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TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES A Pure Woman Faithfully presented by THOMAS HARDY Phase the First: The Maiden I On an evening in the latter part of May a middle-aged man was walking homeward from Shaston to the village of Marlott, in the adjoining Vale of Blakemore, or Blac
kmoor. The pair of legs that carried him were rickety, and there was a bias in his gait which inclined him somewhat to the left of a straight line. He occasionally gave a smart nod, as if in confirmation of some opinion, though he was not thinking of anything in particular. An empty eg
g-basket was slung upon his arm, the nap of his hat was ruffled, a patch being quite worn away at its brim where his thumb came in taking it off. Presently he was met by an elderly parson astride on a gray mare, who, as he rode, hummed a wandering tune. "Good night t'ee," said the empty ego and the parson astride on a gray mare, who, as he rode, hummed a wandering tune. "Good night t'ee," said the empty ego and the parson astride on a gray mare, who, as he rode, hummed a wandering tune. "Good night t'ee," said the empty ego and the parson in 
representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles, who derive their descent from Sir Pagan d'Urberville, that renowned knight who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, as appears by Battle Abbey Roll?" "Never heard it before, sir!"
ow up your chin a moment, so that I may catch the profile of your face better. Yes, that's the d'Urberville nose and chin--a little debased. Your ancestor was one of the twelve knights who assisted the Lord of Estremavilla in Normandy in his conquest of Glamorganshire. Branches of
ow up your chin a moment, so that I may catch the profile of your face better. Yes, that's the d'Urberville nose and chin--a little debased. Your ancestor was one of the twelve knights who assisted the Lord of England; their names appear in the Pipe Rolls in the time of King Stephen. In the reign of King John one of them was rich enough to give a manor to the Royal Oak for your loyalty. Aye, there have been generations of Sir Johns among you, and if knighthood were hereditary, like a baronetcy, as it practically was in old times, when men were knighted from father to son, you would be Sir John now." "Ye don't say so!" "In short," concluded the parson, decisively smacking his leg with his switch, "there's hardly such anot her family in England." "Daze my eyes, and isn't there?" said Durbeyfield. "And here have I been knocking about, year after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about we been knowed, pear after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And bowledge, and could hardly be said to be known at all. His own investigations had begun on a day in the preceding spring when, having been engaged in tracing the wind here... The parish the fermion
either?" "None; though you once had 'em in abundance, as I said, for you family consisted of numerous branches. In this county there was a seat of yours at Kingsbere, and another at Lullstead, and another at Wellbridge." "And shall we ever come into our own again?" "Ah--that I can't tell!" "And what had I better do about it, sir?" asked Durbeyfield, after a pause. "Oh--nothing, nothing; except chasten yourself with the thought of 'how are the mighty fallen.' It is a fact of some interest to the local historian and ge nealogist, nothing more. There are several families among the cottagers of this county of almost equal lustre. Good night." "But you'll turn back and have a quart of beer wi' me on the strength o't, Pa'son Tringham? There's a very pretty brew in tap at The Pure Drop--though, to be sure, not so good as at Rolliver's." "No, thank you--not this evening, Durbeyfield. You've had enough already." Concluding thus, the parson rode on his way, with doubts as to his discretion in retailing this curious bit of lore. When he was gone, Durbeyfield walked a few steps in a pr
ofound reverie, and then sat down upon the grassy bank by the roadside, depositing his basket before him. In a few minutes a youth appeared in the distance, walking in the same direction as that which had been pursued by Durbeyfield. The latter, on seeing him, held up his hand.
and the lad quickened his pace and came near. "Boy, take up that basket! I want 'ee to go on an errand for me." The lath-like stripling frowned. "Who be you, then, John Durbeyfield, to order me about and call me 'boy'? You know my name as well as I know yours!" "Do you, do you? That's the secret-that's the secret! Now obey my orders, and take the message I'm going to charge 'ee wi'... Well, Fred, I don't mind telling you that I'm one of a noble race--it has been just found out by me this present afternoon, P.M." And as he made the announce
ment, Durbeyfield, declining from his sitting position, luxuriously stretched himself out upon the bank among the daisies. The lad stood before Durbeyfield, and contemplated his length from crown to toe. "Sir John d'Urberville--that's who I am," continued the prostrate man. "That is if knights were baronets--which they be. 'Tis recorded in history all about me. Dost know of such a place, lad, as Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill?" "Ees. I've been there to Greenhill Fair." "Well, under the church of that city there lie--" "Tisn't a city, the place I mean; leastwise 'twaddn' whe not be the church of that there parish lie my ancestors--hundreds of 'em--in coats of mail and jewels, in gr't lead coffins weighing tons and tons. There's not a man in the county o' South-Wessex that's got grander and nobler skillentons in his family than I." "Oh?" Now take up that basket, and goo on to Marlott, and when you've come to The Pure Drop Inn, tell 'em to send a carriage to me immediately, to carry me howeme. And in the bottom o' the carriage to put a noggeties and part they be to put a noggeties of the part to the par
In the bottom of the carriage they be to put a noggin of rum in a small bottle, and chalk it up to my account. And when you've done that goo on to my house with the carriage they be to put away that washing, because she needn't finish it, and when you've done that goo on to my house with the pasket, and tell my wife to put away that washing, because she needn't finish it, and when you've done that goo on to my house with the pasket, and tell my wife to put away that washing no difference in the wife of supper,--well, lamb's fry if they can't get that." He read of for 'ee, Sir John?" "Tell be mat hwome that I should like for supper,--well, lamb's fry if they can't get that, well children it, well can't get that, well can't get that get
Stoy, and Bubb Down. The traveller from the coast, who, after plodding northward for a score of miles over calcareous downs and corn-lands, suddenly reaches the verge of one of these escarpments, is surprised and delighted to behold, extended like a map beneath him, a country differing absolutely from that which he has passed through. Behind him the hills are open, the sun blazes down upon fields so large as to give an unenclosed character to the landscape, the lanes are white, the hedges low and plashed, the atmosphere colourless. Here, in the valle y, the world seems to be constructed upon a smaller and more delicate scale; the fields are mere paddocks, so reduced that from this height their hedgerows appear a network of dark green threads overspreading the paler green of the grass. The atmosphere beneath is languorous, and is so tinged with azure that what artists call the middle distance particle was known in former times as the Forest of White Hat the major. Such is the Vale ging, in white he killing by a certain Thomas delay and of a beautiful white heat which the killing bod run down and spared was made the construction of a beautiful white heat which the killing are to be found in the color of the construction of the particle condition are to be found in the color of the construction of the construction of the construction of the construction of the color of the col
la Lynd of a beautiful white hart which the king had run down and spared, was made the occasion of a heavy fine. In those days, and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and rregular belts of timber that yet survive upon its slopes, and the holl ow trunked trees that shade so many of its pastures. The forests have departed, but some old customs of their shades remain. Many, however, linger only in a metamorphosed or disguised form. The May-Day dence, for instance, was to be discerned on the afternoon under the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, the countr
                                                                                                                                                                       e retention of a custom of walking in procession and dancing on each anniversary than in the members being solely women. In men's clubs such celebrations were, though expiring, less unco sex, or a sarcastic attitude on the part of male relatives, had denuded such women's clubs as remained (if any other did) or this their glory and consummation. The club of Marlott alone lived
cipators in the ceremony. Its singularity lay less in th
mmon; but either the natural shyness of the softer
to uphold the local Cerealia. It had walked for h
                                                                                                                                                                                   undreds of years, if not as benefit-club, as votive sisterhood of some sort; and it walked still. The banded ones were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all dressed in white gowns--a gay survival from Old Style days, when one were all days are the survival from Old Style days.
heerfulness and May-time were synonyms- -d
                                                                                                                                                                                      ays before the habit of taking long views had reduced emotions to a monotonous average. Their first exhibition of themselves was in a processional march of two and two round the paris
h. Ideal and real clashed slightly as the sun
                                                                                                                                                                                          lit up their fi gures against the green hedges and creeper-laced house-fronts; for, though the whole troop wore white garments, no two whites were alike among them. Some approache
d pure blanching; some had a bluish pallor:
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           y the older ch. aracters (which had possibly lain by folded for many a year) inclined to a cadaverous tint, and to a Georgian style. In addition to the d
                                                                                                                                                                                             some wor
stinction of a white frock, every woman and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              in her right hand a peeled willow wand, and in her left a bunch of white flowers. The peeling of the former, and the selection of the
                                                                                                                                                                                              girl carr
atter, had been an operation of personal c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ere were a few middle-aged and even elderly women in the train, their silver-wiry hair and wrinkled faces, scourged by time and trouble, h
                                                                                                                                                                                             are. Th
aving almost a grotesque, certainly a path
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       pearance in such a jaunty situation. In a true view, perhaps, there was more to be gathered and told of each anxious and experienced
                                                                                                                                                                                             etic, ap
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              she should say, "I have no pleasure in them," than of her juvenile comrades. But let the elder be passed over here for those under
                                                                                                                                                                                              when
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             rm. The young girls formed, indeed, the majority of the band, and their heads of luxuriant hair reflected in the sunshine every tone ful eyes, others a beautiful nose, others a beautiful mouth and figure: few, if any, had all. A difficulty of arranging their lips in the
                                                                                                                                                                                          nd wa
of gold, and black, and brown. Some had
                                                                                                                                                                                          beauti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        to balan ce their heads, and to dissociate self-consciousness from their features, was apparent in them, and showed that th
                                                                                                                                                                                     nabilit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              eyes.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ach and all of them were warmed without by the sun, so each had a private little sun for her soul to ba
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               t le ast some remote and distant hope which, though perhaps starving to nothing, still lived on, as hop m merry. They came round by The Pure Drop Inn, and were turning out of the high road to pass through
                                                                                                                                                                                  hobby,
                                                                                                                                                                                   of the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         of the w omen said-- "The Load-a-Lord! Why, Tess Durbeyfield, if there isn't thy father riding hwome
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  n ed her head at the exclamation. She was a fine and handsome girl--not handsomer than som
in a carriage!" A young member of the ban
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape. She wore a red ribbon in her hair
and was the only one of the white company
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       Id boast of such a pronounced adornment. As she looked round Durbeyfield was seen moving along
                                                                                                                                                                                 who c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       driven by a frizzle-headed brawny damsel with her gown-sleeves rolled above her elbows. This was
                                                                                                                                                                              Drop,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                art of factotum, turned groom and ostler at times. Durbeyfield, leaning back, and with his eyes closed lu
                                                                                                                                                                              ho, in h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     nging in a slow recitative-- "I've-got-a-gr't-family-vault-at-Kingsbere--and knighted-forefathers-in-lead called Tess--in whom a slow heat seemed to rise at the sense that her father was making himself
xuriously, was waving his hand above his
                                                                                                                                                                           head, a
coffins-there!" The clubbists tittered, e
                                                                                                                                                                          xcept th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    e girl
oolish in their eyes. "He's tired, tha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         hastily, "and he has got a lift home, because our own horse has to rest to-day." "Bless thy simplicity
                                                                                                                                                                      e's got hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         market-nitch. Haw-haw!" "Look here; I won't walk another inch with you, if you say any jokes about
 Tess," said her companions. "H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                eks spread over her face and neck. In a moment her eyes grew moist, and her glance drooped to the g
more, and order again prevailed. Tess's pride would not allow her to turn her head again, to learn what h
him!" Tess cried, and the colo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              r che
                                                                                                                                                                      ur upon he
ound. Perceiving that they h
                                                                                                                                              ad really pained her they said n
er father's meaning was,
                                                                                                                                         f he had any; and thus she moved on
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           with the whole body to the enclosure where there was to be dancing on the green. By the time the spot was reached
                                                                                                                                      quanimity, and tapped her neighbour w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         th her wand and talked as usual. Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinctured by
she has recovered her e
                                                                                                                                    ct was on her tongue to some extent, de
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ite the village school: the characteristic intonation of that dialect for this district being the voicing approximately rendered
experience. The diale
by the syllable UR,
                                                                                                                               probably as rich an utterance as any to be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             und in human speech. The pouted-up deep red mouth to which this syllable was native had hardly as yet settled into its def
inite shape, and h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e of her top one upward, when they closed together after a word. Phases of her childhood lurked in her aspect still. As she
                                                                                                                           er lower lip had a way of thrusting the mid
walked along to
                                                                                                                         -day, for all her bouncing handsome wo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               anliness, you could sometimes see her twelfth year in her cheeks, or her ninth sparkling from her eyes; and even her fifth
                                                                                                                        the curves of her mouth now and the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   Yet few knew, and still fewer considered this. A small minority, mainly strangers, would look long at her in casually pas
would flit over
                                                                                                                     grow momentarily fasci
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  by her freshness, and wonder if they would ever see her again: but to almost everybody she was a fine and picturesque
sing by, and
                                                                                                                      , and no more. Nothin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            en or heard further of Durbeyfield in his triumphal chariot under the conduct of the ostleress, and the club having entered
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    a n. A s ther e were no men in the company, the girls danced at first with each other, but when the hour for the close of labour drew on, the villag e, togeth er with other idlers and pedestrians, gathered round the spot, and appeared inclined to negotiate for a partner. Among these men of a super ior class, carrying small knapsacks strapped to their shoulders, and stout sticks in their hands. Their general likeness to each other,
                                                                                                                      space, dancing beg
                                                                                                                    uline inhabitants of
                                                                                                                   ers were three you
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ges, would almost have suggested that they might be, what in fact they were, brothers. The eldest wore the white tie, high waistcoat, and thin-brimmed
                                                                                                                   eir consecutive a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   urate; the second was the normal undergraduate; the appearance of the third and youngest would hardly have been sufficient to characterize him; there
                                                                                                                    he regulation c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 d, uncabined aspect in his eyes and attire, implying that he had hardly as yet found the entrance to his professional groove. That he was a desultory tenta of something and everything might only have been predicted of him. These three brethren told casual acquaintance that they were spending their Whitsun
                                                                                                                    an uncribbe
                                                                                                                    student
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ays in a walking tour through the Vale of Blackmoor, their course being south-westerly from the town of Shaston on the north-east. They leant over the gate
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              y the highway, and inquired as to the meaning of the dance and the white-frocked maids. The two elder of the brothers were plainly not intending to linger m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ore than a moment, but the spectacle of a bevy of girls dancing without male partners seemed to amuse the third, and make him in no hurry to move on. He unstrapped his knapsack, put it, with his stick, on the hedge-bank, and opened the gate. "What are you going to do, Angel?" asked the eldest. "I am inclined to go and have a fling with them. Why not all of us--just for a minute or two--it will not detain us long?" "No--no; nonsense!" said the first. "Dancing in public with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     a troop of country hoydens--suppose we should be seen! Come along, or it will be dark before we get to Stourcastle, and there's no place we can sleep at nearer
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  han that; besides, we must get through another chapter of A Counterblast to Agnosticism before we turn in, now I have taken the trouble to bring the book." "All right-lill overtake you and Cuthbert in five minutes; don't stop; I give my word that I will, Felix." The two elder reluctantly left him and walked on, taking their brother's k napsack to relieve him in following, and the youngest entered the field. "This is a thousand pities," he said gallantly, to two or three of the girls nearest him, as soon as there was a pause in the dance. "Where are your partners, my dears?" "They've not left off work yet," answered one of the boldest. "They'll be here by and by. Till then will you be one, sir?" "Certainly. But what's one among so many!" "Better than none. 'Tis melancholy work facing and footing it to one of your own sort, and no clipsing an
                                                                                                                                                                                                           d colling at all. Now, pick and choose." "'Ssh--don't be so for ard!" said a shyer girl. The young man, thus invited, glanced them over, and attempted some discrimination; but,
                                                                                                                                                                                                       as the group were all so new to him, he could not very well exercise it. He took almost the first that came to hand, which was not the speaker, as she had expected; nor did it hap
                                                                                                                                                                                                    pen to be Tess Durbeyfield. Pedigree, ancestral skeletons, monumental record, the d'Urberville lineaments, did not help Tess in her life's battle as yet, even to the extent of attracti
                                                                                                                                                                                                ng to her a dancing-partner over the heads of the commonest peasantry. So much for Norman blood unaided by Victorian lucre. The name of the eclipsing girl, whatever it was, has not been handed down; but she was envied by all as the first who enjoyed the luxury of a masculine partner that evening. Yet such was the force of example that the village young
                                                                                                                                                                                           men, who had not hastened to enter the gate while no intruder was in the way, now dropped in quickly, and soon the couples became leavened with rustic youth to a marked extent, til
                                                                                                                                                                                          at length the plainest woman in the club was no longer compelled to foot it on the masculine side of the figure. The church clock struck, when suddenly the student said that he must le
                                                                                                                                                                                   ave--he had been forgetting himself--he had to join his companions. As he fell out of the dance his eyes lighted on Tess Durbeyfield, whose own large orbs wore, to tell the truth, the fainte
                                                                                                                                                                              st aspect of reproach that he had not chosen her. He, too, was sorry then that, owing to her backwardness, he had not observed her; and with that in his mind he left the pasture. On account
                                                                                                                                                                           of his long delay he started in a flying-run down the lane westward, and had soon passed the hollow and mounted the next rise. He had not yet overtaken his brothers, but he paused to get bro
                                                                                                                                                                      ath, and looked back. He could see the white figures of the girls in the green enclosure whirling about as they had whirled when he was among them. They seemed to have quite forgotten him all
                                                                                                                                                                  eady. All of them, except, perhaps, one. This white shape stood apart by the hedge alone. From her position he knew it to be the pretty maiden with whom he had not danced. Trifling as the matter
                                                                                                                                                               was, he yet instinctively felt that she was hurt by his oversight. He wished that he had asked her, he wished that he had inquired her name. She was so modest, so expressive, she had looked so soft
                                                                                                                                                                in her thin white gown that he felt he had acted stupidly. However, it could not be helped, and turning, and bending himself to a rapid walk, he dismissed the subject from his mind. III As for Tess Du
                                                                                                                                                               rbeyfield, she did not so easily dislodge the incident from her consideration. She had no spirit to dance again for a long time, though she might have had plenty of partners; but ah! they did not spea
                                                                                                                                                                k so nicely as the strange young man had done. It was not till the rays of the sun had absorbed the young stranger's retreating figure on the hill that she shook off her temporary sadness and answe
                                                                                                                                                                 red her would-be partner in the affirmative. She remained with her comrades till dusk, and participated with a certain zest in the dancing; though, being heart-whole as yet, she enjoyed treading a m
                                                                                                                                                                    easure purely for its own sake; little divining when she saw "the soft torments, the bitter sweets, the pleasing pains, and the agreeable distresses" of those girls who had been wooed and won, who will be the soft torments are the bitter sweets, the pleasing pains and the agreeable distresses of those girls who had been wooed and won, who will be the soft torments are the bitter sweets.
                                                                                                                                                                       at she herself was capable of in that kind. The struggles and wrangles of the lads for her hand in a jig were an amusement to her--no more; and when they became fierce she rebuked them. She
                                                                                                                                                                         might have stayed even later, but the incident of her father's odd appearance and manner returned upon the girl's mind to make her anxious, and wondering what had become of him she dropp
                                                                                                                                                                           ed away from the dancers and bent her steps towards the end of the village at which the parental cottage lay. While yet many score yards off, other rhythmic sounds than those she had quitted became audible to her; sounds that she knew well--so well. They were a regular series of thumpings from the interior of the house, occasioned by the violent rocking of a cradle upon a sto
                                                                                                                                                                               ne floor, to which movement a feminine voice kept time by singing, in a vigorous gallopade, the favourite ditty of "The Spotted Cow"-- I saw her lie do'-own in yon'-der green gro'-ove; Come, love!' and I'll tell' you where!' The cradle-rocking and the song would cease simultaneously for a moment, and an exclamation at highest vocal pitch would take the place of the melody. "God bless thy diment eyes! And thy waxen cheeks! And thy cherry mouth! And thy Cubit's thighs! And every bit o' thy blessed body!" After this invocation the rocking and the singing wo
                                                                                                                                                                                        uld recommence, and the "Spotted Cow" proceed as before. So matters stood when Tess opened the door and paused upon the mat within it, surveying the scene. The interior, in spite
                                                                                                                                                                                           of the melody, struck upon the girl's senses with an unspeakable dreariness. From the holiday galeties of the field the white gowns, the nosegays, the willow-wands, the whirling move
                                                                                                                                                                                              ements on the green, the flash of gentle sentiment towards the stranger-to the yellow melancholy of this one-candled spectacle, what a step! Besides the jar of contrast there came
                                                                                                                                                                                                 o her a chill self-reproach that she had not returned sooner, to help her mother in these domesticities, instead of indulging herself out-of-doors. There stood her mother amid the gr
                                                                                                                                                                                                    oup of children, as Tess had left her, hanging over the Monday washing-tub, which had now, as always, lingered on to the end of the week. Out of that tub had come the day before
                                                                                                                                                                                                        e--Tess felt it with a dreadful sting of remorse--the very white frock upon her back which she had so carelessly greened about the skirt on the damping grass--which had been we rung up and ironed by her mother's own hands. As usual, Mrs Durbeyfield was balanced on one foot beside the tub, the other being engaged in the aforesaid business of rocking her youngest child. The cradle-rockers had done hard duty for so many years, under the weight of so many children, on that flagstone floor, that they were worn near
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ly flat, in consequence of which a huge jerk accompanied each swing of the cot, flinging the baby from side to side like a weaver's shuttle, as Mrs Durbeyfield, excited by her song, trod the rocker with all the spring that was left in her after a long day's seething in the suds. Nick-knock, nick-knock, went the cradle; the candle-flame s tretched itself tall, and began jigging up and down; the water dribbled from the matron's elbows, and the song galloped on to the end of the verse, Mrs Durbeyfield regarding her daughter the while. Even now, when burdened with a young family, Joan Durbeyfield was a passionate lover of tune. No ditty floated into Blackm oor Vale from the outer world but Tess's mother caught up its notation in a week. There still faintly be aneed from the world but Tess's mother caught up its notation in a week. There still faintly be aneed from the world because in materials and the rockers in the part of the results and the part of the rockers.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ness, and even the prettiness, of her youth, rendering it probable that the personal charms which Tess could boast of were in main part her mother's gift, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  nd therefore unknightly, unhistorical. "I'll rock the cradle for 'ee, mother," said the daughter gently. "Or I'll take off my best frock and help you wring up? I thought you had finished long ago." Her mother bore Tess no ill-will for leaving the housework to her single-handed efforts for so long; indeed, Joan sel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         dom upbraided her thereon at any time, feeling but slightly the lack of Tess's assistance whilst her instinctive plan for relieving herself of her labours I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ay in postponing them. To-night, however, she was even in a blither mood than usual. There was a dreaminess, a pre-occupation, an exaltation, in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 e maternal look which the girl could not understand. "Well, I'm glad you've come," her mother said, as soon as the last note had passed out of her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         I want to go and fetch your father; but what's more'n that, I want to tell 'ee what have happened. Y'll be fess enough, my poppet, when th'st kn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ow!" (Mrs Durbeyfield habitually spoke the dialect; her daughter, who had passed the Sixth Standard in the National School under a London-
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               rained mistress, spoke two languages: the dialect at home, more or less; ordinary English abroad and to persons of quality.) "Since I've be en away?" Tess asked. "Ay!" "Had it anything to do with father's making such a mommet of himself in thik carriage this afternoon? Why did 'er? I felt inclined to sink into the ground with shame!" "That wer all a part of the larry! We've been found to be the greatest gentlook in the whole county--reaching all back long before Oliver Grumble's time--to the days of the Pagan Turks--with monuments, a
                   nd
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          vaults, and crests, and 'scutcheons, and the Lord knows what all. In Saint Charles's days we was made Knights o' the Royal
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   our real name being d'Urberville! ... Don't that make your bosom plim? 'Twas on this account that your father rode home vlee; not because he'd been drinking, as people supposed." "I'm glad of that. Will it do us any good, mother?" "O y
                 Oak,
                 in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    thoughted that great things may come o't. No doubt a mampus of volk of our own rank will be down here in thei
              es! 'Tis
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s as soon as 'tis known. Your father learnt it on his way hwome from Shaston, and he has been telling me th
             r carriage
           e whole pe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 digree of the matter." "Where is father now?" asked Tess suddenly. Her mother gave irrelevant informati
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        f answer: "He called to see the doctor to-day in Shaston. It is not consumption at all, it seems. It is fa
          on by way o
        t round his he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             art, 'a says. There, it is like this." Joan Durbeyfield, as she spoke, curved a sodden thumb and for
      efinger to the s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        hape of the letter C, and used the other forefinger as a pointer. "'At the present moment,' he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    er, 'your heart is enclosed all round there, and all round there; this space is still open
     says to your fath
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      as it do meet, so,"'--Mrs Durbeyfield closed her fingers into a circle complete--"off adder, Mr Durbeyfield,' 'a says. 'You mid last ten years; you mid go off in ten months
       'a says. 'As soon
  you will go like a sh
  or ten days." Tess I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ooked alarmed. Her father possibly to go behind the eternal cloud so soon, notwithst
anding this sudden gr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   eatness! "But where IS father?" she asked again. Her mother put on a deprecating look
  "Now don't you be bur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               sting out angry! The poor man--he felt so rafted after his uplifting by the pa'son's news--t
hat he went up to Rolliv
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           er's half an hour ago. He do want to get up his strength for his journey to-morrow with that
load of beehives, which
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        must be delivered, family or no. He'll have to start shortly after twelve to-night, as the distant
ce is so long." "Get up hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s strength!" said Tess impetuously, the tears welling to her eyes. "O my God! Ğo to a public-ho
use to get up his strength
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ! And you as well agreed as he, mother!" Her rebuke and her mood seemed to fill the whole room
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ok to the furniture, and candle, and children playing about, and to her mother's face. "No," said t agreed. I have been waiting for 'ee to bide and keep house while I go fetch him." "I'll go."
, and to impart a cowed lo
the latter touchily, "I be no
O no, Tess. You see, it wou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ld be no use." Tess did not expostulate. She knew what her mother's objection meant. Mrs
Durbeyfield's jacket and bo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       nnet were already hanging slily upon a chair by her side, in readiness for this contemplated
aunt, the reason for which th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    e matron deplored more than its necessity. "And take the Compleat Fortune-Teller to the outho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               wiping her hands, and donning the garments. The Compleat Fortune-Teller was an old thick volu
use," Joan continued, rapidly
me, which lay on a table at he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        r elbow, so worn by pocketing that the margins had reached the edge of the type. Tess took it up, an
d her mother started. This goin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                g to hunt up her shiftless husband at the inn was one of Mrs Durbeyfield's still extant enjoyments in the
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