1.1. An Overview of Novel

The novel is the most popular literary form of the last 250 years. Novels are indeed ubiquitous and provide both intellectual stimulation and emotional satisfaction. The novel is also an especially important and influential form. To the extent, for example, that we see society as complex and interconnected or view human personality as the product of early childhood experience, we are—whether we realize it or not—registering the impact of such writers as Jane Austen and Charles Dickens, Henry James and Virginia Woolf.
This overview of novel is an introduction to the form of the novel and, in particular, to the English novel tradition. No prior knowledge of the texts or authors is assumed. The course has an unusually wide sweep, beginning in the 1740s and closing in the 1920s.

In distinguishing the novel from other forms, we might note two of its most striking features. The first is the novel’s preoccupation with social values and social distinctions. A great novel often seems to describe an entire society, creating a vivid image of the relationships among whole classes of people. It’s no wonder that novels are frequently described as the forerunners of modern ethnographies and social histories.

Equally important to our ongoing definition of the novel form is its interest in human psychology. Whereas plays and films are often forced to concentrate on externals—how a character moves or speaks—novels are free to probe the inner recesses of both mind and heart. By the end of a novel, we may have developed a deep sympathy and, perhaps, some kind of identification with the characters. In addition to examining human communities, then, the novel explores the nature of consciousness itself.

To define the novel in these ways is to recognize its relationship to larger social forces. The rise of the novel through the 18th and 19th centuries coincides with major historical developments—urbanization and democratization, industrialization and globalization, to name a few. These developments heighten conflicts between established elites and the growing middle class. They also raise urgent questions of personal identity, social responsibility, and moral virtue—the very sorts of questions that turn up in so many of the greatest English novels.

That the novel provided compelling responses to such questions is evidenced by its enormous and enduring popularity. No form could have established itself so quickly and so powerfully without addressing the deepest needs of its audience.

The English novel tradition is not the only one to concern itself with the relationship between society and the self. Such concerns can also be seen to dominate the French, Russian, and American traditions. Yet if the English tradition shares much with its Continental and American counterparts, it also possesses a number of distinguishing features. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the English tradition is its virtual obsession
with courtship, love, and marriage. Almost all of the greatest English novels of the 18th and 19th centuries are love stories, and some of the great Modernist novels of the early 20th century are dominated by issues of love and marriage.

Another distinguishing feature of the English tradition, especially as it unfolds in the 18th and 19th centuries, is its striking preference for comedic plots. Unlike the works of Flaubert, Tolstoy, or Melville, the overwhelming majority of English novels from this period end happily. By the close of a novel by Fielding or Austen or the early Dickens, each of the characters has found his or her proper place in society. These characters not only end up where they belong but also get what they deserve. Virtue is rewarded, and vice is punished—which is to say that a larger sense of poetic justice prevails.

As the 19th century moved on, English novelists began to experiment with other sorts of endings. By the time Thomas Hardy published Tess of the d’Urbervilles in 1891, the old conventions and forms had become increasingly untenable. For about a century, it had been possible for English writers to imagine a satisfying resolution to social conflicts. By the time we get to Hardy, after decades of industrialization and the reorganization of English society along modern lines, that possibility had vanished.

In tracing the emergence and consolidation of various approaches to stories and storytelling, we will, of course, fashion a story of our own. The last large movement in that story will focus on the great modern novelists of the 1910s and 1920s. Like their 18th- and 19th-century predecessors, these writers were responding to larger social forces, including those associated with the horrors of the First World War. Yet even as modern novelists create disturbing images of social fragmentation, they deepen our understanding of the individual personality, fashioning character studies of unsurpassed emotional complexity. Thus, one can see why the novel remains a form of unrivalled popularity and undeniable importance.

1.2 Introduction to the Author

Daniel Defoe was born in 1660 in London, England. He became a merchant and participated in several failing businesses, facing bankruptcy and aggressive creditors. He was also a prolific political pamphleteer which landed him in prison for slander. Late in life he
turned his pen to fiction and wrote Robinson Crusoe, one of the most widely read and influential novels of all time. Defoe died in 1731.

Early Life

Daniel Foe, born circa 1660, was the son of James Foe, a London butcher. Daniel later changed his name to Daniel Defoe, wanting to sound more gentlemanly.

Defoe graduated from an academy at Newington Green, run by the Reverend Charles Morton. Not long after, in 1683, he went into business, having given up an earlier intent on becoming a dissenting minister. He travelled often, selling such goods as wine and wool, but was rarely out of debt. He went bankrupt in 1692 (paying his debts for nearly a decade thereafter), and by 1703, decided to leave the business industry altogether.

Acclaimed Writer

Having always been interested in politics, Defoe published his first literary piece, a political pamphlet, in 1683. He continued to write political works, working as a journalist, until the early 1700s. Many of Defoe's works during this period targeted support for King William III, also known as "William Henry of Orange." Some of his most popular works include The True-Born Englishman, which shed light on racial prejudice in England following attacks on William for being a foreigner; and the Review, a periodical that was published from 1704 to 1713, during the reign of Queen Anne, King William II's successor. Political opponents of Defoe's repeatedly had him imprisoned for his writing in 1713.

Defoe took a new literary path in 1719, around the age of 59, when he published Robinson Crusoe, a fiction novel based on several short essays that he had composed over the years. A handful of novels followed soon after—often with rogues and criminals as lead characters—including Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack, Captain Singleton, Journal of the Plague Year and his last major fiction piece, Roxana (1724).

In the mid-1720s, Defoe returned to writing editorial pieces, focusing on such subjects as morality, politics and the breakdown of social order in England. Some of his later works include Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business (1725); the nonfiction essay "Conjugal Lewdness: or, Matrimonial Whoredom" (1727); and a follow-up piece to the
"Conjugal Lewdness" essay, entitled "A Treatise Concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed."

Death and Legacy

Defoe died on April 24, 1731. While little is known about Daniel Defoe's personal life—largely due to a lack of documentation—Defoe is remembered today as a prolific journalist and author, and has been lauded for his hundreds of fiction and nonfiction works, from political pamphlets to other journalistic pieces, to fantasy-filled novels. The characters that Defoe created in his fiction books have been brought to life countless times over the years, in editorial works, as well as stage and screen productions.

1.3 Introduction to the Novel

Considered one of the great English novels, Defoe's book follows Moll Flanders as she struggles to avoid the deadly poverty of 17th-century England. From a prison-birth to final prosperity, Moll reckons love, theft and prostitution in terms of profit and loss and emerges as an extraordinary character. This vivid saga of an irresistible and notorious heroine - her high misdemeanours and delinquencies, her varied careers as a prostitute, a charming and faithful wife, a thief, and a convict - endures today as one of the liveliest, most candid records of a woman's progress through the hypercritical labyrinth of society ever recorded.

Moll Flanders, published in 1722, was one of the earliest English novels (the earliest is probably Aphra Behn's Oroonoko, published in 1688). Like many early novels, it is told in the first person as a narrative, and is presented as a truthful account, since at that time the idea of a long, realistic work of fiction was still new. It is not only an extremely entertaining and action-packed story, but also gives a valuable and lively picture of 17th century society. Although Moll is an exceptional character because of her ingenuity and extraordinary life, the problems that Moll faces are firmly rooted in her society.

As the daughter of a transported convict, she begins life at a great disadvantage: she lacks the support system of family and friends which all children need, and which was particularly necessary for women, since their access to employment was limited. Without any system to protect them, the children of convicts are thrown into the world with no
training in any trade and no prospects other than starvation or the same life of crime that ended so badly for their parents. Moll herself was very lucky to be taken in: the parish (the area served by one church) were under no obligation to take care of penniless children who were not born there, or had no other particular claim to charity: "I was not a parish charge upon this or that part of the town by law."

When Moll is a young girl, she is forced to go into service as a maid because she would not be able to make a living sewing and spinning. Maids were paid very little, but at least they were fed and clothed. The fact that women were not able to support themselves legally (the assumption being that their husbands or father would contribute to their support from their higher wages) always underlies Moll’s decisions: she really needs to get married. When she is widowed at the age of 48, she is too old to hope to marry again, and has little choice but to embark on a life of crime.

In the 17th century, crime (at least thievery) really paid, because labour was very cheap and things were very expensive. Before the era of industrialization, the production of objects took an immense amount of labour: a piece of cloth could be the result of many hours of work, though stealing it might only take a minute. Even though labour was very cheap, the sheer amount of it which was required to make an object added up to make theft a profitable line of business. For example, the governess bought a lady’s watch that Moll stole for 20 guineas, presumably less than it was worth, since it was stolen; 20 guineas would have supported one of Moll’s children for 4 years. It would be by no means easy for Moll to make a living doing honest work, but she grows rich rapidly as a pickpocket. The emphasis on cloth underscores the fact that the production of cloth was a very important part of the 17th and 18th century English economy.

Theft was not the only illegal occupation open to women. In the 17th and 18th centuries, prostitution was widespread in London. This was probably the result of a social system in which poor women could hardly make an honest living, and completely lost their reputations if they were seduced, thus making it almost impossible to get an honest job. A "fallen woman" had little choice but to remain on the ground. Also, men could not engage in extramarital sex with respectable women, and commonly married late.
Theft and prostitution were not without their risks, however: a thief could be transported or hanged for stealing a watch or a length of cloth. At the very least, they could expect to spend several weeks in Newgate Prison, a lively but hellish place.

Transportation to Virginia was considered a terrible punishment, even though transported convicts could eventually hope to be freed and settle their own land. The difference between colonial America as viewed by Americans, and as viewed by the colonizing English, is worth noticing. We are in the 17th century, long before any breath of revolution: Virginia is simply a place where good money can be made raising tobacco.

Prostitutes could not defend themselves well from infection or pregnancy. Syphilis was probably introduced into Europe from the Americas, in exchange for small pox and a host of other diseases. It appeared in Naples in 1493, and ravaged its way through Europe, known generally as the French Pox, except in France where it was called the Naples Disease (le mal de Naples). It was treated in a variety of harmful and ineffective ways, including the use of mercury, a dangerous poison. Some people argued that it could not be sexually transmitted because so many monks had it! But by the time of Moll Flanders, there was apparently little doubt that it was a venereal disease. It appears commonly in 18th century engravings as a punishment suffered by lustful sinners, weakening aristocratic families when infected children were born. Pregnant prostitutes might be chased from parish to parish since the authorities would not want to have to take charge of the unwanted infant. They could take refuge in houses like that of Moll’s governess, who had presumably bribed the parish so they wouldn’t bother her. Unwanted children could be given to country families to be taken care of, along with a sum of money. However these children were often neglected, and in any case rates of child mortality were very high. Many of Moll’s many children quietly disappear, presumably fallen prey to illness. Perhaps because of the high rates of child mortality, some mothers guarded against becoming too attached to their children. Other familial ties were less strong also: people married for money rather than for love.

Despite all these difficulties and dangers, the picture Defoe gives of 17th century England is not altogether black. Its inhabitants seem to enjoy themselves quite a bit whenever they have a little money. Although the gaiety is rather frenetic, and pleasure is rarely without attendant dangers, there seems to be no doubt in Moll’s mind that life is well
worth having. Perhaps the spice of danger is what gives Moll Flanders, and the society it represents, such a vivid and intensely alive quality.

2. Major Themes

Greed

The major recurrent theme in the novel is that of greed — a greed which leads Moll to prostitution, thievery, and moral disintegration. Moll sees people as commodities — her relationships with them as business transactions. Although she is in love with the eldest brother, she has few qualms about taking money from him. She then accepts a bribe from him to marry his brother Robin. She easily consigns her children to the care of their grandparents and considers herself lucky. "My two children were, indeed, taken happily off of my hands by my husband's father and mother, . . ." She chooses husbands on the basis of their affluence or social class. When the first one dies she muses, "I had preserved the elder brother's bonds to me to pay me £500, which he offered me for my consent to marry his brother; and this, with what I saved of the money he formerly gave me and about as much more by my husband, left me a widow with about £1200 in my pocket." She takes money for prostitution. She steals from children and from people in distress. And only when she is too old to do otherwise does she repent.

It appears that Defoe consciously manipulates the reader to view Moll as a covetous individual. The terms he uses in the novel are very often economic, with direct recordings of Moll’s business and criminal transactions. In journalistic fashion, Defoe itemizes the booty of Moll’s first criminal venture: " . . . I found there was a suit of childbed-linen in it, very good and almost new, the lace very fine; there was a silvery porringer of a pint, a small silver mug and six spoons, with some other linen, a good smock, and three silk handkerchiefs, and in the mug, in a paper, 18s.6d, in money."

In fact, at nearly any point in the book, the reader is able to approximate what is Moll’s economic standing. Unfortunately, our knowledge of her inner life suffers. Kenneth Rexroth notes, "Moll Flanders has no interior life at all, and the material facts with which her character is constructed do not increase her individuality. They are chosen as facets of her typicality."
Defoe, in the Preface, insists that he is writing the book as a moral lesson to "give the history of a moral life repented...." But Moll seems to flourish in her life of crime and actually the lesson we learn is that to survive one must fight with the weapons one has. Defoe was writing in a new, capitalistically oriented England. To have played the genteel lady would have meant a life of poverty for Moll. This was a decision which the social environment of the day forced on many people; Moll Flanders can be considered a good example of the criminal of that time who is forced into a life of crime by social conditions which leave few other alternatives. We cannot, thus, consider them too harshly for they are protagonists in the constant battle for survival which society imposes on the poor.

Vanity

An important theme of Moll Flanders is that vanity is the force that prevails over virtue. It is vanity that determines Moll’s behaviour in the first part of the book. Moll’s vanity facilitates her seduction by the elder brother. It is also a strong motif which runs through Moll’s five marriages and numerous lovers. It is a factor which precipitates her decision to steal rather than remain poor and exist only by the honest labour of her needle. In fact all her actions are in some way linked to her vanity.

Repentance

The theme of repentance is a recurring one in Moll Flanders. She constantly entertains the desire to repent. Lacking true moral persuasion these repentances are, until the end, half-hearted and insincere. She lacks moral strength; her moral fibre is quickly overcome on several occasions by the slightest pressures or inducements. Her will at times seems to be completely enslaved. Her first repentance comes when Robin asks her to marry him: "I was now in a dreadful condition indeed, and now I repented heartily my easiness with the eldest brother; not from any reflection of conscience, for I was a stranger to those things, but I could not think of being a whore to one brother and a wife to the other."

Actually, Moll's repentance seems more like regret for having underestimated her chances for a better arrangement.

It is evident as the book unfolds that Moll has not been "led astray." She has very shrewdly calculated the course of her life. Throughout the story Moll considers or reflects
on the path her life is taking. The occasion of Robin's marriage proposal causes Moll to say to the elder brother, "Upon serious consideration, for indeed now I began to consider things very seriously, and never till now I resolved to tell him of it." Again Moll considers what to do when she realizes she is not as bad as the people living in the Mint. She says, "I was not wicked enough for such fellows as these yet. On the contrary, I began to consider here very seriously what I had to do; how things stood with me, and what course I ought to take."

When the gentleman at Bath rejects any further contact with Moll, she reports "I cast about innumerable ways for my future state of life, and began to consider very seriously what I should do, but nothing offered."

After her Lancashire husband leaves and Moll is back in London alone she says that "here being perfectly alone, I had leisure to sit down and reflect seriously upon the last seven months' ramble I had made, . . ." After she is delivered of another baby and receives a letter from her London bank clerk saying he wants to see her again Moll is "exceedingly surprised at the news, and began now seriously to reflect on my present circumstances, . . ." She appears to reproach herself just before she marries him: "Then it occurred to me, 'What an abominable creature am I! and how is this innocent gentleman going to be abused by me!' How little does he think, that having divorced a whore, he is throwing himself into the arms of another!"

Nevertheless, she marries him and after his death begins her criminal career. As can be noted, many of her partial repentances dissipate into further scheming. Ironically Moll's energies are too consumed in manoeuvring herself out of a bad situation to worry seriously about saving her soul.

When Moll is first committed to Newgate she makes the following statement: "Then I repented heartily of all my life past, but that repentance yielded me no satisfaction, no peace, no, not in the least, because, as I said to myself, it was repenting after the power of further sinning was taken away. I seemed not to mourn that I had committed such crimes, and for the fact, as it was an offense against God and my neighbour, but that I was to be punished for it. I was penitent, as I thought, not that I had sinned, but that I was to suffer and this took away all the comforts of my repentance in my own thoughts."
This passage clearly shows another shallow repentance by Moll. She fears not for her spiritual state but for her physical being.

Even during her stay in Newgate, Moll does not appear to really repent until quite some time after her talk with the pastor. And perhaps even then Moll is really worried about being hanged. The very fact that she insists on securing her inheritance shows how the possession of earthly goods has much more meaning to Moll than the acquisition of spiritual well-being. In fact, we see a meaningful contrast between Moll's character and that of the governess, a former crook who seemingly has truly repented.

Note that the tears Moll weeps from time to time are merely an emotional release rather than a sign of true repentance, for even after the shedding her heart quickly hardens against her victims and she continues their victimization. This is shown, for example, when she steals the bundle from the burning house. Whatever regret Moll has is weak indeed: "with all my sense of its being cruel and inhuman, I could never find in my heart to make any restitution."

**Hardening**

The question as to whether Moll ever really becomes a hardened criminal is an interesting one. We have seen that, motivated by greed, she has been able to commit the crassest of criminal acts. But Defoe still reveals to us sentimental aspects of Moll's personality that we cannot ignore. To say that she is a thief with a soul is to credit her with more depth than Defoe really shows us. We never really see Moll's inner life that completely. Yet it is evident that Defoe meant us to sympathize with Moll; and we are able to sympathize with her because he portrays her as a very likeable woman, who, despite her thieving and prostitution, is well-liked by her contemporaries, and seems to like them as well.

Defoe uses irony ingeniously in the passages telling us of Moll's thoughts during her various crimes. He often portrays her as moralistic; for example, when she steals the necklace from the child in Aldersgate Street, she feels she is actually doing the child a favour: "The thought of this booty put out all the thoughts of the first, and the reflections I had made wore quickly off; poverty, as I have said, hardened my heart, and my own
necessities made me regardless of anything. The last affair left no great concern upon me, for as I did the poor child no harm, I only said to myself, I had given the parents a reproof for their negligence in leaving the poor little lamb to come home by itself, and it would teach them to take more care of it another time." Defoe didn’t want us to condone the action and condemn the parents. Through ironic humour he gives us insight into Moll's attempts to rationalize her felonies.

Frequently Moll feels remorse — but it is a hollow remorse, for it neither leads her to curtail the particular crime she is bemoaning, nor does it prompt her to offer restitution. This is shown in her robbery of a woman whose house is on fire: "This was the greatest and the worst prize that ever I was concerned in; for indeed, though, as I have said above, I was hardened now beyond the power of all reflection in other cases, yet it really touched me to the very soul when I looked into this treasure, to think of the poor disconsolate gentlewoman who had lost so much by the fire. . . ."

Moll is shown as most compassionate in her relationships with her various lovers and husbands. She seems to truly love the elder brother. And when she marries his brother Robin, poor Robin never learns of the affair. Her second spouse is a rake, but she treats him well and helps him escape from his creditors. She nurses her men when they are sick and loves them when they are well. Her relationship with Jemmy seems to be full of love and compassion. Moll is in Newgate, under sentence of death, but when she learns Jemmy is there too her remorse and sense of guilt are genuine. "I was overwhelmed with grief for him; my own case gave me no disturbance compared to this, and I loaded myself with reproaches on his account." Moll is an ambivalent character. She is a criminal — but a sympathetic one. Her life of crime is constantly coloured by her good humour, compassion and sense of loyalty.

3. Chapter Analysis

3.1 Summary and Analysis of Section 1 (Moll's childhood)

Summary: Section 1

Moll Flanders (which is not her true name, she tells us) is born in Newgate prison to a mother who is a convicted felon. Her mother had "pleaded her Belly," and so was granted
a reprieve until her child was born. When Moll is six months old, her mother is transported to America as punishment for her crime, leaving her infant daughter "a poor desolate Girl without Friends, without Clothes, without Help or Helper in the World." Moll's earliest childhood memory is of wandering with a band of gypsies at the age of three. She separates herself from the gypsies in Colchester, where she is taken up by the town magistrates as a charity case. They place her with a nurse, a local woman who "got a little Livelihood by taking such as I was suppos'd to be, and keeping them with all Necessaries, till they were at a certain Age, in which it might be suppos'd they might go to Service, or get their own Bread." This honest and kind woman provides Moll with a fairly good upbringing and gives her a rudimentary education.

When Moll reaches the age (eight years) at which she is supposed to seek employment as a servant, she protests tearfully that she would rather stay with her current mistress. She could earn her keep doing needlework, she entreats, explaining (without really knowing what the word means) that she wants to be "a gentlewoman." The childish innocence of this unreasonable ambition amuses her mistress and neighbours to no end, and she actually becomes something of a local celebrity. She is allowed to continue in her current situation, and several rich ladies begin to act as her benefactors, occasionally giving her money and clothes. When the nurse dies, Moll (now fourteen years old) goes to live with one of these prominent families. She continues her education alongside the daughters of this family, learning to sing, dance, and speak French.

Analysis

The narrative begins with the disclosure that "Moll Flanders" is not the heroine's true name, but rather an alias given her by "some of my worst Comrades" in crime. Defoe thus reveals from the novel's first lines that Moll, having been born in prison as the daughter of a convicted felon, will eventually continue in that tradition. We also glimpse in this opening paragraph the severity of the justice system of the time. Defoe's century saw an increase in crime, and also in the number of crimes that were punishable by death. Moll's mother receives her sentence--transportation to the American colonies--as a "Favour"; the expected punishment would have been execution.
Defoe takes great pains to establish the authenticity of his book, which, though fictional, is almost journalistic in its unflinching realism and in its wealth of mundane detail. By presenting the story as the autobiographical account of a first-person narrator, Defoe reinforces that sense of immediacy. Almost everything that happens in the book is told out of Moll's direct experience. When this is not the case, Defoe is careful to give the source of Moll's indirect knowledge, as when she sketches the first few years of life based on "hear say."

Moll begins as an orphan, and her life will in fact be defined, from start to finish, as one of profound isolation. Moll's early abandonment is but the first in a long line of such desertions, and the novel will continue divesting Moll of all her friends and relations at a rapid rate. The basic aloneness of human beings was a favourite theme for Defoe. Although Moll exists in the midst of a bustling and crowded urban world (rather than being stranded on an island like Robinson Crusoe), she forges almost no enduring loyalties or friendships. On the rare occasions when she does find fellowship, Defoe does not allow Moll's interpersonal relations to become the focus of the novel.

Moll's solitary and unpropitious start in life also initiates her remarkable self-sufficiency. That she divides herself from the band of gypsies at the age of three is an index of the power this heroine will have to steer and direct her own life. While Moll is often at the mercy of circumstances, her lack of affiliation also gives her a kind of freedom and it forces her to rely on her own judgment and cunning to make her way in the world. Her story will be a quest for survival.

3.2 Summary and Analysis of Section 2 (Moll's first lover and first marriage)

Summary: Section 2

Moll is growing into a very beautiful young woman, and she becomes vain of her appearance. The two sons of her adopted family begin to take notice of Moll (who at this time is known as "Mrs. Betty"). The eldest son is of a worldly and dissolute character. He flatters and flirts with Moll and eventually seduces her—which, as Moll confesses, was actually not all that difficult a task. They become regular lovers, and he gives her quite a bit of money in exchange for her sexual favours. She believes, however, that he means to marry
her, and so she is bewildered when the younger brother, Robert (also called "Robin"), makes her a marriage proposal as well. Robert, captivated by Moll's beauty, wants to wed her immediately and without regard for the certain disapproval of his family and friends. Because he makes no secret of his desires, his mother and sisters start to treat Moll gruffly and even begin to talk of turning her out of the house.

Moll consults with the elder brother about how to handle the situation. Much to her surprise, her current lover encourages her to accept Robert's offer. He obviously sees this marriage as an easy way of extricating himself from a potentially embarrassing liaison. Moll, however, is aghast at this suggestion; she feels herself bonded to the elder brother indissolubly, and she admonishes him "to remember the long Discourse you have had with me, and the many Hours pains you have taken to persuade me to believe myself an honest Woman, that I was your Wife intentionally, though not in the eye of the World, and that it was as effectual a Marriage that had pass'd between us as if we had been publicly Wedded by the Parson of the Parish." She realizes that if she marries the younger brother, she will have been nothing but a prostitute to the elder: "If I have been persuaded to believe that I am really, and in the Essence of the Thing your Wife, shall I now give the Lye to all those Arguments, and call myself your Whore, or Mistress, which is the same thing?"

The shock of this whole series of developments throws Moll into a fever, from which she takes five weeks to recover. The family's concern over their younger son's attachment to Moll becomes increasingly obvious during this period, and they interrogate her repeatedly about his advances and her own intentions. She first claims that Robert is not serious, and then declares that she would never marry him against the family's wishes. Robert presses his family for their consent, believing that then Moll will marry him. His older brother aids him in this campaign, urging both Moll and his mother to agree to the marriage. He tries to work on Moll without having to violate his promises explicitly, but finally he makes her understand that he will have nothing more to do with her, whether she marries Robert or not. She begins to see the true contours of the situation, and when the mother eventually consents, she agrees to marry Robert. The older brother arranges things so that Robert is in too much of "a Fuddle" on his wedding night to know that his bride is not a virgin. Moll has no love for Robert and continues to cherish a flame for her first lover.
Her husband dies after five years, and their two children are sent to live with Robert's parents.

Analysis

The situation in which Moll eventually finds herself—in love with one brother but compelled to marry the other—is the stuff of tragedy. Defoe gives the plot a fairly comic treatment, however, utilizing the episode mainly to demonstrate Moll's early naïveté and to show her perseverance and her quickness to learn from her experiences. Moll singles out the growth of her youthful vanity as marking a turning point in her life. Up to this point, Moll has had nothing to reproach herself with except a childish ignorance. "Thus far I have had a smooth Story to tell of myself, and in all this Part of my Life, I not only had the Reputation of living in a very good Family,...but I had the Character too of a very sober, modest, and virtuous young Woman, and such I had always been; neither had I yet any occasion to think of anything else, or to know what a Temptation to Wickedness meant." Yet the narrator backs off of the sermon on the evils of vanity, or at least she recasts those evils in material, not spiritual terms. The lesson she draws is one of expediency rather than of piety. When she warns her younger readers "to Guard themselves against the Mischief which attend an early Knowledge of their own Beauty," the mischief to which she refers is not immoral sexual behavior but rather the credulousness that will allow a woman to be the dupe of a more sophisticated man. She admonishes herself for her lack of attention to practical matters—not for the fact that she yielded to temptation, but for the fact that she failed to secure her own interests as she might have.

The scene of Moll's seduction is one of the book's raciest episodes. As the heroine becomes more sexually experienced, the narrator ceases to present the sexual facts of her story with the same romance and titillation. Desire and emotion are in fact conspicuously minimized in this novel, which distills human existence to its economic and materialistic bottom line. The emotional responses of the character Moll contrast markedly here with the wizened perspective of the septuagenarian who narrates the story. As Moll grows into her adult self, this divided perspective closes somewhat: she matures into a pattern in which her first reactions to events, which may be emotional or impetuous initially, quickly resolve into stoic and pragmatic courses of action.
Yet the gap between the narrator and the protagonist remains important throughout, serving to reinforce the conditional morality that the book so often propounds. Life decisions in Defoe's novel cannot be divorced from the circumstances under which they are made. The narrator's most frequent strategy in commenting on her own life is to imagine herself into her former situation, rather than to impose the wisdom of her years on her earlier experience. Moll's ability to perform this imaginative displacement is part of what enables her to tell her story with such tenderness of sympathy and understanding. The narrator is never coy with her reader, which is part of her appeal. She presents her own responses and motivations frankly and unabashedly, as when she confesses that she was too pleased with her first lover's attentions to resist him. The fact that we get no real external perspective on Moll's life, however, limits the capacity of the novel to pronounce any stern judgment or to come to an objective moral resolution, and many readers find it difficult to discern even the author's own real opinion of Moll's character.

3.3 Summary and Analysis of Section 3 (Moll marries the draper, and then her half-brother)

Summary: Section 3

Moll suddenly finds herself a wealthy widow (she has saved 1200 pounds of the money her first lover gave her), alone in London, and "still Young and Handsome." She is courted by several men before she marries a draper, a tradesman who strikes her as being "something of a Gentleman too." His extravagant expenditures soon cast them into poverty, however. He is arrested and then escapes from prison and flees to France. This leaves Moll in a strange predicament: "I found I could hardly muster up 500 l. and my condition was very odd, for tho' I had no Child,...yet I was a Widow bewitched, I had a Husband, and no Husband, and I could not pretend to Marry again, tho' I knew well enough my Husband would never see England anymore." She decides, accordingly, to dress as a widow and begin a new life under the assumed name "Mrs. Flanders." She soon finds herself among a miserable, "wicked" company of men and does not feel inclined to return any of their attentions.

Moll reflects on the extreme disadvantage women are at in the marriage market. Her own situation is such that it "made the offer of a good Husband the most necessary
Thing in the World to me," but the people with whom she is acquainted all know that she has no fortune, a handicap over which "Being well Bred, Handsome, Witty, Modest and agreeable" cannot prevail. Moll gets help from an acquaintance, who carries her into the country where, together, they cultivate the public misinformation that Moll has a fortune of 1500 pounds. Moll then finds herself courted by a plantation owner and, during a flirtatious game, tricks him into saying that he would marry her even if she were penniless. Once they are married, he bears the news that she is actually poor with relative equanimity, stating "that indeed he thought it had been more, but that if it had been less he did not repent his bargain; only that he should not be able to maintain me so well as he intended." In light of their reduced prospects, he expresses the wish to move to Virginia, where his plantations are, and where his mother and sister live. Moll agrees.

The whole family is getting along well in America, and Moll "thought myself the happiest creature alive; when an odd and surprising Event put an end to all that Felicity in a moment, and rendered my Condition the most uncomfortable, if not the most miserable, in the World." While her new mother-in-law is telling some stories, Moll suddenly realizes that the woman is actually her own mother by birth, and that she has inadvertently married her half-brother. Appalled in this moment of recognition, she hesitates to reveal her discovery to her husband; she knows only that she cannot continue in the marriage. She insists on being allowed to return to England--without giving a real reason--and her husband refuses. They quarrel regularly and begin to be on very bad terms. Finally Moll confides in her mother-in-law/mother, who recommends that she "bury the whole thing entirely" and continue to live as before. She also promises to provide for Moll in her will. Moll is too disgusted at the thought of "lying with my own brother" even to consider this option. She finally tells her husband/brother the whole story, and the news throws him "into a long lingering Consumption." Moll once again demands to go to England, and he is in no condition to resist. After eight years in America she sails for home, and she and her husband consider their marriage effectively dissolved.

Analysis

The disappearance of Moll's second husband to France is the first of several occasions when Moll will find herself with "a Husband, and no Husband." Her solution to
this problem is to close the door on her past and assume a new identity. She embraces the same strategy for dealing with her incestuous marriage, and she will continue the practice throughout her life, becoming increasingly adept at moulding her disguises and personas to her own advantage.

Defoe depicts, through his heroine, the harsh realities of the marriage market. He himself was outspoken in his criticism of the practice of marrying without love, calling such alliances "legalized prostitution." This candid and unsentimental presentation of the economic motives governing marriage casts Moll's frankness about her own motivations in a new light. If we were inclined to see her avowed acquisitiveness as overly mercenary, we are now forced to acknowledge, at the very least, that she is a creature of her world.

Moll's moral disgust at the revelation that she has been living with her brother as a husband is somewhat surprising. It is so for given the equanimity and lack of emotion with which she has met the other tragedies that have befallen her. This is one of the rare cases when a moral principle will outweigh every other consideration for Moll. Even in this case, however, her initial repulsion is quickly channelled into a more pragmatic vein as she calmly considers what action she ought to take. The news causes Moll's brother/husband to suffer a breakdown, a fact which reinforces, by contrast, Moll's personal resourcefulness and resiliency.

This episode serves as a link between the beginning of the novel and the end: it shows Moll rediscovering her mother and her own origins and also paves the way for her return to America and her final attainment of prosperity.

3.4 Summary and Analysis of Section 4 (Moll has an affair with a married man)

Summary: Section 4

Moll arrives safely in London but finds that some of her possessions have been destroyed in transit. With those goods, she says, "I might have married again tolerably well; but as it was I was reduc'd to between two or three hundred pounds in the whole... [and] entirely without Friends." She sets up residence at Bath, which turns out to be a place "where Men find a Mistress sometimes, but very rarely look for a Wife." She does, however, become the platonic companion of a Gentleman whose company she particularly enjoys. He
turns out to be a fairly wealthy man, and Moll finds out that he is in fact married, but that his wife has gone mad.

This gentleman-friend inquires into Moll’s financial situation, offering to assist her if she is in need. Moll hesitates at first to accept any money from him despite the urging of her landlady, who tells Moll that she "ought to expect some Gratification from him for [her] company." Finally she does take his money. He invites her to move to London with him, but then he falls ill. She nurses him for five weeks, during which time their familiarity increases. Finally, after a journey to Bristol in which they are forced to sleep in the same room, their reserve falls away and they become lovers. "Thus the Government of our Virtue was broken and I exchang’d the Place of Friend for that unmusical harsh-sounding Title of Whore."

Moll has several children by this man, and he dutifully supports both her and them. "Now I was indeed at the height of what I might call my prosperity," Moll relates, "and I wanted nothing but to be a Wife, which however could not be in this Case." She saves her money, knowing that her prosperous situation may not continue indefinitely. Because of the imperative to secrecy, Moll lives a fairly solitary life except for the company of her lover: "I kept no Company but in the Family where I Lodg’d,...so that when he was absent I visited no Body, nor did he ever find me out of my Chamber or Parlour whenever he came down; if I went anywhere to take the Air it was always with him." After six years "in this happy but unhappy Condition," Moll’s lover falls into a "Distemper." For months she has little news of him. Finally he explains that he has had a religious experience in which, finding himself "at the very brink of Eternity," he repented of his sinful and adulterous conduct. Giving her a final sum of money, he resolves to see her no more. Moll plays on his guilt and pity to extract some further payments from him, on the agreement that he will then be released from all further obligations.

Analysis

Moll’s relationship with this "Gentleman" is governed by a conflict: she seems reluctant to become his mistress, but also at some level desires that outcome. She confesses "that from the first hour I began to converse with him, I resolv’d to let him lye with me if he offer’d it; but it was because I wanted his help and assistance, and I knew no other way of securing him than that." The underlying question for Moll is one of security, not of love or
even desire. Moll has learned that being a wife is more secure than being a mistress, and she knows that there is no chance of marrying this man as long as his mad wife is still living. Yet his generosity and loyalty make him a likely candidate for an affair, and this assessment is confirmed when he promises to take care of her and her children. For the six years that they are together, Moll enjoys financial stability, if not social comfort. She is wise enough, however, to save money while she is enjoying such prosperity, "knowing well enough that such things as these do not always continue, that Men that keep mistresses often change them, grow weary of them or Jealous of them, or something or other happens to make them withdraw their Bounty." Moll's concerns—and her financial prudence—are not unfounded: after finding himself on the brink of death, her lover repents of his adultery and deserts Moll. Still, the relationship is a relative success, especially since marriage for Moll has been equally uncertain.

Interestingly, the moral valence of the situation is not in the fact of committing adultery, but rather in having the common sense to secure oneself against some change of circumstances; the woman who does not protect herself against that possibility is "justly" ruined. Moll admits to having some "secret Reproaches of my own Conscience for the Life I led," but then elaborates them in financial terms: "even in the greatest height of the Satisfaction I ever took, yet I had the terrible prospect of Poverty and starving which lay behind me." Moll has learned to look for openings that might bring her financial gain, and she is not shy to capitalize on them when she finds them.

3.5 Summary and Analysis of Section 5 (The banker, and Moll's Lancashire husband)

Summary: Section 5

"I was now a single Person again," Moll remembers, "loose'd from all the Obligations either of Wedlock or Mistresship in the World." She has 450 pounds to her name, but at forty-two years old she is aware that her assets of personal beauty are in decline. She knows what she wants ("to be placed in a settled State of living") but says she does not know how to attain that end. What she really means is that no easy opportunity presents itself, and so she sets out to create an opportunity. Moll again allows people to think she is richer than she is. She meets and befriends a woman who carries herself like a gentlewoman and who encourages Moll to move to the North Country, where the cost of living is lower and where,
she hints, there are plenty of rich husbands to be found. Moll decides to take her up on this offer, except that she needs someone to look after her finances in London. She is referred to a banker, who offers to handle her money for her and then offers to marry her in the bargain. He is married already, as it turns out, but his wife has been cheating on him. He is wealthy and congenial, and Moll agrees to consider his proposal if and when he can obtain a legal divorce. In the meantime, she still means to travel north, stating, "I made no scruple in my Thoughts of quitting my honest Citizen, who I was not so much in love with, as not to leave him for a Richer."

In Lancashire, Moll is introduced to Jemy, who poses as her friend's brother and who supposedly has a great estate in Ireland. He understands from his "sister" (who is actually his accomplice) that Moll has a fortune. He courts her in grand style, and at great personal expense. Not until they have been married for a month does Moll's actual poverty come to light. Jemy then is forced to reveal his own fraudulence. He has no Irish estate; he has in fact wasted his last pennies trying to impress Moll and was counting on her supposed fortune to restore himself to solvency. "We are married here upon the foot of a double Fraud," Moll tells him; "you are undone by the Disappointment it seems, and if I had had a Fortune I had been cheated too, for you say you have nothing." They discuss various get-rich-quick schemes to alleviate their distress, but Moll wakes up the next morning to find her husband gone. She is quite forlorn: "Nothing that ever befel me in my Life sunk so deep into my Heart as this Farewel." He soon returns, but Moll cannot persuade him to stay. He heads off to try his luck in Ireland, in spite of all her protestations. If he meets with any success there, he tells her, he'll look her up.

Analysis

We see in Moll's calculating treatment of the banker how much she has learned since her handling of the two brothers at the time of her first seduction. With respect to that affair, she sees retrospectively that "if I had known his Thoughts, and how hard he thought I would be to be gain'd, I might have made my own Terms with him." By this time, however, Moll knows how to string a man along; "I play'd with this Lover as an Angler does with a Trout," she brags. When the banker suggests that she marry him immediately, promising to seek the divorce afterwards, she is tempted only momentarily, and knows not
to reveal her eagerness to her suitor. She plans her moves so as to keep her options open and refuses to rest her confidence in anybody but herself.

In Jemy, however, Moll meets her manipulative match. They cross each other in the same game, and although they banter about which of them is more "undone," each is good-tempered enough not to harbour any real resentment. For all their anxiety about what to do next, both take a certain delight in their predicament, and Jemy's attitude toward adversity is much like Moll's: "I must try the world again; a Man ought to think like a Man: To be Discourag'd, is to yield to the Misfortune." Jemy is in fact the only man Moll has any real and lasting affection for, probably because they have so much in common. "I really believe...that he was a Man that was as well qualified to make me happy, as to his Temper and Behaviour, as any Man ever was," she reminisces. He is one of the few characters in the book who has a name (in fact he goes by several). While this is partly an expedient to his reappearance later in the story, it is also a signal of the fact that he makes a lasting impression on Moll's affections--something few of the people she meets manage to do.

This segment of the story is full of little morals and bits of wisdom that seem at times to come from Defoe's mouth rather than Moll's. For example, he writes, "When a Woman is thus left desolate and void of Council, she is just like a Bag of Money, or a Jewel dropt on the Highway, which is a Prey to the next Comer." This statement reinforces the connection between economics and feminine virtue that the novel has been exploring all along, but by literary-sounding analogy rather than in direct, pragmatic, and causal terms and nor does the fatalism of this passage sound like Moll. She is aware of the role that chance plays in her own outcomes and choices, reinforcing for the reader the fact that, whatever her moral shortcomings, "the Vice came in always at the Door of Necessity, not at the Door of Inclination." Even though Moll subscribes to an ethics of convenience and speculates about the circumstances under which she might have behaved differently, she never renounces her own free choice or ascribes her decisions entirely to fate or to the power of other people.

3.6 Summary and Analysis of Section 6 (Moll marries the banker)

Summary: Section 6
Moll returns to London intending to find the banker, who has been writing her letters weekly and who knows nothing of her marriage to Jemy. When she realizes she is pregnant, however, she has to stall her husband-to-be so as not to give herself away. During this inconvenient pregnancy Moll falls under the care of a street-wise woman whom she will later call "my Governess." This woman orchestrates all the details of Moll's confinement and arranges for the hasty dispatch of the infant once it is born. Moll is then free to marry her banker, who in the meantime has succeeded in divorcing his wife.

She arranges to meet the banker outside of London in order to preserve the appearance that she is just returning from Lancashire. He persuades her to marry him that very night, and a minister is called to the inn to do the offices. The next morning Moll happens to look out the window and is surprised to see her Lancashire husband, Jemy, in the company of two other men. She is later questioned by the police, who are looking for three highwaymen. She throws them off the trail, assuring them that she knows one of those three to be a very respectable gentleman.

Moll returns to London with her new husband, where she says she "took Possession at once of a House well Furnish'd, and a Husband in very good Circumstances, so that I had a prospect of a very happy Life, if I knew how to manage it." They lead a pleasant and comfortable existence, if a solitary one (Moll still insists that she had no friends and "kept no Company" at that time). After five years, however, Moll's husband loses a great deal of money in a financial speculation, falls into despair, and eventually dies. Moll is left alone and impoverished once again.

**Analysis**

Although we have seen Moll growing in worldliness and sophistication over the course of the novel, Defoe emphasizes his heroine's innocence in comparison to the women she meets when she returns to London. Assuming her first landlady to be a very scrupulous gentlewoman, she is embarrassed to appear as an unwed mother (although she is also reluctant to admit that she is married, because of her intention of remarrying). Only later does she realize that "the Mistress of the House was not so great a Stranger to such Cases as mine was." The midwife whom the landlady summons turns out to be exactly "the right sort" for Moll's situation. Little by little, Moll begins to get glimpses into a shadowy--but
highly organized--world of corruption and degeneracy. She is surprised to discover what intricate networks of people and practices are in place to support immoral and criminal behaviour. Moll's Governess is midwife to "Ladies of Pleasure" on a regular basis, and she knows just whom to contact to have Moll's baby taken off her hands. She evidently knows how to abort the baby as well, though she broaches the topic so indirectly that Moll only barely catches her meaning. She also appears to be acting as a procuress. Moll in fact declines to narrate in full detail "the Nature of the wicked Practice of this Woman, in whose Hands I was now fallen," fearing that she may tempt others to similar vice. Defoe offers his readers a glimpse into this underworld as kind of realistic documentary—as "Testimony of the growing Vice of the Age."

In the security of her new married life with the banker, Moll has leisure to reflect on her past misdeeds, and to acknowledge "how much happier a Life of Virtue and Sobriety is, than that which we call a Life of Pleasure." One of the tenets of the novel, and the final moral of Moll's life, is that virtue and piety are luxuries that can be enjoyed only when certain basic material needs are met. "While I liv'd thus," Moll says, "I was really a Penitent for all my Life pass'd, I look'd back on it with Abhorrence, and might truly be said to hate myself for it." Yet there is little acknowledgment on Moll's part that she really ought to have acted differently, under the circumstances, and she recognizes even in her repentance that her new outlook might last only as long as her fortunes do.

3.7 Summary and Analysis of Section 7 (Moll begins a life of crime)

Summary: Section 7

Moll lives for two years in a hopeless and lonely state of ever-increasing poverty. One night she wanders out with no particular aim and happens upon an unguarded package. "This was the Bait," she recounts, "and the Devil who...laid the Snare, as readily prompted me, as if he had spoke, for I remember, and shall never forget it, 'twas like a Voice spoken to me over my Shoulder, take the Bundle; be quick; do it this Moment." She steals the package and then wanders around in "Horror of...Soul" and "Terror of Mind." Her severe poverty soon reconciles her to the act, however, and she becomes a regular thief. Moll has a particular eye for an opportunity--and quite good luck as well--and soon has a substantial
store of stolen goods. Not knowing where to market them, she returns to her "old Governess," who has since fallen on hard times and become a pawn-broker.

Moll entertains the hope that her Governess might be able to help her find some honest employment, "but here she was deficient; honest Business did not come within her reach." She does finally find a little sewing work, but still feels the periodic urge to walk out on stealing expeditions; it becomes plain that she has begun to enjoy them. After becoming the mistress of a baronet for a brief period, Moll returns to crime. She soon begins to collaborate openly with her Governess in her thieving and becomes acquainted with other local criminals as well. She learns a few tricks of the trade from veteran thieves and pickpockets, and her skill quickly surpasses their own. Although she sometimes enters into partnerships, Moll prefers to work alone, and she soon gains some renown as a master thief. In the period of her greatest notoriety she is given the name "Moll Flanders."

Moll sees a number of her "Comerades" sent to Newgate prison and even executed, and she has several close calls herself. The sense of danger she derives from these experiences makes her more careful--she begins to don disguises and occasionally leaves London when things get too hot--but she is never seriously deterred from her life of crime. If anything, the risk seems to feed her addiction. Moll once gets arrested by mistake, and she even manages to turn that to her own advantage. Finally, however, Moll is caught in the act of stealing some fabric, and they cart her off to Newgate.

**Analysis**

Moll carefully traces the process by which she is tempted into and then inextricably involved in a life of crime. She says of her critics, "Let 'em remember that a time of Distress is a time of dreadful Temptation, and all the Strength to resist is taken away; Poverty presses, the Soul is made Desperate by Distress, and what can be Done?" The more successful and celebrated she becomes as a criminal, the more reluctant Moll is to leave off the "trade," despite her occasional pangs of conscience. She explains the strength of the inducements to crime but does not disguise her motives: "If...a prospect of Work had presented itself at first, when I began to feel the approach of my miserable Circumstances,...I had never fallen into this wicked Trade, or into such a wicked Gang as I was now embark'd with; but practise had hardened me, and I grew audacious to the last.
degree; and the more so, because I had carried it on so long, and had never been taken."
Stealing becomes a kind of compulsion for Moll, and she freely admits that she continued to
steal even once she had plenty of money—as if for the challenge and excitement of it.

This segment of the book is peppered with pragmatic morals: Defoe tells us not only
how Moll could have done her work better, but also how her victims might have avoided
being robbed. And the crime detail as a whole is purported to serve the moral purpose of
warning readers against becoming victims themselves, rather than against criminal
behavior. Even this explanation does not seem to capture the true character of Defoe's
relish for these scenes, however. He presents Moll's thievery as almost an art form; her
narrative delights in the ingenuity with which each crime is conceived and the technical
mastery with which it is accomplished. "I grew the greatest Artist of my time," she writes,
"and work'd myself out of every danger with...Dexterity." The fact that Moll, from her
retrospective vantage point, takes such joy in these relations calls into question the sincerity
of her repentance.

Moll's criminal phase is in many ways the period of her greatest independence and
autonomy. Once she becomes a master thief, Moll's solitude is turned from a liability to an
advantage. It becomes the mark of freedom and self-sufficiency, just as her preference for
working alone stems from the knowledge of her superior skill. Having found a "career," at
which she excels, Moll no longer has to seek desperately for a man to support her. The fact
that crime is the occupation that presents itself (we can hardly imagine that needlework,
Moll's only real alternative, would have been as fulfilling or empowering) might be taken as
an indication of Defoe's insight into predicament of women in his day, and particularly of
the dearth of acceptable outlets for their talent and ambition.

3.8 Summary and Analysis of Section 8 (Moll in Newgate)

Summary: Section 8

Moll describes Newgate as the very pit of hell: "'tis impossible to describe the terror
of my mind, when I was first brought in, and when I look'd round upon all the horrors of that
dismal Place: I look'd on myself as lost, and that I had nothing to think of, but of going out of
the World, and that with the utmost Infamy; the hellish Noise, the Roaring, Swearing and
Clamour, the Stench and Nastiness, and all the dreadful crowd of Afflicting things that I saw there; joyn'd together to make the Place seem an Emblem of Hell itself, and a kind of Entrance into it." Moll's fear of the prison launches her into a posture of repentance, and she spends several sleepless nights tormented by her conscience as well as by the mockery of her fellow inmates. However, she soon grows accustomed to her new surroundings. Moll's Governess, having heard of her capture, comes to advocate on her behalf with the prison officials and with the prosecution. Moll realizes during this tense period that her first repentance had not been sincere, but rather "only the Effect of my Fear of Death." While she still anticipates a death sentence, she finds that she can muster very little remorse--even though she acknowledges that her life has been "a horrid Complication of Wickedness, Whoredom, Adultery, Incest, Lying, Theft, and in a Word, everything but Murther and Treason."

Jemy, Moll's Lancashire husband, soon appears in the prison as well, finally having been caught at his highwayman's trade. She is surprised to feel a resurgence of guilt at her deception of him, in spite of the fact that he had deceived her equally. She still feels no real remorse for her crimes, though, even when her death sentence is handed down. Her Governess, who had become a "true penitent" herself, sends for a minister for Moll. With his help, Moll finally repents of her misdeeds. He eventually manages to have her sentence reduced to transportation to America. At this point, Moll finds Jemy and urges him to try for transportation as well, convincing him that going to America will offer the best chance for both of them to get a fresh start. He succeeds in this, and they manage to get passage on the same ship, where with their combined assets they are able to purchase good treatment on the voyage and to stock themselves with the implements and supplies they will need to set up a plantation in the colonies.

**Analysis**

Defoe links Newgate with hell: he clearly wants to summon up a connection in the reader's mind between earthly punishment and eternal judgment, and Moll tells in ominous, religious-sounding terms of "the Place, where my Mother suffered so deeply, where I was brought into the World, and from whence I expected no Redemption, but by an infamous Death: To conclude, the Place that had so long expected me, and which with so
much Art and Success I had so long avoided." The scene of Moll's terror upon entering the prison is one of the most emotionally evocative in the book. But the fact that Moll so quickly grows accustomed to her surroundings is typical of the novel's tendency to subordinate emotion to pragmatism (and literary contrivance to realism). Moll has ever been one to make the best of a bad situation, and the fact that she can engineer her own reprieve stands as an unavoidable reminder that Newgate is not Hell. The place may suggest eternal damnation, but it never loses its literal reality. Moll's religious repentance, however vividly depicted, has little bearing on her release from punishment. She finds rescue rather by means of a decidedly non-religious expedient: she essentially buys herself out of captivity and into a new life.

The Governess who has all along been complicit in Moll's misdeeds now feels herself responsible for her friend's desperate situation. The astonishing degree of loyalty and solicitude she demonstrates proves her to be one of the only real friends of Moll's life. In this, she stands out from the long succession of minor, nameless female characters who serve to help or hinder Moll's fortunes and then disappear from the story. They seem to be mere instruments by which Defoe advances his plot; all of his strength of characterization is invested in Moll herself. Only with her Governess and with Jemy does Moll create anything approaching a realized relationship; Defoe, interested primarily in Moll's isolation, seems to want even these personages to be limited as far as possible to instrumental roles, obscuring their characters and refusing to tap into whatever depth of relationship the reader may feel to exist beneath the surface.

Moll seems to anticipate the fact that her repentance might seem less-than-convincing, or at least that it will not make for such riveting reading as the tales of her misdeeds: "This may be thought inconsistent in itself, and wide from the Business of this Book; Particularly, I reflect that many of those who may be pleas'd and diverted with the Relation of the wild and wicked part of my Story, may not relish this, which is really the best part of my Life, the most Advantageous to myself, and the most instructive to others; such however will I hope allow me the liberty to make my Story complete." This series of reflections forces the reader to ask what "the Business of this Book" has been exactly, and the answer is not altogether clear. Moll's repentance has seemed to many critics an
unsatisfactory or unconvincing resolution to the novel. Certainly such an ending, even if contrived, would have been necessary to make the book publicly acceptable.

3.9 Summary and Analysis of Section 9 (Moll and Jemy in America, and conclusion)

Summary: Section 9

Moll and Jemy land safely in Virginia, but Moll knows she cannot stay there because of the chance of running into her Virginia relatives. She is led by curiosity to inquire after her mother and brother, and she learns that the old woman is dead and that her former husband, who lives on a nearby plantation with their son Humphrey, has gone almost blind and a little bit crazy. Seeing her son from a distance, Moll goes into a rapture of filial emotion: she can barely restrain herself from embracing him, and feels moved to kiss the ground where he has walked.

Remembering her mother's promise to provide for her in her will, Moll tries to devise a way to collect her inheritance without exposing herself. She has concealed her earlier ill-fated marriage from Jemy; he knows only that she has relatives in the area who ought not to know of their current shame. She cannot therefore let Jemy into all the particulars of her current dilemma over the inheritance, but tells him as much as he needs to know to agree with her that they ought to move elsewhere. They settle themselves on a farm in Maryland, and then Moll returns to Virginia to pursue the inheritance. She writes a letter to her brother, which her son receives first. He is moved deeply by the rediscovery of his lost mother and receives her passionately and with great generosity. Without informing his father of anything that passes between them, he makes arrangements for Moll to receive the yearly income of the estate her mother has left her. She returns to Maryland laden with her son's gifts and in a fair way to make a great success in the New World. After her brother dies, Moll invites Humphrey to visit in Maryland, pretending to have married Jemy only recently. She also tells Jemy the whole story of her Virginia relations, and thus frees herself from all her lies and entanglements. Moll returns to England at the age of seventy, where she and Jemy "resolve to spend the Remainder of our Years in sincere Penitence, for the wicked Lives we have lived."

Analysis
Moll presents it as a basic truth of human nature that "a Secret of the Moment should always have a Confident, a bosom Friend, to whom we may communicate the Joy of it, or the Grief of it, be it which it will, or it will be a double weight upon the Spirits, and perhaps become even insupportable." This reflection is particularly poignant in light of the fact that Moll has so often been lacking in such a friend or confidante, and thus has been forced to bear most of her life's burdens alone. She does not draw out the connection very explicitly in her own case, but goes on to affirm that the lack of friends has been the source of much weakness in many of her acquaintances.

Moll's outpouring of emotion upon seeing her son seems incongruous with the strikingly unsentimental way she has borne the loss of so many children, and especially with her particular disdain for the children of her incestuous relationship with her brother. Such sentiment, it would seem, is a luxury for Moll: only in moments of relative security and prosperity does she find leisure to indulge in such displays of emotion. Her new filial piety is also presumably meant to accord with her religious conversion, as testimony—however thin it may seem—to the fact that her outlook has really changed. The fact that she does not hesitate to tell a whole web of lies to protect herself and promote her own convenience casts some doubt on the image of Moll as a reformed woman, however, and her eagerness to retrieve her share of her mother's legacy has a similar effect. Much critical debate has centred on the (questionable) sincerity of Moll's reformation by the end of the novel. By her own account, her repentance is sincere enough. The fond manner in which she relates her past life, however, suggests otherwise, and the fact that the novel seems to offer piety as an option only after economic security and social stability have been obtained represents a more bleakly materialistic view of human spiritual possibilities. On the religious register as well as on others, the question of whether Moll actually develops as a character or merely responds to changing conditions remains a troubling one.

4. Overview

Defoe wrote Moll Flanders at a time when there was still little precedent for the novel as a genre, and he accordingly felt compelled to justify his book by presenting it as a true story. He stages his novel therefore as the memoir of a person who, though fictional, is a composite of real people who experienced real events in Defoe's London. (Of course, part
of the comic effect stems from the fact that no one person could have experienced all that Moll does.) He draws on the established conventions of the rogue biography—a genre that presented the lives and escapades of real criminals in semi-fictionalized and entertaining ways. Moll Flanders concerns itself above all with the practical, day-to-day exigencies of a woman who enjoys no long-standing social stability or financial security, allowing the accumulation of factual detail to stand as evidence for the writing's truthfulness, if not its literal truth. His language, which is also Moll's throughout, is plain and un-literary. The prose is not allusive, ornamental, or metaphoric, relying rather on the combination of journalistic accuracy and a strong personal voice for their effects of authenticity.

Defoe emphasizes in his Preface to the novel that the tale is meant to convey a serious moral. But the novel itself, which details its heroine's scandalous sexual and criminal adventures, keeps moralizing (particularly traditional Christian moralizing) to a minimum. Her immoral actions have no real consequences, and the narrative tends to excuse her behavior by referring it to material necessity. If Moll Flanders is surprisingly unmoralizing, Defoe's indulgent attitude toward his heroine accords with the reaction of most readers. E.M. Forster called the book "a masterpiece of characterization," and it is a testimony to the psychological nuance of her character, as well as to its liveliness, that we like Moll more than we censure her. Defoe creates in Moll a character of limitless interest, in spite of her unconcealed ethical shortcomings. His vision is one that values the personal qualities of self-reliance and perseverance, and that dignifies human labor, even when it takes the form of crime.

Defoe's own attitude toward his character and her escapades is less than clear, as is his final verdict on the questions and conflicts her life story raises. What emerges unequivocally in the novel is Defoe's fascination with moral ambiguity, and with the isolated life of the individual human being. Moll Flanders illustrates unflinchingly the kinds of motives that rise to the surface in human life under hardship and duress, and the frankness with which Moll discusses her own motivations is an appeal to their universality. The book therefore generates a conflict between an absolute Christian morality on the one hand and the conditional ethics of measurement and pragmatism that govern the business world, as well as the human struggle for survival, on the other.
5. Character Analysis

5.1 Major Characters

a) Moll Flanders

Moll’s most salient characteristics are her ingenuity, energy, and determination to survive and do well. She is willing to sacrifice moral principles in order to prosper, but does not appear to be extraordinarily wicked: when her continued prosperity seems secure, she can be an exemplary wife, sober and virtuous. She is beautiful, clever, and talented, and her education is better than those of most girls of her class, since she learned the lessons of the young ladies she served as a maid. Her manners are generally good and she has clean habits, enabling her to pass as a lady if she chooses. She rarely lets herself despair, believing that drooping under the weight of misfortune doubles it. She has a great amount of self control, and in particular is able to keep important secrets from people close to her for long periods of time. She is an excellent actress, and can take on different characters as easily as changing her clothes, but prefers to appear as a lady. Although she marries for money several times, she is capable of deep affection, and devotes a great deal of time, money, and effort to saving her Lancashire husband. Her affection for her children is not terribly strong, however. There are some things she refuses to do, such as having abortions or being a streetwalker. She is a very cautious thief, never engaging in violence or house-breaking, and never revealing more about herself than necessary. Her religious principles vary depending on her circumstances: she is fairly tolerant of different sects, and usually does not seem to think about God much. She is very fervent for a while in Newgate, but that wears off as her circumstances improve - however, she is never an atheist.

b) Moll’s Mother

Moll’s mother was first mentioned in Chapter 1 as a young girl in Newgate Prison about to be hanged for a petty theft. She was saved because she was carrying a child (Moll), and was later transported to the colonies, leaving the one-and-a-half-year-old Moll in bad hands.

She appeared again in Chapter 8 now living in Virginia and the mother of Moll’s husband. She reminisced to Moll about her experiences in Newgate Prison and Moll
discovered that she was in actuality her own mother. This friendly, outgoing woman tried to convince Moll to remain married to her son (Moll’s brother) in order to keep the family intact. When she died, she left some money and her plantation to Moll.

5.2 Minor Characters

i) Moll’s Nurse

a pious lady, poor but refined, who takes care of Moll in her extreme youth. She makes some money by caring for orphans.

ii) The Mayor's Lady

a generous lady who takes Moll in as a favoured maid, but doesn't like the idea of her marrying her son, although she eventually agrees.

iii) The Mayor's Eldest Daughter

a sharp-tongued young lady who says that "[she has] the money and [wants] the beauty; but as times go now, the first will do without the last."

iv) The Mayor's Youngest Daughter

also not as beautiful or talented as Moll.

v) The Mayor's Eldest Son (Moll's first lover)

"a gay gentleman that knew the town as well as the country." He seduces Moll by cleverly complimenting her, and giving her presents of money. He is not so in love, however, to oppose his brother's marrying her, after which they are no longer lovers.

vi) The Mayor's Youngest Son, Robert or Robin (Moll's first husband)

a "plain and honest" young gentleman who makes "good honest professions of being in love with" Moll and "proposes fairly and honorably to marry" her. He stubbornly insists on marrying Moll, a servant girl, and obtains the consent of his mother. He made a good and agreeable husband for Moll, but she was never in love with him.
vii) The Gentleman-Draper (Moll’s second husband)

"A tradesman ... that was something of a gentleman too," he "had this excellence, that he valued nothing of expense and... this enough to tell you that in about two years and a quarter he broke, and was not so happy to get over into the Mint, but got into a sponging-house, being arrested in an action too heavy for him to give bail." He has good manners and is very civil to Moll, but his expensive habits, including travelling pretending to be a lord, ruins them financially.

viii) Moll’s Widowed Friend

While in the Mint, Moll meets this "very sober, good sort of a woman," who invites her home, where Moll hoped to meet and marry a captain.

ix) Moll’s Friend, who marries a captain

a young lady who follows Moll’s advice to catch and humble a disdainful lover. She is clever and high-spirited.

x) The Captain

husband of the previous. He is proud at first, but not smart enough to escape Moll’s plan, and becomes a humble and obedient husband.

xi) Moll’s Brother and Third Husband, Humphrey

"a man of infinite good nature, but... no fool." He loses much of his good nature when he discovers that Moll is his sister, and attempts suicide. Later, he becomes "old and infirm both in body and mind... very fretful and passionate, almost blind, and capable of nothing."

xii) Moll’s Mother and Mother-in-Law

"a mighty cheerful, good-humoured old woman." She tells Moll many entertaining stories about convicts transported to Virginia; in one of these, Moll learns the truth of her incestuous marriage. Her mother’s reaction to the news is to want to keep it quiet.

xiii) Moll’s Landlady at Bath
"though she did not keep an ill house, as we call it, yet had none of the best principles in herself." She kindly befriends Moll and sets her up with the Gentleman of Bath, below.

xiv) The Gentleman of Bath (Moll's second lover)

"a man of honour and virtue, as well as of great estate." He has a chaste relationship with Moll for a long time (because of his great respect for her virtue), then an unchaste one for several years, then coldly leaves her after he recovers from a serious illness. For a discussion of his morals, see Part 7.

xv) The Woman from the North

"a north-country woman that went for a gentlewoman." She lures Moll up north and sets her up with the Lancashire husband. She is in fact a member of Moll's Lancashire husband's gang of highwaymen.

xvi) The Grave Gentleman (later Moll's fifth)

"a quiet, sensible, sober man; virtuous, modest, sincere, and in his business diligent and just." He divorces an unfaithful wife to marry Moll, who he believes to be virtuous. He loses heart and dies when his business fails.

xvii) Moll's Lancashire Husband (the fourth), James

"He had... the appearance of an extraordinary fine gentleman; he was tall, well-shaped, and had an extraordinary address." This gentleman is in fact an adept highwayman, but Moll finds him to be very good company, and she loves him very much. He balks at being transported, and although he can play the gentleman very well, he fears any other role, such as that of an indentured servant. See parts 9 and 17 especially.

xviii) Moll's Governess (the midwife)

"an eminent lady in her way." She is an unprincipled woman who manages the affairs of many whores, deals with the problems of unmarried mothers, and also eventually has a pawnshop and deals with thieves. She probably could induce abortions, and disposed of unwanted children. She is an impressive figure who poses a challenge to Moll's ideas and to the reader's as well. In one sense, her organized vice threatens everything commonly
thought of as good. She is so hardened as to be immune; apparently, to feelings of guilt or affection - the feelings, in fact, which in the conventional scheme of morality ideally motivate most human actions. What is so disturbing about her is not simply this inhumanity - cruel and remorseless villains are stock figures - but rather the fact that she is living proof that financial motivations work as well, if not better, than emotional ones. Moll's narrative is full of references to her governess' kind behaviour: full example, once the woman sent her a roast chicken and a bottle of sherry, which she thought "surprisingly good and kind." This seeming kindness is not the result of the governess' affection for Moll; it is part of her business plan. By the same logic, the governess tells Moll that she need not scruple to give her baby to strangers: a stranger, motivated by money, will be just as loving as a natural mother.

xix) Moll's Schoolmistress (the expert thief)

an expert at lifting gold watches from ladies' sides, she teaches Moll the tricks of the trade. She is finally caught and hanged for shoplifting.

xx) The Pair of Thieves

"a young woman and a fellow that went for her husband, though as it appeared afterwards, she was not his wife, but they were partners, it seems, in the trade they carried on, and partners in something else. In short, they robbed together, lay together, were taken together, and at last were hanged together." Moll worked with them for a while, but thought their methods too clumsy.

xxi) The Young Fellow (thief who steals with Moll dressed as Gabriel Spencer)

"a young fellow that was nimble enough at his business." He gets caught making a rash attempt, and tries to betray Moll but doesn't know her true identity.

xxii) The Woman Thief (arrested in Moll's place)

a poor woman, who tries to betray Moll when she is arrested in her place. She is transported.

xxiii) Moll's Drunken Lover
a fine but inebriated baronet who picks Moll up at a fair and is later robbed by her. He is a good honest gentleman when sober, and a pleasant but lustful one when drunk.

**xxiv) The Master Mercer**

He pays dearly for his stubbornness in refusing to let Moll leave his shop when she is suspected of having stolen from there.

**xxv) A Rude Journeyman**

"Impudent and unmanly to the last degree," he treats Moll roughly.

**xxvi) Mr. William and Mr. Alexander**

politer journeymen, who catch the real thief.

**xxvii) The Constable**

"a good, substantial kind of man, and a man of good sense."

**xxviii) The Porter**

a poor man who acts as a witness for the Mercer's rudeness.

**xxix) Moll's Attorney**

"a very creditable sort of man."

**xxx) Lady Betty**

"a little miss, a young lady of about twelve or thirteen years old," who believes Moll when she pretends to be a family friend, and loses her gold watch as a result.

**xxxi) Her Little Sister**

about nine years old, a pretty child.

**xxxii) Jack the Gambler**

a gentleman who lets Moll gamble with his money. He generously divides the profits with her, giving her a bad conscience since she had already stolen quite a lot.
xxxiii) A Goldsmith

a fair man, in whose shop Moll is surprised while planning to steal.

xxxiv) Sir T.B.

an alderman and a justice of the peace, who judges Moll not guilty of stealing from the goldsmith; he releases her partly because of her wealth.

xxxv) Two Wenches

servants in the house where Moll is finally taken, "two fiery dragons could not have been more furious than they were." Very loyal maid-servants, they resisted the governess' attempts at bribery.

xxxvi) The Master (Andrew Johnson) and Mistress of the House

a fairly compassionate couple.

xxxvii) Jenny

a thief in Newgate, who shocks Moll with her careless gaiety and lack of fear or repentance.

xxxviii) The Ordinary of Newgate

a hypocritical clergyman who spent his days trying to get prisoners to confess and getting drunk.

xxxix) A Keeper at Newgate

He baldly tells Moll that she should prepare for death, but does not seem cruel.

xl) The Minister

a good pious man who helps Moll to sincere repentance, and obtains a reprieve for her.

xli) The Boatswain
an officer on the ship that takes Moll to Virginia. He is a generally courteous and compassionate person, but is especially so when he finds out that Moll is rich.

**XLII) The Captain of the Ship**

"one of the best-humoured gentlemen in the world," who was "easily brought to accommodate [Moll and James] as well as [they] could desire.

**XLIII) Mrs. Owen**

a chairwoman who shows Moll where her brother and son live.

**XLIV) Moll's Son and Nephew, Humphrey**

"a handsome, comely young gentleman in flourishing circumstances," a "kind, dutiful, and obliging" son to Moll.

**XLV) The Quaker**

"a faithful, generous, and steady friend to [Moll and James]" who helps them settle in Virginia.

**6. Stylistic Devices**

Moll Flanders is characterized by its episodic quality. Events follow events spasmodically with little or no transition. Incidents are arbitrarily held together with such weak transitions as "I had now a new scene of life upon my hands. . . ." or "At length a new scene opened." The phrases "in short" and "in a word" are used repeatedly to loosely tie one episode to another. Note how this occurs in the following passages: "The Captain's lady, in short, put this project . . ."; "in short, we were married, . . ."; "To bring the story short, we agreed to go."; "To make this part of the story short, . . ."; "in short, it put him in a fit something like an apoplexy; . . ."; "In short, by an unwearied importunity . . ."; (and again three on one page) "In short, I carried on the argument against this so far, . . ."; "In short, I ventured to avoid signing a contract of marriage, ...."; and "In a word, I avoided a contract; . . ." The story unravels as a series of loosely connected episodes. There is, however, underlying continuity in the gradual unfolding of Moll's character.
Coincidence plays a large part in the work. Moll just happens to see an unattended bundle in an apothecary's shop and steals it when she is in low financial circumstances. This begins her life in crime. The governess, once a midwife, has just turned pawnbroker and therefore knows how to turn Moll's thieving into profit for them both. Jemmy happens to get arrested when Moll is in Newgate where they meet again after being many years apart. He happens to be transported to America on the same boat even after their frantic arrangements to expedite this fail.

The autobiographical method allows us to see Moll through her own eyes as she unfolds her account of events in her life.

7. Study Questions (Sample Questions and Answers)

7.1 How sensitive is Defoe to the plight of women in his contemporary social milieu? Is Moll Flanders an early feminist novel?

Answer for Study Question 1

The most striking and unusual features about Moll Flanders as a female protagonist are her intelligence, her practical competence, her self-sufficiency, and her defiance of conventional feminine roles and mores. Moll is persevering and adaptable, and she seems to dominate every situation. She depends on men for security, but no more than she has to, and her dependency is of a peculiarly active sort: she uses men as tools whenever possible and seeks to maximize her opportunities for self-reliance. It is in the lowest stratum of society that Moll is most free, and where her activity rises to the level of art. She moves in that world with a confidence and celebrity that is actually quite becoming, in spite of her reprehensible acts. Defoe is sensitive to the inherent conflict in the fact that the arenas where Moll might hope to use her many talents and provide for herself are all morally dubious: she can be a thief, a whore, or a husband-seeker. Moll's admittedly flexible moral code is one designed to accommodate this conflict as much as possible. The fact that this questionable morality raises another set of conflicts--between mercantilist ethics and religious ethics, for example, and between public and private values--links Moll's particular dilemmas as a woman to larger issues of society.
7.2 What is the effect, for the novel as a whole, of Defoe's tendency to reduce every situation to its materialistic basis?

Answer for Study Question 2

Defoe is at great pains, in this novel, to act as chronicler of his era. His personal background as a merchant provides much of the material for Moll Flanders, a book in which everything has a value: objects, situations, and people. Moll's personal attractions are her most valuable commodity when she is young; as she grows older she has to cash in on her cleverness. Her alternatives in life are severely limited, and Defoe has her explore all the available trades in order to document the realities of each. Life is above all a market-place, and the world of the novel is one in which human existence is defined by a basic struggle for survival. One result of this materialist orientation is that it sees the individual human being as profoundly isolated. Other people are reduced to mere expedients: Moll's relationships tend to end abruptly and without residual emotion, and the novel itself exploits a large number of minor, nameless characters only to advance the plot, and then abandons them. The spiritual side of human life is all but overshadowed by materialistic concerns, and there is very little room in Defoe's vision for the idea that people might find ways of transcending their physical and material constraints.

7.3 Does Moll develop or change as a character over the course of the novel?

Answer for Study Question 3

There are two main movements to Moll's development. The first is the process by which she gradually becomes more sophisticated in the ways of the world. She learns, by the obstacles that life throws in her way, how to handle herself so as to minimize the extent to which she must depend on other people. This development forms the bulk of the novel, and it tends to lead Moll into ever-greater degrees of vice. Defoe also includes a discontinuous turn at the end of the story, in which Moll repents of all her former wickedness and lives a reformed life. This aspect of Moll's development has seemed unconvincing to many readers; certainly it has very little effect in shaping the book as a whole. Moll's life is one with material but not ethical consequences, and she tells her own story in those terms even from the vantage point of her later repentance.
8. Suggested Essay Topics

a) Is there an overall structure or design that holds the various episodes of Moll's life together? How tightly is this novel organized?

b) Does a wealth of material facts and details like that in Moll Flanders suffice to make a novel "realistic"? What other kinds of realism are there, and in what ways is this novel unrealistic?

c) How penitent is Moll by the end of the novel?

d) How does the fact that Defoe so often merges trade with crime complicate his overwhelmingly economic vision of human life?

e) What clues does Moll Flanders give us to the realities of life in the late 17th and early 18th centuries? How effective is the novel as a historical document?

f) What differences are there between Moll the character and Moll the narrator? Discuss Defoe's use of first-person narration.

g) Compare Moll Flanders with one or two other female protagonists with whom you are familiar.

h) Virginia Woolf, who admired Defoe, nevertheless pronounced that "he leaves out the whole of vegetable nature, and a large part of human nature." Other critics have pointed out that Moll Flanders, however engaging it may be as a story, does not do enough to clarify its overall purpose or point. How would you assess the novel's weaknesses? What seems to be left out?

i) Briefly describe at least five episodes which illustrate Moll's pseudo-repentance.

j) Show that Moll's ambition to become a gentlewoman is not a mere whimsical desire.

k) Show how Moll's conscience, a weak and faltering guide, is overcome on crucial occasions by external pressures or inducements.

l) Trace the gradual hardening of Moll's character prior to her final repentance.

m) Explain what sort of shady activities Moll was engaged in before she began her actual career in crime.
9. Suggestions for Further Reading


10. Bibliography


Web. 6 May 2013.
1. Background

1.1 Introduction to the Author

Jane Austen was a major English novelist, whose brilliantly witty, elegantly structured satirical fiction marks the transition in English literature from 18th century neoclassicism to 19th century romanticism.

Jane Austen was born on 16 December, 1775, at the rectory in the village of Steventon, near Basingstoke, in Hampshire. The seventh of eight children of the Reverend George Austen and his wife, Cassandra, she was educated mainly at home and never lived apart from her family. She had a happy childhood amongst all her brothers and the other boys who lodged with the family and whom Mr Austen tutored. From her older sister, Cassandra, she was inseparable. To amuse themselves, the children wrote and performed
plays and charades, and even as a little girl Jane was encouraged to write. The reading that she did of the books in her father's extensive library provided material for the short satirical sketches she wrote as a girl. Jane's close relationship with her siblings and her family's relationship with the local gentry would provide her with material for her plots and influence her creation of the settings and characterizations in her novels.

At the age of 14 she wrote her first novella, *Love and Friendship* and then *A History of England by a partial, prejudiced and ignorant Historian*, together with other very amusing juvenilia. By the age of twenty-five, Austen had already written three novels, though *Sense and Sensibility*, Austen's first novel to be published, was not released until 1811. In the early nineteenth century, publishing was one of the few ways middle-class women could earn money, and Austen used her modest earnings to supplement her income. Two years later, her second novel, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) was published and proved to be extremely popular, ending Austen's anonymity. Her next novel, *Mansfield Park* (1814), did not sell as well, and Austen followed it in 1816 with *Emma*, the last novel to be published before her early death. In failing health, Austen wrote her final novel, *Persuasion*, in under a year. *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* were published posthumously in 1818, and together earned little over 500 pounds, a small amount by today's standards, but more money than Austen herself ever saw in her lifetime.

From 1811 to 1816, with the release of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*, she achieved success as a published writer. She wrote two additional novels, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, both published posthumously in 1818, and began a third, which was eventually titled Sanditon, but died before completing it.

### 1.2 Introduction to the Novel

When *Persuasion* was published posthumously in 1818, only a small circle of people knew of and admired Jane Austen's novels. Since that date, however, Austen has come to be one of the world's most widely read and most beloved authors. *Persuasion* is Jane Austen's last completed novel. She began it soon after she had finished *Emma*, completing it in August 1816. She died, aged 41, in 1817; and *Persuasion* was published in December that year.
In *Persuasion*, her last novel, Austen continues to present in minute detail the daily lives of her characters, upper-middle-class men and women living in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This novel perhaps is her most romantic, centreing on postponed but enduring love. Anne Elliot, the story's heroine, suffers from a decision that was forced upon her several years ago—to break off a relationship with the man she deeply loved. As Austen examines the causes and consequences of this action, she offers a penetrating critique of the standards of the British class system and the narrow-mindedness of those who strictly subscribe to them. The novel's witty realism helped guarantee Austen's position as one of the finest novelists.

*Persuasion* is also a novel that reflects the changing social order of England. Many of the peerage — not to mention baronets like Anne's father Sir Walter Elliot — could no longer maintain their extravagant lifestyles easily. Thus the novel opens with the premise that the Elliots must move to a smaller residence and let their mansion to Admiral Croft of the navy. The navy, incidentally, is highly praised by the third-person omniscient narrator, who reserves many satiric criticisms for the upper class. Given that Austen had brothers with careers in the navy, such praise is perhaps not so surprising.

*Persuasion* represents the maturity of Austen's work, and more than her other novels, evidences Austen's comic yet biting satire of the titled upper classes. Austen's own social position, as the daughter of a parish clergyman, placed her firmly in the respected middle-class, but as an author she was free to step outside her sphere and write about the personal flaws and mistakes of the proud gentry. Such subtle criticism is especially apparent in her descriptions of the ridiculous and vain Sir Walter Elliot, who is forced to leave his family's house because of his lavish and imprudent overspending.

Austen's final novel also stands out for the nationalistic pride expressed by the characters throughout the work. The reverence which *Persuasion*’s female characters hold for the Naval officers reflects the esteem in which the Navy was held in Austen's day. At the height of the British Empire, amidst wars with both France and America, the Navy was admired as the defender of British interests throughout the world. Such Navy heroes in the novel introduce a new, rougher ideal of manliness into Austen's world, for which the feminized Sir Walter serves as the unfortunate foil.
2. Major Themes

2.1 Class Consciousness

The predominant theme in *Persuasion* focuses on the consciousness of class. Austen defines one main social division—the landed gentry of the upper-middle class—through her realistic portrayals of the Elliot family and those who travel in their sphere. She notes the traditions of this structured social group as well as its restricted vision of those outside the group. The ladies and gentlemen of the landed gentry, as represented by Sir Walter, depend on social hierarchies to ensure their superiority over the lower classes. Thus, the issues of class rigidity and social mobility are the most important themes in Persuasion. Marriage and the naval profession are two means by which individuals may improve their social class. Austen is not a revolutionary; she defends the values and traditions of respect for the social structure. Yet she is subtly subversive in her support of greater social mobility. The Navy’s role in gradually increasing class flexibility is stated to be one of its “domestic virtues.” But there are rules and limits to social ambition in Austen's world. Mr. Elliot and Mrs. Clay are punished for the selfishness they show in overstepping their bounds and breaking these rules. Austen is conservative in her respect for class traditions, yet practically she recognizes the advantages of greater social flexibility.

For Sir Walter and Elizabeth, rank and consequence are everything. They live to be important in society. Although Sir Walter has the title of baronet, the Elliots suffer from the common problem of a limited income. They thus leave their primary home of Kellynch Hall and move to Bath, where they might be “important at comparatively little expense” (10). At Bath, the Elliots are indeed important and their company is much sought after. Sir Walter and Elizabeth are also eager to seek the company of those whom they deem more important than themselves. When the Dowager Viscountess Dalrymple arrives in Bath with her daughter the Honorable Miss Carteret, for example, they "assiduously pus[h] their good fortune" with them (100). Of course, rank does not always equal consequence. Mr. Elliot chooses to marry a wealthy common woman instead of Elizabeth precisely because of the diminishing Elliot fortune. Finally, the border between pride of family and obsession with rank is a fine line. Lady Russell possesses superior understanding but sometimes errs on the
side of valuing rank too much; Anne judges people fairly by their character rather than rank, yet still has her share of Elliot pride.

2.2 Marriage

In a novel with many unmarried and young woman, marriage is naturally an important theme. The central premise behind the novel is the thwarted engagement between the heroine and hero, Anne and Captain Wentworth. Although they are very much in love, the marriage is judged imprudent from a financial perspective. Much of the narrative builds up a weighty force against such a judgment, suggesting that somewhat imprudent marriages can still lead to happiness. This is a conclusion that is stated explicitly at the end by Mrs. Musgrove and Mrs. Croft. At the same time, the novel also deals with of marriages (or hopes of marriage) that have no purpose other than the social or financial benefit of one party. Such is the case of Mr. Elliot and his first wife, for example, or Mrs. Clay's desire to marry Sir Walter. In a society in which family plays such an important role, marriage is necessarily a complicated negotiation.

2.3 Persuasion

The title of novel derives presumably from the instance of Lady Russell's persuading Anne not to marry Captain Wentworth. This instance of persuasion in turn derives from Lady Russell's personal persuasion that a prudent marriage involves a man with either family or fortune to his name. For her part, Anne has her own persuasion about her engagement to Captain Wentworth: “She was persuaded that under every disadvantage of disapprobation at home... she should yet have been a happier woman in maintaining the engagement, than she had been in the sacrifice of it” (20). Much of the novel addresses questions of moral judgment in these foremost examples of persuasion. Was Lady Russell "right" to dissuade Anne from marrying the captain? Although it becomes clear that Anne's decision was a bad one, the ultimate judgment of right and wrong remains ambiguous. At the end of the novel, Anne states that, despite her suffering, she “was perfectly right in being misguided by Lady Russell” (164).

2.4 Place and Location
Among Austen's novels, a story that takes place in as many locations as in Persuasion is rare. The relatively large number of locales is telling of the distinct social milieus that together make up the world of the novel. At Kellynch, we find a respectable titled family as well as a changing social order; at Uppercross, we find the happiness of an unpretentious wealthy family; at Lyme, we find life amid impressive nature and the fruits and dangers that it offers; and at Bath, we see all worlds converge. On an even more microcosmic level, streets and place are also assigned social importance: Camden Place and Laura Place in Bath are very respectable, for example, while the Westgate Buildings are not. The novel also suggests, however, that such fragmentation is superficial and can be reconciled by a mind with superior sensibilities. Anne, after all, enjoys the serene gardens of Kellynch as much as she does the bustle of Uppercross. For her, Camden Place and the Westgate Buildings represent no special difference per se; what is truly important is the people who live in such places.

3. Chapter Analysis

3.1 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 1-2

Summary: Chapter 1

Austen opens her novel by introducing Sir Walter Elliot, the owner of Kellynch Hall, and a man for whom "vanity was the beginning and end of [his] character." His favorite book, the reader is told, is the Baronetage, a book which holds record of the most important families in England, and which, most importantly records Sir Walter's own personal history. In this passage, we learn that Sir Walter's wife, Elizabeth, has passed away fourteen years ago, and that he has three daughters: Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary. Of the girls, only Mary, the youngest, is married (to a Mr. Charles Musgrove). Having only three daughters and no sons, the Elliot family fortune will pass to William Elliot, the girls' cousin, upon the death of Sir Walter. Sir Walter has decided, "for his daughters' sake," not to remarry.

Sir Walter's deceased wife, the former Lady Elliot, had been an excellent woman, and had complemented her husband's flaws with her sensibility and good judgment. But in the years since her passing, Sir Walter has fallen in love with himself. Lady Russell, an old
friend of Lady Elliot has helped Sir Walter raise his daughters and has become a trusted family advisor.

In this opening chapter, we are also introduced to the three Elliot daughters: Elizabeth, who is beautiful, yet vain like her father; Anne, who has a sweetness of character, but is often overlooked by her family; and Mary, who thinks herself very important since her marriage. Of the three, Elizabeth is the favorite of Sir Walter, and Anne is the favorite of Lady Russell.

The history of Mr. William Elliot is also recounted in this chapter. The family had hoped their heir would marry Elizabeth, yet he had slighted and disappointed them, opting for independence by marrying another woman of fortune and lower birth. Since this slight seven years ago, he has not been in the good graces of the Elliot family.

Finally, we learn that the Elliot family is distressed for money. Sir Walter has spent lavishly on a lifestyle well beyond his means. Mr. Shepard and Lady Russell, two trusted family advisors, help the Elliots save money and get their finances back in order.

Summary: Chapter 2

Mr. Shepard and Lady Russell draw up a plan for ways that Sir Elliot can save money. They decide that he must "retrench" by seriously cutting back on his expenditures if he is to get out of the large debt he has accrued. Lady Russell, argues that such cuts will in no way lessen Sir Walter's standing in the eyes of sensible people since "Kellynch Hall has a respectability in itself, which cannot be affected by these reductions." Anne agrees and thinks their spending should be cut even more, since there is much they do not need.

Yet, Sir Walter will not hear of altering his lifestyle so significantly. He believes doing without such comforts would be disgraceful to his rank. Finally, Mr. Shepard suggests that the Elliots should leave Kellynch Hall for a short time. In another house, he reasons, the Elliots could more easily alter their style of living to become a more modest household. Sir Walter agrees to this option only if they can find a tenant worthy enough to rent Kellynch. Sir Walter decides that the family will relocate to Bath, dismissing Anne's dislike of the city.
Lady Russell thinks the relocation of the family is a very good idea for two reasons: first, it will help the Elliots save money, and second, it will hopefully separate Elizabeth from her new friend Mrs. Clay, the widowed daughter of Mr. Shepard. Lady Russell is a good woman, but she values propriety, rank, and consequence. She feels that it is out of place for Elizabeth to be friends with Mrs. Clay and she feels the slight that Elizabeth prefers the company of this woman to Anne. We learn that Lady Russell thinks Mrs. Clay a "very dangerous companion."

Analysis

The opening chapters of Persuasion introduce us to the main characters of the novel and set up the problem which will drive the rest of the plot. The primary conflict is the difficulty of saving money while keeping up the appearance of a rich and titled landowner. The problem Sir Walter faces is not unique; it emerges in part because of the class system of early nineteenth-century England. Such a system, in which families are strictly categorized by their wealth, rank, and birth, necessitates living a lifestyle consistent with one's class. Sir Walter is horrified that people might think less of him for spending less money and is shocked at the prospect of giving up comforts that he considers necessities.

Austen introduces the concept of "retrenching" and implies that it is not an infrequent occurrence for the wealthy families of her time. "Retrenching" involves living less ostentatiously for a period of time in order to save money and get out of debt. In this period of industrial and imperial progress, the traditional aristocracy was having an increasingly difficult time maintaining their large estates and lavish way of living. Lady Russell suggests that the retrenching of respected families is a common occurrence. She notes that, "there will be nothing singular in his case, and it is singularity which often makes the worst part of our suffering, as it always does of our conduct."

In these chapters, we see the first example of persuasion. Anne, Lady Russell, and Mr. Shepard gently convince Sir Walter that it would be best for him to leave Kellynch Hall for a time. They persuade not by appealing to practicality, about which he cares little, but by appealing to his vanity. He is induced to believe that Bath will provide him more consequence and enjoyment than he can receive in Somersetshire. This is an example of positive persuasion that influences a decision on the side of practicality.
These opening chapters establish the Elliot family dynamics. Sir Walter is a "silly parent," and like silly parents in many Austen novels, he precipitates the initial crisis. His vanity and impracticality mean that his more sensible daughter, Anne, must find a way to straighten out the mess. Sir Walter serves as a foil for the valued characteristics which will bring closure to the novel. By existing as a conceited, image-conscious, and insensible man, Sir Walter highlights Anne's opposing qualities of self-deprecation, humility, and sensibility. He has not transmitted his characteristics to her, yet their differences foreshadow potential future conflict in the novel.

3.2 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 3-4

Summary: Chapter 3

Observing that England is now at peace, Mr. Shepard remarks that many men of the English Navy will soon be back to home. He suggests that a sailor would be a very desirable tenant to rent Kellynch Hall because they are so meticulous and careful with their possessions.

The family enters into a conversation on the merits of the Navy as a profession. Anne asserts that naval men work extremely hard and that they must all be indebted to them for their service. Sir Walter counters that he would never want any of his relatives to be a part of the Navy for two reasons: first, it is a "means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction" and second, it severely weathers a man's youth and appearance. Mrs. Clay makes the point that every career, except that of the privileged landowner, does its part to wear on the looks and health of men.

News comes that Admiral Croft, a native of Somersetshire and a man with quite a large fortune, is interested in renting Kellynch Hall. Sir Walter is concerned that Admiral Croft's appearance must be "orange" and weatherbeaten from all his time at sea. But Mr. Shepard assures him that the Admiral is a "well-looking man" who would be an extremely desirable and appreciative tenant. The Admiral is a gentleman, and he has a wife but no children. A woman, Shepard argues, is much more likely to keep a watchful eye over the estate. Furthermore, Admiral Croft has family connections to the area; his wife's brother, Mr. Wentworth, was a curate at Monkford. Sir Walter concedes that the sentence, "I have
let my house to Admiral Croft" has a good sound to it, since the consequence and rank of the tenant is quite clear. Finally convinced by the "extreme happiness" the Crofts would have at being chosen to be the tenants of Kellynch, Sir Walter agrees to let them rent his estate. Elizabeth is strongly in favor of going to Bath and is happy to have a tenant so soon. At the end of the chapter, Anne walks outside with flushed cheeks and thinks fondly to herself that her love interest "may soon be walking here."

**Summary: Chapter 4**

Anne's love interest is Captain Frederick Wentworth, the brother of the former curate of Monkford and of Mrs. Croft. The narrator recounts the events of the summer of 1806 in which Captain Wentworth was visiting his brother in the area and became acquainted with Anne. They fell in love and had hoped to marry but Anne's family and her trusted friend Lady Russell thought it a degrading alliance. In 1806 Captain Wentworth was without fortune or high birth. Lady Russell thought it was her duty, in the absence of Anne's mother, to persuade her not to marry beneath her social class. She vehemently opposed the match.

Anne, very young and gentle at this time, did not want to contradict her father's wishes and her friend's advice. She was persuaded that their engagement was improper and impractical, and she ended it. Her consolation was that her prudence and self-denial was for his good, as well as her own, and that Captain Wentworth would be better off unattached to her. But he was angry at being given up so easily, and he proudly left the country. Anne suffered from the lonely effects of her decision for the seven years from their short engagement to the present time. She did not stop thinking about her Captain, who by now, she reasons, must have made a large fortune.

Since that time, there was no man who matched Captain Wentworth in Anne's affections, though Charles Musgrove proposed to her. Although her father condoned this match, she refused him, and he married instead her younger sister, Mary.

Anne regretted her refusal of Captain Wentworth, but she did not blame Lady Russell for her unwanted advice. She understood that Lady Russell's motives were good, however selfish her father's might be. Seven years let Anne mature, and her maturity
brought a greater understanding of love, romance, and happiness. The thought of Captain Wentworth’s sister inhabiting Kellynch Hall brings all these emotions to the forefront of Anne’s mind.

Analysis

Persuasion explores the role of the Navy in early nineteenth-century class-structured society. Sir Walter’s principal objection to the Navy is that it brings "persons of obscure birth into undue distinction." Thus, he dislikes and disapproves of its function as a means of social mobility. The Navy allows men who are dedicated and hard-working to build not only a fortune, but also to gain respect and social status. His objection then, is not only to the Navy, but to increasing social mobility in society. Sir Walter's dislike of this progress, in which birthright loses some of its social importance, is representative of upper-class nineteenth-century British men.

On the other hand, Anne sees the Navy as a source of national pride. In this period of English history, England was often embroiled in wars with France and skirmishes with America. Domestic politics gave way to perceived international threats and the Navy was considered the arm of English power and the defender of British sovereignty. The officers of the Navy held a charm and an attraction for young girls at home, who believed that they had a reputation for gallantry and bravery.

Chapter Four highlights the theme of persuasion. Anne is persuaded by the disapproval of her father and of Lady Russell to end her engagement with Captain Wentworth. Such advice is against her initial decision, but she believes it is right to defer to those older and wiser, who must, she assumes, have her best interest at heart. Though seven years later Anne regrets her decision to break the engagement, Austen leaves it unclear whether her ability to be persuaded is a positive or negative character trait. Anne is torn between her duty to her class and her passion for Captain Wentworth.

Austen's style makes use of free indirect discourse, which interweaves grammatical and other features of the character's direct speech with the narrator's indirect report. This technique allows the narrator to take on the speech or thought patterns of a particular character, often expressing a sense of irony. Thus we learn that from Sir Walter's point of
view, "an admiral speaks his own consequence, and, at the same time, can never make a baronet look small."

3.3 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 5-6

Summary: Chapter 5

Admiral and Mrs. Croft come to see Kellynch. They approve of the house, grounds, and furniture, and hit it off very well with Sir Walter and Elizabeth. Sir Walter is flattered and gratified by their polished behaviour and good manners. He thinks the Admiral one of the "best-looking sailors he has ever met." It is formally approved that the Crofts will rent Kellynch. Sir Walter and Elizabeth plan to take Mrs. Clay with them to Bath as an assistant and companion. Both Anne and Lady Russell feel the imprudence of this arrangement. Though Mrs. Clay has freckles and a projecting tooth, she is not altogether bad-looking and Anne suspects that her mild manners may allow her to form an intimacy with Sir Walter which would be neither appropriate nor desirable for the Elliot family. In an effort to warn Elizabeth of this danger, Anne suggests the impropriety of bringing Mrs. Clay to Bath. But Elizabeth rejects Anne's suggestion, confident that Mrs. Clay is not pretty enough for their father to ever consider her a potential wife.

Claiming that she is unwell, Mary requests that Anne come to stay with her for a few weeks at Uppercross Cottage, rather than immediately joining Sir Walter and Elizabeth at Bath. Anne, happy to be of some use and grateful to stay in Somersetshire a while longer, gladly agrees to go to Mary. She finds her sister in a very bad mood, lying on a couch and complaining that she has been alone all morning; Charles is out shooting and her two small sons are unmanageable. Mary, we are told, was never as pretty as either of her two sisters; she has a trying nature and easily falls into self-pity when others fail to pay her attention. Anne finally manages to cheer her up enough that she could get off the sofa and go with Anne to visit the Musgroves as the Great House.

At the Great House, Austen introduces us to the Musgroves, a happy family, "friendly and hospitable, not much educated and not at all elegant." The family consists of the mother and father, the three adult children: Charles (Mary's husband), Henrietta, and Louisa, who have just returned from school at Exeter, and younger children who are
unnamed. Anne enjoys the Musgrove household for its merriness and comfort. She encourages the Miss Musgrove to join her and Mary for a walk.

**Summary: Chapter 6**

At Uppercross, Anne notices the very different topics that occupy the Musgroves’ attention. Little concerned with discussing appearances and social standing, the Musgrove family occupies itself with hunting, newspapers, house-keeping, dress, dancing, and music. She finds their presence a welcome change from the company of her father and Elizabeth.

Austen describes the marriage of Charles and Mary Musgrove as reasonably happy. Charles is good-natured enough to put up with Mary's moods, though he wastes his time on sport. Charles is much better with the children, but Mary's interference makes them unmanageable. Anne gets along tolerably with the whole family, and the young boys respect her much more than their mother.

The Musgrove family is quite pleased to have Anne visiting. While Anne is there, Mary is much happier to have a constant companion. Periodically, both Charles Musgrove and his parents entreat Anne to use her influence upon her sister to make changes. They would like Mary to better manage her children and her home, and Anne is constantly made a middle party to small complaints.

Though Anne is happy at Uppercross, it bothers her deeply that the Crofts have now moved into Kellynch. She thinks sadly of her home being inhabited by other people. She and Mary go to pay a visit to the Crofts. The Crofts are amiable people, and Mrs. Croft has a weather-beaten complexion from spending much time at sea with her husband. Mrs. Croft mentions that her other brother, Mr. Wentworth is married, and Anne briefly fears that it is her Captain Wentworth to which Mrs. Croft refers. But Captain Wentworth is soon expected to be visiting. This news excites and unnerves Anne.

The name of Captain Wentworth sparks a recollection in Mrs. Musgrove. She remembers that her son Dick served under Captain Wentworth in the Navy and wrote of him fondly. Dick was a "troublesome, hopeless" son who had been sent to sea at the age of twenty because he was unmanageable on land. Though his family had never been very attached to him, Dick's death affected his mother deeply. To hear Captain Wentworth’s
name, a man whom her son respected and described as "dashing," made Mrs. Musgrove remember her son and grieve his loss again.

**Analysis**

Austen continues to explore the complex English class system. Comparing her own household to that of the Musgroves allows Anne to make important observations about class divisions in England. Although the Musgroves are a wealthy, landowning family, second in the parish only to the Elliots, they are not titled. They do not have as high birth and family connections as the Elliots do. Though the Elliots are perfectly happy to interact and even to intermarry with them, there are distinct differences in their ways of life. Anne notices that the Musgroves discuss sport, dress, and daily activities; they are not nearly as concerned with appearances, social standing, and the affairs of other families. This difference is at first refreshing to Anne, but at the same time, slightly disconcerting. The narrator describes the Musgroves as "not much educated and not at all elegant." Anne enjoys the Musgroves' company, but does not wish to emulate them; her taste seeks more education and more elegance. Though Anne finds both of these qualities in her own family, she dislikes their close-minded elitism.

These chapters touch upon the social positions of women within the class system. In the late nineteenth-century, a woman's social rank was extremely tenuous. Women were unique in the class society for their ability to rise or fall in social station easily. After marriage, a woman's rank was entirely dependent upon her husband's birth and social standing. In contrast, although a man might increase his fortune, he could not improve his rank by marrying a well-born woman; his wife would only fall to his level. Choosing a marriage partner well, then, was of the utmost importance for a woman. Her friends and family would seek to guide her in finding the very best man available.

In these chapters, the theme of social mobility for women is illustrated by the "dangerous" prospect of a match between Mrs. Clay and Sir Walter. Anne thinks taking Mrs. Clay to Bath is entirely imprudent and unwise, and she considers it her duty to warn Elizabeth that such a match might be a possibility. The "danger" of such a marriage is twofold. First, a marriage like this is a way for a woman of obscure birth to be brought into "undue distinction" and though Anne does not specifically say this, she is not liberal enough
in her views to avoid being offended by such a presumptuous move on Mrs. Clay's part. Second, such a marriage would turn Mrs. Clay into Lady Elliot, thereby allowing her to take precedence over both Elizabeth and Anne at family functions. When the narrator refers to the specific "danger" to Elizabeth, she means that if a marriage were to happen, Elizabeth would be ousted from her position as first lady of Kellynch Hall.

3.4 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 7-8

Summary: Chapter 7

Captain Wentworth arrives at Kellynch to visit his sister, Mrs. Croft. Mr. Musgrove goes to call on him and decides he likes the Captain very much. He invites Captain Wentworth to the Great House at Uppercross, and Mary and Anne are invited to join them in the visit. Anne is quite nervous at the prospect of seeing Captain Wentworth again after such a long time. The two sisters are on their way to the Great House when Mary’s oldest son has a bad fall and seriously dislocates his collarbone. Everyone is in distress and they call for the apothecary to come examine the boy. They find that his injury is not life-threatening.

Henrietta and Louisa Musgrove come to visit the child. They bring news that Captain Wentworth has been to their house; they both appear absolutely smitten and pleased by him. It is announced that he will have dinner the following day at the Great House. The next day, the boy is in stable condition and Charles Musgrove (the boy’s father) announces his intention to dine with his parents and Captain Wentworth. Mary is upset that Charles would leave her alone at home with Anne and the child. She is mostly angered by the idea that her husband may enjoy himself while she is stuck at home. Anne settles the matter by offering to stay home with the boy while Mary goes to the dinner with her husband. Though Anne consoles herself that she will be very useful to the sick child, she cannot believe that Captain Wentworth is less than half a mile away. That evening, Charles and Mary return after a lovely dinner. Everyone is charmed by the humour and good manners of the Captain.

The next morning, Captain Wentworth comes to call on Mary at breakfast before he and Charles go out shooting. Anne and the Captain glance at each other briefly, but it is a short meeting. Anne wonders how eight years have changed the Captain’s feelings for her. Mary tells Anne that Henrietta asked the Captain what he thought of Anne and he
responded that Anne "was so altered he should not have known her again." Anne is understandably hurt by this remark, but she reasons that it is better to know his feelings for her, whatever they may be.

The narrator tells the reader that Captain Wentworth has not forgiven Anne. He was very attached to her, and he feels that her actions eight years ago show a "feebleness of character" that he cannot endure. Now he is on the hunt for a pleasing woman to marry; anyone, he thinks, except Anne Elliot.

Summary: Chapter 8

Captain Wentworth and Anne Elliot are now in the same social circle and must repeatedly dine together. They refrain from having any conversation, however, except what politeness necessitates. Anne thinks about how their temperaments are perfectly suited to each other. She thinks that Admiral and Mrs. Croft are the only couple she knows that could be nearly as attached and happy as she and Captain Wentworth once had the chance of being.

The dinner conversation turns to the Navy and to Captain Wentworth's experiences on the ships. Mrs. Musgrove implores him to tell her what he knows of her late son, Dick Musgrove, who served beneath him on the Laconia. Captain Wentworth moves to sit next to Mrs. Musgrove and talk to her, comfortingly, about her son.

Captain Wentworth is sensitive in dealing with Mrs. Musgrove, amusing at dinner, and outspoken in his beliefs. He admits that he would never willingly let women aboard his ship, as he thinks it is not a suitable place for them. Mrs. Croft disagrees, and asserts her feeling that she has always been perfectly comfortable on board her husband's ship. The Crofts joke that when Frederick Wentworth is married, he will sing a different tune. The Crofts discuss their marriage. Mrs. Croft travels with her husband almost everywhere and cannot bear to be separated from him.

At the end of the evening there is dancing and Anne prefers to play music for them all night. Captain Wentworth seems to be having a terrific time. All the young ladies, including both Miss Musgroves are enamoured by him. Although he rarely addresses her, Anne is hurt by the "cold politeness" in his voice.
Analysis

Austen uses the narrative mode of free indirect discourse to indirectly convey the thoughts and feelings of her characters. In Chapter Seven, which concentrates on Anne's reaction to Captain Wentworth's reappearance, the narrative mode is especially apparent. Austen writes: "She had seen him. They had met. They had been once more in the same room!" Such a series of sentences allows Austen to express the excitement of her protagonist without directly forcing the narrator to declare it. This mode of narration is a literary technique characteristic of Austen.

These chapters address the issue of motherhood, another frequent theme in Austen's novels. We see two very different motherly reactions in these passages, that of Mary for her young son who is hurt and that of Mrs. Musgrove for her late son, Dick. Mary, though initially hysterical at the thought of her boy being seriously injured, soon gets over her hysteria and loses interest when she realizes he will most likely be all right. She reasons that she may as well go out to dinner, since she can be of little use to her son at home. Mary is one of Austen's "silly parents." She is silly because she pretends to have all the concerns of a mother, when in reality she has little loving feeling or maternal protectiveness. Austen presents Mary as an example of a bad (but not malicious) mother, someone who cares more about her own entertainment than her child's well-being.

Mrs. Musgrove is reminded of her late son when Captain Wentworth, his former commander, comes to dine with them. She wishes to hear as much about her son as possible, and though not hysterical, shows great regret and sadness over the fate of her boy. Unlike Mary, Mrs. Musgrove is not a "silly parent," yet like her daughter-in-law, she uses her children to draw attention to herself. Encouraging Captain Wentworth to speak of Dick means that he must give her attention and comfort. Both passages are examples of Austen's close observation of social roles and the different ways people fill those roles in society.

3.5 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 9-10

Summary: Chapter 9
Captain Wentworth has come to stay at Kellynch for an extended length of time. He makes frequent trips to Upper cross to visit the Musgroves. Charles Hayter, who is a cousin of the Musgroves and a suitor of Henrietta's, is disturbed to come back from his short trip to find Captain Wentworth so much a favourite of his cousin.

The narrator then gives background on the Hayters. Mrs. Hayter and Mrs. Musgrove are sisters, but their marriages have made a material difference in their "degree of consequence." The Hayters have an "inferior, retired and unpolished" way of living, being not as educated as the Musgroves, but there is little discord between the two amiable families. The Musgroves will not oppose a match between Henrietta and Charles Hayter if it makes her happy, but Mary thinks it a very degrading alliance for her sister-in-law.

Both Musgrove sisters seem to like Captain Wentworth, however, and the family turns to speculating which sister he will choose. Charles Hayter is quite upset at the change in Henrietta's responses toward his advances.

One morning, Captain Wentworth walks into a room while looking for the Miss Musgroves, and finds himself in a room alone with Anne and the invalid little boy. After a few awkward moments, Charles Hayter joins them, increasing the tension. The younger boy, Walter, comes in the room and starts teasing Anne; she cannot get him to disentangle himself from her. Charles Hayter tells the boy to get off his aunt, but he does not listen. Before she knows what is going on, Captain Wentworth has removed the boy from her shoulders. She is so stunned that she is unable to thank him. Later, she is grateful for his assistance, yet ashamed for being so nervous.

**Summary: Chapter 10**

Anne's observations make her believe that Captain Wentworth is not in love with either of the Musgrove sisters, but is just accepting and enjoying their attentions. Charles Hayter, feeling slighted by Henrietta, ceases to come to Uppercross after a few days.

In the morning, the Miss Musgroves stop by the cottage to announce that they are going for a long walk. Though it is clear they do not want Mary to join them, she insists on going along. When the gentlemen arrive, they all decide to go on a walk together and the party consists of the two Miss Musgroves, Captain Wentworth, Mary, Anne, and Charles.
Musgrove. Anne’s intention is to stay as out of the way as possible and just to enjoy the landscape and the day. Louisa flirts with Captain Wentworth throughout the walk and declares that if she loved a man, nothing should ever separate them.

The party makes their way to Winthrop, the home of the Hayters. Mary wants to turn around immediately, as she does not approve of associating with people of such low connection, but Charles insists on calling on his aunt; he and Henrietta visit the Hayters. While Charles and Henrietta are gone, the rest of the group looks for seats in the woods. Mary is never satisfied because she thinks Louisa must have found a better seat somewhere else. Louisa pulls Captain Wentworth aside and they talk of firmness of character; Louisa has convinced Henrietta to visit Charles, though Henrietta would have turned back from her decided destination. Captain Wentworth compares strength of character to the "happiness" of a hazelnut that has not yet dropped off the tree. The conversation continues and Louisa remarks that Mary sometimes bothers her excessively with her "Elliot pride."

Louisa tells Captain Wentworth that Charles wanted to marry Anne before Mary, but that Anne refused him. Captain Wentworth seems very interested in this piece of information. When Henrietta returns to the group, she brings Charles Hayter with her. It is now very clear that Louisa is meant for Captain Wentworth, and Henrietta for Charles.

On the walk back home, they pass Admiral and Mrs. Croft who are out in their carriage for a ride. Guessing that Anne might be tired, Captain Wentworth arranges for the Crofts to give her a ride home; Anne appreciates the kind gesture. The Crofts tell her that they hope Captain Wentworth will settle down with a nice girl soon. Anne notices that the Crofts share the reins and the responsibility of driving; Mrs. Croft steers them around posts and ruts. Anne observes that this is representative of the symbiotic way they run their marriage.

Analysis

While most of Jane Austen’s novels end in marriage, few of her works provide examples of couples with long and healthy relationships. Admiral and Mrs. Croft are an exception to this rule. Austen provides them as an example of a perfect marriage. The couple cannot bear to be apart; they are constantly together, even at sea. The drive home
illustrates the way their marriage runs. While Admiral Croft drives the carriage most of the time, Mrs. Croft not infrequently grabs the reins to steer them around posts, ruts, and obstacles. Their relationship is symbiotic, each depending on the other for their happiness. Such a vision is extraordinarily progressive for the time. The idea of separate spheres and responsibilities for men and women is destroyed in the Crofts' marriage. Because they do everything together, they take equal joy in going to sea and in fixing a creaky door in their home. Such an equal partnership was a very forward-looking vision for the generally conservative Austenian world.

3.6 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 11-12

Summary: Chapter 11

Anne plans to leave her sister Mary at Uppercross and go stay with Lady Russell for a while. She reasons this move may put her more in contact with Captain Wentworth, because Lady Russell's house is decidedly closer to Kellynch.

Captain Wentworth returns to visit Uppercross after not being seen for two days. He had gone to visit his friends, Captain and Mrs. Harville, in Lyme. He tells the Musgroves about Lyme, and they are all eager to see it. It is decided that Charles, Mary, Anne, Henrietta, Louisa, and Captain Wentworth will form a party to go visit Lyme. The following day, they arrive at Lyme, a seaside town, and are delighted by it.

Three new characters are introduced. Captain and Mrs. Harville are friends of Wentworth from the Navy who have a house in Lyme, and Captain Benwick is staying with them. The Harvilles are extremely hospitable people with excellent manners. Though they have very small quarters, they have developed great contrivances to make the best use of their space and Anne considers it a very happy home. Captain Benwick was known as "an excellent young man and an officer" but he has fallen into a deep depression since the death of his fiancée, Fanny Harville, Captain Harville's sister. Benwick has turned to poetry as solace for his sadness.

On one of their visits with the Harvilles, it falls to Anne to make conversation with Captain Benwick. Although he is initially shy, Benwick opens up to Anne and begins discussing poetry passionately. Anne recommends that he include more prose in his daily
reading. He takes her suggestion warmly, and Anne feels that she has done a good thing by patiently helping a grieving man to open up once more.

Summary: Chapter 12

The next morning, the party goes for an early morning stroll by the seashore before breakfast. While they are walking up the steps, a gentleman stops to let them pass and cannot help but look at Anne. It is clear that he finds her very attractive. Captain Wentworth notices the man admiring Anne, and turns to admire her himself.

The party goes back to the Inn to have breakfast and they find that the gentleman who admired Anne is also a guest at their hotel. They inquire as to his name and find out he is Mr. Elliot, a gentleman of large fortune. Mary assumes it must be their cousin and father's heir! She wishes that they could have been introduced before Mr. Elliot left, but Anne reminds her that such an introduction might not be proper; their father has not been on good terms with Mr. Elliot for quite some time.

The party all goes out for another walk and is joined by Captain Benwick and the Harvilles. Captain Benwick seeks Anne's company again, and Captain Harville mentions that Anne has done quite a good deed in getting Benwick talking again and bringing him out of his shell. They continue on their walk and come to a set of stairs. Louisa insists on being jumped down them by Captain Wentworth. She gets down safely but enjoys the sensation so much that she desires to do it again. But she jumps a second too soon and lands on the wall, unconscious. Mary and Henrietta become hysterical, but Anne remains calm. She directs Captain Benwick to run for a doctor and Captain Wentworth to carry her to the Inn. The Harvilles insist that Louisa be brought to their home, and there the doctor comes to examine her.

The doctor concludes that she has a severe head injury, but all is not hopeless; she will most likely have a long recovery. The Harvilles offer their home for Louisa for as long as she needs it. They decide that Captain Wentworth, Henrietta, and Mary should travel back to Uppercross to give the news to the Musgroves. Wentworth praises Anne's capability to
care for Louisa. But Mary objects and will not hear of leaving her sister-in-law. She decides to stay in Lyme and sends Anne back in the carriage with Captain Wentworth. Mrs. Harville, who has nursing experience, will care for Anne.

On the ride home, Captain Wentworth expresses the guilt he feels for Louisa’s fall. He asks Anne her opinion regarding the plan for breaking the news to the Musgroves. She feels grateful that he values her opinion. Captain Wentworth tells the Musgroves of Louisa's fall, drops Anne off at home, and returns as soon as possible to Lyme.

**Analysis**

Chapter 12 signals a climax in the novel's narrative. *Persuasion* is a linear narrative that is organized chronologically. The original edition of this novel was published in two volumes, the first volume ending at the close of Chapter 12. Louisa's fall is the greatest dramatic occurrence which has happened so far. By inserting the fall here, Austen creates a cliffhanger and encourages her readers to buy the second volume of her novel. In these chapters, the reader is shown the negative effects of what can happen when one is too stubborn. Louisa would not be persuaded to keep from jumping off the wall. Her firmness of mind means serious injury for her and significant guilt for Captain Wentworth. He is encouraged to rethink his initial judgment of the benefit of a "strong character."

**3.7 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 13-14**

**Summary: Chapter 13**

Louisa’s health continues to slowly improve at Lyme, and family friends bring constant updates of her condition to the Musgroves at Uppercross. Anne decides to leave Uppercross to stay with Lady Russell. The Musgroves go to Lyme to visit Louisa and to help Mrs. Harville with her own children while she is caring for their daughter.

Lady Russell comes in her carriage to collect Anne, and conversation between them is initially strained; Anne finds it hard to place importance on any of the normal events that Lady Russell is concerned about. Lady Russell finds Anne much improved in her plumpness and good looks. Anne is pleased by Lady Russell’s evaluation. Anne tells Lady Russell about Captain Wentworth’s attachment to Louisa Musgrove.
Lady Russell and Anne pay a visit to Mrs. Croft at Kellynch, and it pains Anne to see someone else occupying her house, though she likes the Crofts exceedingly. Admiral Croft, sensitive to her feelings, offers Anne the freedom to look about the house as much as she desires. She is grateful, but declines his offer. He mentions some of the small improvements he has happily made around Kellynch: fixing a creaky laundry door and having some of the numerous mirrors removed from Sir Walter's dressing room. He finds two small mirrors quite sufficient for himself.

The Crofts mention Captain Wentworth and how he has complimented Anne. He finds her exertions and aid to the Musgroves very admirable. Anne is flattered by this praise. The Crofts mention that they will be leaving Kellynch to go to the country and then to Bath for a few weeks. Anne is relieved, but a little disappointed, since this means she has little chance of seeing Captain Wentworth in the coming weeks.

Summary: Chapter 14

Charles and Mary finally return from Lyme. They pay a visit to Anne and Lady Russell to report that Louisa is now able to sit up, although her head is still very weak. Mary says she really enjoyed her two-week stay in Lyme; she had gone to church, bathed, dined nightly, and taken numerous books from the library. Her time was not limited by any nursing to Louisa.

Anne asks how Captain Benwick is doing, and Charles merely laughs. He thinks Captain Benwick is romantically interested in his sister-in-law. He tells Anne how highly the Captain speaks of her. Mary disagrees; she does not think Captain Benwick worthy of, or interested in, her sister. Lady Russell is amused and declares that she must see Captain Benwick for herself before she can form an opinion of him. There is a rumour that Benwick will soon ride over to Kellynch to see Anne, but he does not come, and Lady Russell dismisses him as not worth her interest.

The Musgroves return to Uppercross to care for their own younger children as well as those of the Harvilles. Lady Russell and Anne go to visit them at Uppercross. The narrator describes the strong contrast between the Musgrove house that they now see and the one of a few weeks ago. This household is filled with children, food, light, and activity, whereas
only a few weeks ago the home was depressed by the thought of the family's sick daughter. Louisa is now recovering quickly and they expect her to be home soon.

Anne does not look forward to joining her father and sister in Bath; she dislikes the large, disagreeable buildings and the feel of the city. Anne receives a letter from Elizabeth reporting that their cousin, Mr. Elliot, is in Bath. He has come to visit Sir Walter, been forgiven, and is once again accepted into the company of his uncle and cousins. Anne and Lady Russell both desire to see Mr. Elliot. They make the journey to Bath.

**Analysis**

These chapters reflect on past occurrences describe the characters of Mary, Lady Russell, and the Musgroves. Austen contrasts the traits of various characters in these chapters. In the conversation with the Crofts, the differences between Admiral Croft and Sir Walter Elliot become evident. Admiral Croft thinks it silly to have so many mirrors constantly around him in the dressing room. He is a man of relatively simple tastes, and his comments allow the reader to see the silliness and vanity of Sir Walter. Similarly, Anne contrasts the animated and friendly Musgrove home with its formerly depressed state. Visiting such a bustling place, in which she is so warmly welcomed, heightens the contrast she fears awaits her in the coldness of Bath.

**3.8 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 15-16**

**Summary: Chapter 15**

Now in Bath, Anne finds her father and sister happily situated at a house in Camden Place. Although she is very depressed to be there, she finds the welcome from her family unusually warm. They are excited to show her all the new furniture and rooms of the house, but they have no inclination to listen to Anne's stories. Sir Walter and Elizabeth are quite pleased with the pleasures and accommodations that Bath affords them, and Anne is saddened that her family should be so degraded and not even feel it.

They tell Anne how happy they are to have renewed their acquaintance with Mr. Elliot. He has often been visiting them at Camden Place. They have forgiven him for the estrangement and for his choice in marrying his first wife, who was rich, but not well-born. Mr. Elliot is now in mourning, his wife having died only six months ago. Anne cannot help
but be sceptical as to the reasons for her cousin so suddenly paying respects to his family after so long a separation. She guesses that he might be interested in marrying Elizabeth.

The conversation with Sir Walter and Elizabeth turns to the topic of appearance. Sir Walter announces his belief that Bath is filled with plain-looking women. He inquires after Mary's appearance.

Mr. Elliot arrives to visit them and finds Anne very attractive. He recognizes her from their brief meeting in Lyme and is very pleased to find that she is actually his cousin. He sits down with them, seems very interested in Anne, and tries repeatedly to talk to her. Anne thinks that he is polished, well-mannered, and sensible. After an hour, he rises to leave. Anne thinks her first evening in Bath has gone much better than she could have hoped.

**Summary: Chapter 16**

The next morning, Mrs. Clay offers to leave Bath, now that Anne has come, but Sir Walter and Elizabeth will not hear of it. This reignites worries in Anne that her father may become romantically attached to Mrs. Clay. She notices that her sister, Elizabeth, does not worry at all about this possibility. Lady Russell, with all her propriety, is vexed that Mrs. Clay should receive any precedence over Anne at Camden Place.

Lady Russell is quite charmed by Mr. Elliot, and thinks him all that he should be: sensible, moderate, pleasant, and correct in her opinions. She has no suspicions as to his motives for reuniting with his family. Anne recognizes that she may at times disagree with Lady Russell; it is her belief that Mr. Elliot is paying them attention because he means to court Elizabeth.

Now, the news comes that Lady Dalrymple and Miss Carteret, estranged cousins of the Elliots, have arrived in Bath. Lady Dalrymple is considered nobility, and Sir Walter is extremely excited about the prospect of renewing his acquaintance with her and moving with the Dalrymples among the very finest social circles in Bath. Anne is disappointed that her father and sister have so little pride as to be in awe of their cousins. Sir Walter writes the Dalrymples a letter of apology for their estrangement and receives a forgiving note in return. Anne is ashamed that her family talks of their high relations to everybody; she sees little of merit in her awkward, unaccomplished, and uninteresting relatives.
Anne talks with Mr. Elliot and finds he agrees with Sir Walter that the acquaintance with Lady Dalrymple should be pursued. Mr. Elliot believes that in a relatively small city like Bath, one's social circle is extremely important. He implies to Anne that he also worries about his uncle's connection to Mrs. Clay. He thinks such a potential attachment dangerous and he hopes to do everything possible to draw Sir Walter's attentions elsewhere.

Analysis

Here, Austen introduces the issue of place, meaning one's position both geographically and in society. The two are highly connected. Mr. Elliot points out that Sir Walter's family may be relatively insignificant in London due to their 'present, quiet style of living,' but in Bath they are able to move within prominent social circles. Anne takes offense to the idea that one's social worth is dependent on one's location. She has a more nuanced and complex vision of social standing, in which value is placed not only on birth and wealth, but on one's accomplishments, manners, and interests. In Somersetshire, the Elliot family is considered the very best; here in Bath, they could be understood to be socially beneath their cousins, the Dalrymples. Anne has pride, and she is offended at the thought that such unaccomplished and uninteresting people could be ranked above her.

Austen does not believe that the class system should be discarded. Anne is extremely conscious of class, which explains the offense she takes at the prospect of having Mrs. Clay for her step-mother. Anne is unaccustomed to being thought beneath anyone, and in some ways, she has more pride than her father and sister. She cannot bear the thought that such a respected, landed family such as hers must live in rented rooms in a city, while their home is inhabited by others. Anne is further dismayed at the small degree to which her father and sister seem to be upset by this. Austen is expressing that a certain amount of pride can be

3.9 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 17-18
Summary: Chapter 17

Anne hears that an old school friend of hers, Miss Hamilton now Mrs. Smith, is in Bath. After school, Mrs. Smith had married a rich man, but he was extravagant. Two years ago, he had died, leaving her a widow and deeply in debt. Soon afterwards, she contracted rheumatic fever and was crippled by her illness. Anne decides that she must go visit her old friend, who is now almost entirely excluded from society.

When she visits Mrs. Smith, she finds that her friend's good spirits and good manners have not left her, though she is now in an awful situation. Mrs. Smith makes a living by selling her needlework to the wealthier women of Bath. They re-establish their friendship and Anne promises to visit often.

One night, the Elliots receive an invitation to the Dalrymples' place, and Anne tells her family she must decline it because she has an engagement to visit Mrs. Smith. Sir Walter is horrified that Anne should be visiting such a poor neighbourhood and is appalled that she chooses to associate with someone so much lower in consequence than herself.

The dinner party allows Mr. Elliot and Lady Russell to talk. Mr. Elliot expresses his high regard for Anne's character, and Lady Russell becomes convinced that he means to court Anne and not Elizabeth. This decision pleases Lady Russell immensely, as she would love to see Anne, her favourite, holding her mother's place as Lady Elliot of Kellynch Hall. She thinks Anne is just like her mother in disposition and virtue. Though Anne loves the idea of becoming the future Lady Elliot, she remains suspicious of Mr. Elliot's motives and character. She finds him agreeable, but neither warm nor open.

Summary: Chapter 18

A letter arrives for Anne from Mary, and Anne is pleased to learn that the Crofts have come to Bath. Mary's letter also brings Anne the news that Louisa Musgrove has become engaged to Captain Benwick. To everyone's surprise, they have fallen in love while Louisa was recovering at the Harvilles' home. Mary says that Benwick is not a good match for Louisa, but Mary considers it much better than marrying among the Hayters.

Anne is entirely pleased by this news, both because she thinks it very healthy for Captain Benwick to be attached to a young woman, and because this means that Captain
Wentworth is once again free. Although she thinks their temperaments very different (Louisa is high-spirited and joyous; Captain Benwick more pensive and thoughtful), she is happy that they have found love.

With the Crofts in Bath, Anne looks forward to seeing them frequently. One morning, she has the good fortune to meet the Admiral while walking. He seems happy to see her and he relates to her his knowledge of the engagement between Captain Benwick and Louisa. He tells her that he and Mrs. Croft are surprised because they expected Louisa to marry their brother, Captain Frederick Wentworth. He tells her that Frederick does not seem to be upset over the news of the engagement. He suggests that Captain Wentworth come to Bath, as there are many young, available women here for him to court.

Analysis

Austen's novels are famous for their use of irony. Irony is hiding what is actually the case, not in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Austen uses irony to hint at deeper observations of social life and customs. It is ironic that Captain Benwick proposes to Louisa because they are such an unlikely match. Yet their engagement suggests Austen's observation of different kinds of marriages in society. Austen shows that not every couple is like Anne and Captain Wentworth, entirely suited in temperament. Instead, some people marry because they happen to find something close to what they are looking for at a certain point in their life. Both Captain Benwick and Louisa are in somewhat needy and desperate situations. Benwick is recovering from the death of his fiancée, and Louisa is recovering from her fall.

Although Austen finds their match amusing, she does not condemn a match made under such conditions. Rather, her irony serves to highlight her scepticism of true love. The kind of connection which Anne and Wentworth have is rare indeed, and the practical side of this novel emphasizes the good fortune of finding someone from a corresponding social class who will make you tolerably happy. Love is not merely a matter of shared passion, but of shared learning.
Mrs. Smith's sad situation once again highlights the danger women must face in a society where they have increased social mobility. Mrs. Smith has fallen drastically in her rank and consequence since her marriage and the subsequent death of her husband. Her situation illustrates the potential cruelty of such a strongly class-based society. Not only is Mrs. Smith poor and crippled, she is relatively friendless. Few will visit her in her meagre lodgings. Anne's visit is a testament to her own personal character, independence of mind, and willingness to look past social rank.

3.10 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 19-20

Summary: Chapter 19

Captain Wentworth arrives in Bath and Anne sees him the very next day when she is out walking. She is with Elizabeth, Mrs. Clay, and Mr. Elliot in town when it starts to rain. Mr. Elliot asks Lady Dalrymple if she will escort the ladies home in her carriage. Lady Dalrymple agrees but since she only has room for two of them, Anne decides to walk home with Mr. Elliot. They meet Captain Wentworth while in a store waiting for Lady Dalrymple's carriage.

Captain Wentworth is shocked to see her. He speaks to Anne and they talk of the Musgroves. Elizabeth would not acknowledge Captain Wentworth, as she thought him beneath her; this pains Anne. Elizabeth and Mrs. Clay leave to enter the carriage. On finding that there is no room for Anne, Captain Wentworth offers her his services and his umbrella. But Mr. Elliot at that moment returns to take Anne by the arm and whisk her out of the store. The people who accompany Captain Wentworth guess that there is something between Mr. Elliot and Anne.

The next morning, Anne is walking with Lady Russell when they see Captain Wentworth on the opposite side of the street. Though she knows that Lady Russell must see him, she makes no comment.

Anne grows tired of the private parties she must always attend with her family's friends, but she looks forward to an upcoming concert for the benefit of one of Lady Dalrymple's friends. Captain Wentworth is sure to be at this concert. She tells Mrs. Smith
about the upcoming concert and Mrs. Smith makes a cryptic remark that she thinks she may not have many more visits from Anne.

Summary: Chapter 20

The Elliot family goes to the concert, which all the important people in Bath will attend. Captain Wentworth enters, and Anne is pleased that her father and Elizabeth choose to acknowledge him. Wentworth stops to talk with Anne, compliments her on her level-headedness in Lyme, and expresses his good wishes for Louisa and Captain Benwick. He also tells Anne that he has some doubts about their marriage, Louisa being not nearly intellectual enough for Benwick. He is surprised that Benwick has been able to get over the death of his first love, Fanny Harville, so quickly.

Anne is very happy after her conversation with Captain Wentworth, but she is unable to sit near him during the concert. Instead, she sits next to Mr. Elliot and is asked by him to translate the Italian in their program. He compliments her excessively, hints that he was told of her fine character before he met her, and expresses his hope that her name may never change. He implies a marriage between himself and Anne. Although she is surprised, Anne is thinking instead of Captain Wentworth and how to get near enough to talk to him again. He is distant and will not come over to talk with her.

During the intermission, Anne changes seats, moving herself away from Mr. Elliot and closer to Captain Wentworth. She finally gets close enough to speak to him when Mr. Elliot once again interrupts and asks her to help him with a translation of Italian. Politeness forces her to go with him. After she is done, Captain Wentworth rushes up to Anne to bid her goodnight and let her know that he is leaving the concert. She implores him to stay, but he refuses. Anne recognizes that Captain Wentworth must be jealous of Mr. Elliot.

Analysis

In these chapters, misunderstanding and bad timing thwart the relationship between Anne and Captain Wentworth. Although both seek to ascertain the feelings and affections of the other, they are confused by the appearance of a third party, Mr. Elliot, who has his own personal motives. This part of the novel leads toward climax. Captain Wentworth is now free of all attachments, and both he and Anne are at the same place at the same time.
Though they seek the same goal, they are uncertain whether obstacles such as Anne's family or Mr. Elliot will keep them from reaching happiness. The confusion and awkwardness that fill these chapters serve a larger narrative purpose; they heighten the tension leading up to the climax of the novel.

The description of the relationship By keeping the feelings between The knowledge that Captain Wentworth and Anne are in love with each other must be released slowly. Though the reader knows what both characters are feeling, it is a testament to Austen's high value on civility that she does not make her characters passionately express their feelings. The tension is deep, but the characters' restraint of emotion is an admirable, if frustrating quality. Austen does not trust unbridled passion; she sees something improper and self-absorbed in public declarations of love. Captain Wentworth's passion must unfold gradually and with prudence, in a manner in accordance with social custom, if it is to be trusted and respected.

3.11 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 21-22

Summary: Chapter 21

The next morning, Anne goes to visit Mrs. Smith and tell her all about the concert. Mrs. Smith, having already heard a version of last night's events from one of the maids, is anxious to hear Anne's description as well. Mrs. Smith believes Anne to be in love with Mr. Elliot and she asks Anne if he has ever mentioned her in conversation. Anne tries to set Mrs. Smith straight; she reassures her that she has no interest at all in marrying her cousin. Mrs. Smith thinks that because their marriage would be so appropriate, everyone must be persuading Anne towards that end.

Mrs. Smith tells Anne the story of her acquaintance with Mr. Elliot. She considers him to be a man "without a heart or a conscience...a cold-blooded being." In the past, he had been the good friend of her late husband, and Mrs. Smith had accepted him as a friend of her own. They had often assisted him when he was having financial trouble. Mr. Elliot married entirely for money, dismissing the honor of marriage to Elizabeth in favor of wealth and independence. Mrs. Smith often heard him say that if he could sell his baronetcy, anyone could have it for fifty pounds. She shows Anne a letter written by Mr. Elliot in which he promises to destroy Kellynch or sell it for as much money as he can get. After his
marriage to a wealthy, but untitled woman, he encouraged Mr. Smith to live extravagantly and go into great debt. He brought the Smiths to financial ruin and refused to help them. Upon Mr. Smith's death, Mr. Elliot, the executor of his will, refused to act, thereby leaving all the debts and difficulties onto his grieving widow.

Mrs. Smith continues to tell Anne of Mr. Elliot's current plans, which she hears through the servants' gossip. Mr. Elliot, having long had all the money he could want, now desires beyond all else, to become baronet. When he heard that it was a distinct possibility that Sir Walter might remarry, he was outraged. If Sir Walter was to have a son with Mrs. Clay, that child and not Mr. Elliot, would be the rightful heir to Kellynch. Mr. Elliot traveled to Bath and rejoined the family in an effort to keep Mrs. Clay away from Sir Walter, and to protect his future baronetcy. When he met Anne, his motives doubled; he desires that it be written into their marriage contract that Sir Walter never re-marries.

Anne is saddened and upset by all this news about her cousin. She realizes what a cunning and manipulative man he actually is, but she is glad to have this information so that she can warn and protect her family. She decides to tell everything to Lady Russell as soon as possible.

**Summary: Chapter 22**

That evening Mr. Elliot tries to flatter and entertain Anne, but to no avail. He finds she is not at all interested in him tonight. He announces that he is leaving Bath for a few days and will return on Saturday.

The next morning, Anne intends to go visit Lady Russell, but she is met by Charles and Mary Musgrove, surprise visitors. They are warmly welcomed. Mary brings the news that some of the Musgrove family has come to Bath: Mrs. Musgrove, Henrietta, Mary, Charles, and Captain Harville. Henrietta has come to shop for wedding clothes. It is settled that she will soon marry Charles Hayter. Anne remarks that it is wonderful to have such nice parents who care more about their child's happiness than propriety.

Anne goes to visit the Musgroves where they are staying, and she once again relishes the happiness of their bustling company. While they are there, Mary looks out the window
and notices Mr. Elliot talking to Mrs. Clay on the street outside. Anne looks and confirms that it is them.

Mary and Charles get into an argument about the plans for that night. Charles has got a box for them all to see a play, but Mary thinks they must go to her father's evening party; she feels it is vital that they be introduced to the Dalrymples. She is also very curious to meet Mr. Elliot, her father's heir. Anne takes this opportunity to express that she would much rather see a play than spend time with Mr. Elliot. Captain Wentworth takes note of this. After a good deal of arguing, Charles and Mary finally decide to attend the evening party.

Sir Walter and Elizabeth enter the room briefly to extend the invitation to their party to all the Musgroves. They invite Captain Wentworth as well. The Elliots return to their home to prepare for tomorrow's party.

Analysis

In these chapters, deception is discovered as Anne finds out Mr. Elliot's true motivations behind all his attentions to her family. In a twist of dramatic irony, Mrs. Smith is the one to inform Anne of her cousin's cold-heartedness and social ambition. Anne acknowledges that she would never have this important information were it not for her own feelings that friendship must trump the value of social appearances; if Anne had not chosen to visit Mrs. Smith, she would not have known about Mr. Elliot's bad character. Austen employs dramatic irony to express a certain social justice; the crippled and impoverished Mrs. Smith is capable of ruining the plans of the wealthy Mr. Elliot.

These passages allow Austen to iron out, for her reader, the rules and limitations of social ambition in the world of Persuasion. The novel critiques aristocratic claims to distinction by painting a ridiculous caricature of Sir Walter and Elizabeth, but it condemns Mr. Elliot's more determined plan to rise in social consequence. In this world, there are rules to social mobility. It is acceptable that one should consider birth and fortune when choosing a marriage partner; Austen concedes that it is only prudent to do so. It is also acceptable, if humiliating, to seek company with one's social superiors. But it is entirely unacceptable to lie, manipulate, and feign emotion in order to gain a title. Mr. Elliot went wrong in failing to behave like a gentleman. He was callous and cold to Mrs. Smith, actions
that Anne cannot forgive. Furthermore, Mr. Elliot openly rejected the rules and values of his class and station; by writing all those years ago that he cared neither for his family nor his title. The aristocracy is based upon the core beliefs of family and tradition; by rejecting these, Mr. Elliot proves himself unworthy to hold the title of baronet.

3.12 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 23-24

Summary: Chapter 23

The next morning, Anne leaves to join the Musgroves, Captain Harville, Captain Wentworth, and Mrs. Croft for the day. They are in a parlour room, and Anne talks to Captain Harville by the window. Captain Wentworth is not far off, and is writing a letter. Anne and Captain Harville discuss the constancy of love. Anne argues that women are the more constant and faithful gender; she says that women love longest, even "when existence or when hope is gone." Captain Harville disagrees; he asserts that men remember their women long after the women have moved on. They agree to disagree. Captain Wentworth overhears the entire conversation.

Having finished his letter, Captain Wentworth slips a note to Anne, and then he and Captain Harville leave to mail the letter. Anne reads Wentworth's note. In it, he declares his constancy and his undying love for her. Anne is overcome with emotion. She exclaims that she is not feeling well and must go home at once. Though she hopes to walk alone, Charles insists on walking with her. In the street, they see Captain Wentworth, and Charles suggests that he accompany Anne the rest of the way home.

Finally alone, Anne tells Captain Wentworth how much she has loved him for this long time. Though people walk the streets around them, they are only conscious of each other. They are 'exquisitely happy' and relieved. Captain Wentworth asserts that he has never loved anyone but Anne. Although he flirted with Louisa, he never meant to be engaged to her. When he found out that others thought him promised to her, he was
distraught. He could not have been more pleased when, upon getting better, she chose to marry Captain Benwick.

Captain Wentworth tells Anne how horrible it was to be at the concert, knowing that everyone who had influence over her must persuade her to marry Mr. Elliot. Anne explains that eight years ago, she yielded to duty, but that in "marrying a man indifferent to [her],...all duty would be violated." They part for the afternoon, each overwhelmingly happy.

That night, at the Elliots' card party, Anne talks to Captain Wentworth again. She says that eight years ago, Lady Russell poorly advised her to reject him, but she believes she was right to follow that advice. She reasons that "a strong sense of duty is no bad part of a woman's portion." Captain Wentworth blames himself for the long years of separation. Learning that she would have said yes, he wishes that he had asked her to marry him again six years ago. He concludes that he was too proud, and in finally marrying her will be happier than he deserves.

**Summary: Chapter 24**

This chapter is a complete summary by the narrator. Anne and Captain Wentworth announce their engagement. Neither Elizabeth nor Sir Walter openly object. With a very large fortune, Captain Wentworth is now worthy to propose to the daughter of an indebted baronet. Lady Russell is initially upset, but her first desire is to see Anne happy, so she eventually gets over her hurt feelings. She and Captain Wentworth grow fond of each other.

Mr. Elliot is shocked and withdraws from Bath. There seems to be no man of any consequence who is a prospective husband for Elizabeth. Mrs. Clay leaves Bath and it is rumored that she is under the protection of Mr. Elliot. He had been making advances to her all along, so that she would not marry Sir Walter. She gives up all hopes of marrying Sir Walter, but the narrator suggests that she may someday be made the wife of Sir William Elliot.

Captain Wentworth helps Mrs. Smith to get some of her husband's money back and she stays a close friend of Anne's.
Anne and Captain Wentworth are utterly happy. The narrator ends with a few sentences on the Navy, a profession "which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance."

Analysis

Like many of Jane Austen’s novels, Persuasion ends with a happy marriage. Anne and Captain Wentworth renew their love for each other and announce their engagement. Wentworth, who is now significantly richer than Sir Walter, is considered worthy enough to marry Anne. The Navy has given him the freedom of making a large fortune and of moving up substantially in society. This possibility for social mobility is what the narrator refers to in the closing line of the novel as the Navy's "domestic virtue." His position in the Navy allows Captain Wentworth to be considered deserving of Anne Elliot.

However, Captain Wentworth is not the only character whose social standing has changed. The Elliot family has been humbled by Sir Walter’s significant debt. Although they were once an extremely wealthy family with a country estate, the Elliots are forced to rent their house and live more modestly. Although they retain their titles and high birth, wealth is an important factor in gauging social consequence. This fact is not lost on Sir Walter.

Anne concludes that she was right to be persuaded eight years ago. This conclusion implies that she accepts a traditional interpretation of duty; she has an obligation to follow the advice of her family and form an appropriate match. For Anne, marriage is a subordination of the self to the social order. What allows Anne to marry Captain Wentworth eight years later is not that her ideas of duty have changed; it is the social order itself that is altered. The accepted social mobility of Naval officers is what allows Anne and Captain Wentworth to finally find happiness.

4. Character Analysis

4.1 Major Characters

a) Anne Elliot

Anne Elliot, the protagonist of Persuasion, is, like most Austen heroines, witty, clever, and considerate. Austen referred to her in one of her letters as "a heroine who is
almost too good for me." Though Austen very frankly notes that the bloom of youth has left Anne, and that she is not the prettiest of the young ladies in the novel, Anne becomes most decidedly more attractive when her better qualities are noted. Anne is proud of her appearance, and she is deeply hurt after overhearing that Captain Wentworth thinks her appearance much changed for the worst. Unlike her father, Anne also takes pride in practicality, intellect, and patience.

Anne is feminine while possessing none of what Austen clearly sees as the negative characteristics of her gender; Anne is neither catty, nor flighty, nor hysterical. On the contrary, she is level-headed in difficult situations and constant in her affections. Such qualities make her the desirable sister to marry; she is the first choice of Charles Musgrove, Captain Wentworth, and Mr. Elliot.

That Anne has her own mind is clear from the way she rebels against the vanity of her father and elder sister. But Anne is not one to avoid her responsibility and duty as a member of the upper class. She understands and respects the importance of making a "suitable" match, and is offended by the prospect of someone as low as Mrs. Clay entering into her family through marriage. She is conscious of the social structure in which her relations operate, and though she may seek a bit more flexibility, she by no means wishes to seriously challenge notions of class.

In the end, Anne concludes that she is right to have been persuaded by Lady Russell, even if the advice itself was misguided. The conclusion implies that what might be considered Anne's flaw, her ability to be persuaded by others, is not really a flaw at all. It is left to the reader to agree or disagree with this. But overall, she must be highly regarded; for in her respect for duty and with an independent mind, Anne balances passion and practicality.

b) Sir Walter Elliot

Sir Walter acts as a foil to both Captain Wentworth and to Anne Elliot. As a vain, pretentious, and stubborn baronet, he maintains personal qualities that are abhorrent to Austen's protagonists. Selfish and self-absorbed, he is unable to think past himself and his own immediate desires. Yet Sir Walter is not at all evil or ill-inclined; rather, he is comically
ridiculous, a caricature of the old, titled class. Sir Walter allows Austen to poke fun at the declining aristocracy. With the rise of industry in Great Britain beginning in the late eighteenth century, old, titled families were forced to consider accepting the nouveau riche into their circle. Such industrial magnates and wealthy merchants who had made their fortunes trading with the colonies had large amounts of money, and could afford to challenge the importance of birth in social interaction. Sir Walter's strong attachment to the significance of birth appears antiquated in the new century of progress.

Sir Walter is an impractical man; his habits of lavish spending and his strong desire to maintain appearances threaten the very future of the Elliot family. This is a grave character flaw, which Anne does not easily forgive. But his vanity is perhaps the defining character of Sir Walter. With a dressing room surrounded by mirrors, a Baronetage book treasured for its description of the Elliot family, and a predilection to be seen only with attractive and socially important people, Sir Walter is the very image of conceit. Yet, Sir Walter's ridiculousness highlights the fact that his kind is no longer the preferred version of manliness. He is an effeminate man, one who would shy away from the sun for fear of a negative reaction of his complexion. In stark contrast is the gallant, brave naval officer, Captain Wentworth, a very different and more modern ideal of the British gentleman.

c) Captain Frederick Wentworth

Captain Wentworth is the prototype of the 'new gentleman.' Maintaining the good manners, consideration, and sensitivity of the older type, Wentworth adds the qualities of gallantry, independence, and bravery that come with being a well-respected Naval officer. He has made his own fortune through hard work and good sense, in direct contrast to Sir Walter who has only wasted the money that came to him through his title. Without land or high birth, Captain Wentworth is not the traditional match for a woman of Anne Eliot's position. But in true Austenian fashion, his fine personal qualities are enough to surmount the now divide which separates his position from that of Anne.
In the novel, Captain Wentworth develops, eventually overcoming his pride and shame at being once refused, in order to make another ardent overture to his chosen bride. This development is a sign of a promising future for their relationship. Like Admiral Croft, who allows his wife to drive the carriage alongside him and to help him steer, Captain Wentworth will defer to Anne throughout their marriage. Austen envisions this kind of equal partnership as the ideal marriage.

4.2 Minor Characters

a) Lady Elizabeth Elliot

At the time of the novel's opening, Lady Elliot has been dead for thirteen years. It appears that she had been a “excellent woman” and wife, both more sensible and more amiable than her husband (4).

b) Elizabeth Elliot

The eldest daughter of Sir Walter and Lady Elliot, born on June 1, 1785. Elizabeth resembles her parents closely in both looks and temperament: she is considered very beautiful and considers herself a proud Elliot. Following her mother's death thirteen years ago, she has supported Sir Walter as mistress of Kellynch Hall. As with Sir Walter, rank, consequence, propriety, and honor dominate her worldview. Although the Elliots are a respectable family, Elizabeth demonstrates her strong desire for upward mobility when the Dalrymples come to Bath. Even though the Dalrymples are at best tolerable poeple, Elizabeth appears to derive immense satisfaction from associating with them.

c) Mary Elliot

The youngest daughter of Sir Walter and Lady Elliot, born on November 20, 1791. Although Mary has inherited her share of the Elliot pride, she has neither Elizabeth's good looks nor Anne's fine sensibilities. In her father's mind, however, she has "acquired a little artificial importance by becoming Mrs. Charles Musgrove" (5). She lives with her husband and children at the Cottage in Uppercross — not far from the Great House, where the older Musgroves live with their children. Mary has occasional hypochondriac tendencies, perhaps due to a want of attention and a somewhat temperamental nature. She can be very
agreeable when in a good mood, but the converse is also true. She thus argues frequently with Charles Musgrove and Mrs. Musgrove. Fortunately, the Musgrove family accepts her temperament with good humour.

d) **William Walter Elliot**

A cousin of Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary's. Mr. Elliot is also the heir presumptive to the Elliot estate and title. Although he was expected to marry Elizabeth, he chose instead to marry a woman with considerable wealth. For this reason, he is estranged from Sir Walter and the rest of the Elliot family for many years. While the Elliots are at Bath, Mr. Elliot pays them many visits and makes up for the past. His perfectly agreeable manners and excellent sensibilities impress everyone, including Anne and Lady Russell. Ultimately, however, he is revealed to be a “a man without heart or conscience; a designing, wary, cold-blooded being, who . . . for his own interest or ease, would be guilty of any cruelty, or any treachery, that could be perpetrated without risk of his general character” (132). At the end of the novel, he is heard to have taken Mrs. Clay "under his protection" in London (133). Much like Mrs. Clay, Mr. Elliot serves as an example of how fine manners often conceal the arrière pensée — ulterior motive — of upward mobility that so plagues the upper class.

e) **Lady Russell**

A widow of "steady age and character, and extremely well provided for" who lives in Kellynch (4). She is one of the Elliots' most highly valued family friends and has fulfilled her role as godmother after Lady Elliot's death. Although she loves all of the Elliot girls, she is particularly fond of Anne and continues to serve as adviser and friend on a daily basis. Lady Russell's influence on Anne is a positive one, since she possesses a discerning mind and fine, understanding character. Occasionally, however, she places too much emphasis on such values as rank, family, and propriety. She plays an critical role in the plots of the novel, as it is she who advised Anne against marrying Captain Wentworth seven years ago.

f) **Mr. Shepherd**

A friend of the Elliot family, Mr. Shepherd is a "civil, cautious lawyer" who prefers to say only agreeable things (8). He helps the Elliots decide to leave Kellynch temporarily and is instrumental in finding an appropriate tenant (the Crofts).
g) Mrs. Clay

A daughter of Mr. Shepherd’s who has returned home after an unsuccessful marriage, bringing with her two children. She exceeds at the art of pleasing at Kellynch Hall and is thought well of by both Sir Walter and Elizabeth. Although no one describes her as beautiful — she has a projecting tooth and freckles — both Lady Russell and Anne fear that she will ingratiate herself with the Elliots to the extent that an intimacy develops with Sir Walter. Ultimately, Mrs. Clay reveals her true identity as a fortune-seeker by establishing herself "under [the] protection" of Mr. Elliot in London (166-67).

h) Mr. Musgrove

The father of Charles, Henrietta, and Louisa Musgrove, he and his wife are described as a "very good sort of people, friendly and hospitable, not much educated, and not at all elegant" (28).

i) Mrs. Musgrove

The mother of Charles, Henrietta, and Louisa Musgrove, she and her husband are described as a "very good sort of people, friendly and hospitable, not much educated, and not at all elegant" (28).

j) Charles Musgrove

Very much like his parents, he is an agreeable young man whose strength is more simplicity than elegance. He enjoys hunting and would rather spend an evening at the theater than at a party. Although he argues frequently with his wife Mary, he is still portrayed as an essentially good husband.

k) Henrietta Musgrove

A young lady of nineteen, just returned from school at Exeter, she is like "thousands of other young ladies, living to be fashionable, happy, and merry" (28). Like Louisa, she has
every advantage of looks and character but does not possess a highly cultivated mind. At times, she can be flippant and unsure of herself.

l) Louisa Musgrove

A year older than Henrietta, she resembles her sister in that she has just returned from school at Exeter and is like "thousands of other young ladies, living to be fashionable, happy, and merry" (28). Although it is thought initially that she will marry Captain Wentworth, fortune brings her together with Captain Benwick. This match subdues her character considerably and instills in her a newfound appreciation of poetry.

m) Richard Musgrove

A Musgrove son who died young. According to the narrator, “the Musgroves had had the ill fortune of a very troublesome, hopeless son; and the good fortune to lose him before he reach[ed] his twentieth year” (34). His sole importance in the narrative lies in the fact that he once served under Captain Frederick Wentworth.

n) Admiral Croft

The rear admiral of the white in the British navy. He is an accomplished and honorable man whom Sir Walter deems "the best-looking sailor he ha[s] ever met" and worthy of renting Kellynch Hall (22). Admiral Croft possesses a warm, unaffected, and hearty character.

o) Mrs. Croft

The wife of Admiral Croft and sister of Edward and Frederick Wentworth. Mrs. Croft is portrayed as an extremely kind and agreeable woman.

p) Edward Wentworth

The brother of Mrs. Croft and Captain Frederick Wentworth who formerly served as curate of Monkford, near Kellynch.

q) Charles Hayter
A somewhat awkward but agreeable cousin of the Musgroves who resides at Winthrop. He is a clergyman who often visits Uppercross in hopes of winning Henrietta over. Although Mary deems his small income unworthy of Henrietta, Charles Musgrove finds him promising and states that he has liked Charles Hayter "all [his] life" (145).

r) Miss Hayters

The sisters of Charles Hayter who visit Uppercross on occasion for dancing and entertainment.

s) Captain Harville

A good friend of Captain Wentworth and Captain Benwick. Since Captain Harville has a slightly lame leg that prevents him from exercising much, he applies his incisive mind to carpentry and other domestic activities. Although less polished than Captain Wentworth in manners, he is a perfect gentleman — open, warm, unaffected, and virtuous.

t) Mrs. Harville

Very similar in character to her husband Captain Harville, Mrs. Harville makes up for her lack of refinement with her good will. When Louisa takes a fall at the Cobb, Mrs. Harville proves herself to be an excellent nurse and plays an instrumental role in Louisa's recovery.

u) Fanny Harville

Captain Harville's sister. She was engaged to Captain Benwick but died before his return from sea. Captain Wentworth describes her as a "very superior creature" (121).

v) Lady Dalrymple

Dowager Viscountes Dalrymple arrives in Bath with much pomp and circumstance. Despite her title, however, "there was no superiority of manner, accomplishment, or understanding" in her or her daughter Miss Carteret. As the narrator notes: "Lady Dalrymple had acquired the name of 'a charming woman,' because she had a smile and a civil answer for everybody" (99).

w) Miss Cartaret
Honorable Miss Cartaret, daughter of Lady Dalrymple. She is described as "so plain and awkward, that she would never have been tolerated in Camden-place but for her birth" (99).

x) Mr. Smith

The late Charles Smith was a man who spent his money too freely. He was an intimate friend of Mr. Elliot's and often gave him money.

y) Mrs. Smith

A former classmate of Anne's, though three years her elder. During her school days, Mrs. Smith helped Anne through her homesickness and loneliness. After school, Mrs. Smith married and lived the life of a young woman of society. Her husband's extravagant spending, however, has left her with no money upon his death. Despite her unenviable situation, she remains largely cheerful, agreeable, and sensible. A woman with a penchant for gossip, she renews her friendship with Anne through the latter's frequent visits to her in Bath.

z) Mrs. Rooke

The sister of Mrs. Smith's landlady at Bath, she is friend of Mrs. Smith's. Mrs. Smith describes her as "shrewd, intelligent, sensible woman" who has a gift for observing human nature that is "infinitely superior to thousands of those who have only received 'the best education in the world'" (102-103).

5. Stylistic Devices

5.1 Domestic Comedy

Austen helped create the domestic comedy of middle-class manners, a genre that is concerned with family situations and problems. This type of novel focuses on the manners and conventions of the British middle class—in Austen's work, specifically the landed gentry. The plot is structured around problems that arise within the family concerning the particular fashions and outlook of this structured social group. The point of view is often satirical, as it
illuminates and critiques the idiosyncrasies of its members. Although the plot can offer clever solutions to the family’s conflicts, it is less important than the characterizations and the dialogue. In Persuasion, Austen’s plot revolves around the conflicts within her family and their desire to keep those they deem undesirable out. Though some characters, such as Lady Russell and Mrs. Clay, are decidedly flat, most of the Elliot family is carefully drawn to reflect the realities of upper-middle-class life.

5.2 Remembrance

Remembrance of past lovers is regarded as an important virtue in Persuasion. When Captain Benwick mourns the loss of Fanny Harville, it is regarded as highly unfortunate but at the same time honorable and respectful. Captain Harville expects Captain Benwick to remember his sister for a long time — certainly longer than he actually does. Although Captain Harville does not go too far in his criticism of Captain Benwick’s engagement to Louisa, he notes that his sister would have remembered the captain for much longer. There is a strong sense that the past must be embraced almost continuously. Indeed, one of the reasons why Anne becomes suspicious of Mr. Elliot is that he never shows signs of mourning his wife. And of course, remembrance applies not only to the dead, but also to those who are far away. The question of which sex remembers lovers longer provides fuel for a passionate debate between Anne and Captain Harville at the end of the novel. As it turns out, Anne and Captain Wentworth — the heroine and hero — both possess the virtue of remembrance.

5.3 Walking

Walking is a motif that is employed throughout Persuasion and Austen’s other novels. When characters go for walks in the novel, it often signals a period of character development. Walking entails conversing with others, commenting on one’s surroundings, and reacting to the world outside. It allows an author to expand upon her reader’s understanding of a character by bringing the character out into a different light. In Persuasion, walks are essential for the progression of Anne and Captain Wentworth’s relationship. Anne learns of his feelings regarding female constancy on one of their initial
walks, and at the end they reveal their feelings to each other on a walk home through the park. Walking is a frequent and essential motif.

5.4 Reading and Poetry

Many of the characters in the novels are readers. Sir Walter reads his family lineage in the Baronetage; Captain Wentworth reads his naval records; Anne and Lady Russell are both implied to have read a great deal; Captain Benwick can recite lines and lines of romantic poetry; and even Mary enjoys the library at Lyme. For Anne, poetry seems to increase her appreciation of nature and also serves as an occasional form of distraction. Books evidently don't supply Mary with superior sensibilities, however, and fail in other ways. With regards to Captain Benwick, for example, Anne's suggestion that he read more prose is telling. Poetry overcomes the senses; it carries him away and perhaps facilitates his falling in love with Louisa. A tentative conclusion that we can draw is that the meaning of reading lies not in books but in their readers. Sir Walter reads the Baronetage to confirm his title and indulge in self-satisfaction; for Elizabeth, on the other hand, the words "heir presumptive" after the name of William Walter Elliot makes the same book unpleasant.

6. Study Questions (Sample Questions and Answers)

6.1 Does Persuasion challenge or defend the status of class structure in early nineteenth century British society? How?

Answer for Study Question 1

Austen challenges the class structure of her society. She employs irony and satire to poke fun at people in positions of high social consequence. Sir Walter is a perfect example of a caricature of a titled landowner. Austen's treatment of him is subtly subversive; by making his vanity a joke, she lessens the grandeur and respect of his position. Austen also treats the Navy favorably. As a means of social mobility which undercuts the traditional landed gentry system, the Navy is a relatively progressive institution. This novel supports the 'domestic virtues' of the Navy, and therefore may be thought to challenge existing ideas of class.
On the other hand, *Persuasion* does defend the relatively rigid class structure in some ways. Anne Elliot strongly dislikes Mrs. Clay, and is averse to any marriage between her father and a woman of a lower class. Anne finally concludes that she was right to allow herself to be persuaded and that she ought to have upheld her class duty. Anne's marriage to Captain Wentworth of course does not disrupt the class system. Wentworth has risen in wealth and consequence during the eight years he has been at sea. Anne's marriage at the end of the novel is perfectly suitable, and does not challenge the class system.

6.2 What is the significance of the title "Persuasion"? How are the novel's characters positively and negatively affected by persuasion in the story?

**Answer for Study Question 2**

Anne Elliot is clearly the foremost example of one who is persuaded. Eight years before the novel begins, Lady Russell persuaded Anne not to marry Captain Wentworth. This leads the Captain to negatively judge Anne's firmness of mind and strength of character. But Anne does not agree that persuasion negatively affected her. Although she disagrees with the content of Lady Russell's advice, she thinks it was right to be persuaded. A sound mind, she reasons, pays heed to duty and to the judgment of others.

In contrast, Louisa Musgrove is an example of someone who could not be persuaded. Try as he might, Captain Wentworth could not get Louisa to keep from jumping off the wall. While he initially praises Louisa's strong character, Captain Wentworth later realizes that there is a big difference between a constant disposition and a stubborn mind. In the end, Austen allows the reader to judge whether persuasion is a positive or negative force.

7. **Suggested Essay Topics**

a) What is the role of parents in *Persuasion*? What kinds of examples do they set for their own children?

b) Is *Persuasion* a romantic novel? Why or why not?

c) What rhetorical and narrative techniques does Austen employ in her novel? How do they affect the novel's overall narration?
d) Which characters change throughout the course of the novel? Which ones remain static? What are the larger implications for this personal growth or stagnation?

e) Why is it so important to keep Kellynch within the Elliot family? How important is Kellynch to the different members of the family?

8. Suggestions for Further Reading


9. Bibliography


STRUCTURE

1. Background

1.1 Introduction to the Author

Emily Bronte lived most of her life in England on the North Yorkshire moors like those depicted in *Wuthering Heights*. Not many details are known about her life. As one Bronte scholar stated, "Next to her genius, the most astonishing thing about Emily Bronte is the silence which surrounds her life." Charlotte Bronte declared that Emily's "disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she seldom crossed the threshold of home. Though her feeling for the people [all around] was benevolent, intercourse with them was never sought; nor, with very few exceptions, ever experienced."

Emily Jane was the fifth of six children born to the Reverend Patrick and Maria Bronte on July 30, 1818, in the village of Bradford, Yorkshire. Three years after Emily was born, her mother died of cancer, the first of several tragedies that would befall the Bronte family. Just before Emily's sixth birthday, she and her older sisters--Maria, Elizabeth, and Charlotte--enrolled at the Cowan Bridge School. Maria and Elizabeth both fell ill, and on May 6, 1825, Maria succumbed to her illness. The other three girls then left for home, where Elizabeth died two weeks later.

In June 1826, Mr. Bronte returned from travelling with a set of twelve wooden soldiers for Emily's brother, Branwell. Led by Charlotte and Branwell, the Bronte children created imaginative stories, poems, plays, and games about a magical world they created...
for "The Twelves," as they called the soldiers. They founded a kingdom on the African coast with a city named Great Glass Town, complete with a government, newspapers, magazines, generals, poets, historians, publishers, and actors. Their adventures were recorded in tiny booklets, often less than two inches square, in minute handwriting. One hundred of the booklets—whose word count is equal to the total published works of the three sisters—have been preserved.

Charlotte discovered Emily's poems in October 1845 and convinced her sisters to collaborate on a volume of poetry. They chose to use pseudonyms to avoid the criticism and prejudice often directed towards women writers. In May 1846, Poems (by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell) was published, with the Bronte’s paying for the costs; only two copies were sold.

Emily began working on Wuthering Heights in December 1845. She completed it in July 1846 and began submitting it for publication (along with Anne's Agnes Grey and Charlotte's The Professor). In December 1847, the publisher T. C. Newby published Wuthering Heights. One year later, on December 19, 1848, Emily died from the effects of a severe cold. Two years later, Wuthering Heights was reissued, along with a selection of Emily's poems and a biographical notice by Charlotte.

About Emily Bronte, Virginia Woolf wrote that she had the ability to “tear up all that we know human beings by, and fill these unrecognizable transparencies with such a gust of life that they transcend reality. . . . She could free life from its dependence on facts; with a few touches indicate the spirit of a face so that it needs no body; by speaking of the moor make the wind blow and the thunder roar.”

1.2 Introduction to the Novel

Wuthering Heights is Emily Bronte’s only novel, an impassioned, spellbinding tale considered to be one of the greatest literary works of all time. The story—as turbulent as its title suggests—transports the reader to the North Yorkshire moors to witness the drama of the Earnshaws and the Lintons, and the volatile, yet spiritual, relationship of Catherine and Heathcliff.

Wuthering Heights, which has long been one of the most popular and highly regarded novels in English literature, seemed to hold little promise when it was published in 1847, selling very poorly and receiving only a few mixed reviews. Victorian readers found the book shocking and inappropriate in its depiction of passionate, ungoverned love and cruelty (despite the fact that the novel portrays no sex or bloodshed), and the work was virtually ignored. Even Emily Bronte’s sister Charlotte—an author whose works contained similar motifs of Gothic love and desolate landscapes—remained ambivalent toward the unapologetic intensity of her sister’s novel. In a preface to the book, which she wrote shortly after Emily Bronte’s death, Charlotte Brontë stated, “Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know. I scarcely think it is.”
Emily Bronte lived an eccentric, closely guarded life. She was born in 1818, two years after Charlotte and a year and a half before her sister Anne, who also became an author. Her father worked as a church rector, and her aunt, who raised the Bronte children after their mother died, was deeply religious. Emily Bronte did not take to her aunt’s Christian fervour; the character of Joseph, a caricature of an evangelical, may have been inspired by her aunt’s religiosity. The Bronte’s lived in Haworth, a Yorkshire village in the midst of the moors. These wild, desolate expanses—later the setting of Wuthering Heights—made up the Bronte’s’ daily environment, and Emily lived among them her entire life. She died in 1848, at the age of thirty.

As witnessed by their extraordinary literary accomplishments, the Bronte children were a highly creative group, writing stories, plays, and poems for their own amusement. Largely left to their own devices, the children created imaginary worlds in which to play. Yet the sisters knew that the outside world would not respond favourably to their creative expression; female authors were often treated less seriously than their male counterparts in the nineteenth century. Thus the Bronte sisters thought it best to publish their adult works under assumed names. Charlotte wrote as Currer Bell, Emily as Ellis Bell, and Anne as Acton Bell. Their real identities remained secret until after Emily and Anne had died, when Charlotte at last revealed the truth of their novels’ authorship.

Today, Wuthering Heights has a secure position in the canon of world literature, and Emily Bronte is revered as one of the finest writers—male or female—of the nineteenth century. Like Charlotte Bronte’s Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights is based partly on the Gothic tradition of the late eighteenth century, a style of literature that featured supernatural encounters, crumbling ruins, moonless nights, and grotesque imagery, seeking to create effects of mystery and fear. But Wuthering Heights transcends its genre in its sophisticated observation and artistic subtlety. The novel has been studied, analyzed, dissected, and discussed from every imaginable critical perspective, yet it remains unexhausted. And while the novel’s symbolism, themes, structure, and language may all spark fertile exploration, the bulk of its popularity may rest on its unforgettable characters. As a shattering presentation of the doomed love affair between the fiercely passionate Catherine and Heathcliff, it remains one of the most haunting love stories in all of literature.

2. Major Themes

The Destructiveness of a Love

Catherine and Heathcliff’s passion for one another seems to be the centre of Wuthering Heights, given that it is stronger and more lasting than any other emotion displayed in the novel, and that it is the source of most of the major conflicts that structure the novel’s plot. As she tells Catherine and Heathcliff’s story, Nelly criticizes both of them harshly, condemning their passion as immoral, but this passion is obviously one of the most compelling and memorable aspects of the book. It is not easy to decide whether Bronte
intends the reader to condemn these lovers as blameworthy or to idealize them as romantic heroes whose love transcends social norms and conventional morality. The book is actually structured around two parallel love stories, the first half of the novel centring on the love between Catherine and Heathcliff, while the less dramatic second half features the developing love between young Catherine and Hareton. In contrast to the first, the latter tale ends happily, restoring peace and order to Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. The differences between the two love stories contribute to the reader’s understanding of why each ends the way it does.

The most important feature of young Catherine and Hareton’s love story is that it involves growth and change. Early in the novel Hareton seems irredeemably brutal, savage, and illiterate, but over time he becomes a loyal friend to young Catherine and learns to read. When young Catherine first meets Hareton he seems completely alien to her world, yet her attitude also evolves from contempt to love. Catherine and Heathcliff’s love, on the other hand, is rooted in their childhood and is marked by the refusal to change. In choosing to marry Edgar, Catherine seeks a more genteel life, but she refuses to adapt to her role as wife, either by sacrificing Heathcliff or embracing Edgar. In Chapter XII she suggests to Nelly that the years since she was twelve years old and her father died have been like a blank to her, and she longs to return to the moors of her childhood. Heathcliff, for his part, possesses a seemingly superhuman ability to maintain the same attitude and to nurse the same grudges over many years.

Moreover, Catherine and Heathcliff's love is based on their shared perception that they are identical. Catherine declares, famously, “I am Heathcliff,” while Heathcliff, upon Catherine’s death, wails that he cannot live without his “soul,” meaning Catherine. Their love denies difference, and is strangely asexual. The two do not kiss in dark corners or arrange secret trysts, as adulterers do. Given that Catherine and Heathcliff’s love is based upon their refusal to change over time or embrace difference in others, it is fitting that the disastrous problems of their generation are overcome not by some climactic reversal, but simply by the inexorable passage of time, and the rise of a new and distinct generation. Ultimately, *Wuthering Heights* presents a vision of life as a process of change, and celebrates this process over and against the romantic intensity of its principal characters.

**The Precariousness of Social Class**

As members of the gentry, the Earnshaws and the Lintons occupy a somewhat precarious place within the hierarchy of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British society. At the top of British society was the royalty, followed by the aristocracy, then by the gentry, and then by the lower classes, who made up the vast majority of the population. Although the gentry, or upper middle class, possessed servants and often large estates, they held a nonetheless fragile social position. The social status of aristocrats was a formal and settled matter, because aristocrats had official titles. Members of the gentry, however, held no titles, and their status was thus subject to change. A man might see
himself as a gentleman but find, to his embarrassment, that his neighbours did not share this view. A discussion of whether or not a man was really a gentleman would consider such questions as how much land he owned, how many tenants and servants he had, how he spoke, whether he kept horses and a carriage, and whether his money came from land or “trade”—gentlemen scorned banking and commercial activities.

Considerations of class status often crucially inform the characters’ motivations in Wuthering Heights. Catherine’s decision to marry Edgar so that she will be “the greatest woman of the neighborhood” is only the most obvious example. The Lintons are relatively firm in their gentry status but nonetheless take great pains to prove this status through their behaviours. The Earnshaws, on the other hand, rest on much shakier ground socially. They do not have a carriage, they have less land, and their house, as Lockwood remarks with great puzzlement, resembles that of a “homely, northern farmer” and not that of a gentleman. The shifting nature of social status is demonstrated most strikingly in Heathcliff’s trajectory from homeless waif to young gentleman-by-adoption to common labourer to gentleman again (although the status-conscious Lockwood remarks that Heathcliff is only a gentleman in “dress and manners”).

Solitude

For a novel that draws its plot from the vicissitudes of interpersonal relationships, it is notable how many of the characters seem to enjoy solitude. Heathcliff and Hindley both state their preference for isolation early in the novel and Lockwood explains that solitude is one of the reasons he chose to move to the remote Thrushcross Grange. Each of these characters believes that solitude will help them get over romantic disappointments: Heathcliff becomes increasingly withdrawn after Catherine’s death; Hindley becomes more cruel than ever to others after he loses his wife, Frances; and Lockwood’s move to the Grange was precipitated by a briefly mentioned romantic disappointment of his own. However, Bronte ultimately casts doubt on solitude’s ability to heal psychic wounds. Heathcliff’s yearning for Catherine causes him to behave like a monster to people around him; Hindley dies alone as an impoverished alcoholic; and Lockwood quickly gives up on the Grange’s restorative potential and moves to London.

Doubles

Given the symmetrical structure of Wuthering Heights, it follows naturally that Bronte should thematize doubles and doubleness. Catherine Earnshaw notes her own "double character" (66) when she tries to explain her attraction to both Edgar and Heathcliff, and their shared name suggests that Cathy Linton is, in some ways, a double for her mother. There are also many parallel pairings throughout the novel that suggests that certain characters are doubles of each other: Heathcliff and Catherine, Edgar and Isabella, Hareton and Cathy, and even Hindley and Ellen (consider the latter’s deep grief when
Hindley dies, and that they are 'milk siblings'). Catherine's famous insistence that "I am Heathcliff" (82) reinforces the concept that individuals can share an identity.

**Self-knowledge**

Brontë frequently dissociates the self from the consciousness—that is, characters have to get to know themselves just as they would another person. This becomes a major concern when Catherine Earnshaw decides against her better judgment to marry Edgar Linton; she is self-aware enough to acknowledge that she has a 'double character' and that Heathcliff may be a better match for her, but she lacks the confidence to act on this intuition. Self-knowledge also affects how characters get to know others; Isabella knows how violent Heathcliff is, but is unable to acknowledge this because she believes herself capable of controlling him.

**Sibling relationships**

Sibling relationships are unusually strong in the Earnshaw and Linton families. Indeed, the novel's most prominent relationship—the love between Catherine and Heathcliff—begins when the two are raised as siblings at Wuthering Heights. It is never entirely clear whether their love for each other is romantic or the love of extremely close siblings; although Catherine expresses a desire to marry Heathcliff, they are never shown having sex and their union seems more spiritual than physical. After Catherine's death, Heathcliff gets revenge on Edgar for marrying Catherine by encouraging Isabella to marry him and then mistreating her. Given that Emily Bronte is thought to have had no friends outside of her own family (although she was very close to her brother Branwell and her sisters Anne and Charlotte), it is perhaps unsurprising that close sibling relationships are a driving force in her only novel.

**Humanity versus nature**

Bronte is preoccupied with the opposition between human civilization and nature. This is represented figuratively in her descriptions of the moors, but she also ties this conflict to specific characters. For example, Catherine and Heathcliff resolve to grow up "as rude as savages" (46) in response to Hindley's abuse, and Ellen likens Hindley to a "wild-beast" (73). The natural world is frequently associated with evil and reckless passion; when Bronte describes a character as 'wild,' that character is usually cruel and inconsiderate—take for example Heathcliff, Catherine Earnshaw, and Hindley. However, Bronte also expresses a certain appreciation for the natural world; Linton and Cathy Linton's ideas of heaven both involve peaceful afternoons in the grass and among the trees. Likewise, Hareton is actually a very noble and gentle spirit, despite his outward lack of civilization and his description as a "rustic" (299).

In *Wuthering Heights*, Bronte constantly plays nature and culture against each other. Nature is represented by the Earnshaw family, and by Catherine and Heathcliff in particular.
These characters are governed by their passions, not by reflection or ideals of civility. Correspondingly, the house where they live—Wuthering Heights—comes to symbolize a similar wildness. On the other hand, Thrushcross Grange and the Linton family represent culture, refinement, convention, and cultivation.

When, in Chapter VI, Catherine is bitten by the Lintons’ dog and brought into Thrushcross Grange, the two sides are brought onto the collision course that structures the majority of the novel’s plot. At the time of that first meeting between the Linton and Earnshaw households, chaos has already begun to erupt at Wuthering Heights, where Hindley’s cruelty and injustice reign, whereas all seems to be fine and peaceful at Thrushcross Grange. However, the influence of Wuthering Heights soon proves overpowering, and the inhabitants of Thrushcross Grange are drawn into Catherine, Hindley, and Heathcliff’s drama. Thus the reader almost may interpret Wuthering Heights’s impact on the Linton family as an allegory for the corruption of culture by nature, creating a curious reversal of the more traditional story of the corruption of nature by culture. However, Brontë tells her story in such a way as to prevent our interest and sympathy from straying too far from the wilder characters, and often portrays the more civilized characters as despicably weak and silly. This method of characterization prevents the novel from flattening out into a simple privileging of culture over nature, or vice versa. Thus in the end the reader must acknowledge that the novel is no mere allegory.

3. Chapter Analysis

3.1 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 1-5

Summary: Chapter 1

It is 1801, and the narrator, Mr. Lockwood, relates how he has just returned from a visit to his new landlord, Mr. Heathcliff. Lockwood, a self-described misanthropist, is renting Thrushcross Grange in an effort to get away from society following a failure at love. He had fallen in love with a "real goddess" (6), but when she returned his affection he acted so coldly she "persuaded her mamma to decamp." He finds that relative to Heathcliff, however, he is extremely sociable. Heathcliff, "a dark skinned gypsy, in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman" (5) treats his visitor with a minimum of friendliness, and Wuthering Heights, the farm where Heathcliff lives, is just as foreign and unfriendly. 'Wuthering' means stormy and windy in the local dialect. As Lockwood enters, he sees a name carved near the door: Hareton Earnshaw. Dangerous-looking dogs inhabit the bare and old-fashioned rooms, and threaten to attack Lockwood: when he calls for help Heathcliff implies that Lockwood had tried to steal something. The only other inhabitants of Wuthering Heights are an old servant named Joseph and a cook—neither of whom are much friendlier than Heathcliff. Despite his rudeness, Lockwood finds himself drawn to Heathcliff: he describes him as intelligent, proud and morose—an unlikely farmer. Heathcliff gives Lockwood some wine
and invites him to come again. Although Lockwood suspects this invitation is insincere, he decides he will return because he is so intrigued by the landlord.

Analysis

This chapter introduces the reader to the frame of the story: Lockwood will gradually discover the events which led to Heathcliff—now about forty years old—living with only his servants at Wuthering Heights, almost completely separated from society. Here, Heathcliff is characterized by casual violence and lack of concern for manners or consideration for other people. This is only a hint of the atmosphere of the whole novel, in which violence is contrasted with more genteel and civilized ways of living.

Summary: Chapter 2

Annoyed by the housework being done in the Grange, Lockwood pays a second visit to Wuthering Heights, arriving there just as snow begins to fall. The weather is cold, the ground is frozen, and his reception matches the bleak unfriendliness of the moors. After yelling at the old servant Joseph to open the door, he is finally let in by a peasant-like young man. The bare kitchen is warm, and Lockwood assumes that the young and beautiful girl there is Mrs. Heathcliff. He tries to make conversation but she is consistently scornful and inhospitable, and he only embarrasses himself. There is "a kind of desperation" (11) in her eyes. She refuses to make him tea unless Heathcliff said he could have some. The young man and Heathcliff come in for tea. The young man behaves boorishly and seems to suspect Lockwood of making advances to the girl. Heathcliff demands tea "savagely" (12), and Lockwood decides he doesn't really like him. Trying to make conversation again, Lockwood gets into trouble first assuming that the girl is Heathcliff's wife, and then that she is married to the young man, who he supposes to be Heathcliff's son. He is rudely corrected, and it transpires that the girl is Heathcliff's daughter-in-law but her husband is dead, as is Heathcliff's wife. The young man is Hareton Earnshaw. It is snowing hard and Lockwood requests a guide so he can return home safely, but he is refused: Heathcliff considers it more important that Hareton take care of the horses. Joseph, who is evidently a religious fanatic, argues with the girl, who frightens him by pretending to be a witch. The old servant doesn't like her reading. Lockwood, left stranded and ignored by all, tries to take a lantern, but Joseph offensively accuses him of stealing it, and sets dogs on him. Lockwood is humiliated and Heathcliff and Hareton laugh. The cook, Zillah, takes him in and says he can spend the night.

Analysis

Bronte begins to develop the natural setting of the novel by describing snowstorms and the moors, and it becomes clear that the bleak and harsh nature of the Yorkshire hills is not merely a geographical accident. It mirrors the roughness of those who live there: *Wuthering Heights* is firmly planted in its location and could not exist anywhere else.
Knowing Emily Bronte’s passionate fondness for her homeland, we can expect the same bleakness which Lockwood finds so disagreeable to take on a wild beauty. Its danger cannot be forgotten, though: a stranger to those parts could easily lose his way and die of exposure. Heathcliff and the wind are similar in that they have no pity for weakness. The somewhat menacing presence of the natural world can also be seen in the large number of dogs who inhabit Wuthering Heights: they are not kept for pets.

The power dynamics that Lockwood observes in the household of Wuthering Heights are extremely important. The girl is evidently frightened of Heathcliff and scornful of Hareton; Hareton behaves aggressively because he is sensitive about his status; Heathcliff does not hesitate to use his superior physical strength and impressive personality to bully other members of his household. The different ways in which different characters try to assert themselves reveal a lot about their situation. Most notably, it is evident that in this house, sheer force usually wins out over intellectual and humane pretensions. The girl is subversive and intellectual, an unwilling occupant of the house, but she can achieve little in the way of freedom or respect.

Lockwood continues to lose face: his conversational grace appears ridiculous in this new setting. Talking to Heathcliff, for example, he refers to the girl as a "beneficent fairy," which is evidently neither true nor welcome flattery. This chapter might be seen, then, as a continuation of the strict division between social ideals (grace, pleasant social interactions, Lockwood) and natural realities (storms, frost, dogs, bluntness, cruelty, Hareton, Heathcliff). If the chapter was taken by itself, out of context, the reader would see that while social ideals are ridiculed, it is clear that the cruel natural world is ugly and hardly bearable. However, these depictions will change and develop as the novel continues.

**Summary: Chapter 3**

Zillah quietly shows Lockwood to a chamber which, she says; Heathcliff does not like to be occupied. She doesn't know why, having only lived there for a few years. Left alone, Lockwood notices the names "Catherine Earnshaw," "Catherine Linton," and "Catherine Heathcliff" scrawled over the window ledge. He leafs through some old books stacked there, and finds that the margins are covered in handwriting—evidently the child Catherine’s diary. He reads some entries which evoke a time in which Catherine and Heathcliff were playmates living together as brother and sister, and bullied by Joseph (who made them listen to sermons) and her older brother Hindley. Apparently Heathcliff was a 'vagabond' taken in by Catherine's father, raised as one of the family, but when the father died Hindley made him a servant and threatened to throw him out, to Catherine's sorrow.

Lockwood then falls asleep over a religious book, and has a nightmare about a fanatical preacher leading a violent mob. Lockwood wakes up, hears that a sound in his dream had really been a branch rubbing against the window, and falls asleep again. This time he dreams that he wanted to open the window to get rid of the branch, but when he
did, a "little, ice-cold hand" (25) grabbed his arm, and a voice sobbed "let me in." He asked who it was, and was answered: "Catherine Linton. I'm come home, I'd lost my way on the moor." He saw a child's face and, afraid, drew the child's wrist back and forth on the broken glass of the window so that blood soaked the sheets. Finally he gets free, and insists that he won't let the creature in, even if it has been lost for twenty years, as it claims. He wakes up screaming.

Heathcliff comes in, evidently disturbed and confused, unaware that Lockwood is there. Lockwood tells him what happened, mentioning the dream and Catherine Linton’s name, which distresses and angers Heathcliff. Lockwood goes to the kitchen, but on his way he hears Heathcliff at the window, despairingly begging 'Cathy' to come in "at last" (29). Lockwood is embarrassed by his host’s obvious agony.

Morning comes: Lockwood witnesses an argument between Heathcliff and the girl, who has been reading. Heathcliff bullies her, and she resists spiritedly. Heathcliff walks Lockwood most of the way home in the snow.

Analysis

It is very important that the ghost of Catherine Linton (who is more than just a figment of Lockwood’s imagination) appears as a child. Of course Lockwood thinks of her as a child, since he has just read parts of her childhood diary, but Heathcliff also seems to find it natural that she appeared in the form she had when they were children together. Rather than progressing from childhood on to a mature age with its different values, Heathcliff and Catherine never really grew up. That is to say, the most emotionally important parts of their lives either took place in childhood or follows directly from commitments made then. They never outgrew their solidarity against the oppressive forces of adult authority and religion that is described in Catherine’s diary. Thus the ghost of Catherine Linton (that is her married name) tries to return to her childhood sanctuary, which Heathcliff has kept in its original state. This challenges the dominion of linear time.

Summary: Chapter 4

Lockwood is bored and a little weak after his adventures, so he asks his housekeeper, Ellen Dean, to tell him about Heathcliff and the old families of the area. She says Heathcliff is very rich and a miser, though he has no family, since his son is dead. The girl living at Wuthering Heights was the daughter of Ellen's former employers, the Lintons, and her name was Catherine. She is the daughter of the late Mrs. Catherine Linton, was born an Earnshaw, thus Hareton's aunt. Heathcliff's wife was Mr. Linton's sister. Ellen is fond of the younger Catherine, and worries about her unhappy situation.

The narrative switches to Ellen's voice, whose language is much plainer than Lockwood's. She is a discreet narrator, rarely reminding the listener of her presence in the
story, so that the events she recounts feel immediate. She says she grew up at Wuthering Heights, where her mother worked as a wet nurse. One day, Mr. Earnshaw offered to bring his children Hindley (14 years old) and Catherine (about 6) a present each from his upcoming trip to Liverpool. Hindley asked for a fiddle and Catherine for a whip, because she was already an excellent horsewoman. When Earnshaw returned, however, he brought with him a "dirty, ragged, black-haired child" (36) found starving on the streets. The presents had been lost or broken. The boy was named Heathcliff and taken into the family, though he was not entirely welcomed by Mrs. Earnshaw, Ellen, and Hindley. Heathcliff and Catherine became very close, and he became Earnshaw's favourite. Hindley felt that his place was usurped, and took it out on Heathcliff, who was hardened and stoic. For example, Earnshaw gave them each a colt, and Heathcliff chose the finest, which went lame. Heathcliff then claimed Hindley's, and when Hindley threw a heavy iron at him, Heathcliff threatened to tell Earnshaw about it if he didn't get the colt.

Analysis

In this chapter, the narrative turns to the past: from now on, Lockwood will gradually lose importance as the story of Heathcliff and Catherine's childhood becomes more and more vibrant. However, we cannot entirely neglect the role Ellen Dean plays as a narrator: her personality means that the events she recounts are presented in a unique style. She is practical and, like a good housekeeper, tends to incline to the side of order. Even when she was young, she did not really participate in the private lives of the children of Wuthering Heights, and has little access to the relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine. Bronte demonstrates her versatility by using different points of view, faithfully recording each character's distinctive style of speech.

Considering character development, it is interesting to know what Heathcliff and Catherine were like as children since, as we have seen in the previous chapter, their essential natures remain very much the same. Like her mother, Catherine Linton was wilful and mischievous and Heathcliff was uncomplaining but vindictive.

Summary: Chapter 5

Earnshaw grew old and sick, and with his illness he became irritable and somewhat obsessed with the idea that people disliked his favourite, Heathcliff. Heathcliff was spoiled to keep Earnshaw happy, and Hindley, who became more and more bitter about the situation, was sent away to college. Joseph, already "the wearisomest, self-righteous Pharisee that ever ransacked a Bible to rake the promises to himself, and fling the curses to his neighbors" (42) used his religious influence over Earnshaw to distance him from his children. Earnshaw thought Hindley was worthless, and didn't like Cathy's playfulness and high spirits, so in his last days he was irritable and discontented. Cathy was "much too fond"
of Heathcliff, and liked to order people around. Heathcliff would do anything she asked. Cathy's father was harsh to her and she became hardened to his reproofs.

Finally Earnshaw died one evening when Cathy had been resting her head against his knee and Heathcliff was lying on the floor with his head in her lap. When she went to kiss her father good night, she discovered he was dead and the two children began to cry, but that night Ellen saw that they had managed to comfort each other with "better thoughts than [she] could have hit on" (44) imagining the old man in heaven.

Analysis

The extremely close and entirely sexless relationship between Heathcliff and Cathy already manifests itself in an opposition to the outside world of parental authority and religion. Cathy is already charming and manipulative, though her love for her father is real. Joseph's false, oppressive religious convictions contrast with the pure, selfless thoughts of heaven of the grieving children.

Earnshaw's decline and death highlights the bond between the physical body and the spirit. The old man had formerly been charitable, loving, and open, but his physical weakness makes him irritable and peevish: the spirit is corrupted by the body's decline. One might remember that Emily Brontë watched her brother Branwell die wretchedly of alcohol and drug abuse, having had his youthful dreams of gallantry and glory disappointed.

3.2 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 6-10

Summary: Chapter 6

Hindley returns home, unexpectedly bringing his wife, a flighty woman with a strange fear of death and symptoms of consumption (although Ellen did not at first recognize them as such). Hindley also brought home new manners and rules, and informed the servants that they would have to live in inferior quarters. Most importantly, he treated Heathcliff as a servant, stopping his education and making him work in the fields like any farm boy. Heathcliff did not mind too much at first because Cathy taught him what she learned, and worked and played with him in the fields. They stayed away from Hindley as much as possible and grew up uncivilized and free. "It was one of their chief amusements," Ellen recalls, "to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day, and after punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at" (46).

One day they ran off after being punished, and at night Heathcliff returned. He told Ellen what had happened. He and Cathy ran to the Grange to see how people lived there, and they saw the Linton children Edgar and Isabella in a beautiful room, crying after an argument over who could hold the pet dog. Amused and scornful, Heathcliff and Cathy laughed; the Lintons heard them and called for their parents. After making frightening
noises, Cathy and Heathcliff tried to escape, but a bulldog bit Cathy's leg and refused to let go. She told Heathcliff to escape but he would not leave her, and tried to pry the animal's jaws open. Mr. and Mrs. Linton mistook them for thieves and brought them inside. When Edgar Linton recognized Cathy as Miss Earnshaw, the Lintons expressed their disgust at the children's wild manners and especially at Heathcliff's being allowed to keep Cathy company. They coddled Cathy and drove Heathcliff out; he went back to Wuthering Heights on foot after assuring himself that Cathy was all right. When Hindley found out, he welcomed the chance to separate Cathy and Heathcliff, so Cathy was to stay for a prolonged visit with the Lintons while her leg healed and Heathcliff was forbidden to speak to her.

Analysis

In this chapter we first hear young Heathcliff speak, and it is worth noting how his language differs from the narrators we have heard so far. He is more expressive and emotional than Lockwood or Ellen, and his speech is more literary than Ellen's and less artificial than Lockwood's. He tends to speak in extreme and vibrant terms: expressing his scorn for Edgar Linton's cowardice and whiny gentility, he says: "I'd not exchange, for a thousand lives, my condition here, for Edgar Linton's at Thrushcross Grange not if I might have the privilege of flinging Joseph off the highest gable, and painting the housefront with Hindley's blood!" (48) He admires the comparative luxury of the Grange and recognizes its beauty, but he remains entirely devoted to the freedom of his life with Cathy, and cannot understand the selfishness of the spoiled children: "When would you catch me wishing to have what Catherine wanted?" His devotion to Cathy is clear, and he sees it as completely natural and inescapable: "she is so immeasurably superior to them to everyone one earth; is she not, Nelly?" (51) He admires Cathy for her bravery, and he possesses that same kind of courage.

The image of the two civilized children inside the beautiful room forms a parallel to the two wild children outside. Through this use of parallelism, Bronte turns the window glass into a kind of mirror. However, the 'mirror' shows the complete opposite rather than the true images of those who look into it. Although the children are of similar ages, their breeding differs dramatically, as does their relationship—Edgar and Isabella fight, but Heathcliff and Cathy are inseparable.

Summary: Chapter 7

Ellen resumes the narrative. Cathy stayed at Thrushcross Grange for five weeks, until Christmas. When she returned home she had been transformed into a young lady with that role's attending restrictions: she could no longer kiss Ellen without worrying about getting flour on her dress. She hurt Heathcliff's feelings by comparing his darkness and dirtiness to Edgar and Isabella's fair complexions and clean clothes. The boy had become more and
The Linton children were invited for a Christmas party the next day. That morning Heathcliff humbly approached Ellen and asked her to "make him decent" because he was "going to be good" (55). Ellen applauded his resolution and reassured him that Cathy still liked him and that she was grieved by his shyness. When Heathcliff said he wished he could be more like Edgar—fair, rich, and well-behaved—Ellen told him that he could be perfectly handsome if he smiled more and was more trustful.

However, when Heathcliff, now "clean and cheerful" (57), tried to join the party, Hindley told him to go away because he was not fit to be there. Edgar unwisely made fun of his long hair and Heathcliff threw hot applesauce at him, and was taken away and flogged by Hindley. Cathy was angry at Edgar for mocking Heathcliff and getting him into trouble, but she didn't want to ruin her party. She kept up a good front, but didn't enjoy herself, thinking of Heathcliff alone and beaten. At her first chance after her guests gone home, she crept into the garret where he was confined.

Later Ellen gave Heathcliff dinner, since he hadn't eaten all day, but he ate little and when she asked what was wrong, he said he was thinking of how to avenge himself on Hindley. At this point Ellen's narrative breaks off and she and Lockwood briefly discuss the merits of the active and contemplative life, with Lockwood defending his lazy habits and Ellen saying she should get things done rather than just telling Lockwood the story. He persuades her to go on.

Analysis

This chapter marks the end of Cathy and Heathcliff's time of happiness and perfect understanding; Cathy has moved into a different sphere, that of the genteel Lintons, and Heathcliff cannot follow her. Although Cathy still cares for the things she did when the two of them ran wild together, she is under a lot of pressure to become a lady, and she is vain enough to enjoy the admiration and approval she gets from Edgar, Hindley and his wife. Cathy's desire to inhabit two worlds—the moors with Heathcliff and the parlor with Edgar—is a central driving force for the novel and eventually results in tragedy. Emily Bronte had experienced a personal inability to remain true to herself while interacting in conventional social terms, and she chose to abandon society as a result. Cathy takes a different route.

Just as the window separated the Wuthering Heights children from the Lintons in the last chapter, a material object separates Cathy from Heathcliff in this one. The fine dress she wears is a very real boundary between the old friends: it must be sacrificed (smudged, crumpled) if the two of them are to be as close as they were before. It is valuable for economic reasons (its cost), for social ones (the respect Cathy gets on account of it), and
because of its artificial beauty. These issues will consistently come between Cathy and Heathcliff; he is right to recognize the dress and what it represents as a threat to his happiness.

Summary: Chapter 8

Hindley’s wife Frances gave birth to a child, Hareton, but did not survive long afterwards: she had consumption. Despite the doctor’s warnings, Hindley persisted in believing that she would recover, and she seemed to think so too, always saying she felt better, but she died a few weeks after Hareton’s birth. Ellen was happy to take care of the baby. Hindley "grew desperate; his sorrow was of a kind that will not lament, he neither wept nor prayed—he cursed and defied—execrated God and man, and gave himself up to reckless dissipation" (65). The household more or less collapsed into violent confusion—respectable neighbours ceased to visit, except for Edgar, entranced by Catherine. Heathcliff’s ill treatment and the bad example posed by Hindley made him "daily more notable for savage sullenness and ferocity." Catherine disliked having Edgar visit Wuthering Heights because she had a hard time behaving consistently when Edgar and Heathcliff met, or when they talked about each other. Edgar’s presence made her feel as though she had to behave like a Linton, which was not natural for her.

One day when Hindley was away, Heathcliff was offended to find Catherine dressing for Edgar’s visit. He asked her to turn Edgar away and spend the time with him instead but she refused. Edgar was by this time a gentle, sweet young man. He came and Heathcliff left, but Ellen stayed as a chaperone, much to Catherine’s annoyance. She revealed her bad character by pinching Ellen, who was glad to have a chance to show Edgar what Catherine was like, and cried out. Catherine denied having pinched her, blushing with rage, and slapped her, then slapped Edgar for reproving her. He said he would go; she, recovering her senses, asked him to stay, and he was too weak and enchanted by her stronger will to leave. Brought closer by the quarrel, the two "confess[ed] themselves lovers" (72). Ellen heard Hindley come home drunk, and out of precaution unloaded his gun.

Analysis

Hindley’s dissipation and moral degradation are further evidence that only a strong character can survive defeat or bereavement without becoming distorted. His desperation is a result of his lack of firm foundations: Ellen says that he "had room in his heart for only two idols—his wife and himself—he doted on both and adored one" (65) Evidently it is impossible to live well when only caring about one’s self, as Hindley does following his wife’s death. It would be interesting to compare Hindley’s behaviour and Heathcliff’s in the opening chapters: both survive after the deaths of their beloveds and both live in a chaotic and cheerless Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff, however, has not entirely lost contact with
Cathy: their closer relationship rules out a complete separation, even after death. Emily Bronte’s obvious model for Hindley is her brother Branwell, who was sinking into dissipation when she was writing the novel.

This is the first time we really see Cathy behaving badly, showing that her temper makes the gentle and repressed life led by Edgar Linton unsuitable for her. Here she blushes with rage and in a later chapter she refers to her blood being much hotter than Edgar’s: heat and coolness of blood are markers of different personalities. The physical differences between Cathy and Edgar are linked to their moral differences, not only in their appearances but even in their blood and bones.

Summary: Chapter 9

Hindley came in raging drunk and swearing, and caught Ellen in the act of trying to hide Hareton in a cupboard for his safety. Hindley threatened to make Nelly swallow a carving knife, and even tried to force it between her teeth, but she bravely said she’d rather be shot, and spat it out. Then he took up Hareton and said he would crop his ears like a dog, to make him look fiercer, and held the toddler over the banister. Hearing Heathcliff walking below, Hindley accidentally dropped the child, but fortunately Heathcliff caught him. Looking up to see what had happened, he showed “the intensest anguish at having made himself the instrument of thwarting his own revenge” (75). In other words, he hated Hindley so much that he would have liked to have him to kill his own son by mistake. If it had been dark, Ellen said, "he would have tried to remedy the mistake by smashing Hareton’s skull on the steps." Hindley was somewhat shaken, and began to drink more. Heathcliff told Nelly he wished Hindley would drink himself to death, but that was unlikely to happen as he had a strong constitution.

In the kitchen Cathy came to talk to Nelly (neither of them knew Heathcliff was in the room, sitting behind the settle). Cathy said she was unhappy, that Edgar had asked her to marry him, and she had accepted. She asked Nelly what she should have answered. Nelly asked her if and why she loved Edgar; she said she did for a variety of material reasons: "he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman in the neighborhood, and I shall be proud of such a husband" (78). Nelly disapproved, and Cathy admitted that she was sure she was wrong: she had had a dream in which she went to heaven and was unhappy there because she missed Wuthering Heights. She said: "I have no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now; so he shall never know how I love him; and that, not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightening, or frost from fire." (81)

Heathcliff left after hearing that it would degrade her to marry him and did not hear Cathy's confession of love. Nelly told Cathy that Heathcliff would be deserted if she married
Linton, and Cathy indignantly replied that she had no intention of deserting Heathcliff, but would use her influence to raise him up. Nelly said Edgar wouldn't like that, to which Cathy replied: "Every Linton on the face of the earth might melt into nothing, before I could consent to forsake Heathcliff!" (82)

Later that night it turned out that no one knew where Heathcliff was. Cathy went out in the storm looking for him, unsuccessfully—he had run away. The next morning she was sick. After some time she went to stay with the Lintons a healthier environment and she got better, although Edgar and Isabella's parents caught the fever from her and died. She returned to Wuthering Heights "saucier, and more passionate, and haughtier than ever" (88). When Nelly said that Heathcliff's disappearance was her fault, Cathy stopped speaking to her. She married Edgar three years after Mr. Earnshaw's death, and Ellen unwillingly went to live with her at the Grange, leaving Hareton to live with his wretched father and Joseph.

Analysis

The atmosphere of careless violence, despair, and hatred in the first part of the chapter is almost suffocating. Heathcliff's willingness to kill an innocent child out of revenge is the first real indication of his lack of morality. It is unclear whether that immorality is a partly a result of his hard childhood and miserable circumstances, or whether he was always like that. Certainly he appears quite changed from the sensitive boy who wanted to look nice so Cathy wouldn't reject him for Edgar, and who relied trustfully on Ellen, but he had spoken of wanting to paint the house with Hindley's blood much earlier.

The definition of love for Cathy and Heathcliff is perhaps Emily Brontë's original creation. It is not based on appearances, material considerations, sexual attraction, or even virtue, but rather a shared being. Cathy says: "I am Heathcliff—he's always, always in my mind—not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself—but as my own being" (82). In this sense, her decision to marry Edgar is a terrible mistake: she will be abandoning the essence of herself. Apparently the sexual aspect of love is so meaningless for her that she believes marriage to Edgar will not come between her and Heathcliff: she would not consciously abandon her soul. Heathcliff thinks otherwise, since he runs away.

Summary: Chapter 10

Catherine got along surprisingly well with her husband and Isabella, mostly because they never opposed her. She had "seasons of gloom and silence" (92) though. Edgar took these for the results of her serious illness.

When they had been married almost a year, Heathcliff came back. Nelly was outside that evening and he asked her to tell Catherine someone wanted to see her. He was quite changed: a tall and athletic man who looked as though he might have been in the army,
with gentlemanly manners and educated speech, though his eyes contained a "half-civilized ferocity" (96). Catherine was overjoyed and didn’t understand why Edgar didn’t share her happiness. Heathcliff stayed for tea, to Edgar’s peevish irritation. It transpired that Heathcliff was staying at Wuthering Heights, paying Hindley generously, but winning his host’s money at cards. Catherine wouldn’t let Heathcliff actually hurt her brother.

In the following weeks, Heathcliff often visited the Grange. Edgar Linton’s sister, Isabella, a "charming young lady of eighteen" (101) became infatuated with Heathcliff, to her brother’s dismay. Isabella got angry at Catherine for keeping Heathcliff to herself, and Catherine warned her that Heathcliff was a very bad person to fall in love with and that Isabella was no match for him: "I never say to him to let this or that enemy alone, because it would be ungenerous or cruel to harm them, I say "Let them alone, because I should hate them to be wronged”; and he'd crush you, like a sparrow's egg, Isabella, if he found you a troublesome charge." (103)

Catherine teased Isabella by telling Heathcliff in her presence that Isabella loved him. Humiliated, Isabella tried to run away, but Catherine held her. Isabella scratched Catherine’s arm and managed to escape, and Heathcliff, alone with Catherine, expressed interest in marrying Isabella for her money and to enrage Edgar. He said he would beat Isabella if they were married because of her "mawkish, waxen face" (106).

**Analysis**

Catherine’s belief that Edgar should not be jealous of her relationship with Heathcliff emphasizes the difference in her mind between her passionate love for her adopted brother and ordinary love affairs. Catherine says that just as she does not envy Isabella’s blonde hair, so Edgar shouldn’t become jealous when Cathy praises Heathcliff—he should be glad for her sake. The comparison with Isabella suggests that Cathy and Heathcliff are sister and brother, which is evidently not the case—but it is a comparison that makes sense to her.

Catherine makes several analogies to the natural world: Heathcliff would crush Isabella "like a sparrow's egg" (103), and he is "an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone" (102). Isabella uses what seems to be a natural metaphor, but is in fact a literary one: she compares Catherine to "a dog in the manger" (102) for keeping Heathcliff to herself. The sisters-in-law speak and think quite differently despite superficial similarities.

There are also important differences between the ways that Edgar and Catherine view class. Edgar thinks that Heathcliff, "a runaway servant" (96), should be entertained in the kitchen, not the parlor. Catherine jokes that she will have two tables laid, one for the gentry (Edgar and Isabella) and one for the lower classes (herself and Heathcliff). Likewise, she and Heathcliff both call the narrator Nelly, while Edgar coldly calls her Ellen.

**3.3 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 11-15**
Summary: Chapter 11

Nelly went to visit Wuthering Heights to see how Hindley and Hareton were doing. She saw little Hareton outside, but he didn't recognize her as his former nurse, so he threw a rock at her and cursed. She found that his father had taught him how to curse, and that Hareton liked Heathcliff because he defended Hareton from Hindley's curses, and allowed Hareton to do what he liked. Nelly was going to go in when she saw Heathcliff there; frightened, she ran back home.

The next time Heathcliff visited Thrushcross Grange, Nelly saw him kiss Isabella in the courtyard. She told Catherine what had happened, and when Heathcliff came in the two had an argument. Heathcliff said he had a right to do as he pleased, since Catherine was married to someone else. He said: "You are welcome to torture me to death for your amusement, only, allow me to amuse myself a little in the same style" (112).

Nelly found Edgar, who came in while Catherine was scolding Heathcliff. Edgar scolded Catherine for talking to "that blackguard" (113), which made her very angry, since she had been defending the Lintons. Edgar ordered Heathcliff to leave, who scornfully ignored him. Edgar motioned for Nelly to fetch reinforcements, but Catherine angrily locked the door and threw the key into the fire when Edgar tried to get it from her. Catherine and Heathcliff mocked the humiliated and furious Edgar, so he hit Heathcliff and went out by the back door to get help. Nelly warned Heathcliff that he would be thrown out by the male servants if he stayed, so he chose to leave.

Left with Nelly, Catherine expressed her anger at her husband and Heathcliff: "Well, if I cannot keep Heathcliff for my friend—if Edgar will be mean and jealous, I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own" (116). Edgar came in and demanded to know whether Catherine would drop Heathcliff's acquaintance, and she had a temper tantrum, ending with a faked "fit of frenzy" (118). When Nelly revealed that the fit was faked, Catherine ran to her room and refused to come out or to eat for several days.

Analysis

Nelly may seem unfeeling in her unsympathetic descriptions of Catherine and Heathcliff, but her behaviour to Hareton and Hindley (who was her foster-brother) reveals her to be extremely tender-hearted and maternal at times. However, she is independent and spirited, and doesn't like to be bullied or imposed upon by Catherine, so she has no qualms about siding with Edgar Linton when her mistress is being temperamental.

The strain imposed on the three characters—Catherine, Edgar, and Heathcliff—has finally resulted in outright violence: it is no longer possible to conceal the strength of the emotions involved. Edgar is in a particularly difficult situation: Catherine and Heathcliff are used to violent expressions of feeling, but he is not, and hates having to adjust to their
modes of communication. He is more committed to gentility of behaviour than the others, although they now appear as well-dressed and cultivated as he does.

Heathcliff and Catherine call Edgar a "lamb," a "sucking leveret," and a "milk-blooded coward" (115). The first two insults are natural images that might easily come to mind for people who grew up on the moors; the third again uses the 'blood' imagery which appears to be central to the way they think about personality.

Summary: Chapter 12

After three days in which Catherine stayed alone in her room, Edgar sat in the library, and Isabella moped in the garden, Catherine called Nelly for some food and water because she thought she was dying. She ate some toast, and was indignant to hear that Edgar wasn’t frantic about her. She said: "How strange! I thought, though everybody hated and despised each other, they could not avoid loving me—and they have all turned to enemies in a few hours" (122). It became clear to Ellen that Catherine was delirious, and thought she was back in her room at Wuthering Heights. After seeing her reflection in a mirror, Catherine became frightened because she thought there was no mirror there. She opened the window and talked to Heathcliff (who was not there) as though they were children again. Edgar came in and was very concerned for Catherine, and angry at Ellen for not having told him what was going on.

Going to fetch a doctor, Ellen noticed that Isabella's little dog almost dead, hanging by a handkerchief on the gate. She rescued it, and found Dr. Kenneth, who told her that he had seen Isabella walking for hours in the park with Heathcliff. Moreover, Dr. Kenneth had heard a rumour that Isabella and Heathcliff were planning to run away together. Ellen rushed back to the Grange found that Isabella had indeed disappeared, and a little boy told her he had seen the girl riding away with Heathcliff. Ellen told Edgar, hoping he would rescue his sister from her ill-considered elopement, but he coldly refused to do so.

Analysis

In her delirium, Catherine reveals that her true emotional identity has not altered since she was twelve, just before she stayed with the Lintons for some weeks. Everything that happened to her since then ceases to have any importance when she is irrational: "...supposing at twelve years old, I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted, at a stroke, into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world You may fancy a glimpse at the abyss where I groveled!" (125)
Time is unimportant: it has no effect on the true, deep emotions in Bronte’s world. Edgar’s coldness to Isabella seems to result from his sister deserting him for his greatest enemy. His willingness to abandon her because of hurt pride is perhaps his greatest moral flaw. The emphasis he places on personal dignity differentiates him from the other characters—who certainly have many faults, though not that one.

Summary: Chapter 13

In the next two months Catherine "encountered and conquered the worst shock of what was denominated a brain fever" (134), but it became clear that she would never really recover. She was pregnant. Heathcliff and Isabella returned to Wuthering Heights, and Isabella wrote Edgar an apology and a plea for forgiveness, to which he gave no reply. She later sent Ellen a longer letter asking whether Heathcliff were a demon or crazy, and recounting her experiences. She found Wuthering Heights dirty, uncivilized and unwelcoming: Joseph was rude to her, Hareton was disobedient, Hindley was a half-demented wreck of a man, and Heathcliff treated her cruelly. He refused to let her sleep in his room, which meant she had to stay in a tiny garret. Hindley had a pistol with a blade on it, with which he dreamed of killing Heathcliff, and Isabella coveted it for the power it would have given her. She was miserable and regretted her marriage heartily.

Analysis

Isabella’s reactions to her new home reveal her lack of inner fortitude: although she tries at first to stand up to Joseph and Hareton, her ladylike education has in no way prepared her for her married life, so when she loses her pride she has little else to fall back on. Her envy upon seeing Hindley’s pistol is a little disconcerting, and she herself is horrified by it.

It is worth noting the unfortunate position of women who depend on men: Isabella cannot escape from Heathcliff without the help of her brother, who does not want to help her. Surrounded by hatred and indifference, she can only fall back on Ellen’s pity.

Summary: Chapter 14

Ellen, distressed by Edgar’s refusal to console Isabella, went to visit her at Wuthering Heights. She told Isabella and Heathcliff that Catherine would "never be what she was" (135) and that Heathcliff should not bother her anymore. Heathcliff asserted that he would not leave her to Edgar’s lukewarm care, and that she loved him much more than her husband. He said that if he had been in Edgar’s place he would never have interfered with Catherine’s friendships, although he would kill the friend the moment Catherine no longer cared about him.

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Ellen urged Heathcliff to treat Isabella better, and he expressed his scorn and hatred for his wife (in her presence, of course). He said Isabella knew what he was when she married him: she had seen him hanging her pet dog. Isabella told Ellen that she hated Heathcliff, and he ordered her upstairs so he could talk to Ellen.

Alone with her, he told her that if she did not arrange an interview for him with Catherine, he would force his way in armed, and she agreed to give Catherine a letter from him.

**Analysis**

This chapter includes a great deal of criticism of the Lintons: Edgar is called proud and unfeeling, and Heathcliff says that Isabella was actually attracted by his brutality until she herself suffered from it. Edgar’s explanation of his refusal to write to Isabella is extremely unconvincing: "I am not angry, but sorry to have lost her: especially as I can never think she'll be happy. It is out of the question my going to see her, however; we are eternally divided" (145). Edgar is angry, of course, because he hates Heathcliff: presumably he is jealous of him. Heathcliff considers Edgar’s version of love to be selfish, as though Edgar thought he owned his wife, and had a right to restrict her behavior: "Had he been in my place, and I in his, though I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall, I never would have raised a hand against him... I never would have banished him from her society, as long as she desired his. (147)

Correspondingly, Heathcliff imagines Catherine’s affection for Edgar in terms of property: "He is scarcely a degree dearer to her than her dog, or her horse—it is not in him to be loved like me" (148). Bronte has always associated the Lintons with material wealth. Heathcliff extends ideas of property and ownership to their emotions as well.

Isabella’s case is somewhat different. Heathcliff despises her because she loves him despite knowing what he is. This is an interesting point: Heathcliff is an obviously romantic figure, with his mysterious past, dark appearance, and passionate emotions. But Bronte makes it very clear that although he exerts a certain amount of fascination, he should in no way be considered a "hero of romance" (149). For doing so, Isabella is called a "pitiful, slavish, mean-minded brach" (150). In this very romantic novel, one can never rely on conventional notions of romance: through Heathcliff’s character, Bronte suggests that brutality should never be considered attractive. Even Catherine does not find Heathcliff attractive—she simply finds him inescapable, a part of herself.

**Summary: Chapter 15**

The Sunday after Ellen’s visit to Wuthering Heights; while most people were at church, she gave Catherine Heathcliff’s letter. Catherine was changed by her sickness: she was beautiful in an unearthly way and her eyes "appeared always to gaze beyond and far
beyond" (158). Ellen had left the door open, so Heathcliff walked in and Catherine eagerly waited for him to find the right room. Their reunion was bitter-sweet: though passionately glad to be reunited, Catherine accused Heathcliff of having killed her, and Heathcliff warned her not to say such things when he would be tortured by them after her death—besides, she had been at fault by abandoning him. She asked him to forgive her, since she would not be at peace after death, and he answered: "It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands... I love my murderer— but yours! How can I?" (163) They held each other closely and wept until Ellen warned them that Linton was returning. Heathcliff wanted to leave, but Catherine insisted that he stay, since she was dying and would never see him again. He consented to stay, and "in the midst of the agitation, [Ellen] was sincerely glad to observe that Catherine's arms had fallen relaxed... She's fainted or dead, so much the better..." (164) Linton came in, and Heathcliff handed him Catherine's body and told him to take care of her: "Unless you be a friend, help her first then you shall speak to me!" He told Nelly he would wait outside for news of Catherine's welfare, and left.

Analysis

The passionate scene between Catherine and Heathcliff in this chapter is probably the emotional climax of the novel, though it only marks the middle of the book. It reveals how little their love relies on pleasure: they can hardly be said to be fond of one another, or to enjoy each other's company, yet they are absolutely necessary to each other. It is as though they were members of a different species from other humans, and they belonged together. Ellen says: "The two, to a cool spectator, made a strange and fearsome picture" (160). Catherine tore Heathcliff's hair, and he left bruises on her arm. Later, he "foamed like a mad dog, and gathered her to him with greedy jealousy. [Ellen] did not feel as though [she] were in the company of a member of [her] own species" (162). Love appears to be a form of madness.

Catherine and Heathcliff's emotional reunion is counteracted by Ellen's cool and unsympathetic narration: their passionate conversation is interspersed with dry commentary on her part.

3.4 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 16-20

Summary: Chapter 16

Around midnight, Catherine gave birth to a daughter (also named Catherine—she is Catherine Linton, the teenage girl Lockwood saw at Wuthering Heights). Catherine Earnshaw died two hours later without recovering consciousness. No one cared for the infant at first, and Ellen wished it had been a boy: with no son, Edgar's heir was Isabella, Heathcliff's wife. Catherine's corpse looked peaceful and beautiful, and Ellen decided that she had found heaven at last.
She went outside to tell Heathcliff and found him leaning motionless against an ash tree. He knew Catherine was dead, and asked Ellen how it had happened, attempting to conceal his anguish. Ellen was not fooled, and told him that Catherine had died peacefully, like a girl falling asleep. Heathcliff cursed Catherine and begged her to haunt him so he would not be left in "this abyss, where I cannot find you!... I cannot live without my soul!" (169) He dashed his head against the tree and howled "like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears." Ellen was appalled.

On Tuesday, when Catherine's body was still lying in the Grange, strewn with flowers, Heathcliff took advantage of Edgar's short absence from the bedchamber to see her again, and to replace Edgar's hair in Catherine's locket with some of his own. Ellen noticed the change, and enclosed both locks of hair together.

Catherine was buried on Friday in a green slope in a corner of the kirkyard, where, Ellen said; her husband now lies as well.

Analysis

The question of what happens after death is important in this chapter and throughout the novel; though no firm answer is ever given. Ellen is fairly sure Catherine went to heaven, "where life is boundless in its duration, and love in its sympathy, and joy in its fullness" (167) But Heathcliff cannot conceive of Catherine finding peace when they are still separated, or of his living without her. In the chapter before, Catherine said: "I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart, but really with it, and in it" (162). It is as though she had in mind a heaven that was like the moors in every way but the constraints of physicality: the spirit of natural freedom.

Another interesting question that comes up in this chapter is that of the value of self-control and reserve: Heathcliff tries to conceal his weakness and grief, holding "a silent combat with his inward agony" (168), but Ellen considers it to be worse than useless, since he only tempts God to wring his "heart and nerves." Yet we know that Emily Brontë herself was incredibly self-disciplined, refusing to alter her everyday life even when suffering a mortal illness.

Summary: Chapter 17

The next day, while Ellen was rocking baby Catherine, Isabella came in laughing giddily. Isabella was pale, her face was cut, and her thin silk dress was torn by briars. She asked Ellen to call a carriage for the nearest town, Gimmerton, since she was escaping from her husband, and to have a maid get some clothes ready. Then she allowed Ellen to give her
dry clothes and bind up the wound. Isabella tried to destroy her wedding ring by throwing it in the fire, and told Ellen what had happened to her in the last few days.

Isabella said that she hated Heathcliff so much that she could feel no compassion for him even when he was in agony following Catherine's death. He hadn't eaten for days, and spent his time at Wuthering Heights in his room, "praying like a methodist; only the deity he implored was senseless dust and ashes" (175). The evening before, Isabella sat reading while Hindley drank morosely. When they heard Heathcliff returning from his watch over Catherine's grave, Hindley warned Isabella of his plan to lock Heathcliff out, and try to kill him with his bladed pistol if he came in. Isabella would have liked Heathcliff to die, but refused to help in the scheme, so when Heathcliff knocked she refused to let him in, saying: "If I were you, I'd go stretch myself over her grave, and die like a faithful dog... The world is not worth living in now, is it?" (178) Hindley went to the window to kill Heathcliff, but the latter grabbed the weapon so the blade shut on Hindley's wrist; then he forced his way in. He kicked and trampled Hindley, who had fainted from the loss of blood, then roughly bound up the wound, and told Joseph and Isabella to clean up the blood.

The next morning when Isabella came down, Hindley "was sitting by the fire, deadly sick; his evil genius, almost as gaunt and ghastly, leant by the chimney" (180). After eating breakfast by herself, she told Hindley how he had been kicked when he was down, and mocked Heathcliff for having so mistreated his beloved's brother, saying to Hindley: "everyone knows your sister would have been living now, had it not been for Mr. Heathcliff" (182). Heathcliff was so miserable that he could hardly retaliate, so Isabella went on and said that if Catherine had married him, he would have beaten her the way he beat Hindley. Heathcliff threw a knife at Isabella, and she fled, knocking down Hareton, "who was hanging a litter of puppies from a chairback in the doorway" (183). She ran to the Grange.

That morning, Isabella left, never to return to the moors again. Later, in her new home near London, she gave birth to a son, named Linton, "an ailing, peevish creature.” Isabella died of illness when her son was about twelve years old.

Edgar grew resigned to Catherine's death, and loved his daughter, who he called Cathy, very much. Ellen points out the difference between his behavior and Hindley are in a similar situation.

Hindley died, "drunk as a lord” (186), about six months after Catherine. He was just 27, meaning that Catherine had been 19, Heathcliff was 20, and Edgar was 21. Ellen grieved deeply for him they had been the same age and were brought up together. She made sure he was decently buried. She wanted to take Hareton back to the Grange, but Heathcliff said he would keep him, to degrade him as much as he himself had been degraded by Hindley. If Edgar insisted on taking Hareton, Heathcliff threatened to claim his own son Linton, so Ellen gave the idea up.
Analysis

Isabella’s tendency toward impotent cruelty shows up again in the character of her son Linton. The question of how cruelty operates in powerful versus weak characters was evidently of great interest to Bronte and might bear further investigation. One obvious point is that weakness is not simply equated with goodness, as is often the case in the Christian tradition. Although the weak are unable to physically express their hatred, they can, like Isabella, use verbal taunts to hurt their enemies emotionally.

Ellen’s particular grief for Hindley emphasizes the way characters are paired in the novel: Ellen and Hindley, Heathcliff and Catherine, Edgar and Isabella. These pairs all grew up together (Ellen’s mother was Hindley’s wet-nurse, so they literally shared mother’s milk) under somewhat fraternal conditions. Bronte’s careful structure and concern with symmetry are important presences throughout the novel, and form an interesting contrast with the chaotic emotions that seem to prevail.

Summary: Chapter 18

In the next twelve years, Cathy Linton grew up to be “the most winning thing that ever brought sunshine into a desolate house” (189). She was fair like a Linton, except for her mother’s dark eyes. High-spirited but gentle, she seemed to combine the good qualities of both the Lintons and the Earnshaws, though she was a little saucy because she was accustomed to getting her way. Her father kept her within the park of the Grange, but she dreamed of going to see some cliffs, Penistone Craggs, which were located not too far away on the moor.

When Isabella fell ill, she wrote to Edgar to come visit her, so he was gone for three weeks. One day Cathy asked Ellen to give her some food for a ramble around the grounds—she was pretending to be an Arabian merchant going across the desert with her caravan of a pony and three dogs. She left the grounds, however, and later Ellen went after her on the road to Penistone Craggs, which passed Wuthering Heights. She found Cathy safe and sound there—Heathcliff wasn’t home, and the housekeeper had taken her in—chattering to Hareton, now 18 years old. After Ellen arrived, Cathy offended Hareton by asking whether he was the master’s son, and when he said he wasn’t, deciding that he must be a servant. The housekeeper told Cathy that Hareton was her cousin, which made her cry. Hareton offered her a puppy to console her, which she refused. Ellen told Cathy that her father didn’t want her to go to Wuthering Heights, and asked her not to tell Edgar about the incident, to which Cathy readily agreed.

Analysis
We have moved from the violent and discordant world of adulthood back to harmonious childhood. The abrupt contrast between the hellish last chapters and this relatively serene and innocent one could hardly be clearer. One might even suppose that we are witnessing a second chance: the story of the first Catherine ended in grief and bloodshed, but perhaps her daughter’s life will be more serene. Indeed, there are many similarities between the first Catherine and her daughter, although the mother's bad qualities are minimized in the younger Cathy.

Although Cathy appears to display more Linton characteristics than Earnshaw ones, her desire to explore the wilderness outside of the Grange’s park links her strongly to the wild, Wuthering Heights clan. Her sauciness also reminds the reader of her mother, as does her aristocratic unwillingness to be related to Hareton (just as Catherine thought it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff, who was at the time very much like Hareton).

**Summary: Chapter 19**

Isabella died, and Edgar returned home with his half-orphaned nephew, Linton, a "pale, delicate, effeminate boy” (200) with a "sickly peevishness" in his appearance. Cathy was excited to see her cousin, and took to babying him when she saw that he was sickly and childish. That very evening, Joseph came to demand the child on Heathcliff’s behalf—Linton was, after all, Heathcliff’s son. Ellen told him Edgar was asleep, but Joseph went into Edgar’s room and insisted on taking Linton. Edgar wished to keep Linton at the Grange, but could not legally claim him, so he could only put it off until the next morning.

**Analysis**

The contrast between Cathy and her cousin Linton is very strong: she is energetic and warm-hearted, whereas he is limp and parasitic. It is interesting to see how Bronte distributes conventionally masculine and feminine characteristics among her characters without regard for gender. Linton is pointedly described as being delicate, with fine flaxen hair even lighter than Cathy's: he is the helpless ‘lady’ of the two, who cries when he doesn't get his way, and allows himself to be cared for by his female cousin.

**Summary: Chapter 20**

The next morning, Ellen woke Linton early and took him over to Wuthering Heights, promising dishonestly that it was only for a little while. Linton was surprised to hear he had a father, since Isabella had never spoken of Heathcliff. When they arrived, Heathcliff and Joseph expressed their contempt for the delicate boy. Heathcliff told Linton that his mother was a "wicked slut" (208) because she did not tell Linton about his father. Ellen asked Heathcliff to be kind to the boy, and he said that he would indeed have him carefully
tended, mostly because Linton was heir to the Grange, so he wanted him to live at least until Edgar was dead and he inherited. So when Linton refused to eat the homely oatmeal Joseph offered him, Heathcliff ordered that his son be given tea and boiled milk instead. When Ellen left, Linton begged her not to leave him there.

Analysis

Bronte’s novel is full of innocent children who are abandoned into cold and unfriendly homes: Heathcliff as an orphan in Liverpool; Hindley sent away to college; Heathcliff and Cathy after Earnshaw’s death; Hareton and Linton at Wuthering Heights, and Cathy Linton at her father’s death. The effect of this is that each character, no matter how ruthless and cruel they may be, contains at their core the same wish for love and the same loneliness as their former childlike selves. We are never able to judge any character too harshly because we know this. Linton is a particularly interesting example of this because he is unpleasant, even as a child, yet one can only pity him for being so abruptly introduced to an unloving father and a home where everyone despises him.

3.5 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 21-25

Summary: Chapter 21

Cathy missed her cousin when she woke up that morning, but time made her forget him. Linton grew up to be a selfish and disagreeable boy, continually complaining about his health. On Cathy’s sixteenth birthday she and Ellen went out on the moors, and strayed onto Heathcliff’s land, where he found them. He invited them to come to Wuthering Heights, telling Ellen that he wanted Linton and Cathy to marry so he would be doubly sure of inheriting the Grange. Cathy was glad to see her cousin, though she was somewhat taken back by his invalidish behaviour. Hareton, at Heathcliff’s request, showed Cathy around the farm, though he was shy of her and she teased him unkindly. Linton mocked Hareton’s lack of education in front of Cathy, showing himself to be mean-spirited.

Later, Cathy told her father where she had been, and asked him why he had not allowed the cousins to see each other. Heathcliff had told her that Edgar was still angry at him because he thought Heathcliff too poor to marry Isabella. Edgar told her of Heathcliff’s wickedness, and forbade her to return to Wuthering Heights. Cathy was unhappy, and began a secret correspondence with Linton. By the time Ellen discovered it, they were writing love letters—affected ones on Linton’s part, that Ellen suspected had been partially dictated by Heathcliff. Ellen confronted Cathy and burned the letters, threatening to tell her father if Cathy continued to write to Linton.

Analysis
Trespassing becomes an important issue in this chapter, which recalls the scene in Chapter 6 when Cathy Earnshaw and Heathcliff are caught on the Lintons' land. This chapter is almost an inversion of the earlier one, especially considering that this Cathy will marry Linton, just as the earlier Cathy married Edgar. The fact that people frequently leave their property and marriages often result from trespassing speaks to the wild, dynamic quality of the moors. The emphasis on land and privacy might be taken for a metaphor for more emotional intimacy: in order for two people to become close, one must in some way trespass. On the other hand, the marriages that result from trespassing are unhappy, while those that result from exploration, such as Cathy Linton’s first meeting with Hareton in Chapter 18, are happy. Of course, the difference between trespassing and innocent exploration depends entirely on the attitude taken by the people whose lands are being entered.

Often in literature, land and women are identified with one another, so that trespassing could be taken for a metaphor for sex. This hardly seems to be the case in *Wuthering Heights*: Linton and Edgar remain passively in their places while their future wives come to see them. This is consistent with the way the male Lintons are frequently given female characteristics. Isabella, both biologically female and Lintonishly feminine, meets Heathcliff when he intrudes at the Grange.

**Summary: Chapter 22**

That fall, Edgar caught a cold that confined him to the house all winter. Cathy grew sadder after the end of her little romance, and told Ellen that she was afraid of being alone after Ellen and her father die. Taking a walk, Cathy ended up briefly stranded outside of the wall of the park, when Heathcliff rode by. He told her that Linton was dying of a broken heart, and that if she were kind, she would visit him. Ellen told her that Heathcliff was probably lying and couldn't be trusted, but the next day Cathy persuaded her to accompany her on a visit to Wuthering Heights.

**Analysis**

See the analysis of Chapter 20 for a discussion of children left alone in the world—Cathy Linton is not the only character to fear a parent’s death, nor is her fear unjustified. Cathy is particularly vulnerable because, as a girl, she will not inherit her father’s estate: her father’s nephew Linton will. This is a result of legal conventions, and has nothing to do with Edgar’s relationship with his daughter.

Emily Brontë was especially conscious of the position of orphaned children: although her father outlived her, her mother, like Cathy’s mother, died when she was very young, and Emily’s older sister Maria, who took a mothering role with her younger siblings, died in childhood of tuberculosis. See Chapter 12 for further evidence of the importance of
abandoned children: in her delirium Catherine Earnshaw remembers a nest of baby birds that died of starvation ("little skeletons") after Heathcliff caught their mother. She had been deeply upset by the sight and made Heathcliff promise never to kill a mother bird again. This may be the key to Bronte’s continual emphasis on that theme: she was deeply familiar with the natural world, in which orphaned baby animals stand little chance of survival.

Summary: Chapter 23

At Wuthering Heights, Cathy and Ellen heard "a peevish voice" (236) calling Joseph for more hot coals for the fire. Following the sound of the voice, they discovered Linton, who greeted them rather ungraciously: "No don't kiss me. It takes my breath dear me!" (237) He complained that writing to Cathy had been very tiring, and that the servants didn't take care of him as they ought, and that he hated them. He said that he wished Cathy would marry him, because wives always loved their husbands, upon which Cathy answered that this was not always so. Her father had told her that Isabella had not loved Heathcliff. Upon hearing this, Linton became angry and answered that Catherine's mother had loved Heathcliff and not Edgar. Cathy pushed his chair and he coughed for a long time, for which she was very sorry. Linton took advantage of her regret and bullied her like a true hypochondriac, making her promise to return the next day to nurse him.

When Cathy and Ellen were on their way home, Ellen expressed her disapproval of Linton and said he would die young—a “small loss” (242). She added that Cathy should on no account marry him. Cathy was not so sure he would die, and was much more friendly toward him.

Ellen caught a cold and was confined to her room. Cathy spent almost all her time taking care of her and Edgar, but she was free in the evenings. As Ellen later found out, she used this time to visit Linton.

Analysis

In this chapter, Bronte explores the intersections between love and power: to what extent does Linton want Cathy to love him freely, and to what extent does he want to have husbandly control over her? It would appear that for him, love is just another form of control: he uses Cathy's love for him to make her do whatever he likes, without any consideration for her own happiness. Is this form of controlling love essentially linked to marriage? That might well be the case: see how the relationship between the older Catherine and her husband Edgar breaks down when he tries to control her friendships. However, Edgar unmistakably loved Catherine, whereas Linton seems to care for no one but
himself. Marriage in Wuthering Heights is not an unqualified good: it must be accompanied by unselfish love on both sides in order to be successful.

Summary: Chapter 24

Three weeks later, Ellen was much better, and discovered Cathy's evening visits to Wuthering Heights. Cathy told her what had happened:

Cathy bribed a servant with her books to take care of saddling her pony and keep her escapades secret. On her second visit, she and Linton had an argument about the best way of spending a summer afternoon: Linton wanted to lie in the heather and dream it away, and she wanted to rock in a treetop among the birds. "He wanted to lie in an ecstasy of peace;" Cathy explained "I wanted all to sparkle, and dance in a glorious jubilee" (248). They made up and played ball until Linton became unhappy because he always lost, but as usual, Cathy consoled him for that.

Cathy looked forward to her next visit, but when she arrived, she met Hareton, who showed her how he had learned to read his name. She mocked him for it. (Here Ellen rebuked Cathy for having been so rude to her cousin. Cathy was surprised by Ellen's reaction, but went on.) When she was reading to Linton, Hareton came in angrily and ordered them into the kitchen. Shut out of his favourite room, Linton staged a frightening temper tantrum, wearing an expression of "frantic, powerless fury" (251) and shrieking that he would kill Hareton. Joseph pointed out that he was showing his father's character. Linton coughed blood and fainted; Cathy fetched Zillah. Hareton carried the boy upstairs but wouldn't let Cathy follow. When she cried, Hareton began to regret his behaviour. Cathy struck him with her whip and rode home.

On the third day, Linton refused to speak to her except to blame her for the events of the preceding day, and she left resolving not to return. However, she did eventually, and took Linton to task for being so rude. He admitted that he was worthless, but said that she was much happier than he and should make allowances. Heathcliff hated him, and he was very unhappy at Wuthering Heights. However, he loved Cathy.

Cathy was sorry Linton had such a distorted nature, and felt she had an obligation to be his friend. She had noticed that Heathcliff avoided her, and reprimanded Linton when he did not behave well to her.

Ellen told Edgar about the visits, and he forbade Cathy to return to Wuthering Heights, but wrote to Linton that he could come to the Grange if he liked.

Analysis
The contrast between Linton and Cathy's ideas of how to spend an afternoon sums up the differences in their characters. However, the juxtaposition of Linton's peaceful ideal afternoon with his furious temper tantrum is somewhat disconcerting. Are passivity and laziness essentially related to hatred and fury in the novel? This hardly seems possible, considering Edgar's peaceful and generally loving character. However, the juxtaposition serves to remind us that weakness and goodness are not to be carelessly equated.

Summary: Chapter 25

Ellen points out to Lockwood that these events only happened the year before, and she hints that Lockwood might become interested in Cathy, who is not happy at Wuthering Heights. Then she continues with the narrative.

Edgar asked Ellen what Linton was like, and she told him that he was delicate and had little of his father in him—Cathy would probably be able to control him if they married. Edgar admitted that he was worried about what would happen to Cathy if he were to die. As spring advanced Edgar resumed his walks, but although Cathy took his flushed cheeks and bright eyes for health, Ellen was not so sure. He wrote again to Linton, asking to see him. Linton answered that his father refused to let him visit the Grange, but that he hoped to meet Edgar outside sometime. He also wrote that he would like to see Cathy again, and that his health was improved.

Edgar could not consent, because he could not walk very far, but the two began a correspondence. Linton wrote well, without complaining about his health (since Heathcliff carefully edited his letters) and eventually Edgar agreed to Cathy's going to meet Linton on the moors, with Ellen's supervision. Edgar wished Cathy to marry Linton so she would not have to leave the Grange when he died—but he would not have wished it if he knew that Linton was dying as fast as he was.

Analysis

The prominent presence of tuberculosis in this novel is disturbingly prescient, considering that the illness was soon to be the cause of Bronte’s own death. Cathy fools herself into thinking that Edgar is getting better, just as Hindley's wife Frances (and Bronte herself) tried hard to pretend that she was not sick.

In Wuthering Heights, death is a mysterious and yet unavoidable presence: the characters cannot simply expect each other to live until they are old. A cold can turn into a fever, which can turn into consumption, ending in the grave. In this chapter, Brontë lays the groundwork for the sudden deaths from illness that will occur in the final third of the novel.

3.6 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 26-30

32
Summary: Chapter 26

When Ellen and Cathy rode to meet Linton, they had to go quite close to Wuthering Heights to find him. He was evidently very ill, though he claimed to be better: "his large blue eyes wandered timidly over her; the hollowness round them, transforming to haggard wildness, the languid expression they once possessed" (261). Linton had a hard time making conversation with Cathy, and was clearly not enjoying their talk, so she decided to leave. Surprisingly, Linton then looked anxiously towards Wuthering Heights and begged her to stay longer, and to tell her father he was in "tolerable health" (262). Cathy half-heartedly agreed, and Linton soon fell into some kind of slumber. He woke suddenly and seemed to be terrified that his father might come. Eventually, Cathy and Ellen returned home, perplexed by his strange behavior.

Analysis

This chapter reveals a level of cruelty in Heathcliff that has not been seen before. He has no reason to hate his son beyond the fact that he is a Linton, and yet he is perfectly willing to fill Linton’s last days with terror and despair. Linton's life is singularly hopeless, and the mere fact that Bronte invented it testifies to the darkness of her vision. Linton is unlikable and dislikes everyone; he will die without ever achieving anything worthwhile or good, and probably without ever having been happy. A more pointless, bitter existence could hardly be imagined. In contrast, Heathcliff seems energetic and happy in this section of the novel, such that he seems to draw vitality from his son’s misery.

Summary: Chapter 27

A week later, Ellen and Cathy were to visit Linton again. Edgar was much sicker, and Cathy didn’t want to leave him, but he encouraged her relationship with Linton, hoping to ensure his daughter’s welfare thereby. Linton "received us with greater animation on this occasion; not the animation of high spirits though, nor yet of joy; it looked more like fear" (266). Cathy was angry that she had had to leave her father, and she was disgusted by Linton’s abject admissions of terror of his father. Heathcliff came upon them, and asked Ellen how much longer Edgar had to live: he was worried that Linton would die before Edgar, thus preventing the marriage. Heathcliff then ordered Linton to get up and bring Cathy into the house, which he did, against Cathy’s will: "Linton... implored her to accompany him, with a frantic importunity that admitted no denial" (269). Heathcliff pushed Ellen into the house as well and locked the door behind them. When Cathy protested that she must get home to her father, Heathcliff slapped her brutally and made it clear that she wouldn't leave Wuthering Heights until she married Linton. Linton showed his true character: as Heathcliff said, "He'll undertake to torture any number of cats if their teeth be
drawn, and their claws pared” (274). Cathy and Heathcliff declared their mutual hatred. Ellen remained imprisoned separately from Cathy for five days with Hareton as her jailer: he gave her food but refused to speak to her beyond what was necessary. She did not know what was happening to Cathy.

Analysis

This chapter provides further evidence of Linton’s bad character; he thinks exclusively of himself despite Cathy’s pain and terror. Cathy’s pity and kindness are the causes of her misfortunes here: in the presence of Heathcliff’s intelligent hatred, her good qualities only leave her vulnerable to his plans.

Summary: Chapter 28

On the fifth afternoon of the captivity, Zillah released Ellen, explaining that Heathcliff said she could go home and that Cathy would follow in time to attend her father’s funeral. Edgar was not dead yet, but soon would be. Ellen asked Linton where Catherine was, and he answered that she was shut upstairs, that they were married, and that he was glad she was being treated harshly. Apparently he resented that she hadn’t wished to marry him. He was annoyed by her crying, and was glad when Heathcliff struck her as punishment.

Ellen rebuked Linton for his selfishness and unkindness, and went to the Grange to get help. Edgar was glad to hear his daughter was safe and would be home soon: he was almost dead, at the age of 39. Upon hearing of Heathcliff’s plot to take control of his estate, Edgar sent for Mr. Green, the local attorney, to change his will so that his money would be held in a trust for Cathy. However, Heathcliff bought off Mr. Green and the lawyer did not arrive until it was too late to change the will. The men sent to Wuthering Heights to rescue Cathy returned without her, having believed Heathcliff’s tale that she was too sick to travel. Very early the next morning, however, Catherine came back by herself, joyful to hear that her father was still alive. She had convinced Linton to help her escape. Ellen asked her to tell Edgar that she would be content with Linton so that he could die happy, to which she agreed. Edgar died “blissfully” (283). Catherine was stony-eyed with grief. Mr. Green, now employed by Heathcliff, gave all the servants but Ellen notice to quit, and hurried the funeral.

Analysis

One part of Heathcliff’s revenge fails: Cathy manages to escape in time to see her father again, and Edgar dies happy. Given the great importance attached to last words and dying moments, this is a notable victory for Cathy, and an essential one if all of Heathcliff's evil work is to be undone in the end. If Edgar had died miserably, no amount of happy
endings could ever have undone that tragedy. This chapter also includes some brief satire of lawyers; much as in modern society, many Victorians considered lawyers to be untrustworthy. Mr. Green’s willingness to be bought by the highest bidder demonstrates a moral bankruptcy that rivals Heathcliff’s.

Summary: Chapter 29

Heathcliff came to the Grange to fetch Catherine to Wuthering Heights to take care of Linton, who was dying in terror of his father. When Ellen begged him to allow Cathy and Linton to live at the Grange, Heathcliff explained that he wanted to get a tenant for the estate (Mr. Lockwood, as it turned out). Catherine agreed to go because Linton was all she had to love, and explained that she pitied Heathcliff because no one loved him. Then she left the room.

Heathcliff, in a strange mood, told Ellen what he had done the night before. He had bribed the sexton who was digging Edgar’s grave to uncover his Catherine’s coffin, so he could see her face again—he said it was hers yet. The sexton told him that the face would change if air blew on it, so he tore himself away from contemplating it, and struck one side of the coffin loose and bribed the sexton to put his body in with Catherine’s when he was dead. Ellen was shocked, and scolded him for disturbing the dead, at which he replied that on the contrary she had haunted him night and day for eighteen years, and—”yesternight, I was tranquil. I dreamt I was sleeping my last sleep, by that sleeper, with my heart stopped, and my cheek frozen against hers” (289).

Heathcliff then told Ellen what he had done the night after Catherine’s burial (the night he beat up Hindley). He had gone to the kirkyard and dug up the coffin “to have her in his arms again” (289), but while he was wrenching at the screws he suddenly felt sure of her living presence. He was consoled, but tortured as well: from that night for 18 years he constantly felt as though he could almost see her, but not quite. He tried sleeping in her room, but constantly opened his eyes to see if she were there, he felt so sure she was. Heathcliff finished his story, and Cathy sadly bade farewell to Ellen.

Analysis

Heathcliff’s continued love for Catherine’s dead body after 18 years emphasizes the physical, yet non-physical nature of their relationship. It would appear to physical in a way that transcends conventional ideas about sexuality: Heathcliff was pleased to see that Catherine still looked like herself after 18 years, but claimed that if she had been "dissolved into earth, or worse" (289) he would have been no less comforted by the proximity to her body. His idea of heaven is to be utterly and completely unified with Catherine in body, as in spirit—and this could just as well mean to disintegrate into dust together as to be joined in the act of love. The difference between these two forms of union is that while people are
joined during sexual intercourse, their separate bodies and identities remain clear. But in Heathcliff and Catherine's corporeal and spiritual unity, as envisioned by him, an observer would not be able to tell "which is which" (288) This is similar to Catherine's statement in Chapter 9 that she was Heathcliff.

Summary: Chapter 30

Ellen has now more or less reached the present time in her narrative, and tells Lockwood what Zillah told her about Cathy's reception at Wuthering Heights. Cathy spent all her time in Linton's room, and when she came out she asked Heathcliff to call a doctor, because Linton was very sick. Heathcliff replied: "We know that! But his life is not worth a farthing" (292). Cathy was thus left to care for her dying cousin all by herself—Zillah, Hareton and Joseph would not help her—and became haggard and bewildered from lack of sleep. Finally Linton died, and when Heathcliff asked Cathy how she felt, she said: "He's safe and I'm free. I should feel very well but you have left me so long to struggle against death, alone, that I feel and see only death! I feel like death!" (294) Hareton was sorry for her.

Cathy was ill for the next two weeks. Heathcliff informed her that Linton had left all of his and his wife's property to himself. One day when Heathcliff was out, Cathy came downstairs. Hareton made shy, friendly advances, which she angrily rejected. He asked Zillah to ask Cathy to read for them (he was illiterate, but wished to learn) but she refused on the grounds that she had been forsaken during Linton's illness, and had no reason to care for Hareton or Zillah. Hareton said that he had in fact asked Heathcliff to be allowed to relieve her of some of her duties, but was denied. Cathy was in no mood to forgive, however, and thus became the unfriendly young woman whom Lockwood had seen at Wuthering Heights. According to Zillah: "She'll snap at the master himself, and as good dares him to thrash her; and the more hurt she gets, the more venomous she grows" (297). Ellen wanted to get a cottage and live there with Cathy, but Heathcliff would not permit it. Ellen now believes that the only way Cathy might escape from Wuthering Heights is to marry a second time.

Analysis

Some believe that difficult and painful experiences open the door to personal growth. If this is the case, Cathy's short marriage to Linton should have caused her to grow a great deal from the happy and innocent girl she had formerly been. Instead, it appears to make her venomous and permanently angry. However, one might make the argument that the humbling she undergoes is necessary because, without it, she never would have bothered to see the good in Hareton. Is the time Cathy spends caring for Linton a complete loss, or does she learn anything valuable from it? This is related to the question of whether Wuthering Heights is a Christian novel: in Christian theology, suffering is usually considered
ennobling. See the analysis of the next chapter for a discussion of the role of education and books in Cathy and Hareton’s relationship.

3.7 Summary and Analysis of Chapters 31-34

Summary: Chapter 31

Lockwood goes to Wuthering Heights to see Heathcliff and tell him he is moving to London and thus doesn’t want to stay at the Grange any longer. He notices that Hareton is "as handsome a rustic as need be seen" (299). He gives Cathy a note from Ellen. Initially, Cathy thinks it is from Lockwood and rejects it, but when Lockwood makes it clear that it isn’t, Hareton snatches it away, saying that Heathcliff should look at it first (he isn’t home yet). Cathy tries to hide her tears, but Hareton notices and lets the letter drop beside her seat. She reads it and expresses her longing for freedom, telling Lockwood that she can’t even write Ellen back because Heathcliff has destroyed her books. Hareton has all the other books in the house: he has been trying to learn to read. Catherine mocks him for his clumsy attempts at self-education: "Those books, both prose and verse, were consecrated to me by other associations, and I hate to hear them debased and profaned in his mouth!" (302) Poor Hareton fetches the books and throws them into her lap, saying he doesn’t want to think about them any longer. She persists in her mockery, reading aloud in "the drawling tone of a beginner," for which Hareton slaps her and throws the books into the fire. Lockwood "read[s] in his countenance what anguish it was to offer that sacrifice to spleen."

Heathcliff enters and Hareton leaves, "to enjoy his grief and anger in solitude” (303). Heathcliff moodily confides to Lockwood that Hareton reminds him more of Catherine Earnshaw than he does of Hindley. He also tells Lockwood that he will still have to pay his full rent even if he leaves the Grange, to which Lockwood, insulted, agrees. Heathcliff invites Lockwood to dinner, and informs Cathy that she can eat with Joseph in the kitchen. Lockwood eats the cheerless meal and leaves, contemplating the possibility of his courting Cathy and bringing her "into the stirring atmosphere of the town” (304).

Analysis

Books take on an important role in the relationship between Hareton and Catherine: Hareton’s illiteracy is the most glaring result of Heathcliff’s mistreatment of him, designed to reduce him to rustic ignorance. Hareton never rebels against Heathcliff, but his contact with Catherine, who was carefully educated by her father, makes him extremely conscious of his shortcomings. One might wonder how great the value of book-learning is in this novel: Linton, who can read, is obviously inferior to his more vigorous cousin Hareton, which might lead one to think that Brontë is championing native energy over imposed refinement. However, for Catherine and Hareton to become close it is absolutely necessary for Hareton to wish to educate himself, and in the last chapter their love will be symbolized in the joint
reading of a book. Similarly, Heathcliff’s youthful degradation really begins when he ceases to follow Catherine's lessons. It appears that book-learning is not enough to make a person good, but that the lack of it is enough to make someone ridiculous. Literacy is, in short, a basic and essential quality.

Summary: Chapter 32

In the fall of 1802, later that year, Lockwood returns to the Grange because he is passing through the area on a hunting trip. He finds the Grange more or less empty: Ellen is now at Wuthering Heights, and an old woman had replaced her. Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights to see what has changed. He notices flowers growing around the old farm house, and overhears a pleasant lesson from indoors. Cathy, sounding "sweet as a silver bell" (307) is teaching Hareton, now respectably dressed, to read. The lesson is interspersed with kisses and very kind words. Lockwood doesn’t want to disturb them, and goes around to the kitchen to find Ellen singing and Joseph complaining as usual. Ellen is glad to see Lockwood and tells them that he will have to settle the rent with her, since she is acting for Cathy. Heathcliff has been dead for three months. Ellen tells Lockwood what has happened in his absence.

A fortnight after Lockwood left the Grange the previous spring, Nelly was summoned to Wuthering Heights, where she gladly went, hoping to keep Cathy out of Heathcliff’s way. She was pleased to see Cathy, but saddened by the way the young woman’s personality had changed.

One day when Cathy, Ellen, and Hareton were sitting in the kitchen, Cathy grew tired of the animosity between herself and her cousin and offered him a book, which he refused. She left it close to him, but he never touched it. Hareton was injured in a shooting accident in March, and since Heathcliff didn't like to see him, he spent a lot of time sitting in the kitchen, where Cathy found many reasons to go. Finally her efforts at reconciliation succeeded, and they became loving friends, much to Joseph's indignation.

Analysis

Cathy and Hareton’s is not surprising given Brontë’s preoccupation with symmetry.. At the beginning of the story, Hindley and Catherine inhabited Wuthering Heights and Edgar and Isabella inhabited the Grange. The obvious symmetrical plot would have been: Hindley married Isabella producing a son, while Catherine married Edgar, producing Cathy. Then Cathy and her male cousin would marry, unifying the two houses completely, and Cathy Linton would become Catherine Earnshaw, taking her mother’s maiden name. The harmony of this plot was disrupted by the introduction of Heathcliff, an alien figure who destroyed the potential marital balance. By the end of the novel, however, Heathcliff and his issue are eliminated, and the unifying marriage between the Linton and Earnshaw families will take
place after all, as though Heathcliff had never existed. The union between Isabella and Heathcliff should not have taken place, so naturally Linton Heathcliff was a mistake, an unlikable and weakly being. Cathy Linton's marriage to Linton Heathcliff was likewise a mistake, forced by Heathcliff, and in order to preserve the integrity of the pattern, their marriage was childless. For harmony to be reinstated, no descendants of Heathcliff must remain by the end of the novel.

Another beauty of Brontë's plot is that the three names that Lockwood reads when he stays at Wuthering Heights in Chapter 3—Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, and Catherine Linton—are all assumed at one point or another by each of the two Catherines. The first Catherine is named Earnshaw, then Linton when she marries Edgar, then perhaps Heathcliff when she and Heathcliff are finally united in the grave. Her daughter is first Catherine Linton, then Heathcliff, then Earnshaw.

**Summary: Chapter 33**

The next morning Ellen found Catherine with Hareton in the garden, planning a flower garden in the middle of Joseph's cherished currant bushes. She warned them that they would be punished for destroying the bushes, but Hareton promised to take the blame. At tea, Cathy was careful not to talk to Hareton too much, but she put flowers into his porridge, which made him laugh and made Heathcliff angry. Heathcliff assumed Cathy had laughed, but Hareton quietly admitted his fault. Joseph came in and incoherently bewailed the fate of his bushes. Hareton said he had uprooted some, but would plant them again, and Cathy said it had been at her instigation. Heathcliff called her an "insolent slut" (319) and Cathy accused him of having stolen her land and Hareton's. Heathcliff commanded Hareton to throw her out. The poor boy was torn between his two loyalties and tried to persuade Catherine to leave. Heathcliff seemed "ready to tear Catherine in pieces" (319) when he suddenly calmed down and told everyone to leave. Later Hareton asked Catherine not to speak ill of Heathcliff in front of him because Hareton considers him to be his father. Cathy understood his position and refrained from insulting her oppressor from then on. Ellen was glad to see her two ‘children’ happy together; Hareton quickly shook off his ignorance and boorishness and Catherine became sweet again.

When Heathcliff saw them together he was struck by their resemblances to Catherine Earnshaw, and told Ellen that he had lost his motivation for destruction. He no longer took any interest in everyday life. Catherine and Hareton didn't appear to him to be distinct characters of their own, but apparitions that evoked his beloved. He also felt Hareton to be very much like himself as a youth. But most importantly, his Catherine haunted him completely: "The most ordinary faces of men, and women my own features mock me with a resemblance. The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and that I have lost her!" (324) He told Nelly that he felt a change coming—that he could no longer exist in the living world when he felt so close to that of the dead, or
the immortal. Nelly wondered whether he was ill, but decided that he was in fine health and mind, except for his “monomania” (324) for Catherine Earnshaw.

**Analysis**

This chapter offers us an extraordinary window into Heathcliff’s mind. Whenever he looks at something, he sees Catherine in it, and he hears her voice in every sound. This is Bronte’s conception of true haunting, which seems to bear far more resemblance to madness than it does to scary noises in the dark. It is mainly an interior phenomenon: if the ghost of Catherine is at work, she has found her home in Heathcliff’s mind, and her vocation in distorting his perception and his ability to communicate with the outside world.

**Summary: Chapter 34**

In the next few days Heathcliff all but stopped eating, and spent the nights walking outside. Catherine, happily working on her garden, came across him and was surprised to see him looking "very much excited, and wild, and glad" (327). Ellen urged him to eat, and indeed at dinner he took a heaping plate, but abruptly lost interest in food, seemed to be watching something by the window, and went outside. Hareton followed to ask him what was wrong, and Heathcliff told him to go back to Catherine and not bother him. He came back an hour or two later, with the same "unnatural appearance of joy" (328), shivering the way a "tight-stretched cord vibrates a strong thrilling, rather than trembling." Ellen asked him what was going on, and he answered that he was within sight of his heaven, hardly three feet away. His heaven, needless to say, was being buried alongside Catherine Earnshaw.

Later that evening, Ellen found Heathcliff sitting in the dark with all the windows open. His black eyes and pale face frightened her. Ellen half-wondered if he were a vampire, but told herself that she was foolish, since she had watched him grow up. The next day he was even more restless and could hardly speak coherently, and stared with fascination at nothing with an "anguished, yet raptured expression" (331). Early the next morning, he declared he wanted to settle things with his lawyer, Mr. Green. Ellen said he should eat, and get some sleep, but he replied that he could do neither: "My soul's bliss kills my body, but does not satisfy itself" (333). Ellen told him to repent his sins, and he thanked her for the reminder and asked her to make sure that he was buried next to Catherine: "I have nearly attained my heaven; and that of others is altogether unvalued, and uncoveted by me." Heathcliff behaved more and more strangely, talking openly of Catherine. Ellen called the doctor, but Heathcliff refused to see him. The next morning she found him dead in his room, by the open window, wet from the rain and cut by the broken window-pane, with his eyes fiercely open and wearing a savage smile. Hareton mourned deeply for him. The doctor wondered what could have killed him, although Ellen knew that it was Heathcliff’s
depression. He was buried alongside Catherine’s remains, as he had asked. People claim that his ghost roams the moors with Catherine. Ellen once came across a little boy crying because he believed he had seen Heathcliff’s phantom with a woman and dared not pass them.

Cathy and Hareton are engaged, and they plan to move to the Grange, leaving Wuthering Heights to Joseph and the ghosts. Lockwood notices on his walk home that the church was falling apart from neglect, and he found the three headstones—Catherine’s, Edgar’s, and Heathcliff’s—covered by varying degrees of heather. He "wondered how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers, for sleepers in that quiet earth" (337).

Analysis

An essential question for thinking about this novel is: does it end happily or not, and why? Is the novel on the side of the Grange and civilization, since Catherine and Hareton move there after Heathcliff dies? Or should we miss the passionate intensity of Wuthering Heights? Who wins? It seems at first that the Grange wins, and yet we should remember that Heathcliff achieves his version of heaven as well. Several film versions of Wuthering Heights prefer to delete the whole second half of the novel, ending dramatically with Catherine’s death—they find that the restabilising second half detracts from the romance and power of the first part. Is this the case? Did Bronte add the second half because society would not have accepted the first half alone?

When considering these questions, it is important to keep in mind the novel’s carefully designed, symmetrical structure. This might lead to the conclusion that civilization really does win, since the marriage of Cathy and Hareton is the final and necessary conclusion to two generations of unrest, and all traces of Heathcliff disappear. In another sense, however, Cathy and Hareton resemble the earlier Catherine and Heathcliff, purified of their wilder and more antisocial elements. Their marriage could be an echo of the marriage that never took place between Catherine and Heathcliff. This is supported by the fact that the story begins and ends with a Catherine Earnshaw, and that the name Hareton is very similar to Heathcliff.

In another reading, one might remember that Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff belonged above all to the natural and immaterial world, whereas the Lintons belonged to a material society. The reunion in death of the two lovers constitutes their achievement of complete freedom—as far as they are concerned, it hardly matters what happens on earth. Heathcliff’s realization at the end of the novel that he no longer cares about getting revenge on Hindley and Edgar, both long dead, supports this interpretation.

One might also conclude that Emily Bronte was really more drawn to her wild characters—Catherine and Heathcliff—but realized that their extreme personalities posed a great threat to the existence of peaceful life on earth. Perhaps she eliminated them because
she was unwilling to sacrifice the rest of the world for such a wild ideal, whatever its appeal. In this case the ambiguous conclusion of the novel may represent an inner conflict in the author herself.

4. Character Analysis

4.1 Major Characters

a) Heathcliff:

*Wuthering Heights* centres around the story of Heathcliff. The first paragraph of the novel provides a vivid physical picture of him, as Lockwood describes how his “black eyes” withdraw suspiciously under his brows at Lockwood’s approach. Nelly’s story begins with his introduction into the Earnshaw family, his vengeful machinations drive the entire plot, and his death ends the book. The desire to understand him and his motivations has kept countless readers engaged in the novel.

Heathcliff, however, defies being understood, and it is difficult for readers to resist seeing what they want or expect to see in him. The novel teases the reader with the possibility that Heathcliff is something other than what he seems—that his cruelty is merely an expression of his frustrated love for Catherine, or that his sinister behaviors serve to conceal the heart of a romantic hero. We expect Heathcliff’s character to contain such a hidden virtue because he resembles a hero in a romance novel. Traditionally, romance novel heroes appear dangerous, brooding, and cold at first, only later to emerge as fiercely devoted and loving. One hundred years before Emily Bronte wrote *Wuthering Heights*, the notion that “a reformed rake makes the best husband” was already a cliché of romantic literature, and romance novels centre around the same cliché to this day.

However, Heathcliff does not reform, and his malevolence proves so great and long-lasting that it cannot be adequately explained even as a desire for revenge against Hindley, Catherine, Edgar, etc. As he himself points out, his abuse of Isabella is purely sadistic, as he amuses himself by seeing how much abuse she can take and still come cringing back for more. Critic Joyce Carol Oates argues that Emily Brontë does the same thing to the reader that Heathcliff does to Isabella, testing to see how many times the reader can be shocked by Heathcliff’s gratuitous violence and still, masochistically, insist on seeing him as a romantic hero.

It is significant that Heathcliff begins his life as a homeless orphan on the streets of Liverpool. When Bronte composed her book, in the 1840s, the English economy was severely depressed, and the conditions of the factory workers in industrial areas like Liverpool were so appalling that the upper and middle classes feared violent revolt. Thus,
many of the more affluent members of society beheld these workers with a mixture of sympathy and fear. In literature, the smoky, threatening, miserable factory-towns were often represented in religious terms, and compared to hell. The poet William Blake, writing near the turn of the nineteenth century, speaks of England’s “dark Satanic Mills.” Heathcliff, of course, is frequently compared to a demon by the other characters in the book.

Considering this historical context, Heathcliff seems to embody the anxieties that the book’s upper- and middle-class audience had about the working classes. The reader may easily sympathize with him when he is powerless, as a child tyrannized by Hindley Earnshaw, but he becomes a villain when he acquires power and returns to Wuthering Heights with money and the trappings of a gentleman. This corresponds with the ambivalence the upper classes felt toward the lower classes—the upper classes had charitable impulses toward lower-class citizens when they were miserable, but feared the prospect of the lower classes trying to escape their miserable circumstances by acquiring political, social, cultural, or economic power.

b) Catherine

The location of Catherine’s coffin symbolizes the conflict that tears apart her short life. She is not buried in the chapel with the Lintons. Nor is her coffin placed among the tombs of the Earnshaws. Instead, as Nelly describes in Chapter XVI, Catherine is buried “in a corner of the kirkyard, where the wall is so low that heath and bilberry plants have climbed over it from the moor.” Moreover, she is buried with Edgar on one side and Heathcliff on the other, suggesting her conflicted loyalties. Her actions are driven in part by her social ambitions, which initially are awakened during her first stay at the Lintons’, and which eventually compel her to marry Edgar. However, she is also motivated by impulses that prompt her to violate social conventions—to love Heathcliff, throw temper tantrums, and run around on the moor.

Isabella Linton—Catherine’s sister-in-law and Heathcliff’s wife, who was born in the same year that Catherine was—serves as Catherine’s foil. The two women’s parallel positions allow us to see their differences with greater clarity. Catherine represents wild nature, in both her high, lively spirits and her occasional cruelty, whereas Isabella represents culture and civilization, both in her refinement and in her weakness.

c) Edgar

Just as Isabella Linton serves as Catherine’s foil, Edgar Linton serves as Heathcliff’s. Edgar is born and raised a gentleman. He is graceful, well-mannered, and instilled with civilized virtues. These qualities cause Catherine to choose Edgar over Heathcliff and thus to initiate the contention between the men. Nevertheless, Edgar’s gentlemanly qualities ultimately prove useless in his ensuing rivalry with Heathcliff. Edgar is particularly
humiliated by his confrontation with Heathcliff in Chapter XI, in which he openly shows his fear of fighting Heathcliff. Catherine, having witnessed the scene, taunts him, saying, “Heathcliff would as soon lift a finger at you as the king would march his army against a colony of mice.” As the reader can see from the earliest descriptions of Edgar as a spoiled child, his refinement is tied to his helplessness and impotence.

Charlotte Bronte, in her preface to the 1850 edition of *Wuthering Heights*, refers to Edgar as “an example of constancy and tenderness,” and goes on to suggest that her sister Emily was using Edgar to point out that such characteristics constitute true virtues in all human beings, and not just in women, as society tended to believe. However, Charlotte’s reading seems influenced by her own feminist agenda. Edgar’s inability to counter Heathcliff’s vengeance, and his naïve belief on his deathbed in his daughter’s safety and happiness, make him a weak, if sympathetic, character.

4.2 Minor Characters

a) Cathy Linton

The daughter of the older Catherine and Edgar Linton. She has all her mother’s charm without her wildness, although she is by no means submissive and spiritless. Edgar calls her Cathy. She marries Linton Heathcliff to become Catherine Heathcliff, and then marries Hareton to be Catherine Earnshaw.

b) Mr. Earnshaw

A plain, fairly well-off farmer with few pretensions but a kind heart. He is a stern father to Catherine. He takes in Heathcliff despite his family's protests.

c) Ellen Dean

One of the main narrators. She has been a servant with the Earnshaws and the Lintons for all her life, and knows them better than anyone else. She is independent and high-spirited, and retains an objective viewpoint on those she serves. She is called Nelly by those who are on the most egalitarian terms with her: Mr. Earnshaw, the older Catherine, and Heathcliff.

d) Frances Earnshaw

Hindley's wife, a young woman of unknown background. She seems rather flighty and giddy to Ellen, and displays an irrational fear of death, which is explained when she dies of tuberculosis.

e) Hareton Earnshaw
The son of Hindley and Frances; he marries the younger Catherine. For most of the novel, he is rough, rustic, and uncultured, having been carefully kept from all civilizing influences by Heathcliff. He grows up to be superficially like Heathcliff, but is really much more sweet-tempered and forgiving. He never blames Heathcliff for having disinherited him, for example, and remains his oppressor's staunchest ally.

f) Hindley Earnshaw

The only son of Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw, and Catherine's older brother. He is a bullying, discontented boy who grows up to be a violent alcoholic when his beloved wife, Frances, dies. He hates Heathcliff because he felt supplanted in his father's affections by the other boy, and Heathcliff hates him even more in return.

g) Isabella Linton

Edgar's younger sister, who marries Heathcliff to become Isabella Heathcliff. Her son is named Linton Heathcliff. Before she marries Heathcliff, she is a rather shallow-minded young lady, pretty and quick-witted but a little foolish (as can be seen by her choice of husbands). Her unhappy marriage brings out an element of cruelty in her character: when her husband treats her brutally, she rapidly grows to hate him with all her heart.

h) Joseph

A household servant at Wuthering Heights who outlives all his masters. His brand of religion is unforgiving for others and self-serving for himself. His heavy Yorkshire accent gives flavor to the novel.

i) Dr. Kenneth

The local doctor who appears when people are sick or dying. He is a sympathetic and intelligent man, whose main concern is the health of his patients.

j) Mr. And Mrs. Linton

Edgar and Isabella's parents. They spoil their children and turn the older Catherine into a little lady, being above all concerned about good manners and behaviour. They are unsympathetic to Heathcliff when he is a child.

k) Linton Heathcliff

The son of Heathcliff and Isabella. He combines the worst characteristics of both parents, and is effeminate, weakly, and cruel. He uses his status as an invalid to manipulate the tender-hearted younger Catherine. His father despises him. Linton marries Catherine and dies soon after.

l) Lockwood
The narrator of the novel. He is a gentleman from London, in distinct contrast to the other rural characters. He is not particularly sympathetic and tends to patronize his subjects.

m) Zillah

The housekeeper at Wuthering Heights after Hindley’s death and before Heathcliff’s. She doesn’t particularly understand the people she lives with, and stands in marked contrast to Ellen, who is deeply invested in them. She is an impatient but capable woman.

n) Juno

Heathcliff’s dog.

o) Skulker

The Lintons’ bulldog. Skulker attacks Cathy Earnshaw on her first visit to Thrushcross Grange.

p) Michael

The Lintons’ stable boy.

q) Mr. Green

A lawyer in Gimmerton who briefly becomes involved with executing Edgar Linton’s estate.

5. Stylistic Devices

5.1 Narration

The power of Wuthering Heights owes much to its complex narrative structure and to the ingenious device of having two conventional people relate a very unconventional tale. The story is organized as a narrative within a narrative, or what some critics call "Chinese boxes." Lockwood is used to open and end the novel in the present tense, first person ("I"). When he returns to Thrushcross Grange from his visit to Wuthering Heights sick and curious, Nelly cheerfully agrees to tell him about his neighbors. She picks up the narrative and continues it, also in the first person, almost until the end, with only brief interruptions by Lockwood. The critic David Daiches notes in his introduction of Wuthering Heights the "fascinating counterpoint" of "end retrospect and present impression," and that the strength of the story relies on Nelly's familiarity with the main characters.

5.2 Repetition

Repetition is another tactic Brontë employs in organizing Wuthering Heights. It seems that nothing ever ends in the world of this novel. Instead, time seems to run in cycles, and the horrors of the past repeat themselves in the present. The way that the names of the characters are recycled, so that the names of the characters of the younger generation
seem only to be rescramblings of the names of their parents, leads the reader to consider how plot elements also repeat themselves. For instance, Heathcliff’s degradation of Hareton repeats Hindley’s degradation of Heathcliff. Also, the young Catherine’s mockery of Joseph’s earnest evangelical zealoussness repeats her mother’s. Even Heathcliff’s second try at opening Catherine’s grave repeats his first.

5.3 Symbols

a) Moors

The constant emphasis on landscape within the text of *Wuthering Heights* endows the setting with symbolic importance. This landscape is comprised primarily of moors: wide, wild expanses, high but somewhat soggy, and thus infertile. Moorland cannot be cultivated, and its uniformity makes navigation difficult. It features particularly waterlogged patches in which people could potentially drown. (This possibility is mentioned several times in *Wuthering Heights*.) Thus, the moors serve very well as symbols of the wild threat posed by nature. As the setting for the beginnings of Catherine and Heathcliff’s bond (the two play on the moors during childhood), the moorland transfers its symbolic associations onto the love affair.

b) Ghosts

Ghosts appear throughout *Wuthering Heights*, as they do in most other works of Gothic fiction, yet Brontë always presents them in such a way that whether they really exist remains ambiguous. Thus the world of the novel can always be interpreted as a realistic one. Certain ghosts—such as Catherine’s spirit when it appears to Lockwood in Chapter III—may be explained as nightmares. The villagers’ alleged sightings of Heathcliff’s ghost in Chapter XXXIV could be dismissed as unverified superstition. Whether or not the ghosts are “real,” they symbolize the manifestation of the past within the present, and the way memory stays with people, permeating their day-to-day lives.

6. Study Questions (Sample Questions and Answers)

6.1. Many of the names in Wuthering Heights are strikingly similar. For example, besides the two Catherines, there are a number of Lintons, Earnshaws, and Heathcliffs whose names vary only slightly. What role do specific names play in Wuthering Heights?

Answer for Study Question 1

Names have a thematic significance in Wuthering Heights. As the second generation of characters gradually exhibits certain characteristics of the first generation, names come to represent particular attributes. The Earnshaws are wild and passionate, the Lintons tame.
and civilized; therefore, young Catherine Linton displays a milder disposition than her mother, Catherine Earnshaw. Linton Heathcliff becomes a mixture of the worst of both his parents. In other words, he possesses Heathcliff’s arrogance and imperiousness, combined with the Lintons’ cowardice and frailty. Names in Wuthering Heights also serve to emphasize the cyclic nature of the story. Just as the novel begins and ends with a Catherine Earnshaw, the name of Hareton Earnshaw also bookends an era; the final master of Wuthering Heights shares his name with a distant ancestor, whose name was inscribed above the main door in 1500.

6.2. In many ways, Wuthering Heights structures itself around matched, contrasting pairs of themes and of characters. What are some of these pairs, and what role do they play in the book?

Answer for Study Question 2

Matched and contrasting pairs form the apparatus through which the book’s thematic conflicts play out, as the differences between opposed characters and themes force their way into action and development. Some of the pairs include: the two manor houses, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange; the two loves in Catherine’s life, Heathcliff and Edgar; the two Catherines in the novel, mother and daughter; the two halves of the novel, separated by Catherine’s death; the two generations of main characters, each of which occupies one half of the novel; the two families, Earnshaw and Linton, whose family trees are almost exactly symmetrical; and the two great themes of the novel, love and revenge. By placing these elements into pairs, the novel both compares and contrasts them to each other. The device of pairing serves to emphasize the book’s themes, as well as to develop the characters.

6.3. Analyze the character of Edgar Linton. Is he a sympathetic figure? How does he compare to Heathcliff? Is Catherine really in love with him?

Answer for Study Question 3

Edgar Linton is a kind, gentle, civilized, somewhat cowardly man who represents the qualities of Thrushcross Grange as opposed to the qualities of Wuthering Heights. Married to a woman whom he loves but whose passions he cannot understand, Edgar is a highly sympathetic figure after Heathcliff returns to Wuthering Heights. The man finds himself in an almost impossible position, seeing his wife obviously in love with another man but unable to do anything to rectify the situation. Still, he proves weak and ineffectual when compared to the strong-willed Heathcliff, and thus can exercise almost no claim on Catherine’s mind and heart.
While the reader may pity Edgar and feel that morality may be on his side, it is hard not to sympathize with the charismatic Catherine and Heathcliff in their passionate love. It is impossible to think that Catherine does not really love Edgar with some part of herself. Although she marries him largely because of her desire for his social status, she seems genuinely drawn to his good looks, polished manners, and kind demeanor. But it is also impossible to think that her feelings for Edgar equal her feelings for Heathcliff—compared with her wild, elemental passion for Heathcliff, her love for her husband seems frail and somewhat proper, like Edgar himself.

7. Suggested Essay Topics

a) Discuss the novel’s narrative structure. Are the novel’s narrators trustworthy? Why or why not? With particular reference to Nelly’s story, consider what might be gained from reading between the lines of the narration. What roles do the personalities of the narrators play in the way that the story is told?

b) What role does social class and class ambiguity play in Wuthering Heights? To what extent is Heathcliff’s social position responsible for the misery and conflict so persistent in the book?

c) Discuss revenge in Wuthering Heights. In what ways is it connected to love? What is the nature of love in the novel, that it can be so closely connected to vengeance?

d) Think about the influence of the physical landscape in the novel. What role do the moors play in the development of the story, and in the presentation of the characters? How does Catherine’s abiding love of the moors help us to understand her character? What do the moors come to symbolize in the novel?

8. Suggestions for Further Reading


A collection of criticism on the works of the Brontë Sisters, including reprints of early reviews of Wuthering Heights and Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell and Charlotte Brontë's observations on her sister's novel.


Eagleton analyzes the novel in terms of class differences in nineteenth-century England.


Genn discusses Emily Brontë's life and the effect of her environment on her work.

9. Bibliography


Paper V: Unit IV
Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*

1. Background

2. Major Themes

3. Chapter Analysis

4. Character Analysis

5. Stylistic Devices

6. Study Questions

7. Suggested Essay Topics

8. Suggestions for Further Reading

9. Bibliography

Structure

1. Background

1.1 Introduction to the Author

Jonathan Swift, son of the English lawyer Jonathan Swift the elder, was born in Dublin, Ireland, on November 30, 1667. He grew up there in the care of his uncle before attending Trinity College at the age of fourteen, where he stayed for seven years, graduating in 1688. In that year, he became the secretary of Sir William Temple, an English politician and member of the Whig party. In 1694, he took religious orders in the Church of Ireland and then spent a year as a country parson. He then spent further time in the service of Temple before returning to Ireland to become the chaplain of the earl of Berkeley. Meanwhile, he had begun to write satires on the political and religious corruption surrounding him, working on A Tale of a Tub, which supports the position of the Anglican Church against its critics on the left and the right, and The Battle of the Books, which argues for the supremacy of the classics against modern thought and literature. He also wrote a number of political pamphlets in favour of the Whig party. In 1709 he went to London to campaign for the Irish church but was unsuccessful. After some conflicts with the Whig party, mostly because of Swift’s strong allegiance to the church, he became a member of the more conservative Tory party in 1710.
Unfortunately for Swift, the Tory government fell out of power in 1714 and Swift, despite his fame for his writings, fell out of favour. Swift, who had been hoping to be assigned a position in the Church of England, instead returned to Dublin, where he became the dean of St. Patrick’s. During his brief time in England, Swift had become friends with writers such as Alexander Pope, and during a meeting of their literary club, the Martinus Scriblerus Club, they decided to write satires of modern learning. The third voyage of Gulliver’s Travels is assembled from the work Swift did during this time. However, the final work was not completed until 1726, and the narrative of the third voyage was actually the last one completed. After his return to Ireland, Swift became a staunch supporter of the Irish against English attempts to weaken their economy and political power, writing pamphlets such as the satirical A Modest Proposal, in which he suggests that the Irish problems of famine and overpopulation could be easily solved by having the babies of poor Irish subjects sold as delicacies to feed the rich.

Gulliver’s Travels was a controversial work when it was first published in 1726. In fact, it was not until almost ten years after its first printing that the book appeared with the entire text that Swift had originally intended it to have. Ever since, editors have excised many of the passages, particularly the more caustic ones dealing with bodily functions. Even without those passages, however, Gulliver’s Travels serves as a biting satire, and Swift ensures that it is both humorous and critical, constantly attacking British and European society through its descriptions of imaginary countries.

Late in life, Swift seemed to many observers to become even more caustic and bitter than he had been. Three years before his death, he was declared unable to care for himself, and guardians were appointed. Based on these facts and on a comparison between Swift’s fate and that of his character Gulliver, some people have concluded that he gradually became insane and that his insanity was a natural outgrowth of his indignation and outrage against humankind. However, the truth seems to be that Swift was suddenly incapacitated by a paralytic stroke late in life, and that prior to this incident his mental capacities were unimpaired.

Gulliver’s Travels is about a specific set of political conflicts, but if it were nothing more than that it would long ago have been forgotten. The staying power of the work comes from its depiction of the human condition and its often despairing, but occasionally hopeful, sketch of the possibilities for humanity to rein in its baser instincts.

1.2 Introduction to the Text

Gulliver’s Travels recounts the story of Lemuel Gulliver, a practical-minded Englishman trained as a surgeon who takes to the seas when his business fails. In a deadpan first-person narrative that rarely shows any signs of self-reflection or deep emotional response, Gulliver narrates the adventures that befall him on these travels.
Gulliver’s adventure in Lilliput begins when he wakes after his shipwreck to find himself bound by innumerable tiny threads and addressed by tiny captors who are in awe of him but fiercely protective of their kingdom. They are not afraid to use violence against Gulliver, though their arrows are little more than pinpricks. But overall, they are hospitable, risking famine in their land by feeding Gulliver, who consumes more food than a thousand Lilliputians combined could. Gulliver is taken into the capital city by a vast wagon the Lilliputians have specially built. He is presented to the emperor, who is entertained by Gulliver, just as Gulliver is flattered by the attention of royalty. Eventually Gulliver becomes a national resource, used by the army in its war against the people of Blefuscu, whom the Lilliputians hate for doctrinal differences concerning the proper way to crack eggs. But things change when Gulliver is convicted of treason for putting out a fire in the royal palace with his urine and is condemned to be shot in the eyes and starved to death. Gulliver escapes to Blefuscu, where he is able to repair a boat he finds and set sail for England.

After staying in England with his wife and family for two months, Gulliver undertakes his next sea voyage, which takes him to a land of giants called Brobdingnag. Here, a field worker discovers him. The farmer initially treats him as little more than an animal, keeping him for amusement. The farmer eventually sells Gulliver to the queen, who makes him a courtly diversion and is entertained by his musical talents. Social life is easy for Gulliver after his discovery by the court, but not particularly enjoyable. Gulliver is often repulsed by the physicality of the Brobdingnagians, whose ordinary flaws are many times magnified by their huge size. Thus, when a couple of courtly ladies let him play on their naked bodies, he is not attracted to them but rather disgusted by their enormous skin pores and the sound of their torrential urination. He is generally startled by the ignorance of the people here—even the king knows nothing about politics. More unsettling findings in Brobdingnag come in the form of various animals of the realm that endanger his life. Even Brobdingnagian insects leave slimy trails on his food that make eating difficult. On a trip to the frontier, accompanying the royal couple, Gulliver leaves Brobdingnag when his cage is plucked up by an eagle and dropped into the sea.

Next, Gulliver sets sail again and, after an attack by pirates, ends up in Laputa, where a floating island inhabited by theoreticians and academics oppresses the land below, called Balnibarbi. The scientific research undertaken in Laputa and in Balnibarbi seems totally inane and impractical, and its residents too appear wholly out of touch with reality. Taking a short side trip to Glubbdubdrib, Gulliver is able to witness the conjuring up of figures from history, such as Julius Caesar and other military leaders, whom he finds much less impressive than in books. After visiting the Luggnaggians and the Struldbrugs, the latter of which are senile immortals who prove that age does not bring wisdom, he is able to sail to Japan and from there back to England.

Finally, on his fourth journey, Gulliver sets out as captain of a ship, but after the mutiny of his crew and a long confinement in his cabin, he arrives in an unknown land. This
land is populated by Houyhnhnms, rational-thinking horses who rule, and by Yahoos, brutish humanlike creatures who serve the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver sets about learning their language, and when he can speak he narrates his voyages to them and explains the constitution of England. He is treated with great courtesy and kindness by the horses and is enlightened by his many conversations with them and by his exposure to their noble culture. He wants to stay with the Houyhnhnms, but his bared body reveals to the horses that he is very much like a Yahoo, and he is banished. Gulliver is grief-stricken but agrees to leave. He fashions a canoe and makes his way to a nearby island, where he is picked up by a Portuguese ship captain who treats him well, though Gulliver cannot help now seeing the captain—and all humans—as shamefully Yahoolike. Gulliver then concludes his narrative with a claim that the lands he has visited belong by rights to England, as her colonies, even though he questions the whole idea of colonialism.

2. Major Themes

Exploration

Gulliver decides to join a ship to explore the South Sea. After his education, Gulliver is curious as to the ways of other worlds and jumps at the chance to discover new lands. He leaves his wife so easily, that it would seem he has married an explorer instead of a woman.

Although he is living in a previously unexplored land, Gulliver wants to see all of Lilliput. He explores the metropolis and looks into the royal palace. He explores this land from a bird's eye view, since he hovers above the land as a giant Man-Mountain.

When Gulliver meets with the Blefuscu-an emperor, they both agree on a love and need for exploration of other countries and cultures. Both the Blefuscu and Lilliput empires desire their youth to be exchange students in each other's countries.

After arriving in Brobdingnag, Gulliver sees the twenty foot long blades of grass and forty foot sheaves of corn, and decides to explore the land. He sees enormous agriculture and people, and eventually fears for his life, as he realizes he is the size of a Lilliputian.

Gulliver explores the land of Brobdingnag in all its glory and gory. He discovers the land, the cities, the dirt, and the food. He comments on all of it in relation to his own size and his own native land in Europe.

Even after his miraculous exit and recovery from Brobdingnag, Gulliver still desires to explore more of the world. He looks upon his wife and children as pygmies, and has difficulty living with them. His need to see more and explore still pulls at his soul, so he prepares for his third journey.
Gulliver spots the land of multiple islands from his ship, held captive by pirates. When he is released, he jumps from island to island, exploring the different terrain and environments, until he is swept off land into the flying island of Laputa.

Gulliver explores Laputa in excruciating detail, as he has with Lilliput and Brobdingnag. He details the lodestone, the people, the countryside, and the dimensions of the land in his writings.

After Gulliver grows weary of his stay on the flying island, he is prepared to explore some of the lands underneath. He gathers his letter of recommendation and heads down to Balnibarbi, the continent, to explore the lands of Luggnagg and Glubbdubdrib.

Gulliver explores other parts of the continent, including Glubbdubdrib, the island of magicians and sorcerers. From there, he explores his curiosity even farther by summoning the ghosts of Caesar, Pompey, Alexander the Great, and more great figures of history.

Gulliver explores the island of Luggnagg, on which he meets the Struldbruggs, a people of immortality. He further explores the meaning behind immortality, learning that it is rather a curse than a blessing.

Gulliver explores the footprints, hoof prints, and other marks on the ground of the new land. He sees horses, cows, and hideous people, called yahoos. He begins to explore this new culture’s language when he shouts out the word "yahoo!" It seems as though Gulliver's exploration is turning inward.

Gulliver leaves Houyhnhnm in good weather and explores more of the seas and lands until he arrives in Lisbon, Portugal. He fears the Inquisition will find him mad, for nobody can believe his great story. He continues to explore himself and the land until he finally arrives home in England.

After four long journeys and sixteen years abroad, Gulliver turns his explorations inwards. He despises the human race - especially his family - after living with the Houyhnhnms for so long. He explores his inner thoughts, dreams, wishes and ideas with two horses that he purchases. He also explores his past experiences through writing. The entire book of journeys is a written exploration of Gulliver's ideas and experiences.

**Gender Differences**

Gulliver illustrates the carelessness of women, when he retells the story of the fire. It started, apparently, by the mindlessness of one of the Empress's maids. Furthermore, the only way to extinguish the fire is through urination, an act so lewd and grotesque that a woman could not handle it. She decrees that public urination be banned and that the
contaminated building be left as it is. The method by which Gulliver describes this event, leads the reader to believe that only a woman would act so harshly to his actions.

When the farmer initially shows Gulliver ot his wife, she screams with disgust, the way a woman would react to a bug. Later, Gulliver is repulsed most of all by the sight of a woman's breast. He looks up close at the woman's anatomy and thanks God for the women of England. Whenever Gulliver notices women in Brobdingnag, he is perpetually repulsed, for he sees all their faults and blemishes in expanded form.

Glumdalclitch adopts Gulliver as her little pet/doll, and loves him dearly. Her feminine touch and attention is what Gulliver needs while living in Brobdingnag. Perhaps only a young woman (child) would have been able to care for Gulliver with such attention, affection, and detail. However, her youthful feminine cries are also a disturbance to Gulliver, for he must deal with the negatives as well as the positives.

When Gulliver describes a grotesque vision of humanity in Brobdingnag, he generally uses women as the objects of repulsion. Initially it is the Empress who eats in a grotesque fashion, and now it is the homeless beggar. The beggar is a horrific site, as Gulliver can see into the crevices and cavities in her body, destroyed by vermin and waste and disease.

Again, Gulliver describes a repulsive experience with a woman. Glumdalclitch brings Gulliver to visit the maids of the palace. However, they change in front of him, making him gag at the sight of their blemished skin and sickly smell. One maid even placed him on her nipple so that she could play with him closely. Gulliver does not describe men purely by their physical and flippant attributes - only women.

Women are repeatedly described separately from men, as is the case in the flying island of Laputa. The women are described by geometric shape and mathematical figures. The entire population is described in the same way; however, Gulliver makes a point to tell the reader that the women are separate. Furthermore, the women are not allowed to explore or travel off the island without specific doctrine from the King.

Women are taxed differently than men are in Balnibarbi. They are taxed on the basis of what their most important virtues are - beauty and fashion.

Gulliver relates a story of the yahoo women and how they are different from the men. One day he was bathing and a female yahoo jumped after him, leaping and attacking. Gulliver was so shocked; he didn’t know what to do. Furthermore, he learns that the female yahoo can leave her family after she gives birth. There is no allegiance to anyone.

**Might Versus Right**

*Gulliver’s Travels* implicitly poses the question of whether physical power or moral righteousness should be the governing factor in social life. Gulliver experiences the advantages of physical might both as one who has it, as a giant in Lilliput where he can defeat the Blefuscidian navy by virtue of his immense size, and as one who does not have
it, as a miniature visitor to Brobdingnag where he is harassed by the hugeness of everything from insects to household pets. His first encounter with another society is one of entrapment, when he is physically tied down by the Lilliputians; later, in Brobdingnag, he is enslaved by a farmer. He also observes physical force used against others, as with the Houyhnhnms’ chaining up of the Yahoos.

But alongside the use of physical force, there are also many claims to power based on moral correctness. The whole point of the egg controversy that has set Lilliput against Blefuscu is not merely a cultural difference but, instead, a religious and moral issue related to the proper interpretation of a passage in their holy book. This difference of opinion seems to justify, in their eyes at least, the warfare it has sparked. Similarly, the use of physical force against the Yahoos is justified for the Houyhnhnms by their sense of moral superiority: they are cleaner, better behaved, and more rational. But overall, the novel tends to show that claims to rule on the basis of moral righteousness are often just as arbitrary as, and sometimes simply disguises for, simple physical subjugation. The Laputans keep the lower land of Balnibarbi in check through force because they believe themselves to be more rational, even though we might see them as absurd and unpleasant. Similarly, the ruling elite of Balnibarbi believe itself to be in the right in driving Lord Munodi from power, although we perceive that Munodi is the rational party. Claims to moral superiority are, in the end, as hard to justify as the random use of physical force to dominate others.

The Individual versus Society

Like many narratives about voyages to nonexistent lands, Gulliver’s Travels explores the idea of utopia—an imaginary model of the ideal community. The idea of a utopia is an ancient one, going back at least as far as the description in Plato’s Republic of a city-state governed by the wise and expressed most famously in English by Thomas More’s Utopia. Swift nods to both works in his own narrative, though his attitude toward utopia is much more skeptical, and one of the main aspects he points out about famous historical utopias is the tendency to privilege the collective group over the individual. The children of Plato’s Republic are raised communally, with no knowledge of their biological parents, in the understanding that this system enhances social fairness. Swift has the Lilliputians similarly raise their offspring collectively, but its results are not exactly utopian, since Lilliput is torn by conspiracies, jealousies, and backstabbing.

The Houyhnhnms also practice strict family planning, dictating that the parents of two females should exchange a child with a family of two males, so that the male-to-female ratio is perfectly maintained. Indeed, they come closer to the utopian ideal than the Lilliputians in their wisdom and rational simplicity. But there is something unsettling about the Houyhnhnms’ indistinct personalities and about how they are the only social group that Gulliver encounters who do not have proper names. Despite minor physical differences, they are all so good and rational that they are more or less interchangeable, without individual identities. In their absolute fusion with their society and lack of individuality, they
are in a sense the exact opposite of Gulliver, who has hardly any sense of belonging to his native society and exists only as an individual eternally wandering the seas. Gulliver’s intense grief when forced to leave the Houyhhnms may have something to do with his longing for union with a community in which he can lose his human identity. In any case, such a union is impossible for him, since he is not a horse, and all the other societies he visits make him feel alienated as well.

*Gulliver’s Travels* could in fact be described as one of the first novels of modern alienation, focusing on an individual’s repeated failures to integrate into societies to which he does not belong. England itself is not much of a homeland for Gulliver, and, with his surgeon’s business unprofitable and his father’s estate insufficient to support him, he may be right to feel alienated from it. He never speaks fondly or nostalgically about England, and every time he returns home, he is quick to leave again. Gulliver never complains explicitly about feeling lonely, but the embittered and antisocial misanthrope we see at the end of the novel is clearly a profoundly isolated individual. Thus, if Swift’s satire mocks the excesses of communal life, it may also mock the excesses of individualism in its portrait of a miserable and lonely Gulliver talking to his horses at home in England.

**The Limits of Human Understanding**

The idea that humans are not meant to know everything and that all understanding has a natural limit is important in *Gulliver’s Travels*. Swift singles out theoretical knowledge in particular for attack: his portrait of the disagreeable and self-centred Laputans, who show blatant contempt for those who are not sunk in private theorizing, is a clear satire against those who pride themselves on knowledge above all else. Practical knowledge is also satirized when it does not produce results, as in the academy of Balnibarbi, where the experiments for extracting sunbeams from cucumbers amount to nothing. Swift insists that there is a realm of understanding into which humans are simply not supposed to venture. Thus his depictions of rational societies, like Brobdingnag and Houyhnhnmeland, emphasize not these people’s knowledge or understanding of abstract ideas but their ability to live their lives in a wise and steady way.

The Brobdingnagian king knows shockingly little about the abstractions of political science, yet his country seems prosperous and well governed. Similarly, the Houyhnhnms know little about arcane subjects like astronomy, though they know how long a month is by observing the moon, since that knowledge has a practical effect on their well-being. Aspiring to higher fields of knowledge would be meaningless to them and would interfere with their happiness. In such contexts, it appears that living a happy and well-ordered life seems to be the very thing for which Swift thinks knowledge is useful.

Swift also emphasizes the importance of self-understanding. Gulliver is initially remarkably lacking in self-reflection and self-awareness. He makes no mention of his emotions, passions, dreams, or aspirations, and he shows no interest in describing his own
psychology to us. Accordingly, he may strike us as frustratingly hollow or empty, though it is likely that his personal emptiness is part of the overall meaning of the novel. By the end, he has come close to a kind of twisted self-knowledge in his deranged belief that he is a Yahoo. His revulsion with the human condition, shown in his shabby treatment of the generous Don Pedro, extends to himself as well, so that he ends the novel in a thinly disguised state of self-hatred. Swift may thus be saying that self-knowledge has its necessary limits just as theoretical knowledge does, and that if we look too closely at ourselves we might not be able to carry on living happily.

3. Chapter Analysis

Summary of Part I, Chapter I

The novel begins with Lemuel Gulliver recounting the story of his life, beginning with his family history. He is born to a family in Nottinghamshire, the third of five sons. Although he studies at Cambridge as a teenager, his family is too poor to keep him there, so he is sent to London to be a surgeon’s apprentice. There, under a man named James Bates, he learns mathematics and navigation with the hope of travelling. When his apprenticeship ends, he studies physics at Leyden.

He then becomes a surgeon aboard a ship called the Swallow for three years. Afterward, he settles in London, working as a doctor, and marries a woman named Mary Burton. His business begins to fail when his patron dies, so he decides to go to sea again and travels for six years. Although he has planned to return home at the end of this time, he decides to accept one last job on a ship called the Antelope.

In the East Indies, the Antelope encounters a violent storm in which twelve crewmen die. Six of the crewmembers, including Gulliver, board a small rowboat to escape. Soon the rowboat capsizes, and Gulliver loses track of his companions. They are never seen again. Gulliver, however, swims safely to shore.

Gulliver lies down on the grass to rest, and soon he falls asleep. When he wakes up, he finds that his arms, legs, and long hair have been tied to the ground with pieces of thread. He can only look up, and the bright sun prevents him from seeing anything. He feels something move across his leg and over his chest. He looks down and sees, to his surprise, a six-inch-tall human carrying a bow and arrow. At least forty more little people climb onto his body. He is surprised and shouts loudly, frightening the little people away. They return, however, and one of the little men cries out, “Hekinah Degul.”

Gulliver struggles to get loose and finally succeeds in breaking the strings binding his left arm. He loosens the ropes tying his hair so he can turn to the left. In response, the little people fire a volley of arrows into his hand and violently attack his body and face. He decides that the safest thing to do is to lie still until nightfall. The noise increases as the little people build a stage next to Gulliver about a foot and a half off the ground. One of them climbs onto it and makes a speech in a language that Gulliver does not understand.
Gulliver indicates that he is hungry, and the little people bring him baskets of meat. He devours it all and then shows that he is thirsty, so they bring him two large barrels of wine. Gulliver is tempted to pick up forty or fifty of the little people and throw them against the ground, but he decides that he has made them a promise of goodwill and is grateful for their hospitality. He is also struck by their bravery, since they climb onto his body despite his great size.

An official climbs onto Gulliver’s body and tells him that he is to be carried to the capital city. Gulliver wants to walk, but they tell him that that will not be permitted. Instead, they bring a frame of wood raised three inches off the ground and carried by twenty-two wheels. Nine hundred men pull this cart about half a mile to the city. Gulliver’s left leg is then padlocked to a large temple, giving him only enough freedom to walk around the building in a semicircle and lie down inside the temple.

**Overall Analysis**

Gulliver’s narrative begins much like other travel records of his time. The description of his youth and education provides background knowledge, establishes Gulliver’s position in English society, and causes the novel to resemble true-life accounts of travels at sea published during Swift’s lifetime. Swift imitates the style of a standard travelogue throughout the novel to heighten the satire. Here he creates a set of expectations in our minds, namely a short-lived belief in the truth of Gulliver’s observations. Later in the novel, Swift uses the style of the travelogue to exaggerate the absurdity of the people and places with which Gulliver comes into contact. A fantastical style—one that made no attempt to seem truthful, accurate, or traditional—would have weakened the satire by making it irrelevant, but the factual, reportorial style of Gulliver’s Travels does the opposite.

Gulliver is surprised to discover the Lilliputians but is not particularly shocked. This encounter is only the first of many in the novel in which we are asked to accept Gulliver’s extraordinary experiences as merely unusual. Seeing the world through Gulliver’s eyes, we also adopt, for a moment, Gulliver’s view of the world. But at the same time, we can step back and recognize that the Lilliputians are nothing but a figment of Swift’s imagination. The distance between these two stances—the gullible Gulliver and the sceptical reader—is where the narrative’s multiple levels of meaning are created: on one level, we have a true-life story of adventure; on another, a purely fictional fairy tale; and on a third level, transcending the first two and closest to Swift’s original intention, a satirical critique of European pretensions to rationality and goodwill.

Swift wrote Gulliver’s Travels at a time when Europe was the world’s dominant power, and when England, despite its small size, was rising in power on the basis of its formidable fleet. England’s growing military and economic power brought it into contact with a wide variety of new animals, plants, places, and things, but the most significant change wrought by European expansion was the encounter with previously unknown people—like the inhabitants of the Americas—with radically different modes of existence.
The miniature stature of the Lilliputians can be interpreted as a physical incarnation of exactly these kinds of cultural differences.

The choice of physical size as the way of manifesting cultural differences has a number of important consequences. The main consequence is the radical difference in power between Gulliver and the Lilliputian nation. His physical size and strength put Gulliver in a unique position within Lilliputian society and give him obligations and capabilities far beyond those of the people who keep him prisoner. Despite Gulliver’s fear of the Lilliputians’ arrows, there is an element of condescension in his willingness to be held prisoner by them. The power differential may represent England’s position with respect to the people it was in the process of colonizing. It may also be a way for Swift to reveal the importance of might in a society supposedly guided by right. Finally, it may be a way of destabilizing humanity’s position at the centre of the universe by demonstrating that size, power, and significance are all relative. Although the Lilliputians are almost pitifully small in Gulliver’s eyes, they are unwilling to see themselves that way; rather, they think of themselves as normal and of Gulliver as a freakish giant. That Gulliver may himself be the Lilliputian to some other nation’s Englishman—a notion elaborated fully in Part II—is already implied in the first chapter.

3.2 Summary of Part I, Chapters II–III

Summary: Chapter II

Once the Lilliputians chain Gulliver to the building, he is finally allowed to stand up and view the entire countryside, which he discovers is beautiful and rustic. The tallest trees are seven feet tall, and the whole area looks to him like a theatre set.

Gulliver meticulously describes his process of relieving himself, which initially involves walking inside the building to the edge of his chain. After the first time, he makes sure to relieve himself in open air, and servants carry away his excrement in wheelbarrows. He says that he describes this process in order to establish his cleanliness, which has been called into question by his critics.

The emperor visits on horseback from his tower. He orders his servants to give Gulliver food and drink. The emperor is dressed plainly and carries a sword to defend himself. He and Gulliver converse, though they cannot understand each other. Gulliver tries to speak every language he knows, but nothing works. After two hours, Gulliver is left with a group of soldiers guarding him. Some of them, disobeying orders, try to shoot arrows at him. As a punishment, the brigadier ties up six of these offenders and places them in Gulliver’s hand. Gulliver puts five of them into his pocket and pretends that he is going to eat the sixth, but then cuts loose his ropes and sets him free. He does the same with the other five, which pleases the court.

After two weeks, a bed is made for Gulliver. It consists of 600 small beds sewn together. News of his arrival also spreads throughout the kingdom and curious people from
the villages come to see him. Meanwhile, the government tries to decide what to do with him. Frequent councils bring up various concerns: that he will break loose, for instance, or that he will eat enough to cause a famine. Some suggest that they starve him or shoot him in the face to kill him, but others argue that doing so would leave them with a giant corpse and a large health risk.

Officers who witnessed Gulliver’s lenient treatment of the six offending soldiers report to the council, and the emperor and his court decide to respond with kindness. They arrange to deliver large amounts of food to Gulliver every morning, supply him with servants to wait on him, hire tailors to make him clothing, and offer teachers to instruct him in their language.

Every morning Gulliver asks the emperor to set him free, but the emperor refuses, saying that Gulliver must be patient. The emperor also orders him to be searched to ensure that he does not have any weapons. Gulliver agrees to this search, and the Lilliputians take an inventory of his possessions. In the process, all of his weapons are taken away.

Summary: Chapter III

Gulliver hopes to be set free, as he is getting along well with the Lilliputians and earning their trust. The emperor decides to entertain him with shows, including a performance by Rope-Dancers, who are Lilliputians seeking employment in the government. For the performance, which doubles as a sort of competitive entrance examination, the candidates dance on “ropes”—slender threads suspended two feet above the ground. When a vacancy occurs, candidates petition the emperor to entertain him with a dance, and whoever jumps the highest earns the office. The current ministers continue this practice as well, in order to show that they have not lost their skill.

As another diversion for Gulliver, the emperor lays three silken threads of different colors on a table. He then holds out a stick, and candidates are asked to leap over it or creep under it. Whoever shows the most dexterity wins one of the ribbons.

Gulliver builds a platform from sticks and his handkerchief and invites horsemen to exercise upon it. The emperor greatly enjoys watching this new entertainment, but it is cut short when a horse steps through the handkerchief, after which Gulliver decides that it is too dangerous for them to keep riding on the cloth.

Some Lilliputians discover Gulliver’s hat, which washed ashore after him, and he asks them to bring it back. Soon after, the emperor asks Gulliver to pose like a colossus, or giant statue, so that his troops might march under Gulliver.

Gulliver’s petitions for freedom are finally answered. Gulliver must swear to obey the articles put forth, which include stipulations that he must assist the Lilliputians in times of war, survey the land around them, help with construction, and deliver urgent messages. Gulliver agrees and his chains are removed.
Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters II–III)

In these chapters, Gulliver learns more about Lilliputian culture, and the great difference in size between him and the Lilliputians is emphasized by a number of examples, many of which are explicit satires of British government. For instance, Lilliputian government officials are chosen by their skill at rope-dancing, which the Lilliputians see as relevant but which Gulliver recognizes as arbitrary and ridiculous. The would-be officials are almost literally forced to jump through hoops in order to qualify for their positions. Clearly, Swift intends for us to understand this episode as a satire of England’s system of political appointments and to infer that England’s system is similarly arbitrary. Gulliver, however, never suggests that he finds the Lilliputians ridiculous. Throughout the entire novel, Gulliver tends to be very sympathetic in his descriptions of the cultures he visits, never criticizing them or finding anything funny, no matter how ludicrous certain customs seem to us. Nor does Gulliver point out the similarities between the ridiculous practices he observes in his travels and the ridiculous customs of Europe. Instead, Swift leaves us to infer all of the satire based on the difference between how things appear to us and how they appear to Gulliver.

The difference in size between Gulliver and the Lilliputians helps to emphasize the importance of physical power, a theme that recurs throughout the novel. Over time, Gulliver begins to earn the Lilliputians’ trust, but it is clearly unnecessary: for all their threats, Gulliver could crush the Lilliputians by simply walking carelessly. The humor comes from the Lilliputians’ view of the situation: despite the evidence before their eyes, they never realize their own insignificance. They keep Gulliver tied up, believing that they can control him, while in truth he could destroy them effortlessly. In this way, Swift satirizes humanity’s pretensions to power and significance.

In these chapters, Swift plays with language in a way that again pokes fun at humanity’s belief in its own importance. When the Lilliputians draw up an inventory of Gulliver’s possessions, the whole endeavour is treated as if it were a serious matter of state. The contrast between the tone of the inventory, which is given in the Lilliputians’ own words, and the utter triviality of the possessions that are being inventoried, serves as a mockery of people who take themselves too seriously. Similarly, the articles that Gulliver is forced to sign in order to gain his freedom are couched in formal, self-important language. But the document is nothing but a meaningless and self-contradictory piece of paper: each article emphasizes the fact that Gulliver is so powerful that, if he so desires, he could violate all of the articles without much concern for his own safety.

3.3 Summary of Part I, Chapters IV–V

Summary: Chapter IV

After regaining his freedom, Gulliver goes to Mildendo, the capital city of the Lilliputians. The residents are told to stay indoors, and they all sit on their roofs and in their garret windows to see him. The town is 500 feet square with a wall surrounding it, and can
hold 500,000 people. The emperor wants Gulliver to see the magnificence of his palace, which is at the centre of the city, so Gulliver cuts down trees to make himself a stool, which he carries around with him so that he can sit down and see things from a shorter distance than a standing position allows.

About two weeks after Gulliver obtains his liberty, a government official, Reldresal, comes to see him. He tells Gulliver that two forces, one rebel group and one foreign empire, threaten the kingdom. The rebel group exists because the kingdom is divided into two factions, called Tramecksan and Slamecksan. The people in the two factions are distinguished by the heights of their heels.

Reldresal tells Gulliver that the current emperor has chosen to employ primarily the low-heeled Slamecksan in his administration. He adds that the emperor himself has lower heels than all of his officials but that his heir has one heel higher than the other, which makes him walk unevenly. At the same time, the Lilliputians fear an invasion from the Island of Blefuscu, which Reldresal calls the “Other Great Empire of the Universe.” He adds that the philosophers of Lilliput do not believe Gulliver’s claim that there are other countries in the world inhabited by other people of his size, preferring to think that Gulliver dropped from the moon or a star.

Reldresal describes the history of the two nations. The conflict between them, he tells Gulliver, began years ago, when the emperor’s grandfather, then in command of the country, commanded all Lilliputians to break their eggs on the small end first. He made this decision after breaking an egg in the old way, large end first, and cutting his finger. The people resented the law, and six rebellions were started in protest. The monarchs of Blefuscu fueled these rebellions, and when they were over the rebels fled to that country to seek refuge. Eleven thousand people chose death rather than submit to the law. Many books were written on the controversy, but books written by the Big-Endians were banned in Lilliput. The government of Blefuscu accused the Lilliputians of disobeying their religious doctrine, the Brundrecral, by breaking their eggs at the small end. The Lilliputians argued that the doctrine reads, “That all true believers shall break their eggs at the convenient end,” which could be interpreted as the small end.

Reldresal continues that the exiles gained support in Blefuscu to launch a war against Lilliput and were aided by rebel forces inside Lilliput. A war has been raging between the two nations ever since, and Gulliver is asked to help defend Lilliput against its enemies. Gulliver does not feel that it is appropriate to intervene, but he nonetheless offers his services to the emperor.

Summary: Chapter V

Gulliver spies on the empire of Blefuscu and devises a plan. He asks for cables and bars of iron, out of which he makes hooks with cables attached. He then wades and swims the channel to Blefuscu and catches their ships at port. The people are so frightened that
they leap out of their ships and swim to shore. Gulliver attaches a hook to each ship and ties them together. The Blefuscu soldiers fire arrows at him, but he keeps working, protecting his eyes by putting on the spectacles he keeps in his coat pocket. He tries to pull the ships away, but they are anchored too tightly, so he cuts them away with his pocketknife and pulls the ships back to Lilliput.

In Lilliput, Gulliver is greeted as a hero. The emperor asks him to go back to retrieve the other ships, intending to destroy Blefuscu’s military strength and make it a province in his empire. Gulliver dissuades him from this action, saying that he does not want to encourage slavery or injustice. This position causes great disagreement in the government, with some officials turning staunchly against Gulliver and calling for his destruction.

Three weeks later, a delegation arrives from Blefuscu, and the war ends with Blefuscu’s surrender. The Blefuscu delegates are privately told of Gulliver’s kindness toward the Lilliputians, and they ask him to visit their kingdom. He wishes to do so, and the emperor reluctantly allows it.

As a Nardac, or person of high rank, Gulliver no longer has to perform all the duties laid down in his contract. He does, however, have the opportunity to help the Lilliputians when the emperor’s wife’s room catches fire. He forgets his coat and cannot put the flames out with his clothing, so instead he thinks of a new plan: he urinates on the palace, putting out the fire entirely. He worries afterward that since the act of public urination is a crime in Lilliput he will be prosecuted, but the emperor tells him he will be pardoned. He is told, however, that the emperor’s wife can no longer tolerate living in her rescued quarters.

Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters IV–V)

Despite the fact that the history of the conflict between Lilliput and Blefuscu is blatantly ridiculous, Gulliver reports it with complete seriousness. The more serious the tone, the more laughable this conflict appears. But Swift expects us to understand immediately that the entire history Gulliver relates parallels European history exactly, down to the smallest details. The High-Heels and the Low-Heels correspond to the Whigs and Tories of English politics. Lilliput and Blefuscu represent England and France. The violent conflict between Big-Endians and Little-Endians represents the Protestant Reformation and the centuries of warfare between Catholics and Protestants.

By recasting European history as a series of brutal wars over meaningless and arbitrary disagreements, Swift implies that the differences between Protestants and Catholics, between Whigs and Tories, and between France and England are as silly and meaningless as how a person chooses to crack an egg. Once we make this connection, though, we face the question of why Swift thinks that these conflicts are trivial and irrelevant. After all, religion, politics, and national identity would have been considered the most important issues in Swift’s time, and we continue to think of these things as important today. The answer to this question is less obvious, and the text does not give us a simple
explanation. The debate between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians does provide some clues, however. The egg controversy is ridiculous because there cannot be any right or wrong way to crack an egg, so it is unreasonable to legislate how people must do it. Similarly, we may conclude that there is no right or wrong way to worship God—at least, there is no way to prove that one way is right and another way is wrong. Moreover, the Big-Endians and Little-Endians both share the same religious text, but they disagree on how to interpret a passage that can clearly be interpreted two ways. Similarly, Swift is suggesting that the Christian Bible can be interpreted in more than one way, and that it is ridiculous for people to fight over how to interpret it when no one can really be certain that one interpretation is right and others are wrong.

The text contains a number of allusions to events in Swift’s life and to the politics of Europe. For instance, it has been suggested that the empress represents Queen Anne of England, Gulliver’s urination on her quarters represents Swift’s work A Tale of a Tub, and the empress’s disgust at Gulliver’s urination is analogous to Queen Anne’s criticism of Swift’s work and her attempts to limit his prospects in the Church of England. Within the story, Gulliver’s urination on the palace is not merely an offense to the Lilliputians’ sense of decency, it is also a suggestion of their insignificance, to which they respond indignantly. Although Gulliver’s urination is intended to prevent a disaster, it is also an assertion of his ability to control the Lilliputians—even by the most profane of actions. The episode illustrates again the importance of physical power, which can turn a normally insignificant and vulgar action into a lifesaving act.

Gulliver’s refusal to obey the emperor’s orders to destroy the fleet of Blefuscu is a sign that he feels some responsibility toward all beings. However small, the inhabitants of Blefuscu still have rights, one of which is freedom from tyranny. Granted almost godlike power by his unusual size, Gulliver finds himself in a position to change the Lilliputians’ society forever.

3.4 Summary of Part I, Chapters VI–VIII

Summary: Chapter VI

Gulliver describes the general customs and practices of Lilliput in more detail, beginning by explaining that everything in Lilliput— their animals, trees, and plants—is sized in proportion to the Lilliputians. Their eyesight is also adapted to their scale: Gulliver cannot see as clearly close-up as they can, while they cannot see as far as he can.

The Lilliputians are well educated, but their writing system is odd to Gulliver, who jokes that they write not left to right like the Europeans or top to bottom like the Chinese, but from one corner of the page to the other, “like the ladies in England.”

The dead are buried with their heads pointing directly downward, because the Lilliputians believe that eventually the dead will rise again and that the Earth, which they
think is flat, will turn upside down. Gulliver adds that the better-educated Lilliputians no longer believe in this custom.

Gulliver describes some of the other laws of Lilliput, such as a tradition by which anyone who falsely accuses someone else of a crime against the state is put to death. Deceit is considered worse than theft, because honest people are more vulnerable to liars than to thieves, since commerce requires people to trust one another. The law provides not only for punishment but also for rewards of special titles and privileges for good behaviour.

Children are raised not by individual parents but by the kingdom as a whole. They are sent to live in schools at a very young age. The schools are chosen according to the station of their parents, whom they see only twice a year. Only the labourers’ children stay home, since their job is to farm. There are no beggars at all, since the poor are well looked after.

Summary: Chapter VII

Gulliver goes on to describe the “intrigue” that precipitates his departure from Lilliput. While he prepares to make his trip to Blefuscu, a court official tells Gulliver that he has been charged with treason by enemies in the government. He shows Gulliver the document calling for his execution: Gulliver is charged with public urination, refusing to obey the emperor’s orders to seize the remaining Blefuscu ships, aiding enemy ambassadors, and travelling to Blefuscu.

Gulliver is told that Reldresal has asked for his sentence to be reduced, calling not for execution but for putting his eyes out. This punishment has been agreed upon, along with a plan to starve him to death slowly. The official tells Gulliver that the operation to blind him will take place in three days. Fearing this resolution, Gulliver crosses the channel and arrives in Blefuscu.

Summary: Chapter VIII

Three days later, he sees a boat of normal size—that is, big enough to carry him—overturned in the water. He asks the emperor of Blefuscu to help him fix it. At the same time, the emperor of Lilliput sends an envoy with the articles commanding Gulliver to give up his eyesight. The emperor of Blefuscu sends it back with the message that Gulliver will soon be leaving both their kingdoms. After about a month, the boat is ready and Gulliver sets sail. He arrives safely back in England, where he makes a good profit showing miniature farm animals that he carried away from Blefuscu in his pockets.

Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters VI–VIII)

Throughout much of Part I, Swift satirizes European practices by implicitly comparing them to outrageous Lilliputian customs. In Chapter VI, however, Gulliver describes a number of unusual Lilliputian customs that he presents as reasonable and sensible. This chapter, which describes improvements that could be made in European society, is less satirical and
ironic than the previous chapters. We may infer that Swift approves of many of these institutions. Clearly, there is a good case to be made for treating fraud as a more serious crime than theft and for making false testimony a capital crime. The very fabric of society depends upon trust, so dishonesty may be even more damaging than theft and violence.

In general, the customs of Lilliput that Swift presents as good are those that contribute to the good of the community or the nation as opposed to those that promote individual rights or freedoms. Ingratitude is punishable by death, for instance, because anybody who would treat a benefactor badly must be an enemy to all mankind. Children are raised by the community rather than by their parents because parents are thinking only of their own appetites when they conceive children. Children are raised in public nurseries, but parents are financially penalized if they burden society by bringing children for whom they cannot pay into the world.

Gulliver’s analysis of Lilliputian customs also serves to illuminate the arbitrary nature of such practices, as well as the fact that societies tend to assume, nonetheless, that certain customs are simply natural. The Lilliputians do not question their cultural norms because they have no reason to believe that there is any other way to conduct affairs. When alternatives are discussed, as in the case of the egg-breaking controversy, the discussion ends in violent conflict.

The articles of accusation against Gulliver, like the inventory of his possessions and the articles of his freedom in the previous chapters are written in formal language that serves only to emphasize their absurdity. Swift makes a mockery of formal language by showing how it can be used to mask simple fears and desires, such as the Lilliputians’ desire to eliminate the threat that Gulliver poses. The help that Gulliver gets from Reldresal is an illustration of a persistent motif in Gulliver’s Travels: the good person surrounded by a corrupt society.

### 3.5 Summary of Part II, Chapters I–II

**Summary: Chapter I**

Two months after returning to England, Gulliver is restless again. He sets sail on a ship called the Adventure, travelling to the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar before encountering a monsoon that draws the ship off course. The ship eventually arrives at an unknown land mass. There are no inhabitants about, and the landscape is barren and rocky. Gulliver is walking back to the boat when he sees that it has already left without him. He tries to chase after it, but then he sees that a giant is following the boat. Gulliver runs away, and when he stops, he is on a steep hill from which he can see the countryside. He is shocked to see that the grass is about twenty feet high.

He walks down what looks like a high road but turns out to be a footpath through a field of barley. He walks for a long time but cannot see anything beyond the stalks of corn, which are forty feet high. He tries to climb a set of steps into the next field, but he cannot
mount them because they are too high. As he is trying to climb up the stairs, he sees another one of the island’s giant inhabitants. He hides from the giant, but it calls for more people to come, and they begin to harvest the crop with scythes. Gulliver lies down and bemoans his state, thinking about how insignificant he must be to these giant creatures.

One of the servants comes close to Gulliver with both his foot and his scythe, so Gulliver screams as loudly as he can. The giant finally notices him, and picks him up between his fingers to get a closer look. Gulliver tries to speak to him in plaintive tones, bringing his hands together, and the giant seems pleased. Gulliver makes it clear that the giant’s fingers are hurting him, and the giant places him in his pocket and begins to walk toward his master.

The giant’s master, the farmer of these fields, takes Gulliver from his servant and observes him more closely. He asks the other servants if they have ever seen anything like Gulliver, then places him onto the ground. They sit around him in a circle. Gulliver kneels down and begins to speak as loudly as he can, taking off his hat and bowing to the farmer. He presents a purse full of gold to the farmer, which the farmer takes into his palm. He cannot figure out what it is, even after Gulliver empties the coins into his hand.

The farmer takes Gulliver back to his wife, who is frightened of him. The servant brings in dinner, and they all sit down to eat, Gulliver sitting on the table not far from the farmer’s plate. They give him tiny bits of their food, and he pulls out his knife and fork to eat, which delights the giants. The farmer’s son picks Gulliver up and scares him, but the farmer takes Gulliver from the boy’s hands and strikes his son. Gulliver makes a sign that the boy should be forgiven, and kisses his hand. After dinner, the farmer’s wife lets Gulliver nap in her own bed. When he wakes up he finds two rats attacking him, and he defends himself with his “hanger,” or sword.

Summary: Chapter II

The farmer’s nine-year-old daughter, whom Gulliver calls Glumdalclitch, or “nursemaid,” has a doll’s cradle that becomes Gulliver’s permanent bed. Glumdalclitch places the cradle inside a drawer to keep Gulliver safe from the rats. She becomes Gulliver’s caretaker and guardian, sewing clothes for him and teaching him the giants’ language. The farmer begins to talk about Gulliver in town, and a friend of the farmer’s comes to see him. He looks at Gulliver through his glasses, and Gulliver begins to laugh at the sight of the man’s eyes through the glass. The man becomes angry and advises the farmer to take Gulliver into the market to display him. He agrees, and Gulliver is taken to town in a carriage, which he finds very uncomfortable. There, he is placed on a table while Glumdalclitch sits down on a stool beside him, with thirty people at a time walking through as he performs “tricks.”

Gulliver is exhausted by the journey to the marketplace, but upon returning to the farmer’s house, he finds that he is to be shown there as well. People come from miles
around and are charged great sums to view him. Thinking that Gulliver can make him a great fortune, the farmer takes him and Glumdalclitch on a trip to the largest cities.

The three arrive in the largest city, Lorbrulgrud, and the farmer rents a room with a table for displaying Gulliver. By now, Gulliver can understand their language and speak it fairly well. He is shown ten times a day and pleases the visitors greatly.

**Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters I–II)**

In Gulliver’s adventure in Brobdingnag, many of the same issues that are brought up in the Lilliputian adventure are now brought up again, but this time Gulliver is in the exact opposite situation. Many of the jokes from Gulliver’s adventure in Lilliput are played in reverse: instead of worrying about trampling on the Lilliputians, Gulliver is now at risk of being trampled upon; instead of being feared and admired for his gargantuan size, he is treated as a miniscule and insignificant curiosity; instead of displaying miniature livestock in England to make money, he is put on display for money by the farmer. As a whole, the second voyage serves to emphasize the importance of size and the relativity of human culture.

Gulliver’s initial experiences with the Brobdingnagians are not positive. First they almost trample him, then the farmer virtually enslaves him, forcing him to perform tricks for paying spectators. This enslavement emphasizes the fundamental humanity of the Brobdingnagians—just like Europeans, they are happy to make a quick buck when the opportunity arises—and also makes concrete Gulliver’s lowly status. Whereas in Lilliput, his size gives him almost godlike powers, allowing him to become a hero and a Nardac to the Lilliputian people, in Brobdingnag his different size has exactly the opposite effect. Even his small acts of heroism, like his battle against the rats, are seen by the Brobdingnagians as, at best, “tricks.”

Swift continues to play with language in a way that both emphasizes his main satirical points about politics, ethics, and culture and makes fun of language itself. In the first few pages of this section, while Gulliver is still at sea, he describes in complicated naval jargon the various attempts his ship makes to deal with an oncoming storm. The rush of words is nearly incomprehensible, and it is meant to be so—the point is to satirize the jargon used by writers of travel books and sailing accounts, which in Swift’s view was often overblown and ridiculous. By taking the tendency to use jargon to an extreme and putting it in the mouth of the gullible and straightforward Gulliver, Swift makes a mockery of those who would try to demonstrate their expertise through convoluted language. Attacks like this one, which are repeated elsewhere in the novel, are part of Swift’s larger mission: to criticize the validity of various kinds of expert knowledge that are showier than helpful, whether legal, naval, or, as in the third voyage, scientific.

**3.6 Summary of Part II, Chapters III–V**

**Summary: Chapter III**
The strain of travelling and performing “tricks” takes its toll on Gulliver, and he begins to grow very thin. The farmer notices Gulliver’s condition and resolves to make as much money as possible before Gulliver dies. Meanwhile, an order comes from the court, commanding the farmer to bring Gulliver to the queen for her entertainment.

The queen is delighted with Gulliver’s behaviour and buys him from the farmer for 1,000 gold pieces. Gulliver requests that Glumdalclitch be allowed to live in the palace as well. Gulliver explains his suffering to the queen, and she is impressed by his intelligence. She takes him to the king, who at first thinks he is a mechanical creation. He sends for great scholars to observe Gulliver, and they decide that he is unfit for survival, since there is no way he could feed himself. Gulliver tries to explain that he comes from a country in which everything is in proportion to himself, but they do not seem to believe him.

Glumdalclitch is given an apartment in the palace and a governess to teach her, and special quarters are built for Gulliver out of a box. They also have clothes made for him from fine silk, but Gulliver finds them very cumbersome. The queen grows quite accustomed to his company, finding him very entertaining at dinner, especially when he cuts and eats his meat. He finds her way of eating repulsive, since her size allows her to swallow huge amounts of food in a single gulp.

The king converses with Gulliver on issues of politics, and laughs at his descriptions of the goings-on in Europe. He finds it amusing that people of such small stature should think themselves so important, and Gulliver is at first offended. He then comes to realize that he too has begun to think of his world as ridiculous.

The queen’s dwarf is not happy with Gulliver, since he is used to being the smallest person in the palace and a source of diversion for the royal court. He drops Gulliver into a bowl of cream, but Gulliver is able to swim to safety and the dwarf is punished. At another point, the dwarf sticks Gulliver into a marrowbone, where he is forced to remain until someone pulls him out.

Summary: Chapter IV

Gulliver describes the geography of Brobdingnag, noting first that since the land stretches out about 6,000 miles there must be a severe error in European maps. The kingdom is bounded on one side by mountains and on the other three sides by the sea. The water is so rough that there is no trade with other nations. The rivers are well stocked with giant fish, but the fish in the sea are of the same size as those in the rest of the world—and therefore not worth catching.

Gulliver is carried around the city in a special travelling-box, and people always crowd around to see him. He asks to see the largest temple in the country and is not overwhelmed by its size, since at a height of 3,000 feet it is proportionally smaller than the largest steeple in England.
Summary: Chapter V

Gulliver is happy in Brobdingnag except for the many mishaps that befall him because of his diminutive size. In one unpleasant incident, the dwarf, angry at Gulliver for teasing him, shakes an apple tree over his head. One of the apples strikes Gulliver in the back and knocks him over. Another time, he is left outside during a hailstorm and is so bruised and battered that he cannot leave the house for ten days.

Gulliver and his nursemaid are often invited to the apartments of the ladies of the court, and there he is treated as a plaything of little significance. They enjoy stripping his clothes and placing him in their bosoms, and he is appalled by their strong smell, noting that a Lilliputian told him that he smelled quite repulsive to them. The women also strip their own clothes in front of him, and he finds their skin extremely ugly and uneven.

The queen orders a special boat to be built for Gulliver. The boat is placed in a cistern, and Gulliver rows in it for his own enjoyment and for the amusement of the queen and her court.

Yet another danger arises in the form of a monkey, which takes Gulliver up a ladder, holding him like a baby and force-feeding him. He is rescued from the monkey, and Glumdalclitch pries the food from his mouth with a needle, after which Gulliver vomits. He is so weak and bruised that he stays in bed for two weeks. The monkey is killed and orders are sent out that no other monkeys be kept in the palace.

Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters III–V)

Gulliver’s continued adventures in Brobdingnag serve to illustrate the importance of physical size. Reduced to a twelfth of the size of the people who surround him, Gulliver finds all of his pride and importance withering away. Without physical power to back him up—whether the normal level that he experiences in England or the extraordinary level of his time in Lilliput—it is impossible for Gulliver to maintain the illusion of his own importance.

These chapters contain, in addition to the continuing satire of European culture, some of the most entertaining portions of the novel. Gulliver is treated like a doll, tormented by the court dwarf, and adopted, briefly, by a monkey. For the most part, these scenes serve to hammer home the image of Gulliver’s miniscule size as compared to the Brobdingnagians, but they also achieve several more significant accomplishments. The conflict with the dwarf is a good example of such a point. The dwarf, unable to gain the power that generally accompanies great physical size, has tried to make a place for himself in society by capitalizing instead on the distinctive lack of power that accompanies his tiny size. When Gulliver enters the court, he challenges the dwarf’s distinctiveness, and the dwarf responds aggressively. If there is a moral to the episode, it is that the politics of those who attempt to achieve power not through physical strength but through their distinctiveness can be just as immoral as the mainstream.
Another key episode takes place with Gulliver’s visit to the ladies of the court. The fantasy of domination and submission—realized when Gulliver becomes the sexual plaything of the ladies—is overshadowed by his outright disgust at their smell and appearance. He knows, theoretically, that if he were their size they would be just as attractive as the well-pampered court ladies of England, but since he is not, their flaws are literally magnified, and they appear to him malodorous, blemished, and crude. Swift’s point is that anything, even the smoothest skin or the most appealing political system, has imperfections, and these imperfections are bound to be exposed under close enough scrutiny. In a sense, what looks perfect to us is not actually perfect—it is simply not imperfect enough for our limited senses to notice.

At the time that Swift was writing Gulliver’s Travels, however, technology that could accentuate these imperfect senses was burgeoning, and Gulliver’s microscopic view of flies and flesh may be a reference to the relatively recent discovery of the microscope. The late seventeenth century saw the first publication of books containing magnified images illustrating that various items—fleas, hair, skin—contained details and flaws that had previously been hidden. Gulliver lives this microscopic experience directly. In a magnified world, everything takes on new levels of complexity and imperfection, demonstrating that the truth about objects is heavily influenced by the observer’s perspective.

3.7 Summary of Part II, Chapters VI–VIII

Summary: Chapter VI

Gulliver makes himself a comb from the stumps of hair left after the king has been shaved. He also collects hairs from the king and uses them to weave the backs of two small chairs, which he gives to the queen as curiosities. Gulliver is brought to a musical performance, but it is so loud that he can hardly make it out. Gulliver decides to play the spinet for the royal family, but must contrive a novel way to do it, since the instrument is so big. He uses large sticks and runs over the keyboard with them, but he can still strike only sixteen keys.

Thinking that the king has unjustly come to regard England as insignificant and laughable, Gulliver tries to tell him more about England, describing the government and culture there. The king asks many questions and is particularly struck by the violence of the history Gulliver describes. He then takes Gulliver into his hand and, explaining that he finds the world that Gulliver describes to be ridiculous, contemptuous, and strange, tells him that he concludes that most Englishmen sound like “odious Vermin.”

Summary: Chapter VII

Gulliver is disturbed by the king’s evaluation of England. He tries to tell him about gunpowder, describing it as a great invention and offering it to the king as a gesture of friendship. The king is appalled by the proposal, and Gulliver is taken aback, thinking that
the king has refused a great opportunity. He thinks that the king is unnecessarily scrupulous and narrow-minded for not being more open to the inventions of Gulliver’s world.

Gulliver finds the people of Brobdingnag in general to be ignorant and poorly educated. Their laws are not allowed to exceed in words the number of letters in their alphabet, and no arguments may be written about them. They know the art of printing but do not have many books, and their writing is simple and straightforward. One text describes the insignificance and weakness of Brobdingnagians and even argues that at one point they must have been much larger.

**Summary: Chapter VIII**

Gulliver wants to recover his freedom. The king orders any small ship to be brought to the city, hoping that they might find a woman with whom Gulliver can propagate. Gulliver fears that any offspring thus produced would be kept in cages or given to the nobility as pets. He has been in Brobdingnag for two years and wants to be among his own kind again.

Gulliver is taken to the south coast, and both Glumdalclitch and Gulliver fall ill. Gulliver says that he wants fresh air, and a page carries him out to the shore in his traveling-box. He asks to be left to sleep in his hammock, and the boy wanders off. An eagle grabs hold of Gulliver’s box and flies off with him, and then suddenly Gulliver feels himself falling and lands in the water. He worries that he will drown or starve to death, but then feels the box being pulled. He hears a voice telling him that his box is tied to a ship and that a carpenter will come to drill a hole in the top. Gulliver says that they can simply use a finger to pry it open, and he hears laughter. He realizes that he is speaking to people of his own height and climbs a ladder out of his box and onto their ship.

Gulliver begins to recover on the ship, and he tries to tell the sailors the story of his recent journey. He shows them things he saved from Brobdingnag, like his comb and a tooth pulled from a footman. He has trouble adjusting to the sailors’ small size, and he finds himself shouting all the time. When he reaches home, it takes him some time to grow accustomed to his old life, and his wife asks him to never go to sea again.

**Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters VI–VIII)**

In the previous section, Gulliver’s personal insignificance is illustrated by his reduction to the status of a plaything in the court. In this section, the same lesson is repeated on a larger scale when he describes the culture and politics of Europe to the king of Brobdingnag. Suddenly, all of the life-and-death issues that seemed so important when Gulliver was in Europe are revealed to be the trivial conflicts of miniscule people. They are not only insignificant, but the king also derides them as “odious.” In his eyes, the tiny size of the Europeans is matched by their moral weakness. Gulliver’s long discussions with the king leave him feeling humiliated.
Nonetheless, Gulliver manages to maintain some sense of the importance of England in the face of the king’s criticisms. But his protests seem so transparently groundless that each argument he gives for England’s superiority, including his argument that the king is too dull-witted to see the beauty of English culture, serves only to emphasize the futility of his resistance. In the end, the king’s assessment of the Europeans as “odious vermin” wins the day. Gulliver’s personality plays an important role in pushing this satirical point home. His naïveté, his gullibility, and his ingenuous praise for England all accentuate his similarity to the Lilliputians: convinced of his own significance, he is unable to realize the pettiness and imperfection of the society he represents.

This imperfection is not just one of organization or law. If that were the only problem with English society as Swift saw it, then Gulliver’s Travels would have been a much more boring and less significant work. The imperfection, rather, is fundamentally one of morals: the British, and by extension humanity in general, are not only bad at getting what they want, they also want bad things. This truth is illustrated in Gulliver’s offer of the secret of gunpowder to the king. The king refuses without a second thought, not because the Brobdingnagians have superior technology, but because he is horrified by the potential moral and physical consequences of gunpowder. Most preindustrial societies would treat gunpowder as an achievement of high order. But the king indicates that he feels it would be better to live where violence and destruction are minimized instead of exaggerated. Gulliver’s inability to understand the king’s position—he sees the refusal as a weakness in the king’s understanding—illustrates how the values of a violent society are deeply ingrained in Gulliver. Observing both the king and Gulliver, we are invited to choose between them.

Nevertheless, the Brobdingnagians are not perfect, however much more developed their moral sense may be than Gulliver’s. They are, rather, humans who have achieved a gargantuan level of moral achievement. Unlike the petty and miniscule Lilliputians, in whom the human vices of pride and self-righteousness are exaggerated, the Brobdingnagians have constructed a society in which those vices are minimized as much as possible. They still exist—for instance, the farmer exploits Gulliver by showing him off for profit—but they are not, as they are in England, encoded in the structure of government itself. The Brobdingnagians—more moral than the Lilliputians, more practical than the Laputans of the third voyage, and more human than the Houyhnhnms of the fourth voyage—are in some ways the most admirable of the societies Gulliver encounters.

3.8 Summary of Part III, Chapters I–III

Summary: Chapter I

Gulliver has been home in England only ten days when a visitor comes to his house, asking him to sail aboard his ship in two months’ time. Gulliver agrees and prepares to set out for the East Indies. On the voyage, pirates attack the ship. Gulliver hears a Dutch voice among them and speaks to the pirate in Dutch, begging to be set free since he and the
pirate are both Christians. A Japanese pirate tells them they will not die, and Gulliver tells the Dutchman that he is surprised to find more mercy in a heathen than in a Christian. The Dutchman grows angry and punishes Gulliver by sending him out to sea in a small boat with only four days’ worth of food.

Gulliver finds some islands and goes ashore on one of them. He sets up camp but then notices something strange: the sun is mysteriously obscured for some time. He then sees a landmass dropping down from the sky and notices that it is crawling with people. He is baffled by this floating island and shouts up to its inhabitants. They lower the island and send down a chain by which he is drawn up.

Summary: Chapter II

Gulliver is immediately surrounded by people and notices that they are all quite odd. Their heads are all tilted to one side or the other, with one eye turned inward and the other looking up. Their clothes are adorned with images of celestial bodies and musical instruments. Some of the people are servants, and each of them carries a “flapper” made of a stick with a pouch tied to the end. Their job is to aid conversation by striking the ear of the listener and the mouth of the speaker at the appropriate times to prevent their masters’ minds from wandering off.

Gulliver is conveyed to the king, who sits behind a table loaded with mathematical instruments. They wait an hour before there is some opportunity to arouse the king from his thoughts, at which point he is struck with the flapper. The king says something, and Gulliver’s ear is struck with the flapper as well, even though he tries to explain that he does not require such actions. It becomes clear that he and the king cannot speak any of the same languages, so Gulliver is taken to an apartment and served dinner.

A teacher is sent to instruct Gulliver in the language of the island, and he is able to learn several sentences. He discovers that the name of the island is Laputa, which in their language means “floating island.” A tailor is also sent to provide him with new clothes, and while he is waiting for these clothes, the king orders the island to be moved. It is taken to a point above the capital city of the kingdom, Lagado, passing villages along the way and collecting petitions from the king’s subjects by means of ropes sent down to the lands below.

The language of the Laputans relies heavily on mathematical and musical concepts, as they value these theoretical disciplines above everything. The Laputans despise practical geometry, thinking it vulgar—so much so that they make sure that there are no right angles in their buildings. They are very good with charts and figures but very clumsy in practical matters. They practice astrology and dread changes in the celestial bodies.

Summary: Chapter III
The island is exactly circular and consists of 10,000 acres of land. At the center there is a cave for astronomers, containing all their instruments and a lodestone six yards long. It moves the island with its magnetic force, since it has two charges that can be reversed by means of an attached control. The mineral that acts upon the magnet is large enough to allow it to move only over the country directly beneath it. When the king wants to punish a particular region of the country, he can keep the island above it, depriving the lands below of sun and rain. Such measures failed to work in one town, where the rebellious inhabitants had stored provisions of food in advance. They planned to force the island to come so low that it would be trapped forever and to kill the king and his officials in order to take over the government. Instead, the king ordered the island to stop descending and gave in to the town’s demands. The king is not allowed to leave the floating island, nor is his family.

Overall Analysis (Part III, Chapters I–III)

Gulliver’s third voyage is more scattered than the others, involving stops at Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbdubdrib, Luggnagg, and Japan. Swift completed the account of this voyage after that of the fourth voyage was already written, and there are hints that it was assembled from notes that Swift had made for an earlier satire of abstract knowledge. Nonetheless, it plays a crucial role in the novel as a whole. Whereas the first two voyages are mostly satires of politics and ethics, the third voyage extends Swift’s attack to science, learning, and abstract thought, offering a critique of excessive rationalism, or reliance on theory, during the Enlightenment.

Laputa is more complex than Lilliput or Brobdingnag because its strangeness is not based on differences of size but, instead, on the primacy of abstract theoretical concerns over concrete practical concerns in Laputan culture. Nonetheless, physical power is just as important in Laputa as it is in Lilliput and Brobdingnag. Here, power is exercised not through physical size but through technology. The government floats over the rest of the kingdom, using technology to gain advantage over its subjects. The floating island is both a formidable weapon and an allegorical image that represents the distance between the government and the people it governs. The king is oblivious to the real concerns of the people below—indeed, he has never even been below. The nobility and scientific thinkers of the island are similarly far removed from the people and their concerns, so much so that they need to be aroused from their thoughts and daydreams by their servants. The need to regulate when people listen and when they talk by means of such intermediaries as the servants with their flappers is absurd, and the mechanized quality of this system demonstrates how nonhuman these people are. Indeed, abstract theory dominates all aspects of Laputan life, from language to architecture to geography. We are compelled to wonder whether the Laputans’ rigid adherence to such principles—their disdain for practical geometry, for example, leads them to renounce right angles—limits their society.

Swift continues to satirize specialized language in his description of the technique used to move the island from one place to another. The method of assigning letters to parts
of a mechanism and then describing the movement of these parts from one point to another resembles the mechanistic philosophical and scientific descriptions of Swift’s time. The use of this technique does nothing but obscure what Gulliver is trying to say, but he is so enamoured of its supposed geometrical rigor that he uses it to excess, as he does earlier with naval language.

3.9 Summary of Part III, Chapters IV–XI

Summary: Chapter IV

Gulliver feels neglected on Laputa, since the inhabitants seem interested only in mathematics and music and are far superior to him in their knowledge. He is bored by their conversation and wants to leave. There is one lord of the court whom Gulliver finds to be intelligent and curious, but who is regarded by the other inhabitants of Laputa as stupid because he has no ear for music. Gulliver asks this lord to petition the king to let him leave the island. The petition succeeds, and he is let down on the mountains above Lagado. He visits another lord, named Munodi, and is invited to stay at his home.

Gulliver and Munodi visit a nearby town, which Gulliver finds to be populated by poorly-dressed inhabitants living in shabby houses. The soil is badly cultivated and the people appear miserable. They then travel to Munodi’s country house, first passing many barren fields but then arriving in a lush green area that Munodi says belongs to his estate. He says that the other lords criticize him heavily for the “mismanagement” of his land.

Munodi explains that forty years ago some people went to Laputa and returned with new ideas about mathematics and art. They decided to establish an academy in Lagado to develop new theories on agriculture and construction and to initiate projects to improve the lives of the city’s inhabitants. However, the theories have never produced any results and the new techniques have left the country in ruin. He encourages Gulliver to visit the academy, which Gulliver is glad to do since he was once intrigued by projects of this sort himself.

Summary: Chapter V

Gulliver visits the academy, where he meets a man engaged in a project to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. He also meets a scientist trying to turn excrement back into food. Another is attempting to turn ice into gunpowder and is writing a treatise about the malleability of fire, hoping to have it published. An architect is designing a way to build houses from the roof down, and a blind master is teaching his blind apprentices to mix colours for painters according to smell and touch. An agronomist is designing a method of plowing fields with hogs by first burying food in the ground and then letting the hogs loose to dig it out. A doctor in another room tries to cure patients by blowing air through them. Gulliver leaves him trying to revive a dog that he has killed by supposedly curing it in this way.
On the other side of the academy there are people engaged in speculative learning. One professor has a class full of boys working from a machine that produces random sets of words. Using this machine, the teacher claims, anyone can write a book on philosophy or politics. A linguist in another room is attempting to remove all the elements of language except nouns. Such pruning, he claims, would make language more concise and prolong lives, since every word spoken is detrimental to the human body. Since nouns are only things, furthermore, it would be even easier to carry things and never speak at all. Another professor tries to teach mathematics by having his students eat wafers that have mathematical proofs written on them.

**Summary: Chapter VI**

Gulliver then visits professors who are studying issues of government. One claims that women should be taxed according to their beauty and skill at dressing, and another claims that conspiracies against the government could be discovered by studying the excrement of subjects. Gulliver grows tired of the academy and begins to yearn for a return to England.

**Summary: Chapter VII**

Gulliver tries to travel to Luggnagg, but he finds no ship available. Since he has to wait a month, he is advised to take a trip to Glubbdubdrib, the island of magicians. Gulliver visits the governor of Glubbdubdrib, and he finds that servants who appear and disappear like spirits attend the governor. The governor tells Gulliver that he has the power to call up any shade he would like. Gulliver chooses Alexander the Great, who assures him that he died not from poison but from excessive drinking. He then sees the Carthaginian general Hannibal and the Roman leaders Caesar, Pompey, and Brutus.

**Summary: Chapter VIII**

Gulliver sets apart one day to speak with the most venerated people in history, starting with Homer and Aristotle. He asks the French philosophers René Descartes and Pierre Gassendi to describe their systems to Aristotle, who freely acknowledges his own mistakes while pointing out that systems of nature will always vary from age to age.

**Summary: Chapter IX**

Gulliver then returns to Luggnagg, where he is confined despite his desire to return to England. He is ordered to appear at the king’s court and is given lodging and an allowance. He learns that subjects are expected to lick the floor as they approach the king, and that the king sometimes gets rid of opponents in the court by coating the floor with poison.

**Summary: Chapter X**
The Luggnaggians tell Gulliver about certain immortal people, children born with a red spot on their foreheads who are called Struldbrughs. Gulliver devises a whole system of what he would do if he were immortal, starting with the acquisition of riches and knowledge. Contrary to his fantasy, however, he is told that after the age of thirty, most Struldbrughs grow sad and dejected, and by eighty, they are incapable of affection and envious of those who are able to die. If two of the Struldbrughs marry, the marriage is dissolved when one reaches eighty, because “those who are condemned without any fault of their own to a perpetual continuance in the world should not have their misery doubled by the load of a wife.” He meets some of these people and finds them to be unhappy and unpleasant, and he regrets ever wishing for their state.

Summary: Chapter XI

Gulliver is finally able to depart from Luggnagg, after refusing employment there, and he arrives safely in Japan. From there he gains passage on a Dutch ship by pretending to be from Holland and sets sail from Amsterdam to England, where he finds his family in good health.

Overall Analysis (Part III, Chapters IV–XI)

Swift continues his mockery of academia by describing the projects carried out in the cities below Laputa. The academy serves to create entirely useless projects while the people starve outside its walls. Each project described, such as the extraction of sunbeams from a cucumber, is not only impossibly flawed but also purposeless. Even if its scientific foundations were correct, it would still serve no real purpose for the people meant to gain from it. The result is a society in which science is promoted for no real reason and time is wasted as a matter of course.

Much of Swift’s inspiration for the scientists in this voyage came from the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge, a scientific society founded in 1660 that had an important effect on the development of science in Europe. The prominent early scientists Robert Boyle, Robert Hooke, and Isaac Newton were all members of the Royal Society. All of them, but particularly Newton, were influential promoters of scientific theories that were at the heart of the Scientific Revolution. The Royal Society assigned itself the task of using the new techniques of science to improve the crafts, but it was far more successful at discovering natural phenomena than it was at building new, useful technologies. As a result, the Royal Society was open to the parody created by Swift, in which absentminded philosophers ruin a country by forcing its people to follow their novel and wholly useless methods. Interestingly, most of the experiments parodied by Swift had actually been proposed or carried out by British scientists at the time of his writing.

Glubbdubdrib offers the opportunity for Swift to satirize various historical figures, undermining their images as paragons of virtue or learning. Gulliver’s interaction with the dead hearkens back to Dante Alighieri’s fourteenth-century poem Inferno, in which Dante
himself travels through the various regions of hell and witnesses sinners being punished. This imaginary tour of hell allowed Dante the author to skewer his political opponents and enemies, just as Swift’s imaginary wanderings allow him to ridicule certain aspects of society. Gulliver’s visit to Glubbdubdrib is part of Swift’s attempt in the third voyage to undercut standards of abstract learning. At the same time, however, Swift does elevate certain people above others. Generally speaking, the ancient Greeks and Romans are held up as truly virtuous, whereas the Europeans who have lived since are held up as somewhat degenerate.

The Struldbrugs of Luggnagg provide an opportunity for Swift to satirize human desires. Many would seek eternal life, and the primary benefit of old age, as Gulliver sees it, is the ability to use one’s accumulated wisdom to help humanity. The reality is much less glorious—instead of growing in wisdom, the immortal Struldbrugs grow only more prejudiced and selfish, eventually becoming a detriment to the whole Luggnaggian society. Furthermore, the Struldbrugs’ immense sadness despite their seeming advantage shows the emptiness of Gulliver’s desire—a desire prominent in Western society—to acquire riches. Swift denounces such self-absorbed goals as the province of small minds unconcerned with the good of society as a whole.

3.10 Summary of Part IV, Chapters I–IV

**Summary: Chapter I**

Gulliver stays home for five months, but he then leaves his pregnant wife to set sail again, this time as the captain of a ship called the Adventure. Many of his sailors die of illness, so he recruits more along the way. His crewmembers mutiny under the influence of these new sailors and become pirates. Gulliver is left on an unknown shore, after being confined to his cabin for several days. In the distance, he sees animals with long hair, goatlike beards, and sharp claws, which they use to climb trees. Gulliver decides that these animals are extremely ugly and sets forth to find settlers, but he encounters one of the animals on his way.

Gulliver takes out his sword and hits the animal with the flat side of it. The animal roars loudly, and a herd of others like it attack Gulliver by attempting to defecate on him. He hides, but then he sees them hurrying away. He emerges from his hiding place to see that the beasts have been scared away by a horse. The horse observes Gulliver carefully, and then it neighs in a complicated cadence. Another horse joins the first and the two seem to be involved in a discussion. Gulliver tries to leave, but one of the horses calls him back.

The horses appear to be so intelligent that Gulliver concludes that they are magicians who have transformed themselves into horses. He addresses them directly and asks to be taken to a house or village. The horses use the words “Yahoo” and “Houyhnhnm,” which Gulliver tries to pronounce.

**Summary: Chapter II**
Gulliver is led to a house, and he takes out gifts, expecting to meet people. He finds instead that there are more horses in the house, sitting down and engaged in various activities. He thinks that the house belongs to a person of great importance, and he wonders why they should have horses for servants. A horse looks Gulliver over and says the word “Yahoo.” Gulliver is led out to the courtyard, where a few of the ugly creatures Gulliver has seen are tied up. Gulliver is lined up and compared with one of the creatures, and Gulliver finds that the creature does look quite human. The horses test Gulliver by offering him various foods: hay, which he refuses, and flesh, which he finds repulsive but which the Yahoo devours. The horses determine that he likes milk and give him large amounts of it to drink.

Another horse comes to dine, and they all take great pleasure in teaching Gulliver to pronounce words in their language. They cannot determine what he might like to eat until Gulliver suggests that he could make bread from their oats. He is given a place to sleep with straw for the time being.

**Summary: Chapter III**

Gulliver endeavours to learn the horses’ language, and they are impressed by his intellect and curiosity. After three months, he can answer most of their questions and tries to explain that he comes from across the sea, but the horses, or Houyhnhnmns, do not believe that such a thing is possible. They think that Gulliver is some kind of Yahoo, though superior to the rest of his species. He asks them to stop using that word to refer to him, and they consent.

**Summary: Chapter IV**

Gulliver tries to explain that the Yahoos are the governing creatures where he comes from, and the Houyhnhnmns ask how their horses are employed. Gulliver explains that they are used for travelling, racing, and drawing chariots, and the Houyhnhnmns express disbelief that anything as weak as a Yahoo would dare to mount a horse that was so much stronger than it. Gulliver explains that the horses are trained from a young age to be tame and obedient. He describes the state of humanity in Europe and is asked to speak more specifically of his own country.

**Overall Analysis (Part IV, Chapters I–IV)**

In the fourth voyage, Gulliver reaches a stage at which he no longer cares for humankind at all, though in this section we see only the beginnings of his transformation. After visiting countries in which he is too large, too small, and too down-to-earth, he finds himself in a country where he is neither rational nor moral enough, stuck in the limbo between the humane Houyhnhnmns and the untamed, unruly Yahoos. In these chapters we see the rough outline of Houyhnhnm society, which Gulliver finds pleasant but still alien. In the next section, he attempts to become a part of this society.
In the meantime, we are treated to a description of the Houyhnhnms’ society. Swift plays a clever trick in the first two chapters, obscuring the true nature of the Houyhnhnms so that we follow Gulliver in his mistaken belief that the horses are magicians or the servants of a magician. Instead of telling us outright that the horses are intelligent, Swift allows us to discover this fact through Gulliver’s eyes. As a result, what looks strange to Gulliver also looks strange to us, and at some point in the description of the horses’ behavior, we realize that there is nothing more to these creatures than meets the eye. Instead of being tools of humans, the horses are revealed to be intelligent in their own right. In one stroke, they go from being a manifestation of humanity to something utterly nonhuman.

There are a number of differences between the first three voyages and the fourth. Three of these differences are particularly important because they signal changes in the overall satirical thrust of the novel: Gulliver finds himself not among fellow humans, however distorted in size or culture, but among a race of horses; instead of being happy to leave, he is eager to stay; and instead of seeing the world through his eyes, we are forced to step back and look at Gulliver himself as an important, though not always sympathetic, player in the drama.

In other ways, these chapters are similar to the initial chapters of the other voyages. Gulliver arrives in a strange land, becomes the guest or prisoner of the people who live there, learns their language, and slowly begins to learn about their culture and tell them about European culture. The major difference here is that the humans, or Yahoos, are not his hosts. Instead, they are vile creatures that get nothing but his contempt. In his descriptions of the Yahoos, Swift uses the technique of describing the familiar in unfamiliar terms. Only slowly does it dawn on us that the Yahoos are humans. As with the realization that the Houyhnhnms are intelligent in their own right, the sudden shock—which we experience along with Gulliver—of recognizing the Yahoos for what they are strengthens the impact of the description.

3.11 Summary of Part IV, Chapters V–XII

Summary: Chapter V

Over the course of two years, Gulliver describes the state of affairs in Europe, speaking to his Houyhnhnm master about the English Revolution and the war with France. He is asked to explain the causes of war, and he does his best to provide reasons. He is also asked to speak of law and the justice system, which he does in some detail, criticizing lawyers severely in the process.

Summary: Chapter VI

The discussion then turns to other topics, such as money and the different kinds of food eaten in Europe. Gulliver explains the different occupations in which people are involved, including service professions such as medicine and construction.
Summary: Chapter VII

Gulliver develops such a love for the Houyhnhnms that he no longer desires to return to humankind. His master tells him that he has considered all of Gulliver’s claims about his home country and has come to the conclusion that Gulliver’s people are not so different from the Yahoos as they may at first have seemed. He describes all the flaws of the Yahoos, principally detailing their greed and selfishness. He admits that Gulliver’s humans have different systems of learning, law, government, and art but says that their natures are not different from those of the Yahoos.

Summary: Chapter VIII

Gulliver wants to observe the similarities between Yahoos and humans for himself, so he asks to go among the Yahoos. He finds them to be very nimble from infancy but unable to learn anything. They are strong, cowardly, and malicious.

The principle virtues of the Houyhnhnms are their friendship and benevolence. They are concerned more with the community than with their own personal advantages, even choosing their mates so as to promote the race as a whole. They breed industriousness, cleanliness, and civility in their young and exercise them for speed and strength.

Summary: Chapter IX

Gulliver’s master attends a Grand Assembly of Houyhnhnms, where the horses debate whether or not to extinguish the Yahoos from the face of the Earth. Gulliver’s master suggests that instead of killing them, they should, as the Europeans do with their horses, merely castrate them. Eventually, unable to breed, the Yahoos will die out, and in the meantime the Houyhnhnms can breed asses to take their place.

Gulliver then describes further aspects of the Houyhnhnms’ society. They create excellent poetry, have a sound knowledge of medicinal herbs, build simple houses, and usually live about seventy or seventy-five years, dying of old age. They feel no sorrow about death, accepting it as a routine element of life. They have no writing system and no word to express anything evil.

Summary: Chapter X

A room is made for Gulliver, and he furnishes it well. He also makes new clothes for himself and settles into life with the Houyhnhnms quite easily. He begins to think of his friends and family back home as Yahoos. However, he is called by his master and told that others have taken offense at his being kept in the house as a Houyhnhnm. The master has no choice but to ask Gulliver to leave. Gulliver is very upset to hear that he is to be banished. He builds a canoe with the help of a fellow-servant and departs sadly.

Summary: Chapter XI
Gulliver does not want to return to Europe, and so he begins to search for an island where he can live as he likes. He finds land and discovers natives there. He is struck by an arrow and tries to escape the natives’ darts by paddling out to sea. He sees a sail in the distance and thinks of going toward it, but then decides he would rather live with the barbarians than the European Yahoos, so he hides from the ship. The seamen, including Don Pedro de Mendez, discover him after landing near his hiding place. They question him, laughing at his strange horse-like manner of speaking, and cannot understand his desire to escape from their ship. Don Pedro treats Gulliver hospitably, offering him food, drink, and clothes, but Gulliver can think of him only as a Yahoo and is thus repulsed by him.

Gulliver is forced to travel back to England, where he returns to his family, which has been convinced that he is dead. He is filled with disgust and contempt for them. For a year he cannot stand to be near his wife and children, and he buys two horses and converses with them for four hours each day.

Summary: Chapter XII

Gulliver concludes his narrative by acknowledging that the law requires him to report his findings to the government but that he can see no military advantage in attacking any of the locations he discovered. Moreover, he particularly wishes to protect the Houyhnhnms.

Overall Analysis (Part IV, Chapters V–XII)

The desire that Gulliver experiences to live among the animals persists in European literature. This desire is echoed later by the Romantics, who, writing in the nineteenth century, idealized pastoral simplicity and a return to nature. In the case of the Romantics, however, this love of nature was a response to the urbanization and industrialization of European society. In Swift’s case, the return to nature is a two-pronged tool for satire, skewering both human civilization itself and those who would look to animals for a model of how to live.

For the first time, Gulliver finds himself wanting to stay in exile from humanity, but he is not given the choice. He is appalled by the idea of going to live among the Yahoos, and he has so fully adopted the belief system of the Houyhnhnms that he cannot help but see his wife and children as primitive, ugly, beastlike creatures. But at the same time, he realizes that he has been living with the Houyhnhnms on borrowed time, pretending only half-successfully to be as rational as they are. The simplicity of the Houyhnhnms’ world attracts him, but it is not a world in which he is allowed to live. In the end, he is forced to return to the world from which he came—a single world that encompasses all of the flaws and complexities he has encountered in his travels. But even there Gulliver cannot rest easy. Having seen the things he has, the world of Yahoos is contemptible and disgusting to him. Barely able to tolerate the presence of his family, he retreats into a kind of madness,
spending his days talking to the horses in his stable as if to recreate the idyll of Houyhnhnmland.

In the first three voyages, it is easy to identify with Gulliver, but in the last voyage he becomes so alienated from humanity that it is difficult to sympathize with him. This shift in our loyalty is accompanied by a shift in the method of satire. Whereas in the first voyages we can look through Gulliver’s eyes—sharing his astonishment at the Lilliputians’ miniature society, his discomfort at being the plaything of the Brobdingnagian giants, and his contempt for the tyrannical intellectualism of the Laputans—here, in the fourth voyage, we are forced to step back and look not with Gulliver, but at him.

Although in some ways the Houyhnhnms are the ideal for which Gulliver strives unsuccessfully among his fellow humans, in another way they are just as much the victims of Swift’s satire as the peoples of the first three voyages. Paragons of virtue and rationality, the horses are also dull, simple, and lifeless. Their language is impoverished, their mating loveless, and their understanding of the complex play of social forces naïve. What is missing in the horses is exactly that which makes human life rich: the complicated interplay of selfishness, altruism, love, hate, and all other emotions. In other words, the Houyhnhnms’ society is perfect for Houyhnhnms, but it is hopeless for humans. Houyhnhnm society is, in stark contrast to the societies of the first three voyages, devoid of all that is human.

4. Character Analysis

a) Major Characters

Lemuel Gulliver

Although Gulliver is a bold adventurer who visits a multitude of strange lands, it is difficult to regard him as truly heroic. Even well before his slide into misanthropy at the end of the book, he simply does not show the stuff of which grand heroes are made. He is not cowardly—on the contrary, he undergoes the unnerving experiences of nearly being devoured by a giant rat, taken captive by pirates, shipwrecked on faraway shores, sexually assaulted by an eleven-year-old girl, and shot in the face with poison arrows. Additionally, the isolation from humanity that he endures for sixteen years must be hard to bear, though Gulliver rarely talks about such matters. Yet despite the courage Gulliver shows throughout his voyages, his character lacks basic greatness. This impression could be due to the fact that he rarely shows his feelings, reveals his soul, or experiences great passions of any sort. But other literary adventurers, like Odysseus in Homer’s Odyssey, seem heroic without being particularly open about their emotions.

What seems most lacking in Gulliver is not courage or feelings, but drive. One modern critic has described Gulliver as possessing the smallest will in all of Western literature: he is simply devoid of a sense of mission, a goal that would make his wandering into a quest. Odysseus’s goal is to get home again, Aeneas’s goal in Virgil’s Aeneid is to found Rome, but Gulliver’s goal on his sea voyage is uncertain. He says that he needs to
make some money after the failure of his business, but he rarely mentions finances throughout the work and indeed almost never even mentions home. He has no awareness of any greatness in what he is doing or what he is working toward. In short, he has no aspirations. When he leaves home on his travels for the first time, he gives no impression that he regards himself as undertaking a great endeavour or embarking on a thrilling new challenge.

We may also note Gulliver’s lack of ingenuity and savvy. Other great travellers, such as Odysseus, get themselves out of dangerous situations by exercising their wit and ability to trick others. Gulliver seems too dull for any battles of wit and too unimaginative to think up tricks, and thus he ends up being passive in most of the situations in which he finds himself. He is held captive several times throughout his voyages, but he is never once released through his own stratagems, relying instead on chance factors for his liberation. Once presented with a way out, he works hard to escape, as when he repairs the boat he finds that delivers him from Blefuscu, but he is never actively ingenious in attaining freedom. This example summarizes quite well Gulliver’s intelligence, which is factual and practical rather than imaginative or introspective.

Gulliver is gullible, as his name suggests. For example, he misses the obvious ways in which the Lilliputians exploit him. While he is quite adept at navigational calculations and the humdrum details of seafaring, he is far less able to reflect on himself or his nation in any profoundly critical way. Travelling to such different countries and returning to England in between each voyage, he seems poised to make some great anthropological speculations about cultural differences around the world, about how societies are similar despite their variations or different despite their similarities. But, frustratingly, Gulliver gives us nothing of the sort. He provides us only with literal facts and narrative events, never with any generalizing or philosophizing. He is a self-hating, self-proclaimed Yahoo at the end, announcing his misanthropy quite loudly, but even this attitude is difficult to accept as the moral of the story. Gulliver is not a figure with whom we identify but, rather, part of the array of personalities and behaviours about which we must make judgments.

The Queen of Brobdingnag

The Brobdingnagian queen is hardly a well-developed character in this novel, but she is important in one sense: she is one of the very few females in Gulliver’s Travels who is given much notice. Gulliver’s own wife is scarcely even mentioned, even at what one would expect to be the touching moment of homecoming at the end of the fourth voyage. Gulliver seems little more than indifferent to his wife. The farmer’s daughter in Brobdingnag wins some of Gulliver’s attention but chiefly because she cares for him so tenderly. Gulliver is courteous to the empress of Lilliput but presumably mainly because she is royalty. The queen of Brobdingnag, however, arouses some deeper feelings in Gulliver that go beyond her royal status. He compliments her effusively, as he does no other female personage in the work, calling her infinitely witty and humorous. He describes in proud detail the manner
in which he is permitted to kiss the tip of her little finger. For her part, the queen seems earnest in her concern about Gulliver’s welfare. When her court dwarf insults him, she gives the dwarf away to another household as punishment. The interaction between Gulliver and the queen hints that Gulliver is indeed capable of emotional connections.

**Lord Munodi**

Lord Munodi is a minor character, but he plays the important role of showing the possibility of individual dissent within a brainwashed community. While the inhabitants of Lagado pursue their attempts to extract sunbeams from cucumbers and to eliminate all verbs and adjectives from their language, Munodi is a rare example of practical intelligence. Having tried unsuccessfully to convince his fellows of their misguided public policies, he has given up and is content to practice what he preaches on his own estates. In his kindness to strangers, Munodi is also a counterexample to the contemptuous treatment that the other Laputians and Lagadans show Gulliver. He takes his guest on a tour of the kingdom, explains the advantages of his own estates without boasting, and is, in general, a figure of great common sense and humanity amid theoretical delusions and impractical fantasizing. As a figure isolated from his community, Munodi is similar to Gulliver, though Gulliver is unaware of his alienation while Munodi suffers acutely from his. Indeed, in Munodi we glimpse what Gulliver could be if he were wiser: a figure able to think critically about life and society?

**Don Pedro de Mendez**

Don Pedro is a minor character in terms of plot, but he plays an important symbolic role at the end of the novel. He treats the half-deranged Gulliver with great patience, even tenderness, when he allows him to travel on his ship as far as Lisbon, offering to give him his own finest suit of clothes to replace the seaman’s tatters, and giving him twenty pounds for his journey home to England. Don Pedro never judges Gulliver, despite Gulliver’s abominably antisocial behaviour on the trip back. Ironically, though Don Pedro shows the same kind of generosity and understanding that Gulliver’s Houyhnhnm master earlier shows him, Gulliver still considers Don Pedro a repulsive Yahoo. Were Gulliver able to escape his own delusions, he might be able to see the Houyhnhnm-like reasonableness and kindness in Don Pedro’s behaviour. Don Pedro is thus the touchstone through which we see that Gulliver is no longer a reliable and objective commentator on the reality he sees but, rather, a skewed observer of a reality coloured by private delusions.

**Mary Burton Gulliver**

Gulliver’s wife is mentioned only briefly at the beginning of the novel and appears only for an instant at the conclusion. Gulliver never thinks about Mary on his travels and never feels guilty about his lack of attention to her. A dozen far more trivial characters get much greater attention than she receives. She is, in this respect, the opposite of Odysseus’s wife Penelope in the Odyssey, who is never far from her husband’s thoughts and is the final destination of his journey. Mary’s neglected presence in Gulliver’s narrative gives her
certain claim to importance. It suggests that despite Gulliver’s curiosity about new lands and exotic races, he is virtually indifferent to those people closest to him. His lack of interest in his wife bespeaks his underdeveloped inner life. Gulliver is a man of skill and knowledge in certain practical matters, but he is disadvantaged in self-reflection, personal interactions, and perhaps overall wisdom.

b) Minor Characters

**Captain William Prichard**

Captain Prichard is the head of the ship named Antelope. He controls Gulliver’s first voyage in which a storm overtakes the ship, leaving Gulliver stranded on the strange land of Lilliput.

**Lilliputians**

The Lilliputians are the minuscule people from the land of Lilliput. They initial fear Gulliver, for his size is so overpowering. However, with the help of the emperor and few others, Gulliver befriends these people by helping them at war with their enemy, Blefuscu. However, after using so many of their resources and performing lewd acts in public, he is forced to flee the country for Blefuscu, and eventually home to England.

**The Emperor of Lilliput**

Although the emperor initially helps Gulliver by ordering clothing, food, and lodging for him, he eventually turns against Gulliver. He orders an edict with several laws pertaining to Gulliver, grants him his freedom, and is thrilled when Gulliver helps Lilliput defeat Blefuscu, but is outraged when Gulliver will not use the Blefuscu-ans as slaves.

**Reldresal**

Reldresal is the Principal Secretary of Private Affairs and eventually becomes a close friend to Gulliver. He warns him about the Emperor’s edict and speaks up for him during council meetings.

**Blefuscu-ans**

The Blefuscu-ans are the enemies of the Lilliputians and inhabitants of the neighbouring land. They welcome Gulliver openly after he must flee Lilliput and are thankful to him for showing mercy.

**Brobdingnags**

The Brobdingnags are the giant people of the land of Brobdingnag. They are the size that Gulliver is in Lilliput, and view Gulliver as a toy, a doll, an exhibition. He looks like a little
bug, but acts like a person. Although they are kind to him, Gulliver knows he must leave their land for fear of death.

**Glumdalclitch**

Glumdalclitch is the young daughter of the farmer of Brobdingnag who discovers Gulliver. She is thrilled to take Gulliver under her care as his nanny and never leaves his side for his entire stay in Brobdingnag. Like a girl to her doll, Glumdalclitch dresses, washes, feeds, houses, and teaches Gulliver. He treasures her, but at the same time, understands that she is still just a young girl who can be careless at times.

**The Farmer**

The farmer of Brobdingnag discovers Gulliver in his cornfields and initially takes him into his house as a pet. His daughter, Glumdalclitch, adores him and becomes his permanent nanny. However, the farmer wishes to capitalize on Gulliver’s novelty by taking him throughout the land on tour and exhibition, until he sells Gulliver to the King.

**The King of Brobdingnag**

The King of Brobdingnag, likewise befriends and loves Gulliver deeply. They spend much time together sharing the culture of their respective homelands, discussing the positives and negatives of each.

**Captain William Robinson**

Captain Robinson is the man who befriends Gulliver back in England. He convinces Gulliver to become the surgeon aboard his ship, and Gulliver agrees, starting his third journey. It is from Captain Robinson's ship, that Gulliver is tossed and thrown into the land of Laputa, the Flying Island.

**The King of Laputa**

The King of Laputa is a man of mathematical obsession who explains the laws of his land to Gulliver. He also decrees that the lands below Laputa should obey his laws. If they don't, they will have to face the consequences.

**Laputans**

The Laputans are the people in the land of Laputa, who live their lives in mathematical contemplation and cannot communicate without the help of a flapper.

**Struldbruggs**

The race of people from Luggnagg born with a mark over their left eyebrow deeming them immortal. Although Gulliver initially believes this trait to be miraculous, he soon discovers that it may be a curse instead.

**Yahoos**
The yahoos are a detestable species that infect the Houyhnhnm countryside and metropolis. They are brutish, dirty, foul, immoral, and repulsive to not only the Houyhnhnms, but also Gulliver. However, these yahoos are the equivalent of human beings, and Gulliver is, therefore, considered a yahoo in the land. After seeing them, Gulliver is disgusted to all extremes and cannot bear the site of humans after his time in the land.

Houyhnhnms

Houyhnhnms are the equivalent of horses in the land of Houyhnhnm. They are the noble, beautiful, clean, and honest species, and look to the yahoos as inferior slaves. Gulliver is enamoured of these species, these horses, and learns all about their culture and how it is ruled by reason, and reason alone. He even begins to act like them, and when he is forced to leave the land, he is brokenhearted.

Master Horse

Gulliver befriends one Houyhnhnm, who he calls his master. It is through this Houyhnhnm that Gulliver learns all about the laws of reason and the honest lifestyle that the Houyhnhnms (horses) live. His master is the one who favors Gulliver during the meetings that want him expunged from the land.

5. Stylistic Devices

a) Motifs

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, and literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.

Excrement

While it may seem a trivial or laughable motif, the recurrent mention of excrement in Gulliver’s Travels actually has a serious philosophical significance in the narrative. It symbolizes everything that is crass and ignoble about the human body and about human existence in general, and it obstructs any attempt to view humans as wholly spiritual or mentally transcendent creatures. Since the Enlightenment culture of eighteenth-century England tended to view humans optimistically as noble souls rather than vulgar bodies, Swift’s emphasis on the common filth of life is a slap in the face of the philosophers of his day. Thus, when Gulliver urinates to put out a fire in Lilliput, or when Brobdingnagian flies defecate on his meals, or when the scientist in Lagado works to transform excrement back into food, we are reminded how very little human reason has to do with everyday existence. Swift suggests that the human condition in general is dirtier and lowlier than we might like to believe it is.

Foreign Languages
Gulliver appears to be a gifted linguist, knowing at least the basics of several European languages and even a fair amount of ancient Greek. This knowledge serves him well, as he is able to disguise himself as a Dutchman in order to facilitate his entry into Japan, which at the time only admitted the Dutch. But even more important, his linguistic gifts allow him to learn the languages of the exotic lands he visits with a dazzling speed and, thus, gain access to their culture quickly. He learns the languages of the Lilliputians, the Brobdingnagians, and even the neighing tongue of the Houyhnhnms. He is meticulous in recording the details of language in his narrative, often giving the original as well as the translation. One would expect that such detail would indicate a cross-cultural sensitivity, a kind of anthropologist’s awareness of how things vary from culture to culture. Yet surprisingly, Gulliver’s mastery of foreign languages generally does not correspond to any real interest in cultural differences. He compares any of the governments he visits to that of his native England, and he rarely even speculates on how or why cultures are different at all. Thus, his facility for translation does not indicate a culturally comparative mind, and we are perhaps meant to yearn for a narrator who is a bit less able to remember the Brobdingnagian word for “lark” and better able to offer a more illuminating kind of cultural analysis.

**Clothing**

Critics have noted the extraordinary attention that Gulliver pays to clothes throughout his journeys. Every time he gets a rip in his shirt or is forced to adopt some native garment to replace one of his own, he recounts the clothing details with great precision. We are told how his pants are falling apart in Lilliput, so that as the army marches between his legs they get quite an eyeful. We are informed about the mouse skin he wears in Brobdingnag, and how the finest silks of the land are as thick as blankets on him. In one sense, these descriptions are obviously an easy narrative device with which Swift can chart his protagonist’s progression from one culture to another: the more ragged his clothes become and the stranger his new wardrobe, the farther he is from the comforts and conventions of England. His journey to new lands is also thus a journey into new clothes. When he is picked up by Don Pedro after his fourth voyage and offered a new suit of clothes, Gulliver vehemently refuses, preferring his wild animal skins. We sense that Gulliver may well never fully reintegrate into European society.

But the motif of clothing carries a deeper, more psychologically complex meaning as well. Gulliver’s intense interest in the state of his clothes may signal a deep-seated anxiety about his identity, or lack thereof. He does not seem to have much selfhood: one critic has called him an “abyss,” a void where an individual character should be. If clothes make the man, then perhaps Gulliver’s obsession with the state of his wardrobe may suggest that he desperately needs to be fashioned as a personality. Significantly, the two moments when he describes being naked in the novel are two deeply troubling or humiliating experiences: the first when he is the boy toy of the Brobdingnagian maids who let him cavort nude on their mountainous breasts, and the second when he is assaulted by an eleven-year-old Yahoo girl.
as he bathes. Both incidents suggest more than mere prudery. Gulliver associates nudity with extreme vulnerability, even when there is no real danger present—a pre-teen girl is hardly a threat to a grown man, at least in physical terms. The state of nudity may remind Gulliver of how nonexistent he feels without the reassuring cover of clothing.

b) Symbols

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colours used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

Lilliputians

The Lilliputians symbolize humankind’s wildly excessive pride in its own puny existence. Swift fully intends the irony of representing the tiniest race visited by Gulliver as by far the most vainglorious and smug, both collectively and individually. There is surely no character more odious in all of Gulliver’s travels than the noxious Skyresh. There is more backbiting and conspiracy in Lilliput than anywhere else, and more of the pettiness of small minds who imagine themselves to be grand. Gulliver is a naïve consumer of the Lilliputians’ grandiose imaginings: he is flattered by the attention of their royal family and cowed by their threats of punishment, forgetting that they have no real physical power over him. Their formally worded condemnation of Gulliver on grounds of treason is a model of pompous and self-important verbiage, but it works quite effectively on the naïve Gulliver.

The Lilliputians show off not only to Gulliver but to themselves as well. There is no mention of armies proudly marching in any of the other societies Gulliver visits—only in Lilliput and neighbouring Blefuscu are the six-inch inhabitants possessed of the need to show off their patriotic glories with such displays. When the Lilliputian emperor requests that Gulliver serve as a kind of makeshift Arch of Triumph for the troops to pass under, it is a pathetic reminder that their grand parade—in full view of Gulliver’s nether regions—is supremely silly, a basically absurd way to boost the collective ego of the nation. Indeed, the war with Blefuscu is itself an absurdity springing from wounded vanity, since the cause is not a material concern like disputed territory but, rather, the proper interpretation of scripture by the emperor’s forebears and the hurt feelings resulting from the disagreement. All in all, the Lilliputians symbolize misplaced human pride, and point out Gulliver’s inability to diagnose it correctly.

Brobdingnagians

The Brobdingnagians symbolize the private, personal, and physical side of humans when examined up close and in great detail. The philosophical era of the Enlightenment tended to overlook the routines of everyday life and the sordid or tedious little facts of existence, but in Brobdingnag such facts become very important for Gulliver, sometimes
matters of life and death. An eighteenth-century philosopher could afford to ignore the fly buzzing around his head or the skin pores on his servant girl, but in his shrunken state Gulliver is forced to pay great attention to such things. He is forced to take the domestic sphere seriously as well. In other lands it is difficult for Gulliver, being such an outsider, to get glimpses of family relations or private affairs, but in Brobdingnag he is treated as a doll or a plaything, and thus is made privy to the urination of housemaids and the sexual lives of women. The Brobdingnagians do not symbolize a solely negative human characteristic, as the Laputans do. They are not merely ridiculous—some aspects of them are disgusting, like their gigantic stench and the excrement left by their insects, but others are noble, like the queen’s goodwill toward Gulliver and the king’s commonsense views of politics. More than anything else, the Brobdingnagians symbolize a dimension of human existence visible at close range, under close scrutiny.

**Laputans**

The Laputans represent the folly of theoretical knowledge that has no relation to human life and no use in the actual world. As a profound cultural conservative, Swift was a critic of the newfangled ideas springing up around him at the dawn of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, a period of great intellectual experimentation and theorization. He much preferred the traditional knowledge that had been tested over centuries. Laputa symbolizes the absurdity of knowledge that has never been tested or applied, the ludicrous side of Enlightenment intellectualism. Even down below in Balnibarbi, where the local academy is more inclined to practical application, knowledge is not made socially useful as Swift demands. Indeed, theoretical knowledge there has proven positively disastrous, resulting in the ruin of agriculture and architecture and the impoverishment of the population. Even up above, the pursuit of theoretical understanding has not improved the lot of the Laputans. They have few material worries, dependent as they are upon the Balnibarbians below. But they are tormented by worries about the trajectories of comets and other astronomical speculations: their theories have not made them wise, but neurotic and disagreeable. The Laputans do not symbolize reason itself but rather the pursuit of a form of knowledge that is not directly related to the improvement of human life.

**Houyhnhnms**

The Houyhnhnms represent an ideal of rational existence, a life governed by sense and moderation of which philosophers since Plato have long dreamed. Indeed, there are echoes of Plato’s Republic in the Houyhnhnms’ rejection of light entertainment and vain displays of luxury, their appeal to reason rather than any holy writings as the criterion for proper action, and their communal approach to family planning. As in Plato’s ideal community, the Houyhnhnms have no need to lie or any word for lying. They do not use force but only strong exhortation. Their subjugation of the Yahoos appears more necessary than cruel and perhaps the best way to deal with an unfortunate blot on their otherwise ideal society. In these ways and others, the Houyhnhnms seem like model citizens, and
Gulliver’s intense grief when he is forced to leave them suggests that they have made an impact on him greater than that of any other society he has visited. His derangement on Don Pedro’s ship, in which he snubs the generous man as a Yahoo-like creature, implies that he strongly identifies with the Houyhnhnms.

But we may be less ready than Gulliver to take the Houyhnhnms as ideals of human existence. They have no names in the narrative or any need for names, since they are virtually interchangeable, with little individual identity. Their lives seem harmonious and happy, although quite lacking in vigour, challenge, and excitement. Indeed, this apparent ease may be why Swift chooses to make them horses rather than human types like every other group in the novel. He may be hinting, to those more insightful than Gulliver, that the Houyhnhnms should not be considered human ideals at all. In any case, they symbolize a standard of rational existence to be either espoused or rejected by both Gulliver and us.

England

As the site of his father’s disappointingly “small estate” and Gulliver’s failing business, England seems to symbolize deficiency or insufficiency, at least in the financial sense that matters most to Gulliver. England is passed over very quickly in the first paragraph of Chapter I, as if to show that it is simply there as the starting point to be left quickly behind. Gulliver seems to have very few nationalistic or patriotic feelings about England, and he rarely mentions his homeland on his travels. In this sense, Gulliver’s Travels is quite unlike other travel narratives like the Odyssey, in which Odysseus misses his homeland and laments his wanderings. England is where Gulliver’s wife and family live, but they too are hardly mentioned. Yet Swift chooses to have Gulliver return home after each of his four journeys instead of having him continue on one long trip to four different places, so that England is kept constantly in the picture and given a steady, unspoken importance. By the end of the fourth journey, England is brought more explicitly into the fabric of Gulliver’s Travels when Gulliver, in his neurotic state, starts confusing Houyhnhnmland with his homeland, referring to Englishmen as Yahoos. The distinction between native and foreign thus unravels—the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos are not just races populating a faraway land but rather types that Gulliver projects upon those around him. The possibility thus arises that all the races Gulliver encounters could be versions of the English and that his travels merely allow him to see various aspects of human nature more clearly.

6. Study Questions

6.1 Study Question 1

How does Swift use language and style for the purpose of satire? How does his style change as the story progresses?

Answer for Study Question 1
Scattered among the standard narrative style of most of Gulliver’s travels are legal documents and reports, such as the inventory of Gulliver’s possessions and the list of obligations presented to him by the Lilliputians. There are also brief passages in which Swift, by his style alone, ridicules the linguistic excesses of various specialists. A good example is at the beginning of Part II, Chapter I, where Gulliver uses complicated nautical jargon. The effect is so overdone that, instead of coming off as a demonstration of Gulliver’s in-depth knowledge of sailing, the passage works as a satire of sailing language and, more generally, of any kind of specialist jargon. A similar passage occurs in Part III, Chapter III, where Gulliver’s painstaking description of the geometry of Laputa serves as a satire of philosophical jargon.

Over the course of the novel, there are several changes in Swift’s style. In the first two voyages, the style is constant: it is a relatively light-hearted but still biting satire of European culture and politics, framed as an adventure among dwarves and giants. In the third voyage, the tone shifts. Gulliver becomes less of a personality and more of an abstract observer. His judgments of the societies he encounters become more direct and unmediated, and the overall narrative becomes less of an adventure and more of a scattered satire on abstract thought. In the fourth voyage, the tone becomes, for the most part, much more serious than in the first three adventures. Gulliver too is more serious and more desperate, and his change in personality is reflected in a style that is darker, more sombre, and more cynical.

6.2 Study Question 2

Does Gulliver change as the story progresses? Does he learn from his adventures?

Answer for Study Question 2

Gulliver is somewhat more tranquil and less restless at the end of the story than he is at the beginning. In desiring first to stay with the Houyhnhnms, then to find an island on which he can live in exile, Gulliver shows that his adventures have taught him that a simple life, one without the complexities and weaknesses of human society, may be best. At the same time, his tranquillity is superficial—lying not far below the surface is a deep distaste for humanity that is aroused as soon as the crew of Don Pedro de Mendez captures him. From our point of view, after we have looked at the world through Gulliver’s eyes for much of the novel, Gulliver undergoes several interesting transformations: from the naïve Englishman to the experienced but still open-minded world traveller of the first two voyages; then to the jaded island-hopper of the third voyage; and finally to the cynical, disillusioned, and somewhat insane misanthrope of the fourth voyage.

6.3 Study Question 3

Is Gulliver an everyman figure or does he have a distinctive personality of his own?

Answer for Study Question 3
In many ways, Gulliver’s role as a generic human is more important than any personal opinions or abilities he may have. Fate and circumstance conspire to lead him from place to place, while he never really asserts his own desires. By minimizing the importance of Gulliver as a specific person, Swift puts the focus on the social satire itself. At the same time, Gulliver himself becomes more and more a subject of satire as the story progresses. At the beginning, he is a standard issue European adventurer; by the end, he has become a misanthrope who totally rejects human society. It is in the fourth voyage that Gulliver becomes more than simply a pair of eyes through which we see a series of unusual societies. He is, instead, a jaded adventurer who has seen human follies—particularly that of pride—at their most extreme, and as a result has descended into what looks like, and probably is, a kind of madness.

7. Suggested Essay Topics

7.1 Why is Gulliver so eager to assert his own country’s importance to the Brobdingnagians? How does this desire compare to the Lilliputians’ desire to assert their importance to Gulliver?

7.2 What is the significance, if any, of the order in which Gulliver’s journeys take place? How does each adventure build on the previous one?

7.3 What is the allegorical significance of the floating island of Laputa?

7.4 Why does Gulliver keep travelling despite his many misfortunes?

7.5 Why does Gulliver want to stay with the Houyhnhnms? Does his desire make sense in light of the other societies he has visited?

7.6 How do the Lilliputians view the threat that Gulliver represents?

8. Suggestions for Further Reading


9. Bibliography


1. Background

1.1 Introduction to the Author

Samuel Richardson, (Aug. 19, 1689 - July 4. 1761), was an English novelist who expanded the dramatic possibilities of the novel by his invention and use of the letter form (“epistolary novel”). His major novels were Pamela (1740) and Clarissa (1747–48).

Richardson was 50 years old when he wrote Pamela, but of his first 50 years little is known. His ancestors were of yeoman stock. His father, also Samuel, and his mother’s father, Stephen Hall, became London tradesmen, and his father, after the death of his first wife, married Stephen’s daughter, Elizabeth, in 1682. A temporary move of the Richardsons to Derbyshire accounts for the fact that the novelist was born in Mackworth. They returned to London when Richardson was 10. He had at best what he called “only Common School-Learning.” The perceived inadequacy of his education was later to preoccupy him and some of his critics.

Richardson was bound apprentice to a London printer, John Wilde. Sometime after completing his apprenticeship he became associated with the Leakes, a printing family whose presses he eventually took over when he set up in business for himself in 1721 and married Martha Wilde, the daughter of his master. Elizabeth Leake, the sister of a prosperous bookseller of Bath, became his second wife in 1733, two years after Martha’s death. His domestic life was marked by tragedy. All six of the children from his first marriage died in infancy or childhood. By his second wife he had four daughters who survived him,
but two other children died in infancy. These and other bereavements contributed to the nervous ailments of his later life.

In his professional life Richardson was hardworking and successful. With the growth in prominence of his press went his steady increase in prestige as a member, an officer, and later master, of the Stationers’ Company (the guild for those in the book trade). During the 1730s his press became known as one of the three best in London, and with prosperity he moved to a more spacious London house and leased the first of three country houses in which he entertained a circle of friends that included Dr. Johnson, the painter William Hogarth, the actors Colley Cibber and David Garrick, Edward Young, and Arthur Onslow, speaker of the House of Commons, whose influence in 1733 helped to secure for Richardson lucrative contracts for government printing that later included the journals of the House.

In this same decade he began writing in a modest way. At some point, he was commissioned to write a collection of letters that might serve as models for “country readers,” a volume that has become known as Familiar Letters on Important Occasions. Occasionally he hit upon continuing the same subject from one letter to another, and, after a letter from “a father to a daughter in service, on hearing of her master’s attempting her virtue,” he supplied the daughter’s answer. This was the germ of his novel Pamela. With a method supplied by the letter writer and a plot by a story that he remembered of an actual serving maid who preserved her virtue and was rewarded by marriage, he began writing the work in November 1739 and published it as Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded, a year later.

1.2 Richardson’s Contribution to the Development of the Novel in English.

Some critics have considered Samuel Richardson the father of the novel. George Saintsbury declared Pamela the first novel in history, asking rhetorically, “Where are we to find a probable human being, worked out to the same degree, before?” Other characters in English literature had been as “probable” as Pamela Andrews, including the characters of Shakespeare. No previous character, however, had been “worked out to the same degree,” that is, delineated through such a lavish presentation of her personal attributes and the conditions of her everyday life. Richardson did not invent the form of long fiction, but he did innovate the combination of psychological realism and amplitude of concrete detail that is the special province of the genre of the novel.

This aesthetic achievement grew out of the epistolary form that Richardson chose to employ, but its significance extends beyond that form. As M. Kinkead-Weekes observes, “What [Richardson] invented was the dramatic novel, not merely the idea of writing in letters.” In other words, Pamela inaugurates a whole tradition in the English novel whereby readers know the characters directly through the circumstances of their comparatively unfiltered lives, rather than learning of them second-hand through an omniscient narrator. The method is “dramatic” in the sense that it dispenses with the objective mediating consciousness, much as a theatrical production does. The tradition of the dramatic novel would go on to claim, among so many other titles, Sterne’s Tristram Shandy in the eighteenth century, Brontë’s Jane Eyre in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century Joyce’s Ulysses and much of the rest of the Modernist canon.

Another of Richardson’s decisive contributions to the tradition of the novel was his investing Pamela with such moral heft that serious people felt at liberty to take it seriously.
As a result, the previously lightweight genre of the novel, which had long possessed a
cultural status comparable to that of soap operas or music videos in our day, acquired new
prestige. As Elizabeth Bergen Brophy observes, the novel prior to Richardson had been
primarily the work of hack writers, with the highbrow literary talent preferring to
concentrate their efforts on poetry, and its chief purpose was to supply “vicarious thrills,
improbable plots, and thinly disguised sexual titillation.” In Pamela, by contrast, Richardson
sought to “turn young People into a Course of Reading different from the Pomp and Parade
of Romance-writing” by using fiction as a vehicle for moral instruction. His efforts to
“promote the Cause of Religion and Virtue” endeared the novel to the religious
establishment, such that certain clergymen even read the more directly pious passages from
their pulpits on Sundays. Thus bearing the approval of the moral and spiritual authorities,
novels emerged as artifacts of major cultural significance, capable of providing not merely
entertainment but also, potentially, moral wisdom and psychological insight.

The rise of the novel as Richardson re-created it coincided with the increasing
cultural importance of private experience and personal relationships. Indeed, the influential
critic Ian Watt has argued that the ascendancy of the Richardsonian novel contributed to
this new emphasis on the private and personal, what Watt calls “the transition from the
objective, social and public orientation of the classical world to the subjective, individualist
and private orientation of the life and literature of the last two hundred years.” The
eighteenth century saw the rise of economic individualism, that is, the phenomenon of
individual workers’ selling their labor on the open market rather than attaching themselves
for life to aristocratic patrons in the feudal manner. With this new economic model came
greater personal mobility, as workers moved to where the jobs were, and this increased
mobility led to the decline of the patriarchal family structure: extended families became less
likely to remain together in the same geographical area and consequently ceased to be as
important as they had previously been. The loss of the organic social networks of patriarchy
created a momentous deficit for which society compensated by placing a new emphasis on voluntary personal bonds and the inner life. As Watt puts it, such personal relationships as friendship and the marital bond “offer[ed] the individual a more conscious and selective pattern of social life to replace the more diffuse, and as it were involuntary, social coherences which individualism had undermined.” Such newly important bonds, in particular the marital kind, are precisely Richardson’s field of interest, and his dignifying of private relationships and private experience naturally struck a chord with his contemporaries.

Thinking of the rise of the novel as a response to the heightened importance of voluntary private relationships makes it easy to understand why the dominant tradition of the English novel, at least until the beginning of the twentieth century, has followed Richardson’s lead in taking for its subject the coming-together of a heroine and her freely chosen husband. The novel provides a forum for exploring the psychological niceties involved in securing that most critical of personal relationships, the spousal bond; it has served an important sociological function, then, by acquainting unmarried readers with the emotional facts of the courtship process. Whether the novel’s record in this regard has been completely beneficial is, however, a matter of some debate. As Watt explains it, “the formula that explains the power of the popular novel” is a “combination of romance and formal realism,” that is, a pairing of wish fulfillment with a semblance of probability. The novel’s use of “narrative skill” to “re-create the pseudo-realism of the daydream, to give an
air of authenticity to a triumph against all obstacles and contrary to expectation,” amounts simply to a more insidious version of the Cinderella fantasy, an application of literary realism that teaches the infusion of marital aspirations with fairy-tale patterns of social elevation. Whether or not one chooses to accept Watt’s moral judgment of this tendency of the English novel, it is a tendency that undoubtedly bears the impress of Richardson and of Pamela.

1.3 Introduction to the Novel

Samuel Richardson may have based his first novel on the story of a real-life affair between Hannah Sturges, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a coachman, and Sir Arthur Hesilrige, Baronet of Northampton, whom she married in 1725. He certainly based the form of the novel on his own aptitude for letter-writing: always prolific in private correspondence, he had recently tried his hand at writing fictionalized letters for publication, during which effort he had conceived the idea of a series of related letters all tending to the revelation of one story. He began work on Pamela on November 10, 1739 and completed it on January 10, 1740.

Richardson’s objects in writing Pamela were moral instruction and commercial success, perhaps in that order. As he explained to his friend Aaron Hill in a famous letter, his goal was to divert young readers from vapid romances by creating “a new Species of Writing that might possibly turn young People into a Course of Reading different from the Pomp and Parade of Romance-writing, and dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which Novels generally abound, might tend to promote the Cause of Religion and Virtue.” The nature of this “new species of writing” may seem obscure at first. Richardson felt that the best vehicle for a moral lesson was an exemplary character; he also felt that the most effective presentation of an exemplary character was a realistic presentation that evoked the reader’s sympathy and identification, as opposed to an ideal one that rendered the character as inhumanly perfect. For the project of rendering an exemplary character in a realistic manner the appropriate form, he reasoned, was the novel, providing as it did ample scope in which to flesh out psychological complexities and mix dominant virtues with smaller but significant flaws. In itself, Richardson’s idea of combining instruction with entertainment was, of course, hardly original; then as now, it was a highly traditional argument for the moral utility of art. Richardson’s innovation was a generic one consisting, in part, of his producing a respectable and morally elevating work in the despised genre of the novel, hitherto the province of only the cheapest diversions.

Pamela achieved extraordinary popularity among three groups whose tastes do not often coincide: the public, the litterateurs, and the professional moralists. It went through five editions in its first year and inspired a market for Pamela-themed memorabilia, which took such forms as paintings, playing cards, and ladies’ fans. Pre-publication hype doubtless encouraged sales, as the novel’s backers secured and publicized endorsements by such major literary figures as Alexander Pope, and there is some indication that Richardson, with his many connections in the London literary world, may have incentivized some of this “buzz” under the table. The novel had a legitimate claim to its wide audience, however: in addition to its moral utility, there was the aesthetic achievement of Richardson’s narrative method, quite avant-garde at the time. The epistolary form presented Pamela’s first-person jottings directly to the reader, dispensing with the imperious traditional narrator and
allowing unmediated access to her personality and perceptions. The intimacy and realism of this method, which Richardson called “writing to the moment,” combined with the liveliness of Pamela’s language and character, proved highly attractive.

Not all were won over, however, and part of what makes the publication of Pamela such a phenomenon in English literary history is the controversy that greeted it and the legion of detractors and parodists it inspired. A Danish observer went so far as to say that England seemed divided into “two different parties, Pamelaists and Antipamelists. . . Some look on this young Virgin as an Example for Ladies to follow. . . Others, on the contrary, discover in it the Behaviour of an hypocritical, crafty Girl . . . who understands the Art of bringing a Man to her Lure.” Some critics, then, accused Pamela of being less innocent than she puts on to be and of simulating sexual virtue in order to make herself more desirable. In Henry Fielding’s Shamela, for instance, the “heroine” boasts: “I thought once of making a little fortune by my [physical] Person. I now intend to make a great one by my Vartue.” Fielding’s savagely funny send-up was one of many parodies of Richardson’s novel (Eliza Haywood’s Anti-Pamela is another notable contribution); it burlesques not only the moral pretensions of Richardson’s heroine but also her vulgar tongue and her penchants for recording voluminous detail and writing in real time. (For instance, Shamela happens to have her pen by her and goes on scribbling during one of her Master’s rape attempts.)

Richardson was sensitive to the criticism and ridicule, and it influenced his many revisions of the novel. In particular, in subsequent editions of the novel he elevates Pamela’s style of writing and speaking, progressively eliminating rusticisms, regionalisms, and other markers of her lower-class status. These changes were in response to a widespread critique that held that a young woman of admirable character should speak in a way that commands admiration; as one of Richardson’s correspondents put it, “The Language is not altogether unexceptionable, but in several Places sinks below the Idea we are constrained to form of the Heroine who writes it.” Other casualties of Richardson’s gradual accommodation of literary and social decorum include Pamela’s “saucy” reactions to her superiors, both in dialogue and in her private thoughts. The result is that by the time Richardson was finished tinkering with his explosive first novel, it had become a smoother, more polished, and often less challenging text.

2. Major Themes

The Nature of Virtue

Richardson’s novel has often given the impression of defining “virtue” too narrowly and negatively, as the physical condition of virginity before marriage. The novel’s conception of virtue is actually more capacious than its detractors have allowed, however. To begin with, Pamela makes a sensible distinction between losing her virginity involuntarily and acquiescing in a seduction. Only the latter would be a transgression against sexual virtue. Moreover, almost the entire second half of the novel is taken up with the explication and praise of Pamela’s positive qualities of generosity and benevolence. Mr. B. values these qualities, and they have brought him to propose marriage: reading her journal, he has discovered her genuine goodwill toward him, particularly in her rejoicing over his escape from death by drowning. As a result, Pamela’s active goodness merits the “reward” of a happy marriage as much as her defense of her virginity.
The Integrity of the Individual

Richardson’s fiction commonly portrays individuals struggling to balance incompatible demands on their integrity: Pamela, for instance, must either compromise her own sense of right or offend her Master, who deserves her obedience except insofar as he makes illicit demands on her. This highly conscientious servant and Christian must work scrupulously to defy her Master’s will only to the degree that it is necessary to preserve her virtue; to do any less would be irreligious, while to do any more would be contumacious, and the successful balance of these conflicting claims represents the greatest expression of Pamela’s personal integrity. Meanwhile, those modern readers who dismiss Pamela’s defense of her virtue as fatally old-fashioned might consider the issue from the standpoint of the individual’s right to self-determination. Pamela has a right to stand on her own principles, whatever they are, so that as so often in English literature, physical virginity stands in for individual morality and belief: no one, Squire or King, has the right to expect another person to violate the standards of her own conscience.

Class Politics

One of the great social facts of Richardson’s day was the intermingling of the aspirant middle class with the gentry and aristocracy. The eighteenth century was a golden age of social climbing and thereby of satire (primarily in poetry), but Richardson was the first novelist to turn his serious regard on class difference and class tension. Pamela’s class status is ambiguous at the start of the novel. She is on good terms with the other Bedfordshire servants, and the pleasure she takes in their respect for her shows that she does not consider herself above them; her position as a lady’s maid, however, has led to her acquiring refinements of education and manner that unfit her for the work of common servants: when she attempts to scour a plate, her soft hand develops a blister. Moreover, Richardson does some fudging with respect to her origins when he specifies that her father is an educated man who was not always a peasant but once ran a school.

If this hedging suggests latent class snobbery on Richardson’s part, however, the novelist does not fail to insist that those who receive privileges under the system bear responsibilities also, and correspondingly those on the lower rungs of the ladder are entitled to claim rights of their superiors. Thus, in the early part of the novel, Pamela emphasizes that Mr. B., in harassing her, violates his duty to protect the social inferiors under his care; after his reformation in the middle of the novel, she repeatedly lauds the “Godlike Power" of doing good that is the special pleasure and burden of the wealthy. Whether Richardson’s stress on the reciprocal obligations that characterize the harmonious social order expresses genuine concern for the working class, or whether it is simply an insidious justification of an inequitable power structure, is a matter for individual readers to decide.

Sexual Politics

Sexual inequality was a common theme of eighteenth-century social commentators and political philosophers: certain religious groups were agitating for universal suffrage, John Locke argued for universal education, and the feminist Mary Astell decried the inequities of the marital state. Though Richardson’s decision to have Pamela fall in love with her would-be rapist has rankled many advocates of women’s rights in recent years, he remains in some senses a feminist writer due to his sympathetic interest in the hopes and
concerns of women. He allows Pamela to comment acerbically on the hoary theme of the sexual double standard: “those Things don’t disgrace Men, that ruin poor Women, as the World goes.” In addition, Sally Godfrey demonstrates the truth of this remark by going to great lengths (and a long distance) to avoid ruination after her connection with Mr. B., who comes through the episode comparatively unscathed.

Not only as regards extramarital activities but also as regards marriage itself, eighteenth-century society stacked the deck against women: a wife had no legal existence apart from her husband, and as Jocelyn Harris notes, Pamela in marrying Mr. B. commits herself irrevocably to a man whom she hardly knows and who has not been notable for either his placid temper or his steadfast monogamy; Pamela’s private sarcasms after her marriage, then, register subtly Richardson’s appropriate misgivings about matrimony as a reward for virtue. Perhaps above all, however, Richardson’s sympathy for the feminine view of things emerges in his presentation of certain contrasts between the feminine and masculine psyches. Pamela’s psychological subtlety counters Mr. B.’s simplicity, her emotional refinement counters his crudity, and her perceptiveness defeats his callousness, with the result that Mr. B. must give up his masculine, aggressive persona and embrace instead the civilizing feminine values of his new wife.

**Psychology and the Self**

In composing Pamela, Richardson wanted to explore human psychology in ways that no other writer had. His innovative narrative method, in which Pamela records her thoughts as they occur to her and soon after the events that have inspired them, he called “writing to the moment”; his goal was to convey “those lively and delicate Impressions, which Things Present are known to make upon the Minds of those affected by them,” on the theory that “in the Study of human Nature the Knowledge of those Apprehensions leads us farther into the Recesses of the human Mind, than the colder and more general Reflections suited to a continued . . . Narrative.” The most profound psychological portrait, then, arises from the depiction, in the heat of the moment, of spontaneous and unfiltered thoughts. Nevertheless, Richardson’s eagerness to illuminate the “Recesses of the human Mind” is balanced by a sense of these mental recesses as private spaces that outsiders should not enter without permission.

Although the overt plot of the novel addresses Mr. B.’s efforts to invade the recesses of Pamela’s physical person, the secondary plot in which she must defend the secrecy of her writings shows the Squire equally keen to intrude upon her inmost psyche. Beginning with the incident in Letter I when she reacts to Mr. B.’s sudden appearance by concealing her letter in her bosom, Pamela instinctively resists her Master’s attempts to expose her private thoughts; as she says, “what one writes to one’s Father and Mother, is not for every body.” It is not until Mr. B. learns to respect both Pamela’s body and her writings, relinquishing access to them except when she voluntarily offers it, that he becomes worthy of either physical or psychological intimacy with her.

**Hypocrisy and Self-Knowledge**

Since the initial publication of Pamela in 1740, critics of Richardson’s moralistic novel have accused its heroine of hypocrisy, charging that her ostensible virtue is simply a reverse-psychological ploy for attracting Mr. B. This criticism has a certain merit, in that Pamela does
indeed turn out to be more positively disposed toward her Master than she has let on; in her defense, however, her misrepresentation of her feelings has not been deliberate, as she is quite the last person to figure out what her “treacherous, treacherous Heart” has felt. Pamela’s difficulty in coming to know her own heart raises larger questions of the possibility of accurate disclosure: if Pamela cannot even tell herself the truth, then what chance is there that interpersonal communication will be any more transparent?

The issue crystallizes when, during her captivity in Lincolnshire, Pamela becomes of necessity almost compulsively suspicious of appearances. This understandable defense mechanism develops into a character flaw when it combines with her natural tendency toward pride and aloofness to prevent her reposing trust in Mr. B. when, finally, he deserves it. The lovers thus remain at cross-purposes when they should be coming together, and only Mr. B.’s persistence secures the union that Pamela’s suspicions have jeopardized. While the novel, then, evinces skepticism toward the possibility of coming to know oneself or another fully, it balances that skepticism with an emphasis on the necessity of trusting to what cannot be fully known, lest all opportunities of fulfilling human relationships be lost.

Realism and Country Life

Eighteenth-century literature tended to idealize the life of rustic simplicity that Pamela typifies. Dramatists were fond of rendering the tale of the licentious squire and the chaste maiden in a high romantic strain, and Margaret Anne Doody points out that Mr. B., when he displays Pamela to the neighbors as “my pretty Rustick,” implicitly calls on the traditional identification of country lasses with natural beauty and pastoral innocence. Richardson, however, disappoints these idyllic expectations by having Pamela tell her story in the “low” style that is realistically appropriate to her class, as well as through his generous incorporation of naturalistic details. Far from idealizing the countryside, Richardson recurs to the dirt in which Pamela conceals her writings and plants her horse beans. In selecting his imagery, Richardson favors not the wood nymphs and sentimental willows of pastoral romance but such homely items as Pamela’s flannel, Mr. B.’s boiled chicken, the carp in the pond, the grass in the garden, the mould, a cake, and the shoes that Mrs. Jewkes periodically confiscates from Pamela. By refusing to compromise on the lowliness of his heroine and her surroundings, Richardson makes a statement that is both socially progressive and aesthetically radical. To discover dramatic significance, Richardson does not look to the great cities and the exemplars of public greatness who reside there; he maintains, rather, that much of equal or greater significance inheres in the private actions and passions of common people.

3. Chapter Analysis

3.1 Summary and Analysis of Prefatory Material and Letters I-X

Summary of Prefatory Material and Letters I-X

Prefatory Material

Richardson includes a “Preface by the Editor,” one purpose of which is to establish the white lie that what follows is not a novel that Richardson has authored about fictional characters but rather a collection of real letters that he has edited. The other major purpose is to outline in detail the moral justification of his publication of these letters, namely, the
goal of “inculcat[ing] Religion and Morality” in “the Minds of the Youth of both Sexes” through the vehicle of an entertaining narrative.

A letter to the Editor from “J.B.D.F.” (the French translator Jean Baptiste de Freval) applauds the literary quality of Pamela’s writings and takes note of some of their most distinctive features, such as their having been “written under the immediate Impression of every Circumstance which occasioned them” and their displaying “the fair Writer’s most secret Thoughts.” Freval echoes the Editor’s moral program when he remarks that “Pleasure and Instruction here always go hand in hand: Vice and Virtue are set in constant Opposition, and Religion every-where inculcated.” He also supports the illusion of the narrative’s being non-fiction, as he speculates that “the Story must have happened within these Thirty Years past” and that the Editor has “been obliged to vary some of the Names of Persons, Places, &c. and to disguise a few of the Circumstances, in order to avoid giving Offense to some Persons.”

Finally, a letter to the Editor from an “affectionate Friend” offers similar compliments regarding the work’s ability to provide “Entertainment,” “Instruction,” and “Morality.” The Friend then goes on to comment on the plot and commend Pamela’s virtue at some length. He argues that “the Cause of Virtue, calls for the Publication of such a Piece as this,” and supports his claim by drawing a contrast between the moral and intellectual value of Pamela’s writings on the one hand, and the worthlessness of “pernicious Novels” on the other.

Letter I: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mrs. B., the “good Lady” whose waiting maid Pamela has been, has died of illness. All the servants grieve for the death of their Lady, who was kind to them.

On her deathbed, Mrs. B. bade her son, Mr. B., to take care of the servants, and she bade him especially to “Remember my poor Pamela!” Pamela’s new Master, taking her by the hand, promised to be a friend to her and employ her in the care of his linen. He later distributes mourning clothes and a year’s wages to all the servants; to Pamela, who has never received any wages in this household, he awards four golden guineas and the spare change from his mother’s pocket.

Pamela now sends the four guineas to her parents, recommending that they use some of the money to pay off their debts. She has concealed the money in a pillbox and wrapped the pillbox in paper, and she requests that her parents not extract the money in the presence of John the footman, who will have carried both Pamela’s letter and, unwittingly, the four guineas.

A postscript recounts what happened while Pamela was folding up this letter and preparing to send it. Mr. B. surprises her in her Lady’s dressing room, causing Pamela to conceal the letter in her bosom. Mr. B. prevails on her to give him the letter and, after reading it over, praises her dutifulness toward her parents, compliments her delicate hands and competent spelling, and offers her the use of his mother’s library. Pamela is flattered and grateful; she concludes again, extolling Mr. B. as “the best of Gentlemen.”
Letter II: John and Elizabeth Andrews to Pamela.

Pamela’s parents fear that the favor of Mr. B., setting Pamela above her station, may lead her into vice or the abandonment of chastity. Pamela was remarkably pretty when last they saw her six months ago. Mr. Andrews impresses upon her the value of “honesty” (that is, chastity), saying that no money can make good the loss of it and no mode of subsistence could be as degrading as Pamela being a kept woman. While professing to hope that the Squire has no dishonorable intentions toward Pamela, Mr. Andrews encourages her to be suspicious of the marks of favor she has received and says that if Mr. B. tries anything with her, Pamela should leave and come straight home. Mr. Andrews thanks Pamela for the gift of the four guineas, but he has hidden it in the thatched roof, and he will not spend it until he is confident that Mr. B. did not bestow it for the wrong reasons.

Letter III: Pamela to her Father.

Pamela expresses anxiety over her father’s suspicions, which Pamela herself now partly shares. She claims, however, to have a reasonable hope that Mr. B. will never treat her dishonorably. Above all, she is indignant that her parents should seem to doubt her commitment to chastity; she vows that she will “die a thousand Deaths” rather than commit a sexual infraction.

Letter IV: Pamela to her Mother.

Pamela receives praise from Mr. B.’s sister, Lady Davers, who has been visiting for the past month, compliments Pamela’s looks and character and advises her to “keep the Fellows at a Distance.” While waiting at table, Mrs. Jervis opines that Pamela is “too pretty to live in a Batchelor’s House,” prompting Lady Davers to suggest that Pamela should come to live at the Davers household. Mr. B. agrees, and Pamela takes heart from the inference that, if her Master is willing to part with her, then he must have no lecherous motives.

Letter V: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Pamela confesses to her parents that she has no particular exigency for writing. John Arnold the footman always seems eager to carry letters between Pamela and her parents, and Pamela takes his willingness itself as a justification for writing. Moreover, as she admits toward the end of this letter, “I love Writing.”

Though Pamela has heard nothing further of the plan for her going to the Davers household, she is content with her current situation. Mrs. Jervis is kind and competent, and she comes from a genteel background. Notably, she has chastised a male servant who attempted to kiss the unwilling Pamela.

In concluding, Pamela professes herself free of any worries about her Master’s conduct, reasoning that an indiscretion with a servant-girl would lessen his chances of making a fine marriage.

Letter VI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mr. B. bestows on Pamela a wardrobe of his mother’s old clothes. Mrs. Jervis is present during the presentation of the clothes, so that Pamela’s virtue is not endangered.
Pamela considers the clothes too fine for her and wishes she could, without being rude, sell them and send the money home to her parents.

Later, Mrs. Jervis reveals to Pamela that Mr. B. has inquired about Pamela’s conduct toward the other sex, expressing some concern that her good looks could attract predatory admirers. Mrs. Jervis’s answer was to lavish praise on Pamela’s moral character.

**Letter VII: Pamela to her Father.**

Mr. B. furnishes Pamela with further gifts, including stockings. Mrs. Jervis is absent this time, and Pamela is embarrassed to be alone with a young man in her Lady’s closet, receiving a gift of intimate apparel. Mr. B. teases her, saying, “Don’t blush, Pamela: Dost think I don’t know pretty Maids wear Shoes and Stockens?” Pamela, anxious about the impropriety of this remark, recounts the experience to Mrs. Jervis, who calms her by suggesting that Mr. B. may be outfitting Pamela to serve as a waiting-maid for Lady Davers. The letter concludes with Pamela’s effort to convince herself that Mr. B. has nothing to gain and everything to lose in transgressing upon the purity of a servant girl and that, in the ways of providence, “All that happens is for our Good.”

**Letter VIII: Her Father and Mother to Pamela.**

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews indicate their concern regarding Mr. B.’s “free Expression to [Pamela] about the Stockens.” They again enjoin their daughter to sacrifice anything, even her life, rather than her virtue. They recommend that she trust Mrs. Jervis and seek the housekeeper’s counsel in everything.

**Letter IX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. has called off the plan for Pamela to take a position in the Davers household. His stated reasons are that Lady Davers has a nephew who might behave improperly toward Pamela and that as Mr. B.’s mother committed Pamela to her son’s care, it is right that Pamela should remain in Mr. B.’s household. Mrs. Jervis tells Pamela that Lady Davers, upon hearing of the change of plans, shook her head ominously, saying, “Ah! Brother!”

**Letter X: Pamela to her Mother.**

In accordance with the forebodings of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, Mr. B. has finally “degraded himself to offer Freedoms to his poor Servant.” No details are forthcoming yet because, as Pamela reports, the letter in which she supplied the details has gone missing. She now suspects that Mr. B., given his immorality in one quarter, would hardly forbear from stealing letters. Pamela is now sensible of a general atmosphere of censorship and oppression: she believes that members of the household are spying on her, and she has heard Mr. B. say to Mrs. Jervis, “That Girl is always scribbling.” Mr. B. now wants to keep Pamela occupied with embroidering a waistcoat for him, so that she will have less time to write.

**Overall Analysis:**

After the death of her Mistress, Pamela finds herself in an atmosphere of secrecy and hidden meanings, and henceforth the preservation of her purity will depend on her
interpreting other people’s motives and intentions correctly. Readers should go immediately on the alert when the openness and solidarity in which the servants collectively mourned the departed Mrs. B. gives way to Pamela’s suspicions of John the footman, from whom she conceals her four golden guineas. Even the cautious Pamela may not be vigilant enough, however. If she does not trust John with the guineas, then why does she assume he will not read the letter in which she reveals their hiding place?

Moreover, Pamela does not at first think to question Mr. B.’s motives for awarding her the golden guineas. Perhaps he simply felt that she had earned them, or perhaps he wanted to commemorate his mother with a munificent gesture. Pamela’s parents, however, suspect that there are strings attached, and while their worries probably arise from their parental feeling and rustic traditionalism, a worldlier observer might find equal reason for concern.

In this era and in such a context, the transfer of money may conceal its own set of meanings. These guineas are Pamela’s first earnings in her three years in the B. household. Previously, her employers have compensated her primarily with room and board -- that is, with a form of remuneration with no value outside the household and that therefore binds her to her employers, even making her part of the “family” in the old sense of that word, in which “family” denoted not only blood relatives but household servants as well. By contrast, money, which is current throughout England and therefore confers economic mobility, places value on Pamela’s labor alone rather than on her loyalty. The classic example of a woman who sells her labor, but not her loyalty, for money is the prostitute; Mr. B.’s singling out Pamela for a golden bonus may not, then, be quite as flattering as Pamela in her innocence takes it to be. Certainly, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews doubt the honor of his intentions: they conceal the guineas out of shame over what they might mean, that is, over what Pamela may have to do to earn them.

The greatest hidden meaning, however, is that of Pamela’s own feelings, which are a secret even from Pamela herself. From the first, when she is so acutely aware of Mr. B.’s presence in the closet, Pamela reacts to her Master in ways that are not always consonant with her stated attitudes. In particular, her resourcefulness in convincing herself that he would never make any attempt upon her chastity seems at odds with her rather hysterical readiness to take any precaution against the loss of her purity, even to the point of “d[ying] a thousand Deaths.”

On the level of imagery, the opening pages establish patterns that will hold through the rest of the novel by indicating symbolic connections between writing, clothing, and intimacy. Mr. B. has retained Pamela to care for his linen, a category that includes garments and bedclothes, and one of his first efforts at flirting with her takes as its occasion a gift of “Shoes and Stockens.” Similarly, his first approach to her is to demand the letter Pamela has secreted in her bosom, where “bosom” is not anatomically explicit but indicates the part of her dress covering the chest and, as in the biblical usage, connotes secrecy and intimacy. It also, of course, alludes to the heart as the seat of the emotions, and Pamela’s declaration that “I love Writing” sets up a long-term tension between Pamela’s Master and her literary pursuits. Mr. B. will increasingly view her writing as a rival for her attention: “That Girl is always scribbling” when she should instead be working or, even better, receiving his advances.
3.2 Summary and Analysis of Letters XI- XVIII

Summary of Letters XI- XVIII

Letter XI: Pamela to her Mother.

Pamela supplies the details of Mr. B.’s assault on her purity. Mr. B. comes upon Pamela in the summerhouse and kisses her, saying that he will make her a gentlewoman if she agrees to stay in his household rather than join that of Lady Davers. Pamela nearly faints in terror, and her vulnerability allows Mr. B. to inflict two or three more kisses before she breaks away. She rebukes him for his behavior toward her, and he denies any lecherous intent, saying that his advances were only meant to test her virtue. He offers her money in exchange for her secrecy, but she refuses it and leaves the summerhouse. The letter concludes with a promise to continue the story soon and an acknowledgment that Pamela has not yet left Mr. B.’s household, despite the fact that it has become a place of “Anguish and Terror.”

Letter XII: Pamela to her Mother.

Pamela continues the story she left off in her previous letter. After coming in from the summerhouse, she considers leaving Mr. B.’s household but is confused about whether and how to take with her the clothes that Mr. B. has given her. She further wonders whether she should confide in Mrs. Jervis or heed Mr. B.’s command of secrecy in the hopes that he will never again attempt anything comparably depraved.

In the evening, Pamela asks Mrs. Jervis to let Pamela share a bed with her at night. Later, Pamela divulges to Mrs. Jervis what happened in the summerhouse. Mrs. Jervis thinks that Pamela’s virtue will put Mr. B. to shame and discourage him from ever taking such liberties again. With this prediction in mind, Pamela decides to remain in Mr. B.’s household for the time being, despite her parents’ urging her to leave as soon as she had grounds for concern.

Ominously, Mr. B. has ordered that Pamela should not spend so much time writing. The letter concludes with Pamela’s wish that she had not left her family’s poverty for the dangers that attend exposure to high society.

Letter XIII: Her Father and Mother to Pamela.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews exhort Pamela to flee the household of Mr. B. at the first sign of his further pursuit of her. They meditate on the utility of temptations in the cultivation of self-knowledge and express their confidence in Pamela’s ability, with the aid of her “virtuous Education,” to withstand the temptations of Mr. B. Overall, however, they propose that Pamela would do best to return home.

Letter XIV: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mr. B. returns from a two-week visit with Lady Davers and questions Pamela’s virtue in conversation with Mrs. Jervis, expressing his opinion that “she is an artful young Baggage,” full of “Vanity and Conceit, and Pride too.” He accuses Pamela of having
interpreted innocent marks of favor as a design on her purity, and he tells Mrs. Jervis to
order Pamela to stop gossiping about his family in her letters home.

Pamela, concluding her letter, surmises that Mr. B. must have stolen and read the
letter whose disappearance she has previously noted.

**Letter XV: Pamela to her Mother.**

Pamela recounts what happened as she was concluding her previous letter. Mr. B.
again surprises Pamela, causing her to conceal the letter in her bosom. He admonishes her
for having publicized his earlier indiscretion. When Pamela denies it, he names Mrs. Jervis as
her interlocutor, to which Pamela responds by demanding why, if Mr. B. has done nothing
wrong, he would mind Pamela discussing his behavior. Mr. B. then accuses Pamela of having
written about the encounter in addition to talking about it. Pamela retorts that Mr. B. could
not have known the contents of her writings if he had not stolen her letter to her parents.
When Mr. B. expresses anger over Pamela's impudence, she begs him to recognize her
vulnerable position and her right to defend her own purity.

She then breaks down in tears. Mr. B. charges her with overreacting and, by way of
giving her some more substantial grounds for anguish, invites her to sit on his knee. Over
her objections, he kisses and fondles her, causing her to make a dash through the door and
enjoin secrecy on the housekeeper, and leaves the two women alone.

Mr. B. returns later to defend his conduct to Mrs. Jervis, insisting it was entirely
innocent. He casts doubt on the authenticity of Pamela's fainting fits and arranges a
meeting for the next day between Mrs. Jervis, Pamela, and himself. After Mr. B. has left,
Pamela professes to Mrs. Jervis her determination to leave the house but then qualifies that
resolution by saying that she will know better what to do after the next day's meeting.

**Letter XVI: Pamela to her Parents.**

Pamela describes the meeting between Mrs. Jervis, Pamela, and Mr. B. The Squire
demands that Mrs. Jervis tell him what she has heard from Pamela regarding his conduct.
Mrs. Jervis says that Pamela said that Mr. B. pulled her onto his knee and kissed her. Pamela
objects that Mrs. Jervis has not related the worst of it, since she has glossed over Pamela's
expectation that if her Master could take such liberties with a servant girl, he probably had
more in mind. Mr. B. insists that he had no further intentions and gets Mrs. Jervis to join him
in condemning Pamela for her pertness in imputing lecherous motives to her Master. He
accuses Pamela of hypocrisy for writing letters in which she presents herself as a paragon of
virtue and him, "her Master and Benefactor," as a "Devil incarnate." He declares his
resolution of sending Pamela back to her family and their poverty.

Pamela finds this prospect encouraging and expresses her gratitude to Mr. B. The
letter concludes with her hope of returning to her parents and supporting herself with
needlework, though a postscript cautions that another week may pass before she can fulfill
her responsibilities with respect to Mr. B.'s linen.
Letter XVII: Her Parents to Pamela.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews anticipate Pamela’s return with great eagerness. Mr. Andrews wants to return the four guineas they received from Mr. B. and hopes that John the footman will be able to accompany Pamela on her homeward journey.

Letter XVIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mrs. Jervis again predicts that Mr. B. will make no further attempts on Pamela’s virtue and suggests that Pamela could stay on at the household if she were to beg it as a favor from Mr. B. When Pamela replies that she wants nothing more than to return to her home and poverty, Mrs. Jervis complains that this eagerness to leave bespeaks a lack of gratitude on Pamela’s part for the love Mrs. Jervis has shown her. Pamela again defends her decision to leave, dwelling particularly on the example she would set if she were to linger in a household that presents such threats to her purity. Mrs. Jervis concedes the force of this argument and agrees to supply Pamela with glowing references.

Later, Mr. B. passes Pamela in the hall and accuses her of being always in his way. When she expresses her hope that she will not be in his way much longer, he curses her and leaves her to marvel at the crudity of his language, which she reflects is consonant with his general moral character.

Overall Analysis:

“I sobb’d and cry’d most sadly. What a foolish Hussy you are, said he, have I done you any harm?” Many readers find themselves concurring in Mr. B.’s sentiment when he poses this question during the incident in the summerhouse, and Pamela’s answer, “the greatest Harm in the World,” will doubtless strike the same readers as hyperbolic. When we consider that Pamela is merely observing moral precepts that are specific to her historical and religious context of eighteenth-century Calvinist-tinged Anglicanism, then her scrupulousness becomes comprehensible if not sympathetic. It is not to such precepts, however, that Pamela appeals during her rebuff of Mr. B. in the summerhouse; instead, her arguments in this scene invoke less antiquated ideas, those of social responsibility and of the integrity of the self.

“Well may I forget that I am your Servant, when you forget what belongs to a Master.” Mr. B.’s station as a member of the landed gentry involves responsibilities as well as privileges: he has a duty to protect Pamela no less than she does to obey him. In violating his responsibility to look out for her welfare, he obliges her to violate, in self-defense, her duty to obey him; in repelling his advances, then, she is not only defending her own sexual purity but also upholding the social order. Moreover, to allow Mr. B. to tyrannize over her would be to forfeit not only her virtue but also the voluntary basis on which to engage in personal relations. She is not such a prude that his sexual advances necessarily revolt her; her natural inclination may even be to favor them, but she respects both herself and her Master too much to let him prey on her.

We learn a great deal about Pamela during this incident in the summerhouse; for one thing, she is a very clever debater. When Mr. B. tries to put her in her place by reminding her of her low social status (“Do you know whom you speak to?”), she wittily turns the point to her advantage by reminding him of the obligations that attend high birth
(“what belongs to a Master”), thus converting her main weakness to a defense. As long as Mr. B.’s aggression toward her persists, Pamela will continue to keep track of what rights she possesses under a system that in so many ways disadvantages her.

Another of Pamela’s notable qualities is the innate pride that allows her to talk back to her social superiors when they deserve it. This audacity is in many contexts rather magnificent; readers of Jane Austen (herself a reader of Richardson) may wish to compare Pamela to the feisty Elizabeth Bennet, who is one of Pamela’s many descendants in the tradition of the English novel. Pamela’s pride may also contain the seeds of weakness, however, if it comes to manifest itself as spiritual pride or moral rigidity; in this context one thinks of Shakespeare’s Cordelia, whose refusal to verbalize her affections on command puts in motion the tragedy of King Lear.

Finally, these early stages of the novel tend to raise in modern minds the question of why Pamela does not simply leave. When in Letter XII she allows the quandary of what clothes to wear to prevent her from doing what her parents and her conscience urge her to do, she may forfeit the sympathy of readers who expect their heroines to demonstrate a bit of initiative. Richardson’s original readers, however, would not have had this problem in sympathizing with Pamela, knowing as they did how difficult it was for a domestic servant to leave a position without incurring a stigma. In order to get another position in the domestic service, Pamela would have to present a “character” (i.e. references) from her previous housekeeper and employer. Mrs. Jervis has already declared herself willing to oblige, but if Pamela were to leave Mr. B.’s household without his consent, and leave him feeling jilted no less, then she could certainly not count on his support. In that case, not only would her career prospects be dim, but her reputation as a young woman of virtue would likewise take a hit, as acquaintances would begin to wonder what she can have done that would make a gentleman refuse to vouch for her character.

3.3 Summary and Analysis of Letters XIX- XXIV

Summary of Letters XIX- XXIV

Letter XIX: Pamela to her Father and Mother

Pamela continues where her previous letter left off. Mr. B. has conferred with Mrs. Jervis and, approving the work Pamela has done so far on his waistcoat, has determined that Pamela should stay until it is finished. Pamela is aware of “some private Talk” between Mr. B. and Mrs. Jervis, which the housekeeper will not summarize for Pamela. However, Pamela professes to trust Mrs. Jervis, who after all must remain in Mr. B.’s service after Pamela has left it. Mrs. Jervis again advises Pamela to humble herself before Mr. B. and ask to continue in his employment, causing Pamela to set out her case again in response. Mrs. Jervis gives a novel assessment of Mr. B.’s conduct, suggesting that he is irritated with himself for being unable to overcome his love for Pamela, a social inferior, and that his frustration with himself accounts for his cursing of Pamela and his demand that she leave his household. Pamela reiterates her principles and discourses on the sexual double standard. She speculates that, were she to become Mr. B.’s mistress, he would abandon her as soon as she began to show the ill effects of their connection.
The two women continue discussing the probability or improbability of Mr. B. improving his behavior. Mrs. Jervis attenuates her confidence in Mr. B.’s delicacy, professing, “I dare swear for him, he never will offer you any Force.” When Pamela has disposed of all of Mrs. Jervis’s arguments, she declares again that she has no option but to leave, though she laments having to part from all the servants, who have been kind to her. A postscript, however, notes that Pamela has indeed consented to remain to finish her embroidery work on Mr. B.’s waistcoat, which she considers the prettiest needlework she has ever done, and that she is working overtime to finish it, the sooner to return home.

Letter XX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Pamela describes the humble wardrobe she has gotten up in preparation for her return to poverty. Concerned that she would make a tawdry spectacle if she were to return home in the fine clothes she received from Mr. B., Pamela acquires some sturdy fabric and sews for herself a number of undergarments. From a peddler she purchases a number of small articles, primarily outerwear. The letter concludes with Pamela’s deciding against the return of the four guineas: she reasons that they are all the wages she has ever received from Lady B. or Mr. B. and that she can reasonably consider herself to have earned them in the fourteen months since her Lady’s death.

Letter XXI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mrs. Jervis tells Pamela that she has been speaking about her with Mr. B. and that he has expressed anger at the servant-girl, saying that she has acted her own enemy in refusing his innocent favor. He has further said that if he knew a lady of noble birth, identical to Pamela “in Person and Mind,” he would marry her immediately. Pamela counters that if she were a lady of noble birth she might not accept Mr. B.’s proposal, given his previous behavior to her. Mrs. Jervis finds Pamela’s rigidity exasperating. The conversation languishes as the two women bridle at each other and then terminates with their reconciliation. The letter concludes with Pamela’s hope that she will have finished Mr. B.’s waistcoat, which she now calls “ugly,” within two days.

Letter XXII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mr. B. meets Pamela in the hall and demands to know when she plans to leave the household. When she replies that she will stay until his waistcoat is finished, he observes that she has spent an inordinate amount of time on it already and accuses her of working harder at her writing than at her sewing. He exclaims, “I don’t want such idle Sluts to stay in my House,” just before he notices that the butler, Mr. Jonathan, is standing nearby. Since this incident, the servants have been asking Mrs. Jervis about the timing and reason for Pamela’s departure, the general sense being that they will miss her when she is gone.

Later, Mr. B. approaches Mrs. Jervis and Pamela, demanding of the housekeeper when Pamela will be finished with the notorious waistcoat. Pamela, answering for herself, says that she needs a few more hours, but she would be happy to leave the house immediately and send the waistcoat back when it is finished. Mr. B., still addressing Mrs. Jervis, complains that Pamela seems to cast a spell on everyone who meets her, convincing them that she is “an Angel of Light.” Pamela leaves Mr. B. and Mrs. Jervis to discuss her out
of her hearing, though she will learn later from Mrs. Jervis that Mr. B. expressed regret during this conversation for having spoken roughly to Pamela in front of Mr. Jonathan.

Pamela encounters Mr. Jonathan, who speaks kindly to her and expresses confidence in her virtue. Pamela thanks him, crying, and hurries away. The steward, Mr. Longman, holds Pamela in similarly high regard. When Pamela loses her pen and runs out of paper, she asks for supplies from Mr. Longman, who generously supplies all the writing implements she needs and more. He expresses his regret that Pamela is soon to leave, and he puzzles aloud over the recent change in Mr. B.’s character. The letter concludes with Pamela’s reflecting on her contentment with the high respect in which her fellow servants hold her.

Letter XXIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mr. B. entertains the neighbors at dinner. The Ladies express interest in seeing Pamela, who has gained a reputation as “the greatest Beauty in the Country.” Mr. B. downplays Pamela’s attractions and gives his opinion that Pamela’s real distinction lies in her humility and her ability to inspire loyalty among her fellow servants. The ladies are not discouraged, however, and resolve to visit Pamela.

Soon the ladies approach the mildly nettled Pamela, who endures their examination and keeps her sarcastic replies to herself. The ladies finally depart, singing Pamela’s praises and surmising that she must have a genteel background.

Pamela, writing, registers her hope that she will be able to set out on Thursday. She reflects on the paradoxical affinity of love with hate and closes by indicating her mischievous plan to surprise Mrs. Jervis by appearing in her new outfit of country clothes.

Letter XXIV: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Pamela reflects with some regret on the Master that she will soon leave. She reasons that he seems to have striven in vain to overcome his attraction to her and that his failure has deformed his “Temper.” She regrets having been the cause for Mr. B. demeaning himself in the eyes of his servants, whose respect he should endeavor to retain.

Pamela tries on her new country outfit, which she describes in extensive detail, and is pleased with the reflection she catches in the mirror. She then models the clothes in the housekeeper’s parlor before Mrs. Jervis, who is suitably surprised.

Meanwhile, Mr. B. steps into the room behind Pamela’s back, catches a glimpse of her, takes her to be a stranger, and withdraws. From another room he summons Mrs. Jervis and asks her to send the pretty maiden to him, so Mrs. Jervis directs Pamela to go in and fool him. Mr. B., while recognizing Pamela, takes advantage of the pretense of anonymity to make advances, prompting Pamela to exclaim, “Indeed I am Pamela, her own self!” An argument ensues in which Mr. B. accuses Pamela of disguise and hypocrisy and Pamela defends her costume choice as appropriate to her station and thereby a manifestation of her honesty and integrity. Mr. B. then offers to allow Pamela to stay another two weeks while he convinces Lady Davers to take her on. Pamela protests, however, that she merely wants to return to her parents. Mr. B. calls her several names, Pamela breaks down weeping, and they contest again the issue of Mr. B.’s efforts to distinguish Pamela, whether
they are essentially liberal or lecherous. Pamela flees when Mr. B. loses his temper, and soon she receives a note in which Mr. Jonathan reports that another servant has overheard Mr. B. vowing, “I will have her!” Pamela goes anxiously to bed.

Overall Analysis:

Throughout the novel, both Pamela and Mr. B. exhibit a notable interest in their own and each other’s clothing. Pamela’s commitment here to embellishing her Master’s waistcoat is notorious among critics as being the flimsiest of excuses for her remaining in his employment. To condemn the waistcoat as a flagrant plot device may, however, be simplistic: Pamela’s ambivalence about the garment, her thinking it first pretty and then ugly and the arbitrariness with which she seizes upon the necessity of its completion, may exemplify her divided feelings about its owner and hence reveal attitudes that are obscure to Pamela herself. Individual readers will decide whether the waistcoat is a clumsy expedient on Richardson’s part or a compelling instance of psychological realism.

Letter XX demonstrates Pamela’s use of clothing as a mark of identity. Earlier, when Mr. B. gave Pamela the set of new garments he had selected for her, he asked her whether she thought that he did not “know [that] pretty Maids wear Shoes and Stockers,” thereby subsuming Pamela under the category “pretty Maids” and, implicitly, under the category of maids with whose hosiery the Squire has been familiar. His question, then, proposed clothing as a mark of group identity, and not a dignified group by Pamela’s lights. Pamela, who stands on her dignity, would naturally prefer to present herself as an individual and distinct from this group. In order to declare her distinction, she assembles for herself a practical and economical wardrobe suitable for life in the country. Some of the articles she sews for herself, and some of the articles she purchases with her own money; crucially, none of the articles is the remnant of another woman’s wardrobe or something that a man wanted her to wear. Pamela is engaged in constructing the identity that she presents visually to the world, and that identity is modest, sturdy, and unpretentious, declaring not what she wants to be but simply what she is. Thus, when Mr. B. pretends to mistake her for “Pamela’s Sister,” she cries out, “Indeed I am Pamela, her own self!”

Closely related to the utility of clothing as a sign of personal identity is its utility as a sign of class status. Pamela, whom many critics have accused of being a social climber, has, in this instance at least, no interest in dressing above her station; in fact, she worries about how trashy she would look if she were to return to her parents’ humble home wearing her Lady’s cast-off wardrobe. This anxiety underscores the ambiguous class position Pamela has come to occupy as an “upper” servant, a lady’s companion, and a young woman of incongruously genteel attainments. Her return to her parents must, if she is to maintain any kind of social respectability, involve a deliberate casting-off of the waiting-maid persona, a persona that begins to look sordidly pretentious when seen outside of the peculiar context from which it derives its legitimacy. Interestingly, Pamela here seems scarcely to resent the prospect of descending in the social scale; her main concern is to acknowledge clearly to the world, through her sartorial choices, the role she has embraced.

The charge of hypocrisy hangs in the air, however. Mr. B. makes it explicit after he strikes out with “Pamela’s Sister”: “[A]nd so you must disguise yourself, to attract me, and yet pretend, like a Hypocrite as you are----.” Pamela interrupts him at this point, but he presumably would have said that Pamela is a hypocrite for dressing herself so attractively.
and then pretending that she does not desire to attract anyone. Is it unreasonable of Mr. B. to doubt Pamela when she disclaims the goal of being attractive? In Letter XXV Mrs. Jervis will suggest to Pamela, “I believe truly, you owe some of your Danger to the lovely Appearance you made,” prompting Pamela to respond, “Then . . . I wish the Cloaths in the Fire. I expected no Effect from them; but if any, a quite contrary one.” Early in Letter XXIV, however, she seemed delighted to make a “lovely Appearance”: “I trick’d myself up as well as I could in my new Garb, . . . and look’d about me in the Glass, as proud as any thing. ---To say Truth, I never lik’d myself so well in my Life.” Her attitude does not change until Mr. B. turns out to like her just as well as she likes herself. The question, it would seem, is whether Pamela is a proper hypocrite, conscious of her inconsistency, or whether she is manifesting an unconscious ambivalence regarding her own physical charms. Very possibly she may take a natural pleasure in her ability to attract admirers, only censoring this pleasure because of the danger she perceives in Mr. B.’s attentions; her hypocrisy, such as it is, would then consist of a refusal to acknowledge consciously a desire that she sees perceives as threatening.

Mr. B.’s doubts about Pamela’s sincerity and integrity extend to her relations with the other servants, whom she has “inchant[ed]” to believe that she is “an Angel of Light.” He has evidently noticed the degree to which his recent conduct has caused his reputation to decline among such members of the household as Mr. Longman, who wonders what “ails our Master of late”; the upper servants, at least, have even gleaned that the Squire’s predatory fixation on Pamela has contributed to the change in his behavior. Mr. B. alludes to the party spirit among the staff when he explains to his dinner guests that Pamela “makes all her Fellow-servants love her” by being “humble, and courteous, and faithful.” His insinuation, of course, is that these admirable qualities are all part of Pamela’s strategy for forging alliances: she “makes” others feel a certain way by enchanting or deceiving them, and she perpetrates this deception by simulating the qualities of humility, courtesy, and faithfulness rather than possessing them in earnest.

While there is certainly no evidence to support the Squire’s suspicion that Pamela is deliberately fomenting rebellion among the servants, events will show that the notion of a Pamelist faction among the servants is logical. Moreover, Mr. B.’s mention of humility as a cause of Pamela’s popularity among her peers raises a vexed issue, to wit, that Pamela’s delight in reporting others’ praise of her virtue may strike many readers as rather off-putting. In making the transition from the scene of Mr. Jonathan’s admiration of her goodness to the scene of Mr. Longman’s admiration of the same, she writes to her parents, “And now I will give you an Instance how much I am in Mr. Longman’s Esteem also.” Some would contend that the virtue of humility is simply incompatible with the degree to which Pamela piques herself on the perquisite accruing to that virtue, namely her flattering reputation. Is virtue its own reward, or does Pamela, as the novel’s subtitle perhaps suggests, seek some extraneous return for it?
3.4 Summary and Analysis of Letters XXXI and Editorial Material.

Summary of Letters XXXI and Editorial Material

Letters XXV through XXXI and Editorial Material

Pamela and Mrs. Jervis go to the latter’s chamber and sit down on opposite sides of the bed to undress for the night. They argue over Mrs. Jervis’s poor judgment in suggesting that Pamela fool Mr. B. in her new clothes. Mrs. Jervis defends herself against the unspoken charge that she intended to expose Pamela to Mr. B.’s sexual advances.

Pamela hears a noise in the closet and, on her way to investigate in her under-petticoat, is surprised when Mr. B. rushes out at her, dressed for conquest in “a rich silk and silver Morning Gown.” She takes refuge in the bed, where Mr. B. follows her. When Mrs. Jervis defends Pamela, Mr. B. threatens to throw the housekeeper out of the window and out of his employment. He fondles Pamela, whereupon Pamela has a series of fainting fits that last through the next three hours. Mr. B. leaves Mrs. Jervis and another servant, Rachel, to attend on her.

Letter XXVI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Mr. B. returns to Mrs. Jervis’s room late in the morning to speak to Pamela and the housekeeper. He is quite angry, and Mrs. Jervis volunteers to accompany Pamela in leaving Mr. B.’s employment. Mr. B. accuses Pamela of fomenting rebellion among the servants and of simulating her fainting fits. He says that he will not detain Pamela any longer since he is likely to marry soon. Pamela is glad to hear this news, both for Mr. B.’s sake and for her own.

Letter XXVII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Pamela finds that she must stay in Mr. B.’s household for another week because Mrs. Jervis plans to accompany her and cannot be ready until the next Thursday.

Mr. B. models for Pamela a suit of new clothes, which she reviews enthusiastically. They argue about whether Pamela should be wearing her cast-off fine clothes or the country clothes she prefers. He teases her about her fastidious virtue and her penchant for recounting his attempts to Mrs. Jervis and Mr. and Mrs. Andrews. Pamela submits her opinion that Mr. B. is “no Gentleman.”

Letter XXVIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

At a meeting with Pamela, Mrs. Jervis, and Mr. Longman the steward, Mr. B. informs the housekeeper that she may stay on in the household. Pamela is glad not to have been the occasion for Mrs. Jervis’s dismissal. Mr. B. then clarifies that he cannot allow Pamela to stay, due to her seditious “Freedom of Speech” and “her Letter-writing of all the Secrets of my Family.” He also considers her intolerably “pert.” An argument ensues among Mr. B., Pamela, and Mr. Longman on the subject of Pamela’s pertness, whether it exists or not and whether it is culpable or justifiable. Pamela finally makes an extravagant show of self-abasement that moves both Mr. Longman and Mr. B., and the latter dismisses Pamela with the epithet, “thou strange Medley of Inconsistence.”
Letter XXIX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Writing on a Monday and expecting to return to her parents on Thursday, Pamela laments the refinements she has acquired in Mr. B.’s household, as they have made her unfit for menial labor. She hopes to be able to support herself with needlework, a comparatively delicate occupation.

Pamela divides her clothing into three parcels, declaring that she is “resolv’d to take with me only what I can properly call my own.” She displays their contents to Mrs. Jervis in the green room where, with the cooperation of the housekeeper, Mr. B. has hidden himself in another closet. The first parcel contains the items Mrs. B. bestowed on Pamela, the second contains presents from Mr. B., and the third contains the articles Pamela has made or bought for herself. To the first bundle, she feels she has no claim, the second bundle she rejects as “the Price of my Shame,” but the third she embraces as “the Companion of my Poverty, and the Witness of my Honesty.” Pamela then seeks Mrs. Jervis’s advice on the point of the four guineas, asking whether she should return the money on the same principle that compels her to leave the second bundle. Mrs. Jervis advises Pamela to keep the guineas and the first and second bundles, too. Pamela will not take the bundles, but she is now at ease about the guineas.

Mrs. Jervis sends Pamela out of the room in order to confer with Mr. B. and give him a chance to sneak out, but Pamela returns so quickly that she catches a glimpse of him. She declares she has lost all faith in Mrs. Jervis, though the housekeeper insists that Mr. B.’s eavesdropping has had a good effect on him, moving him partway to repentance. The letter concludes with Pamela’s desire to be away from Mr. B.’s household, where it appears even her friends are against her.

Letter XXX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

On Wednesday morning, Mr. B. approaches Pamela in a kindly manner to question her about her home and parents. He offers to better the condition of Mr. Andrews and professes to be impressed with the evidences of Pamela’s moral character. The upshot is that he “love[s her] to Extravagance” and desires her to stay another week or two while he arranges to assist her family. Thinking that he has secured her consent, he leaves the room.

Pamela debates with herself whether to stay, for though she deeply wants Mr. B. to make her parents’ lives comfortable, she fears that her Master’s new kindness will prove a greater threat to her virtue than his aggression ever did. Finally, Pamela resolves not to trust Mr. B. but to return to her parents.

Letter XXXI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Later on Wednesday, after Pamela has finished the letter to her parents, Mr. B. comes to secure her acquiescence. When Pamela indicates that she is still resolved to leave, he offers fifty guineas, which she refuses, and then offers to find her a genteel husband, the clergyman Mr. Williams of Lincolnshire, who will raise her socially and protect her from predatory men. Pamela sees this suggestion as a ruse to keep her for another two weeks while Mr. B. can claim to be arranging the match, but she feigns interest and then goes off to pen a note rejecting the plan. Mr. B. seems to accept this answer, and Pamela prepares to depart.
Mrs. Jervis gives Pamela five guineas from Mr. B. Pamela surmises that Mr. B. may send the first and second bundles after her, in which case Pamela plans to sell the clothes and keep the money.

The letter concludes with fourteen four-line stanzas that Pamela has penned on the subject of her departure.

**Editorial Material**

The Editor warns that Pamela’s trials are not over. Mr. B. has sent for Robin, the coachman from his Lincolnshire estate, to transport the unwitting Pamela to Lincolnshire. The Editor also reveals that John the footman has allowed Mr. B. to read all of the correspondence between Pamela and her parents.

The Editor provides a letter from Mr. B. to Mr. Andrews in which the Squire pretends to explain why Pamela is not coming home. He charges Pamela with fabricating romantic stories about Mr. B.’s designs upon her and claims that she has been conducting a long-distance affair with a young clergyman, so that Mr. B. has seen fit to send Pamela into the country for a time in order to prevent the imprudent match.

Mr. Andrews sees through this subterfuge and sets out for Mr. B.’s estate. He stations himself at the gate and bewails the disappearance of his child. Mr. B. assures him that Pamela is safe, claiming that she has gone to London in the service of a reputable family. Mr. Andrews does not believe this story and vows to remain in Mr. B.’s house until he has some word from Pamela. He returns home, however, several days later, before the arrival of a letter from Pamela to Mrs. Jervis, which the Editor provides.

Pamela reports to Mrs. Jervis that Robin the coachman has abducted her on his Master’s orders but that she has met with tolerable treatment. She asks Mrs. Jervis to tell Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that she is well. Mrs. Jervis sends the letter to Pamela’s parents, who derive small comfort from it but have no recourse other than prayer.

**Overall Analysis:**

Some of the events in these letters have led critics to question the purity of Richardson’s moralistic intentions, the integrity of his moralistic heroine, or both. Skeptical readers often have difficulty taking seriously passages such as this one from Letter XXV: “I found his Hand in my Bosom, and . . . I was ready to die; and I sighed, and scream’d, and fainted away.” From one angle, Pamela’s physical reactions to Mr. B.’s assault seem to imitate erotic responsiveness, as Richardson specifies fierce activity terminating in a swoon and even works in the old pun on “death” as a slang term for sexual climax. On such a reading, the author stands accused of smuggling pornography into what purports to be an edifying work, as Pamela claims outrage but the worldly reader discerns titillation. Alternatively, a less hostile analysis might focus on Richardson’s psychological realism: the physical manifestations of Pamela’s distress may be an ingenious way of indicating her divided consciousness, as her body sends the signals that her mind and morals have censored. This reading, of course, implicates Pamela in a version of the hypocrisy charge, since it suggests that she does in fact experience the sexual attraction she denies. For many readers, these scenes of assault indicate that someone, at any rate, is less pure than he or she claims to be.
However one assesses the sincerity of Richardson and his heroine, what seems undeniable is that Pamela’s reporting of these scenes presents a problem of characterization: if the heroine is so delicate about sexual relations, how can she be so comfortable with passing on all the salacious details, and to her parents no less? The fault, however, probably lies not in Pamela’s hypocrisy but in Richardson’s imperfect mastery of the form that he has chosen. In making Pamela’s letters the main substance of the narrative, he has restricted himself almost entirely to one focalizing consciousness, that of his victim-heroine. If either Mr. B. or Mrs. Jervis has committed the details of this incident to paper, Richardson the “Editor” seems unaware of the fact, with the result that all of the necessary details must come from Pamela’s pen, despite her insistence that the details revolt her. By the time he wrote Clarissa five years later, Richardson had discovered the obvious solution to this problem was to include more of the epistolary output of other participants in the drama besides the impeccably pure heroine. In the meantime, however, Richardson’s readers must contend with the impact on characterization of this quirk of Richardson’s form, and try to distinguish the details Pamela includes because she is the sort of girl who would include them from the details Pamela includes because she must serve as Richardson’s narrator.

Related to the issues of assault and reportage is the theme of voyeurism, which obtrudes itself strongly in these letters. As early as Letter X, Pamela has worried that she is under surveillance, and her watchers will become more numerous and more shameless as the story moves along. In the “bundling scene,” where she separates her wardrobe into three bundles, Pamela believes herself to be engaging a trustworthy housekeeper in a cozy chat about domestic trivia. One of the pleasures she takes in this activity is clearly her sense that, in organizing her belongings according to their moral connotations, she is taking control of her life. In rejecting the clothes Mr. B. has chosen for her, she also rejects the role he has chosen for her, and in embracing her own clothes as “the Companion of my Poverty, and the Witness of my Honesty,” she affirms her social and economic decline as a positive act of self-determination and an index of her personal integrity. The fact that Mr. B. is slavering in the closet all the while, however, subverts the tone of the entire scene. Pamela is not really in charge of her own destiny or even of her own “Honesty” (i.e. chastity), because Mr. B. has her almost entirely in his power. As will become clear, he maintains that power by monitoring her every move and, indeed, her every (written) thought.

To what degree Richardson himself resembles Mr. B. in casting a prurient gaze on Pamela is an interesting question; many readers have felt that the novelist’s delight in revealing the heroine in so many physical trials and humiliations qualifies as a form of voyeurism. This charge may have some biographical justification, as Richardson from an early age evinced a tendency to scrutinize young women and speculate about their inner lives. Having achieved with Pamela a reputation for profound understanding of women, he gathered around himself a “harem” of young female disciples who consulted him on sensitive matters and whom, as his letters reveal, he observed closely. While this propensity doubtless aided Richardson in the “mastery in the [literary] delineation of the female heart” for which his contemporary admirers celebrated him, it may also bespeak an interest in his observational subjects that was neither aesthetic nor properly moral.

That Richardson possessed insight into the female psyche is not in doubt, however, and the “bundling scene” presents an excellent example of his knack for both portraying
female characters and attracting female readers. The itemization of domestic objects, in this scene and elsewhere in the novel, resonated with women readers whose lives were taken up almost entirely with domestic affairs. Women readers represented a particularly important demographic for the novel in the eighteenth century because they generally lacked the education to read and appreciate the classical texts in which privileged men received their education. Women, then, tended to appreciate Richardson’s “realistic” handling of detail, whereas university-educated men tended to disapprove of such details too mundane, as insufficiently “literary” and thereby a violation of literary decorum. Literary decorum was a classical value, espoused most famously by Horace in his Ars Poetica, and part of Richardson’s contribution to the rise of the novel was to vindicate the aesthetic use of such indecorous elements as colloquial speech and non-symbolic detail. In Richardson’s writings, things very often stand first for themselves, second for whatever connotations they may have picked up through their participation in a realistic context, and third or not at all for a concept in the manner of a traditional poetic symbol.

3.5 Summary and Analysis of Letter XXXII, the Beginning of Pamela’s Journal—the 6th Day of her Imprisonment

Summary of Letter XXXII, the Beginning of Pamela’s Journal—the 6th Day of her Imprisonment

Letter XXXII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.

Pamela addresses this lengthy (400-page) letter nominally to her mother and father, though at present she has small hope of its ever reaching them from her “prison” in Mr. B.’s Lincolnshire estate. She determines to “write my sad State” every day from now on, so that her letters will become, in essence, a journal. She will label the separate entries with days of the week, though not with dates; starting on the Monday following her abduction, she will number the days from the start of her imprisonment, albeit neither consistently nor always accurately. Later she will number the days from the start of her married life, with a similar degree of consistency and accuracy.

The journal commences with a narration of the Thursday and Friday of Pamela’s abduction.

The servants at Mr. B.’s Bedfordshire estate lament Pamela’s leaving, and Mr. Longman provides her with abundant writing implements, including paper, pens, and ink. Mr. B. oversees Pamela’s departure from his window.

Pamela becomes anxious when the journey seems to take longer than she expected. Robin claims to have lost the way, and when darkness falls, they stop at a farmhouse for the night. When the farmer turns out to be a tenant of “Esquire B. of Bedfordshire,” Pamela develops grave suspicions. Robin gives Pamela a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire explains that the house to which he is sending her will be at her command, such that Mr. B. himself will not approach it without Pamela’s permission. He promises to write to Mr. and Mrs. Andrews to assure them that nothing untoward will happen to their daughter.

Pamela, while not trusting Mr. B., apprehends that at least she is in no immediate danger. She learns that the farmer, too, has had a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire claims to be abducting Pamela for her own good, in order to thwart “a Love Affair, which
will be her Ruin.” Pamela sees that because of this letter and Mr. B.’s power over his tenants, she will be unable to recruit the farmer’s family to her cause.

Pamela and Robin set out again on Friday morning. Pamela’s escape plans come to nothing when the proprietress of the inn at which they stop for dinner turns out to be the sister-in-law of Mrs. Jewkes, the housekeeper of Mr. B.’s Lincolnshire estate. Mrs. Jewkes herself is present at the inn and accompanies Pamela for the rest of the journey, making several lewd suggestions to her during the interval. Pamela concludes that she has “fallen into the hands of a wicked Procuress.”

They arrive at Mr. B.’s estate around eight o’clock on Friday evening. Mrs. Jewkes informs Pamela that all the servants will show her respect and address her as “Madam,” due to the great power Pamela wields over their Master. Pamela quizzes Mrs. Jewkes as to the extent of her obedience to Mr. B., whether Mrs. Jewkes could justify clear wrongdoing as the duty of a servant to follow orders. Mrs. Jewkes denies the immorality of facilitating the sexual alliance of a gentleman and any woman. Pamela concludes that she has “nothing to expect from [Mrs. Jewkes’s] Virtue or Conscience.” To her dismay, she discovers that she is to share a bed with Mrs. Jewkes, at least until Mr. B. arrives.

Saturday

Pamela resolves to find some means of escape and has great hopes for Mr. Williams, whose clerical position should obligate him to help her in her distress. Mrs. Jewkes has instructions to read everything that Pamela writes and to ration her paper, ink, and pens. Pamela retaliates by dispersing and concealing the writing supplies she received from Mr. Longman so that she can continue to write in secret.

Sunday

Mrs. Jewkes forbids Pamela to go to church, where she hoped to speak to Mr. Williams, and further berates the clergyman for pleading Pamela’s case. Pamela is hesitant to ask for Mr. Williams's help, given that he is dependent on Mr. B.’s patronage and Pamela does not wish to be the cause of his ruin.

Mrs. Jewkes removes Pamela’s shoes in order to prevent her escaping, and Pamela retaliates by penning a devastating caricature of the housekeeper’s physical person.

John the footman arrives with letters from Mr. B. to both Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes. Mr. B. requests that Pamela write a letter to Mrs. Jervis in order to reassure Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that she is well. He reiterates his commitment not to approach the Lincolnshire estate without Pamela’s permission. Pamela writes to Mrs. Jervis according to the form Mr. B. has suggested. She also writes to Mr. B. expressing her dissatisfaction with the present arrangement and begging that he release her. She shows both letters to Mrs. Jewkes, hoping by this action to win the housekeeper’s goodwill.

“Monday, the 5th Day of [her] Bondage and Misery.”

“Honest John” the footman gives Pamela a note in which he confesses to having shown all of Pamela’s letters to Mr. B. He expresses great remorse, and Pamela laments
“the Deceitfulness of the Heart of Man.” He has also brought the contents of the two bundles Pamela left at the Bedfordshire estate, but Pamela has no interest in them.

**Tuesday and Wednesday**

On a walk in the garden with Mr. Williams, Pamela conspires with the clergyman to set up a secret correspondence: they will leave letters between two tiles in the garden beside a sunflower.

Later, Pamela asks Mrs. Jewkes for two sheets of paper and, with the housekeeper hanging over her shoulder, writes out her complaints against Mrs. Jewkes’s treatment of her. Pamela’s object is to convince Mrs. Jewkes that her writings are generally of this frivolous nature and not part of a plot to rebel or escape. Once Mrs. Jewkes has left, Pamela finishes a letter to Mr. Williams, in which she pleads with him to find some means for her to escape and a friendly household to give her temporary shelter. She then walks in the garden with the servant Nan and, when Nan’s back is turned, hides the letter between the tiles.

**Overall Analysis:**

By having Robin the coachman abduct Pamela from Bedfordshire to Lincolnshire, Richardson shifts the setting in a way that is crucial for the development not only of the plot but also of the themes of the novel. Lincolnshire is farther north than Bedfordshire, and in the imaginative geography of England, the north connotes sublimity and exposure. Whereas the south appears in literature as the locus of pastoral gentility, a journey to the north is a journey into the wilderness; appropriately, Pamela observes upon her arrival in Lincolnshire the “brown nodding Horrors of Lofty Elms and Pines,” a spooky, gothic image that invests the landscape with the villainous agency she finds in its inhabitants. Away from such friendly if ineffectual human stays as Mrs. Jervis and Mr. Longman, Pamela will have to rely increasingly on herself and her God. Between the beginning of Pamela’s stay in Lincolnshire and the approach of Mr. B. there will elapse forty days, a symbolic duration for a trial in the wilderness.

This portion of the journal introduces Mrs. Jervis’s Lincolnshire counterpart, Mrs. Jewkes, who despite the similarity in their surnames has little in common with the Bedfordshire housekeeper. Instead of being a surrogate mother for Pamela, she acts the part of “wicked Procuress.” Whatever personal interest Mrs. Jewkes may have in her ward is not maternal but amatory: she offers to kiss Pamela before they have known each other a day, prompting Pamela to object that such conduct is “not like two Persons of one Sex.” (Note that Mrs. Jewkes, despite her title, is unmarried; housekeepers took the honorific “Mrs.” regardless of their marital status.)

In portraying Mrs. Jewkes’s physical person, Richardson (or Pamela) draws on the literary tradition whereby grotesque physical traits manifest spiritual defects. Mrs. Jewkes is a villainous character, and she looks the part: “She is a broad, squat, pursy, fat Thing, quite ugly. . . . She has a huge Hand, and an Arm as thick as my Waist, I believe. . . . She has a hoarse man-like Voice, and is as thick as she’s long; and yet looks so deadly strong, that I am afraid she would dash me at her Foot in an Instant, if I was to vex her.---So that with a Heart more ugly than her Face, she frightens me sadly.” The correlation between moral and physical ugliness, which Pamela makes explicit here, is conventional enough, but one
wonders how much of this description Richardson intends the reader to accept as objective truth. Assuming that Pamela’s waist is a wasp-like 15 inches in circumference, the housekeeper would have to be either morbidly obese or inhumanly muscular in order to match it with her biceps. (Indeed Pamela soon acknowledges, though she immediately downplays, the retaliatory nature of this portrait of her warder: “This is but poor helpless Spight in me!—But the Picture is too near the Truth notwithstanding.”) This description may serve as a warning that Pamela is not always a reliable narrator; in particular, her comments on Mrs. Jewkes will continue to be less than objective.

One element of Mrs. Jewkes’s monstrousness, her sexual ambiguity, is so congruous with Richardson’s moral logic that it cannot arise entirely from Pamela’s spite. Pamela perceives Mrs. Jewkes as “man-like,” almost hermaphroditic, and the essentialism necessary for the imputation of such boundary crossing owes much to the rigorous construction of gender roles that arose in the eighteenth century with the ascendancy of individualistic values (which Richardson shared). As the patriarchal extended family declined in England due to the advent of economic mobility, the bond between husband and wife became the new essence of the family unit, and from this development arose the vital social importance of the gender roles appropriate to the respective participants in that bond. Richardson’s fiction routinely valorizes the heterosexual conjugal unit and punishes deviations from it, whether they are of the extramarital heterosexual sort or the non-marital homosexual sort. Mrs. Jewkes’s sexual attitudes, which encompass a comfort with both premarital sex and, apparently, lesbianism, associate her with the less rigorously codified sexual paradigm that Richardson’s ideology was in the process of superseding.

Mrs. Jewkes’s androgyny also aligns her in fascinating ways with Mr. B. The housekeeper resembles her Master in her tendency not to control her sexual impulses; she differs from him in that she is middle-aged (“about forty Years old”), so that whereas Mr. B. has the excuse of youth and may well bring his passions into good order in time, Mrs. Jewkes seems confirmed in her irregularity. She also functions as an amplified version of Mr. B. in his capacity as a watcher of Pamela: she is even more assiduous in her observation of Pamela than Mr. B. was in Bedfordshire, and she lacks even the faux-delicacy that caused the Squire to conceal himself in closets and cupboards. Her role in the novel, then, seems to be to exemplify and facilitate Mr. B.’s masculine fantasies of power and surveillance.

3.6 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Imprisonment to the 18th day

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Imprisonment to the 18th day

Thursday.

Pamela is unable to get away from Mrs. Jewkes in order to check the tiles for a note from Mr. Williams. She walks in the garden with Mrs. Jewkes, and they argue about Pamela’s position with respect to Mr. B. When Mrs. Jewkes accuses Pamela of attempting to “rob [Mr. B.] of yourself,” Pamela objects to the implication that she is her Master’s property. Mrs. Jewkes then implies that if she were in Mr. B.’s place, she would not wait for Pamela’s consent but would simply force herself on her. Pamela calls her “Jezebel,” prompting Mrs. Jewkes to strike her. They then return to the house and make peace, each
forgiving the other, whereupon Mrs. Jewkes allows Pamela to walk in the garden again with Nan.

Pamela manages to distract Nan long enough to extract a note from between the tiles. From it, she learns that Mr. Williams plans to contact Lady Davers and to canvass the neighborhood for genteel households that will shelter Pamela. Pamela then writes a grateful letter in return, adding the suggestion that Mr. Williams, who has a chamber in the house, make a copy of his key and leave it under the sunflower.

After dinner, Pamela goes into the garden with Mrs. Jewkes to do some fishing in the pond. Pamela catches a carp, which she then returns to the water, explaining to Mrs. Jewkes that she can sympathize with the carp’s betrayal by “false Bait” and has a moral objection to toying with a helpless creature. She wishes that someone would grant her liberty in a similar way. While Mrs. Jewkes continues fishing, Pamela goes to plant some horse beans near the sunflower and takes advantage of the opportunity to place her letter between the tiles.

**Friday, Saturday.**

Mrs. Jewkes, claiming to owe money to a tradesman, tricks Pamela out of nearly all her money, which amounts to five or six pounds. Pamela reproaches herself for falling for such a transparent ruse.

A letter arrives for Pamela from Mr. B. in which he declares that he now regrets having promised to keep his distance from Pamela. He asks her to invite him to Lincolnshire and tempts her with the prospect of discharging Mrs. Jewkes upon his arrival. Pamela thinks little of this proposal.

Pamela retrieves another letter from Mr. Williams during a turn in the garden. It tells her that the clergyman has met with no success in his effort to cultivate support for Pamela among the genteel neighbors. Even Mr. Peters, the senior clergyman of the parish, suspects the motives of both Pamela and Mr. Williams and refuses to help them. Mr. Williams promises, however, to supply Pamela with a copy of the key, and he plans to have a horse in readiness for her flight. Pamela writes back to Mr. Williams, thanking him for his efforts and suggesting that it may not be advisable after all to write to Lady Davers, as a confrontation between her and her brother might backfire and confirm him in his depravity. Pamela has greater hopes for the key and horse, though she fears that Mr. B. may be planning to come down quite soon.

On another walk in the garden with Mrs. Jewkes, Pamela again finds a pretext to get away from her warder and place her letter between the tiles. She then returns inside to write a response to Mr. B. in which she indicates that she still does not desire his presence in Lincolnshire.

**Sunday.**

Pamela, because she cannot go to church, spends Sunday morning in private devotions. Mrs. Jewkes approaches and asks Pamela to sing her a psalm, so Pamela adapts Psalm 137 (which laments Israel’s Captivity in Babylon) so that it describes her own situation.
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.

Mr. Williams has taken a parcel of Pamela’s writings and plans to send them to her parents, which cheers Pamela. She has also received the key from Mr. Williams, though a possible obstacle has arisen in the form of a bull in the pasture that has injured one of the maids.

Mr. Williams pays a visit and manages to get another letter into Pamela’s hands. After he has left, Mrs. Jewkes begins to tease Pamela that Mr. Williams is in love with her and offers to suggest to Mr. B. that Pamela ought to marry the clergyman. Pamela refuses this kindness.

Reading Mr. Williams’s letter, Pamela finds the clergyman proposing to marry her as the most effectual way of extricating her from her present situation. He makes clear, however, that he will not require marriage as a condition of his helping her, and so Pamela writes back to him refusing his proposal.

“Thursday, Friday, Saturday, the 14th, 15th and 16th of [her] Bondage.”

Pamela has had another letter from Mr. Williams in which he accepts her refusal and says he will continue to assist her.

Sunday.

Mrs. Jewkes and Mr. Williams approach Pamela with the news that Mr. B. has bestowed a clerical living on Mr. Williams and has suggested that Pamela and the clergyman should marry. Pamela cautions the ecstatic parson that she will not consider herself fit to accept his proposal until she is free to return to her parents, whom she feels bound to consult on this matter. She partly suspects that Mr. Williams himself may be part of the plot against her, but she convinces herself to continue trusting him. When Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes go to bed in the evening, the housekeeper urges her to give encouragement to Mr. Williams. Pamela insists that she does not intend to marry anyone.

Monday Morning.

Pamela receives news that Mr. Williams has been attacked by thieves who took his letters, though fortunately he has protected the papers Pamela asked him to carry to her parents. The incident is strange because robbery has been rare in the neighborhood for some years. Mrs. Jewkes laughs upon reading the clergyman’s account of the incident, but Pamela worries that the thieves may have had orders to find her own papers.

Pamela goes into the garden and contemplates making a run for it. She loses her nerve and returns to her closet but then descends again to the back door that leads to the pasture. There she confronts the sinister bull that injured the maidservant and that Pamela considers may actually be demonic. She loses her nerve, returns to her closet, resolves to try again, allows the gardener to frighten her off, returns to her closet, and descends to try once more. This time she mistakes two cows for vicious bulls and, by the time she realizes her mistake, has convinced herself that she is not in the right mental state for an escape. She laments her own “weak Mind” and recognizes that her own fears, of robbers and imaginary bulls, are as effective as any other force in keeping her imprisoned.
Monday Afternoon.

Mrs. Jewkes returns from a visit to Mr. Williams and reports that, while his injuries are superficial, his love for Pamela is profound. Pamela realizes that the real object of Mrs. Jewkes’s visit has been not to comfort Mr. Williams but to pump him for information about the assistance he has given to Pamela. Pamela gathers that the clergyman has revealed nothing of the key, but she worries that he may have divulged other details. When Mrs. Jewkes shuts herself up to write a long letter to Mr. B., Pamela’s anxieties increase.

Overall Analysis:

This portion of the journal includes two notable examples of Richardson’s versatility in the handling of physical detail: in both instances, the treatment may be primarily realistic or “novelistic,” but it plays on the reader’s knowledge of more traditionally “poetic” or figurative treatments as well.

The first instance is that of the sunflower beside which Pamela and Mr. Williams conceal their correspondence. As Margaret Anne Doody points out, the sunflower carries a number of meaningful connotations: its sturdiness and its suggestion of optimism allude to qualities in Pamela herself, and its humbleness, quite unlike the hothouse blossoms that tend to sprout up around the heroines of traditional romance, is consistent with Pamela’s low birth. The sunflower’s traditional emblematic significance, however, is more specific: because it always turns its face to the sun, it represents the quality of constancy in various forms, such as the constancy of servant to master, spouse to spouse, lover to beloved, son to father, and so on. Richardson seems almost deliberately to subvert this traditional meaning, as Pamela has recourse to the “sunflower correspondence” precisely because she cannot afford to be constant to the Squire her Master: he has violated the duties of a Master toward his servant so grossly that self-preservation requires her to reciprocate his breaking of faith.

The second instance is that of Pamela’s angling (i.e. fishing) with Mrs. Jewkes in the pond. The image of angling has several traditional meanings, which Richardson invokes rather artfully and Doody again explicates. Angling is a conventional pastoral activity in which many heroines of romance indulge, among them Pamela’s namesake in Sidney’s Arcadia. It is said to soothe the troubled mind, a fact that underscores Pamela’s distress here, which the gratuitous injury to the carp only exacerbates. In religious literature, the Devil is an angler who tempts souls with false baits; for Pamela, Mr. B. acts the part of the Devil, as her soul will end up as collateral damage if he should ever succeed in destroying her reputation. Finally, the love poetry of the previous century had turned angling into an erotic symbol, with the fish attracted to the beauty of the female angler and glad to find him on her hook. Richardson inverts this meaning by aligning the woman with the fish and Mr. B. with the angler who toys with her for sport. As an added note, Pamela’s moral objection to angling derives an ironic echo from its context in the plot, in that she is the one who has lured Mrs. Jewkes to the pond on false pretenses, her real motive being to retrieve one of Mr. Williams’s letters from between the tiles by the sunflower.

Mr. Williams’s participation in this part of the journal not only moves the plot along but is revelatory of contemporary attitudes regarding the privileges of upper-class men and, implicitly, of Richardson’s responses to those attitudes. To begin with, the clergyman’s
difficulties in recruiting allies for Pamela among the Lincolnshire gentry illustrate how ordinary Mr. B.’s treatment of his maidservant would have seemed to his socioeconomic peers, and how aberrant Pamela’s defense of her virtue would have seemed. As Sir Simon Darnford puts it, “Why, what is all this, . . . but that the ’Squire our Neighbor has a mind to his Mother’s Waiting-maid?” This sort of gender and class entitlement, in which the desires of upper-class men are peremptory and the resistance of lower-class women is inconsequential, Richardson plainly finds reprehensible.

Nevertheless, Mr. B.’s rakish personality appeals to Richardson, however much the moralist in him may condemn the Squire’s behavior and the prejudices that enable it. The rake, the licentious and dissolute upper-class man, was a common figure in eighteenth-century literature, in part because he personified the moral flaws that threatened the emerging social order. Equally, however, he personified masculine style and energy, and Richardson seems to have felt that these positive qualities, if brought under discipline, were highly admirable. The meek Mr. Williams serves as an instructive foil to Mr. B. in this respect. For all that the clergyman is impeccably virtuous and well meaning, he is so lacking in vigor as to be almost contemptible; certainly no one considers him an acceptable suitor for the vibrant Pamela, and his ecstasy upon receiving Mr. B.’s mischievous recommendation is slightly nauseating. Indeed, the function of the milquetoast curate may be primarily to accentuate by contrast the attractive qualities of the dynamic, if profligate, Squire.

That Pamela shares to some degree her creator’s preoccupation with vigorous masculinity seems clear enough, in a Freudian way, from the episode of the phantom bulls. Pamela’s fixation on the bull that punctures innocent maidens causes her to hallucinate the offending animal and an accomplice as well during one of her escape attempts. If the aggressive bulls represent, as some critics believe, the repressed sexual content of Pamela’s psyche that she has projected outward, then this episode would appear to support the argument that Pamela has more interest in Mr. B. than she allows herself to admit. One way or another, however, it certainly suggests that Pamela is to some extent her own prisoner in Lincolnshire, bound to her prison by her own fears, her own desires, or both.

3.7 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 19th Day of her Imprisonment to the 35th day

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 19th Day of her Imprisonment to the 35th day

Tuesday, Wednesday.

Mr. Williams pays another visit but, as Mrs. Jewkes forbids Pamela to walk with him in the garden, Pamela retires to her closet to write another letter to put between the tiles. In it, she chastises the clergyman for being so open with Mrs. Jewkes and demands to know what he has told her. She deposits the letter between the tiles and waits for an answer.

Thursday

Pamela receives a letter from Mr. Williams in which he apologizes for his lack of guile and passes on what he has learned from John the footman, the fact that Mr. B. will go to London before long and visit Lincolnshire soon thereafter. He confirms that he has told Mrs. Jewkes nothing of the key but reports one worrisome fact, that John the footman has sent
him a letter that appears to have gone missing. Pamela writes back to Mr. Williams expressing her concern about the missing letter and wondering whether John the footman may be lying about the destination of Mr. B.’s upcoming trip. She implores Mr. Williams to hurry up and supply her with a horse.

Friday

Pamela receives a letter from Mr. Williams in which he takes exception to her implication that he has not been doing his utmost to assist her. He defends John the footman and expresses confidence in his information. Through Mr. Williams, she also receives a letter from her father in which Mr. Andrews encourages her to marry the clergyman, though ultimately he defers to his daughter’s inclinations.

Saturday, Sunday

Mr. Williams visits on both Saturday and Sunday, but Pamela learns from Mrs. Jewkes that the housekeeper and the clergyman have quarreled. Pamela suspects that “there is Mischief brewing,” especially as Mrs. Jewkes seems impatient for a response to her most recent letter to Mr. B.

“Monday, Tuesday, the 25th and 26th Days of [her] heavy Restraint”

Two letters have arrived from Mr. B., one for Pamela and one for Mrs. Jewkes, but with their addresses switched so that each woman reads the other’s letter. In Mrs. Jewkes’s letter, Mr. B. accuses Mr. Williams of “perfidious Intrigue” with Pamela and reveals that he has arranged to send the clergyman to prison for debt. Of Pamela he declares, “I now hate her perfectly,” and he plans to be in Lincolnshire in three weeks, at which time he will take his “Revenge” for her alleged intrigue with Mr. Williams.

Mrs. Jewkes appears, takes her letter from Pamela, and gives Pamela her own letter from Mr. B. After taking a few minutes to recover from what she has already read, Pamela reads what Mr. B. intended for her eyes. He accuses her of hypocrisy in standing on her purity while intending to run away with a clergyman she barely knows. He concludes that, while once he considered her innocence worth preserving, now “my Honor owes you nothing” and he will soon make clear the low regard in which he holds her.

Pamela laments that she now receives accusations of duplicity, simply because she strives to preserve her integrity. She asks Mrs. Jewkes to warn Mr. Williams of the impending action against him for debt, but the housekeeper insists that any such action would violate her duty toward Mr. B. Mrs. Jewkes then takes Pamela downstairs and introduces her to Monsieur Colbrand, a monstrous Swiss man whom Mr. B. has sent to keep watch over Pamela. His appearance appalls Pamela, who dreams that night of Mr. B. and Colbrand approaching her bedside with nefarious designs.

“Wednesday, the 27th Day of [her] Distress”

Mr. Williams has been arrested for debt, and Pamela regrets it for both his sake and her own. Judging that the time for desperate measures has arrived, Pamela hatches a plan to escape through the window while Mrs. Jewkes is sleeping. Once outside, she will fake her own suicide by throwing her petticoat into the pond, thereby creating a diversion that will
occupy the household while she gets away. She will bury her writings in the garden, because she expects to be searched thoroughly if she fails to escape.

Pamela overhears Mrs. Jewkes telling Colbrand that the waylaying of Mr. Williams was a contrivance of the housekeeper to acquire Pamela’s letters.

“Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, the 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st Days of [her] Distress”

On Wednesday night, once Mrs. Jewkes has fallen asleep, Pamela squeezes through the window bars and drops to the roof beneath her and thence to the ground. She buries her papers under a rose bush, tosses her petticoat and some other items into the pond, and runs to the door that leads from the garden into the pasture. She finds, however, that Mrs. Jewkes has changed the locks, so that Pamela’s key will not work. She tries climbing the wall but falls when the mortar crumbles, injuring her head, shins, and ankle. She seeks a ladder, but in vain.

Pamela’s next thought is to drown herself in earnest. She creeps toward the pond, sits on the bank, and reflects on her situation. She envisions the remorse of her persecutors upon the discovery of her corpse and rises to throw herself in. Her bruises slow her, however, and give her a chance to consider what purposes providence may have for subjecting her to such afflictions. She reasons that God would not try her beyond her strength and that even Mr. B. may undergo a change of heart. She chastises herself for presuming to shorten the life and trials God has given her and recognizes the folly of keeping herself free of sin for so many months, only to commit the unforgivable sin in the end.

Too maimed to reach the house, Pamela takes refuge in an outhouse, where she lies until Nan finds her in the morning. The servants, having been fooled by Pamela’s suicide diversion, are glad to find her alive. They carry Pamela to her bed, where Mrs. Jewkes and Nan tend to her injuries. Pamela remains in bed until Saturday morning, when Mrs. Jewkes reveals that Mr. B., who is a Justice of the Peace, has provided the housekeeper with a warrant for the apprehension of Pamela in the case of her escape, so that Pamela would almost certainly not have gotten far even had she made it over the wall.

Sunday Afternoon

Pamela learns that Mr. B. nearly drowned a few days ago while hunting, and she marvels at her sympathetic reaction to this news: she rejoices for his safety in spite of all he has done to her. She also learns, through Mrs. Jewkes, that a number of the servants at the Bedfordshire estate have incurred Mr. B.’s displeasure. Mr. Longman, Mr. Jonathan, and Mrs. Jervis have spoken to him and to his sister in Pamela’s behalf, and Mr. B. has even dismissed John the footman for having corresponded with Mr. Williams.

“Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, the 32nd, 33rd, and 34th Days of [her] Imprisonment”

Pamela has little to report besides continued “Squabblings” with Mrs. Jewkes.

Thursday

Pamela perceives that the servants are busy tidying the house, and she infers that Mr. B. is on his way.
Overall Analysis

Pamela makes this, her final attempt at escape, in spite of the fact that all of her human supports have fallen away. Mr. Williams is in debtor’s prison without having supplied her with a horse, the neighbors have all refused to help her, and the arrival of the monstrous Monsieur Colbrand has stacked the deck of human agency further against her. She undertakes the attempt with no hope of human assistance, trusting only to herself and to God, who may “succeed to me my dangerous, but innocent Devices.”

In this episode, it becomes clear why Richardson chose to keep Mr. B. away from Lincolnshire for a symbolic forty days. Lincolnshire is the site of Pamela’s greatest temptation in spite of the fact that Mr. B. is not present to seduce her: the temptation turns out to be a classically religious one, namely despair, and Pamela’s fumbling in the darkened garden has biblical echoes of being fallen and spiritual wandering. When she overcomes her impulse to suicide beside the pond, thereby “escaping from an Enemy worse than any she ever met with,” she will come to a new self-knowledge and a new humility.

The enemy, in Pamela’s analysis, is “the Weakness and Presumption . . . of her own Mind.” In her self-examination, she lays emphasis on her own “Presumption” and pride, demanding of herself, “who gave thee, presumptuous as thou art, a Power over thy Life?” Again, “how do I know, but that God . . . may have permitted these Sufferings . . . to make me rely solely on his Grace and Assistance, who, perhaps, have too much prided myself in a vain Dependence on my own foolish Contrivances?” Despite her continual references to God and grace, Pamela has relied in Lincolnshire on her own relentless plotting, an occupation that has had the double bad effect of distracting her from her ultimate dependence on divine providence and cultivating her disposition to be suspicious of those around her. When her final, desperate escape attempt collapses in such a spectacular manner, and due to such prosaic obstacles, her human limitations become plain, and despair is the result. Aside from her pride of earthly achievement, however, perhaps the most important casualty of her struggle against despair is her spiritual pride. Pamela has always had faith in God, but she must have greater faith in the value of human life on earth, lest her striving for perfection end with her destroying herself in order to be avatar of inhuman virtue.

The scene of Pamela’s near-suicide is crucial, then, to her moral and spiritual development; it is also an instructive example of how Richardson recommends that we “read” both his novel and real life. Pamela’s intuition of a divine intervention in her psychological struggle beside the pond may seem far-fetched to modern readers; certainly, her constant praise and supplication of the divine will has proven alienating to the modern mind where it endeared her to her eighteenth-century audience. To dismiss Richardson’s conviction of the providential significance of all events would be, however, to miss a major premise of the novel. Fortuna contends, “those times in the novel when Pamela is saved, dissuaded from suicide or protected from rape, however improbable, fantastic, or silly these may seem to the casual reader, are in fact fictive counterparts, thematic mirroring, of that providential rule and order which Richardson himself, along with the theologians and divines of his day, saw evidenced in the events of everyday life.” The discovery of just this “providential rule” in “everyday life” clarifies for Pamela her situation, endowing her with a
sense of her ultimate weakness and paradoxically renewing her strength to meet earthly challenges.

One of the effects of this “Ray of Grace” is to impart to Pamela greater spiritual equipoise, which will manifest itself in her attitude and conduct henceforward. Though her captivity continues and her assailant approaches, and despite the fact that she has run entirely out of plans to escape his designs upon her purity, Pamela will not give up on her defense of her virtue, nor will she fail in charity toward her Master. On Sunday afternoon, she genuinely rejoices to learn that he has avoided the same fate, drowning, that he nearly drove her to embrace in desperation. Pamela has reached and passed the crisis of her moral and spiritual life; what remains is for her struggle against her earthly tormentor to reach its long-deferred culmination.

3.8 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 36th Day of her Imprisonment to the 41st day

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 36th Day of her Imprisonment to the 41st day

“Friday, the 36th Day of [her] Imprisonment”

Pamela walks down the row of elms on Thursday afternoon, having no thought of escape, and attracts a crowd of servants who rush from the house to prevent her running off. Mrs. Jewkes orders two maids to escort Pamela back to the house, where Mrs. Jewkes locks her up without shoes.

On Friday, Mrs. Jewkes approaches Pamela with shoes and some of the fine clothes from Pamela’s first and second bundles. She asks Pamela to get dressed in preparation for a visit from the daughters of a neighbor lady. Pamela refuses. At five o’clock, there is no sign of the young ladies, but Pamela sees Mr. B. arrive in his chariot. Pamela is frightened, but by seven o’clock, he still has not approached her.

Saturday Morning

Around seven-thirty on Friday evening, Mr. B. appears in Pamela’s chamber and accuses her of hypocrisy while Pamela weeps and prostrates herself before him. Mr. B. then leaves her with Mrs. Jewkes, and at nine o’clock, the housekeeper compels Pamela to wait on their Master at dinner. During dinner, Mr. B. taunts Pamela about Mr. Williams and Pamela complains to Mr. B. about Mrs. Jewkes. The Squire brushes aside her complaints and, after dinner, admires her physical person vocally and minutely. She rebuffs his attempt to fondle her, and he sends her to bed.

At midday on Saturday, Pamela receives from Mr. B. a set of written proposals, the gist of which she distills as “to make me a vile kept Mistress.” In seven “Articles,” Mr. B. demands that Pamela swear her indifference to Mr. Williams and then offers her gifts of money, jewels, and property if she will consent to be his wife in everything but name. He even promises to consider formal marriage after a yearlong test-run. Pamela responds to these articles point-by-point, disavowing any interest in Mr. Williams but rejecting all the gifts and heaping scorn on his proposal to consider marrying her after he has made her his “Harlot.” Pamela presents her written response to Mr. B., who swears that he cannot and
will not live without her. Pamela flees and later overhears him ranting to Mrs. Jewkes, who advises him to force himself on Pamela and have done with it.

**Saturday Night**

Mr. B. summons Pamela to his chamber, but Pamela refuses to meet him there and retreats instead to her closet. She then refuses to go to bed, fearing that Mrs. Jewkes will let their Master in, but the housekeeper hauls her to bed forcibly.

**Sunday Morning**

Pamela writes two petitions for Mr. B. to present to the congregation at church: one desires prayers for a gentleman who is tempted to ruin a poor maiden, and the other desires prayers for a “distressed Creature” who is endeavoring to preserve her virtue. Mrs. Jewkes presents the petitions to Mr. B., who does not take them with him to church. Pamela looks out the window as he leaves and admires her Master’s figure and clothing, and she wonders, “Why can’t I hate him?”

**Sunday Evening**

Mr. B. has been absent from the house, and Mrs. Jewkes receives a letter from him that she leaves on a table unattended. Pamela reads the letter and learns that Mr. B. has gone to Stamford to question Mr. Williams in prison. He vows that, upon his return, nothing will save Pamela “from the fate that awaits her.” Pamela anticipates that she will have “one more good honest Night” before Mr. B. returns to ruin her.

**Tuesday Night**

Mr. B.’s journey to Stamford turns out to have been a pretense designed to lower Pamela’s defenses. On Sunday night, Mrs. Jewkes gets the maid Nan drunk on cherry brandy and puts her to bed early to sleep it off. Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes go up to bed around eleven o’clock, and Pamela notices a figure, whom she takes to be Nan, slouched in a chair in the corner. She gives Mrs. Jewkes a brief history of her life as they are undressing, and she contrasts her parents’ virtue and her pious education with the tawdry baits Mr. B. has offered her.

Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes then go to bed, and after a time the figure Pamela has taken to be Nan approaches the bed and reveals herself to be Mr. B. in disguise. Mrs. Jewkes aids him in pinning Pamela’s arms, and Mr. B. offers Pamela an ultimatum: either comply with his articles or prepare to be taken by force. Before she can return an answer, he fondles her, causing her to faint away. When Pamela regains consciousness Mr. B. treats her more kindly and promises to desist from his attempts on her virtue. Mrs. Jewkes taunts him for his timidity, causing Pamela to faint again. When she regains consciousness this time, Mr. B. is present but has sent Mrs. Jewkes away. He asks for Pamela’s forgiveness and leaves.

Pamela remains in bed on Monday, and Mr. B. shows great tenderness toward her, though Pamela suspects that the appearance of kindness may be a further ruse. On Tuesday, Mr. B. summons Pamela, declares his love for her, and vows never to force himself on her again, though he continues to refuse to let her return to her parents. He asks Pamela
to express forgiveness of Mrs. Jewkes and to stay for two more weeks without attempting to escape. Pamela agrees to both of these proposals.

**Wednesday Morning**

Mr. B. takes Pamela on a walk in the garden, draws her into an alcove, and begins kissing her despite her objections. She begs to be left alone, and finally he leads her out of the alcove, "still bragging of his Honour, and his Love." An argument ensues, during which Pamela calls Mr. B. “Lucifer himself in the Shape of my Master.” When Mr. B. takes umbrage, Pamela insists on her right to speak strongly to him, given that she has no defense but words.

**Wednesday Night**

Mr. B. joins Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes at dinner, directing Pamela to eat heartily. Mr. B. then walks out into the garden, asking Pamela to attend him. They sit down together beside the pond, where Mr. B. expresses his admiration of her, remarking that her defense of her virtue has only increased his respect. In defense of himself, he observes that if he were wholly depraved he would not have allowed Pamela to frustrate him for so long. He explains that he is averse to marriage, even with a lady of his own social status, and he solicits Pamela’s advice as to what he should do in light of all these facts.

Pamela, startled, reverts to her customary request and asks again that he allow her to return to her parents. Mr. B. asks her to confirm that she has no affection for any other man. Pamela avows that her hesitation owes not to a preference for any other man but rather to her fear that Mr. B.’s new gentleness is simply a more devilish ruse. Mr. B. belabors the point of Pamela’s connection with Mr. Williams, so that Pamela must defend herself at some length. Mr. B. then demands to know whether Pamela is capable of loving him above all other men. She becomes inarticulate, and Mr. B. interprets a “yes.” He reiterates, however, his aversion to marriage, and Pamela assures him that she never aspired to the honor.

They return to the house, and Pamela hopes that she can trust in Mr. B.’s goodness from now on, though she still is not wholly confident that he is not playing an elaborate trick on her. Volume I concludes with Pamela’s hoping desperately that Mr. B. is finally in earnest and wondering what she should do if he is not: “What shall I do, what Steps take, if all this be designing!---O the Perplexities of these cruel Doubtings!”

**Overall Analysis**

Mr. B.’s assumption of a ridiculous disguise for his final attack on Pamela has its roots in the traditional imagery of the Devil, which emphasizes his protean qualities. The Squire, like Satan before him, becomes a shape-shifter. The fact that this transformation is so grotesque, involving transvestitism and a descent to the level of his meanest servant, suggests that Mr. B. has reached his moral nadir. The fact that the trick does not succeed suggests something further, that evil is not Mr. B.’s natural element, that his corruption has been an aberration and not his essence.

One notable thing about Mr. B.’s attempts on Pamela is how unexciting they are. They contain very little suspense, as their farcical beginnings (Mr. B. hiding in the closet, Mr.
B. disguised as a drunken maidservant) proclaim them doomed from the start. Moreover, for all that some contemporaries condemned these scenes for immorality, they contain little that would cause a schoolboy to mark the pages. Nor is this judgment a result of changing standards of erotic suggestiveness: soon after the publication of Pamela (and, some critics suspect, in response to the publication of Pamela), John Cleland published that classic of pornographic literature in English, Fanny Hill, which would remain a dubious standard for the next seventy-five years at least. Rather, M. Kinkead-Weekes argues, Pamela’s scenes of attempted rape “remain unsatisfactory, not because Richardson gives too much treatment to sex, but too little; because he treats it too narrowly in its brutally egotistic and violating aspects, and sees too little of its full human potential and significance.” These scenes, then, are not really about sex at all; rather, they are about pride and the attempts of the male to subjugate, and fittingly, they end in humiliation.

Mr. B. simply does not have the psychological profile of a rapist; for one thing, he is too much of a snob. As Robert Alan Donovan observes, the Squire will not condescend to take by force what should be his by droit de seigneur, the (probably apocryphal) right of a feudal lord to deflower any virgin on his estate. Moreover, the aggressive persona that he assumes and that Mrs. Jewkes endorses with her taunts requires for its maintenance more ruthless confidence than Mr. B. actually possesses. If he were truly a sadist or a man of rapacious lust, Pamela’s physical weakness would be his opportunity; on the contrary, however, her fainting fits, which seem to manifest her genuine disgust, ruin his appetite entirely. Perhaps, as one critic has suggested, there is even a childish game-mentality to Mr. B.’s approaches to Pamela, such that he considers it out-of-bounds to proceed when her agency is suspended.

The victim and her assailant are not irreconcilable foils in this novel, as Mr. B. is capable of redemption. He is a “low” character, a country squire with simple pleasures, not a sadist or a connoisseur of evil. (Fielding was not a completely insensitive reader when he completed Mr. B.’s surname as “Booby.”) The detail of his pausing in his attack on Pamela to urge her acceptance of his “Articles” is telling with respect to both his ineptitude as a predator and his basic decency. As the patriarchal head of household, in which position traditional ideology would have likened him to an absolute monarch, Mr. B. has claimed the right to have his way with Pamela, whom the law does not even recognize as a person. In offering her a contract in the form of his “articles,” however, he has implicitly conceded her personal autonomy and the necessity of her consent in his erotic plans for her. This instinct is of course the right one, and his reversion to it in the middle of a sexual assault bespeaks an imperfect commitment to what has been his ostensible goal, the crushing of her ability to refuse him.

By contrast, Mrs. Jewkes’s enthusiastic participation in this fiasco bespeaks some cruelty, on Richardson’s part as well as the housekeeper’s. We are to take it that because Mrs. Jewkes will never attract a man and cannot act the man’s part herself, aiding in a sexual assault is the closest she will ever come to erotic fulfillment. The presentation of Mrs. Jewkes’s character will presently become less drastically villainous, but whether such flagrant depravity can transform convincingly into ordinary decency is a question for the reader to decide.
3.9 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 42nd Day of her Imprisonment to the 4th Day of her Freedom

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 42nd Day of her Imprisonment to the 4th Day of her Freedom

Thursday Morning

Mr. B. announces that he will be leaving for Stamford and will not return until Saturday. He warns Mrs. Jewkes to keep close watch on Pamela because he has received a tip that one of his Bedfordshire servants has recently sent a letter for Pamela. Mr. B. also indicates that he has dismissed Mrs. Jervis, Mr. Longman, and Mr. Jonathan due to their appeal to Lady Davers, which has caused a breach between Mr. B. and his sister. Pamela regrets having been the occasion for the misfortunes of the servants, and she considers that if Mr. B. truly loved her, he would not resent his servants’ support of her.

Friday Night

Pamela has retrieved her papers from under the rose bush. On Thursday evening, she and Mrs. Jewkes encounter a “Gypsy-like Body” who offers to tell their fortunes, and Pamela suspects that the gypsy may have a commission to deliver a letter to her. An hour after the gypsy has left, Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes inspect the area where she was standing, and Pamela finds a scrap of paper beneath a tuft of grass. The note warns her to expect an impostor clergyman who will put Pamela and Mr. B. through a sham wedding. Pamela reacts intensely against Mr. B., whom she had begun to love and forgive but who now appears to have betrayed her.

Saturday Afternoon

Mr. B. returns from Stamford. Later in the day, Mrs. Jewkes comes upon Pamela and takes from her the parcel of writings from under the rose bush, which contains everything from Sunday, the 17th Day of her Imprisonment to Wednesday, the 27th Day. (Pamela has sewn the more recent writings into the linings of her underclothes.) Pamela begs Mrs. Jewkes not to show the papers to Mr. B., but to no avail.

Saturday Evening

Mr. B. approaches Pamela in a pleasant manner, telling her that he has not yet read her papers. Pamela requests that he not read them at all. He then remonstrates with her for her unfriendly behavior toward him and returns to his conviction that she must be in love with someone else. Pamela begs that he will judge her fairly while reading the papers, and she insists on her absolute honesty. Mr. B. vows to judge her according to her deserts.

At nine o’clock Mr. B. summons Pamela to what he calls her “Trial.” He has read her papers, and he describes her correspondence with Mr. Williams as “love letters,” refusing to believe that her efforts to discourage the clergyman were genuine. He asks to see Pamela’s earlier letters, which are now in the hands of her father, as well as her later efforts, which are hidden in her garments. When he threatens to strip-search her for the later writings, she begs to be allowed to fetch them from upstairs, where she claims to have hidden them. From her closet, she sends Mr. B. a note asking for time until tomorrow morning to look
over the papers. He grants this extension, and Pamela uses the time to make notes of the contents of the papers she is giving up.

**Sunday Morning**

Pamela meets Mr. B. in the garden and hands over her papers. He sits down with her beside the pond and flips to the account of Pamela’s escape attempt and her near-suicide. As he reads, he walks around the garden to the various spots Pamela mentions in her narrative, which he declares “is a very moving Tale.” After reading the relation of Pamela’s genuine near-suicide, Mr. B. reflects, “I see you have been us’d too roughly.” He regrets aloud his strategy of terrifying her into submission, and he vows to make amends. Pamela still fears the sham-marriage, however, and asks again to return to her parents. Her eagerness to leave angers Mr. B., and Pamela reflects on the effects of his spoiled childhood on his character.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Jewkes tells Pamela to prepare to return to her parents forthwith. Pamela readies her belongings but is far from believing that she will find herself at home any time soon.

**Monday**

On Sunday evening, Pamela departs Mr. B.’s Lincolnshire estate and is surprised to discover how reluctant she is to leave and how upset she is that the Squire has turned her out of doors. With Robin the coachman and Monsieur Colbrand, she reaches an alehouse in a strange village after nightfall. Robin gives her a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire reveals that he was on the point of proposing marriage to her when he sent her away. Pamela reels from the emotional impact of this letter and admits to herself that she has fallen in love with Mr. B.

**Monday Morning**

Pamela and her companions arrive at the inn belonging to Mrs. Jewkes’s family. Pamela rereads her letter from Mr. B. Soon the Squire’s groom arrives with letters for Pamela and Colbrand. To Pamela Mr. B. writes that he has read further in her journal and finds the evidence of her character so impressive that he now desires Pamela to return to Lincolnshire and, implicitly, wishes to marry her. Pamela, while thrilled at this prospect, nevertheless continues to suspect a plot to entrap her in a sham-marriage. She finally resolves to return to Lincolnshire. Before departing, however, she sends a note to her parents informing them that all is well and directing them to send her papers to Mr. B. in Lincolnshire. They arrive in Lincolnshire late at night to find that Mr. B. is ill with a fever.

**Tuesday Morning**

Pamela visits Mr. B., who is ill in bed. The Squire orders Mrs. Jewkes to leave Pamela entirely at liberty and informs Pamela that he has released Mr. Williams from prison and may forgive his debt. When Pamela expresses her regret over the breach between Mr. B. and Lady Davers, he allows her to read a letter he has received in which his sister berates him for his dalliance with Pamela. Lady Davers reasons that her brother must be planning to keep Pamela either as a mistress or as a wife, and either connection would be disgraceful. She
vows to renounce Mr. B. forever if he brings their mother’s waiting-maid into the family. Pamela reflects on the unmerited pride of the noble and wealthy.

**Wednesday Morning**

Mr. B. invites Pamela to go driving with him in the chariot, and Pamela considers whether she should dress up for the event or wear her favorite country clothes, which she fears will shame her Master. Mr. B. approves the more modest outfit.

During the chariot ride, Mr. B. explains the causes of his sister’s anger. Lady Davers favors the daughter of a lord as Mr. B.’s future wife and resents her brother’s choice of another. She also, of course, fears the censure of the fashionable world if Mr. B. marries a member of the servant class, and Mr. B. himself admits that no noble ladies will ever visit a Mrs. Pamela B. He probes Pamela’s attitudes on this point, and Pamela professes herself indifferent to the opinion of high society.

Once they have resolved to be perfectly happy together, Pamela shows Mr. B. the note she received from the gypsy, and he identifies the writing as that of Mr. Longman. He admits that did indeed have a plan of deceiving Pamela with a sham-marriage and might have let the farce continue for years before telling her the truth. He thought better, however, upon reflecting that, among other things, he would be incapable of legitimating their offspring and passing his property to them.

As the chariot turns back toward the house, Mr. B. informs Pamela that some of the neighboring gentry will be coming to dinner in a few days in order to meet Pamela. He requests that she wear her country outfit, since the neighbors have heard the story behind it, and Mr. B. wants to demonstrate that Pamela’s attractions are not dependent on her wardrobe.

Pamela and Mr. B. meet Mrs. Jewkes upon reentering the house, and Pamela forgives the housekeeper’s harsh treatment of her. The Squire invites Pamela to dine with him, but she declines, fearing that so many distinctions will cause her to grow proud.

**Thursday**

In the morning, Pamela and Mr. B. discuss their wedding arrangements. Mr. B. wants to get married within two weeks and favors a private ceremony in his own house. Pamela prefers a church wedding, so Mr. B. compromises by ordering the cleanup of the family chapel. Pamela also resists Mr. B.’s impatience and chooses the second week of the fortnight.

Thomas the servant returns from Pamela’s parents, reporting that Mr. and Mrs. Andrews will not hand over the papers and that they believe Pamela either to have written her reassuring note on compulsion or to have yielded to Mr. B.’s dishonorable intentions. Pamela writes her parents a longer letter explaining how things now stand.

Mr. B. goes out for another drive and, upon returning, recounts to Pamela his meeting with Mr. Williams in a field. The Squire and Pamela argue again about whether she encouraged the clergyman’s hopes of marrying her.
Overall Analysis

Volume II begins with the opening, after some false starts, of a new chapter in Pamela’s life. Though her habitual suspicions and hesitations hinder her for a time, Pamela in this portion of the journal comes to recognize Mr. B.’s moral reformation, and it is her writings, so long a bone of contention between them, that facilitate this meeting of their minds.

The scene of Pamela’s “Trial” contains the culmination of Mr. B.’s long-standing obsession with her writings. This interest of Mr. B.’s is, on one view, quite sinister. While in the beginning his ostensible objection to her “scribbling” had to do with her gossiping about him and his family, gradually his motive developed into a more erotic and tyrannical ambition to possess absolute knowledge of Pamela, to prevent her withholding from him either her mind or her body. It is fitting, in view of Mr. B.’s desire for both mental and physical knowledge, that the convergence of clothes imagery with the themes of writing and intimacy, which began with his surprising her during her composition of Letter I, should reach its culmination during this scene.

Pamela has sewn her secret papers into her undergarments, and the evocations of pregnancy with which she has described this stratagem (“my Writings may be discovered; for they grow large”) make her seem to have assimilated the writings directly to her body. The distinction seems to have gone blurry for Mr. B. as well: when he declares, “I will now begin to strip my pretty Pamela,” he seeks not only (or even primarily) her physical person but, rather, her literary output. The mortification that Pamela expects will attend this revelation (“now he will see all my private Thoughts of him, and all my Secrets”) indicates that she considers this assault to be as great a violation as would be a physical rape, even if less morally compromising for the victim. She recognizes that Mr. B. has decided that even the record of her secret thoughts must participate in his self-presentation as a dominating male.

The trial scene has a positive side, too, however. As Jocelyn Harris observes, trial scenes in general are favorite resolution devices in Richardson’s fiction, being safe arenas in which the powerless can speak out and truth can carry the day. Pamela’s handing over of the “evidence” after the Trial leads to the scene in which Mr. B. finally ceases to be a predator and becomes her perfectly sympathetic reader. This incident is the fourth important scene to take place by the pond in the garden: the first was the angling scene, the second was the incident of Pamela’s near-suicide, and the third was her tentative reconciliation with Mr. B. on Wednesday night (in the final entry of Volume I). This scene revises all three of its predecessors, effecting a more enduring reconciliation than that of Wednesday night. As Mr. B. reads the account of her struggle with despair and her subsequent reaffirmation of her faith in God, his resulting tenderness gives her cause to recover her faith in man, and finally he becomes the merciful angler to her hooked carp, granting her freedom when she continues to demand it. The total import of the scene is that of the redemption of Mr. B.’s desire for knowledge about Pamela, as he now employs that knowledge in fostering sympathy and love.

Unfortunately, whereas Mr. B. has finally passed the test of generosity toward his servant and beloved, Pamela fails the first test of her faith in man. She has yet to overcome her habit of “suspecting all the World almost” and, still fearing the sham-marriage, she
asks again to return to her parents. The request angers Mr. B., who nevertheless grants it, and Pamela finds to her surprise that she is hardly more satisfied with the result: “I was loth to leave the House. Can you believe it?---What could be the Matter with me, I wonder!” Poetic justice is served as the mistrustful Pamela finally gets what she has so long demanded, only to find that she no longer wants it.

Pamela’s struggle with her heart, which comes explicitly to the fore in the aftermath of her dismissal, is a conflict that is itself at the heart of the novel. Though she has previously wondered at her own high tolerance for Mr. B.’s “bad usage” of her (“Why can’t I hate him?”), she has resisted admitting the cause that has long been apparent to the reader. During the Trial scene, she insists on the absolute veracity of her writings, saying, “I wrote my Heart; and that is not deceitful”; the reader will notice, however, that the degree to which Pamela’s heart has been obscure to Pamela herself argues strongly against this claim. Now, thinking that she has lost Mr. B. forever, she expostulates with the organ she previously thought so transparent: “O my treacherous, treacherous Heart! to serve me thus! And give no Notice to me of the Mischiefs thou wast about to bring upon me!” The treachery of Pamela’s heart raises important questions for her authority and reliability as a narrator, with consequences for the job of the reader. As her own pronouncements on the state of her emotions have by no means been the last word, the reader’s role must therefore be an active and critical one. When Pamela writes her heart, what she produces is not a definitive interpretation of her psyche but rather a set of data that the reader must analyze in order to form an independent conclusion.

3. 10 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 5th Day of her Freedom to the 10th day

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 5th Day of her Freedom to the 10th day

Friday

The neighboring gentry come to dinner: Sir Simon Darnford, his wife, and their daughters; Lady Jones and her sister-in-law; Mr. Peters the parson, his wife, and their niece. Mr. B. introduces Pamela as “my pretty Rustick,” and the guests lavish praise on her appearance. Pamela assists Mrs. Jewkes in serving refreshments, and Sir Simon remarks Pamela’s habit of addressing the Squire as “Master.” Lady Darnford requests that Pamela dine with them, but Pamela excuses herself. Her humility impresses the ladies. She then takes a turn in the garden with the younger ladies, one of whom had hopes of marrying Mr. B. herself. Pamela then obliges the company by playing the spinet and singing a song that Mrs. B. learned in Bath.

Around four o’clock Mr. B. fetches Pamela and warns her to prepare herself to meet a very surprising guest downstairs. Pamela braces herself for a mortifying encounter with Mr. Williams but finds her father instead. Father and daughter have an ecstatic reunion, which Mr. B. stages in front of all the company. Alone with Pamela, Mr. Andrews volunteers to move with his wife into a far country so that they will not disgrace their daughter with their poverty. Pamela insists, however, that their honest poverty is her glory.

Returning to Mr. B. and the guests, Pamela mildly resents the Squire’s forcing her to meet her father in front of the assembled gentry. When Pamela wishes to take supper alone
with her father, the company will not hear of it. After supper, there is discussion of the wedding date. Mr. B. expresses his opinion that “the sooner it is done, the better.” Mr. Andrews has no opinion, and Pamela, when the Squire presses her to agree to a date within the week, secures his permission to give her answer the next day.

Saturday

Pamela walks with her father in the garden in the morning. Mr. B. soon joins them, having spent the night reading the papers Mr. Andrews brought with him. He once again contests the issue of Pamela’s willingness to marry Mr. Williams, and he expresses concern over Mrs. Jewkes’s treatment of Pamela. Over breakfast, they discuss the wedding date again, and Pamela again prefers the second week of the fortnight. Pamela then goes upstairs to dress herself, in accordance with Mr. B.’s request, in some of the contents of the two bundles she previously rejected. She descends again, surprising Mr. B. and her father with her appearance. Mr. B. then discusses with her the refurbishment of the chapel and his plans to keep it in use from now on.

Pamela and Mr. B. drive to a meadow for a walk and happen upon Mr. Williams. The Squire and the clergyman discuss the latter’s participation in Pamela’s plans for escape, and Mr. Williams confirms that he received no encouragement from Pamela in his desire to marry her. Mr. B. is pleased and tells Pamela that she may number Mr. Williams among her friends. Mr. B. and Pamela then introduce Mr. Williams to Pamela’s father. After a general exchange of elevated sentiments, Mr. Williams remarks on how fortunate Mr. B. is to have received the grace of moral reformation before the commission of grave sin.

After dinner, they visit the chapel, which Pamela approves. Mr. B. invites Mr. Williams to officiate at Divine Service the next day and then cancels the clergyman’s debt, apologizing for his persecution of him.

Sunday

Several of the neighboring gentry attend Divine Service in Mr. B.’s chapel, as do all of the household servants. At dinner, Mr. B. asks Pamela to sing her own version of Psalm 137. When she refuses, he takes a copy of it from his pocket and threatens to read it aloud himself. Finally, Mr. B. performs a scriptural duet with Mr. Williams, whereby the clergyman reads a stanza or two from the Authorized Version and Mr. B. supplies the corresponding stanzas of Pamela’s version. Pamela receives praises from all the ladies.

While everyone walks in the garden in the afternoon, Lady Jones instigates another discussion of the wedding date and the Miss Darnfords have the idea for a ball, which Pamela nixes. After tea, the gentry leave and Mr. Andrews begs to leave the next morning. Before he goes to bed, Pamela asks him not to work so hard from now on, since she expects that Mr. B. plans to do something for him.

Monday

Colbrand arrives with a marriage license, prompting yet another discussion of the wedding date. Pamela continues to prefer the Thursday at the end of the original fortnight and even professes a superstitious attachment to Thursdays in general. Mr. B. disputes it with her to no avail, and they finally settle on Thursday of the present week. At supper, Mr.
B. mentions a letter he has received from Lady Davers’s husband, and they discuss Mr. B.’s rejection of his sister and the prospects of reconciliation. They then discuss arrangements for the wedding and the measures Mr. B. has taken to ensure that it will be a private affair.

**Tuesday**

Pamela and Mr. B. go for an airing in the chariot, during which she makes a pious reference to the afterlife and he asks her to stop being so gloomily tendentious, though he quickly softens the criticism. Pamela finds that there is a general weight upon her mind and a subtle dread of the coming Thursday. She fears that she will prove unworthy of the love of Mr. B.

**Wednesday**

Pamela continues to feel very serious about her approaching nuptials.

**Wednesday Evening**

Pamela is too nervous to eat supper. Mr. B. attempts to comfort her by lauding her modesty and thoughtfulness. He offers to delay the wedding, but Pamela anticipates that she would endure the same anxiety on the later date. After a time, Pamela expresses concern about the breach between Mr. B. and Lady Davers and asks him to be patient with his sister. Mr. B. condemns Lady Davers as a terminal snob and shows no sign of being disposed to reconciliation. Pamela then worries about her own failure to bring a dowry to the marriage, but Mr. B. assures her that he is happy to improve her economic fortunes by way of making amends for his past treatment of her.

Mr. B. then summons Mrs. Jewkes and informs her that tomorrow is to be the wedding day and that they wish to keep it a secret for the time being. Mrs. Jewkes informs him that she has heard from a servant of Lady Davers that her ladyship intends to arrive in Lincolnshire in time to thwart the wedding. Before Mrs. Jewkes leaves, she and Pamela again reconcile, and the housekeeper learns that she is to attend Pamela at the ceremony.

**Overall Analysis**

This portion of the journal focuses mostly on the presentation of Pamela to the neighboring gentility. From now on, in fact, the chief business of the novel will be to show the process of Pamela’s acceptance by those reaches of society that everyone, including Mr. B. and Pamela herself, previously considered off-limits to her. Although Richardson seems to have shifted genres halfway through his story, switching from a rather gothic romance narrative to a novel of society and manners, the story of Pamela’s resistance to seduction has always been, in part, the story of her successful negotiation with a social context that was disposed to be hostile to her. With her installation as the future Mrs. B., that effort of negotiation simply changes its goal a bit and widens its scope.

As Robert Alan Donovan points out, Pamela during the period of her betrothal still occupies a highly ambiguous social role: she remains technically a servant, but everyone expects her to handle herself like a lady, and ladylike conduct involves a total prohibition on the performance of any of the menial tasks to which, as a servant, Pamela has been accustomed. She must evince the proper blend of dignity and humility, making a number of
touchy distinctions; for example, though she agrees to drink a toast with the august company, she declines to sit down to dinner with them. Moreover, the neighbors who visit on Friday are friendly but definitely patronizing. Pamela’s country clothes, which have been so important to her as an index of her identity and integrity, they seem to regard as a charming species of indigenous costume, and in having to play the part of “pretty Rustick,” Pamela must essentially romanticize her own biography for their amusement.

Several details in this portion of the journal raise questions about just how equitable and happy Pamela’s marriage is going to be. Some readers, for instance, may find cause for concern in Mr. B.’s tendency to objectify Pamela by putting her on display. Pamela feels quite understandably self-conscious when Mr. B. announces the approach of his “pretty Rustick” and the neighbors “all, I saw, which dash’d me, stood at the Windows and in the Door-way, looking full at me.” Mr. B.’s stage-managing of Pamela’s reunion with her father, a deeply personal scene that anyone might prefer to enact in private, gives a similar sense that he is more interested in how Pamela’s generous feelings reflect on him than in how Pamela actually feels.

The reunion with Mr. Andrews has a strong upside, too, however. Richardson has characterized Pamela’s father with touches from the ballad tradition and Christian allegory. His traversing the countryside in search of his beloved daughter recalls the plight of innumerable lamenting fathers in hoary English songs, and his elevation from the stable in Bedfordshire to the table in Lincolnshire invites us to read his story as a parable in which the last shall be first. Contrasting Mr. B.’s treatment of his future father-in-law in this scene with his irreverence toward him in Bedfordshire certainly reveals a positive moral trajectory.

Further religious echoes augur not just the personal reformation of Mr. B. but also the general restoration of harmony and propriety in the household. The family chapel, which had fallen into disuse, is now “being got in tolerable Order” at Pamela’s request and will “always be kept in Order for the future.” Meanwhile, a shift in the characters’ uses of language signals the adoption of Pamela and her values by a formerly decadent establishment. Mr. B.’s scriptural duet with Mr. Williams is an image of reconciliation, and not simply because the Squire, under Pamela’s influence, has managed to overlook his differences with the clergyman. Mr. B.’s appreciative reading of Pamela’s re-written Psalm 137 suggests that he has accepted the legitimacy of her protest against her captivity and now espouses the values on which she based it. Further, the splicing of Pamela’s version with the Authorized Version symbolizes the alignment of Pamela with the established church; that church’s preeminent local representative, the vicar Mr. Peters, who once doubted her chastity and refused to aid in her escape, is now among her admiring audience and will participate in her wedding.
3. 11 Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 1st Day of her Happiness to the 5th day

Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 1st Day of her Happiness to the 5th day

Thursday Morning

After a sleepless night, Pamela frets about what the fashionable world will say about her impending nuptials. Mr. B. drops in for an exchange of elevated sentiments. Pamela dresses for the ceremony and strives to overcome her unseasonable misgivings.

Thursday Afternoon

Pamela and Mr. B. have breakfast with Mr. Peters and Mr. Williams, but Pamela is again too nervous to eat. After breakfast, they all proceed to the chapel, with Mrs. Jewkes accompanying and Nan standing guard at the door. Mr. Williams officiates at the ceremony, and Mr. Peters gives away the bride.

After the wedding Pamela and Mr. B. go for a ride in the chariot. When they return, they find that three gentleman-rakes of Mr. B.'s acquaintance have invited themselves to dinner. Mr. B. tells Pamela that these gentlemen are notorious moochers and likely to stay on all through the evening and night. Pamela retires to her closet, and after a time Mr. B. comes up to inform her that the rakes have heard from Lady Davers about the Squire's alliance with his mother's waiting-maid. Mr. B. intends to get rid of them as soon as possible.

Pamela dines with Mrs. Jewkes, who at first resists sitting down with her. After dinner, the two women take a turn in the garden while Mr. B. sees off the rakes. Pamela marvels at what a different aspect the house and grounds (not to mention the housekeeper) now wear. Mr. B. then returns, without the rakes, and he and Pamela sit down to supper, during which he speaks words of comfort, in spite of which she grows increasingly anxious. Pamela then retires again to her closet, where she says a prayer of thanksgiving and prepares herself for the “happy, yet awful Moment” that approaches.

Friday Evening

Pamela reflects contentedly on Mr. B.’s “delicate and unexceptionable” behavior of the previous night. Over breakfast Mr. B. asks (but makes clear that he does not demand) to see those of Pamela’s writings that he has not yet read, and Pamela cheerfully agrees to supply them. Mr. B. then inquires into the financial situation of Pamela’s parents and gives her fifty guineas with which to pay their debts. He gives her a further one hundred guineas, seventy-five of which she distributes to the servants as presents in commemoration of her wedding. He promises her yet more money to spend on fine clothes, which he expects her to wear as befitting her new station.

The couple takes another turn in the chariot. After some small talk, they discuss Lady Davers again, with Mr. B. warning Pamela against effecting reconciliation through dishonorable self-abasement. They return to the house for dinner, after which Mr. B. declares his intention of leaving for Bedfordshire on Tuesday. Pamela asks him to reinstate
the Bedfordshire servants who lost his favor through loyalty to her. Mr. B. consents, though he still begrudges the servants' inviting Lady Davers to meddle in his affairs.

“Saturday Morning, the Third of [her] Happy Nuptials”

Pamela and Mr. B. write to the Bedfordshire servants, announcing their marriage and the servants’ reinstatement. Mr. Williams visits, asking permission to see his new living, and Pamela is delighted to see him a contented recipient of Mr. B.’s benevolence. She reflects on the great power, and the great responsibility, of the wealthy to do good for the less fortunate.

Saturday Evening

Mr. B. announces his intention of establishing Mr. Andrews, rent-free, on a farm in his estate in Kent, and he proposes that he and Pamela should visit her parents annually and entertain as many visits as Mr. and Mrs. Andrews please to make. He also announces Pamela’s yearly allowance of two hundred pounds.

“Sunday, the Fourth Day of [her] Happiness”

Over breakfast, Mr. B. expresses his opinion that marriages are best served by total openness, so that the spouses each indicate what they like and dislike about each other. He then proceeds to prescribe several rules for Pamela. She should always dress for dinner, lest company arrive and interpret her slovenly attire as a mark of disrespect for her husband. She should arise every morning by six-thirty, with breakfast beginning at nine. Dinner begins at two in the afternoon, with supper at eight. Further, Pamela should always strive to appear pleasant and untroubled, even when she is upset. She must “let no little Accidents ruffle [her] Temper,” especially in front of guests.

After breakfast, Pamela goes upstairs and dresses herself grandly in anticipation of dinner, in accordance with her Master’s injunction. She finds him in the garden alcove, and he invites her to find some fault with him and deliver her injunctions. Pamela claims that she is unable to find fault with him. Mr. B. expresses his hope of progeny and then leaves to bring in their dinner guests.

The guests approach Pamela in the garden, where the ladies compliment her and Sir Simon makes naughty jokes. Mrs. Jewkes arrives and addresses Pamela as “your Ladyship,” letting the cat out of the bag. Mr. B. receives congratulations and Pamela is embarrassed. At dinner, Pamela takes her place at the upper end of the table, and she and Mr. B. commit to a ball on Tuesday night at Lady Darnford’s residence.

“Monday, the Fifth Day”

Mr. B. rides out after breakfast to see Mr. Carlton, a sick man who owes him money, having warned Pamela that he may not be home that night. In the evening Pamela sups with Mrs. Jewkes, who seems somewhat to regret her earlier mistreatment of her. Pamela marvels at the power of the example heads of families set to their servants. When by ten at night Mr. B. has not returned, Pamela fears that the sick man must be worse.
Overall Analysis

Pamela’s conquest of her new social element continues apace. On the morning of the wedding, she awakes to anxieties about what people of fashion will say when her marriage becomes public knowledge: “The great ‘Squire B. has done finel! he has marry’d his poor Servant Wench!” She goes through with it, however, appearing at the altar in garments belonging to the late Lady B., whose social and moral role she hopes to fill. That she will do so creditably seems probable when we recall her musical performance from the previous Friday, when she sang for the neighbors a favorite song of her Lady’s, which her Lady had picked up in the seaside resort town of Bath. The style and content of that song, with its “soft dreams” and “Phoebus’ Rays” and preoccupation with romantic love, made it the harmonious social counterpart to Pamela’s success with Psalm 137. Not only has Pamela deserved her new position by being a moral and spiritual exemplar, but she can also speak and sing the language of leisure and refinement and hence will not be out of place in fine drawing rooms.

Pamela’s social successes may seem to pose a difficulty for the moral premises of the novel. Richardson, of course, did a revolutionary thing when he based a novel on his assertion that the sexual virtue of a lower-class girl has an absolute value and is worth defending; prior to him, literature had portrayed only upper-class virginities as worth fussing over. Ironically, however, one of the notable features of Richardson’s legacy is the frequency with which his critics have condemned him as a snob, partly on the basis of his biography, which demonstrates a lifelong desire to cultivate friendships with the high-born, and partly on the basis of his rewarding Pamela’s virtue with such a drastic elevation of her social status. Pamela’s great claim that “my Soul is of equal Importance with the Soul of a Princess; though my Quality is inferior to that of the meanest Slave” is not necessarily radical. Richardson appears to suggest that the proper destiny of the meritorious servant-girl is to cease to be “inferior to . . . the meanest Slave” and become instead something closer to “a Princess.”

Another of Richardson’s claims, however, is that virtue must receive social recognition in order to exert its due influence. This pragmatic contention may justify his concern with social status; it certainly sheds light on his procedure in the second half of this novel, in which Pamela not only charms the neighbors but also finds opportunities to extend her virtues over wider field. No longer having to invest her moral energy in the negative project of defending her purity, she can demonstrate her positive qualities of humility, obedience, piety, love, forgiveness, gratitude, charity, and so on. The numerous choric scenes, in which the gentry and servants hymn Pamela’s virtue, commend Mr. B. for rewarding it, congratulate Mr. Andrews for having cultivated it, expatiate on the merits of virtue per se, or simply praise God and His providence, may seem tedious and redundant. Nevertheless, they make Richardson’s point about the influence that Pamela can exert on the people around her. In their wordy tributes, the characters demonstrate how compellingly Pamela has spoken to their good nature.

Nevertheless, there remain certain disturbing elements in the outlook for Pamela’s new life. For one, the very suddenness of Pamela’s good fortune may make it seem too much like a fairy-tale transformation. Not only does Richardson allow his heroine to have her cake (by refusing her seducer) and eat it too (by accepting her seducer under different
circumstances), but the reformation of Pamela’s erstwhile antagonists may appear too arbitrary to be genuine and lasting. One character whom critics have singled out in this respect is Mrs. Jewkes, once the “wicked Procuress” and monstrous tormentor, now Pamela’s attendant at the altar. When Pamela remarks, “Mrs. Jewkes was quite another Person to me,” the observation seems true enough; when, however, she assures Mrs. Jewkes that “I must be highly unworthy, if I did not forego all my little Resentments [toward you],” it is a judgment in which few readers will concur. Pamela’s diplomacy in this matter is probably prudent, but in letting the vicious housekeeper off the hook, she seems to have waived one of the strongest arguments she employed during the time of her captivity. Soon after her arrival in Lincolnshire, she probed Mrs. Jewkes as to what exactly her concept of duty comprehended: “[Y]ou will not, I hope, do an unlawful or wicked Thing, for any Master in the World!” Mrs. Jewkes answered her in the most damning way: “[H]e is my Master, and if he bids me do a Thing that I can do, I think I ought to do it.” Pamela knows that the Christian servant’s first duty is to God’s laws, his second to himself, and his third to social authorities such as his Master; by contrast, Mrs. Jewkes and the other servants who cooperated in Pamela’s imprisonment consider duty to Master absolute. On this principle, she hounds Pamela, and on this principle, she undergoes a moral reformation at exactly the same time that her Master does. The fact that the principle now works in Pamela’s favor may not offset the reader’s discomfort with its essentially sinister nature. Like the officers on trial at Nuremberg, Mrs. Jewkes is just following orders.

This criticism of Mrs. Jewkes’s reformation may or may not be Richardson’s; indeed, Richardson has such a penchant for wish-fulfillment narratives that one may reasonably suspect that he approves of the reformed housekeeper wholeheartedly. Nor is her switch to the roster of “good” characters the only problematic such move in the novel. Mr. B.’s moral transformation is more psychologically convincing than that of Mrs. Jewkes: we have seen the process that led to it, and as he himself notes in his own defense, he has not been “a very abandoned Profligate” and, by virtue of fumbling all his chances, has committed “no very enormous or vile Actions.” It is far more important in his case than in the housekeeper’s, however, that the reformed villain should truly deserve the moral credit that the novel awards him for becoming an ally of the heroine.

If Mr. B. does not deserve Pamela’s love but simply receives it as a favor from the author, then his acceptance by Pamela constitutes a serious moral flaw in the novel. Thus, Morris Golden argues, Richardson’s most “sadistic” move is to make his heroine love her would-be rapist: “the full desire of the sadist is not satisfied until the girl both loves and fears, until she is hurt but continues loving nonetheless, or perhaps even as a consequence. . . . As much as Pamela, Mr. B. has his cake and eats it—-not only the pleasure of torturing her, but also the satisfaction of gaining her love.” This is a rather extreme way of putting the case, but it captures the magnitude of the challenge Richardson has set himself in making Mr. B. plausible as a decent husband for Pamela. Individual readers will decide for themselves the degree to which he succeeds.
3. 12 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 6th Day of her Happiness (Twice).

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 6th Day of her Happiness (Twice).

Tuesday Morning

Mr. B. still has not returned, but Pamela receives a note from him directing her to go to Sir Simon’s, where Mr. B. will join her later in the day. Before Pamela can get away, however, Lady Davers arrives and asks Mrs. Jewkes whether Pamela has been “whor’d yet.” Lady Davers demands to see Pamela, who tries to come up with some pretext for avoiding her. Unfortunately, Lady Davers’s waiting-maid, Beck, discovers Pamela upstairs, so Pamela reluctantly descends to the parlor. Lady Davers, believing Pamela to be unmarried, treats her like a tart, and her hormonal nephew, Jackey, follows suit. Pamela attempts to extricate herself from the encounter, but Lady Davers blocks her way out of the room. In the course of condemning Pamela, Lady Davers refers to “the Number of Fools [Mr. B.] has ruin’d,” piquing Pamela’s curiosity. To test Pamela’s claims of sexual innocence, Lady Davers offers first to take Pamela into her own household, then to return her to her parents, both of which proposals Pamela declines.

Mrs. Jewkes brings dinner and lays three place settings, provoking Lady Davers. The lady then pulls off Pamela’s gloves and, seeing her wedding ring, ridicules her fantasy of having married Mr. B. Lady Davers and Jackey sit down to dinner, goading Pamela with wretched puns. Lady Davers demands that Pamela wait on them, but Pamela refuses, indicating obliquely that to do so would be beneath her new station. After some further ridicule and backtalk, Lady Davers tells Pamela that she is “not the first in the List of his credulous Harlots.”

Lady Davers demands a straight answer to the question whether Pamela considers herself married to Mr. B., and when Pamela declines to give it, Lady Davers attempts to box her on the ear. Mrs. Jewkes intervenes and starts to escort Pamela out of the room, but Jackey blocks the door. Pamela, frightened of Jackey’s sword, flies to the arms of Lady Davers, who takes pity on her and begins to speak to her more reasonably. Soon, however, when Pamela declares herself “as much marry’d as your Ladyship,” Lady Davers becomes aggressive again. Pamela speaks through the window to Mrs. Jewkes, dispatching her to send the chariot to Mr. B. to apprise him of the situation. When Lady Davers demands that Pamela confess to being a fallen woman, Pamela notices that she could easily jump out the window and make a run for it, and when Lady Davers’s back is turned, she does so. Colbrand is on hand to defend Pamela from Lady Davers’s servants, and they run to the chariot, in which Robin drives them to Sir Simon’s residence.

Upon her arrival, Pamela finds that Mr. B. is angry with her for her lateness, but he immediately relents when she reveals who prevented her coming. Pamela relates the whole experience to the assembled company, who listen attentively. Then they sit down to whist, and the playing cards inspire Mr. B. to discourse on political philosophy and the responsibilities of the landed gentry. Over supper, Pamela resumes the tale of her encounter with Lady Davers, at the conclusion of which Mr. B. offers an analysis of his sister’s character, acknowledging the combative temperament he shares with her but crediting her with good qualities as well. After supper, there is a dance, and Sir Simon tells more dirty jokes when Pamela is his partner. Pamela and Mr. B. return home, where Mrs.
Jewkes recounts her negotiations with Lady Davers over the sleeping arrangements. Pamela thanks the housekeeper for her help during the ordeal.

“Tuesday Morning, the Sixth of [her] Happiness”

(Note: Either Pamela or Richardson has lost track of the days, as Tuesday, the sixth day of her married life, has already come and gone. Modern editions generally do not correct the error, as the correction produces further inconsistencies.)

Lady Davers demands entry into the newlyweds’ bedroom before they have risen. Mr. B. lets them in, in order to show that he is not ashamed of his wife. Pamela hides under the blankets and Mr. B., once having proved his point, forcibly removes Lady Davers to her own room. Pamela, thoroughly rattled, is reluctant to join Mr. B. and his sister for breakfast. The Squire exempts her, and they go on to discuss how Pamela ought to conduct herself around Lady Davers. Pamela is inclined to prostrate herself before the lady and beg her indulgence, but Mr. B. rejects this plan as unworthy groveling.

Later, Mr. B. visits Pamela in her closet and asks her to come down to dinner. She is again reluctant, and while they are discussing Lady Davers’s behavior, the lady herself appears and makes a scene, complaining that she is being “shunn’d and avoided” by her own brother. Mr. B. makes a stand for his right to choose his wife without reference to his family’s social aspirations. Lady Davers makes a dark reference to Mr. B.’s “Italian Duel,” prompting Mr. B. to order her out of the house, crying, “I renounce you, and all Relation to you.” Pamela intercedes with Mr. B. on Lady Davers’s behalf and then begs forgiveness of Lady Davers. The lady resents Pamela’s presumption and compels Mr. B. to explain all the circumstances of the wedding, which explanation causes her to fear that the connection is legitimate. The argument descends into insults and professions of dudgeon over insults, until Pamela intervenes and asks Mr. B. not to antagonize his sister. Lady Davers walks off, declaring her intention to leave the house and never see its owner again.

Mr. B. and Pamela go down to dinner, and Mr. B. invites Lady Davers to dine before she leaves. She relents at first but balks when she discovers Pamela at the table. Jackey interposes with an appeal to common civility, and Lady Davers gradually cooperates, though she continues to register complaints. As the meal proceeds, fellow-feeling inevitably increases. Lady Davers recovers her appetite by degrees, and at the end of the meal, Mr. B. invites her to accompany them to Bedfordshire. They argue about seating arrangements for traveling there, and Pamela excuses herself from the room. As she is withdrawing, however, Lady Davers says to her, “Thou’lt hold him, as long as any body can, I see that!—Poor Sally Godfrey never had half the Interest in him, I’ll assure you!” Mr. B. becomes suddenly angry and detains Pamela. He acknowledges that Lady Davers has now leveled two charges at him, and he addresses each in turn. Regarding the accusation that he is a dueler, he explains that he once fought an Italian nobleman who arranged for the assassination of Mr. B.’s friend and that the nobleman died a month later of a fever, which was perhaps connected to the superficial wounds he had sustained in the confrontation with Mr. B. Regarding his association with Sally Godfrey, he recalls a young woman he met during his college years, whose social-climbing mother put her irresponsibly in Mr. B.’s way, to what effect he does not specify. Mr. B. then dismisses Pamela, saying that he would have made these confessions in due time without Lady Davers’s forcing him into it.
Lady Davers, seized with remorse, detains Pamela because she intends to perform an act of contrition. Mr. B., however, will not stay for it and stalks off into the garden in a rage. Lady Davers embraces Pamela, weeping, and grants that Pamela is “very good in the main,” though she continues to wish that Pamela had not married Mr. B. Together the women go into the garden to seek him. There, Mr. B. repulses both his sister and his wife. He declares that he never wants to see Lady Davers again, and he rebukes Pamela savagely for having approached him during his fit of temper. The two women strive to calm him, with Lady Davers apologizing for her remark about Sally Godfrey. Finally, Mr. B. forgives both of them and declares them “the two dearest Creatures I have in the World.”

Later, Mr. B. and Lady Davers sup with the neighbors, leaving Pamela alone for the evening. She spends her time writing and chatting with Mrs. Jewkes and Lady Davers’s waiting-maid. Mr. B. and Lady Davers return, and the lady reveals that the neighbors’ praises of Pamela have done much to soften her opinion toward her brother’s wife. She wishes Pamela joy of her marriage, and Jacky apologizes for his previous behavior. They all discuss the afternoon blow-up, with Mr. B. acknowledging the quickness of his temper. For future reference, he explains that it will always be counterproductive for Pamela to oppose him while he is angry.

Mr. B. then discourses on the faults of temper to which the upper classes are prone. They are spoiled in childhood and thereby become insolent and perverse. When two members of this class marry each other, neither has learned how to yield to the other, and misery is usually the result. Pamela, not having been born into the upper class, will naturally be able to perform the crucial yielding function in this marriage. He goes on to describe further qualities of the desirable wife, including but not limited to the ability to “draw a kind Veil over [his] Faults” and to make him “morally sure, that she preferr’d [him] to all Men.” When Pamela returns to her closet, she draws up a list of the rules she has derived from “this awful lecture.” To several of the rules she supplies commentary, the tone of which is apparent in the following example: “19. Few marry’d Persons behave as he likes!—Let me ponder this with Awe and Improvement.” From resentment, however, Pamela passes again to inquisitiveness, as she acknowledges that the case of Sally Godfrey “has given me a Curiosity that is not quite so pretty in me.”

Overall Analysis

In this portion of the journal, Pamela confronts two formidable challenges: social snobbery, which Lady Davers exemplifies, and the gradually emerging truth about Mr. B.’s dissolute past. Pamela will not have achieved complete fulfillment until she has consolidated her new social role and come to terms with the good and the bad about the man she has married.

During the episode of her browbeating at the hands of Lady Davers, Pamela finds herself in a familiar situation: captivity. Nor is her involuntary detention the only feature this encounter shares with Pamela’s long Lincolnshire nightmare. As Donovan observes, “The scene [with Lady Davers] is, in fact, a sort of epitome of the novel, at least insofar as it contains all the essential ingredients: the same arbitrary limitation of Pamela’s freedom of choice, the same (ludicrous) threats of violence, the same fundamental opposition of wills, and the same kinds of skills displayed in Pamela’s successful defense.” Those skills are social in nature; the relentlessly oppositional tone of the encounter can tend to obscure the
degree to which Pamela, who does get her shots in and could with justification burn all bridges with her adversary, in fact acts the part of successful diplomatist.

Pamela’s strategy is to behave more like a lady than does Lady Davers, who is to the manner born. Due to Lady Davers’s belief that Pamela is a tart and a mistress, however, Pamela’s assumption of refinement carries with it the risk of appearing trashy. Thus, she adorns herself with the trimmings of genteel femininity -- gloves and a fan -- only to have Lady Davers tauntingly pull off one of the gloves and reveal what she seizes on as the most egregious mark of pretension, Pamela’s wedding ring (or her pretend wedding ring, as Lady Davers would have it). Pamela meant to keep the ring under wraps, of course, because she and Mr. B. have not yet formally announced their marriage. Lady Davers, noticing Pamela’s reluctance to declare herself married to Mr. B., forces the issue by asking Pamela to pour a glass of wine for her; this seemingly normal request involves a menial task, the performance of which would be degrading to the position Pamela now holds. Her refusal invites Lady Davers to ask point-blank whether Pamela considers herself married, and at this point Pamela can no longer justify ducking the question. Lady Davers outmaneuvers Pamela in this round, as far as the strategic manipulation of social niceties is concerned; overall, however, Pamela bests her opponent simply by acting more civilized (admittedly, not a high bar to clear), and her reward will be Lady Davers’s readiness to accept her as an ally the next day. Such reconciliation has been Pamela’s ultimate goal all along. Mrs. Jewkes has encouraged her to “put on an Air as Mistress of the House” and steamroll the new sister-in-law; Pamela, however, knows that she must strive to win over Lady Davers, lest she gain a reputation as a usurper and an arriviste.

One may question, however, whether Pamela surrenders too much of her dignity and verve in order to ingratiate herself with her new family. In the second entry for Tuesday, her recurrent impulse to abase herself before Lady Davers looks bad, and her deference to Mr. B.’s opinion that such a course of action would degrade her may, paradoxically, look worse. Later, the Squire’s lecture on the conduct he desires in a wife brings to the fore the issue of how much deference the spouses owe each other: as the list of rules that she derives from this disquisition makes clear, Pamela must now adopt her husband’s guidelines in dinner dress, time of rising, entertainment of guests, and so on. Rule 23, “That a Woman gives her Husband Reason to think she prefers him before all Men,” seems particularly nervy, given what Pamela has just learned about Mr. B.’s own wandering preferences. His serving her with a set of terms inevitably recalls the “naughty Articles” by which he sought to make her his consenting mistress, and Pamela’s marginal notes recall her written refusal of the earlier contract. The difference is that her defiance now is strictly private; she has no legal existence apart from her husband, and she must keep her back talk to herself.

The new articles are not all bad, however. Rule 21, “That Love before Marriage is absolutely necessary,” at least indicates Mr. B.’s intention of being a benevolent autocrat. Rule 48, “That a Husband who expects all this, is to be incapable of returning Insult for Obligation, or Evil for Good; and ought not to abridge her of any Privilege of her Sex,” suggests a certain principle of reciprocity, even if the requirement of unconditional complaisance still binds the wife and not the husband. The sexism of Mr. B.’s guidelines, while significant, should not be exaggerated: he married Pamela in full knowledge of her ability to mix obedience with pluck, and while her current station will require her to
demonstrate more of the former than the latter, what he desires is restraint, not repression. As Christianity preaches both meekness and revolution, Mr. B.’s ideal marriage would be a state of dynamic balance.

3. 13 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Happiness to the 14th day

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Happiness to the 14th day

“Wednesday, the Seventh”

Pamela visits Lady Davers in the morning, and they discuss the trials Pamela experienced before marriage. They then discuss Mr. B.’s character, with Lady Davers enumerating his virtues and faults: she says that “he is noble in his Spirit; hates little dirty Actions; he delights in doing Good: But does not pass over a wilful Fault easily. He is wise, prudent, sober, and magnanimous; and will not tell a Lye, nor disguise his Faults.” Pamela says she anticipates that “it will not be an easy Task to behave unexceptionably to him: For he is very nice and delicate in his Notions.”

Lady Davers asks to see Pamela’s journal, saying that she will love Pamela more if the journal convinces her that the marriage is no more than a suitable reward for Pamela’s virtue. She then inquires into the character of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, and Pamela tells the story of her brothers’ plunging their parents into debt and Mr. Andrews’s failing as a schoolmaster. Pamela praises her parents’ honest, cheerful poverty and their success in educating their daughter in virtue. Lady Davers professes herself quite won over. Pamela refrains from asking her about Sally Godfrey, though she remains intensely curious.

Lady Davers intends to leave for home the next morning, and Mr. B. intends to leave with Pamela for Bedfordshire.

Wednesday Night

The neighbors come for supper. Pamela distributes the money Mr. B. gave her for the servants, and Mrs. Jewkes begs Pamela’s forgiveness for her treatment of her.

Saturday

They arrive at the Bedfordshire estate at noon on Friday. The servants gather to witness the homecoming, and Mr. B. forgives all the servants who applied to Lady Davers. Pamela tours the house and in every room, she thanks God for the way things have turned out. She thanks Mr. Longman for having supplied her with the writing materials that have been so instrumental in securing her happiness. When Mr. B. puts the fate of John Arnold in her hands, she forgives the footman and reinstates him.

Mr. B. arranges with Mr. Longman to have Mr. Andrews manage the estate in Kent. He then bestows on Pamela two hundred guineas for distribution among the servants as favors on the wedding. Mr. Longman expresses his wish that the Squire and his wife will produce an heir within the year. Pamela and Mr. B. meet with the maidservants, doling out guineas, and then with the manservants, though John Arnold is too ashamed to come until they call for him. Mr. B. takes Pamela upstairs and gives her possession of his mother’s dressing room, jewelry, books, and other desirables.
Sunday Night

Pamela spends Sunday in prayer and meditation. In the evening, she walks with Mr. B. in the garden, which Pamela judges smaller but better cultivated than the garden in Lincolnshire.

Monday

Pamela, with help from her husband, selects materials for her new clothes. Mr. B. singles out “a white flower’d with Gold most richly,” which has a bridal feel, and determines that Pamela should make her first public appearance in it on Sunday.

Pamela directs her parents, to whom she has addressed all her journal, to get an account of all their debts so that Mr. B. can discharge them. She also desires a list of the deserving poor in her parents’ neighborhood so that she can bestow alms on them.

Wednesday Evening

On Tuesday morning, Mr. B. goes riding and returns for dinner with Mr. Martin, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Brooks, and Mr. Chambers. He recounts his visit to Mr. Arthur’s house, during which Mrs. Arthur expressed her eagerness to visit Pamela with all the neighboring ladies. Pamela descends to dinner, and Mr. B. presents her to the company. Mr. Martin makes several cynical jokes about the marital state, and Mr. Brooks congratulates Mr. B. for having found a wife who is “most accomplished . . . as well in her Behaviour and Wit, as in her Person,” to which Mr. B. responds that “her Person made me her Lover; but her Mind made her my Wife.” After dinner, the gentlemen leave, promising to bring their wives to visit Pamela.

Pamela acknowledges a letter from her father in which he agrees to Mr. B.’s plan of establishing him as the manager of the estate in Kent. The debts have turned out to be less steep than Pamela anticipated. Pamela tells her father that should cease all “Slavish Business,” that is, menial labor.

Overall Analysis

Pamela’s triumphant homecoming in Bedfordshire represents the culmination of her fairy-tale transformation; as Doody observes, the jubilant welcome Pamela receives from the servants who once bade her farewell in sorrow is a reversal right out of the folk-tale tradition. On a more mundane level, this portion of the journal sees Pamela consolidate her new ascendancy over her former colleagues by dispensing monetary favors and interceding for the servants who defected to her during the time of her persecution.

Another significant reversal in Bedfordshire is that of Pamela’s attitude toward fine clothes. Whereas previously she insisted on humble attire and resisted all attempts by Mr. B. to influence her sartorial choices, now she accepts the remnants of his mother’s wardrobe and allows him to select for her numerous rich garments, including a dress made of “white [fabric] flower’d with Gold most richly.” Now that her position with respect to Mr. B. is one of her own choosing and one that she can occupy with dignity, the clothes that once seemed dishonorable can function, no less than her beloved country clothes, as marks of her identity and integrity. She will attend church on Sunday in the white-and-gold dress,
finally making the great public appearance as Mrs. B. that she could not make at her wedding due to the Squire’s preference for a private ceremony.

Mr. B.’s handing down of his late mother’s clothing signifies not only a transformation but also an important continuity. The installation of Pamela, who credits Lady B. with having completed her moral formation, in the family seat of Bedfordshire amounts to a renewal of the good Lady’s principles, which her son previously betrayed through his exploitation of his dependents. Mr. B. affirms his re-commitment to those principles when he reinstates the upper servants whom his mother once entrusted to him and whose service after her death seemed to portend continuity in values between her good rule and her son’s household.

The downside of all this pious celebration and restoration of order, from the reader’s point of view, is its effect on Pamela’s writing. Beginning with Pamela’s voluntary return to Lincolnshire, and especially once the crisis of Lady Davers’s opposition has passed, Richardson puts his epistolary medium to a new use. The decline of real stressors in the latter half of the novel means a corresponding decline in Pamela’s psychological turmoil, with the consequence that she writes less in the heat of the moment and makes fewer unwitting self-revelations. The time has passed for such telling perplexities as “I was loth to leave the House. Can you believe it?” and “Why can’t I hate him?” She no longer has any reason to conceal her feelings from herself, so that instead of a window into her semi-articulate inner life, the letter/journal has become primarily an instrument of moral and theological rumination. Her comments on approaching the Bedfordshire house are representative: “When the Chariot enter’d the Court-yard, I was so strongly impress’d with the Favour and Mercies of God Almighty, on remembering how I was sent away the last time I saw this House; the Leave I took; the Dangers I had encounter’d; a poor cast-off Servant Girl; and now returning a joyful Wife, and the Mistress, thro’ his Favour, of the noble House I was turn’d out of; that I was hardly able to support the Joy I felt in my Mind on the Occasion.” The rhetoric suggesting an insupportable crisis of joy fails to impart any real psychological interest; the sentiments, while by no means out of character for Pamela, suffer from their utter propriety unto conventionality, so that Pamela herself, despite the intensity of the emotion she professes, appears relatively bloodless. Lacking the pressure of events, the heroine becomes less distinctly herself.

Perhaps Pamela at this point in the novel is not so much an authentic young woman as a crypto-Richardson, a mouthpiece and exemplar of the author’s moral teachings. The people with whom she interacts from now on will have strangely uniform reactions to her, ringing the changes on Mrs. Jervis’s tribute: “O my excellent Lady! . . . You are still the same good, pious, humble Soul I knew you; and your Marriage has added to your Graces, as I hope it will to your Blessings.” Pamela is indeed “still the same” virtuous young woman; her personality has virtually stagnated, and the repeated assessments of it would be simply tiresome if the point were to analyze her psychology in a realistic way. Richardson seems, however, to have shifted his mode of characterization, and he is now concerned primarily with representing Pamela as a symbol of admirable womanhood. Stylistically, he reflects this shift by employing a high eulogistic strain that makes a strong contrast with the colloquial and naturalistic style that dominated the first half of the novel. In putting the epistolary medium to two such different uses, the spontaneous and personalized on one hand, and the

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formal and conventional on the other, Richardson shows considerable versatility. Few readers, unfortunately, have been inclined to thank him for it.

3. 14 Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 15th Day of her Happiness to the Editorial Conclusion

Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 15th Day of her Happiness to the Editorial Conclusion

Thursday

Pamela and Mr. B. set out on Thursday morning to have breakfast at a farmhouse with a renowned dairy. During breakfast, Mr. B. tells Pamela that the girls from a nearby boarding school often visit the farmhouse, and while they are discussing the matter, a carriage arrives with four little girls from the school. Among them is a Miss Goodwin toward whom Mr. B. shows particular interest. Miss Goodwin characterizes Mr. B. as her “own dear Uncle,” and Pamela infers that the girl is in fact Mr. B.’s daughter by Sally Godfrey. Pamela is delighted with the child and embraces her, saying, “[W]ill you love me?—Will you let me be your Aunt?” She tells Mr. B., however, that she continues to worry about the fate of Miss Goodwin’s mother, realizing how near her own fate came to resembling it. Pamela then expresses her wish of having Miss Goodwin come to live with them, though Mr. B. defers the question to another time.

Mr. B. describes Lady Davers’s role in providing for Miss Goodwin and keeping the secret from their parents, and then tells the story of his connection with Sally Godfrey. He met her while he was in college, before he was of age, and had easy access to her due to the manipulations of Sally’s mother, who planned to force him into marriage by exposing the pair in a compromising situation. Suspecting Sally of colluding in the plot, Mr. B. broke off the relationship before it had been consummated. This rejection, however, prompted Sally to demonstrate her devotion by throwing herself at Mr. B., thereby “mak[ing] herself quite guilty of a worse Fault, in order to clear herself of a lighter.” A clandestine amour ensued, the eventual result of which was a pregnancy. Mr. B. refused to marry Sally. Lady Davers took responsibility for the infant Miss Goodwin, eventually placing her in the boarding school, and Mr. B. settled on her enough money to give her an attractive dowry. Miss Goodwin knows nothing of her parents except that they are “a Gentleman and his Lady” related to Lady Davers.

When Pamela exhibits curiosity about the present condition of Sally, Mr. B. explains that she is in Jamaica, where she relocated after her difficulties in childbirth had resolved her against a reversion to her former fault. Mr. B. had intended to persist in the dalliance, but Sally escaped him and married someone in Jamaica. The Squire then goes into detail about his pursuit of his former mistress, how he tracked her through England, even to the point of boarding her ship, the embarkation of which he tried in vain to delay. Sally’s adamant refusals caused him finally to give her up. He adds that Sally’s husband in Jamaica, who believes her to be a young widow with a child by her first marriage, recently sent Miss Goodwin “a little Negro Boy” to wait on her, though the boy died of smallpox a month after arriving in England.
Monday Morning

On Sunday morning, Pamela and Mr. B. attend church. With Pamela decked out in a gown “of White flower’d with Gold, and a rich Head-dress, and the Diamond Necklace, Earrings, &c.,” they process down the aisle, attracting great interest and attention. After the service, a crowd forms on the church porch. Pamela collects the good wishes of Mrs. Arthur and Mrs. Brooks, and then summons John the footman to distribute alms among the begging poor. Mr. Martin approaches and lavishes compliments on Pamela, suggesting that she may succeed in reforming him as she reformed Mr. B.

In the afternoon Pamela and Mr. B. return to church and Mr. Martin ogles her throughout the service. Afterwards Mr. Arthur, Mr. Brooks, and Mr. Chambers bring their wives to meet Pamela, and Lady Towers joins them. All of the ladies compliment Pamela and approve Mr. B.’s choice in marriage. In the evening, Pamela and Mr. B. entertain Mr. Martin and his friend Mr. Dormer, and both the gentlemen bestow on Pamela yet more compliments. On Monday morning, twenty-five poor people arrive to accept Pamela’s charity.

Tuesday

After breakfast, Pamela walks with Mr. B. in the garden, and they shelter in the summerhouse during a rain shower. There he explains to her the measures he has recently taken to ensure that Pamela would be provided for if he were to die without producing an heir. Mr. B. is currently the last male of his line, and in case of his dying without a son, most of his estate would revert to another line (implicitly, that of Lady Davers), and Pamela would be at the mercy of the inheritors. He has accordingly arranged for Pamela’s prosperity and independence in the event of his death. He makes one request of Pamela, that as a widow she would never marry Mr. Williams.

Once the rain has stopped they walk again in the garden, and Mr. B. admires the beauty of nature. He then sings to Pamela some pastoral verses of his own invention. Pamela enjoys the song but is upset over the intimations of mortality that Mr. B. has inspired with his talk of inheritance and death.

Friday

On Thursday Pamela and Mr. B. entertain “almost all the neighbouring Gentry, and their good Ladies.” Everyone admires Pamela’s appearance, and Pamela resists her prideful impulses by reminding herself that all goodness comes from God. Pamela and Mr. B. receive the written compliments of Lady Davers, who plans to visit with her husband within two weeks. Pamela sends to her the writings that Lady Davers has requested. Pamela now wishes only for the presence and blessings of her parents, who will set out for a visit on Tuesday morning. She looks forward to another visit to the farmhouse where she met Miss Goodwin, and she hopes to be able to form the girl’s mind and character.

Editor’s Conclusion

Pamela discontinues her journal after the Friday entry. She receives her parents joyfully, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrews live long and comfortably on Mr. B.’s Kentish estate. They visit their daughter twice a year for two weeks at a time.
Pamela bears Mr. B. several children. Her marriage continues to be a happy one, especially as Mr. B. develops into a moral paragon under Pamela’s influence. The ladies of the neighborhood continue to visit her, and her example improves them as well. Lady Davers also remains on good terms with her brother and his wife, and Miss Goodwin follows Pamela down the path of virtue, eventually marrying a decent and wealthy man.

The Editor goes on to derive several lessons from the characters and their experiences: Mr. B. provides the edifying spectacle of the reformed rake, Lady Davers that of “the Deformity of unreasonable Passion,” Mr. Williams that of clerical duty impeded by a patron but rewarded by providence, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that of honest poverty similarly rewarded, and so on. The Editor then discusses Pamela at some length, enumerating her virtues and recommending emulation of her character.

**Overall Analysis**

The Sally Godfrey story, as Pamela acknowledges, shows what could have been Pamela’s fate if she had been less committed to the preservation of her virtue. Perhaps surprisingly, Sally turns out not to have fulfilled the classic trajectory of the fallen woman: she has not, as Pamela feared, died in childbirth or in a brothel somewhere; she has moved on with her life and made at least as good a marriage in Jamaica as she was likely to have made before her entanglement with Mr. B. As if to compensate for the improbability of this no-harm-no-foul resolution, Richardson supplies the strange detail of the slave child who died of smallpox after being sent to England; with this device he deflects onto a minor character the fallout of Sally and Mr. B.’s bad behavior.

Their conduct has had positive consequences as well, however: Richardson presents Miss Goodwin as an unambiguously charming little girl who genuinely reciprocates Pamela’s affections. The impulses that produced her may have been unrestrained, but they were in themselves productive. The novel as a whole is strongly pro-procreation, as for example are Mr. B. and Mr. Longman when they express their hopes of seeing children in the near future. Nor does reproduction figure simply as a biological fact or a means of generating “little Charmer[s]” like Miss Goodwin. In this case, it has a specific economic and social exigency, as Mr. B. reveals that he is the last male of his line and that therefore he and Pamela must produce an heir if the line is not to die out.

What with the happy expectation of progeny, the appearance of Miss Goodwin, and the reconciliation of Mr. B. with Lady Davers, the second half of the novel emphasizes ever more strongly the importance of blood ties and the family feeling that sustains them. Mr. B. turns out, perhaps surprisingly, to be very much a family man. He has readily elucidated his admiration of his sister, even in the face of her serious annoyance of him, and the terms in which he has done so are striking: “She was a dutiful Daughter, is a good Wife; . . . and, I believe, never any Sister better loved a Brother, than she me.” He has admitted that their tendency to quarrel with each other arises from personality flaws that they both derived from their common upbringing, and to complete the sense of their affinity, he reveals that his single ally in his efforts to minimize the damage from the Sally Godfrey affair was Lady Davers. Even this superlatively difficult sibling, then, is dear to Mr. B. because of what appears to be his instinctive attachment to everything that he considers to belong to him.
Pamela, of course, has at least as strong a sense of family piety as Mr. B. has; she demonstrates it in her reverence for her parents, in her readiness to extend amnesty to Lady Davers, and in her eagerness (which Mr. B. in fact withstands) to take Miss Goodwin into the Bedfordshire household. For Richardson, as Jocelyn Harris observes, “the sign of the generous heart is the perfecting and widening of family ties.” This is not a novel in which the hero and heroine retire to the winners’ circle with a few supportive family members, leaving the objecting relatives in the outer darkness (and here one thinks again of Austen’s Pride and Prejudice); rather, redemption touches the entire family. This sense of familial solidarity, Harris continues, “balances the spirit of rebellion against an unjust hierarchy which is present” in the novel but which is hardly the last word.

4. Character Analysis

4.1 Major Characters

a) Pamela

A lively, pretty, and courageous maid-servant, age 15, who is subject to the sexual advances of her new Master, Mr. B., following the death of his mother, Lady B. She is a devoted daughter to her impoverished parents, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, to whom she writes a prodigious number of letters and whom she credits with the moral formation that prompts her to defend her purity at all costs. Pamela resists Mr. B. through the long weeks of his aggression toward her, capitulating neither to his assaults nor to his later tenderness. Though it takes a while for her to admit it, Pamela is attracted to Mr. B. from the first, and gradually she comes to love him. They marry about halfway through the novel, and afterward Pamela’s sweetness and equipoise aid her in securing the goodwill of her new husband’s highborn friends.

b) Mr. B.

A country squire, 25 or 26 years of age, with properties in Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Kent, and London. He is Pamela’s employer, pursuer, and eventual husband. Richardson has censored Mr. B.’s name in order to protect the pretense of non-fiction, but scholars have conjectured based on manuscripts that the novelist had “Brandon” in mind. Mr. B. has rakish tendencies, and he attempts to compel Pamela’s reciprocation of his sexual attentions, even to the point of imprisoning her in his Lincolnshire estate. His fundamental decency prevents him from consummating any of his assaults on her, however, and under her influence he reforms in the middle of the novel.

4.2 Minor Characters

a) Lady Davers

The married elder sister of Mr. B. to whom the Squire’s Bedfordshire servants apply when trying to enlist some aid for Pamela. She objects strenuously to the union of her brother with their mother’s waiting-maid, subjecting Pamela to a harrowing afternoon of insults and bullying, but eventually comes to accept and value her new sister-in-law. She once cleaned up after her brother’s affair with Sally Godfrey. Lady Davers is subject to
drastic changes in mood, given to alternate between imperious and abject humors, but she is, like her brother, basically decent.

b) Lady B.

Pamela’s original employer, the mother of Mr. B. and Lady Davers. Lady B. was morally upright and kind to Pamela, educating her and contributing to the formation of her virtuous character. On her deathbed, she told her son to look after all the Bedfordshire servants, especially Pamela.

c) Mrs. Jewkes

The housekeeper at Mr. B.’s Lincolnshire estate and Pamela’s primary warder during the period of her captivity. Pamela represents her as a brazen villain, physically hideous and sexually ambiguous, though the hyperbolic attributions of depravity may be Pamela’s way of deflecting blame from Mr. B., about whom her feelings are more conflicted. Mrs. Jewkes is devoted to her Master, to a fault: she is as ready to commit a wrong in his service, not excluding assisting in an attempted rape of Pamela, as she is to wait loyally on that same Pamela once Mr. B. has decided to elevate and marry her.

d) Mrs. Jervis

The elderly housekeeper of Mr. B.’s Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela. She has a genteel background and is an able manager, presumably the linchpin of the well-ordered Bedfordshire household. Despite her good nature and her motherly concern for Pamela, however, she is nearly useless in defending her young friend from their Master’s lecherous advances.

e) Mr. John Andrews

Pamela’s father and her chief correspondent. He is virtuous and literate like his daughter, formerly the master of a school, though his fortunes have since declined and he is now an agricultural laborer. He had two sons, now dead, who pauperized him before dying. Pamela credits both her parents with forming her character by educating her in virtue and giving her an example of honest, cheerful poverty.

f) Mrs. Elizabeth Andrews

Pamela’s mother, who has no independent presence in the novel.

g) Mr. Williams

The curate (junior pastor) of Mr. B.’s parish in Lincolnshire. Pamela engages his assistance in her efforts to escape her captivity, and she finds him dutiful but ineffectual; he makes an unsuccessful bid to become Pamela’s husband, and his efforts on her behalf come decisively to naught when Mr. B. sends him to debtor’s prison. Overall, he is meritorious but scarcely appealing, and he suffers from his position as the suitor whom no one takes.
seriously. Mr. B.’s drawn-out preoccupation with his “rival” Williams only serves to keep the latter’s risibility in view.

**h) Monsieur Colbrand**

The monstrous Swiss man whom Mr. B. sends to Lincolnshire to keep watch over Pamela. Like Mrs. Jewkes, he becomes Pamela’s ally after the Squire’s reformation.

**i) Jackey**

Lady Davers’s nephew, who accompanies her to Mr. B.’s estate in Lincolnshire and aids her in browbeating Pamela. He exemplifies what Richardson sees as the aristocratic impulse toward sexual exploitation of social inferiors, though he is quicker than his aunt in perceiving Pamela’s innate respectability.

**j) Beck Worden**

Lady Davers’s waiting-maid, who attends her at Mr. B.’s estate in Lincolnshire and aids in the persecution of the newly married Pamela.

**k) John Arnold**

A footman at the Bedfordshire estate. In the early stages of the novel he delivers Pamela’s letters to and from her parents, and Pamela appreciates his cheerfulness is performing this service. After her abduction, however, he sends her a note confessing that he has allowed Mr. B. to read all of the correspondence between Pamela and her parents. He has been torn between his duty to Mr. B. and the promptings of his conscience, and the result is that he comes into conflict with both Pamela and Mr. B. The Squire dismisses him, but after the marriage, Pamela has him reinstated.

**l) Mr. Longman**

The steward at the Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela. He admires Pamela and supplies her with the abundant writing materials that allow her to continue her journal during her captivity in Lincolnshire.

**m) Mr. Jonathan**

The butler at the Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela.

**n) Nan (or Ann)**

A servant-girl at the Lincolnshire estate. Mrs. Jewkes gets her drunk and Mr. B. impersonates her on the night of his last attempt on Pamela’s virtue.
o) Sally Godfrey

Mr. B.'s mistress from his college days. She bore him a child, the future Miss Goodwin, and then fled to Jamaica, where she is now happily married.

p) Miss Goodwin

Mr. B.'s illegitimate daughter by Sally Godfrey. She lives at a boarding school in Bedfordshire and does not know who her parents are; she addresses Mr. B. as her “uncle.”

q) Sir Simon Darnford

A noble neighbor of Mr. B. in Lincolnshire. He refuses to help Pamela when Mr. Williams applies to him but comes to admire her after her elevation by Mr. B. He is given to dirty jokes.

r) Lady Darnford

The wife of Sir Simon Darnford.

s) Miss Darnford (the elder)

The first daughter of Sir Simon and Lady Darnford. She once had hopes of marrying Mr. B., but she accepts Pamela’s triumph sportingly.

t) Miss Darnford (the younger)

The second daughter of Sir Simon and Lady Darnford. She joins her sister in demanding a ball to commemorate the nuptials of Pamela and Mr. B.

u) Mr. Peters

The vicar of Mr. B.’s parish in Lincolnshire. He refuses to help Pamela when Mr. Williams applies to him but eventually gives Pamela away at her wedding.

v) Mr. Martin

A genteel but rakish neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire. Pamela dislikes him due to his penchant for saying cynical things about married life.

w) Mr. Arthur

A genteel neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire.

x) Mrs. Arthur

The wife of Mr. Arthur.
y) Mr. Towers

A genteel neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire.

z) A gypsy fortune-teller

The agent who delivers to Pamela a note from Mr. Longman warning her of Mr. B.’s plans for a sham-marriage.

5. Stylistic Devices

5.1 Setting

The action takes place in England in the first half of the 18th Century in the counties of Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire. Bedford, the capital of Bedfordshire, is about forty-five miles north of London. Lincoln, the capital of Lincolnshire, is about thirty miles north of Bedford. Squire B. recounts incidents occurring during his travels in Italy, Germany, and Austria; but all present action in the novel takes place in England.

5.2 Narration and Structure

Fifteen-year-old Pamela Andrews, the protagonist, tells the story in first-person point of view in (1) letters she writes to her parents and other characters and (2) in a journal in which she reports daily happenings as well as the contents of letters written to her. An omniscient narrator intrudes briefly to inform the reader of events outside the scope of Pamela’s purview. The author presents the chapters in the form of letters or journal entries. The rising action and development of the conflict take place at Squire B.’s Bedfordshire estate. The conflict intensifies after Pamela is taken against her will to the squire’s Lincolnshire estate. The conflict reaches its climax when Pamela is at an inn between Lincolnshire and Bedfordshire and receives a letter in which the squire declares his love for her. The long denouement of the story takes place mainly at the Lincolnshire estate after Pamela returns to the squire. The story concludes when the newlyweds return to the Bedfordshire estate. After the conclusion, the author presents observations intended to instruct the reader.

5.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Epistolary Writing

In Pamela, the central character reveals in her journal and letters the intimate details of her everyday life in language that is simple, straightforward, and conversational. This approach makes the novel easy to read and understand. Moreover, it creates a closeness with the reader, as if he or she were the recipient of the letters or the reader of the journal. There are obvious drawbacks to epistolary narration, however. As in other first-person accounts, the narrator cannot enter the minds of other characters (as in third-person omniscient narration). In addition, the narrator must be present for all the action or report it in accounts she receives secondhand. Finally, since the narrator writes her letters or journal entries after an event, the storytelling loses at least some of its air of immediacy. Nevertheless, Richardson’s approach was popular with readers, and the novel sold out quickly.
5.4 Climax

The climax occurs when the squire declares his love for Pamela in the letter he sends her after she leaves his Lincolnshire estate. A minor, or secondary, climax occurs when the squire's sister, Lady Davers, overcomes her upper-class pride and prejudice and accepts Pamela as her sister-in-law.

6. Study Questions

6.1 Richardson said that he wanted to innovate an alternative to unrealistic romance novels, with their dependence on “the improbable and marvellous” and on the cheap satisfactions of wish fulfillment. Does Pamela constitute a real alternative in this respect? Why or why not?

Answer for Study Question 1

Richardson’s commitment to avoiding “the improbable” is most apparent in his lavish efforts to lay the psychological groundwork for the crucial event of the story, namely the union of the lovers. Whatever satisfactions the novel provides are thereby hardly cheap in this sense, since the author has paid for them with his scrupulous realism. In another sense, however, Pamela’s story is undoubtedly “marvellous”: marriages between country squires and servant-girls, even highly admirable servant-girls, are extremely rare. Richardson’s novel begins to resemble the despised romance genre even further when we consider that social elevation as a reward for intrinsic merit is the center of the classic Cinderella fantasy, the impossible dream of exceeding one’s class while maintaining one’s integrity. As Ian Watt observes, Pamela can be accused of giving "a new power to the age-old deceptions of romance."

The Marxist critic Arnold Kettle said, “Pamela remains only as a record of a peculiarly loathsome aspect of bourgeois puritan morality.” His objection is twofold: not only does the novel incorporate a set of values that modern readers must repudiate, but because of these outdated values, it is also no longer relevant as art. How fair is this criticism?

Pamela’s defense of her sexual virtue certainly incorporates motives and assumptions that are dependent on her cultural and religious context and that will appear to many modern readers as fatally dated. Her primary arguments against Mr. B.’s propositions, however, invoke ideas of individual autonomy that should be relevant in any age. The fact that Pamela’s unfashionable stand for her chastity rankles many readers today may paradoxically bring us closer than eighteenth-century observers to Richardson’s deeper point, namely that Pamela’s principles are her own prerogative, to which social distinctions and the opinion of the world are alike irrelevant.

Explain the effect on the novel of Richardson’s use of the epistolary form. How does Pamela’s writing in the first person and in (almost) real time impact the presentation of her own character and of other characters? Does this approach have any limitations? Is Richardson’s use of the epistolary form consistent from cover to cover, or does it change at any point in the book?
Richardson’s intention was to render a profound psychological study by making Pamela’s psyche as immediate to the reader as possible through the comparatively unfiltered record of her spontaneous thoughts and feelings. One limitation of this method is the difficulty for the reader of separating objective truth from Pamela’s inevitably subjective (and often over-hasty) representations of it: her nightmare portraits of Mrs. Jewkes and Monsieur Colbrand are the most conspicuous instances, and Mr. B.’s psyche, while immeasurably more important than either of these, remains distressingly opaque during the crucial period of his moral transformation. In the second half of the novel, both the action and Pamela’s subjective turmoil subside considerably, and accordingly Richardson alters his use of the epistolary mode: Pamela largely abandons her “writing to the moment” in favor of more retrospective compositions that are closer to “the colder and more general Reflections” of the narrative tradition against which Richardson had set himself.

6.2 What does Richardson suggest has been the effect of class on Mr. B.’s psychological makeup? What moral strengths or weaknesses has his upbringing imparted?

Answer for Study Question 2

Mr. B. expounds Richardson’s practical view of the effect on character of aristocratic training: “We People of Fortune, or such as are born to large Expectations . . . are usually so headstrong, so violent in our Wills, that we very little bear Control.” The psyches of the highborn invariably encompass urges toward dominance, and the challenge of the highborn is to regulate these urges and make them productive rather than predatory. It is hardly surprising that Mr. B., whose parents raised him to be imperious, should consider himself entitled to sexual access to his female servants. The irony is that this same Squire, whose training has endowed him with such a robust id, should occupy in the social hierarchy the role of guarantor of peace and order. (Mr. B. is literally and officially a Justice of the Peace.) Fortunately, however, the rules he lays down for Pamela after their marriage show him disposed to value discipline and regularity; one simply hopes that he will not enforce these protocols with the same vigor with which he once attempted to enforce his sexual demands.

6.3 Discuss Richardson’s handling of physical detail. What sorts of details does he include, and how do they contribute to our understanding of the characters and themes?

Answer for Study Question 3

Richardson’s employment of physical detail is generally realistic, creating an imitation of the real world through an accumulation of concrete objects. The items he chooses, such as the sturdy fabrics of Pamela’s country wardrobe, the humble plants in the Lincolnshire garden, and the soil in which Pamela conceals her papers, do carry a certain significance, though it stops well short of being symbolic: they simply add up to a general sense of Pamela’s earthiness and vitality. Occasionally, as in the case of the sunflower and the angling scene, Richardson selects details that have strongly traditional emblematic significance, and he plays with the layers of meanings associated with these images; such instances, however, are the exception rather than the rule. This very avoidance of conventional symbol is itself a statement in favor of the significance of everyday life and against the pastoral idealization of rural existence.
6.4 How does Pamela’s “low” style of speaking and writing affect our perceptions of her character and her story?

Answer for Study Question 4

Pamela’s artless style of writing and speaking is appropriate to a story that focuses on such simple emotional drives as those that unite the heroine and Mr. B. It is not a decorous style; its virtue lies in its being as vital and real as Pamela is. By rendering the struggle over Pamela’s virtue in Pamela’s own humble idiom, Richardson executes on the level of style his moral and aesthetic claim that the soul of a servant-girl is as important as that of the princess whose virtue would be a more conventional subject for extended literary treatment.

6.5 Compare and contrast the characters of Mr. B.’s two housekeepers, Mrs. Jervis and Mrs. Jewkes.

Answer for Study Question 5

From one angle, the two housekeepers appear to be elementary moral opposites: Mrs. Jervis is maternal where Mrs. Jewkes is lewd, and Mrs. Jervis tries to aid Pamela in her captivity while Mrs. Jewkes is Pamela’s most avid warder. A closer look, however, may complicate this stark contrast. For one, Mrs. Jervis is slow to line up with Pamela against Mr. B.; she even collaborates with the Squire at first by concealing him in cupboards and closets so that he can spy on Pamela. Moreover, Mrs. Jewkes’s insistent sexual suggestions to Pamela and her encouragement of Mr. B.’s designs may be morally reprehensible, but they show her to be a shrewder judge of sexual dynamics than is the motherly but maneuverable Mrs. Jervis. Mrs. Jewkes is more alert to the predatory nature of her Master’s desires than is the complacent Bedfordshire housekeeper. Her reflections on the appropriateness of sexual relations are darkly congruous with the whole gist of the second half of the novel, with its affirmative references to procreation and its revelation that Mr. B.’s line requires an heir if it is not to expire.

6.6 What is the significance of setting? Consider the abduction of Pamela from Bedfordshire to Lincolnshire and her eventual return to Bedfordshire?

Answer for Study Question 6

Pamela’s removal from the Bedfordshire estate, with its friendly servants of genteel extraction, to the Lincolnshire estate involves her alienation from her human supports; it is a journey into the wilderness, where she will have to rely upon herself and, ultimately, on her God. As is traditional, the fruits of her stay in the wilderness will be renewed faith in God and enhanced self-knowledge, the latter leading to her voluntary union with Mr. B. Once the Lincolnshire landscape has done its work, Pamela enjoys triumphant Bedfordshire homecoming in which the geographical return signifies the completeness of the reversal that providence has engineered for her.

The scenes of attempted sexual assault have been called “the worst part of Richardson’s plot, Mr. B.’s clumsy and brutal attacks on the heroine.” What effect does Mr.
B.’s ineptitude as a predator have on our perceptions of his character and of Pamela’s changing feelings toward him?

The fact that Mr. B. is difficult to take seriously as a rapist makes him easier to take seriously as a decent man and husband. His impulse to aggressive self-assertion is probably not abnormal for a twenty-something man of great social privilege, and at any rate, he lacks the sadism to enact it against the will of his would-be victim. When he defends himself after his conversion on the grounds that he has not committed any very horrible acts, his argument is not entirely a technicality because he had his chances (while Pamela was unconscious) and declined them. Moreover, such comical elements as his pausing during his final assault to urge Pamela’s acceptance of his “articles,” or the Hefner-style robe in which he outfits himself at one point, allow the reader to laugh at him even before his conversion and suspect that Pamela’s fears may be unwarranted. However absurd they may seem as plot elements, then, Mr. B.’s clumsy attacks indicate his basic good nature, impart levity to his character, and render credible (or less incredible) his reformation and Pamela’s eventual acceptance of him.

6.7 What is the significance of the emergence of Miss Goodwin near the end of the novel?

Answer for Study Question 7

Miss Goodwin, being the result of a connection in Mr. B.’s past that Pamela did not begin to suspect when she married him, presents Pamela with the challenge of learning after the fact about a husband who has been more in the world than she has and whom, it turns out, she does not really know very well. Pamela, of course, responds to the challenge with the generosity that is native to her, forgiving Mr. B. and urging him to take Miss Goodwin into their household. Additionally significant is the fact that Richardson presents Miss Goodwin, the product of an illicit sexual relationship, as a sweet and exuberant child, an unambiguously “good” character who is an appropriate recipient of Pamela’s maternal affections. Some have accused the novel of propounding a too-rigid moral scheme with respect to sex and marriage, but Richardson here shows himself fully capable of acknowledging the positive fruits of even extramarital sexual alliances, and the novel as a whole, far from inculcating a fear of sex, strongly favors procreation.

7. Suggested Essay Topics

7. 1. In her letters and journal entries, Pamela often reports the compliments others give her. For example, in Letter IV (to her mother) she ....writes that Lady Davers "thought me the prettiest wench she ever saw in her life." Later in the novel, she reports that Sir Simon ....Darnford "swore he never saw so easy an air, so fine a shape, and so graceful a presence" as Pamela's and that he referred to her as ...."the loveliest maiden in England." Do Pamela's frequent references to such compliments indicate that she is vain? Explain your answer.

7. 2. Does Pamela distort in any way the events she reports in her letters and journal entries? Explain your answer.

7. 3. In an informative essay, write a psychological profile of Pamela, the squire, or Lady Davers.
7. 4. How commonplace was sexual harassment of young women in England in the mid-1700s?

7. 5. In the following statement, the squire describes the typical upbringing of a male or female born into a life of wealth and privilege. Read the statement, and then write an essay arguing that the squire’s observations still apply today in some families.

8. **Suggestions for Further Readings**

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9. **Bibliography**


