

Candidate 3

Dissertation

Study of Angela Carter's use of symbolism to explore gender roles in 'The Tiger's Bride', 'The Company of Wolves' and 'Wolf-Alice' from 'The Bloody Chamber'.

Tess = red, strawberries, blood, ribbon

red guides her through plot → structure

connected to downfall

birds → caged, kills pheasants, prophetic of death
symbolises that by hanging

Tess is trapped
by her past

White dress → pink after seduction

→ grey near death

Eustacia = black, queen of the night, evil, death

Tess' cages = Eustacia's hourglass & hourglass
(trapped)

Literary study - plan

Thematic significance of symbolism in any two novels.

Eustacia & Tess

Eustacia = fire → power "I have shown my power"

quenched by water provided by Clym

"flowers had died for want of water"

consumed by heath's waters

Susan Nunsuch melts wax effigy in fire

"to be loved to madness. Such was her

great desire" → passionate love, fiery

moon = witchcraft, conflicting desires with Clym

Eustacia is part of the heath & cannot

escape "if you fancied the colour of her soul you would imagine it to be the colour of fire"

(fire) burning passions extinguished by society (water)

<u>Intro</u>	TESS: 1891
<u>Art</u> - current situations	RobtN: 1878
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leads through plot - colours - downfalls foreshadowing - deaths 	set in 1840's
<u>para 1</u>	<u>para 4</u>
Tess = caged birds	foreshadowing
Eustacia = objects	- broken heads
} trapped	- melted effigy
<u>para 2</u>	
<u>colours</u>	<u>para 5</u>
- Tess white → tainted	- hanged like birds
- Eustacia black	black flag
- red ribbons	- consumed by
	heath
<u>para 3</u>	
- Structural effects	

part B

13. In the two novels, 'Tess of the d'urbervilles' and 'The Return of the Native', Thomas Hardy uses symbolism to contribute to the numerous themes discussed. He uses physical objects to symbolise entrapment, colours to symbolise characteristics and events to foreshadow and symbolise deaths. This technique is put to use most frequently in the creation and demise of the heroines Tess Durbeyfield and Eustacia Vye.

Towards the beginnings of the novels, Hardy uses objects to symbolise Tess and Eustacia's entrapment in their community. When Tess takes up work at Trantridge she is saddened by the caged birds Mrs Stoke d'urberville keeps. This is used to suggest that Tess is trapped in her own life. Due to her family poverty she is forced to earn a living and attempt

to claim kin - both things that her pride mean she is unenthused by. Eustacia is also trapped. This time in a land she despises and desperately wishes to flee. "Edon Heath" was her "Hades", her hell on earth, and her spyglass symbolises her desire to leave for far-off lands. Furthermore, she carries an hourglass to symbolise the passing of time she cannot stop. Eustacia wants to live in the moment and act on impulse however she is also very conscious of her life slipping away from her thus she is frustrated by her inability to leave. It is as though the heroines are controlled by an external force - something greater than themselves. Tess is forever trapped by her fate which she cannot escape, as represented by the caged birds, and Eustacia is

trapped by the humanlike heath. Which will not let her leave - the personified heath seems to have "hands pulling her into it", never letting her leave. This entrapment represents how Hardy believes women in Victorian society had little or no control of their own lives and fates.

They are controlled by a society they can never escape alone and their desires to be free are never granted by some greater force, like gods playing games with them. Only when both women die and the gods have "finished their sport" are they ~~too~~ truly free.

Hardy uses the symbolism of colours to portray the heroines' states of character. Tess is introduced as a "pure" young maid all dressed in white at the May Day dance. At this point

QUESTION	
	<p>Tess remains an innocent, untainted young girl with "handsome bouncing womanliness" and a "mobile pearly mouth".</p> <p>Later on, after Tess has been seduced by Alec and has given birth, the readers discover her working in a field, dressed in pink. White, when mixed with red which symbolises passion, romance and sex, makes pink. Therefore, arguably, Hardy dresses Tess in this colour to symbolise the fact that she has been tainted by her seduction - that she is no longer a virginal youth maid. Eustacia who "would laugh" if anyone suggested she wear bright colours, is quite the opposite of Tess and is always dressed in black. She is often compared to "tropical midnight" and regularly roams the heath after dark - hence why the chapter which</p>

describes her as titled "Queen of the Night". Eustacia is depressed by life and even suicidal by the end of the novel thus the fact that she wears black and has hair that "not even all the darkness of winter" would be black enough to form its shadow, associates her with death, ~~with~~ witchcraft and evil. Perhaps the most important symbol of her darkness occurs in the plump "black currant eyes" of the adder which kills Mrs Yeobright. Thus Eustacia, by being so strongly associated with black and death, is automatically presumed to be evil. Furthermore, Tess also becomes tainted by evil near the end of the novel when she is depicted in a grey-white dress. This symbolises that Tess, whom Hardy constantly refers to as "pure"

Now has a tint of blackness, therefore evil in her characteristics. This change in the colour of her attire is witnessed only moments before she commits the greatest sin - murder. Therefore it can be argued that Hardy very intentionally depicted his heroines in different colours depending on their state of characteristic from pure to tainted to evil. It is significant thematically as the colours contribute to the idea that the heroines, primarily Tess, cannot escape their past and fate. Tess, after the seduction and birth, will always be tainted by her moment of passion then her evil in committing murder. Eustacia will never wear anything but black and will never escape the heath, therefore her misery will ensue.

Hardy uses symbolism to foreshadow the deaths of Tess and Eustacia. As a fore discussed, Tess' entrapment in her past and fate is symbolised by the caged birds who, if left to nature, would be free to fly as they please. Tess breaks the law of society which had "no place in nature" thus, due to the intervention of mankind, Tess cannot escape her "wrongful" past. Tess is again compared to birds when she has to break the necks of some suffering pheasants injured by humans. This is prophetic of Tess' execution by hanging which also breaks her neck and ends the suffering she suffers due to the conventions of society. Eustacia, always likened to fire, also has her death foreshadowed when her wax effigy is

QUESTION	MARKS
13 Cont.	<p>Melted by superstitious Susan Nunsuch.</p> <p>This destruction of Eustacia occurs only moments before the real Eustacia dies. Thus the symbolic destruction of Eustacia suggests that death waits around the corner. Hardy also uses the symbolism of water to foreshadow the death of Eustacia. Clym provides water for fiery Eustacia and this, arguably, suggests that he is putting out her inner fire and life. Furthermore, Clym's flowers "died for want of water" just as Eustacia the burning ember dies after throwing herself into the "boiling hole" of the Weir. Thus Hardy uses the voodoo destruction of Eustacia and the prophetic water quenching near the beginning to foreshadow the death by drowning of Eustacia</p>

as well as the neck snapping of the wronged birds which represent Tess' execution.

Hardy seems to suggest, through his use of symbolism, that the heroines Tess and Eustacia, who represent both versions of Victorian women - the pure, the evil and the fallen woman in between - are trapped in their societies and trapped by their fates which lie in the hands of Gods. Tess cannot escape her sinful past of temptation just as Eustacia cannot escape the death or shrug off the rumours of her romantic involvement with Wildere. Hardy says that a tainted, no longer pure woman, is a ruined woman who can never escape her past mistakes. He criticises the view

that Victorian women were forced to live with their impulsive mistakes and conveys a heartbreaking sadness in the reality that a fallen woman has two options - accept *lex wronga* and sacrifice themselves, as Tess did, or kill themselves to avoid confrontation and punishment, as Eustacia did. Therefore, Hardy used objects and colours to symbolise how Victorian women were constrained and trapped by society and that their only escape route was through death. A woman in Victorian society was doomed if she did not abide by the social constructions of how to behave correctly. Only in death can complete freedom be granted.