

Oedipus Rex, Sophocles

Oedipus flees Corinth after hearing the prophecy of patricide.

Prophecy: Oedipus will kill his father and marry his mother.

Oedipus unknowingly kills his father (King Laius of Thebes) at a crossroads

Oedipus solves the riddle of the Sphinx in Thebes.

Oedipus becomes king of Thebes and unknowingly marries his mother (Queen Jocasta). He rules peacefully for twelve years.

Thebes becomes plagued by problems and the Theban people are sorrowful.

King Oedipus promises to find the problem and sends his brother-in-law (and ~~and~~ unknowingly uncle) Creon to the Oracle at Delphi.

Creon says the Oracle stated the murderer of King Laius must first be punished.

Oedipus vows to find and punish the murderer of King Laius.

Oedipus calls on the guilty slayer of Laius to come forth and be banished.

Oedipus sends for the blind prophet Tiresius, who holds back his knowledge.

Eventually, Tiresius foreshadows the tragedy to its end following the wrath of Oedipus.

Oedipus ~~blames~~ Creon for accusing him. Jocasta tries to soften the situation (perhaps she suspects the truth).

Oedipus tells Queen Jocasta why he fled from Corinth and that he killed a person at a crossroads. (Perhaps Jocasta suspects the truth).

Queen Jocasta sends for a herdsman who saw Laius murdered.

A stranger arrives in Thebes and announces the death of the King of Corinth, Oedipus's reputed father, temporarily relieving Oedipus, Jocasta, and the audience. But the stranger also says that Oedipus was in fact a Theban baby rescued from a mountainside where he had been left to die. Jocasta seems to realize the truth, putting her head in her hands, and making a quick effort to restrain Oedipus from questioning the stranger further.

The herdsman arrives and is strongly questioned by Oedipus "without mercy."

The herdsman reinstates the truth. Oedipus realizes the truth — that he is ~~the~~ murderer of his own father, incestuous husband to his own mother, and brother to his ^{own} children.

As is the custom in plays, a messenger tells the remaining news. Oedipus finds Jocasta dead and hanging from a noose (after committing suicide). Oedipus loosens the knot and lies her corpse down. He takes a pin from her dress and stabs his eyes, going blind.

Oedipus ^{blinded and bleeding,} embraces his two daughters that are brought by Creon.

Oedipus leaves his children in Creon's care and asks to be banished.

Creon quickly banishes Oedipus, separating him from his children and taking the throne — perhaps too quickly, arousing suspicion in the audience.

Oedipus had hubris (excessive pride)



hamartia ((tragic flaw)

Tiresius is "blind," but he can "see" the future, while Oedipus can ~~only~~ see his true state after blinding himself.

man should not challenge the gods

Antigone, Sophocles

Antigone - strong daughter of Oedipus

determined to break human law (artificial) set by Creon's edict for more important moral and religious law ("law of the gods"); asks sister Ismene for help
conducts funeral rites for her brother Polynices

Ismene - foil for Antigone; sister of Antigone and daughter of Oedipus

does not help Antigone with funeral rites

later regrets her decision

attempts to share punishment with Antigone, but Antigone refuses

Eteocles - son of Oedipus

drives Polynices out of Thebes; exiles him

Polynices - exiled brother of Eteocles, son of Oedipus

besieges Thebes with an Argive army

invaders defeated

kill each other
in a duel

Creon - uncle of Oedipus and his children

states edict which only allows for the honorable burial of Eteocles

Polynices, ^{"aggressor"} enemy of his city-state, is to be left as a corpse in the open

penalty of death to anyone who attempts to bury him

Chorus - Theban elders

Haemon - Creon's son and Antigone's lover

Eurydice - Creon's wife

A guard tells Creon that someone performed funeral rites for Polynices.

Creon threatens the guard with a horrible fate.

The guard removes the dirt covering Polynices and catches Antigone red-handed when she tries to rebury her brother Polynices.

The elders reflect on Creon's daring actions, saying Creon will triumph if he obeys the divine laws; and ruin if he disregards them.

The guard leads Antigone to Creon.

Creon interrogates Antigone, who confirms her guilt, but says she did so because she believed no human law can rise above the laws of heaven and that to her death is of no importance.

Ismene, who Creon suspects, is later brought in. She begs to die with her sister Antigone, but Antigone refuses her plea as "unjust." She then unsuccessfully tries to appeal to Antigone's betrothal to Creon's son Haemon.

Creon sends the sisters Antigone and Ismene into the palace as prisoners. Ismene is later released.

Haemon pleads with his father for the life of his destined bride Antigone, originally showing slight restraint.

Creon responds angrily and refuses.

Haemon says he will never see him again.

Creon decides to seal Antigone in a cave with enough food to "clean the city from guilt."

Antigone compares her fate with that of Niobe. She says "The wise will know my choice was right" since even children or a husband can be replaced, but not her brother Polynices. She asks what divine justice she disobeyed and calls the gods as allies.

The elders contribute her fate to her overboldness which clashed against justice. They also compare her fate with that of Danaë, Cycurgus, and Cleopatra.

Antigone is placed in the cave with food, and the cave is sealed.

The blind prophet warns Creon about the wrath of the gods for his edict.

Creon responds furiously and accuses Tiresias with conspiracy in a seditious plot.

Tiresias declares Creon will pay with his son Haemon's life for the double sin - detention of the dead among the living (Polynices) and the imprisonment of the living among the dead (Antigone).

Tiresias leaves, but Creon changes his mind since he has never known a prophecy of Tiresias to be wrong. He leaves to bury his nephew Polynices and free his niece Antigone.

A companion of Creon returns to give a report which is heard by Creon's wife, Eurydice. Creon burned the remains of Polynices, but later found that Antigone was dead due to suicide. Haemon embraces Antigone's corpse and then tries to kill his father Creon. Haemon misses and kills himself instead.

As Creon arrives, a messenger announces that Eurydice stabbed herself beside the altar, cursing Creon the slayer of her son Creon.

Antigone - duty to bury brother Polynices above all
costs, arguably not a martyr

Ismene - terrified by King's edict

"But this we must remember that we are
Born women and not fit to fight with men!"

"Those in authority I shall obey!"
But courageous enough to share sister's punishment.

power of Love

Love is what caused the quarrel between Antigone and Creon, Haemon and Creon, and Eurydice and Creon. Even Ismene was prepared to share with Antigone's punishment even though she had not helped Antigone with the funeral rites of Polynices.

Creon - too stubborn with his edict and too severe with ~~the~~ execution

Haemon - loves Antigone, but too timid with Creon → refrains from killing Creon and instead himself

Return of the Native, Thomas Hardy

Christian Cantle: shy young man; entrusted to deliver one hundred guineas to Clym and Thomasin

loses the money to Wildeve in a game of dice

Charley: local man who admires Eustacia, valuing his time with her
takes care of her at Captain Vye's house after she argues with Clym
makes a fire, feeds her, and removes the pistols

Johnny Nunsuch: young boy who walks with Mrs. Yeobright after she leaves Clym's cottage

Susan Nunsuch: Johnny's mother; believes Eustacia is a witch

Diggory Venn: reddenman who secretly protects Thomasin

- brings Thomasin back to town after her marriage troubles
- pressures Wildeve to marry Thomasin after he finds out he has been seeing Eustacia, even though he can not have Thomasin for himself, it is best thing for her reputation
- offers to arrange a job for Eustacia
- wins the inheritance money back from Wildeve and gives it to Thomasin
- helps Thomasin find Wildeve and Clym
- saves Clym's life and tries unsuccessfully to save Wildeve
- after quitting the redden business and becoming a dairy farmer, he marries Thomasin

Captain Vye: Eustacia's grandfather

Eustacia Vye: beautiful lady who is eager to leave Egdon Heath

raised in cosmopolitan environment of Budmouth

conflicts with ordinary characters and Egdon Heath; rumors of her being a witch

finds excitement in her relationships with men

- affair with Wildeve
- falls in love with Clym before meeting him, since he had a successful career in Paris
- resents Clym when he becomes a furze-cutter and Wildeve inherits a fortune
- remains faithful to Clym

drowns in a weir, possibly suicide

Damon Wildeve: "wild" young man with a long-standing affair with Eustacia

not a very good husband

tries to tempt Eustacia with money, but fails

drowns in the weir trying to save Eustacia

Clym Yeobright: "native" of the novel who returned to Egdon Heath from a successful career in Paris

Sick of city life and looks forward to starting a local school

marries Eustacia, believing she supports his plan for a school

takes a furze-cutting job after damaging his eyes while studying

feels guilty after mother's death

accuses wife of having an affair

considers marrying Thomasin after Eustacia's death

becomes an open-air preacher after realizing Thomasin will be happily married to Diggory

Yeobright: "yeoman" (yeoman) - "bright" (intelligence)

a
Mrs. Yeobright: Clym's mother and Thomasin's aunt; represents conventional Victorian values

feels Thomasin's honor is at stake when Wildeve postpones the marriage

objects to Clym marrying Eustacia, a "bad girl"

sends inheritance money through Christian Cantle; argues with Eustacia when the money was not received

travels to Clym's house, but is not let in after knocking

walks home feeling she has been turned away

a snake bites her while she's walking and dies after Clym finds her

Thomasin Yeobright: simple character; cousin of Clym

marries Diggory Venn after her husband Wildeve dies

Descriptions of Egdon Heath

Thomasin's marriage with Wildeve is postponed because of a license problem

The redleman Diggory Venn brings Thomasin to her aunt Mrs. Yeobright

Thomasin, Wildeve, and Mrs. Yeobright pretend the marriage occurred

Eustacia Vye lights a bonfire that night (Guy Fawkes Day) which Wildeve sees

Wildeve is attracted to Eustacia as he was a year ago

The redleman Diggory Venn tries to get Eustacia to leave town. He offers to marry Thomasin.

Mrs. Yeobright tells Wildeve Thomasin is thinking of marrying Venn.

Mrs. Yeobright's son Clym returns from Paris

Eustacia becomes infatuated with Clym after becoming bored with Wildeve

Eustacia meets Clym, but keeps her identity secret.

Eustacia fails to show up to an arranged meeting with Wildeve.

Venn pressures Eustacia to leave Wildeve alone. She writes a letter to Wildeve rejecting him.

Venn admits he is not engaged to Thomasin and Wildeve quickly sets a wedding date.

Wildeve marries Thomasin and the witness to their wedding is Eustacia.

Clym decides to stay in Egdon Heath. He dislikes the diamond trade in Paris and instead plans to open a local school.

Clym meets Eustacia and is impressed with her beauty.

Clym informs his mother that Eustacia could be part of the local school, but

Mrs. Yeobright doubts Clym is serious and accuses him of being interested romantically with Eustacia.

Eustacia does not like Clym's plan to open a school; she wants to go to Paris instead.

Clym proposes to Eustacia and she accepts, thinking she can change his mind about the school.

Clym marries Eustacia after a fight with his mother. Mrs. Yeobright does not attend the marriage in protest.

Mrs. Yeobright sends Christian Cantle with a hundred guineas for Clym and Thomasin as inheritance.

Wildeve gambles with Christian and takes all of the money.

Venn gambles with Wildeve and gives all of the money to Thomasin.

Mrs. Yeobright assumes Wildeve gave all of the money to Eustacia. Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia get into a bitter argument.

Clym damages his eyes by studying late into the night. He is told to quit reading for a while.

Clym takes a job as a furze cutter, humiliating Eustacia.

Eustacia goes to a local dance where she meets Wildeve. Wildeve had received a rich inheritance from a distant relative. While Eustacia resents her marriage to Clym, she refuses to get involved with him.

Wildeve goes to Eustacia's house at night, but Venn scares him with gunshots.

Wildeve goes to Eustacia's house one afternoon to avoid Venn.

Eustacia and Wildeve, in the living room while Clym is sleeping, decide they will not have an affair.

Mrs. Yeobright knocks at the door. Wildeve leaves through the back door, but it is too late when Eustacia opens the front door.

Mrs. Yeobright walks back to her home and tells Johnny Nunsuch that her son has broken her heart.

Clym finds his mother dying on the side of a road from a snake bite.

Wildeve says goodbye to Eustacia.

Mrs. Yeobright dies and Johnny tells Clym that she said that afternoon that her son had broken her heart.

Clym blames himself for his mother's death.

Clym learns that Eustacia looked out the window at Mrs. Yeobright and that there was another man in the house.

Clym accuses Eustacia of having an affair and she moves into her grandfather Captain Vye's house.

Wildeve tries to tempt Eustacia with money, but she refuses to be unfaithful. She does allow Wildeve to arrange transport to the port town of Budmouth, where she can take a ship.

Thomasin convinces Clym to forgive Eustacia, but she has already left.

Wildeve tells Thomasin that he has to go away for a while, and leaves with a huge roll of bills.

Thomasin suspects Wildeve is running away with Eustacia and tells Clym.

Clym leaves to try to stop them and Thomasin follows in the storm.

Lost, Thomasin sees Venn who helps with the search.

Clym finds Wildeve as they find Eustacia in a weir. They both jump in to save her.

Venn jumps in and pulls out Clym and Wildeve. Wildeve is dead along with Eustacia, but Clym is revived by a doctor.

Clym blames himself for the death of two loved women in his life, Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright.

One year later

Clym lives with Thomasin^{and her daughter} in his mother's old house.

Venn buys a large dairy farm with the money he has saved from selling redde.

Venn proposes to Thomasin.

Clym thinks of proposing to Thomasin, but she tells him she would like to marry Venn.

Clym supports Thomasin's decision, and Thomasin marries Venn.

Clym becomes a famous open-air preacher.

Return of the Native

Analysis

Story spans 18 months: little change in landscape

- traditional beliefs continue (side effect: hostility like rumor of Eustacia being a witch)

Characters who are not content with country life encounter the most difficulty

die in weir → Eustacia is impatient with the calm life of the heath, wishing for the "bustle" of Paris
Wildeve is bored with life on the heath

- Clym is divided: while he lived in Paris, he is able to appreciate the beauty of the heath
- careful people are those that are most comfortable in their surroundings

People resemble the place where they live

- Egdon Heath introduced first
"neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning nor tame; but, like man, slighted and enduring"

- residents are isolated and possess distinct culture from the rest of the world

nature reflects plot
- extreme heat represents Mrs. Yeobright's turmoil when she is turned away from Clym's cottage

- violent storm when Eustacia drowns; if suicide, the storm can represent her anguish

Characters who connect with nature are the most successful

- care free people are those that are most comfortable in their surroundings

- Diggory Venn is most in tune with nature's mysteries
- eventually makes living as a dairy farmer with domesticated animals, in harmony with nature, but independent

importance of conscience

- characters are motivated by conscience
- attempt to avoid social confrontation guided by fear of harm to others

- Venn does not tell Thomasin about Wildeve's affair
- while it will allow Venn to marry Thomasin, it will hurt her

- Eustacia refuses to be unfaithful and run away with Wildeve
- she cannot hurt Clym

Point of view

- third-person limited omniscient

- allows a sense of mystery

wealth

- not possible to earn wealth from the heath
- Wildeve receives fortune from the inheritance of a distant relative

- Clym possibly receives money from the ^{diamond} work in Paris

- Clym and Thomasin receive inheritance

- Diggory Venn earns money from selling redde

"soft" or "hard"

determinism, naturalism, meliorism

happening based on previous event; no responsibility and everything exists under nature and science; universe is a vast "machine" or compromise between pessimism and optimism; humans can improve world by interfering with natural processes; negative effects can also result

Irony = Statement that means the opposite of what it literally means
(underlying meaning against literal meaning)

- dramatic - audience knows something that the characters do not
- situational - event contradicts one's expectations
- verbal - sarcasm

Point of view: perspective from which a work is presented

Narrative positions

- omniscient narrator - third-person narrator that reports on the thoughts of each character's mind
- limited omniscient narrator - third-person narrator that reports on the thoughts of only one character (at a time)
- first-person narrator - narrator that tells the story from his/her point of view and may be unreliable
- stream of consciousness technique - third-person narrator tells the story, but the audience is exposed to the thoughts of the main character as they "scroll" through his/her conscious

Essays

Meaning of the work

- literal meaning
- feelings and emotions
- point of view (narrator/speaker), tone, figurative language

How this is done

- imagery
- important words or phrases that produce strongest feelings
- opposition
 - foil, tone vs. subject (i.e. satire), setting, imagery, paradox, feelings (of speaker/narrator), dilemma, time (i.e. past vs. present)

remember to refer to evidence and search for double-meanings

diction, imagery, metaphors
use literary terms

poetry: look at title and last lines, speaker, audience, dramatic situation, problem and solution, rhyme scheme, form

prose: anything revealed about ^{characterization} characters? (perhaps through first-person narrator), point of view

* easier said than done