



She had hoped to be a teacher at the school, but the fates seemed to decide otherwise.

muiz

While Tess prepares to leave home to work for the d'Urbervilles, she reflects on the fact that fate has set her in a different direction than she originally envisioned. By this point in the story, readers know how Tess and her family rely on and believe in the idea of fate. In her guilt over the death of the horse, Tess doesn't take a stand against her parents' decision to have her leave home. Instead, she sees her circumstances as out of her control. While Tess is not responsible for everything that happens to her in the novel, she makes a crucial mistake here in not deciding on her own future.

As Tess's own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way: "It was to be."

The narrator frames the perspective of people from Tess's home village of Alec's sexual abuse of Tess, counterpointing the failure of accountability. As with everything in life, they would believe that fate governed Tess's situation and it could not have been avoided. Such dangerous thinking prevents people from taking agency over their own lives. However, this logic might also serve as a coping mechanism when one experiences painful or traumatic events. **Muiz**

"Why didn't you stay and love me when I—was sixteen; living with my little sisters and brothers, and you danced on the green? O, why didn't you, why didn't you!" she said, impetuously clasping her hands.

After Tess and Angel become engaged, she wrestles with whether or not to tell him about her past. She claims that she does not deserve him, and here she asks him why he did not ask her to dance when they saw each other years ago. She believes that if he had stayed and they had fallen in love, she never would have gone to work for the d'Urbervilles, and therefore would not have been raped by Alec and given birth to a child who died. In Tess's mind, one change of history could have changed her entire fate.

Phases of her childhood lurked in her aspect still. As she walked along to-day, for all her bouncing handsome womanliness, you could sometimes see her twelfth year in her cheeks, or her ninth sparkling from her eyes; and even her fifth would flit over the curves of her mouth now and then.

The narrator describes Tess's distinctions among the other women during the May-Day dance. Unlike the others described as middle-aged, elderly, or young, Tess embodies all ages at once. Readers learn of Tess's unique attractiveness from the beginning of the story: She paradoxically exemplifies a childlike innocence as a fully developed woman. This early description of Tess tells readers that she experiences time differently than others do.

She suddenly thought one afternoon, when looking in the glass at her fairness, that there was yet another date, of greater importance to her than those; that of her own death, when all these charms would have disappeared; a day which lay sly and unseen and among all the other days of the year, giving no sign or sound when she annually passed over it; but not the less surely there. When was it? Why did she not feel the chill of each yearly encounter with such a cold relation?

After Tess's baby dies, she begins noting important milestones of her life passing, such as the night Alec first raped her as well as the dates of her baby's birth and death. Here, she notes that the most important date in her life will actually be the day her life comes to an end. She wonders that she has no way of

predicting such an important date. This morbid way of thinking about time passing, waiting for death rather than celebrating life, colors the way Tess lives.



Tess was now carried along upon the wings of the hours, without the sense of a will. The word had been given; the number of the day written down. Her naturally bright intelligence had begun to admit the fatalistic convictions common to field-folk and those who associate more extensively with natural phenomena than with their fellow-creatures; and she accordingly drifted into that passive responsiveness to all things her lover suggested, characteristic of the frame of mind.

The narrator explains that after Tess and Angel set a date for their wedding, she releases control over her future and acquiesces to time pulling her forward. Like the way she waits for death to come, she accepts the marriage as inevitable. Even though she looks forward to the day, she approaches it passively. Just as she relies on fate to put her on the right path, she lets the wedding milestone govern all her decisions.

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