

I. Biography

Thomas Hardy

(1840- 1928)

Thomas Hardy was born on June 2, 1840, in a small country of Higher Bockhampton, Dorset, England. His father was a building contractor while his mother encouraged his education. In 1862, he went to London and worked as an architect. At the same time he began his career by writing poetry, but none of them was accepted. Then, he decided to write fiction. The Poor and the Lady was his first success followed with the publication of Far From the Madding Crowd in 1874. The hostile reaction after the publication of Tess of the D'Urbervilles followed with the publication of Jude the Obscure, made him to turn back to write poetry as it was his first love, and determined not to write fiction anymore. Hardy sympathized with any moves which had a close relationship with the women's lives (Williams, 59). He was associated with the portrayal of female characters. In Far From the Madding Crowd, Hardy has pictured an independent, hard-working, and rebellious woman since she did not want to be a burden for a man and a husband. Hardy died on January

11, 1928 when his final volume of poems, Winter Words, was ready to be published. A few days later his ashes was buried in the poet's corner in Westminster Abbey.

II. Synopsis

Far From the Madding Crowd

Bathsheba Everdene as the main female character in the novel is a young, good-looking woman who obtained inheritance Weatherbury Farm from her uncle. She has been proposed twice by two men. Once, man who has proposed her was Mr. Gabriel Oak, a farmer on a small scale in the neighborhood. Since he has been refused, he vowed not to ask her again. Bathsheba refused his proposal because she did not love him at all, and she needs someone to conquer her. Then, Mr. Oak became Bathsheba's shepherd while she was a landowner of the large farm.

Another suitor who has been proposed and rejected was Farmer Boldwood. He is a middle-aged bachelor. Although he has been rejected by Bathsheba, he vowed to pursue her until she consented to marry him.

As the story developed, Bathsheba was getting married with Sergeant Francis Troy, who experts in flattering. Since Bathsheba did not know the affair between her husband and Fanny Robin, one of her maids, they were getting married in Bath without other

people's acknowledgement. Troy became the master of Weatherbury Farm. With Troy running the farm, things did not go very well. He gambled and drank that caused Bathsheba much unhappiness. When news of Fanny's death reached Weatherbury Farm, Bathsheba sent a cart to bring the body back for burial. Bathsheba learned of Fanny's death and of her child when Troy entered the room. Torn with grief, Troy told Bathsheba that she meant nothing to him, that Fanny had been the only one woman he had ever loved. This fact made her very upset and she shut herself in an attic room.

Then, Troy disappeared from Casterbridge. News came shortly afterward that he had been caught in a dangerous current while swimming in the ocean and had been drowned. Bathsheba did not believe that he was really dead. But, Mr. Boldwood convinced her about Troy's death, and did his best to get Bathsheba in order to marry him if Troy did not reappear within seven years, at the end of which time he would be legally declared dead.

Troy's appearance at Mr. Boldwood's party made everyone surprised. Boldwood took down a gun from the wall and shot Troy in the chest, and Troy died immediately. Boldwood was tried for the murder and Gabriel had made every effort in order to save him from hanging. Then, Gabriel became a leader in the neighborhood.

One day, Gabriel told Bathsheba that he was planning to leave her. She listened quietly and agreed with all he said. Later that night, she went to Gabriel's cottage and told him in order to stay with her because he was the only person left and she needed him. Finally, people in the Weatherbury Farm were all delighted when Bathsheba became Mrs. Oak, and Gabriel became the master of Weatherbury Farm.