

How does thomas
hardy portray a) tess,
b) alec in phase the
first



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the first part of the novel Tess is portrayed in a very innocent light.

She is full of virtue and incredibly child like in all other aspects except her home life. At home Tess takes on the responsibility of taking care of her brothers and sisters due to the frequent absence of her mother and father, therefore taking on the role of a second mother instead of an older sister. Tess spends most of her time in the first phase feeling guilty about something. This starts at the begging, when she feels guilty about enjoying her self as she got her dress dirty. This technique is used to enforce the theme of fate in the story.

Usually Tess feels obliged to help out the family due to her own actions. This is how she ends up going to the D'Urberville estate to claim kin, as she felt guilty, since she blames herself for killing Prince. Throughout the first phase many connections are made between Tess and nature. This gives the idea that she is a pure earth child, at one with nature. Many descriptions compare her to the natural world or environment. This enforces the idea of her innocence and quality.

The first phase lays down the original ideas of her personality that are later built upon in the book. One of the most important ideas portrayed is that Tess is physically a woman. However she is naïve and generally inexperienced, especially about the world outside of her hometown. The only point in the first phase where we hear of any hostility from Tess, is near the beginning when we hear of the reproach shown to Angel when he chooses another to dance with.

I think this shows the reader that even though Tess is shown as a perfect young girl, she is still human. She still has other emotions, like jealousy. Her angelic appearance and qualities are vital to the story line. The purity and naivety she shows suggest that she will play the part of a victim.

As it is this purity that drives Alec to want to want her so much. Therefore her individual character traits lead to her own downfall. Alexander D'Urberville immediately is established as the complete opposite of Tess. Whilst Tess possesses angelic features, Alec is described with features usually associated with the Devil. He is also strongly linked with dark colours like black or red.

Alec is portrayed as the villain in the story. He is simply there to corrupt Tess. Maybe even torture her, as he constantly pushes and intimidates her. He expects Tess should have loose morals, the same as other girls from her class. He sees Tess as an object, which he lusts after. He uses references to family, to make her think she is obliged to be there.

He plays on her weaknesses and personality faults to try and get whatever he wants. He also tries to win her favour by buying things for her family, such as a new horse and toys for the children. Any bad omen perceived by Tess is a suggested connection to Alec. When the rose pricks her chin, it almost signifies the start of the downwards spiral, which Alec inflicts upon her. The omen or fate theme is also connected to the name of the places where Alec lives. Such as Alec's home, 'The Slopes'.

At some points in the first phase, Alec is portrayed in a more positive light, in a more heroic way. He rescues Tess when she is arguing with another girl.
<https://assignbuster.com/how-does-thomas-hardy-portray-a-tess-b-alec-in-phase-the-first/>

However this heroic act is then turned sour as we see that his purpose is not so genuine. He attempts to maintain an innocent façade to try and trick Tess into thinking his intentions are good. Most of the time he has a light hearted demeanour and is playful with Tess, but never seems to be able to restrain himself. Alec's devilish qualities make him the exact opposite of the angelic Tess and only make you feel more sympathy for her as from the beginning, the odds seem to be stacked against her.