

The withered arm by
thomas hardy
argumentative essay



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Entry 1 - At work today I found out that Edward, my son's father should be bringing home his new wife tomorrow. I hear she is ' a rosy cheeked, titsy-tosy little body'; well that is what the other gossiping maids say. I know they talk about me. I've asked my son to find out what she looks like. Edward hasn't spoken to me in ages. I'm feeling isolated, all I have is my son.

Edward had to leave me. He couldn't have been associated with muck like me. I was not good enough for him. I have borne my shame alone all these years. Entry 2 - My son saw Edward's new lady as they were entering the village.

He says she is very ladylike and quite young. She has lightish hair and blueish eyes and her mouth is ' nice and red'. I later sent him to the church the next morning to see how tall she is. He says she is quite short I am taller than she is.

I now have a image of her as clear as a picture. Edward and his lady ignored his son as usual. I have scretely hoped he would return to me, but now she has destroyed my hopes. Entry 3/4 - I had the most terrible but realistic dream a few weeks ago. Gertrude Lodge was sitting on my chest whilst I was in bed; she was showing off her ring to me. I grabbed her arm and threw her across the floor.

I then woke up. It seemed so real though, as if it really happened. What is more unbelievable is that my son said he heard a noise coming from my room. I had another shock that morning after. Gertrude Lodge, the woman of my nightmare, came to my home. My son had met her before and she promised to get him some new shoes.

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Apparently she gives gifts to the poor. I felt quite guilty for hating her, as she is a nice woman. I saw her again a couple of weeks later we got onto the conversation of health and I asked how she was and she replied by showing me her arm; it was discoloured and looked as though had handled it roughly, just as in my dream. I asked her when it happened she said a fortnight ago and that it was the same time as I had my dream.

It was definitely not a coincidence; some people have called me a witch before. Could it be that I am a witch? I feel guilty for wishing her harm, as I like her. Entry 4/5 - I seem to be meeting Gertrude a lot more lately. Her arm is getting much worse; it is shrivelled and has the outline of four fingers, " It looks almost like finger marks", this is what Gertrude said after I asked to see the arm.

She has seen the doctor and has tried various potions all to no avail. Even her husband said it is as if someone has harmed her arm. Her husband is starting to dislike her because of her arm. I feel guilty because of causing her physical pain but I'm not complaining about the slight diminution in her beauty. I'm secretly pleased if Edward is beginning to love her less.

Gertrude has asked me about Conjuror Trendle and that she wants to see him. People had told her that I know of his whereabouts; this means that people must think I'm some sort of witch to know of a sorcerer such as Trendle. What if Trendle tells Gertrude that it was me who inflicted this curse on her, what would she do? I tried to get out of going with her but there is no way I will get out of it. Entry 5/6 - We visited Conjuror Trendle today. It was 5 miles walk to Egdon.

He was at home when we arrived. He examined her arm and said " medicine can't cure it... Tis the work of an enemy" I started to feel worried; what if he told her it was I? He told her he could show her if she wanted, she agreed and I was sent outside.

He left the door open slightly and I watched through the gap. He brought a tumbler from the dresser, nearly filled it with water, prepared an egg and broke it on the edge of the glass so that the white went in and the yolk remained. He leant over the table and Gertrude watched the glass, " Do you catch likeness of any face or figure as you look", he asked. I couldn't hear what she replied but she murmured something.

When she came out I asked her what she saw but didn't want to tell me she said, " Was it you who first proposed coming here?" she then said " How very odd, if you did!" She must have seen my face. Final Entry - My son and I have decided to leave Holmstoke. Ever since seeing Conjuror Trendle, Gertrude has not spoken to me. Rumours say I am responsible for her arm, which is now hanging uselessly at her side. Hopefully my son and I can find a place where no one knows us.