

**THE WELL-BELOVED, A
SKETCH OF A
TEMPERAMENT, VOL. XIII**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649291458

The well-beloved, a sketch of a temperament, Vol. XIII by Thomas Hardy

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

THOMAS HARDY

**THE WELL-BELOVED, A
SKETCH OF A
TEMPERAMENT, VOL. XIII**



The Side of Singers

THE WELL-BELOVED

A SKETCH OF A TEMPERAMENT

BY

THOMAS HARDY

'One shape of many names.'—P. B. SHELLEY.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1922

COPYRIGHT

First Wessex Edition 1919

Reprinted 1922



956985

PR
4740
F20
v. 13

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THE peninsula carved by Time out of a single stone, whereon most of the following scenes are laid, has been for centuries immemorial the home of a curious and well-nigh distinct people, cherishing strange beliefs and singular customs, now for the most part obsolescent. Fancies, like certain soft-wooded plants which cannot bear the silent inland frosts, but thrive by the sea in the roughest of weather, seem to grow up naturally here, in particular amongst those natives who have no active concern in the labours of the 'Isle.' Hence it is a spot apt to generate a type of personage like the character imperfectly sketched in these pages—a native of natives—whom some may choose to call a fantast (if they honour him with their consideration so far), but whom others may see only as one that gave objective continuity and a name to a delicate dream which in a vaguer form is more or less common to all men, and is by no means new to Platonic philosophers.

To those who know the rocky coign of England here depicted—overlooking the great Channel Highway with all its suggestiveness, and standing out so far into mid-sea that touches of the Gulf Stream soften the air till February—it is matter of surprise that the

THE WELL-BELOVED

place has not been more frequently chosen as the retreat of artists and poets in search of inspiration—for at least a month or two in the year, the tempestuous rather than the fine seasons by preference. To be sure, one nook therein is the retreat, at their country's expense, of other geniuses from a distance; but their presence is hardly discoverable. Yet perhaps it is as well that the artistic visitors do not come, or no more would be heard of little freehold houses being bought and sold there for a couple of hundred pounds—built of solid stone, and dating from the sixteenth century and earlier, with mullions, copings, and corbels complete. These transactions, by the way, are carried out and covenanted, or were till lately, in the parish church, in the face of the congregation, such being the ancient custom of the Isle.

As for the story itself, it may be worth while to remark that, differing from all or most others of the series in that the interest aimed at is of an ideal or subjective nature, and frankly imaginative, verisimilitude in the sequence of events has been subordinated to the said aim.

The first publication of this tale in an independent form was in 1897; but it had appeared in the periodical press in 1892, under the title of 'The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved.' A few chapters of that experimental issue were rewritten for the present and final form of the narrative.

T. H.

August 1912.

CONTENTS

PART FIRST

A YOUNG MAN OF TWENTY

	PAGE
1. A SUPPOSITITIOUS PRESENTMENT OF HER	3
2. THE INCARNATION IS ASSUMED TO BE TRUE	8
3. THE APPOINTMENT	15
4. A LONELY PEDESTRIAN	18
5. A CHARGE	22
6. ON THE BRINK	29
7. HER EARLIER INCARNATIONS	33
8. 'TOO LIKE THE LIGHTNING'	40
9. FAMILIAR PHENOMENA IN THE DISTANCE	48

PART SECOND

A YOUNG MAN OF FORTY

1. THE OLD PHANTOM BECOMES DISTINCT	55
2. SHE DRAWS CLOSE AND SATISFIES	65
3. SHE BECOMES AN INACCESSIBLE GHOST	72
4. SHE THREATENS TO RESUME CORPOREAL SUBSTANCE	80
5. THE RESUMPTION TAKES PLACE	85
6. THE PAST SHINES IN THE PRESENT	89

THE WELL-BELOVED

	PAGE
7. THE NEW BECOMES ESTABLISHED	96
8. HIS OWN SOUL CONFRONTS HIM	103
9. JUXTAPOSITIONS	108
10. SHE FAILS TO VANISH STILL.	116
11. THE IMAGE PERSISTS	122
12. A GRILLE DESCENDS BETWEEN	128
13. SHE IS ENSHROUDED FROM SIGHT	138

PART THIRD

A YOUNG MAN OF SIXTY

1. SHE RETURNS FOR THE NEW SEASON	145
2. MISGIVINGS ON THE RE-EMBODIMENT	155
3. THE RENEWED IMAGE BURNS ITSELF IN	162
4. A DASH FOR THE LAST INCARNATION	170
5. ON THE VERGE OF POSSESSION	180
6. THE WELL-BELOVED IS—WHERE?	189
7. AN OLD TABERNACLE IN A NEW ASPECT	201
8. 'ALAS FOR THIS GREY SHADOW, ONCE A MAN!'.	207

Frontispiece.—THE ISLE OF SLINGERS.

MAP OF THE WESSEX OF THE NOVELS AND POEMS.—

End of Volume.