



# The Well-beloved (Wordsworth Classics)

*Thomas Hardy*

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## **The Well-beloved (Wordsworth Classics) Thomas Hardy**

Introduction and Notes by Jane Thomas, University of Hull The Well-Beloved completes the cycle of Hardy's great novels, reiterating his favourite themes of man's eternal quest for perfection in both love and art, and the suffering that ensues. Jocelyn Pierston, celebrated sculptor, tries to create an image of his ideal woman - his imaginary Well-Beloved - in stone, just as he tries to find her in the flesh. Powerful symbolism marks this romantic fantasy that Hardy has grounded firmly in reality with a characteristically authentic rendering of location, the Isle of Slingers, or Portland as we know it. Overt exploration of the relationship between erotic fascination and creativity makes this novel a nineteenth-century landmark in the persistent debate about art, aesthetics and gender.

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