrying two books in her hand. She is an austere beauty, and her cambric gown is neatly starched and pressed - in short, MERCY CHANT resembles her own attire. She catches sight of ANGEL, who pretends not to notice her and makes as if to ride on. She calls to him.

MERCY

Angel! Angel!

ANGEL turns and feigns surprise while wheeling his horse.

ANGEL

Hello, Mercy! Forgive me - I didn't see you.

He dismounts.

MERCY

Welcome home.

ANGEL assumes a spurious air of interest.

ANGEL

How are you?

MERCY

Very well, God be praised. You look radiant with health, I see.

ANGEL

The open air, probably.

MERCY

Have you come to spend the holidays with your brothers?

ANGEL

Are they here? I had no idea. No, I'm only paying my parents a brief visit to settle some urgent business.

73 Continued

MERCY

Then I won't detain you. I have my Bible class to take in any case. Au revoir, Angel.

ANGEL

Au revoir.

74 EXT/DAY GARDEN - VICARAGE

ANGEL pushes open the garden gate and walks up the path to the front door.

75 INT/DAY VICARAGE - DINING-ROOM

Everything is neat, clean, highly polished and austere. Seated at table and about to eat are the Reverend MR CLARE, who has a rather gaunt and pallid face of resolute cast; MRS CLARE, wearing a lace cap and silver-rimmed spectacles; and their sons FELIX and CUTHBERT, a dandified pair who both wear pince-nez for effect. We hear the sound of a door, then footsteps approaching. ANGEL enters carrying a bundle. His clothes, weather-beaten face and tanned complexion mark him out from the rest of the family.

MRS CLARE

Angel, my boy!

ANGEL goes over, kisses her on the forehead and turns to his FATHER.

ANGEL

I apologize, Father, I had no time to warn you of my arrival.

His MOTHER is already rising to lay another place.

FELIX

Perhaps you've forgotten how to write. With a pen, remember?

ANGEL deposits his bundle at the far end of the table. MR CLARE raises his eyebrows and MRS CLARE promptly removes it.

ANGEL

I brought you some farmhouse delicacies. Black puddings and a bottle of mead.

75 Continued

FELIX

Black puddings ...

MR CLARE

It's true that your mother and I have regretted hearing so little of your news.

FELIX

You must bear with him, Father. Spending your days among sheep and cattle takes you closer to Nature but further from Oxford.

ANGEL has settled himself comfortably in a chair. He stretches his legs without undue ceremony.

MR CLARE

I would remind you, Felix, that a university education is worth nothing unless it redounds to the glory of God.

ANGEL

It can also redound to the glory of man.

His FATHER retorts drily:

MR CLARE

Only in the second place.

CUTHBERT, who seems more in sympathy with ANGEL, intervenes in a brotherly fashion.

CUTHBERT

How far have you got with your apprenticeship?

MRS CLARE has filled ANGEL's plate. ANGEL tackles it with gusto.

ANGEL

It's drawing to a close ...

FELIX, who is sitting next to him, abruptly takes one of ANGEL's hands and holds it up for general inspection. We note the grimy nails. FELIX drops the hand with studious distaste. ANGEL resumes his meal, quite unabashed.

75 Continued

ANGEL (contd)

What counts is spiritual
cleanliness - isn't that so,
Father?

MR CLARE

The two go together, my boy.

CUTHBERT

Father tells us you plan to set
up on your own account.

ANGEL

Yes.

CUTHBERT

In what part of the world?

ANGEL

I don't know yet The colonies,
perhaps.

MRS CLARE

Heaven preserve us!

ANGEL

It would suit the type of farming
I have in mind.

MR CLARE

What colony?

ANGEL

The choice is wide ... Or I may
settle in a foreign country.
Some places offer land to immigrants
on very favourable terms - Brazil,
for example.

FELIX

Wonders will never cease!

ANGEL responds to the dismay on the OTHERS' faces.

ANGEL

Nothing's settled yet. I came here
to discuss it - that among other
things. Well, shall we take a
drop of good Mr Crick's delicious
mead?

He sighs, quelled by his MOTHER's pained expression and his
FATHER's stern gaze.

75 Continued

ANGEL (contd)
Forgive me, I'd forgotten. Strong
drink is the root of all evil.

76 INT/DAY MR CLARE'S STUDY

MR CLARE, MRS CLARE and ANGEL are sitting in the study, a room even more spartan than the rest of the house.

MR CLARE
Now, my boy, take us into your
confidence.

MRS CLARE
Is it something serious?

ANGEL
No, not serious, but important ...
The truth is, well - don't you
think it's time I considered
marrying?

His PARENTS' faces brighten. The question does not perturb
them. On the contrary, they exchange a conspiratorial glance.

MR CLARE
Yes indeed, my boy, yes indeed!
Your mother and I have sometimes
debated the same question.

ANGEL
Really? And what sort of wife
would you favour for a budding
farmer like me?

MR CLARE
A truly Christian, God-fearing
woman.

MRS CLARE
One who will be a help and a
comfort to you in all things.

MR CLARE
The rest matters little.

MRS CLARE
You mustn't hesitate, dear son.

ANGEL fails to grasp her meaning.

76 Continued

ANGEL

Not hesitate?

MRS CLARE

To marry your heart's desire:
Mercy Chant.

ANGEL's face darkens.

MR CLARE

She may be rather fond of
overdecorating the church with
fripperies - flowers, scraps
of lace and so forth - but that's
merely a girlish fancy. It will
pass.

MRS CLARE

Mercy is a pure and virtuous girl.

Chest swelling with muted rebellion, ANGEL burns his boats.

ANGEL

Oh yes, I know she's pure and
virtuous, but ... Honesty compels
me to inform you that I have other
plans.

MR CLARE

Other plans?

ANGEL

Very much so. Mercy Chant appeals
more to you than she does to me.
I'm not disputing her merits - I'm
speaking of my own inclinations.

MR CLARE blanches. MRS CLARE's eyes fill with tears behind
her glasses.

MRS CLARE

My dearest boy ...

MR CLARE

Angel, remember you're addressing
your parents!

ANGEL

I'm aware of that.

He struggles to control himself and speak in a slow, calm
voice.

76 Continued

ANGEL

I already know the woman I
intend to marry.

MR CLARE and MRS CLARE eye their son as if he were some
formidable stranger.

ANGEL (contd)

Her name is Teresa Durbeyfield.

His PARENTS exchange an involuntary glance as if to reassure
themselves that neither has prior knowledge of the creature in
question. ANGEL goes on in a gentle and compassionate tone.

ANGEL (contd)

Father, Mother, I respect you
both. I also respect Mercy
Chant and have no doubt she'll
find a worthy husband. With or
without your help. As for me,
my mind's made up.

77 EXT/DAY DAIRY YARD

It is siesta time. The peaceful farm reverberates with snores
A COWMAN is asleep in the shade of a cart with his waistband
unbuttoned. The sun blazes down on a row of wooden pails
bleached by much scouring.

ANGEL, holding his horse's bridle, leads it across the yard
and into the stable.

78 INT/EXT/DAY CORRIDOR - STAIRS - YARD

TESS comes downstairs, hair dishevelled and streaked with
sweat from her afternoon rest. She yawns, then suddenly
sees ANGEL entering the cool shadowy corridor from the sun-
baked yard. A FARM-HAND is stretched out on the flagstones,
fast asleep.

TESS goes to meet ANGEL, surprised and overjoyed. She greets
him in a low voice.

TESS

'Tis you.

ANGEL gazes lovingly at her. He too keeps his voice down
for fear of waking the MAN near by, whose stertorous breathing
can be heard.

ANGEL

Tess, I want to ask you this
now - will you be my wife?

78 Continued

TESS looks at him with such a pitiful expression, on the verge of swooning, that he clasps her to him before continuing.

ANGEL (contd)
I love you with all my heart
and soul!

TESS trembles in his arms.

ANGEL (contd)
But what's the matter?

TESS
I ... I cannot. I cannot be
your wife.

ANGEL holds her away and gazes searchingly into her eyes.

ANGEL
Don't you love me?

TESS
Oh yes, yes! I would rather
belong to you than anyone in
the world. But forgive me ...
I cannot marry you.

Puzzled by her confusion, ANGEL takes her tenderly and protectively into his arms again.

79 INT/DAY SKIMMING-ROOM

The room is bathed in semi-darkness because its few apertures help to conserve humidity.

TESS is drawing the skimmer across the surface of a vessel to remove the cream. Her hand is trembling and her eyes are misted with tears. Even after several attempts, she fails to perform the manoeuvre with her usual dexterity.

80 EXT/EVENING GARDEN

TESS is seated on the worm-eaten bench where ANGEL previously sat to play the flute. She is reading a letter. We hear her MOTHER's voice.

JOAN (OFF)
It was the Good Lord who put
this nice young parson's son
your way - you must believe
that as I do. But with respect
to your question, I tell you,
quite private but very strong,

80 Continued

JOAN (Cont)

on no account say a word about
your bygone trouble. Never a
word, my girl - least of all
to him.

TESS's hand, still holding the letter, sinks slowly on to her
lap.

TESS

Oh Mother, Mother ...

81 EXT/EVENING CART - COUNTRY ROAD

It is drizzling. ANGEL and TESS are in a cart laden with
milk-churns. The clip-clop of the horse's hoofs on the wet
road provides a counterpoint to the splashing of the milk
in the churns.

Here and there in the fading light of day, the peaceful
countryside is fleetingly pierced by the glint of a pond
or stretch of river.

Raindrops spangle the faces of the young couple, who are
huddled together for mutual protection against the wind,
which is blowing in short sharp gusts.

ANGEL, with his collar turned up, is sheltered by a hat;
TESS wears a calico hood.

ANGEL

Tess?

TESS turns to look at him. ANGEL goes on:

ANGEL (contd)

Why does the idea of becoming
my wife displease you?

TESS reacts at two different tempi. First:

TESS

But I never said that ... It
would please me so much!

Then, dejectedly:

TESS (contd)

'Tis simply that I cannot.

ANGEL

Why?

TESS doesn't answer.

81 Continued

ANGEL (Cont)

Is there someone else?

TESS responds by taking his hand and pressing it to her cheek.

ANGEL (contd)

Don't I deserve to know the truth?

TESS shakes her head.

ANGEL (contd)

Well?

TESS

Not now.

ANGEL

When, then?

TESS

Later.

ANGEL

But why?

TESS pauses before making up her mind to speak.

TESS

I'll tell you when we get home.
 You may stop loving me when you
 know. Let me wait till then.

82 EXT/NIGHT SMALL RAILWAY STATION

The rain redoubles. A train drawn by a locomotive spewing steam in great hissing bursts pulls into the station. With practised movements and much metallic clatter, some MEN stow the milk-churns aboard.

TESS stares spell-bound at the locomotive's lights glowing in the darkness.

The train moves off with a long banshee whistle which echoes round the countryside. The red light of the guard's van soon casts its reflection on the glistening wet rails.

TESS

Londoners will drink it at their
 breakfasts tomorrow, won't they?

ANGEL

Yes, but watered down in case it
 goes to their heads.

82 Continued

TESS

Strangers we've never seen ...

She turns to ANGEL with a cryptic smile and says:

TESS (contd)

You saw me once before - do you know that?

ANGEL

I did?

TESS

Yes, and you wouldn't dance with me.

ANGEL stares at TESS as if he is seeing her for the first time.

TESS (contd)

... It was at Marlott.

ANGEL's face lights up with recollection. Simultaneously, he exclaims:

ANGEL

Of course! That's incredible!

TESS

You remember now?

ANGEL

Tessy, Tessy, is it possible!

He takes her in his arms and they laugh together, a trifle nervously, in tribute to the benevolent irony of fate.

83 EXT/NIGHT CART - COUNTRY ROAD

The lanterns of the cart are lit. The YOUNG COUPLE are driving back to the dairy at a leisurely pace. They do not speak, but we sense that ANGEL is waiting for TESS's promised revelation.

ANGEL

Now, my girl.

TESS

Yes. I may never again be brave enough to tell you my story.

ANGEL prompts her in a detached tone.

83 Continued

ANGEL

Then get on with your precious story. I was born at such-and-such a place in such-and-such a year ...

TESS chimes in like a child reciting its lessons.

TESS

I was born at Marlott and I grew up there. I was in the sixth form when I left school - they said I would make a good teacher. But there was trouble in my family. Father was no great worker - he drank ... and I ... my parents ...

Her voice becomes hurried and breathless, her lips tremble..

TESS (contd)

It was then that something happened - something which changed my life. I ... They ... They discovered that we were not Durbeyfields but d'Urbervilles.

ANGEL

Well, go on.

TESS yearns desperately to explain herself without having to utter another word.

TESS

Well, that's it.

ANGEL

What?

TESS

The d'Urbervilles are an old family.

ANGEL

I know.

TESS continues in a whisper, fighting back her tears.

TESS

On account of ... Being of that name, my mother thought ... I was sent ... I had a ...

83 Continued

ANGEL

A what?

TESS

I was told you hated old families.

ANGEL, imagining that he has just been taken into TESS's confidence, gives a little laugh.

ANGEL

And is that all the trouble?

TESS shakes her head and bursts into convulsive sobs but ends by saying:

TESS

Yes.

ANGEL takes her in his arms and clasps her to him, covers her with passionate kisses and murmurs:

ANGEL

None of that matters! Say you'll
be my wife - say it, Tess, say it,
my dear love.

TESS replies through her tears:

TESS

Yes, yes, yes.

The horse seems to share in this moment of happiness between the two human beings it is hauling along the darkened road.

84 INT/EVENING DAIRY - MILKMAIDS' DORMITORY

Ensconced in the corner beside her bed, TESS is writing a letter by the dying rays of the sun, which still lights the room sufficiently. Sometimes she stops writing and glances mechanically at one or other of her three COMPANIONS. RETTY is combing her hair and IZZ sewing while MARIAN chats to them. TESS sees them without hearing their voices, but her voice is audible to us.

TESS (OFF)

... my youth, my simplicity and the
strangeness of my situation may
perhaps lessen my fault, but since
I committed it I am guilty.
I must be guilty because the Lord
saw fit to take my child. If what I

84 Continued

TESS (OFF) (contd)
 have just written failed to pass my
 lips in your presence when I had
 repeated it a thousand times in my
 heart, it was for fear of losing
 you for ever. For love of you I
 shall conquer that fear and bring
 you this letter. Once you receive
 it, Angel, you will hold the rest of
 my life in your hands. I hope, I
 tremble, I love you.

85 INT/EVENING STAIRCASE - ANGEL'S ROOM

The stairs to ANGEL's room are very steep.
 TESS, barefooted, climbs them quietly and timidly. When she
 is near enough she pauses to listen intently for a moment.
 Reassured, she takes the letter - which she has concealed in
 her bodice - and slides it under ANGEL's door.

86 INT/NIGHT MILKMAIDS' DORMITORY

TESS's three COMPANIONS are asleep. Moonlight is flooding the
 big peaceful room.
 TESS is also in bed, but her eyes are wide and staring.

87 INT/DAWN STAIRCASE - ANGEL'S ROOM

TESS is sitting at the foot of the stairs. Various sounds
 from the kitchen below proclaim that breakfast is in preparation.
 ANGEL's footsteps can be heard in his room. The sound brings
 TESS to her feet. She gazes up at ANGEL's door, which opens.
 ANGEL appears and comes quickly down the stairs.
 Delighted to see TESS in this unaccustomed spot, ANGEL fails
 to notice her anxiety. He takes her in his arms and kisses
 her on the forehead.

ANGEL

Tessy, darling ...

Immeasurably relieved, TESS gives him a radiant smile. ANGEL,
 full of joie de vivre, says briskly:

ANGEL

Happiness seems to put an edge on
 my appetite ... I'm starving.

Lover-like, he and TESS head for the kitchen.

88 EXT/DAY MEADOW

ANGEL and TESS are walking across a meadow sprinkled with brightly coloured wild flowers. The grass is knee-high and blue butterflies take wing at their approach. The solitary lovers savour their burgeoning happiness in an idyllic world vibrant with life.

89 EXT/EVENING RIVER - BRIDGE

Hand in hand, ANGEL and TESS are strolling beside a river fringed with reeds. The sluggish green water flows towards a little hump-backed bridge. Although the sun itself is out of sight, its rays are reflected from beneath the arch with a dazzling glare like that of molten metal. Several ducklings paddle along behind their mother, each leaving a threadlike wake which ruffles the surface of the stream.

TESS and ANGEL pause and stand motionless, he with his arm round her waist.

90 EXT/DAY GARDEN

ANGEL is aloft in a tree, tossing fruit into TESS's outspread apron.

91 INT/EVENING ANGEL'S STAIRCASE

Arms laden with wild flowers, TESS slowly climbs the stairs - almost a ladder - to ANGEL's room. The door is ajar. TESS pushes it open to reveal that the room is deserted.

92 INT/EVENING ANGEL'S ROOM

With a mixture of relief and embarrassment, TESS very hurriedly arranges the flowers in her beloved's room. Discreet though she is, she cannot help noticing that the room contains a substantial number of books. TESS tiptoes quietly out, unnerved by her surreptitious intrusion.

93 INT/EVENING ANGEL'S STAIRCASE

The stairs are so steep that TESS has to descend them backward. When her head is on a level with the bedroom floor, her eye is arrested by a small white triangle protruding from beneath the carpet.

TESS freezes, the blood draining from her face. She puts out a trembling hand and withdraws the letter, still unopened, from

93 Continued

the place where fate has ordained that it shall lurk unseen by its intended recipient. With a convulsive gesture, TESS hides the letter in her bodice.

94 EXT/DAY CROSSROADS - COUNTRYSIDE

The wide expanse of flood-water which Angel negotiated with Tess and her friends has half subsided. We hear the sound of wheels and joyful cries. A moment later a vehicle rounds the bend. MRS CRICK is driving an unusual trap-load of PASSENGERS: TESS in her bridal gown, is surrounded by the GIRLS from the dairy. MARIAN, IZZ, RETTY and OTHERS are all wearing their very best dresses. MRS CRICK is also tricked out from head to foot - even the horse has some bunches of flowers in its harness. Poor TESS is the least exuberant of all. Her agitation redoubles when more joyful cries greet the appearance behind them of a dog-cart driven by MR CRICK with ANGEL beside him. ANGEL is stiff as a board in his new formal suit. A minor race spontaneously develops between MR CRICK and MRS CRICK, who is reluctant to be overtaken. In the ensuing hubbub, TESS calls to ANGEL with an air of entreaty.

TESS

Angel ... I must speak to you.

The two vehicles being wheel to wheel, ANGEL leans over and grasps her hand.

ANGEL

What's the matter?

TESS

I want to confess all my past faults - all of them.

ANGEL

Later, sweetheart. Once we're married we'll tell each other everything ...

MR CRICK's vehicle draws ahead and the LOVERS' hands are par-

ANGEL (contd)

I have some failings of my own to confess.

He gives TESS a little wave before settling back comfortably beside the driver.

95 INT/DAY CHURCH

The few people present, silently seated in the pews of the humble church, present us with a living portrait gallery: the bucolic faces of the CRICKS, the ecstatic faces of MARIAN, IZZ and RETTY (who might almost be mistaken for a trio of brides themselves), and a scattering of FARMHANDS, male and female. ANGEL and TESS are standing in front of the PARSON, who addresses the congregation with solemn mien.

PARSON

I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgement when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment why ye may not be lawfully joined in Matrimony, ye do now confess it ...

TESS's face turns to marble. Her perceptions become dimmed. She is engulfed in a diffused blur of sounds and images - the PARSON's lips continuing to move, the faces of the CONGREGATION a fly flitting in and out of a sunbeam, ANGEL's mouth shaping the words "I will". Her senses gradually clear as she hears the PARSON say:

PARSON (contd)

Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him and serve him, love, honour and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

TESS

.... I will.

The finality of this response rouses her from the trance-like state in which she has been immersed. Slowly and diffidently, but with burgeoning hope and joy, she turns her head and lifts her eyes to the face of her husband so soon to be.

96 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE

On a high-lying road, a horse-drawn carriage and its coachman stand out against the sky like figures in a shadow-theatre. The vehicle is proceeding at a slow trot.

97 INT/DAY CARRIAGE

Still wearing her bridal gown, TESS rests her head on ANGEL's shoulder. The monotonous swaying of the carriage seems to cradle their happiness.

98 EXT/EVENING HOUSE AT WELLBRIDGE

The handsome old house is very secluded. A thread of blue smoke rises from one chimney. The carriage pulls up outside. ANGEL and TESS have barely alighted before a brisk and voluble little old woman - MRS HODGES - bustles out of the front door.

MRS HODGES

Welcome, sir, welcome, ma'am!
Mr Plunkett told me to make you
at home ...

While the COACHMAN is attending to the baggage, MRS HODGES steers ANGEL and TESS towards the house.

MRS HODGES (contd)

The rooms you rented are on the first floor, but Mr Plunkett had to leave for Manchester, so you'll have the whole house to yourselves.

ANGEL and TESS exchange a brief look of surprise and pleasure.

99 INT/EVENING FIRST-FLOOR PASSAGE

Preceded by their affable guide, ANGEL and TESS reach the first floor. MRS HODGES' spate of words never dries up.

MRS HODGES (contd)

You'll find it very comfortable here. The house is inclined to be damp, but I lit a good fire in the drawing-room early this afternoon.

She lowers her voice and nods discreetly at the far end of the passage.

MRS HODGES (contd)

The usual offices.

Her voice resumes its cheery tone as she flings open a door.

MRS HODGES (contd)

Your bedroom!

100 INT/EVENING BEDROOM

ANGEL and TESS enter the room, which is very pleasantly furnished with a four-poster bed, lace curtains, two deep armchairs, a washstand with jug and basin, a gleaming chest of drawers ... TESS notices a sprig of mistletoe hung at the head of the bed

100 Continued

MRS HODGES

A little surprise, ma'am. I took the liberty ... My son picked it in the woods.

ANGEL and TESS glance at each other. MRS HODGES tests the resilience of the bed with both hands.

MRS HODGES (contd)

It's a good bed. I think you'll find it to your liking.

Her mind has already flitted to something else.

MRS HODGES (contd)

As for food, I've prepared you a cold supper. There's a nice bottle of wine to go with it ... And now I'll leave you to yourselves. Good night.

She heads for the door. Then another thought strikes her.

MRS HODGES (contd)

Tomorrow, if you wish, I'll bring you some of my husband's excellent cider - he makes it himself.

She goes out, finally leaving ANGEL and TESS on their own. Their mutual smile expresses a unanimous opinion on the friendly but talkative woman.

101 INT/EVENING BEDROOM (LATER)

A china wash-basin is full of cloudy, soapy water. TESS and ANGEL are washing their hands in playful communion.

ANGEL

Which are my hands and which are yours?

She gives him an endearing smile.

TESS

They're all yours.

102 INT/NIGHT DINING-ROOM

A cold supper lies ready on a dumb-waiter and the table is laid for two.

The candles cast a gentle glow.

Double doors open on to the drawing-room, where we can see a log fire burning snugly on the hearth.

102 Continued

ANGEL pours some ruby-coloured wine from a decanter into two wine-glasses. TESS enters the room, reduced to silence by her overwhelming happiness. ANGEL, more conscious of her beauty than ever, shows her to her chair. TESS sits down. Then, noticing a small packet beside her plate, she glances up inquiringly.

ANGEL

Open it - it's for you.

TESS unwraps the paper enclosing a rectangular morocco leather case, which she opens. Inside are an antique necklace with a pendant and a pair of earrings. Their stones catch the light.

ANGEL (contd)

Family jewels.

TESS murmurs incredulously:

TESS

Are they for me?

ANGEL

But of course.

TESS

Truly?

Touched by his young WIFE's childlike astonishment, ANGEL urges her on with a boyish enthusiasm which almost matches it.

ANGEL

Put them on - put them on now!

TESS puts on the necklace and ANGEL comes to assist her from behind. He goes down on one knee and helps her adjust the earrings in her lobes, where they burn with a subtle fire and throw off splinters of coloured light. Then he steps back and contemplates her ardently.

ANGEL (contd)

My God, how beautiful you are!

He takes her by the hand.

ANGEL (contd)

Come and see.

103 INT/NIGHT DRAWING-ROOM

ANGEL leads TESS to a mirror hanging on the drawing-room wall. It is true: she has never looked as consummately beautiful as she does at this moment. They both stand silently facing the reflections which seem their spiritual as well as their physical.

103 Continued

counterparts. Suddenly ANGEL says, on a predominantly serious note:

ANGEL

I have a confession to make, my love.

These unexpected words prompt TESS to reply with a relief and alacrity incomprehensible to ANGEL.

TESS

You have something to confess?

ANGEL

Why not? You think far too highly of me. Listen, I want you to forgive me and not be angry with me for failing to tell you earlier.

TESS has been listening avidly. ANGEL pauses, then goes on:

ANGEL (contd)

I said nothing for fear of losing you. I shall be brief, darling. Not long before we met I lived in London for a time. There I met a woman older than myself. Ours was a false relationship - a sad one. It was all over in a few weeks. That's all there is to tell. Do you forgive me?

Driven by an irresistible impulse, TESS flings her arms round ANGEL and kisses him, unable to say more than:

TESS

Angel ... Oh, Angel!

ANGEL

You're so utterly good and gentle. I was mad to fear your resentment.

TESS

I have a confession too, Angel. Something of the same kind.

ANGEL's egocentric satisfaction renders him incapable of imagining anything that could possibly concern him.

ANGEL

Tell me at table. We'll talk over supper. I'm hungry, aren't you?

TESS's voice hardens insistently.

103 Continued

TESS

I told you, I have a confession
like your own.

ANGEL's brow contracts with faint uneasiness.

ANGEL

What confession?

TESS

I shall be just as brief.

She sits down in one of the two armchairs facing the hearth
and stares into the fire.

ANGEL remains standing near the other armchair as she begins
in a monotone.

TESS

His name is d'Urberville, like
mine. Alexander d'Urberville ...

At her very first words, ANGEL's face becomes extraordinarily
attentive. Then, unable to remain standing as her confession
proceeds, he sits down weakly in the armchair.

TESS (contd)

... His family bought the title -
their real name is Stoke. It
was fate that drove me to work for
false relations as a way of helping
my own folk to live. Alec -
Alexander - took advantage of me,
relying on his strength and my
fear. I became his mistress in
despair, without love. Like
yours, my sad union ended after
a few weeks. I bore a child which
died very young. My life was in
ruins till the day I met you.

TESS has not raised her voice or shed a tear.
But the appearance of things seems transformed: the fire
burning on the hearth has acquired a malign look, as if mocking
her distress. The light confines its interest to chromatic
problems and all surrounding objects proclaim their indifference.
Yet nothing has really changed, at least in the substance of
things. It is their essence that has undergone a metamorphosis.
ANGEL irrelevantly pokes the fire. He stirs the embers, then
turns. His face looks shrunken. He speaks in his most prosa-
ic tone, staring at TESS with dazed and vacant eyes.

ANGEL

I'm going out.

103 Continued

He rises and does so. TESS remains transfixed, her eyes still glued to the fire.

104 EXT/NIGHT COUNTRYSIDE

ANGEL walks slowly along, immersed in the flood of his own dark thoughts - buried by the debris of a universe destroyed in seconds.

Silently, with a shawl draped round her shoulders, TESS joins him. She humbly refrains from speaking, walking abreast of him but some way away. ANGEL seems unaware of her presence. Trees project their writhing limbs against the dusk. At last TESS says:

TESS

You don't forgive me?

When he does not reply, she adds:

TESS (contd)

I forgive you, Angel.

ANGEL

Yes, I know.

TESS

But you - you don't forgive me?

ANGEL

You were one person. Now you're another.

He pauses to reflect on what he has just said. Then, quite suddenly, he breaks into horrible, unnatural, hellish laughter

ANGEL (contd)

No ... no! Have mercy on me,
have mercy!

TESS

What do you mean by that laugh?

ANGEL shakes his head without replying, without even looking at her.

TESS (contd)

How can you speak to me like this?
It frightens me - how can you?

ANGEL

You are not the woman I loved.

104 Continued

TESS

Who am I, then?

ANGEL

Another woman in her shape.

TESS halts, speaking of herself as she would of someone else.

TESS

He says I'm not the woman he
loved but another woman in her
shape.

The injustice of this thought cuts her love to the quick. She runs after ANGEL and catches him up, almost shouting:

TESS (contd)

Angel! I was a child - a child
when it happened. I knew nothing
of men!

ANGEL replies through clenched teeth:

ANGEL

You were sinned against ... That
I grant you.

TESS

So you won't forgive me?

ANGEL

I forgive you, but forgiveness
isn't all.

TESS

Nor love me?

ANGEL evades this question.

ANGEL

I cannot help associating your
lack of firmness with the decline
of your family. Decrepit families
imply deficient willpower and
decadent conduct. I thought you
were a child of nature, but you
were the last in a line of
degenerate aristocrats.

TESS comes to a halt. ANGEL slowly continues on his aimless way.

105 INT/NIGHT BEDROOM

TESS is sitting on the edge of the bed. She stares at the mistletoe, then transfers her gaze to a rope which has been used to secure a trunk. Her eyes light up with lethal interest.

106 INT/NIGHT DINING-ROOM - DRAWING-ROOM

The fire is dying on the hearth. Candle-flames on the verge of extinction gutter in their holders.
ANGEL slowly enters the drawing-room and crosses it, looking downcast. Mechanically, he goes to the table, which is still laden with two derisory glasses of wine and an untouched meal. The necklace and earrings sparkle beside their case on the whiteness of the cloth.

107 INT/NIGHT DRAWING-ROOM

ANGEL removes his shoes. Without undressing, he wraps himself in a rug and settles down for the night, as comfortably as he can, on the sofa.

108 INT/MORNING BEDROOM

TESS's gown is draped over an armchair with her shoes alongside. The pale light of dawn filters through closed shutters. TESS is in bed, fast asleep.

109 INT/MORNING DRAWING-ROOM - DINING-ROOM

ANGEL, in shirt-sleeves, is busy raking cold cinders and charred logs together on the hearth in preparation for a new fire.
Through the double doors leading to the dining-room, we see that the table has been cleared.

110 INT/EXT/MORNING HALL - STAIRS

ANGEL, who has put his jacket on, walks to the foot of the stairs. He slowly climbs a few steps, then pauses. Finally after some hesitation, he calls in a conventional tone:

ANGEL
Breakfast is ready!

He comes down again, walks to the front door and opens it.

He takes three or four paces outside and halts. We see him standing motionless in the cool morning air.

111 INT/MORNING DINING-ROOM

TESS is seated at the breakfast table, which is laid for two. ANGEL enters the room. TESS raises her face to his. She looks so beautiful - so utterly pure - that he is momentarily stupefied. Then, dejectedly, he sits down. TESS pours tea into the cups with the minimum of movement. Conscious that her wedding-ring may catch ANGEL's eye, she discreetly hides her hand. ANGEL's silence is worse than any insult. TESS makes heroic efforts to look as if she is taking a little food. For his part, ANGEL barely sips his tea and avoids her eye. It is TESS who puts an end to this harrowing interlude.

TESS

You can get rid of me.

ANGEL replies truculently:

ANGEL

What did you say?

TESS

You can get rid of me - by divorcing me.

This unexpected proposal, which she advances quite calmly, sends ANGEL into a transport of indignation.

ANGEL

Good God! How can you be so simple!

He gets up and paces to and fro to relieve his anger, muttering

ANGEL (contd)

You're too ... too much of a child, too immature ...

He pauses facing her.

ANGEL (contd)

... too ignorant, I suppose!

To conceal her urge to weep, TESS starts clearing the table. ANGEL shouts furiously at her.

ANGEL (contd)

Leave that! You're my wife, not my servant.

TESS replies blankly:

TESS

I'm your wife but you don't want to live with me. You mean to go, don't you?

111 Continued

ANGEL

I could't stay without despising myself - and, what is worse, without despising you. How can we live together while that man exists? He is your natural husband, not I. Can you honestly tell me to remain?

With downcast eyes, TESS concedes with utter resignation:

TESS

No, that I cannot.

ANGEL talks to himself in quest of a solution.

ANGEL

But it's absolutely necessary that one of us should remain here to avoid a scandal. We must at least keep up appearances.

TESS

That's true, we must.

This fresh token of submission moves ANGEL to pity.

ANGEL

But what will you do?

TESS

I can go home.

ANGEL

Are you sure?

TESS

Yes. If you leave me, I shall go home.

ANGEL

Then so be it.

112 INT/DAY CARRIAGE - COUNTRYSIDE

ANGEL and TESS sway to the motion of a carriage driven by a COACHMAN. TESS is dressed for a journey.

113 EXT/DAY CROSS-IN-HAND MONOLITH

The carriage pulls up. After a momentary silence the COACHMAN turns and calls:

113 Continued

COACHMAN

Cross-in-Hand, sir.

ANGEL

Yes, I know.

He takes TESS by the hand.

ANGEL (contd)

Come.

TESS passively complies.

BOTH retire so as not to be overheard by the COACHMAN. At last ANGEL speaks with a trace of gentleness.

ANGEL (contd)

Now let's be clear about this.
There's no anger in our hearts,
even though something has happened
between us which I cannot endure
at present. I shall let you know
where I go, and if I think I can
bear it - if I'm capable of it -
I'll come to fetch you.

TESS

I shall wait.

ANGEL

Until then, you'd do better not
to try and join me.

TESS repeats simply:

TESS

Until then, I must not join you.

ANGEL

Just so.

BOTH return to the carriage.

TESS

May I write to you?

ANGEL

Oh - yes. If you're ill or in
need of anything.

TESS climbs back into the carriage. The COACHMAN cracks his
whip and the horse breaks into a trot.
ANGEL stands watching the carriage go. Something about his
attitude conveys a hope that TESS will turn to look, but she
does not.

114: EXT/DAY HOUSE AT WELLBRIDGE

ANGEL turns up outside the house just as MRS HODGES arrives there herself accompanied by a young BOY. The worthy WOMAN is carrying a heavy basket and the BOY a jug of milk. She launches a verbal onslaught on ANGEL.

MRS HODGES

Ah, a very good day to you, Mr Clare! I've brought you some groceries. There's a chicken, some sausages, some bacon ...

ANGEL

Thank you, thank you so much.

MRS HODGES

I've also put in some butter, some flour, a dozen eggs, and ...

ANGEL

But that's far too much.

MRS HODGES

Newly-weds are always hungry, sir. From tonight onwards I shall cook for you myself.

ANGEL embarks on an obscure explanation of his future requirements.

ANGEL

The truth is, you see ... for some time I shall be needing less than that.

MRS HODGES stares at him wide-eyed.

ANGEL (contd)

Because, in fact, I ... I shall be alone for a day or two. My wife has been obliged to rejoin her parents.

MRS HODGES

Mercy on us! Is there an illness in the family?

ANGEL

No, no - nothing of that kind. It was all arranged beforehand. So as far as my meals are concerned ... during Mrs Clare's absence ... I.. I'll talk to you later.

MRS HODGES

Shall I leave the basket?

114 Continued

ANGEL

Yes indeed, the basket will do
for today. Many thanks.

He takes the basket and goes into the house, leaving the BOY
holding the jug of milk.

115 INT/DAY BEDROOM (SEVERAL DAYS LATER)

The wind is gusting fiercely. ANGEL is standing at the rain-lashed window, his boundless melancholy intensified by the raging elements. He remains motionless, lost in his waking dreams, his memories and regrets.

116 EXT/EVENING ROAD (SEVERAL DAYS LATER)

ANGEL is walking moodily along a road swirling with dead leaves. Night is beginning to blur the outlines of the landscape, from which a milky mist is rising.

117 INT/NIGHT BEDROOM

A candle is burning on the bedside table. ANGEL, seated on the edge of the bed, is staring at the wedding-band on his finger..

118 INT/DAY DRAWING-ROOM

Logs are burning on the hearth. ANGEL tosses the withered sprig of mistletoe into the fire. It catches and crackles, casting a stronger glow on ANGEL's face.

119 INT/EXT/DAY HALL - GROUND FLOOR

ANGEL's baggage is stacked in the entrance. He has squatted down and is busy checking the lock on a trunk. Suddenly he starts and turns at the sound of a light footstep. A female figure stands silhouetted in the doorway. His look of joy is fierce but fleeting. Then he recognises the newcomer as IZZ HUETT, carrying a bundle in her hand. She recoils at the disappointment on ANGEL's face, saying timidly

IZZ

Excuse me, sir ... the door was
open ... I was passing on my way
home. I only wanted to wish you
well - you and Mrs Clare.

119 Continued

ANGEL

She's not here. I'm on the point
of leaving myself, as you see.

He brightens artificially as though announcing some excellent
news.

ANGEL (contd)

I'm leaving England. I've made
up my mind to go to Brazil.

IZZ

Brazil?

ANGEL

Yes.

IZZ

Then please tell Mrs Clare I hope
the journey agrees with her.

ANGEL's face darkens.

ANGEL

She will not be leaving for the
present. I am going on ahead to
get the measure of the place and
see what life there is like.

We hear the sound of a horse-drawn vehicle outside.

120 EXT/DAY GARDEN - HOUSE

The BOY we saw with MRS HODGES is holding the bridle of a
horse harnessed to a dog-cart.
ANGEL appears on the threshold. Spontaneously assisted by IZZ,
he starts to carry out his baggage, talking to her as he does
so.

ANGEL

How is Retty?

IZZ

As high-strung as ever.

ANGEL

And Marian?

IZZ

Marian's taken to drink.

ANGEL

Really?

120 Continued

IZZ

Yes. Mr Crick has got rid of her.

ANGEL puts the last piece of luggage on the ground and straightens up, saying:

ANGEL

And you, Izz - are you well?

IZZ holds his gaze and blurts out:

IZZ

With you gone? How could I be?

So saying, she hurriedly picks up her bundle and walks over to him.

IZZ (contd)

There, 'tis said. Goodbye, sir.

ANGEL

Goodbye, Izz, goodbye.

He gives her a decorous kiss on the forehead. IZZ quickly walks off. Assisted by the BOY, ANGEL stows his things in the dog-cart.

He returns to the house and locks the front door. He stands there for a moment, staring at the key with a heavy heart. Then he hands it to the BOY and climbs into the dog-cart.

121 EXT/DAY ROAD

Driving briskly, ANGEL reaches a fork in the road. He catches sight of IZZ, who has just turned off down a narrow lane and is proceeding on her way. He slows, hesitates, then walks his horse in her direction. IZZ turns round.

ANGEL

Izz ... If I were to ask you to come with me now - to come to Brazil with me - would your answer be yes?

IZZ, aglow with sincerity, says:

IZZ

To come with you, I should leave everything this minute.

ANGEL

You know what it would mean in the eyes of society?

121 Continued

IZZ
I wouldn't care!

ANGEL
Do you love me so much?

IZZ
I've always loved you.

ANGEL
More than Tess?

IZZ deliberates for several long seconds before passing a low-voiced sentence on herself.

IZZ
No, not more than her. Nobody
could love you more than Tess.
She'd ha' given her life for
you. I could do no more.

ANGEL stifles a sob.

He whips up his horse and drives rapidly off. IZZ stands motionless, like an allegory of desolation.

She watches the dog-cart drive off down the long white road and recede into the peaceful landscape.

122 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE (SEVERAL DAYS LATER)

Autumn is far advanced. It is cold, and the dreary countryside with its trees bare of leaves, is bathed in a thin drizzle. TESS is laboriously trudging along a lane with a heavy bundle on her shoulder, carrying a basket. Her silhouette forms part of the landscape. She is wearing threadbare winter clothes: a grey serge cape, a woollen skirt with a greyish-brown wrappe over it, leather gloves and heavy shoes caked with mud. The plaintive note of a hunting horn attracts her attention. Far away across the fields she sees a hunt galloping in pursuit of a stag. The pack is in full cry and the riders' coats punctuate the indifferent landscape with splashes of red.

123 EXT/EVENING LANE - COTTAGE

Noticing a thread of blue smoke rising into the air, TESS sees a cottage round a bend in the lane and makes for it. Exhausted, she shelters in the lee of the gable-end. She leans her back against the wall, which is evidently warmed by the fire inside. She rests her hands and her rain-moistened cheek against it. The wall seems to be her only friend in the world.

124 EXT/EVENING FOREST

Dusk has descended on the forest. Worn out and numb with cold, TESS makes herself a bed of dead leaves in the lee of a rock. She huddles down on it and curls up with her head on her bundle, trying to capture a little of her own warmth.

125 EXT/NIGHT SAME PLACE (LATER)

Eyes shut and half-drugged with sleep, TESS slowly raises one hand to her face. She feels it all over with her work-worn fingers, dwelling on her eye-sockets, cheekbones and forehead as if exploring their bone structure. Almost inaudibly, she murmurs:

TESS

All is vanity ...

There is a faint crackle of branches and rustle of dead leaves. TESS props herself on one elbow, heart pounding with fear. Peering in the direction of the sound, which becomes more distinct and localised, she sees a shape approaching through the trees: a dark mass advancing with formidable deliberation. At last, a majestic stag emerges into a forest clearing. It takes a few more paces. Then, sensing her presence, it halts and remains absolutely still with its head turned in TESS's direction. Abruptly and without warning it darts off into the depths of the forest. The sound of its headlong flight dies gradually away.

126 EXT/EVENING COUNTRY LANE

TESS has resumed her trek and is now on a side road. Driven by a farmer (GROBY), a horse-drawn cart comes creaking up behind her.

TESS is walking so slowly that the cart soon catches her up. GROBY accosts her.

GROBY

Good night, my pretty!

TESS replies mechanically:

TESS

Good night.

GROBY

'Tis late for a maid to be roaming the lanes by herself. Have you lost your way, then?

TESS doesn't answer. Titillated, GROBY persists.

126 Continued

GROBY (contd)

Step up here beside me and I'll
take you part of the road.

TESS still doesn't answer. Stung by her silence, GROBY resumes his campaign.

GROBY (contd)

Why, you can scarce put one foot
afore t'other. Ride wi' me, I say.

Then, getting a better view of TESS's face, he reviles her coarsely.

GROBY (contd)

Ah, but I know you! You be Mr
Stoke-d'Urberville's fancy-woman!
You weren't too proud to cock a leg
for him, eh?

The sorry wretch cackles at his own insult. TESS makes off across the fields to escape further harassment. GROBY calls after her.

GROBY

Trollop!

127 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE - GROUND-FLOOR ROOM

The humble whitewashed room contains two beds. It is heated by a small stove and poorly lit by an oil-lamp standing on a table.

Seated at the table is MARIAN, whose appearance has also greatly changed. Her hair is stiff with grime, her face bloated with drink and one wrist adorned with a filthy bandage. She is spooning soup out of a bowl.

A repeated tapping on the window-pane makes MARIAN turn to look. TESS's face hovers outside, ghostlike, then disappears. Once her momentary surprise has evaporated, MARIAN dashes to the door and opens it. TESS, still burdened with her belongings enters in a great blast of icy air.

MARIAN

If it isn't my little Tess!

She relieves TESS of her things and is struck by her pitiful condition.

MARIAN (contd)

Poor poppet, what a state you're in!
You must be dying of cold and hunger!

127 Continued

TESS flops down on the chair, barely able to speak. MARIAN pours her a glass of spirits.

MARIAN (contd)

Here, get that inside you -
'twill warm your bones. Go on,
my love, drink it.

TESS sips and coughs under MARIAN's sympathetic gaze. On the verge of tears, she says:

TESS

If only you knew, Marian, if only
you knew ...

MARIAN

Get along - you mustn't let yourself
go. Even bad luck runs out in the
end, take my word for it.

TESS

I can't go on.

MARIAN

You'll feel better tomorrow.

TESS shakes her head, lips trembling. Her voice breaks on a sob.

TESS

I can't go on ... I'd like ...
If I had the courage, I'd like
to die.

MARIAN cuts her short in a bluff and friendly voice.

MARIAN

Don't talk such flummery! Why
didn't you come to see me sooner?
I'm going to take you in hand, my
girl!

TESS asks timidly:

TESS

Do they still have work here?

MARIAN

In this wretched place? There's
always work here for them as can
abide it. Come, have some of my
nice soup. After that you must
take off those slummocky clothes
and prettify yourself - just to

127 Continued

MARIAN (contd)
 make me jealous again, eh,
 my little Tess?

TESS rewards her kindly companion with a ghost of a smile.

128 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE

Under a grey sky, a desolate tract of stony swede-fields stretches to the horizon.

Lost in this chill immensity, a few figures are bent over the hostile soil.

TESS and MARIAN are enshrouded in sleeved brown pinafores knotted behind them to prevent their skirts from blowing about. They also wear boots and sheepskin gloves to protect their hands. Toiling hard, they are grubbing up swedes with hooked forks. Sometimes a juicy swede becomes impaled on a gleaming tine and has to be pulled off by hand.

129 EXT/DAY SAME PLACE (ANOTHER DAY)

Flocks of cawing black crows wheel slowly in a leaden sky. The mournful landscape is unchanged but the wind has grown fiercer.

A handful of FARM LABOURERS are still bent over the soil repeating the same movements, numb with fatigue and transfixed with cold. TESS and MARIAN seem to have taken permanent root in this bleak and cheerless place.

130 EXT/DAY SAME PLACE (ANOTHER DAY)

MARIAN and TESS, with a heavy basket of swedes between them, are stumbling and blundering over the uneven ground. The icy air in front of their mouths whitens with a fleeting puff of vapour at every breath.

Their boots are caked with mud. Mechanically, they tip their basket into a half-filled barrow.

MARIAN gropes in her pocket and produces a bottle plugged with rag. She passes it to TESS, who only moistens her chapped lip. Then MARIAN takes a long swig of liquor. She looks at TESS and guffaws, wagging her head.

MARIAN
 Mrs Clare, if you please!

Her laughter grows louder. TESS feebly begs her to stop.

TESS
 Don't, Marian, don't.

130 Continued

She looks so miserable that MARIAN, in a sudden access of natural warmth, goes over and kisses her.

MARIAN

Poor little thing! Do you know what I should do in your place? One fine Sunday morning I should go a-knocking at his parents' door.

TESS's murmured response is addressed more to herself than MARIAN.

TESS

Never.

MARIAN

Where's that misbegotten son o' yours? If he's in Brazil, say so! If he's dead, say so!

131 EXT/DAY SHED

In the scant shelter of an open-sided shed, TESS and MARIAN are engaged in a new task. Taking swedes from an enormous heap, they slice soil and fibres off them with bill-hooks. The swedes trimmed by TESS are far less numerous than MARIAN's. Not far away, two other WOMEN WORKERS are similarly occupied. It is snowing, and a vicious wind sends snowflakes whirling and eddying round the shed. Hearing footsteps, TESS looks up and recognises the farmer who pestered her in the lane.

GROBY

Be you the new hand? Ah, 'tis you, is it?

He walks off, then retraces his steps and says venomously:

GROBY (contd)

Be they all you've done? 'Tis a mighty poor show.

MARIAN

She's not accustomed to it.

GROBY

I don't keep useless hands here.

TESS argues politely with him.

TESS

We're only paid for what we do, so where's the difference?

131 Continued

GROBY

No arguments - I want the whole
shed cleared.

TESS

Then I'll stay late.

GROBY

You'd better.

He throws her a spiteful glance and turns on his heel. TESS
stares after her persecutor and is consoled by MARIAN.

MARIAN

Never you mind that Groby. 'Tis
just his way.

Pensively, she adds:

MARIAN (contd)

Ah no, Lord love us, 'tis not
like it was at the dairy. All
the week, Dairyman Dick. On
Sundays Mr Richard Crick!

The effect of this abrupt satirical reprise in such baleful
surroundings is to make TESS burst out laughing. MARIAN
becomes infected with her redeeming laughter and follows
suit. Once their mirth subsides, BOTH resume their swede-
trimming with grim alacrity.

132 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE

MARIAN is fast asleep in bed, snoring softly.
TESS is completing her preparations by the oil-lamp's flickeri
light. She stows a pair of patent leather boots in a carpet-
bag. Then she withdraws the wedding-ring from the bodice of
her dress, unties the ribbon that keeps it suspended there and
slips the ring on her finger.
She blows out the lamp and plunges the room in darkness.

133 EXT/DAWN COUNTRYSIDE

Dawn has scarcely tinged the horizon.
TESS is walking briskly down a lane, her footsteps ringing out
on the hard ground. She carries the carpet-bag on her arm
and is wearing a shawl over her head against the cold.

134 EXT/DAY EMMINSTER - NEAR VICARAGE

TESS comes in sight of the village, but the nearer she gets to her long walk's destination the more intimidating her mission seems. Steeling herself, she walks on. Not far from the vicarage, which can now be seen, she does something unexpected. First making sure that she is unobserved, she pulls off her workaday footwear and hurriedly dons her patent leather boots. She hides her heavy mud-caked boots in a hedge and proceeds on her way.

135 EXT/DAY VICARAGE

Reaching the vicarage gate, TESS experiences a moment of terrible indecision but presses on into the unknown. She rings the bell but nobody answers. She musters the courage for a second attempt and rings again. Overcome by a mixture of physical fatigue and emotion, she leans against the wall. Withered grey ivy-leaves rustle in the wind beside her face. Behind her, a dirty piece of paper slithers along the road. Even though she has rung harder the second time, nobody appears. She steps back from the door and surveys the front of the house with an uncertain air. All at once she seems relieved at her failure and walks off quickly. But a new decision and fresh courage take hold of her. TESS heads for the church.

136 EXT/DAY CHURCH

When TESS is not far from the church, the faithful start flocking out in their Sunday best. Not daring to turn back, TESS finds herself in their midst, all the more uncomfortable because many of them eye her as only small country townfolk can eye an exceptional-looking woman who is not of their community.

Among those leaving church are a group consisting of MERCY CHANT escorted by Angel's two brothers: FELIX, carrying an umbrella, and CUTHBERT. The trio chat together without TESS having the least idea who they are. While waiting for the tumult to die, TESS stands aside and watches the throng disperse.

Suddenly she gives a start. The Reverend MR CLARE and his WIFE are coming out of church. MR CLARE shuts the door. Then, as if sensing the fixity of TESS's gaze, he turns towards her. For an instant we feel certain that TESS will make her move. She steps forward, but at that moment MRS CLARE says something to her HUSBAND and distracts his attention from the young and unknown woman.

MR and MRS CLARE walk off.

In despair, TESS starts out on her return journey.

137 EXT/DAY NEAR VICARAGE

While nearing the spot where she has hidden her boots, TESS

137 Continued

catches sight of a group standing beside the road. It is FELIX, CUTHBERT and MERCY CHANT, still chatting before going their separate ways. Suddenly FELIX stoops a little and probes the hedge with the ferrule of his umbrella. From some way off, TESS can faintly hear the voices of the trio as they examine their strange find. Unable to turn back without attracting attention, TESS heroically continues on her way. In passing, she hears the following exchange just as FELIX brings her second boot to light.

FELIX

They're still in good condition.

MERCY CHANT

It's wicked to throw away a good pair of boots like that. They could be of use to the poor.

TESS proceeds sadly on her way.

138 EXT/EVENING ROAD - CROSS-IN-HAND

TESS, walking more slowly now, comes in sight of the monolith where she and Angel were together for the last time. The upright stone bears a crudely carved hand. TESS approaches it and kneels to offer up a fervent prayer. A moment later her mystical reverie is interrupted by a voice.

SHEPHERD (OFF)

It don't do to pray here, Missy!

Surprised, TESS turns to find herself facing an old SHEPHERD.

SHEPHERD (contd)

There be a curse on this place.

TESS rises, looking distressed.

TESS

This is the Cross-in-Hand, isn't it?

SHEPHERD

Ah, so 'tis. On account of a mallyfactor they tortured yurr in ancient times. They did nail his hand to a post and then they 'anged 'en. The sinner's bones be down there to this day, I'm told.

139 EXT/DAY SUMMER - FIELDS - THRESHING-MACHINE

It is summer.

In a field stands a timber-framed threshing-machine with wheels and straps connecting it to a noisy steam-engine, beside which stands the MECHANIC.

TESS is stationed on a platform beside the FEEDER who is keeping the thresher supplied with wheat. Her task is to untie each wheat-sheaf as it is passed to her on the end of a pitchfork by a FARMHAND standing on the corn-rick nearby. TESS, with her hands protected by leather gloves, passes the ears to the FEEDER, who fans them out on the rotating drum to extract the grains. Each worker's movements are synchronized in such a way as to suggest that the human beings are mere components of an insatiable and appallingly noisy machine. A horseman leaves the road and cuts across the fields. He dismounts, hitches his bridle to a gate and questions a FARMHAND, who points out GROBY to him.

We recognise the horseman as ALEC. He walks up to GROBY, riding-crop in hand, and says something to him.

GROBY gives an affirmative nod and points out TESS. ALEC exchanges a few more words with GROBY, then goes and lolls with his back against the gate. He lights a cigar, never taking his eyes off TESS, who is quite unaware of his presence. Meanwhile, a GIRL to whom GROBY has spoken climbs the ladder leading to the platform where TESS is working. She says a few words to TESS, who climbs down. The GIRL takes her place. Still shaky after her strenuous stint at the thresher, TESS walks towards the gate. ALEC tosses his cigar away and steps in front of her. It is only then that TESS recognises him. She stops short as though a wall has suddenly materialised between her and her former lover.

ALEC comes right up to her. The hum of the nearby machine is such that he has to raise his voice to be heard.

ALEC

I knew nothing of your circumstances - nothing at all, until your mother wrote to me.

TESS's lips move slowly. We guess at her words rather than hear them.

TESS

My mother ...

ALEC

She wrote me what you should have told me long ago.

TESS does not react.

ALEC (contd)

I came at once.

139 Continued

The infernal din prompts him to take TESS by the arm and walk her along with him. He resumes after a few paces, trying to catch her eye.

ALEC (contd)

Tess ... Why did you never say anything?

TESS

I had nothing to ask of you.

ALEC replies with suppressed vehemence.

ALEC

That isn't so! You wear your ridiculous pride like a hair shirt!

He pauses before continuing in a milder tone.

ALEC (contd)

You've put me even more in the wrong than I was - against my will. I'd have done my duty by the child, on my honour I would.

TESS

Honour ...

She says it so softly that ALEC fails to hear.

ALEC

I want to take you away from this wretched place. It's unworthy of you.

TESS gives a sort of enigmatic smile.

ALEC (contd)

What is this strange temptation misery holds for you? Come to your senses - come away with me!

TESS shakes her head.

ALEC (contd)

Your father's ill. Did you know?

TESS nods. ALEC goes on.

ALEC (contd)

They fear the worst. Your family will be evicted if he dies. They're quite as destitute as you.

139 Continued

TESS's breathing becomes constricted and her eyes fill with tears.

ALEC (contd)

I'm offering you my help, sincerely.
No one else seems to care. Who is
this husband of yours, anyway?

He tries to take one of her hands, which are still encased in rough, heavy gloves. Realising the absurdity of his gesture just in time, he gives up and mutters:

ALEC (contd)

How could he abandon you like this?

TESS

Please leave me alone.

ALEC

Tess ...

TESS turns away and walks back to the threshing-machine. The noise swells as she draws nearer.

140 EXT/NIGHT THRESHING-MACHINE

The WORKERS are still feeding the thresher by moonlight. TESS is at her post, her face flushed, streaming with sweat and coated with corn-dust. Even the strongest of the team are beginning to look wan and hollow-eyed. ALEC, smoking a cigar with his back against the gate, seems rapt in thought. TESS's hair is streaming loose down her back. MARIAN's voice comes up from below.

MARIAN

Tess ... mind your hair!

But TESS hears nothing in the unremitting din. Every time she raises her head she sees the straw-rick growing higher and higher. The shirt-sleeved MEN at work on top of it seem to be battling with the perpetual torrent of straw discharged by the elevator. A long and piercing whistle-blast rends the air. The MECHANIC stops his steam-engine. Little by little, the deafening hum and clatter is replaced by nocturnal silence. A dog barks in the distance. The WORKERS settle down in the sparse straw round the rick for a drink and a snack. TESS crosses from the machine to the corn-rick, which has dwindled to a flat-topped oblong. All alone, she sits down out of sight of the ground, pulls off her gloves and embarks on her modest meal: a slice of thick pancake. After several long swigs at a water-bottle she takes

140 Continued

a mouthful and chews it reflectively. She gives a little start when she catches sight of ALEC, who crosses from the threshers to the rick and sits down facing her. He remains silent for a moment, then says:

ALEC

There's a point beyond which
obstinacy becomes stupidity.

TESS does not reply. Her lips are dry, and the morsels of food she swallows stick in her throat. The laughter and voices of the WORKERS at the foot of the rick seem to come from a hundred yards away.

ALEC (contd)

Are you in love with this drudgery?
I may be a sham d'Urberville, but
my little finger can do more for
you than all your blue-blooded
ancestors.

TESS still doesn't answer.

ALEC (contd)

I'm right, you know I am.

TESS turns her grave face and looks at him. Is she on the verge of accepting? Sensing that she is and eager to triumph all along the line, he ventures to add:

ALEC (contd)

Forget all this - and forget about
that mule you call your husband!

TESS responds by furiously hurling one of her gloves, which strikes ALEC on the mouth with a dull smack. He turns pale and gets to his feet. With a muscle-tautening effort, he transforms the impulse to retaliate into a smile which exposes his slightly bloodstained teeth. Trembling with defiance, TESS says in a low, breathless voice:

TESS

Go on, hit me! I shall not cry
out. Once victim, always victim
- that's the law.

ALEC

I was your master once - I shall
be so again. If you're any man's
wife, you're mine.

He turns and disappears from view, leaving TESS emotionally drained.

141 INT/NIGHT COTTAGE

TESS, seated at the table, is finishing a letter by the yellow light of the oil-lamp. The rest of the room is plunged in shadow.

TESS (OFF)

My own dear husband, I shall die soon unless I get word from you. All my letters have remained unanswered. Have you even received them? I long for one thing only, and that is to see you again. Come back to me, Angel. Come back and save me from the thing that threatens me. Your faithful and despairing Tess.

Outside, the wind moans long and plaintively.

142 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE (SEVERAL WEEKS LATER)

Visible in the distance on a precipitous road is the silhouette of a cart drawn by two horses. It is heavily laden, and several passengers can be distinguished.

143 EXT/DAY THE SAME, NEARER

The cart, which is driven by a taciturn CARTER, is piled high with furniture and household utensils. Also ensconced in it to the best of their ability are the DURBEYFIELD family. JOAN, dressed in mourning, carefully nurses the head of the grandfather clock. LIZA-LU is holding THOMAS. ABRAHAM, MODESTY and OLIVER are sitting side by side, thrilled with their adventure. TESS is lost in thought. The CHILDREN are the first to see a horseman (ALEC) in the distance, trotting to overtake the cart. TESS's eyes harden as she stares in the same direction. ALEC, an erect and elegant figure, riding-crop in hand, soon draws abreast of the cart and slows his animal to a walk. Nothing can be heard but the monotonous creaking of the cart and the horses' hoofs clip-clopping along the road. ALEC, who is nearest to TESS, eventually breaks the protracted silence.

ALEC

Any reasonable person would call this a ludicrous situation.

TESS doesn't look at him. The CHILDREN stare wide-eyed at the handsome gentleman. JOAN also studies him with shy and furtive admiration.

143 Continued

ALEC (contd)

I offer to help you - you and all
your family - but no. You prefer
to turn yourselves into gypsies.

TESS ignores JOAN's imploring glances. After another brief
silence, she says:

TESS

Please go away.

ALEC

In other words, Mrs Clare, you're
asking me to let you starve in
peace - is that it?

TESS gives a sudden fierce exclamation.

TESS

Go away!

ALEC walks his horse even nearer and lowers his voice.

ALEC

You'll be civil yet!

He draws away from the cart, wheels his horse and trots slow
off. JOAN eyes TESS with reproach.

144 EXT/DAY KINGSBERE - HOUSES

The cart has pulled up outside a group of humble one-storey
dwellings. JOAN, with THOMAS in her arms and the other CHILDREN
clustered round her, is arguing with a LANDLORD of pharisaical
mien. He is pretending to study a piece of paper rather than
look at the mother in distress. JOAN questions him in a
submissive tone.

JOAN

What's to become of me and my
poor little mites?

The LANDLORD makes an impotent gesture which conveys that,
all his compassion, nothing else concerns him. JOAN's voice
hardens.

JOAN (contd)

We be the Durbeyfield family.
'Tis written there, isn't it?

LANDLORD

Oh, 'tis written plain enough,
I grant you ...

144 Continued

He takes advantage of JOAN's question to hand the piece of paper back. THOMAS starts to wail.

LANDLORD (contd)

... but the rooms have been taken -
you never sent the deposit.

The precise meaning of the last word escapes JOAN. TESS comes to her aid.

TESS

He means the money to be paid on
account, Mother.

The LANDLORD gives TESS a complacent nod, but all at once a dangerous glint comes into JOAN's eyes. Quivering with indignation, she raises her voice above THOMAS's incessant wails.

JOAN

There's more in life than money,
sir. You cannot leave these poor
fatherless children in the street -
'twould be a crime!

LANDLORD

Mis'ess ...

JOAN

Hospitality's sacred, even among
the pagan Turks!

LANDLORD

Please, Mis'ess, 'tis your own
fault ...

JOAN

We'll see about that. We're true
descendants of the knightly
d'Urbervilles. Nobody leaves us
in the street like horse-apples -
not in the home of our ancestors!

She levels a determined forefinger.

JOAN (contd)

Our bones are in the crypt there,
laid out in their coffins!

TESS, made nervous and embarrassed by her MOTHER's arguments, which are lost on the LANDLORD, squeezes her arm.

TESS

Mother, I beg you. Don't take on
so.

144 Continued

JOAN

No, my girl! What's true is true. Your poor father's eyes are on us - we mustn't shame him.

The LANDLORD takes advantage of JOAN's inattention to dive into his house and quietly close the door. JOAN calms down as swiftly as she flared up. She starts to climb back into the cart with THOMAS, still crying, in her arms.

JOAN (contd)

The Lord will protect his own and the wicked shall be punished.

CARTER

Bain't you stopping here, then?

JOAN

No, my good man, we're going on.

The CARTER grumbles under his breath.

CARTER

Good man, good man. My beasts are spent. I ought to be a-turning back to Marlott.

145 EXT/DAY STREET

The cart has resumed its slow progress, laboriously jolting and creaking along. A miniature procession of DURBEYFIELDS follows in its wake, weary and unspeaking.

146 EXT/DAY CHURCH SQUARE

The cart debouches into a square flanked by a church with an iron-studded oak door. JOAN comes to an abrupt decision, almost jaunty in her absolute certitude.

JOAN

Good! Very good! Now unload it all.

The CARTER's jaw drops.

CARTER

Where?

JOAN

Here.

146 Continued

CARTER

Here?

JOAN

Yes, here. We shall camp beside
our church ...

She turns to TESS.

JOAN (contd)

... until the town of our ancestors
finds us shelter. Now, children,
set to work!

Assisted by the CARTER, JOAN and her CHILDREN start unloading
the cart and piling the furniture against one of the church
walls.

147 INT/EVENING CHAPEL

Filtered by a stained glass window, the rays of the setting
sun splash the chapel with vivid colour. TESS makes a timid
and respectful entrance. Her footsteps reverberate round the
vault. Tombs with defaced carvings lie there in solemn array.
Spellbound, TESS approaches the mysterious entrance to her
ancestral sepulchre. She raises her head and reads the
following inscription above the door:

Ostium sepulchri antiquae
familiae d'Urberville

After a moment's reflection, she murmurs:

TESS

Why am I on the wrong side of
this door?

148 INT/EVENING FOUR-POSTER BED

Inside the curtained four-poster, which is lit by a lantern,
JOAN is humming a lullaby to her assembled CHILDREN.
This scene, which might have been conceived by de La Tour, is
steeped in utter tranquillity.

149 EXT/EVENING CHURCH SQUARE

Nestling in the lee of the church and lit from within, the
bed looks isolated and unreal in the gathering dusk, like a
ship at sea.

150 EXT/EVENING EMMINISTER - VICARAGE

The bent figure of a man limps towards the garden gate, leaning on a stick and carrying a grip. It is ANGEL, so emaciated as to be hardly recognizable. He rings the bell. There is a pause before a light appears on the first floor and a window opens.

The Reverend MR CLARE peers down into the dark garden.

MR CLARE

Who's there?

ANGEL

It's me, Father. Angel.

He hears the sound of muffled voices overhead.

151 INT/NIGHT FRONT DOOR - HALL

MR CLARE, with a pair of trousers pulled hurriedly over his nightshirt and a candlestick in his hand, is followed by his dishevelled WIFE, who has a shawl round her shoulders. BOTH are wearing slippers.

They reach the door, which MR CLARE opens. ANGEL comes in. His PARENTS are aghast at the sight of their son in such a pitiful condition, with black-ringed eyes sunk deep in their sockets.

MRS CLARE flings her arms round ANGEL, murmuring distractedly

MRS CLARE

My boy, my poor boy!

ANGEL manages to say:

ANGEL

I've been ill. I'm quite all right now.

The words are hardly out of his mouth when he suddenly feels faint. His FATHER has to support him to a bench in the hall, where he sinks down exhausted.

152 INT/NIGHT ANGEL'S BEDROOM

With tremulous hands, ANGEL removes a string-tied bundle of letters from his grip. He takes one and holds it close to the lamp. We hear TESS's voice as he starts to read.

TESS (OFF)

Why have you treated me so monstrously, Angel? I do not deserve it. I have thought it over carefully and I can never, never forgive you. You are cruel.

152 Continued

TESS (contd)

I shall try to forget you. All I have
received at your hands is injustice.

Overcome, ANGEL puts the letter on the table. We see that
it is simply signed 'T'.

153 INT/DAY ANGEL'S BEDROOM

Seated in an armchair with a rug over his knees, ANGEL seems
immersed in a sort of lethargy. His gaze is vacant and his
body racked with periodic feverish tremors. He pours a few
drops of quinine into a medicine glass, adds water, and drinks.
A more than usually violent bout of shivering makes his teeth
chatter audibly.

154 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE ROUND MARLOTT - COTTAGE

ANGEL, whose health is restored although he still has to use
a stick, is striding briskly along. His face has matured
and his expression is more manly and resolute.
He comes in sight of the Durbeyfield cottage and sees a MAN
chopping wood in the garden. He walks up to him and asks:

ANGEL

Mr Durbeyfield?

MAN

Pardon?

ANGEL

You are Mr Durbeyfield?

The MAN looks puzzled.

MAN

They don't live here no more.

ANGEL

Since when?

MAN

Since John Durbeyfield died.

ANGEL

Do you know where they went?

The MAN gives a lugubrious shrug.

155 EXT/DAY ROAD - MEADOW

ANGEL comes level with the gate to the meadow where, long ago, he watched the girls of Marlott dancing. He pauses to survey this place so fraught with nostalgic memories - the place where he first exchanged a glance with his future wife. Then he walks on, more and more quickly.

156 EXT/DAY CHURCHYARD

Somewhat crudely engraved on a headstone are the words:

JOHN DURBEYFIELD
1832-1888

More properly d'URBERVILLE, of the once Powerful Family of that Name, and Directly descended through an illustrious Line from Sir Pagan d'URBERVILLE, one of the Knights of the Conqueror

"How are the Mighty Fallen"

VICAR (OFF)

... of the once powerful family of that name, and directly descended through an illustrious line ...

We see the VICAR with ANGEL beside him. The VICAR continues to read John's high-flown epitaph in a faintly ironical tone.

VICAR (contd)

... from Sir Pagan d'Urberville, one of the Knights of the Conqueror ... How are the mighty fallen!

After a couple of moments he sarcastically adds:

VICAR (contd)

Ah yes, how indeed!

ANGEL discreetly extracts a banknote from his wallet and slips it into the VICAR's hand.

ANGEL

May I? For the poor.

The VICAR stuffs the note in his pocket.

VICAR

I should prefer to settle the mason's account - he has never been paid for his work. They were an odd family. My colleague Mr Tringham would have done better to keep his mouth shut.

157 EXT/DAY KINGSBERE - HOUSES

A carriage and coachman pull up in front of the modest houses where Joan had her argument with the Landlord. ANGEL quickly climbs out and walks up to one of the houses.

He knocks and waits with his head bowed. A moment later the door is opened by MODESTY. She promptly ca

MODESTY

Mother, mother, 'tis a gentleman.

A few moments later JOAN appears with THOMAS clinging to her skirt. Tess's mother is better dressed than she has been hitherto, and so are the children. ANGEL questions her anxiously while she wipes her floury hands on her apron.

ANGEL

I should like to see Mrs Clare.

JOAN, torn between curiosity and misgiving, scrutinizes ANGEL with covert suspicion. She repeats in a neutral tone:

JOAN

Mrs Clare.

ANGEL

Tess.

JOAN

Yes, I know. She's not here.

ANGEL

You are ... Mrs Durbeyfield?

JOAN

Yes.

ANGEL

Where is she living?

JOAN

I don't know.

Almost diffidently, ANGEL says:

ANGEL

I'm her husband.

JOAN

I guessed as much.

ANGEL

Then tell me where she is - please tell me!

157 Continued

Unwilling to yield to the emotion which is gaining a hold on her, JOAN responds vehemently.

JOAN

Leave her, leave her in peace!
My poor girl has suffered enough.
She don't care to see you, sir.
Never.

ANGEL turns away and walks towards the carriage. He is about to climb in when he changes his mind and hurries back.

ANGEL

Mrs Durbeyfield, take pity on a
lonely, wretched man. Tell me where
to find her, I beg you.

Swayed by ANGEL's imploring gaze, JOAN finally says in a low voice:

JOAN

She's at Sandbourne.

ANGEL

But where in Sandbourne? It's a
large town these days.

JOAN

That's all I know. Sandbourne.

158 EXT/DAWN SANDBOURNE - STATION PLATFORM

A train has just pulled in. Several early morning PASSENGERS alight. ANGEL, carrying a grip, is one of the first to reach the exit.

159 EXT/DAWN STREET - POST OFFICE

ANGEL accosts a POSTMAN preparing to set off on his round,

ANGEL

Excuse me. I'm looking for a Mrs
Clare. Would you by any chance know
her address?

The POSTMAN shakes his head, then turns and calls into the post office.

POSTMAN

Hey, George! Got any Clares on your
round?

159 Continued

Another POSTMAN appears, looking dubious.

POSTMAN 2

Clare? No ... We get a lot of visitors here, you know.

ANGEL

Or Durbeyfield - Miss Durbeyfield?

POSTMAN 2

There's a d'Urberville at the Herons.

ANGEL's face lights up.

ANGEL

That's it, d'Urberville!

POSTMAN

'Tis a boarding-house, sir - very stylish too.

160 EXT/MORNING "THE HERONS"

The boarding-house consists of a villa standing in its own grounds. ANGEL gets there just as the MILKMAN makes his delivery.

ANGEL stares pensively at the milk -, to him the symbol of a whole epoch in his life - before ringing the door-bell. The proprietress, MRS BROOKS, opens the door herself at this early hour. Although she is still in her dressing-gown, ANGEL's gentlemanly manner and appearance incline her to affability.

MRS BROOKS

Yes?

ANGEL

Please excuse me for calling at this hour, but do you have a Teresa d'Urberville staying here?

MRS BROOKS

Mrs d'Urberville, you mean?

ANGEL

Yes.

MRS BROOKS beams at him.

MRS BROOKS

Please come in.

She ushers ANGEL inside.

161 INT/MORNING HALL

MRS BROOKS shuts the front door.

ANGEL

Would you be kind enough to tell her
that a relative is anxious to see her?

MRS BROOKS

It's rather early, sir. What name
shall I give?

ANGEL

Angel.

MRS BROOKS

Mr Angel?

ANGEL

No, Angel. It's my Christian name.
She'll understand.

MRS BROOKS opens the door of a small drawing-room. ANGEL
enters.

162 INT/MORNING DRAWING-ROOM

ANGEL looks at MRS BROOKS, who is studying him with ill-
disguised curiosity.

MRS BROOKS

I'll just go and see if she's awake.

She hurriedly withdraws.

ANGEL deposits his grip beside an armchair. He walks over
to the window and idly gazes out to pass the time. A
GARDENER is leisurely trimming the hedge.
Moments later a faint rustling sound makes him swing round.
Amazement dawns on his face.

TESS is standing on the threshold, almost unrecognizable.
Her natural beauty is set off by a pearl-grey cashmere
dressing-gown adorned with embroidery, and she is wearing
slippers of the same shade. A swan's-down collar frames
her neck.

ANGEL, who has held out his arms to her, lowers them when
TESS makes no move towards him.

He speaks in a husky, rather hesitant voice, baffled by her
miraculous transformation.

ANGEL

Tess ... I came to ask your forgiveness.

TESS still doesn't move. She responds in an impersonal tone,
numb with despair.

162 Continued

TESS

It's too late.

ANGEL

Too late? My darling wife, I've come to fetch you.

He takes a step towards her but is brought up short by TESS' faintly uttered words.

TESS

Don't ... Don't come near me, Angel, please. Too late, too late.

ANGEL

I'm not the man I was. I've suffered too.

His voice breaks on a sob.

ANGEL (contd)

I humbly beg you to forgive me.

TESS

Yes ... Oh, yes - yes! But tell you it's too late.

She seems incapable of movement, like someone in a dream. ANGEL's gaze falls on her hands, once rosy but now white and delicate.

TESS (contd)

Don't you know it all? Don't you? How did you find your way here?

ANGEL

I had to ... I saw your mother.

TESS

I waited and waited for you, but you didn't come. I wrote to you and still you didn't come ... He has been good to me - to all of us.

ANGEL stares at her in disbelief.

ANGEL

I don't understand.

TESS

He has won me back to him. He's upstairs.

162 Continued

ANGEL remains rooted to the spot, head bowed, weak as a man condemned to death, his mind refusing to acknowledge the truth

TESS (contd)

Go now, Angel. Go, please, and
never come back.

When ANGEL finally looks up, TESS has left the room. He remains motionless and unable to react.

163 INT/MORNING DINING-ROOM

While breakfasting, MRS BROOKS keeps watch beside the window - obviously her usual vantage-point. She sees:

164 EXT/MORNING GARDEN

ANGEL, grip in hand, is walking out of the garden like an automaton.

165 INT/MORNING FIRST-FLOOR LANDING

MRS BROOKS tiptoes up the stairs and across the landing. She glues her avid eye to a keyhole and sees:

166 INT/MORNING LIVING-ROOM (THROUGH KEYHOLE)

TESS, with her face hidden in her folded arms, is seated at a breakfast-table laid for two.

167 INT/MORNING LIVING-ROOM

ALEC comes in from the bedroom, tying the cord of his silk dressing-gown. He walks over to the table, where TESS is still huddled with her head on her arms, and sits down.

ALEC

Good morning, my dear.

TESS doesn't move. TESS serenely pours some tea and, after a momentary pause, asks in a level voice:

ALEC (contd)

Well, what's the matter now?

No answer or movement from TESS. ALEC picks up a newspaper and opens it.

167 Continued

ALEC (contd)
 Are you feeling unwell? Is
 that why you've got the vapours?
 Yes? No?

He starts to read, sipping his tea meanwhile and turning the pages.

ALEC (contd)
 Yes, I know ... You're moping
 as usual. For God's sake make
 an effort!

He puts the paper down and stretches luxuriously, saying in a sarcastic tone:

ALEC (contd)
 Did you have a bad dream? Brazil,
 perhaps?

TESS raises her tear-stained face and looks at him, choking with hatred and incapable of saying a word.
 ALEC looks unconcerned.

Abruptly, TESS jumps up and dashes to the door.

168 INT/MORNING LANDING

MRS BROOKS hurriedly deserts her post at the keyhole and scuttles downstairs.

169 INT/MORNING BEDROOM

TESS has controlled her impulse to flee and slowly returns to the table. ALEC, who does not look at her, fastidiously carves himself a slice of ham while speaking.

ALEC
 These morning hysterics of yours
 are in poor taste. Don't forget
 we're lunching with the Bennetts.
 I want you to look presentable -
 a genuine d'Urberville.

170 EXT/DAY SANDBOURNE STATION PLATFORM

ANGEL, heedless of his surroundings, is slumped on a bench with his face in his hands and his bag on the platform beside him.

171 INT/DAY "THE HERONS" - STAIRCASE/HALL

TESS comes downstairs, dressed for the street.

172 INT/DAY DINING-ROOM

MRS BROOKS, who has resumed her favourite post at the window, looks out and sees:

173 EXT/DAY GARDEN/STREET

TESS crosses the garden, where the GARDENER is still at work, and quickly disappears into the street.

174 INT/DAY DINING-ROOM

MRS BROOKS is looking thoughtful. Mechanically, her gaze travels to the ceiling, where she notices a steadily expanding stain. She climbs a chair, then a table, and tests the spot with her finger. The result looks like blood. She gives a muffled cry of horror.

175 INT/DAY FIRST-FLOOR LANDING

The GARDENER, with MRS BROOKS in tow, opens the door.

176 INT/DAY ROOM

ALEC is lying on his back, dead. The ham-knife is buried hilt deep in his chest.

177 EXT/DAY SANDBOURNE STATION PLATFORM

TESS dashes on to the platform just as a train is about to pull out. She hurries down the line of carriages towards the engine glancing feverishly into every compartment.

178 INT/EXT/DAY COMPARTMENT/PLATFORM

Lost in mental turmoil, ANGEL is sitting alone in his compartment. The train starts to move. Just then he catches sight of TESS, who has seen him too. Frantically, ANGEL flings open the door and helps TESS inside. They cling to each other in a frenzied embrace. The train picks up speed.

179 EXT/DAY TRAIN/COUNTRYSIDE

The little train trundles through the countryside, spewing smoke.

180/ INT/DAY COMPARTMENT

181 ANGEL and TESS release one another. ANGEL gazes searchingly

130/ Continued
181

into TESS's eyes. She speaks in a matter-of-fact tone which lends even greater impact to her words.

TESS

I came to tell you that I've killed him.

ANGEL starts to say something, but she goes on confusedly as she sits down.

TESS (contd)

I've done it. I don't know how - I don't know. That time I hit him with my glove ... the blood in his mouth ... I thought I might be capable of ... Yes, it was from that day on, yes ...

ANGEL sits down opposite her.

ANGEL

What do you mean?

TESS

I mean that I've killed him.

ANGEL

What, really killed him? Is he dead?

TESS replies on a sigh.

TESS

Yes.

It is then that ANGEL notices a small red stain on the petticoat peeping from under TESS's gown. He turns pale.

ANGEL

I won't desert you!

He takes TESS's cold little hands and covers them with passionate kisses.

ANGEL (contd)

I shall protect you by every means in my power. Whatever you may or may not have done, I love you. I love you.

TESS gazes at him. A sudden fear assails her. In a childlike tone, she says:

TESS

Will they ... will they hang me?

130/ Continued

181

ANGEL exclaims almost harshly:

ANGEL

Hush!

With grim determination, he cogitates and comes to a decision

ANGEL (contd)

We must get out at the next
station and head north on foot.
They'll be looking for us in
the Wessex ports. Once we reach
the north we'll go abroad.

182 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE

ANGEL and TESS are walking through a deserted landscape but
avoiding open country.

183 EXT/EVENING BRIDGE/RIVER

TESS is hiding beneath the arch of a small bridge with ANGEL's
grip beside her.
The tranquil beauty of the place and the calm, sun-dappled
surface of the river belie her tragic predicament.

184 EXT/EVENING COUNTRY ROAD

ANGEL, carrying some groceries, is hurrying along the road.
He suddenly turns at the sound of approaching horses.
Three mounted CONSTABLES trot past in the direction of the
bridge, which they cross before vanishing round a bend in the
road.

135 EXT/EVENING BRIDGE/RIVER

TESS turns her head to look at ANGEL, who joins her under the
bridge. He smiles and speaks calmly so as not to alarm her.

ANGEL

I have the makings of a meal here -
even a bottle of wine...

136 EXT/NIGHT WOODS

The COUPLE have finished a frugal meal. ANGEL prepares a nook
where they can spend the night beside a fallen tree covered
with moss and dead leaves.
They settle down, huddled close together. Above them, leaves
rustle in the night wind like strong, peaceful breathing.

137 EXT/DAY WOODS

The FUGITIVES are trudging wearily along. Round a bend in the road through the woods they sight a country house. Affixed to the gate is a board inscribed as follows:

THIS DESIRABLE RESIDENCE
TO BE LET FURNISHED

Warily, they enter the grounds.

138 EXT/DAY COUNTRY HOUSE

ANGEL swiftly inspects the premises while TESS remains under cover. He beckons to her to join him. BOTH climb the steps and ANGEL manages to open a window.

139 INT/DAY COUNTRY HOUSE: GROUND FLOOR

ANGEL and TESS are inside the house, which is in semi-darkness. An oppressive silence reigns. A big grandfather clock with a pale face stands in the hall, stopped. BOTH slowly climb the stairs to the first floor.

190 INT/DAY CORRIDOR/FIRST FLOOR

ANGEL gingerly opens a door.

191 INT/DAY BEDROOM

The COUPLE make their way into a large bedroom. ANGEL goes over to the window and half-opens the shutters. A dazzling shaft of evening sunlight pierces the gloom, illuminating heavy pieces of furniture, crimson damask hangings and a vast four-poster with carved figures adorning the bed-head. TESS sits down in an armchair covered with a dust-sheet. All at once we feel that this unfamiliar room belongs to her and ANGEL. Infinite peace reigns there. They look at each other. TESS murmurs:

TESS

Rest at last.

ANGEL kneels in front of her, pulls off her muddy shoes and remains there with his forehead on her knees. TESS gently rests her hand on her HUSBAND's head. ANGEL looks up at her with one tear rolling down his cheek. TESS wipes away this glistening tear with her fingertips. ANGEL takes her hand and kisses it ardently. Then, enfolding her body in his arms, he kisses her lips with an almost savage passion to which she responds with every fibre of her being. They sink to the floor where carnal desire engulfs them both.

192 INT/NIGHT BEDROOM

The COUPLE's clothes are scattered across the floor. A heavy chest of drawers has been pushed against the door. Remnants of food can be seen on the table.

ANGEL and TESS are in bed, sleeping soundly.

193 EXT/MORNING COUNTRY HOUSE

A little OLD WOMAN climbs the steps and unlocks the front door. The front of the house is bathed in early morning sunlight.

194 INT/MORNING CORRIDOR/FIRST FLOOR

The OLD WOMAN opens a window in the long corridor and noisily opens the shutters. Light floods in. She goes to another window and repeats the process.

195 INT/MORNING BEDROOM

The room is bathed in warmth and gloom. We hear noises in the corridor. In the bed, TESS is cowering against ANGEL. BOTH stare fearfully at the door barricaded with the chest of drawers.

196 INT/MORNING CORRIDOR/BEDROOM DOOR

The OLD WOMAN reaches the bedroom door. She tries to open it and is surprised when it resists her touch. She pushes feebly but only manages to open it an inch or two.

197 INT/MORNING BEDROOM

Silhouetted against the strip of light between the door-frame and the barricaded door we see the OLD WOMAN. She immediately takes fright and disappears.

ANGEL gets up, hurries to the window and peers through a crack in the shutters. He sees:

198 EXT/MORNING GROUNDS

The OLD WOMAN is scurrying down the drive.

199 INT/MORNING BEDROOM

ANGEL turns to TESS, who is staring at him.

ANGEL
We must leave at once.

199 Continued

TESS does not react. ANGEL nervously repeats:

ANGEL (contd)

I must leave as soon as possible.

TESS

My life can only be a matter of weeks. Why not wait for them here, since they'll catch me in any case?

ANGEL stares at her, dumbfounded by her fatalistic resignation then counters it fiercely.

ANGEL

I'm going to save you, do you hear? I'm going to save you!

200 EXT/DAY COUNTRYSIDE

The fugitive COUPLE continue their wanderings.

201 EXT/NIGHT VILLAGE

The COUPLE pass through a sleeping village. A dog barks furiously.

202 EXT/NIGHT PLAIN - STONEHENGE

The night is dark. Every now and then, chill shafts of moonlight penetrate rents in the clouds. A strange, sad kind of music can be heard. Trudging on, ANGEL and TESS see the monolithic edifice of Stonehenge looming above the plain. It is the wind's lament among the stones that sounds like a barbaric bouche fermée.

203 EXT/NIGHT STONEHENGE

ANGEL and TESS gain the interior of the ring of stones forming the pagan temple. Cold and weary, they huddle together in the meagre shelter of a rock. They hear the wind sighing between the stones. TESS reaches for ANGEL's hand and says in a low voice:

TESS

Can't we rest here?

ANGEL

I'm afraid not. By day this place is visible for miles around.

203 Continued

TESS looks up at the sky.

TESS

There are no stars tonight ...

She adds with a wan smile:

TESS (contd)

Perhaps we could have made our
souls take flight together ...

ANGEL puts his arm round her shoulders and draws her closer.
TESS struggles with the fatigue that weighs so heavily on her
eyelids.

TESS (contd)

Did they sacrifice to God here?

ANGEL

No. To the sun, I believe. It
was a pagan temple.

TESS

Older than the ages, older than
the d'Urbervilles ...

Silence falls.

TESS (contd)

Do you think we shall meet again
after death?

ANGEL kisses her tenderly to avoid having to answer.
TESS clings to him, sobbing.

TESS (contd)

I'm afraid - Oh Angel, I'm afraid!

ANGEL holds her even closer, like someone trying to protect a
child.

204 EXT/DAWN STONEHENGE

The eastern pillars stand out black against the pale light of
dawn. Little pools of rain-water tremble in the pitted rocks.
TESS is fast asleep. Slowly and silently, ANGEL is pacing up
and down on sentry-go. He hears a horse whinny and swings round
to look. Two mounted CONSTABLES have drawn rein. One of them
dismounts, hands his bridle to the other and walks towards
ANGEL.

After a few moment's petrification, ANGEL looks desperately
round for a stone, a means of defence - anything. It is then

204 Continued

that he sees three more mounted CONSTABLES bearing down from another direction. The CONSTABLE on foot has now reached him.

CONSTABLE

It's no use, sir. The whole country is roused.

After a pause, ANGEL says imploringly in a low voice:

ANGEL

She's asleep ... Just a little longer.

The CONSTABLE glances towards TESS and gives a curt nod. ANGEL turns and goes to her.

TESS's eyes are wide open. She slowly raises herself on one elbow and asks calmly:

TESS

Have they come for me?

ANGEL nods and murmurs.

ANGEL

Yes.

TESS rises slowly to her feet.

TESS

I am ready.

205 EXT/DAWN COUNTRYSIDE

The group made up of CONSTABLES on horseback, TESS in handcuffs and ANGEL walking at her side, moves off across the plain.

A dip in the ground gradually swallows up their silhouettes. TESS and ANGEL disappear first, then the mounted CONSTABLES.

The landscape is now deserted.

206 EXT/DAWN STONEHENGE

From between the ancient temple's pillars, the fiery arc of the sun's disc emerges as it did when the stones first stood, heralding a new day.

THE END