

SYNOPSIS

Jude Fawley, an eleven years old boy, wants to follow his teacher Mr. Phillotson, who leaves Marygreen to Christminster to take a university degree and to be ordained. Jude is being raised by his aunt, whom he helps in her bakery. He studies very hard on his own to prepare for the move at the university in Christminster. He learns the trade of ecclesiastical stonework. He meets, desires, and marries Arabella Donn, who deceives him into marriage by making him think he has got her pregnant. They do not get along at all, and eventually Arabella leaves him to go with her family to Australia.

Though delayed, Jude thinks that he is ready to go to Christminster, partly not only because of his aspirations but also partly because of the presence there of his cousin Sue Bridehead. He meets and falls in love with her, though the fact of his being married causes him to feel guilty. Sue will not return his love, and when he realizes that Phillotson, under whom she is now teaching, is interested in Sue, Jude is in despair. This plus the fact that he has made no headway on getting into the university and realizes he never will cause him to give up that part on his dream and leave Christminster.

At Melchester he intends to pursue theological study and eventually enter the church at a lower level. Sue is there at a training college and is to marry Phillotson when she finished but she flees the school when punished for staying out all night with Jude. Jude is puzzled by Sue because her ideas are different from his and she will not return the feeling he has for her.

Shortly after he tells her he is married, she announces her marriage to Phillotson and asks Jude to give her away. He sees Arabella again, who is back from abroad, spends the night with her, and learns that she married in Australia. When he next encounters Sue, she tells him perhaps she should not have married, and Jude vows to go on seeing her in spite of his aim to discipline himself to get into the church.

When Jude's aunt dies, Sue comes to Marygreen for the funeral, and there she admits to him that she is unhappy and cannot give herself to Phillotson. Sue asks Phillotson to let her apart from him, preferably with Jude, but he only allows her to live apart in the house until an instance of her repugnance to him causes him to decide to let her go. Sue goes to Jude and they travel to Aldbrickham, but she will not yet allow intimacy. Phillotson is dismissed from his job at Shaston when Sue never returns, and after seeing her later not being able to get her back he decides to divorce her to give her complete freedom.

After living together a year at Aldbrickham Jude and Sue has still not consummated their relationship, and though they repeatedly plan to be married they never go through with it. When Arabella appears and seems to threaten her hold on Jude and does Sue allow intimacy. Arabella marries Cartlett, her Australian husband, again and sends to Jude her and Jude's son, Little Father Time.

When opinion turns against Jude and Sue and he loses a job because of their reputation, they decide to leave Aldbrickham. They now have two children of their own and another on the way. Having seen Sue in Kennetbridge, Arabella,

whose husband has died, revives her interest in Jude, and when she encounters Phillotson, who is now in Marygreen, she tells him he was wrong to let Sue go. Jude, now ill and not working regularly, wants to return to Christminster.

They return to Christminster, arriving on a holiday, and Jude is upset by his return to the city that has meant so much to him and gives a speech to a street crowd in an attempt to explain what his life has meant. Despairing talk by Sue triggers off a reaction in Little Father Time, and he hangs the other two children and himself. And the child Sue is carrying is born dead. Phillotson writes to ask Sue to come back to him, she agrees, thinking of it as a penance.

Sue returns to Phillotson at Marygreen and marries him again, though she still finds him repugnant. Arabella comes to Jude, and by persistent scheming she gets him to marry her once more. They get along about as before, and though ill Jude goes to see Sue and they declare their love for each other. As a further penance, Sue then gives herself to Phillotson. Jude learns of this, and on the holiday the following year, while Arabella is out enjoying the festivities, Jude dies. Only Arabella and Mrs. Edlin are present to stand watch by his coffin.