

CHARLES

“the scientist, the despiser of novels” “liked to think of himself as a scientific young man”  
“tranquil boredom” “laziness was Charles’s distinguishing trait”  
“a brilliant man trapped, a Byron tamed” “one of life’s victims” “He was trapped.” Freemanism  
“Charles felt obscurely debased; a lion caged.” “Charles the naturally selected”  
“Charles called himself a Darwinist, and yet he had not really understood Darwin.”  
“He knew that *nulla species nova* was rubbish; yet he saw in the strata an immensely reassuring orderliness in existence.”  
“the whole Victorian Age was lost. And I do not mean he had taken the wrong path.”  
“teach Ernestina an evidently much needed lesson in common humanity”  
“about to engage in the forbidden, or rather the forbidden was about to engage in him”  
“stepped off the Cobb and set sail for China.”

“I detest immorality. But morality without mercy I detest rather more.”

HIDDEN FEELINGS: “to be sympathetic, but to establish a distance”

“fraternal, perhaps paternal, a certainty of the innocence of this creature, of her being unfairly outcast”  
“altruism of his motives”

SARAH

“profundity of insight was the first curse of her life; the second was her education”  
“ability to classify other people’s worth: to understand them, in the fullest sense.”  
“she was too striking a girl not to have had suitors, in spite of the lack of dowry of any kind.”  
“French Lieutenant’s Whore” “Woman” “poor Tragedy” “Destiny”  
“then she began to eat, and without any delicacy whatsoever”

CONFESSION

“I have set myself beyond the pale” “I have a freedom they cannot understand.”  
“What has kept me alive is my shame, my knowing that I am truly not like other women.”  
“I am a doubly dishonored woman. By circumstances. And by choice.”  
“she seemed deliberately to press her forefinger down; a second later she was staring at a crimson drop of blood.”  
“a very small but a knowing, and a telling smile.”  
“freedom was embodied in Sarah; in the assumption of a shared exile”  
“a spirit prepared to sacrifice everything but itself” “in order to save its own integrity”

MYSTERY

“Who is Sarah? Out of what shadows does she come?”  
“living memorial to the drowned, a figure from myth”  
“that’s the trouble with provincial life. Everyone knows everyone and there is no mystery. No romance.” “in destroying the mystery, destroyed also a great deal of the pressure”  
“it was not Sarah in herself who attracted him, but some emotion, some possibility she symbolized. She made him aware of a deprivation. His future had always seemed to him of vast potential; and now suddenly it was a fixed voyage to a known place.”  
“I am infinitely strange to myself” “but I am not to be understood.”  
“I don’t know, don’t ask me.” (Sarah, on why she lied)  
“I believe my happiness depends on my not understanding.”  
“the river of life, of mysterious laws and mysterious choice, flows past a deserted embankment.”

TINA

“exactly the right face for her age”  
“tilt at the corner of her eyelids” “denied very subtly, but quite unmistakably, her apparent total obeisance to the great god Man” “a sense of self irony”  
“nearly one of the prim little moppets” “dressed at the height of fashion”  
“and what the feminine, by way of compensation for so much else in her expected behaviour, demanded of a colour was brilliance, not discretion.”  
“I am shameful, I have behaved like a draper’s daughter” “I know I am spoilt.”  
“a willingness to learn perversity, one day to bite timidly but deliciously on forbidden fruit”  
“I will do anything, anything, because I would abandon anything to make you happy.”

## DOUBLE STANDARDS

“where it was universally maintained that women do not have orgasms; and yet every prostitute was taught to simulate them.”

“male vanity lay in being obeyed; female, in using obedience to have the ultimate victory.”

“the law is not concerned with truth, Charles”

“but you cannot reject the purpose for which woman was brought into creation”

## SEX & “EXTREME SEXUAL REPRESSION”

“a kind of dimly glimpsed Laocoön embrace of naked limbs.” “I must not”

“though one may keep the wolves from one’s door, they still howl out there in the darkness”

“intensely tender and yet sexual in the ways she lay” (Charles, of Sarah)

“how can you mercilessly imprison all the natural sexual instinct for twenty years and then not expect the prisoner to be racked by sobs when the doors are thrown open?”

“What can an innocent country girl know of sin?”

“He was at one and the same time Varguennes enjoying her and the man who struck him down; just as Sarah was to him both an innocent victim and a wild, abandoned woman”

“consciousness was sprung on by these lurking tigers it was ludicrously unprepared”

“interesting ratio is between the desire and the ability to fulfill it”

## SEXUAL ENCOUNTER

“possess her, to melt into her, to burn, to burn, to burn to ashes on that body and in those eyes” “but for eternity is when the iron bites.” “frantic brutality”

“precisely ninety seconds had passed”

## PARENTS

“crushing and unrelenting canopy of parental worry”

## SOCIAL CLASS/CONVENTION

“greatest obstacle in her view to their having become betrothed”

“the estate was in tail male”

“this bone of contention between two centuries: is duty to drive us, or not?”

“Duty is but a pot. It holds whatever is put in it, from the greatest evil to the greatest good.”

“the beginnings of a plutocratic stratification of society had, by the mid-century, begun” “generally accepted that good money and good brains” “social standing”

“why am I born what I am? Why am I not born Miss Freeman?”

“Her father had forced her out of her own class, but could not raise her to the next.”

“allowed to live in paradise, but forbidden to enjoy it” “obsession with his own ancestry”//JOHN

“A species must change in order to survive. It must adapt to the changes in the environment” “but he was a gentleman; and gentlemen cannot go into trade”

“fine manners and unpaid bills”

“all his age [...] its iron certainties and rigid conventions, its repressed emotion and facetious humour, its cautious science and incautious religion [...] the great hidden enemy of all his deepest yearnings”

## LOVE AND MARRIAGE AND COMPATIBILITY

“whether Ernestina would ever really understand him as well as he understood her”

“In this vital matter of the woman with whom he had elected to share his life with, had he not been only too conventional?”

“another world, another age, another life, I might have been your wife.”

“all would be well when she was truly his; in his bed and in his bank... and of course in his heart, too.”

“and dressing sarah! Taking her to paris, to Florence, and to rome!” (//confidence)

## MRS. POULTNEY

“two obsessions: one was Dirt, and the other was Immorality.”

“she acknowledged no bounds to her authority.”

“she was like some plump vulture” “incipient sadists”

“there would have been a place in the Gestapo for the lady”

“yet among her own class, a very limited circle, she was renowned for her charity”

“one was her social inferior, the other was the representative of God, before whom she had metaphorically to kneel” “I am not like Lady Cotton”

“each time Sarah departed with a batch to deliver Mrs Poulteney saw an equivalent number of saved souls chalked up to her account in Heaven”

#### RELIGION

“I live among people the world tells me are kind, pious, Christian people. And they seem to me crueler than the cruelest heathens, stupider than the stupidest animals.”

#### FAIRLEY

“whose only pleasures were knowing the worst or fearing the worst”

“hatred for Sarah” “vitriolic in its intensity”

“of course for the best and most Christian of reasons”

“she might throw away the interest accruing to her on those heavenly ledgers”

#### SERVANTS

“Mrs Tranter sat and ate with Mary alone in the downstairs kitchen; and they were not the unhappiest moments in either of their lives.” MRS TRANTER “effusive and kind”

“we’re not ‘orses. We’re ‘ooman beings.”

#### WRITING

“the novelist stands next to God.”

“there is only one good definition of God: the freedom that allows other freedoms to exist”

“fiction is woven into all”

“we are all in flight from the real reality. That is a basic definition of *homo sapiens*.”

#### FATE & GOD

“no intervening god beyond whatever can be seen” // TESS

“he knew in that dark church that the wires were down. No communication was possible.”

“He stared up at the paling stars. Destiny. Those eyes.”

#### NEW WOMAN

“the full uniform of the New Woman, flagrantly rejecting all contemporary conventions.”

#### EXISTENTIALISM

“an atom of faith, a true uniqueness, on which to build.” “find himself reborn”

“and out again, upon the unplumb’d, salt, estranging sea.”

#### ENDINGS

“but what you must not think is that this is a less plausible ending to their story.”

“Charles and Ernestina did not live happily ever after.”

“last few pages you have read are not what happened”

“he felt himself coming to the end of a story; and to an end he did not like.”

“all that Miss Sarah Woodruff is, Mrs Charles Smithson may continue to be.”

“you have not only planted the dagger in my breast, you have delighted in twisting it.”