Chapter XIII
THE MAN'S WORLD

Ursula came back to Cossethay to fight with her mother. Her schooldays were over. She had passed the matriculation examination. Now she came home to face that empty period between school and possible marriage.

At first she thought it would be just like holidays all the time, she would feel just free. Her soul was in chaos, blinded suffering, maimed. She had no will left to think about herself. For a time she must just lapse.

But very shortly she found herself up against her mother. Her mother had, at this time, the power to irritate and madden the girl continuously. There were already seven children, yet Mrs. Brangwen was again with child, the ninth she had borne. One had died of diphtheria in infancy.

Even this fact of her mother's pregnancy enraged the eldest girl. Mrs. Brangwen was so complacent, so utterly fulfilled in her breeding. She would not have the existence at all of anything but the immediate, physical, common things. Ursula inflamed in soul, was suffering all the anguish of youth's reaching for some unknown ordeal, that it can't grasp, can't even distinguish or conceive. Maddened, she was fighting all the darkness she was up against. And part of this darkness was her mother. To limit, as her mother did, everything to the ring of physical considerations, and complacently to reject the reality of anything else, was horrible. Not a thing did Mrs. Brangwen care about, but the children, the house, and a little local gossip. And she *would not* be touched, she would let nothing else live near her. She went about, big with child, slovenly, easy, having a certain lax dignity, taking her own time, pleasing herself, always, always doing things for the children, and feeling that she thereby fulfilled the whole of womanhood.

This long trance of complacent childbearing had kept her young and undeveloped. She was scarcely a day older than when Gudrun was born. All these years nothing had happened save the coming of the children, nothing had mattered but the bodies of her babies. As her children came into consciousness, as they began to suffer their own fulfilment, she cast them off. But she remained dominant in the house. Brangwen continued in a kind of rich drowse of physical heat, in connection with his wife. They were neither of them quite personal, quite defined as individuals, so much were they pervaded by the physical heat of breeding and rearing their young.

How Ursula resented it, how she fought against the close, physical, limited life of herded domesticity! Calm, placid, unshakeable as ever, Mrs. Brangwen went about in her dominance of physical maternity.

There were battles. Ursula would fight for things that mattered to her. She would have the children less rude and tyrannical, she *would* have a place in the house. But her mother pulled her down, pulled her down. With all the cunning instinct of a breeding animal, Mrs. Brangwen ridiculed and held cheap Ursula's passions, her ideas, her pronunciations. Ursula would try to insist, in her own home, on the right of women to take equal place with men in the field of action and work.

"Ay," said the mother, "there's a good crop of stockings lying ripe for mending. Let that be your field of action."

Ursula disliked mending stockings, and this retort maddened her. She hated her mother bitterly. After a few weeks of enforced domestic life, she had had enough of her home. The commonness, the triviality, the immediate meaninglessness of it all drove her to frenzy. She talked and stormed ideas, she corrected and nagged at the children, she turned her back in silent contempt on her breeding mother, who treated her with supercilious indifference, as if she were a pretentious child not to be taken seriously.

Brangwen was sometimes dragged into the trouble. He loved Ursula, therefore he always had a sense of shame, almost of betrayal, when he turned on her. So he turned fiercely and scathingly, and with a wholesale brutality that made Ursula go white, mute, and numb. Her feelings seemed to be becoming deadened in her, her temper hard and cold.

Brangwen himself was in one of his states or flux. After all these years, he began to see a loophole of freedom. For twenty years he had gone on at this office as a draughtsman, doing work in which he had no interest, because it seemed his allotted work. The growing up of his daughters, their developing rejection of old forms set him also free.

He was a man of ceaseless activity. Blindly, like a mole, he pushed his way out of the earth that covered him, working always away from the physical element in which his life was captured. Slowly, blindly, gropingly, with what initiative was left to him, he made his way towards individual expression and individual form.

At last, after twenty years, he came back to his woodcarving, almost to the point where he had left off his Adam and Eve panel, when he was courting. But now he had knowledge and skill without vision. He saw the puerility of his young conceptions, he saw the unreal world in which they had been conceived. He now had a new strength in his sense of reality. He felt as if he were real, as if he handled real things. He had worked for many years at Cossethay, building the organ for the church, restoring the woodwork, gradually coming to a knowledge of beauty in the plain labours. Now he wanted again to carve things that were utterances of himself.

But he could not quite hitch on — always he was too busy, too uncertain, confused. Wavering, he began to study modelling. To his surprise he found he

could do it. Modelling in clay, in plaster, he produced beautiful reproductions, really beautiful. Then he set to to make a head of Ursula, in high relief, in the Donatello manner. In his first passion, he got a beautiful suggestion of his desire. But the pitch of concentration would not come. With a little ash in his mouth he gave up. He continued to copy, or to make designs by selecting motives from classic stuff. He loved the Della Robbia and Donatello as he had loved Fra Angelico when he was a young man. His work had some of the freshness, the naïve alertness of the early Italians. But it was only reproduction.

Having reached his limit in modelling, he turned to painting. But he tried watercolour painting after the manner of any other amateur. He got his results but was not much interested. After one or two drawings of his beloved church, which had the same alertness as his modelling, he seemed to be incongruous with the modern atmospheric way of painting, so that his church tower stood up, really stood and asserted its standing, but was ashamed of its own lack of meaning, he turned away again.

He took up jewellery, read Benvenuto Cellini, pored over reproductions of ornament, and began to make pendants in silver and pearl and matrix. The first things he did, in his start of discovery, were really beautiful. Those later were more imitative. But, starting with his wife, he made a pendant each for all his womenfolk. Then he made rings and bracelets.

Then he took up beaten and chiselled metal work. When Ursula left school, he was making a silver bowl of lovely shape. How he delighted in it, almost lusted after it.

All this time his only connection with the real outer world was through his winter evening classes, which brought him into contact with state education. About all the rest, he was oblivious, and entirely indifferent — even about the war. The nation did not exist to him. He was in a private retreat of his own, that had neither nationality, nor any great adherent.

Ursula watched the newspapers, vaguely, concerning the war in South Africa. They made her miserable, and she tried to have as little to do with them as possible. But Skrebensky was out there. He sent her an occasional postcard. But it was as if she were a blank wall in his direction, without windows or outgoing. She adhered to the Skrebensky of her memory.

Her love for Winifred Inger wrenched her life as it seemed from the roots and native soil where Skrebensky had belonged to it, and she was aridly transplanted. He was really only a memory. She revived his memory with strange passion, after the departure of Winifred. He was to her almost the symbol of her real life. It was as if, through him, in him, she might return to her own self, which she was before she had loved Winifred, before this deadness had come upon her, this pitiless transplanting. But even her memories were the work of her imagination.

She dreamed of him and her as they had been together. She could not dream of him progressively, of what he was doing now, of what relation he would have to her now. Only sometimes she wept to think how cruelly she had suffered when he left her — ah, *how* she had suffered! She remembered what she had written in her diary:

"If I were the moon, I know where I would fall down."

Ah, it was a dull agony to her to remember what she had been then. For it was remembering a dead self. All that was dead after Winifred. She knew the corpse of her young, loving self, she knew its grave. And the young living self she mourned for had scarcely existed, it was the creature of her imagination.

Deep within her a cold despair remained unchanging and unchanged. No one would ever love her now — she would love no one. The body of love was killed in her after Winifred, there was something of the corpse in her. She would live, she would go on, but she would have no lovers, no lover would want her any more. She herself would want no lover. The vividest little flame of desire was extinct in her for ever. The tiny, vivid germ that contained the bud of her real self, her real love, was killed, she would go on growing as a plant, she would do her best to produce her minor flowers, but her leading flower was dead before it was born, all her growth was the conveying of a corpse of hope.

The miserable weeks went on, in the poky house crammed with children. What was her life — a sordid, formless, disintegrated nothing; Ursula Brangwen a person without worth or importance, living in the mean village of Cossethay, within the sordid scope of Ilkeston. Ursula Brangwen, at seventeen, worthless and unvalued, neither wanted nor needed by anybody, and conscious herself of her own dead value. It would not bear thinking of.

But still her dogged pride held its own. She might be defiled, she might be a corpse that should never be loved, she might be a core-rotten stalk living upon the food that others provided; yet she would give in to nobody.

Gradually she became conscious that she could not go on living at home as she was doing, without place or meaning or worth. The very children that went to school held her uselessness in contempt. She must do something.

Her father said she had plenty to do to help her mother. From her parents she would never get more than a hit in the face. She was not a practical person. She thought of wild things, of running away and becoming a domestic servant, of asking some man to take her.

She wrote to the mistress of the High School for advice.

"I cannot see very clearly what you should do, Ursula," came the reply, "unless you are willing to become an elementary school teacher. You have matriculated, and that qualifies you to take a post as uncertificated teacher in any school, at a salary of about fifty pounds a year.

"I cannot tell you how deeply I sympathize with you in your desire to do something. You will learn that mankind is a great body of which you are one useful member, you will take your own place at the great task which humanity is trying to fulfil. That will give you a satisfaction and a self-respect which nothing else could give."

Ursula's heart sank. It was a cold, dreary satisfaction to think of. Yet her cold will acquiesced. This was what she wanted.

"You have an emotional nature," the letter went on, "a quick natural response. If only you could learn patience and self-discipline, I do not see why you should not make a good teacher. The least you could do is to try. You need only serve a year, or perhaps two years, as uncertificated teacher. Then you would go to one of the training colleges, where I hope you would take your degree. I most strongly urge and advise you to keep up your studies always with the intention of taking a degree. That will give you a qualification and a position in the world, and will give you more scope to choose your own way.

"I shall be proud to see one of my girls win her own economical independence, which means so much more than it seems. I shall be glad indeed to know that one more of my girls has provided for herself the means of freedom to choose for herself."

It all sounded grim and desperate. Ursula rather hated it. But her mother's contempt and her father's harshness had made her raw at the quick, she knew the ignominy of being a hanger-on, she felt the festering thorn of her mother's animal estimation.

At length she had to speak. Hard and shut down and silent within herself, she slipped out one evening to the workshed. She heard the tap-tap-tap of the hammer upon the metal. Her father lifted his head as the door opened. His face was ruddy and bright with instinct, as when he was a youth, his black moustache was cut close over his wide mouth, his black hair was fine and close as ever. But there was about him an abstraction, a sort of instrumental detachment from human things. He was a worker. He watched his daughter's hard, expressionless face. A hot anger came over his breast and belly.

"What now?" he said.

"Can't I," she answered, looking aside, not looking at him, "can't I go out to work?"

"Go out to work, what for?"

His voice was so strong, and ready, and vibrant. It irritated her.

"I want some other life than this."

A flash of strong rage arrested all his blood for a moment.

“Some other life?” he repeated. “Why, what other life do you want?”

She hesitated.

“Something else besides housework and hanging about. And I want to earn something.”

Her curious, brutal hardness of speech, and the fierce invincibility of her youth, which ignored him, made him also harden with anger.

“And how do you think *you’re* going to earn anything?” he asked.

“I can become a teacher — I’m qualified by my matric.”

He wished her matric. in hell.

“And how much are you qualified to earn by your matric.?” he asked, jeering.

“Fifty pounds a year,” she said.

He was silent, his power taken out of his hand.

He had always hugged a secret pride in the fact that his daughters need not go out to work. With his wife’s money and his own they had four hundred a year. They could draw on the capital if need be later on. He was not afraid for his old age. His daughters might be ladies.

Fifty pounds a year was a pound a week — which was enough for her to live on independently.

“And what sort of a teacher do you think you’d make? You haven’t the patience of a Jack-gnat with your own brothers and sisters, let alone with a class of children. And I thought you didn’t like dirty, board-school brats.”

“They’re not all dirty.”

“You’d find they’re not all clean.”

There was silence in the workshop. The lamplight fell on the burned silver bowl that lay between him, on mallet and furnace and chisel. Brangwen stood with a queer, catlike light on his face, almost like a smile. But it was no smile.

“Can I try?” she said.

“You can do what the deuce you like, and go where you like.”

Her face was fixed and expressionless and indifferent. It always sent him to a pitch of frenzy to see it like that. He kept perfectly still.

Cold, without any betrayal of feeling, she turned and left the shed. He worked on, with all his nerves jangled. Then he had to put down his tools and go into the house.

In a bitter tone of anger and contempt he told his wife. Ursula was present. There was a brief altercation, closed by Mrs. Brangwen's saying, in a tone of biting superiority and indifference:

"Let her find out what it's like. She'll soon have had enough."

The matter was left there. But Ursula considered herself free to act. For some days she made no move. She was reluctant to take the cruel step of finding work, for she shrank with extreme sensitiveness and shyness from new contact, new situations. Then at length a sort of doggedness drove her. Her soul was full of bitterness.

She went to the Free Library in Ilkeston, copied out addresses from the *Schoolmistress*, and wrote for application forms. After two days she rose early to meet the postman. As she expected, there were three long envelopes.

Her heart beat painfully as she went up with them to her bedroom. Her fingers trembled, she could hardly force herself to look at the long, official forms she had to fill in. The whole thing was so cruel, so impersonal. Yet it must be done.

"Name (surname first):..."

In a trembling hand she wrote, "Brangwen,—Ursula."

"Age and date of birth:..."

After a long time considering, she filled in that line.

"Qualifications, with date of Examination:..."

With a little pride she wrote:

"London Matriculation Examination."

"Previous experience and where obtained:..."

Her heart sank as she wrote:

"None."

Still there was much to answer. It took her two hours to fill in the three forms. Then she had to copy her testimonials from her headmistress and from the clergyman.

At last, however, it was finished. She had sealed the three long envelopes. In the afternoon she went down to Ilkeston to post them. She said nothing of it all to her parents. As she stamped her long letters and put them into the box at the main post office she felt as if already she was out of the reach of her father and mother, as if she had connected herself with the outer, greater world of activity, the man-made world.

As she returned home, she dreamed again in her own fashion her old, gorgeous dreams. One of her applications was to Gillingham, in Kent, one to Kingston-on-Thames, and one to Swanwick in Derbyshire.

Gillingham was such a lovely name, and Kent was the Garden of England. So that, in Gillingham, an old, old village by the hopfields, where the sun shone softly, she came out of school in the afternoon into the shadow of the plane trees by the gate, and turned down the sleepy road towards the cottage where cornflowers poked their blue heads through the old wooden fence, and phlox stood built up of blossom beside the path.

A delicate, silver-haired lady rose with delicate, ivory hands uplifted as Ursula entered the room, and:

“Oh, my dear, what do you think!”

“What is it, Mrs. Wetherall?”

Frederick had come home. Nay, his manly step was heard on the stair, she saw his strong boots, his blue trousers, his uniformed figure, and then his face, clean and keen as an eagle’s, and his eyes lit up with the glamour of strange seas, ah, strange seas that had woven through his soul, as he descended into the kitchen.

This dream, with its amplifications, lasted her a mile of walking. Then she went to Kingston-on-Thames.

Kingston-on-Thames was an old historic place just south of London. There lived the well-born dignified souls who belonged to the metropolis, but who loved peace. There she met a wonderful family of girls living in a large old Queen Anne house, whose lawns sloped to the river, and in an atmosphere of stately peace she found herself among her soul’s intimates. They loved her as sisters, they shared with her all noble thoughts.

She was happy again. In her musings she spread her poor, clipped wings, and flew into the pure empyrean.

Day followed day. She did not speak to her parents. Then came the return of her testimonials from Gillingham. She was not wanted, neither at Swanwick. The bitterness of rejection followed the sweets of hope. Her bright feathers were in the dust again.

Then, suddenly, after a fortnight, came an intimation from Kingston-on-Thames. She was to appear at the Education Office of that town on the following Thursday, for an interview with the Committee. Her heart stood still. She knew she would make the Committee accept her. Now she was afraid, now that her removal was imminent. Her heart quivered with fear and reluctance. But underneath her purpose was fixed.

She passed shadowily through the day, unwilling to tell her news to her mother, waiting for her father. Suspense and fear were strong upon her. She dreaded going to Kingston. Her easy dreams disappeared from the grasp of reality.

And yet, as the afternoon wore away, the sweetness of the dream returned again. Kingston-on-Thames—there was such sound of dignity to her. The shadow of history and the glamour of stately progress enveloped her. The palaces would be old and darkened, the place of kings obscured. Yet it was a place of kings for her — Richard and Henry and Wolsey and Queen Elizabeth. She divined great lawns with noble trees, and terraces whose steps the water washed softly, where the swans sometimes came to earth. Still she must see the stately, gorgeous barge of the Queen float down, the crimson carpet put upon the landing stairs, the gentlemen in their purple-velvet cloaks, bare-headed, standing in the sunshine grouped on either side waiting.

“Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song.”

Evening came, her father returned home, sanguine and alert and detached as ever. He was less real than her fancies. She waited whilst he ate his tea. He took big mouthfuls, big bites, and ate unconsciously with the same abandon an animal gives to its food.

Immediately after tea he went over to the church. It was choir-practice, and he wanted to try the tunes on his organ.

The latch of the big door clicked loudly as she came after him, but the organ rolled more loudly still. He was unaware. He was practicing the anthem. She saw his small, jet-black head and alert face between the candle-flames, his slim body sagged on the music-stool. His face was so luminous and fixed, the movements of his limbs seemed strange, apart from him. The sound of the organ seemed to belong to the very stone of the pillars, like sap running in them.

Then there was a close of music and silence.

“Father!” she said.

He looked round as if at an apparition. Ursula stood shadowily within the candlelight.

"What now?" he said, not coming to earth.

It was difficult to speak to him.

"I've got a situation," she said, forcing herself to speak.

"You've got what?" he answered, unwilling to come out of his mood of organ-playing. He closed the music before him.

"I've got a situation to go to."

Then he turned to her, still abstracted, unwilling.

"Oh, where's that?" he said.

"At Kingston-on-Thames. I must go on Thursday for an interview with theCommittee."

"You must go on Thursday?"

"Yes."

And she handed him the letter. He read it by the light of the candles.

"Ursula Brangwen, Yew Tree Cottage, Cossethay, Derbyshire.

"Dear Madam, You are requested to call at the above offices on Thursday next, the 10th, at 11.30 a.m., for an interview with the committee, referring to your application for the post of assistant mistress at the Wellingborough Green Schools."

It was very difficult for Brangwen to take in this remote and official information, glowing as he was within the quiet of his church and his anthem music.

"Well, you needn't bother me with it now, need you?' he said impatiently, giving her back the letter.

"I've got to go on Thursday," she said.

He sat motionless. Then he reached more music, and there was a rushing sound of air, then a long, emphatic trumpet-note of the organ, as he laid his hands on the keys. Ursula turned and went away.

He tried to give himself again to the organ. But he could not. He could not get back. All the time a sort of string was tugging, tugging him elsewhere, miserably.

So that when he came into the house after choir practice his face was dark and his heart black. He said nothing however, until all the younger children were in bed. Ursula, however, knew what was brewing.

At length he asked:

"Where's that letter?"

She gave it to him. He sat looking at it. "You are requested to call at the above offices on Thursday next ——" It was a cold, official notice to Ursula herself and had nothing to do with him. So! She existed now as a separate social individual. It was for her to answer this note, without regard to him. He had even no right to interfere. His heart was hard and angry.

"You had to do it behind our backs, had you?" he said, with a sneer. And her heart leapt with hot pain. She knew she was free — she had broken away from him. He was beaten.

"You said, 'let her try,'" she retorted, almost apologizing to him.

He did not hear. He sat looking at the letter.

"Education Office, Kingston-on-Thames" — and then the typewritten "Miss Ursula Brangwen, Yew Tree Cottage, Cossethay." It was all so complete and so final. He could not but feel the new position Ursula held, as recipient of that letter. It was an iron in his soul.

"Well," he said at length, "you're not going."

Ursula started and could find no words to clamour her revolt.

"If you think you're going dancin' off to th' other side of London, you're mistaken."

"Why not?" she cried, at once hard fixed in her will to go.

"That's why not," he said.

And there was silence till Mrs. Brangwen came downstairs.

"Look here, Anna," he said, handing her the letter.

She put back her head, seeing a typewritten letter, anticipating trouble from the outside world. There was the curious, sliding motion of her eyes, as if she shut off her sentient, maternal self, and a kind of hard trance, meaningless,

took its place. Thus, meaningless, she glanced over the letter, careful not to take it in. She apprehended the contents with her callous, superficial mind. Her feeling self was shut down.

"What post is it?" she asked.

"She wants to go and be a teacher in Kingston-on-Thames, at fifty pounds a year."

"Oh, indeed."

The mother spoke as if it were a hostile fact concerning some stranger. She would have let her go, out of callousness. Mrs. Brangwen would begin to grow up again only with her youngest child. Her eldest girl was in the way now.

"She's not going all that distance," said the father.

"I have to go where they want me," cried Ursula. "And it's a good place to go to."

"What do you know about the place?" said her father harshly.

"And it doesn't matter whether they want you or not, if your father says you are not to go," said the mother calmly.

How Ursula hated her!

"You said I was to try," the girl cried. "Now I've got a place and I'm going to go."

"You're not going all that distance," said her father.

"Why don't you get a place at Ilkeston, where you can live at home?" asked Gudrun, who hated conflicts, who could not understand Ursula's uneasy way, yet who must stand by her sister.

"There aren't any places in Ilkeston," cried Ursula. "And I'd rather go right away."

"If you'd asked about it, a place could have been got for you in Ilkeston. But you had to play Miss High-an'-mighty, and go your own way," said her father.

"I've no doubt you'd rather go right away," said her mother, very caustic. "And I've no doubt you'd find other people didn't put up with you for very long either. You've too much opinion of yourself for your good."

Between the girl and her mother was a feeling of pure hatred. There came a stubborn silence. Ursula knew she must break it.

"Well, they've written to me, and I s'll have to go," she said.

"Where will you get the money from?" asked her father.

"Uncle Tom will give it me," she said.

Again there was silence. This time she was triumphant.

Then at length her father lifted his head. His face was abstracted, he seemed to be abstracting himself, to make a pure statement.

"Well, you're not going all that distance away," he said. "I'll ask Mr. Burt about a place here. I'm not going to have you by yourself at the other side of London."

"But I've *got* to go to Kingston," said Ursula. "They've sent for me."

"They'll do without you," he said.

There was a trembling silence when she was on the point of tears.

"Well," she said, low and tense, "you can put me off this, but I'm *going* to have a place. I'm *not* going to stop at home."

"Nobody wants you to stop at home," he suddenly shouted, going livid with rage.

She said no more. Her nature had gone hard and smiling in its own arrogance, in its own antagonistic indifference to the rest of them. This was the state in which he wanted to kill her. She went singing into the parlour.

"C'est la mère Michel qui a perdu son chat,
Qui cri par la fenêtre qu'est-ce qui le lui renda ——"

During the next days Ursula went about bright and hard, singing to herself, making love to the children, but her soul hard and cold with regard to her parents. Nothing more was said. The hardness and brightness lasted for four days. Then it began to break up. So at evening she said to her father:

"Have you spoken about a place for me?"

"I spoke to Mr. Burt."

"What did he say?"

"There's a committee meeting tomorrow. He'll tell me on Friday."

So she waited till Friday. Kingston-on-Thames had been an exciting dream. Here she could feel the hard, raw reality. So she knew that this would come to pass. Because nothing was ever fulfilled, she found, except in the hard limited reality. She did not want to be a teacher in Ilkeston, because she knew Ilkeston, and hated it. But she wanted to be free, so she must take her freedom where she could.

On Friday her father said there was a place vacant in Brinsley Street school. This could most probably be secured for her, at once, without the trouble of application.

Her heart halted. Brinsley Street was a school in a poor quarter, and she had had a taste of the common children of Ilkeston. They had shouted after her and thrown stones. Still, as a teacher, she would be in authority. And it was all unknown. She was excited. The very forest of dry, sterile brick had some fascination for her. It was so hard and ugly, so relentlessly ugly, it would purge her of some of her floating sentimentality.

She dreamed how she would make the little, ugly children love her. She would be so *personal*. Teachers were always so hard and impersonal. There was no vivid relationship. She would make everything personal and vivid, she would give herself, she would give, give, give all her great stores of wealth to her children, she would make them so happy, and they would prefer her to any teacher on the face of the earth.

At Christmas she would choose such fascinating Christmas cards for them, and she would give them such a happy party in one of the classrooms.

The headmaster, Mr. Harby, was a short, thick-set, rather common man, she thought. But she would hold before him the light of grace and refinement, he would have her in such high esteem before long. She would be the gleaming sun of the school, the children would blossom like little weeds, the teachers like tall, hard plants would burst into rare flower.

The Monday morning came. It was the end of September, and a drizzle of fine rain like veils round her, making her seem intimate, a world to herself. She walked forward to the new land. The old was blotted out. The veil would be rent that hid the new world. She was gripped hard with suspense as she went down the hill in the rain, carrying her dinner bag.

Through the thin rain she saw the town, a black, extensive mount. She must enter in upon it. She felt at once a feeling of repugnance and of excited fulfilment. But she shrank.

She waited at the terminus for the tram. Here it was beginning. Before her was the station to Nottingham, whence Theresa had gone to school half an hour before; behind her was the little church school she had attended when she was a child, when her grandmother was alive. Her grandmother had been dead two years now. There was a strange woman at the Marsh, with her Uncle Fred, and

a small baby. Behind her was Cossethay, and blackberries were ripe on the hedges.

As she waited at the tram terminus she reverted swiftly to her childhood; her teasing grandfather, with his fair beard and blue eyes, and his big, monumental body; he had got drowned: her grandmother, whom Ursula would sometimes say she had loved more than anyone else in the world: the little church school, the Phillips boys; one was a soldier in the Life Guards now, one was a collier. With a passion she clung to the past.

But as she dreamed of it, she heard the tram car grinding round a bend, rumbling dully, she saw it draw into sight, and hum nearer. It sidled round the loop at the terminus, and came to a standstill, looming above her. Some shadowy grey people stepped from the far end, the conductor was walking in the puddles, swinging round the pole.

She mounted into the wet, comfortless tram, whose floor was dark with wet, whose windows were all steamed, and she sat in suspense. It had begun, her new existence.

One other passenger mounted — a sort of charwoman with a drab, wet coat. Ursula could not bear the waiting of the tram. The bell clanged, there was a lurch forward. The car moved cautiously down the wet street. She was being carried forward, into her new existence. Her heart burned with pain and suspense, as if something were cutting her living tissue.

Often, oh often the tram seemed to stop, and wet, cloaked people mounted and sat mute and grey in stiff rows opposite her, their umbrellas between their knees. The windows of the tram grew more steamy; opaque. She was shut in with these unliving, spectral people. Even yet it did not occur to her that she was one of them. The conductor came down issuing tickets. Each little ring of his clipper sent a pang of dread through her. But her ticket surely was different from the rest.

They were all going to work; she also was going to work. Her ticket was the same. She sat trying to fit in with them. But fear was at her bowels, she felt an unknown, terrible grip upon her.

At Bath Street she must dismount and change trams. She looked uphill. It seemed to lead to freedom. She remembered the many Saturday afternoons she had walked up to the shops. How free and careless she had been!

Ah, her tram was sliding gingerly downhill. She dreaded every yard of her conveyance. The car halted, she mounted hastily.

She kept turning her head as the car ran on, because she was uncertain of the street. At last, her heart a flame of suspense, trembling, she rose. The conductor rang the bell brusquely.

She was walking down a small, mean, wet street, empty of people. The school squatted low within its railed, asphalt yard, that shone black with rain. The building was grimy, and horrible, dry plants were shadowily looking through the windows.

She entered the arched doorway of the porch. The whole place seemed to have a threatening expression, imitating the church's architecture, for the purpose of domineering, like a gesture of vulgar authority. She saw that one pair of feet had paddled across the flagstone floor of the porch. The place was silent, deserted, like an empty prison waiting the return of tramping feet.

Ursula went forward to the teachers' room that burrowed in a gloomy hole. She knocked timidly.

"Come in!" called a surprised man's voice, as from a prison cell. She entered the dark little room that never got any sun. The gas was lighted naked and raw. At the table a thin man in shirt sleeves was rubbing a paper on a jellytray. He looked up at Ursula with his narrow, sharp face, said "Good morning," then turned away again, and stripped the paper off the tray, glancing at the violet-coloured writing transferred, before he dropped the curled sheet aside among a heap.

Ursula watched him fascinated. In the gaslight and gloom and the narrowness of the room, all seemed unreal.

"Isn't it a nasty morning," she said.

"Yes," he said, "it's not much of weather."

But in here it seemed that neither morning nor weather really existed. This place was timeless. He spoke in an occupied voice, like an echo. Ursula did not know what to say. She took off her waterproof.

"Am I early?" she asked.

The man looked first at a little clock, then at her. His eyes seemed to be sharpened to needle-points of vision.

"Twenty-five past," he said. "You're the second to come. I'm first this morning."

Ursula sat down gingerly on the edge of a chair, and watched his thin red hands rubbing away on the white surface of the paper, then pausing, pulling up a corner of the sheet, peering, and rubbing away again. There was a great heap of curled white-and-scribbled sheets on the table.

"Must you do so many?" asked Ursula.

Again the man glanced up sharply. He was about thirty or thirty-three years old, thin, greenish, with a long nose and a sharp face. His eyes were blue, and sharp as points of steel, rather beautiful, the girl thought.

“Sixty-three,” he answered.

“So many!” she said, gently. Then she remembered.

“But they’re not all for your class, are they?” she added.

“Why aren’t they?” he replied, a fierceness in his voice.

Ursula was rather frightened by his mechanical ignoring of her, and his directness of statement. It was something new to her. She had never been treated like this before, as if she did not count, as if she were addressing a machine.

“It is too many,” she said sympathetically.

“You’ll get about the same,” he said.

That was all she received. She sat rather blank, not knowing how to feel. Still she liked him. He seemed so cross. There was a queer, sharp, keen-edge feeling about him that attracted her and frightened her at the same time. It was so cold, and against his nature.

The door opened, and a short, neutral-tinted young woman of about twenty-eight appeared.

“Oh, Ursula!” the newcomer exclaimed. “You are here early! My word, I’ll warrant you don’t keep it up. That’s Mr. Williamson’s peg. This is yours. Standard Five teacher always has this. Aren’t you going to take your hat off?”

Miss Violet Harby removed Ursula’s waterproof from the peg on which it was hung, to one a little farther down the row. She had already snatched the pins from her own stuff hat, and jammed them through her coat. She turned to Ursula, as she pushed up her frizzed, flat, dun-coloured hair.

“Isn’t it a beastly morning,” she exclaimed, “beastly! And if there’s one thing I hate above another it’s a wet Monday morning; — pack of kids trailing in anyhow-nohow, and no holding ’em ——”

She had taken a black pinafore from a newspaper package, and was tying it round her waist.

“You’ve brought an apron, haven’t you?” she said jerkily, glancing at Ursula. “Oh — you’ll want one. You’ve no idea what a sight you’ll look before half past four, what with chalk and ink and kids’ dirty feet. — Well, I can send a boy down to mamma’s for one.”

"Oh, it doesn't matter," said Ursula.

"Oh, yes — I can send easily," cried Miss Harby.

Ursula's heart sank. Everybody seemed so cocksure and so bossy. How was she going to get on with such jolty, jerky, bossy people? And Miss Harby had not spoken a word to the man at the table. She simply ignored him. Ursula felt the callous crude rudeness between the two teachers.

The two girls went out into the passage. A few children were already clattering in the porch.

"Jim Richards," called Miss Harby, hard and authoritative. A boy came sheepishly forward.

"Shall you go down to our house for me, eh?" said Miss Harby, in a commanding, condescending, coaxing voice. She did not wait for an answer. "Go down and ask mamma to send me one of my school pinas, for Miss Brangwen — shall you?"

The boy muttered a sheepish "Yes, miss," and was moving away.

"Hey," called Miss Harby. "Come here — now what are you going for? What shall you say to mamma?"

"A school pina ——" muttered the boy.

"'Please, Mrs. Harby, Miss Harby says will you send her another school pinafore for Miss Brangwen, because she's come without one.'"

"Yes, miss," muttered the boy, head ducked, and was moving off. Miss Harby caught him back, holding him by the shoulder.

"What are you going to say?"

"Please, Mrs. Harby, Miss Harby wants a pinny for Miss Brangwin," muttered the boy very sheepishly.

"Miss *Brangwen*!" laughed Miss Harby, pushing him away. "Here, you'd better have my umbrella — wait a minute."

The unwilling boy was rigged up with Miss Harby's umbrella, and set off.

"Don't take long over it," called Miss Harby, after him. Then she turned to Ursula, and said brightly:

"Oh, he's a caution, that lad — but not bad, you know."

"No," Ursula agreed, weakly.

The latch of the door clicked, and they entered the big room. Ursula glanced down the place. Its rigid, long silence was official and chilling. Half-way down was a glass partition, the doors of which were open. A clock ticked re-echoing, and Miss Harby's voice sounded double as she said:

"This is the big room — Standard Five-Six-and-Seven. — Here's your place — Five ——"

She stood in the near end of the great room. There was a small high teacher's desk facing a squadron of long benches, two high windows in the wall opposite.

It was fascinating and horrible to Ursula. The curious, unliving light in the room changed her character. She thought it was the rainy morning. Then she looked up again, because of the horrid feeling of being shut in a rigid, inflexible air, away from all feeling of the ordinary day; and she noticed that the windows were of ribbed, suffused glass.

The prison was round her now! She looked at the walls, colour washed, pale green and chocolate, at the large windows with frowsy geraniums against the pale glass, at the long rows of desks, arranged in a squadron, and dread filled her. This was a new world, a new life, with which she was threatened. But still excited, she climbed into her chair at her teacher's desk. It was high, and her feet could not reach the ground, but must rest on the step. Lifted up there, off the ground, she was in office. How queer, how queer it all was! How different it was from the mist of rain blowing over Cossethay. As she thought of her own village, a spasm of yearning crossed her, it seemed so far off, so lost to her.

She was here in this hard, stark reality — reality. It was queer that she should call this the reality, which she had never known till today, and which now so filled her with dread and dislike, that she wished she might go away. This was the reality, and Cossethay, her beloved, beautiful, wellknown Cossethay, which was as herself unto her, that was minor reality. This prison of a school was reality. Here, then, she would sit in state, the queen of scholars! Here she would realise her dream of being the beloved teacher bringing light and joy to her children! But the desks before her had an abstract angularity that bruised her sentiment and made her shrink. She winced, feeling she had been a fool in her anticipations. She had brought her feelings and her generosity to where neither generosity nor emotion were wanted. And already she felt rebuffed, troubled by the new atmosphere, out of place.

She slid down, and they returned to the teacher's room. It was queer to feel that one ought to alter one's personality. She was nobody, there was no reality in herself, the reality was all outside of her, and she must apply herself to it.

Mr. Harby was in the teachers' room, standing before a big, open cupboard, in which Ursula could see piles of pink blotting-paper, heaps of shiny new books, boxes of chalk, and bottles of coloured inks. It looked a treasure store.

The schoolmaster was a short, sturdy man, with a fine head, and a heavy jowl. Nevertheless he was good-looking, with his shapely brows and nose, and his great, hanging moustache. He seemed absorbed in his work, and took no notice of Ursula's entry. There was something insulting in the way he could be so actively unaware of another person, so occupied.

When he had a moment of absence, he looked up from the table and said good morning to Ursula. There was a pleasant light in his brown eyes. He seemed very manly and incontrovertible, like something she wanted to push over.

"You had a wet walk," he said to Ursula.

"Oh, I don't mind, I'm used to it," she replied, with a nervous little laugh.

But already he was not listening. Her words sounded ridiculous and babbling. He was taking no notice of her.

"You will sign your name here," he said to her, as if she were some child — "and the time when you come and go."

Ursula signed her name in the time book and stood back. No one took any further notice of her. She beat her brains for something to say, but in vain.

"I'd let them in now," said Mr. Harby to the thin man, who was very hastily arranging his papers.

The assistant teacher made no sign of acquiescence, and went on with what he was doing. The atmosphere in the room grew tense. At the last moment Mr. Brunt slipped into his coat.

"You will go to the girls' lobby," said the schoolmaster to Ursula, with a fascinating, insulting geniality, purely official and domineering.

She went out and found Miss Harby, and another girl teacher, in the porch. On the asphalt yard the rain was falling. A toneless bell tang-tang-tanged drearily overhead, monotonously, insistently. It came to an end. Then Mr. Brunt was seen, bare-headed, standing at the other gate of the school yard, blowing shrill blasts on a whistle and looking down the rainy, dreary street.

Boys in gangs and streams came trotting up, running past the master and with a loud clatter of feet and voices, over the yard to the boys' porch. Girls were running and walking through the other entrance.

In the porch where Ursula stood there was a great noise of girls, who were tearing off their coats and hats, and hanging them on the racks bristling with pegs. There was a smell of wet clothing, a tossing out of wet, draggled hair, a noise of voices and feet.

The mass of girls grew greater, the rage around the pegs grew steadier, the scholars tended to fall into little noisy gangs in the porch. Then Violet Harby clapped her hands, clapped them louder, with a shrill “Quiet, girls, quiet!”

There was a pause. The hubbub died down but did not cease.

“What did I say?” cried Miss Harby, shrilly.

There was almost complete silence. Sometimes a girl, rather late, whirled into the porch and flung off her things.

“Leaders — in place,” commanded Miss Harby shrilly.

Pairs of girls in pinafores and long hair stood separate in the porch.

“Standard Four, Five, and Six — fall in,” cried Miss Harby.

There was a hubbub, which gradually resolved itself into three columns of girls, two and two, standing smirking in the passage. In among the peg racks, other teachers were putting the lower classes into ranks.

Ursula stood by her own Standard Five. They were jerking their shoulders, tossing their hair, nudging, writhing, staring, grinning, whispering and twisting.

A sharp whistle was heard, and Standard Six, the biggest girls, set off, led by Miss Harby. Ursula, with her Standard Five, followed after. She stood beside a smirking, grinning row of girls, waiting in a narrow passage. What she was herself she did not know.

Suddenly the sound of a piano was heard, and Standard Six set off hollowly down the big room. The boys had entered by another door. The piano played on, a march tune, Standard Five followed to the door of the big room. Mr. Harby was seen away beyond at his desk. Mr. Brunt guarded the other door of the room. Ursula’s class pushed up. She stood near them. They glanced and smirked and shoved.

“Go on,” said Ursula.

They tittered.

“Go on,” said Ursula, for the piano continued.

The girls broke loosely into the room. Mr. Harby, who had seemed immersed in some occupation, away at his desk, lifted his head and thundered:

“Halt!”

There was a halt, the piano stopped. The boys who were just starting through the other door, pushed back. The harsh, subdued voice of Mr. Brunt was heard, then the booming shout of Mr. Harby, from far down the room:

"Who told Standard Five girls to come in like that?"

Ursula crimsoned. Her girls were glancing up at her, smirking their accusation.

"I sent them in, Mr. Harby," she said, in a clear, struggling voice. There was a moment of silence. Then Mr. Harby roared from the distance.

"Go back to your places, Standard Five girls."

The girls glanced up at Ursula, accusing, rather jeering, fugitive. They pushed back. Ursula's heart hardened with ignominious pain.

"Forward — march," came Mr. Brunt's voice, and the girls set off, keeping time with the ranks of boys.

Ursula faced her class, some fifty five boys and girls, who stood filling the ranks of the desks. She felt utterly nonexistent. She had no place nor being there. She faced the block of children.

Down the room she heard the rapid firing of questions. She stood before her class not knowing what to do. She waited painfully. Her block of children, fifty unknown faces, watched her, hostile, ready to jeer. She felt as if she were in torture over a fire of faces. And on every side she was naked to them. Of unutterable length and torture the seconds went by.

Then she gathered courage. She heard Mr. Brunt asking questions in mental arithmetic. She stood near to her class, so that her voice need not be raised too much, and faltering, uncertain, she said:

"Seven hats at twopence ha'penny each?"

A grin went over the faces of the class, seeing her commence. She was red and suffering. Then some hands shot up like blades, and she asked for the answer.

The day passed incredibly slowly. She never knew what to do, there came horrible gaps, when she was merely exposed to the children; and when, relying on some pert little girl for information, she had started a lesson, she did not know how to go on with it properly. The children were her masters. She deferred to them. She could always hear Mr. Brunt. Like a machine, always in the same hard, high, inhuman voice he went on with his teaching, oblivious of everything. And before this inhuman number of children she was always at bay. She could not get away from it. There it was, this class of fifty collective children, depending on her for command, for command it hated and resented. It made

her feel she could not breathe: she must suffocate, it was so inhuman. They were so many, that they were not children. They were a squadron. She could not speak as she would to a child, because they were not individual children, they were a collective, inhuman thing.

Dinnertime came, and stunned, bewildered, solitary, she went into the teachers' room for dinner. Never had she felt such a stranger to life before. It seemed to her she had just disembarked from some strange horrible state where everything was as in hell, a condition of hard, malevolent system. And she was not really free. The afternoon drew at her like some bondage.

The first week passed in a blind confusion. She did not know how to teach, and she felt she never would know. Mr. Harby came down every now and then to her class, to see what she was doing. She felt so incompetent as he stood by, bullying and threatening, so unreal, that she wavered, became neutral and nonexistent. But he stood there watching with the listening-genial smile of the eyes, that was really threatening; he said nothing, he made her go on teaching, she felt she had no soul in her body. Then he went away, and his going was like a derision. The class was his class. She was a wavering substitute. He thrashed and bullied, he was hated. But he was master. Though she was gentle and always considerate of her class, yet they belonged to Mr. Harby, and they did not belong to her. Like some invincible source of the mechanism he kept all power to himself. And the class owned his power. And in school it was power, and power alone that mattered.

Soon Ursula came to dread him, and at the bottom of her dread was a seed of hate, for she despised him, yet he was master of her. Then she began to get on. All the other teachers hated him, and fanned their hatred among themselves. For he was master of them and the children, he stood like a wheel to make absolute his authority over the herd. That seemed to be his one reason in life, to hold blind authority over the school. His teachers were his subjects as much as the scholars. Only, because they had some authority, his instinct was to detest them.

Ursula could not make herself a favourite with him. From the first moment she set hard against him. She set against Violet Harby also. Mr. Harby was, however, too much for her, he was something she could not come to grips with, something too strong for her. She tried to approach him as a young, bright girl usually approaches a man, expecting a little chivalrous courtesy. But the fact that she was a girl, a woman, was ignored or used as a matter for contempt against her. She did not know what she was, nor what she must be. She wanted to remain her own responsive, personal self.

So she taught on. She made friends with the Standard Three teacher, Maggie Schofield. Miss Schofield was about twenty years old, a subdued girl who held aloof from the other teachers. She was rather beautiful, meditative, and seemed to live in another, lovelier world.

Ursula took her dinner to school, and during the second week ate it in Miss Schofield's room. Standard Three classroom stood by itself and had windows on two sides, looking on to the playground. It was a passionate relief to find such a retreat in the jarring school. For there were pots of chrysanthemums and coloured leaves, and a big jar of berries: there were pretty little pictures on the wall, photogravure reproductions from Greuze, and Reynolds's "Age of Innocence", giving an air of intimacy; so that the room, with its window space, its smaller, tidier desks, its touch of pictures and flowers, made Ursula at once glad. Here at last was a little personal touch, to which she could respond.

It was Monday. She had been at school a week and was getting used to the surroundings, though she was still an entire foreigner in herself. She looked forward to having dinner with Maggie. That was the bright spot in the day. Maggie was so strong and remote, walking with slow, sure steps down a hard road, carrying the dream within her. Ursula went through the class teaching as through a meaningless daze.

Her class tumbled out at midday in haphazard fashion. She did not realise what host she was gathering against herself by her superior tolerance, her kindness and her *laisser-aller*. They were gone, and she was rid of them, and that was all. She hurried away to the teachers' room.

Mr. Brunt was crouching at the small stove, putting a little rice pudding into the oven. He rose then, and attentively poked in a small saucepan on the hob with a fork. Then he replaced the saucepan lid.

"Aren't they done?" asked Ursula gaily, breaking in on his tense absorption.

She always kept a bright, blithe manner, and was pleasant to all the teachers. For she felt like the swan among the geese, of superior heritage and belonging. And her pride at being the swan in this ugly school was not yet abated.

"Not yet," replied Mr. Brunt, laconic.

"I wonder if my dish is hot," she said, bending down at the oven. She half expected him to look for her, but he took no notice. She was hungry and she poked her finger eagerly in the pot to see if her brussels sprouts and potatoes and meat were ready. They were not.

"Don't you think it's rather jolly bringing dinner?" she said to Mr. Brunt.

"I don't know as I do," he said, spreading a serviette on a corner of the table, and not looking at her.

"I suppose it is too far for you to go home?"

"Yes," he said. Then he rose and looked at her. He had the bluest, fiercest, most pointed eyes that she had ever met. He stared at her with growing fierceness.

"If I were you, Miss Brangwen," he said, menacingly, "I should get a bit tighter hand over my class."

Ursula shrank.

"Would you?" she asked, sweetly, yet in terror. "Aren't I strict enough?"

"Because," he repeated, taking no notice of her, "they'll get you down if you don't tackle 'em pretty quick. They'll pull you down, and worry you, till Harby gets you shifted — that's how it'll be. You won't be here another six weeks"— and he filled his mouth with food — "if you don't tackle 'em and tackle 'em quick."

"Oh, but ——" Ursula said, resentfully, ruefully. The terror was deep in her.

"Harby'll not help you. This is what he'll do — he'll let you go on, getting worse and worse, till either you clear out or he clears you out. It doesn't matter to me, except that you'll leave a class behind you as I hope I shan't have to cope with."

She heard the accusation in the man's voice, and felt condemned. But still, school had not yet become a definite reality to her. She was shirking it. It was reality, but it was all outside her. And she fought against Mr. Brunt's representation. She did not want to realise.

"Will it be so terrible?" she said, quivering, rather beautiful, but with a slight touch of condescension, because she would not betray her own trepidation.

"Terrible?" said the man, turning to his potatoes again. "I dunno about terrible."

"I *do* feel frightened," said Ursula. "The children seem so ——"

"What?" said Miss Harby, entering at that moment.

"Why," said Ursula, "Mr. Brunt says I ought to tackle my class," and she laughed uneasily.

"Oh, you have to keep order if you want to teach," said Miss Harby, hard, superior, trite.

Ursula did not answer. She felt non valid before them.

"If you want to be let to *live*, you have," said Mr. Brunt.

"Well, if you can't keep order, what good are you?" said Miss Harby.

"An' you've got to do it by yourself," — his voice rose like the bitter cry of the prophets. "You'll get no *help* from anybody."

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Harby. "Some people can't be helped." And she departed.

The air of hostility and disintegration, of wills working in antagonistic subordination, was hideous. Mr. Brunt, subordinate, afraid, acid with shame, frightened her. Ursula wanted to run. She only wanted to clear out, not to understand.

Then Miss Schofield came in, and with her another, more restful note. Ursula at once turned for confirmation to the newcomer. Maggie remained personal within all this unclean system of authority.

"Is the big Anderson here?" she asked of Mr. Brunt. And they spoke of some affair about two scholars, coldly, officially.

Miss Schofield took her brown dish, and Ursula followed with her own. The cloth was laid in the pleasant Standard Three room, there was a jar with two or three monthly roses on the table.

"It is so nice in here, you *have* made it different," said Ursula gaily. But she was afraid. The atmosphere of the school was upon her.

"The big room," said Miss Schofield, "ha, it's misery to be in it!"

She too spoke with bitterness. She too lived in the ignominious position of an upper servant hated by the master above and the class beneath. She was, she knew, liable to attack from either side at any minute, or from both at once, for the authorities would listen to the complaints of parents, and both would turn round on the mongrel authority, the teacher.

So there was a hard, bitter withholding in Maggie Schofield even as she poured out her savoury mess of big golden beans and brown gravy.

"It is vegetarian hotpot," said Miss Schofield. "Would you like to try it?"

"I should love to," said Ursula.

Her own dinner seemed coarse and ugly beside this savoury, clean dish.

"I've never eaten vegetarian things," she said, "But I should think they can be good."

"I'm not really a vegetarian," said Maggie, "I don't like to bring meat to school."

"No," said Ursula, "I don't think I do either."

And again her soul rang an answer to a new refinement, a new liberty. If all vegetarian things were as nice as this, she would be glad to escape the slight uncleanness of meat.

"How good!" she cried.

"Yes," said Miss Schofield, and she proceeded to tell her the receipt. The two girls passed on to talk about themselves. Ursula told all about the High School, and about her matriculation, bragging a little. She felt so poor here, in this ugly place. Miss Schofield listened with brooding, handsome face, rather gloomy.

"Couldn't you have got to some better place than this?" she asked at length.

"I didn't know what it was like," said Ursula, doubtfully.

"Ah!" said Miss Schofield, and she turned aside her head with a bitter motion.

"Is it as horrid as it seems?" asked Ursula, frowning lightly, in fear.

"It is," said Miss Schofield, bitterly. "Ha! — it is *hateful*!"

Ursula's heart sank, seeing even Miss Schofield in the deadly bondage.

"It is Mr. Harby," said Maggie Schofield, breaking forth.

"I don't think I *could* live again in the big room — Mr. Brunt's voice and Mr. Harby — ah ——"

She turned aside her head with a deep hurt. Some things she could not bear.

"Is Mr. Harby really horrid?" asked Ursula, venturing into her own dread.

"He! — why, he's just a bully," said Miss Schofield, raising her shamed dark eyes, that flamed with tortured contempt. "He's not bad as long as you keep in with him, and refer to him, and do everything in his way — but — it's all so *mean*! It's just a question of fighting on both sides — and those great louts —"

She spoke with difficulty and with increased bitterness. She had evidently suffered. Her soul was raw with ignominy. Ursula suffered in response.

"But why is it so horrid?" she asked, helplessly.

"You can't do *anything*," said Miss Schofield. "He's against you on one side and he sets the children against you on the other. The children are simply awful. You've got to *make* them do everything. Everything, everything has got to come out of you. Whatever they learn, you've got to force it into them — and that's how it is."

Ursula felt her heart fail inside her. Why must she grasp all this, why must she force learning on fifty five reluctant children, having all the time an ugly, rude jealousy behind her, ready to throw her to the mercy of the herd of children, who would like to rend her as a weaker representative of authority. A great dread of her task possessed her. She saw Mr. Brunt, Miss Harby, Miss Schofield, all the schoolteachers, drudging unwillingly at the graceless task of compelling many children into one disciplined, mechanical set, reducing the whole set to an automatic state of obedience and attention, and then of commanding their acceptance of various pieces of knowledge. The first great task was to reduce sixty children to one state of mind, or being. This state must be produced automatically, through the will of the teacher, and the will of the whole school authority, imposed upon the will of the children. The point was that the headmaster and the teachers should have one will in authority, which should bring the will of the children into accord. But the headmaster was narrow and exclusive. The will of the teachers could not agree with his, their separate wills refused to be so subordinated. So there was a state of anarchy, leaving the final judgment to the children themselves, which authority should exist.

So there existed a set of separate wills, each straining itself to the utmost to exert its own authority. Children will never naturally acquiesce to sitting in a class and submitting to knowledge. They must be compelled by a stronger, wiser will. Against which will they must always strive to revolt. So that the first great effort of every teacher of a large class must be to bring the will of the children into accordance with his own will. And this he can only do by an abnegation of his personal self, and an application of a system of laws, for the purpose of achieving a certain calculable result, the imparting of certain knowledge. Whereas Ursula thought she was going to become the first wise teacher by making the whole business personal, and using no compulsion. She believed entirely in her own personality.

So that she was in a very deep mess. In the first place she was offering to a class a relationship which only one or two of the children were sensitive enough to appreciate, so that the mass were left outsiders, therefore against her. Secondly, she was placing herself in passive antagonism to the one fixed authority of Mr. Harby, so that the scholars could more safely harry her. She did not know, but her instinct gradually warned her. She was tortured by the voice of Mr. Brunt. On it went, jarring, harsh, full of hate, but so monotonous, it nearly drove her mad: always the same set, harsh monotony. The man was become a mechanism working on and on and on. But the personal man was in subdued friction all the time. It was horrible — all hate! Must she be like this? She could feel the ghastly necessity. She must become the same — put away the personal self, become an instrument, an abstraction, working upon a certain material, the class, to achieve a set purpose of making them know so much each day. And she could not submit. Yet gradually she felt the invincible iron closing upon her. The sun was being blocked out. Often when she went out at playtime and saw a luminous blue sky with changing clouds, it seemed just a fantasy, like a piece of painted scenery. Her heart was so black and tangled in the teaching, her personal self was shut in prison, abolished, she was

subjugate to a bad, destructive will. How then could the sky be shining? There was no sky, there was no luminous atmosphere of out-of-doors. Only the inside of the school was real — hard, concrete, real and vicious.

She would not yet, however, let school quite overcome her. She always said. "It is not a permanency, it will come to an end." She could always see herself beyond the place, see the time when she had left it. On Sundays and on holidays, when she was away at Cossethay or in the woods where the beech-leaves were fallen, she could think of St. Philip's Church School, and by an effort of will put it in the picture as a dirty little low-squatting building that made a very tiny mound under the sky, while the great beech-woods spread immense about her, and the afternoon was spacious and wonderful. Moreover the children, the scholars, they were insignificant little objects far away, oh, far away. And what power had they over her free soul? A fleeting thought of them, as she kicked her way through the beech leaves, and they were gone. But her will was tense against them all the time.

All the while, they pursued her. She had never had such a passionate love of the beautiful things about her. Sitting on top of the tram car, at evening, sometimes school was swept away as she saw a magnificent sky settling down. And her breast, her very hands, clamoured for the lovely flare of sunset. It was poignant almost to agony, her reaching for it. She almost cried aloud seeing the sundown so lovely.

For she was held away. It was no matter how she said to herself that school existed no more once she had left it. It existed. It was within her like a dark weight, controlling her movement. It was in vain the high-spirited, proud young girl flung off the school and its association with her. She was Miss Brangwen, she was Standard Five teacher, she had her most important being in her work now.

Constantly haunting her, like a darkness hovering over her heart and threatening to swoop down over it at every moment, was the sense that somehow, somehow she was brought down. Bitterly she denied unto herself that she was really a schoolteacher. Leave that to the Violet Harbys. She herself would stand clear of the accusation. It was in vain she denied it.

Within herself some recording hand seemed to point mechanically to a negation. She was incapable of fulfilling her task. She could never for a moment escape from the fatal weight of the knowledge.

And so she felt inferior to Violet Harby. Miss Harby was a splendid teacher. She could keep order and inflict knowledge on a class with remarkable efficiency. It was no good Ursula's protesting to herself that she was infinitely, infinitely the superior of Violet Harby. She knew that Violet Harby succeeded where she failed, and this in a task which was almost a test of her. She felt something all the time wearing upon her, wearing her down. She went about in these first weeks trying to deny it, to say she was free as ever. She tried not to feel at a disadvantage before Miss Harby, tried to keep up the effect of her own

superiority. But a great weight was on her, which Violet Harby could bear, and she herself could not.

Though she did not give in, she never succeeded. Her class was getting in worse condition, she knew herself less and less secure in teaching it. Ought she to withdraw and go home again? Ought she to say she had come to the wrong place, and so retire? Her very life was at test.

She went on doggedly, blindly, waiting for a crisis. Mr. Harby had now begun to persecute her. Her dread and hatred of him grew and loomed larger and larger. She was afraid he was going to bully her and destroy her. He began to persecute her because she could not keep her class in proper condition, because her class was the weak link in the chain which made up the school.

One of the offences was that her class was noisy and disturbed Mr. Harby, as he took Standard Seven at the other end of the room. She was taking composition on a certain morning, walking in among the scholars. Some of the boys had dirty ears and necks, their clothing smelled unpleasantly, but she could ignore it. She corrected the writing as she went.

"When you say 'their fur is brown', how do you write 'their'?" she asked.

There was a little pause; the boys were always jeeringly backward in answering. They had begun to jeer at her authority altogether.

"Please, miss, t-h-e-i-r", spelled a lad, loudly, with a note of mockery.

At that moment Mr. Harby was passing.

"Stand up, Hill!" he called, in a big voice.

Everybody started. Ursula watched the boy. He was evidently poor, and rather cunning. A stiff bit of hair stood straight off his forehead, the rest fitted close to his meagre head. He was pale and colourless.

"Who told you to call out?" thundered Mr. Harby.

The boy looked up and down, with a guilty air, and a cunning, cynical reserve.

"Please, sir, I was answering," he replied, with the same humble insolence.

"Go to my desk."

The boy set off down the room, the big black jacket hanging in dejected folds about him, his thin legs, rather knocked at the knees, going already with the pauper's crawl, his feet in their big boots scarcely lifted. Ursula watched him in his crawling, slinking progress down the room. He was one of her boys! When he got to the desk, he looked round, half furtively, with a sort of cunning grin and a pathetic leer at the big boys in Standard VII. Then, pitiable, pale, in his

dejected garments, he lounged under the menace of the headmaster's desk, with one thin leg crooked at the knee and the foot struck out sideways his hands in the low-hanging pockets of his man's jacket.

Ursula tried to get her attention back to the class. The boy gave her a little horror, and she was at the same time hot with pity for him. She felt she wanted to scream. She was responsible for the boy's punishment. Mr. Harby was looking at her handwriting on the board. He turned to the class.

"Pens down."

The children put down their pens and looked up.

"Fold arms."

They pushed back their books and folded arms.

Ursula, stuck among the back forms, could not extricate herself.

"*What* is your composition about?" asked the headmaster. Every hand shot up. "The ——" stuttered some voice in its eagerness to answer.

"I wouldn't advise you to call out," said Mr. Harby. He would have a pleasant voice, full and musical, but for the detestable menace that always tailed in it. He stood unmoved, his eyes twinkling under his bushy black eyebrows, watching the class. There was something fascinating in him, as he stood, and again she wanted to scream. She was all jarred, she did not know what she felt.

"Well, Alice?" he said.

"The rabbit," piped a girl's voice.

"A very easy subject for Standard Five."

Ursula felt a slight shame of incompetence. She was exposed before the class. And she was tormented by the contradictoriness of everything. Mr. Harby stood so strong, and so male, with his black brows and clear forehead, the heavy jaw, the big, overhanging moustache: such a man, with strength and male power, and a certain blind, native beauty. She might have liked him as a man. And here he stood in some other capacity, bullying over such a trifle as a boy's speaking out without permission. Yet he was not a little, fussy man. He seemed to have some cruel, stubborn, evil spirit, he was imprisoned in a task too small and petty for him, which yet, in a servile acquiescence, he would fulfil, because he had to earn his living. He had no finer control over himself, only this blind, dogged, wholesale will. He would keep the job going, since he must. And this job was to make the children spell the word "caution" correctly, and put a capital letter after a full stop. So at this he hammered with his suppressed hatred, always suppressing himself, till he was beside himself. Ursula suffered, bitterly as he stood, short and handsome and powerful, teaching her class. It

seemed such a miserable thing for him to be doing. He had a decent, powerful, rude soul. What did he care about the composition on “The Rabbit”? Yet his will kept him there before the class, threshing the trivial subject. It was habit with him now, to be so little and vulgar, out of place. She saw the shamefulness of his position, felt the fettered wickedness in him which would blaze out into evil rage in the long run, so that he was like a persistent, strong creature tethered. It was really intolerable. The jarring was torture to her. She looked over the silent, attentive class that seemed to have crystallised into order and rigid, neutral form. This he had it in his power to do, to crystallise the children into hard, mute fragments, fixed under his will: his brute will, which fixed them by sheer force.

She too must learn to subdue them to her will: she must. For it was her duty, since the school was such. He had crystallized the class into order. But to see him, a strong, powerful man, using all his power for such a purpose, seemed almost horrible. There was something hideous about it. The strange, genial light in his eye was really vicious, and ugly, his smile was one of torture. He could not be impersonal. He could not have a clear, pure purpose, he could only exercise his own brute will. He did not believe in the least in the education he kept inflicting year after year upon the children. So he must bully, only bully, even while it tortured his strong, wholesome nature with shame like a spur always galling. He was so blind and ugly and out of place. Ursula could not bear it as he stood there. The whole situation was wrong and ugly.

The lesson was finished, Mr. Harby went away. At the far end of the room she heard the whistle and the thud of the cane. Her heart stood still within her. She could not bear it, no, she could not bear it when the boy was beaten. It made her sick. She felt that she must go out of this school, this torture place. And she hated the schoolmaster, thoroughly and finally. The brute, had he no shame? He should never be allowed to continue the atrocity of this bullying cruelty. Then Hill came crawling back, blubbering piteously. There was something desolate about this blubbering that nearly broke her heart. For after all, if she had kept her class in proper discipline, this would never have happened, Hill would never have called out and been caned.

She began the arithmetic lesson. But she was distracted. The boy Hill sat away on the back desk, huddled up, blubbering and sucking his hand. It was a long time. She dared not go near, nor speak to him. She felt ashamed before him. And she felt she could not forgive the boy for being the huddled, blubbering object, all wet and snivelled, which he was.

She went on correcting the sums. But there were too many children. She could not get round the class. And Hill was on her conscience. At last he had stopped crying, and sat bunched over his hands, playing quietly. Then he looked up at her. His face was dirty with tears, his eyes had a curious washed look, like the sky after rain, a sort of wanness. He bore no malice. He had already forgotten, and was waiting to be restored to the normal position.

“Go on with your work, Hill,” she said.

The children were playing over their arithmetic, and, she knew, cheating thoroughly. She wrote another sum on the blackboard. She could not get round the class. She went again to the front to watch. Some were ready. Some were not. What was she to do?

At last it was time for recreation. She gave the order to cease working, and in some way or other got her class out of the room. Then she faced the disorderly litter of blotted, uncorrected books, of broken rulers and chewed pens. And her heart sank in sickness. The misery was getting deeper.

The trouble went on and on, day after day. She had always piles of books to mark, myriads of errors to correct, a heart-wearying task that she loathed. And the work got worse and worse. When she tried to flatter herself that the composition grew more alive, more interesting, she had to see that the handwriting grew more and more slovenly, the books more filthy and disgraceful. She tried what she could, but it was of no use. But she was not going to take it seriously. Why should she? Why should she say to herself, that it mattered, if she failed to teach a class to write perfectly neatly? Why should she take the blame unto herself?

Pay day came, and she received four pounds two shillings and one penny. She was very proud that day. She had never had so much money before. And she had earned it all herself. She sat on the top of the tram car fingering the gold and fearing she might lose it. She felt so established and strong, because of it. And when she got home she said to her mother:

“It is pay day today, mother.”

“Ay,” said her mother, coolly.

Then Ursula put down fifty shillings on the table.

“That is my board,” she said.

“Ay,” said her mother, letting it lie.

Ursula was hurt. Yet she had paid her scot. She was free. She paid for what she had. There remained moreover thirty two shillings of her own. She would not spend any, she who was naturally a spendthrift, because she could not bear to damage her fine gold.

She had a standing ground now apart from her parents. She was something else besides the mere daughter of William and Anna Brangwen. She was independent. She earned her own living. She was an important member of the working community. She was sure that fifty shillings a month quite paid for her keep. If her mother received fifty shillings a month for each of the children, she would have twenty pounds a month and no clothes to provide. Very well then.

Ursula was independent of her parents. She now adhered elsewhere. Now, the 'Board of Education' was a phrase that rang significant to her, and she felt Whitehall far beyond her as her ultimate home. In the government, she knew which minister had supreme control over Education, and it seemed to her that, in some way, he was connected with her, as her father was connected with her.

She had another self, another responsibility. She was no longer Ursula Brangwen, daughter of William Brangwen. She was also Standard Five teacher in St. Philip's School. And it was a case now of being Standard Five teacher, and nothing else. For she could not escape.

Neither could she succeed. That was her horror. As the weeks passed on, there was no Ursula Brangwen, free and jolly. There was only a girl of that name obsessed by the fact that she could not manage her class of children. At weekends there came days of passionate reaction, when she went mad with the taste of liberty, when merely to be free in the morning, to sit down at her embroidery and stitch the coloured silks was a passion of delight. For the prison house was always awaiting her! This was only a respite, as her chained heart knew well. So that she seized hold of the swift hours of the weekend, and wrung the last drop of sweetness out of them, in a little, cruel frenzy.

She did not tell anybody how this state was a torture to her. She did not confide, either to Gudrun or to her parents, how horrible she found it to be a schoolteacher. But when Sunday night came, and she felt the Monday morning at hand, she was strung up tight with dreadful anticipation, because the strain and the torture was near again.

She did not believe that she could ever teach that great, brutish class, in that brutal school: ever, ever. And yet, if she failed, she must in some way go under. She must admit that the man's world was too strong for her, she could not take her place in it; she must go down before Mr. Harby. And all her life henceforth, she must go on, never having freed herself of the man's world, never having achieved the freedom of the great world of responsible work. Maggie had taken her place there, she had even stood level with Mr. Harby and got free of him: and her soul was always wandering in far-off valleys and glades of poetry. Maggie was free. Yet there was something like subjection in Maggie's very freedom. Mr. Harby, the man, disliked the reserved woman, Maggie. Mr. Harby, the schoolmaster, respected his teacher, Miss Schofield.

For the present, however, Ursula only envied and admired Maggie. She herself had still to get where Maggie had got. She had still to make her footing. She had taken up a position on Mr. Harby's ground, and she must keep it. For he was now beginning a regular attack on her, to drive her away out of his school. She could not keep order. Her class was a turbulent crowd, and the weak spot in the school's work. Therefore she must go, and someone more useful must come in her place, someone who could keep discipline.

The headmaster had worked himself into an obsession of fury against her. He only wanted her gone. She had come, she had got worse as the weeks went

on, she was absolutely no good. His system, which was his very life in school, the outcome of his bodily movement, was attacked and threatened at the point where Ursula was included. She was the danger that threatened his body with a blow, a fall. And blindly, thoroughly, moving from strong instinct of opposition, he set to work to expel her.

When he punished one of her children as he had punished the boy Hill, for an offence against *himself*, he made the punishment extra heavy with the significance that the extra stroke came in because of the weak teacher who allowed all these things to be. When he punished for an offence against her, he punished lightly, as if offences against her were not significant. Which all the children knew, and they behaved accordingly.

Every now and again Mr. Harby would swoop down to examine exercise books. For a whole hour, he would be going round the class, taking book after book, comparing page after page, whilst Ursula stood aside for all the remarks and fault finding to be pointed at her through the scholars. It was true, since she had come, the composition books had grown more and more untidy, disorderly, filthy. Mr. Harby pointed to the pages done before her regime, and to those done after, and fell into a passion of rage. Many children he sent out to the front with their books. And after he had thoroughly gone through the silent and quivering class he caned the worst offenders well, in front of the others, thundering in real passion of anger and chagrin.

“Such a condition in a class, I can’t believe it! It is simply disgraceful! I can’t think how you have been let to get like it! Every Monday morning I shall come down and examine these books. So don’t think that because there is nobody paying any attention to you, that you are free to unlearn everything you ever learned, and go back till you are not fit for Standard Three. I shall examine all books every Monday——”

Then in a rage, he went away with his cane, leaving Ursula to confront a pale, quivering class, whose childish faces were shut in blank resentment, fear, and bitterness, whose souls were full of anger and contempt for her rather than of the master, whose eyes looked at her with the cold, inhuman accusation of children. And she could hardly make mechanical words to speak to them. When she gave an order they obeyed with an insolent off-handedness, as if to say: “As for you, do you think we would obey *you*, but for the master?” She sent the blubbering, caned boys to their seats, knowing that they too jeered at her and her authority, holding her weakness responsible for what punishment had overtaken them. And she knew the whole position, so that even her horror of physical beating and suffering sank to a deeper pain, and became a moral judgment upon her, worse than any hurt.

She must, during the next week, watch over her books, and punish any fault. Her soul decided it coldly. Her personal desire was dead for that day at least. She must have nothing more of herself in school. She was to be Standard Five teacher only. That was her duty. In school, she was nothing but Standard Five teacher. Ursula Brangwen must be excluded.

So that, pale, shut, at last distant and impersonal, she saw no longer the child, how his eyes danced, or how he had a queer little soul that could not be bothered with shaping handwriting so long as he dashed down what he thought. She saw no children, only the task that was to be done. And keeping her eyes there, on the task, and not on the child, she was impersonal enough to punish where she could otherwise only have sympathized, understood, and condoned, to approve where she would have been merely uninterested before. But her interest had no place any more.

It was agony to the impulsive, bright girl of seventeen to become distant and official, having no personal relationship with the children. For a few days, after the agony of the Monday, she succeeded, and had some success with her class. But it was a state not natural to her, and she began to relax.

Then came another infliction. There were not enough pens to go round the class. She sent to Mr. Harby for more. He came in person.

“Not enough pens, Miss Brangwen?” he said, with the smile and calm of exceeding rage against her.

“No, we are six short,” she said, quaking.

“Oh, how is that?” he said, menacingly. Then, looking over the class, he asked:

“How many are there here today?”

“Fifty two,” said Ursula, but he did not take any notice, counting for himself.

“Fifty two,” he said. “And how many pens are there, Staples?”

Ursula was now silent. He would not heed her if she answered, since he had addressed the monitor.

“That’s a very curious thing,” said Mr. Harby, looking over the silent class with a slight grin of fury. All the childish faces looked up at him blank and exposed.

“A few days ago there were sixty pens for this class — now there are forty eight. What is forty eight from sixty, Williams?” There was a sinister suspense in the question. A thin, ferret-faced boy in a sailor suit started up exaggeratedly.

“Please, sir!” he said. Then a slow, sly grin came over his face. He did not know. There was a tense silence. The boy dropped his head. Then he looked up again, a little cunning triumph in his eyes. “Twelve,” he said.

“I would advise you to attend,” said the headmaster dangerously. The boy sat down.

“Forty eight from sixty is twelve: so there are twelve pens to account for. Have you looked for them, Staples?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Then look again.”

The scene dragged on. Two pens were found: ten were missing. Then the storm burst.

“Am I to have you thieving, besides your dirt and bad work and bad behaviour?” the headmaster began. “Not content with being the worst behaved and dirtiest class in the school, you are thieves into the bargain, are you? It is a very funny thing! Pens don’t melt into the air: pens are not in the habit of mizzling away into nothing. What has become of them then? They must be somewhere. What has become of them? For they must be found, and found by Standard Five. They were lost by Standard Five, and they must be found.”

Ursula stood and listened, her heart hard and cold. She was so much upset, that she felt almost mad. Something in her tempted her to turn on the headmaster and tell him to stop, about the miserable pens. But she did not. She could not.

After every session, morning and evening, she had the pens counted. Still they were missing. And pencils and india-rubbers disappeared. She kept the class staying behind, till the things were found. But as soon as Mr. Harby had gone out of the room, the boys began to jump about and shout, and at last they bolted in a body from the school.

This was drawing near a crisis. She could not tell Mr. Harby because, while he would punish the class, he would make her the cause of the punishment, and her class would pay her back with disobedience and derision. Already there was a deadly hostility grown up between her and the children. After keeping in the class, at evening, to finish some work, she would find boys dodging behind her, calling after her: “Brangwen, Brangwen — Proud acre.”

When she went into Ilkeston of a Saturday morning with Gudrun, she heard again the voices yelling after her:

“Brangwen, Brangwen.”

She pretended to take no notice, but she coloured with shame at being held up to derision in the public street. She, Ursula Brangwen of Cossethay, could not escape from the Standard Five teacher which she was. In vain she went out to buy ribbon for her hat. They called after her, the boys she tried to teach.

And one evening, as she went from the edge of the town into the country, stones came flying at her. Then the passion of shame and anger surpassed her.

She walked on unheeding, beside herself. Because of the darkness she could not see who were those that threw. But she did not want to know.

Only in her soul a change took place. Never more, and never more would she give herself as individual to her class. Never would she, Ursula Brangwen, the girl she was, the person she was, come into contact with those boys. She would be Standard Five teacher, as far away personally from her class as if she had never set foot in St. Philip's school. She would just obliterate them all, and keep herself apart, take them as scholars only.

So her face grew more and more shut, and over her flayed, exposed soul of a young girl who had gone open and warm to give herself to the children, there set a hard, insentient thing, that worked mechanically according to a system imposed.

It seemed she scarcely saw her class the next day. She could only feel her will, and what she would have of this class which she must grasp into subjection. It was no good, any more, to appeal, to play upon the better feelings of the class. Her swift-working soul realized this.

She, as teacher, must bring them all as scholars, into subjection. And this she was going to do. All else she would forsake. She had become hard and impersonal, almost avengeful on herself as well as on them, since the stone throwing. She did not want to be a person, to be herself any more, after such humiliation. She would assert herself for mastery, be only teacher. She was set now. She was going to fight and subdue.

She knew by now her enemies in the class. The one she hated most was Williams. He was a sort of defective, not bad enough to be so classed. He could read with fluency, and had plenty of cunning intelligence. But he could not keep still. And he had a kind of sickness very repulsive to a sensitive girl, something cunning and etiolated and degenerate. Once he had thrown an inkwell at her, in one of his mad little rages. Twice he had run home out of class. He was a well-known character.

And he grinned up his sleeve at this girl-teacher, sometimes hanging round her to fawn on her. But this made her dislike him more. He had a kind of leech-like power.

From one of the children she took a supple cane, and this she determined to use when real occasion came. One morning, at composition, she said to the boy Williams:

"Why have you made this blot?"

"Please, miss, it fell off my pen," he whined out, in the mocking voice that he was so clever in using. The boys near snorted with laughter. For Williams was an actor, he could tickle the feelings of his hearers subtly. Particularly he could

tickle the children with him into ridiculing his teacher, or indeed, any authority of which he was not afraid. He had that peculiar gaol instinct.

"Then you must stay in and finish another page of composition," said the teacher.

This was against her usual sense of justice, and the boy resented it derisively. At twelve o'clock she caught him slinking out.

"Williams, sit down," she said.

And there she sat, and there he sat, alone, opposite to her, on the back desk, looking up at her with his furtive eyes every minute.

"Please, miss, I've got to go an errand," he called out insolently.

"Bring me your book," said Ursula.

The boy came out, flapping his book along the desks. He had not written a line.

"Go back and do the writing you have to do," said Ursula. And she sat at her desk, trying to correct books. She was trembling and upset. And for an hour the miserable boy writhed and grinned in his seat. At the end of that time he had done five lines.

"As it is so late now," said Ursula, "you will finish the rest this evening."

The boy kicked his way insolently down the passage.

The afternoon came again. Williams was there, glancing at her, and her heart beat thick, for she knew it was a fight between them. She watched him.

During the geography lesson, as she was pointing to the map with her cane, the boy continually ducked his whitish head under the desk, and attracted the attention of other boys.

"Williams," she said, gathering her courage, for it was critical now to speak to him, "what are you doing?"

He lifted his face, the sore-rimmed eyes half smiling. There was something intrinsically indecent about him. Ursula shrank away.

"Nothing," he replied, feeling a triumph.

"What are you doing?" she repeated, her heartbeat suffocating her.

"Nothing," replied the boy, insolently, aggrieved, comic.

"If I speak to you again, you must go down to Mr. Harby," she said.

But this boy was a match even for Mr. Harby. He was so persistent, so cringing, and flexible, he howled so when he was hurt, that the master hated more the teacher who sent him than he hated the boy himself. For of the boy he was sick of the sight. Which Williams knew. He grinned visibly.

Ursula turned to the map again, to go on with the geography lesson. But there was a little ferment in the class. Williams' spirit infected them all. She heard a scuffle, and then she trembled inwardly. If they all turned on her this time, she was beaten.

"Please, miss ——" called a voice in distress.

She turned round. One of the boys she liked was ruefully holding out a torn celluloid collar. She heard the complaint, feeling futile.

"Go in front, Wright," she said.

She was trembling in every fibre. A big, sullen boy, not bad but very difficult, slouched out to the front. She went on with the lesson, aware that Williams was making faces at Wright, and that Wright was grinning behind her. She was afraid. She turned to the map again. And she was afraid.

"Please, miss, Williams ——" came a sharp cry, and a boy on the back row was standing up, with drawn, pained brows, half a mocking grin on his pain, half real resentment against Williams — "Please, miss, he's nipped me," — and he rubbed his leg ruefully.

"Come in front, Williams," she said.

The rat-like boy sat with his pale smile and did not move.

"Come in front," she repeated, definite now.

"I shan't," he cried, snarling, rat-like, grinning. Something went click in Ursula's soul. Her face and eyes set, she went through the class straight. The boy cowered before her glowering, fixed eyes. But she advanced on him, seized him by the arm, and dragged him from his seat. He clung to the form. It was the battle between him and her. Her instinct had suddenly become calm and quick. She jerked him from his grip, and dragged him, struggling and kicking, to the front. He kicked her several times, and clung to the forms as he passed, but she went on. The class was on its feet in excitement. She saw it, and made no move.

She knew if she let go the boy he would dash to the door. Already he had run home once out of her class. So she snatched her cane from the desk, and brought it down on him. He was writhing and kicking. She saw his face beneath her, white, with eyes like the eyes of a fish, stony, yet full of hate and horrible

fear. And she loathed him, the hideous writhing thing that was nearly too much for her. In horror lest he should overcome her, and yet at the heart quite calm, she brought down the cane again and again, whilst he struggled making inarticulate noises, and lunging vicious kicks at her. With one hand she managed to hold him, and now and then the cane came down on him. He writhed, like a mad thing. But the pain of the strokes cut through his writhing, vicious, coward's courage, bit deeper, till at last, with a long whimper that became a yell, he went limp. She let him go, and he rushed at her, his teeth and eyes glinting. There was a second of agonized terror in her heart: he was a beast thing. Then she caught him, and the cane came down on him. A few times, madly, in a frenzy, he lunged and writhed, to kick her. But again the cane broke him, he sank with a howling yell on the floor, and like a beaten beast lay there yelling.

Mr. Harby had rushed up towards the end of this performance.

"What's the matter?" he roared.

Ursula felt as if something were going to break in her.

"I've thrashed him," she said, her breast heaving, forcing out the words on the last breath. The headmaster stood choked with rage, helpless. She looked at the writhing, howling figure on the floor.

"Get up," she said. The thing writhed away from her. She took a step forward. She had realized the presence of the headmaster for one second, and then she was oblivious of it again.

"Get up," she said. And with a little dart the boy was on his feet. His yelling dropped to a mad blubber. He had been in a frenzy.

"Go and stand by the radiator," she said.

As if mechanically, blubbering, he went.

The headmaster stood robbed of movement or speech. His face was yellow, his hands twitched convulsively. But Ursula stood stiff not far from him. Nothing could touch her now: she was beyond Mr. Harby. She was as if violated to death.

The headmaster muttered something, turned, and went down the room, whence, from the far end, he was heard roaring in a mad rage at his own class.

The boy blubbered wildly by the radiator. Ursula looked at the class. There were fifty pale, still faces watching her, a hundred round eyes fixed on her in an attentive, expressionless stare.

"Give out the history readers," she said to the monitors.

There was dead silence. As she stood there, she could hear again the ticking of the clock, and the chock of piles of books taken out of the low cupboard. Then came the faint flap of books on the desks. The children passed in silence, their hands working in unison. They were no longer a pack, but each one separated into a silent, closed thing.

"Take page 125, and read that chapter," said Ursula.

There was a click of many books opened. The children found the page, and bent their heads obediently to read. And they read, mechanically.

Ursula, who was trembling violently, went and sat in her high chair. The blubbering of the boy continued. The strident voice of Mr. Brunt, the roar of Mr. Harby, came muffled through the glass partition. And now and then a pair of eyes rose from the reading book, rested on her a moment, watchful, as if calculating impersonally, then sank again.

She sat still without moving, her eyes watching the class, unseeing. She was quite still, and weak. She felt that she could not raise her hand from the desk. If she sat there for ever, she felt she could not move again, nor utter a command. It was a quarter past four. She almost dreaded the closing of the school, when she would be alone.

The class began to recover its ease, the tension relaxed. Williams was still crying. Mr. Brunt was giving orders for the closing of the lesson. Ursula got down.

"Take your place, Williams," she said.

He dragged his feet across the room, wiping his face on his sleeve. As he sat down, he glanced at her furtively, his eyes still redder. Now he looked like some beaten rat.

At last the children were gone. Mr. Harby trod by heavily, without looking her way, or speaking. Mr. Brunt hesitated as she was locking her cupboard.

"If you settle Clarke and Letts in the same way, Miss Brangwen, you'll be all right," he said, his blue eyes glancing down in a strange fellowship, his long nose pointing at her.

"Shall I?" she laughed nervously. She did not want anybody to talk to her.

As she went along the street, clattering on the granite pavement, she was aware of boys dodging behind her. Something struck her hand that was carrying her bag, bruising her. As it rolled away she saw that it was a potato. Her hand was hurt, but she gave no sign. Soon she would take the tram.

She was afraid, and strange. It was to her quite strange and ugly, like some dream where she was degraded. She would have died rather than admit it to

anybody. She could not look at her swollen hand. Something had broken in her; she had passed a crisis. Williams was beaten, but at a cost.

Feeling too much upset to go home, she rode a little farther into the town, and got down from the tram at a small tea shop. There, in the dark little place behind the shop, she drank her tea and ate bread-and-butter. She did not taste anything. The taking of tea was just a mechanical action, to cover over her existence. There she sat in the dark, obscure little place, without knowing. Only unconsciously she nursed the back of her hand, which was bruised.

When finally she took her way home, it was sunset red across the west. She did not know why she was going home. There was nothing for her there. She had, true, only to pretend to be normal. There was nobody she could speak to, nowhere to go for escape. But she must keep on, under this red sunset, alone, knowing the horror in humanity, that would destroy her, and with which she was at war. Yet it had to be so.

In the morning again she must go to school. She got up and went without murmuring even to herself. She was in the hands of some bigger, stronger, coarser will.

School was fairly quiet. But she could feel the class watching her, ready to spring on her. Her instinct was aware of the class instinct to catch her if she were weak. But she kept cold and was guarded.

Williams was absent from school. In the middle of the morning there was a knock at the door: someone wanted the headmaster. Mr. Harby went out, heavily, angrily, nervously. He was afraid of irate parents. After a moment in the passage, he came again into school.

“Sturgess,” he called to one of his larger boys. “Stand in front of the class and write down the name of anyone who speaks. Will you come this way, Miss Brangwen.”

He seemed vindictively to seize upon her.

Ursula followed him, and found in the lobby a thin woman with a whitish skin, not ill-dressed in a grey costume and a purple hat.

“I called about Vernon,” said the woman, speaking in a refined accent. There was about the woman altogether an appearance of refinement and of cleanliness, curiously contradicted by her half beggar’s deportment, and a sense of her being unpleasant to touch, like something going bad inside. She was neither a lady nor an ordinary working man’s wife, but a creature separate from society. By her dress she was not poor.

Ursula knew at once that she was Williams’ mother, and that he was Vernon. She remembered that he was always clean, and well-dressed, in a sailor suit.

And he had this same peculiar, half transparent unwholesomeness, rather like a corpse.

"I wasn't able to send him to school today," continued the woman, with a false grace of manner. "He came home last night *so* ill — he was violently sick — I thought I should have to send for the doctor. — You know he has a weak heart."

The woman looked at Ursula with her pale, dead eyes.

"No," replied the girl, "I did not know."

She stood still with repulsion and uncertainty. Mr. Harby, large and male, with his overhanging moustache, stood by with a slight, ugly smile at the corner of his eyes. The woman went on insidiously, not quite human:

"Oh, yes, he has had heart disease ever since he was a child. That is why he isn't very regular at school. And it is very bad to beat him. He was awfully ill this morning — I shall call on the doctor as I go back."

"Who is staying with him now, then?" put in the deep voice of the schoolmaster, cunningly.

"Oh, I left him with a woman who comes in to help me — and who understands him. But I shall call in the doctor on my way home."

Ursula stood still. She felt vague threats in all this. But the woman was so utterly strange to her, that she did not understand.

"He told me he had been beaten," continued the woman, "and when I undressed him to put him to bed, his body was covered with marks — I could show them to any doctor."

Mr. Harby looked at Ursula to answer. She began to understand. The woman was threatening to take out a charge of assault on her son against her. Perhaps she wanted money.

"I caned him," she said. "He was so much trouble."

"I'm sorry if he was troublesome," said the woman, "but he must have been shamefully beaten. I could show the marks to any doctor. I'm sure it isn't allowed, if it was known."

"I caned him while he kept kicking me," said Ursula, getting angry because she was half excusing herself, Mr. Harby standing there with the twinkle at the side of his eyes, enjoying the dilemma of the two women.

"I'm sure I'm sorry if he behaved badly," said the woman. "But I can't think he deserved beating as he has been. I can't send him to school, and really can't

afford to pay the doctor. — Is it allowed for the teachers to beat the children like that, Mr. Harby?"

The headmaster refused to answer. Ursula loathed herself, and loathed Mr. Harby with his twinkling cunning and malice on the occasion. The other miserable woman watched her chance.

"It is an expense to me, and I have a great struggle to keep my boy decent."

Ursula still would not answer. She looked out at the asphalt yard, where a dirty rag of paper was blowing.

"And it isn't allowed to beat a child like that, I am sure, especially when he is delicate."

Ursula stared with a set face on the yard, as if she did not hear. She loathed all this, and had ceased to feel or to exist.

"Though I know he is troublesome sometimes — but I think it was too much. His body is covered with marks."

Mr. Harby stood sturdy and unmoved, waiting now to have done, with the twinkling, tiny wrinkles of an ironical smile at the corners of his eyes. He felt himself master of the situation.

"And he was violently sick. I couldn't possibly send him to school to-day. He couldn't keep his head up."

Yet she had no answer.

"You will understand, sir, why he is absent," she said, turning to Mr. Harby.

"Oh, yes," he said, rough and off-hand. Ursula detested him for his male triumph. And she loathed the woman. She loathed everything.

"You will try to have it remembered, sir, that he has a weak heart. He is so sick after these things."

"Yes," said the headmaster, "I'll see about it."

"I know he is troublesome," the woman only addressed herself to the male now — "but if you could have him punished without beating — he is really delicate."

Ursula was beginning to feel upset. Harby stood in rather superb mastery, the woman cringing to him to tickle him as one tickles trout.

"I had come to explain why he was away this morning, sir. You will understand."

She held out her hand. Harby took it and let it go, surprised and angry.

"Good morning," she said, and she gave her gloved, seedy hand to Ursula. She was not ill-looking, and had a curious insinuating way, very distasteful yet effective.

"Good morning, Mr. Harby, and thank you."

The figure in the grey costume and the purple hat was going across the school yard with a curious lingering walk. Ursula felt a strange pity for her, and revulsion from her. She shuddered. She went into the school again.

The next morning Williams turned up, looking paler than ever, very neat and nicely dressed in his sailor blouse. He glanced at Ursula with a half-smile: cunning, subdued, ready to do as she told him. There was something about him that made her shiver. She loathed the idea of having laid hands on him. His elder brother was standing outside the gate at playtime, a youth of about fifteen, tall and thin and pale. He raised his hat, almost like a gentleman. But there was something subdued, insidious about him too.

"Who is it?" said Ursula.

"It's the big Williams," said Violet Harby roughly. "*She* was here yesterday, wasn't she?"

"Yes."

"It's no good her coming — her character's not good enough for her to make any trouble."

Ursula shrank from the brutality and the scandal. But it had some vague, horrid fascination. How sordid everything seemed! She felt sorry for the queer woman with the lingering walk, and those queer, insidious boys. The Williams in her class was wrong somewhere. How nasty it was altogether.

So the battle went on till her heart was sick. She had several more boys to subjugate before she could establish herself. And Mr. Harby hated her almost as if she were a man. She knew now that nothing but a thrashing would settle some of the big louts who wanted to play cat and mouse with her. Mr. Harby would not give them the thrashing if he could help it. For he hated the teacher, the stuck-up, insolent high school miss with her independence.

"Now, Wright, what have you done this time?" he would say genially to the boy who was sent to him from Standard Five for punishment. And he left the lad standing, lounging, wasting his time.

So that Ursula would appeal no more to the headmaster, but, when she was driven wild, she seized her cane, and slashed the boy who was insolent to her,

over head and ears and hands. And at length they were afraid of her, she had them in order.

But she had paid a great price out of her own soul, to do this. It seemed as if a great flame had gone through her and burnt her sensitive tissue. She who shrank from the thought of physical suffering in any form, had been forced to fight and beat with a cane and rouse all her instincts to hurt. And afterwards she had been forced to endure the sound of their blubbering and desolation, when she had broken them to order.

Oh, and sometimes she felt as if she would go mad. What did it matter, what did it matter if their books were dirty and they did not obey? She would rather, in reality, that they disobeyed the whole rules of the school, than that they should be beaten, broken, reduced to this crying, hopeless state. She would rather bear all their insults and insolences a thousand times than reduce herself and them to this. Bitterly she repented having got beside herself, and having tackled the boy she had beaten.

Yet it had to be so. She did not want to do it. Yet she had to. Oh, why, why had she leagued herself to this evil system where she must brutalize herself to live? Why had she become a school teacher, why, why?

The children had forced her to the beatings. No, she did not pity them. She had come to them full of kindness and love, and they would have torn her to pieces. They chose Mr. Harby. Well then, they must know her as well as Mr. Harby, they must first be subjugate to her. For she was not going to be made nought, no, neither by them, nor by Mr. Harby, nor by all the system around her. She was not going to be put down, prevented from standing free. It was not to be said of her, she could not take her place and carry out her task. She would fight and hold her place in this state also, in the world of work and man's convention.

She was isolated now from the life of her childhood, a foreigner in a new life, of work and mechanical consideration. She and Maggie, in their dinner hours and their occasional teas at the little restaurant, discussed life and ideas. Maggie was a great suffragette, trusting in the vote. To Ursula the vote was never a reality. She had within her the strange, passionate knowledge of religion and living far transcending the limits of the automatic system that contained the vote. But her fundamental, organic knowledge had as yet to take form and rise to utterance. For her, as for Maggie, the liberty of woman meant something real and deep. She felt that somewhere, in something, she was not free. And she wanted to be. She was in revolt. For once she were free she could get somewhere. Ah, the wonderful, real somewhere that was beyond her, the somewhere that she felt deep, deep inside her.

In coming out and earning her own living she had made a strong, cruel move towards freeing herself. But having more freedom she only became more profoundly aware of the big want. She wanted so many things. She wanted to read great, beautiful books, and be rich with them; she wanted to see beautiful

things, and have the joy of them for ever; she wanted to know big, free people; and there remained always the want she could put no name to.

It was so difficult. There were so many things, so much to meet and surpass. And one never knew where one was going. It was a blind fight. She had suffered bitterly in this school of St. Philip's. She was like a young filly that has been broken in to the shafts, and has lost its freedom. And now she was suffering bitterly from the agony of the shafts. The agony, the galling, the ignominy of her breaking in. This wore into her soul. But she would never submit. To shafts like these she would never submit for long. But she would know them. She would serve them that she might destroy them.

She and Maggie went to all kinds of places together, to big suffrage meetings in Nottingham, to concerts, to theatres, to exhibitions of pictures. Ursula saved her money and bought a bicycle, and the two girls rode to Lincoln, to Southwell, and into Derbyshire. They had an endless wealth of things to talk about. And it was a great joy, finding, discovering.

But Ursula never told about Winifred Inger. That was a sort of secret sideshow to her life, never to be opened. She did not even think of it. It was the closed door she had not the strength to open.

Once she was broken in to her teaching, Ursula began gradually to have a new life of her own again. She was going to college in eighteen months' time. Then she would take her degree, and she would — ah, she would perhaps be a big woman, and lead a movement. Who knows? — At any rate she would go to college in eighteen months' time. All that mattered now was work, work.

And till college, she must go on with this teaching in St. Philip's School, which was always destroying her, but which she could now manage, without spoiling all her life. She would submit to it for a time, since the time had a definite limit.

The class teaching itself at last became almost mechanical. It was a strain on her, an exhausting wearying strain, always unnatural. But there was a certain amount of pleasure in the sheer oblivion of teaching, so much work to do, so many children to see after, so much to be done, that one's self was forgotten. When the work had become like habit to her, and her individual soul was left out, had its growth elsewhere, then she could be almost happy.

Her real, individual self drew together and became more coherent during these two years of teaching, during the struggle against the odds of class teaching. It was always a prison to her, the school. But it was a prison where her wild, chaotic soul became hard and independent. When she was well enough and not tired, then she did not hate the teaching. She enjoyed getting into the swing of work of a morning, putting forth all her strength, making the thing go. It was for her a strenuous form of exercise. And her soul was left to rest, it had the time of torpor in which to gather itself together in strength again. But the teaching hours were too long, the tasks too heavy, and the disciplinary

condition of the school too unnatural for her. She was worn very thin and quivering.

She came to school in the morning seeing the hawthorn flowers wet, the little, rosy grains swimming in a bowl of dew. The larks quivered their song up into the new sunshine, and the country was so glad. It was a violation to plunge into the dust and greyness of the town.

So that she stood before her class unwilling to give herself up to the activity of teaching, to turn her energy, that longed for the country and for joy of early summer, into the dominating of fifty children and the transferring to them some morsels of arithmetic. There was a little absentness about her. She could not force herself into forgetfulness. A jar of buttercups and fool's-parsley in the window-bottom kept her away in the meadows, where in the lush grass the moon-daisies were half submerged, and a spray of pink ragged robin. Yet before her were faces of fifty children. They were almost like big daisies in a dimness of the grass.

A brightness was on her face, a little unreality in her teaching. She could not quite see her children. She was struggling between two worlds, her own world of young summer and flowers, and this other world of work. And the glimmer of her own sunlight was between her and her class.

Then the morning passed with a strange far-awayness and quietness. Dinner-time came, when she and Maggie ate joyously, with all the windows open. And then they went out into St. Philip's churchyard, where was a shadowy corner under red hawthorn trees. And there they talked and read Shelley or Browning or some work about "Woman and Labour".

And when she went back to school, Ursula lived still in the shadowy corner of the graveyard, where pink-red petals lay scattered from the hawthorn tree, like myriad tiny shells on a beach, and a church bell sometimes rang sonorously, and sometimes a bird called out, whilst Maggie's voice went on low and sweet.

These days she was happy in her soul: oh, she was so happy, that she wished she could take her joy and scatter it in armfuls broadcast. She made her children happy, too, with a little tingling of delight. But to her, the children were not a school class this afternoon. They were flowers, birds, little bright animals, children, anything. They only were not Standard Five. She felt no responsibility for them. It was for once a game, this teaching. And if they got their sums wrong, what matter? And she would take a pleasant bit of reading. And instead of history with dates, she would tell a lovely tale. And for grammar, they could have a bit of written analysis that was not difficult, because they had done it before:

"She shall be sportive as a fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs."

She wrote that from memory, because it pleased her.

So the golden afternoon passed away and she went home happy. She had finished her day of school, and was free to plunge into the glowing evening of Cossethay. And she loved walking home. But it had not been school. It had been playing at school beneath red hawthorn blossom.

She could not go on like this. The quarterly examination was coming, and her class was not ready. It irritated her that she must drag herself away from her happy self, and exert herself with all her strength to force, to compel this heavy class of children to work hard at arithmetic. They did not want to work, she did not want to compel them. And yet, some second conscience gnawed at her, telling her the work was not properly done. It irritated her almost to madness, and she let loose all the irritation in the class. Then followed a day of battle and hate and violence, when she went home raw, feeling the golden evening taken away from her, herself incarcerated in some dark, heavy place, and chained there with a consciousness of having done badly at work.

What good was it that it was summer, that right till evening, when the corncrakes called, the larks would mount up into the light, to sing once more before nightfall. What good was it all, when she was out of tune, when she must only remember the burden and shame of school that day.

And still, she hated school. Still she cried, she did not believe in it. Why should the children learn, and why should she teach them? It was all so much milling the wind. What folly was it that made life into this, the fulfilling of some stupid, factitious duty? It was all so made up, so unnatural. The school, the sums, the grammar, the quarterly examinations, the registers — it was all a barren nothing!

Why should she give her allegiance to this world, and let it so dominate her, that her own world of warm sun and growing, sap-filled life was turned into nothing? She was not going to do it. She was not going to be a prisoner in the dry, tyrannical man-world. She was not going to care about it. What did it matter if her class did ever so badly in the quarterly examination. Let it — what did it matter?

Nevertheless, when the time came, and the report on her class was bad, she was miserable, and the joy of the summer was taken away from her, she was shut up in gloom. She could not really escape from this world of system and work, out into her fields where she was happy. She must have her place in the working world, be a recognized member with full rights there. It was more important to her than fields and sun and poetry, at this time. But she was only the more its enemy.

It was a very difficult thing, she thought, during the long hours of intermission in the summer holidays, to be herself, her happy self that enjoyed

so much to lie in the sun, to play and swim and be content, and also to be a schoolteacher getting results out of a class of children. She dreamed fondly of the time when she need not be a teacher any more. But vaguely, she knew that responsibility had taken place in her for ever, and as yet her prime business was to work.

The autumn passed away, the winter was at hand. Ursula became more and more an inhabitant of the world of work, and of what is called life. She could not see her future, but a little way off, was college, and to the thought of this she clung fixedly. She would go to college, and get her two or three years' training, free of cost. Already she had applied and had her place appointed for the coming year.

So she continued to study for her degree. She would take French, Latin, English, mathematics and botany. She went to classes in Ilkeston, she studied at evening. For there was this world to conquer, this knowledge to acquire, this qualification to attain. And she worked with intensity, because of a want inside her that drove her on. Almost everything was subordinated now to this one desire to take her place in the world. What kind of place it was to be she did not ask herself. The blind desire drove her on. She must take her place.

She knew she would never be much of a success as an elementary school teacher. But neither had she failed. She hated it, but she had managed it.

Maggie had left St. Philip's School, and had found a more congenial post. The two girls remained friends. They met at evening classes, they studied and somehow encouraged a firm hope each in the other. They did not know whither they were making, nor what they ultimately wanted. But they knew they wanted now to learn, to know and to do.

They talked of love and marriage, and the position of woman in marriage. Maggie said that love was the flower of life, and blossomed unexpectedly and without law, and must be plucked where it was found, and enjoyed for the brief hour of its duration.

To Ursula this was unsatisfactory. She thought she still loved Anton Skrebensky. But she did not forgive him that he had not been strong enough to acknowledge her. He had denied her. How then could she love him? How then was love so absolute? She did not believe it. She believed that love was a way, a means, not an end in itself, as Maggie seemed to think. And always the way of love would be found. But whither did it lead?

"I believe there are many men in the world one might love — there is not only one man," said Ursula.

She was thinking of Skrebensky. Her heart was hollow with the knowledge of Winifred Inger.

"But you must distinguish between love and passion," said Maggie, adding, with a touch of contempt: "Men will easily have a passion for you, but they won't love you."

"Yes," said Ursula, vehemently, the look of suffering, almost of fanaticism, on her face. "Passion is only part of love. And it seems so much because it can't last. That is why passion is never happy."

She was staunch for joy, for happiness, and permanency, in contrast with Maggie, who was for sadness, and the inevitable passing-away of things. Ursula suffered bitterly at the hands of life, Maggie was always single, always withheld, so she went in a heavy brooding sadness that was almost meat to her. In Ursula's last winter at St. Philip's the friendship of the two girls came to a climax. It was during this winter that Ursula suffered and enjoyed most keenly Maggie's fundamental sadness of enclosedness. Maggie enjoyed and suffered Ursula's struggles against the confines of her life. And then the two girls began to drift apart, as Ursula broke from that form of life wherein Maggie must remain enclosed.