The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF MURIEL SPARK

Born in Edinburgh to a Jewish father and Presbyterian mother, Muriel Spark (then Muriel Camberg) was herself raised as a Presbyterian. From 1923 to 1935, she attended the James Gillespie's School for Girls—a model for the Marcia Blaine School featured in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*—going on from there to teach English and then to work as a secretary in a department store. In 1937, Muriel married Sidney Oswald Spark and moved with him to Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe), but soon discovered that Sidney was manic-depressive and prone to violence. Consequently, Muriel left both her husband and newborn son Robin in 1940, and returned to the United Kingdom in 1944, where she worked in military intelligence until the end of World War II. Though she began writing seriously thereafter, primarily poetry and literary criticism, it wasn't until after her conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1954 that Spark developed the scope of vision necessary to begin writing novels. While living in London, she wrote and published her first, *The Comforters* (1957), the proceeds from which freed Spark to pursue writing full-time. Following several warmly received works came, in 1961, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, which secured Spark's fame, and which is largely considered today to be her masterpiece. Spark would go on to live in New York City and then Rome, where in 1968 she met her lifelong friend, the artist Penelope Jardine, with whom she settled in the Tuscan village of Civitella della China, where the two would spend the rest of their lives together until Spark's death in 2006. For her literary achievements, Spark received many awards and honors, including the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for her novel *The Mandelbaum Gate* (1965), the Golden PEN Award (1998), and eight honorary degrees, one from the University of Oxford.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although published in 1961, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* is set in the 1930s, and is especially preoccupied with the fascist governments that came to power during this period, in the decade leading up to World War II—those led by Mussolini in Italy, Hitler in Germany, and Francisco Franco in Spain. These governments were authoritarian, nationalistic, right-wing, and belligerent. After the collapse of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, intellectuals in liberal democracies found themselves deeply troubled by the question of how such states could arise in the first place, as well as by the question of how commonplace people could become enthusiastically loyal to such states even to the death. Indeed, these questions make up part of Spark's area of inquiry in her novel: Miss Brodie herself is excited by what she witnesses in Fascist Italy—the efficiency and patriotism of it all—and the novel suggests that her influence over the Brodie girls is troublingly similar to Mussolini's influence over his fascisti.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

In most fictions written before the twentieth century, narrative tends to unfold in chronological order, with cause leading to effect. However, Modernist fiction challenges this convention, just as Spark's does. For example, Joseph Conrad's novel *Nostromo* (1904) is littered with time shifts, analepses (flashbacks) and prolepses (flash-forwards), as well as breaks in the narrative. Such is also the case with Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, a book even more influential on Spark's, which takes hundreds of pages to treat an ordinary day, and only a few paragraphs to kill off major characters. From these and other novelists, Spark learned how to create complicated narrative structures, favoring especially the technique of prolepsis in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. Spark also often treated Catholicism in her novels, and for this reason has come to be associated with the Catholic Novelists, among them fellow converts Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene. Both of these writers believed that the religious sense restored importance to the human acts represented in their novels, as in Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) and Greene's *Brighton Rock* (1938). In contrast, Spark, while a Catholic herself, may be said to be less a religious writer than Waugh and Greene and more a theological writer, interested in systematically studying the nature of God and faith.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*
- **When Published:** 1961
- **Literary Period:** Post-War British Fiction
- **Genre:** Bildungsroman, comedy of manners
- **Setting:** In and around Edinburg, Scotland
- **Climax:** Sandy betrays to the headmistress of Blaine, Miss Mackay, that Miss Brodie is interested in radical fascist politics and that she even urged a girl to fight in the Spanish Civil War; this betrayal results in Miss Brodie's forced retirement.
- **Point of View:** Third person omniscient

EXTRA CREDIT

Sitting for a Portrait. Spark modeled the character of Miss Brodie in part on Christina Kay, a teacher of hers for two years

at the James Gillespie's School for Girls. "What filled our minds with wonder and made Christina Kay so memorable," Spark later recalled, "was the personal drama and poetry within which everything in her classroom happened." Like Miss Brodie, Miss Kay displayed both prints of Renaissance paintings and posters of Mussolini's marching Blackshirts.

Miss Brodie's Ancestor. In Chapter 4 of the novel, Miss Brodie claims to be descended from a man named Willie Brodie, a respected town official by day and a criminal by night. However, Willie is not a character of Spark's invention: Deacon William Brodie is a historical figure, who in life was indeed a cabinetmaker in Edinburgh, a member of the Town Council, and a burglar hanged for his crimes on a gallows some hold to have been of his own making. Nor is Spark the first novelist to incorporate Deacon Brodie into her work: Robert Louis Stevenson, whose father owned furniture fashioned by Brodie, based *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) on the cabinetmaker-burglar's double life.

PLOT SUMMARY

It is the early 1930s. At the Marcia Blaine School, located in Edinburgh, Scotland, a class of ten-year-old girls begins two years of instruction with Miss Jean Brodie, a charismatic teacher at the Junior school who claims again and again to be in her "prime." She provides her pupils with an energetic if unorthodox education in unauthorized topics as various as poetry, makeup, Italian fascism under Mussolini, and her own love life, believing that Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are of supreme value, and that the arts hold a higher place than the sciences. In time, Miss Brodie singles out six girls as special to her, and who she intends to mold into "'the crème de la crème'": Sandy Stranger, Rose Stanley, Mary Macgregor, Jenny Gray, Monica Douglas, and Eunice Gardiner. These girls come to be known as the Brodie set, whom Miss Brodie culturally develops and confides in. However, in one of the novel's characteristic prolepses (fast-forwards), we learn that one of these girls will eventually betray Miss Brodie, though Miss Brodie never learns which.

The girls' other teachers at the Junior school include the art master, the handsome, sophisticated Mr. Teddy Lloyd, a Roman Catholic who lost his arm during World War I, as well as the singing master, the short-legged and long-bodied Mr. Gordon Lowther. Both of these men come to love Miss Brodie, but Miss Brodie is passionate only about Teddy Lloyd, whom she commends for his artistic nature. The two kiss once, as witnessed by Monica Douglas, but Miss Brodie soon renounces her love for Teddy Lloyd, as he is married with six children. Instead, she commences an affair with the unmarried Mr. Lowther during a two-week leave of absence (although she claims that her absence is due to illness).

Meanwhile, the highly imaginative, psychologically penetrating Sandy becomes increasingly obsessed with Miss Brodie's love life, going so far as to imagine her teacher having sexual intercourse. At one point in their two years in the Junior school, Sandy's best friend Jenny is accosted by a man exposing his genitals to her near the Water of Leith (a river that runs through Edinburgh), an incident investigated by a female policewoman. Sandy falls in love with the idea of this policewoman, and imagines that she is on the police force alongside her, with the purpose of preventing sex altogether. She also imagines that she and her invented policewoman should investigate the love affair between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther.

At the age of twelve, the girls leave Miss Brodie's class and graduate to the Senior school, taught by teachers like the excellent science instructor Miss Lockhart, all of whom are committed to the authorized curriculum as Miss Brodie was not. Nonetheless, the girls retain their group identity as the Brodie set, even though they have nothing in common save being picked out by Miss Brodie, whom they visit extracurricularly as they did as students at the Junior school, going with her to the ballet and the like.

The headmistress of Blaine, Miss Mackay, has all the while been fostering a professional disapproval of Miss Brodie's educational methods and scorn for the group identity of her six special girls; she wishes Miss Brodie would leave Blaine to teach at a progressive school, but Miss Brodie dismisses the idea. Consequently, Miss Mackay attempts to pump the Brodie girls for incriminating facts about their former teacher that might allow her to dismiss Miss Brodie. Miss Mackay also attempts to break the Brodie set up. Both attempts fail; the Brodie girls are unflaggingly loyal to their beloved teacher and to the principles of individualism, love, and loyalty she instilled in them.

Miss Brodie's love affair with Mr. Lowther continues; when the sewing teachers at Blaine, the sisters Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr, begin to work as housekeepers for Mr. Lowther, and encroach on Miss Brodie's exclusive claim to him, she asserts her influence by coming to Mr. Lowther's house whenever the Kerr sisters are there so that she can oversee them. She criticizes them for skimping on their employer's meals, and sets about fattening Mr. Lowther up. She also begins to invite her special girls, now thirteen years old, to socialize with her in pairs at her paramour's house. She asks them often about Mr. Lloyd, for several of the girls, especially Rose Stanley, have begun to sit for **portraits** with their art teacher. Miss Brodie especially enjoys hearing about how each face Mr. Lloyd paints strangely resembles her own. One day in Mr. Lloyd's studio, Sandy points this fact out to Mr. Lloyd himself, glaring at him insolently; Mr. Lloyd kisses the young girl, and she doesn't know what to think about it.

As the girls grow from thirteen to fourteen, fourteen to fifteen,

Miss Brodie determines that she can trust Sandy absolutely as her informant and confidant. Miss Brodie is also becoming increasingly fixated on the idea that Rose—as the most instinctual of the Brodie set and famous for sex (although Rose has no interest in sex)—should have a love affair with Mr. Lloyd as her, Miss Brodie's, proxy. Miss Brodie additionally plans on Sandy being her informant regarding the affair. Indeed, so fixated does Miss Brodie become on this strange plan that she neglects Mr. Lowther, who, to everyone's surprise, soon becomes engaged to the Senior school science instructor Miss Lockhart.

During this time, another girl, the "rather mad" and delinquent Joyce Emily Hammond, is sent by her rich parents to Blaine as a last resort. She desperately wants to attach herself to the Brodie set, but they won't have anything to do with her. Miss Brodie, however, will. She spends time with Joyce Emily one-on-one, and privately encourages her in her desire to run away and fight in the Spanish Civil War under Francisco Franco's Nationalist banner (Miss Brodie admires Franco, who like Mussolini is a fascist). Swiftly and shockingly, Joyce Emily does so, only to be killed when the train she is traveling in is attacked. The school holds a remembrance service for her.

The Brodie girls, having turned seventeen and upon entering their final year at Blaine, begin to drift apart. Mary Macgregor and Jenny Gray leave before taking their final exams, Mary to become a typist, Jenny to enroll at a school of dramatic art. Monica Douglas becomes a scientist, and Eunice Gardiner becomes a nurse and marries a doctor. Rose makes a good marriage, and easily shakes off Miss Brodie's influence. Sandy decides to pursue psychology.

During this period, both Sandy and Rose, now eighteen years of age, continue to go to Mr. Lloyd's house to model for him. One day, alone with Mr. Lloyd while his wife and children are on holiday, Sandy commences a love affair with him, usurping Rose's role in Miss Brodie's plan (Rose never had any erotic feelings for Mr. Lloyd in any case, nor he for her). The two carry on for five weeks during the summer and even once Mr. Lloyd's wife and children return home. But by the end of the year Sandy loses interest in Mr. Lloyd as a man, becoming more and more exclusively interested in his painter's mind, as well as in his obsession with Miss Brodie as it is documented on his canvases. She eventually leaves Teddy altogether, but takes with her his Roman Catholic beliefs.

That following autumn, Sandy approaches Miss Mackay and announces for reasons never made explicit that she is interested "'in putting a stop to Miss Brodie.'" She tells Miss Mackay about Miss Brodie's side interest in fascist politics and suggests that by following up on this lead Miss Mackay will at last have the incriminating evidence she needs to dismiss Miss Brodie. And indeed, presumably connecting Miss Brodie to Joyce Emily's running away, Miss Mackay at last succeeds in forcing Miss Brodie to retire. Sandy's betrayal is complete, and it won't be until the end of World War II, when she is near death, that Miss Brodie can bring herself to think that it was her most intimate confidant Sandy who betrayed her.

By middle age, Sandy is the author of a famous psychological treatise entitled "**The Transfiguration of the Commonplace**"; she is also a Roman Catholic nun called Saint Helena of the Transfiguration. Over the years, she receives several visitors at her convent, mostly Brodie girls, and invariably conversation turns to Miss Brodie: Sandy suggests that Miss Brodie was silly but also an enlarging presence, yet she also suggests that she nor any other Brodie girl owed Miss Brodie any loyalty. One day, a young man comes to the convent to interview Sandy about her famous work in psychology, asking her at one point, "'What were the main influences of your schooldays, Sister Helena? Were they literary or political or personal? Was it Calvinism?'" Sandy responds: "'There was a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime'"; it would seem that she of all the Brodie set was most deeply influenced by their strange, charismatic teacher.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Miss Jean Brodie – Miss Brodie, with her dark Roman profile, is a charismatic but unorthodox teacher at the Blaine Junior school. She doesn't instruct her girls in history and arithmetic, say, so much as she shares with them poetry, makeup tips, the virtues of fascism, her own romantic history and the like. Although she is a woman of culture and even has something of an artistic nature, Miss Brodie can also be dogmatic, manipulative, and cruel. Just as the predestining God of Calvinism elects the few to salvation, so does Miss Brodie elect six of her pupils to become her special girls, girls whom she develops culturally and confides in, and who in turn loyally admire her—these six girls make up the "Brodie set". Miss Brodie's power over those around her—not just her pupils but also the men in her life—stems in part from her feeling that she is in her prime, that is, at the height of her charisma both sexual and otherwise. Indeed, she loves the Blaine art teacher Mr. Lloyd and he loves her, but, as he is married, Miss Brodie renounces her love for him, becoming intimate instead with the singing teacher Mr. Lowther. Nonetheless, she subtly grooms the instinctual Rose Stanley to have a love affair with Mr. Lloyd as her proxy, and she grooms her favorite, the insightful Sandy, to serve as her informant in regards to the affair. In this way, Miss Brodie plays God, determining the course of fate. But, in the end, all of Miss Brodie's plots go awry: it is Sandy, not Rose, who ends up sleeping with Mr. Lloyd, and it is Sandy who betrays Miss Brodie to the Blaine headmistress, for Miss Brodie in her enthusiasm for fascism encouraged a Blaine student named Joyce Emily to fight in the Spanish Civil War. So it is that Miss Brodie is forced into retirement, a pale memory in the minds of her special girls save Sandy, who both

recognizes that Miss Brodie had an enlarging effect on her, but also doubts whether Miss Brodie was worthy of her loyalty.

Sandy Stranger – A small-eyed member of the Brodie set, Miss Brodie's favorite and most intimate confidant, Sandy is highly imaginative and deeply interested in analyzing human behavior—she has "got insight," as Miss Brodie tells her. She becomes deeply, even obsessively interested in Miss Brodie's love affairs, going so far as to create fictionalized accounts of them with her best friend Jenny when the two are only young girls. But fiction later becomes fact when, in her eighteenth year, Sandy seduces Miss Brodie's beloved Mr. Lloyd—in part because she is interested in his obsession with Miss Brodie and with his Roman Catholicism—thereby becoming her teacher's proxy in the affair (a role Miss Brodie herself anticipated that Rose Stanley would fill). Nonetheless, and rather surprisingly, Sandy also at last betrays Miss Brodie, suggesting as she does to the Blaine headmistress Miss Mackay that Miss Brodie's interest in fascism may well provide grounds for forcing her to retire. And so it does. Why Sandy would betray Miss Brodie, however, remains one of the novel's most haunting open questions. After graduating from Blaine, Sandy studies psychology and publishes a famous psychological treatise, **"The Transfiguration of the Commonplace"**; she also converts to Roman Catholicism and becomes a nun known as Sister Helena. When asked what her greatest girlhood influence was, Sandy, now in middle age, responds: "'There was a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime.'"

Rose Stanley – Rose is a member of the Brodie set, an appealing blonde "famous for sex" in her later years at the Marcia Blaine School even though has no curiosity about sex whatsoever, never talks about sex, and does not indulge in it presumably until marriage. Miss Brodie holds out hope that Rose, along with Sandy, will prove to be the "'the crème de la crème'" of her pupils, and claims that Rose herself has instinct, a quality she admires in her. Indeed, when Rose begins modeling for Mr. Lloyd's **portraits**, Miss Brodie gets it into her head that the girl will have a love affair with him as her, Miss Brodie's proxy, and she plans for this to come about; but it never does, for Mr. Lloyd has no sexual interest in Rose and Rose merely poses for him because she needs the money to fund her "addiction" to the cinema (i.e. movies). After graduating from Blaine, Rose marries well and, in contrast to Sandy, shakes off "Miss Brodie's influence as a dog shakes pond-water from its coat."

Mary Macgregor – Though she is a member of the Brodie set, Mary is considered by everyone at Blaine, from Miss Lockhart to Miss Brodie herself, to be rather stupid and disagreeable. She is Miss Brodie's scapegoat, the girl whom she blames everything on, and even Sandy treats her condescendingly and cruelly. Nonetheless, Mary remembers her years as a member of the Brodie set to be the happiest in her life. She dies at the age of twenty-four in a hotel fire.

Jenny Gray – A member of the Brodie set famous for her beauty and grace, Jenny is also Sandy's best friend when the girls are young; together, the two write a fictionalized love correspondence between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther. However, as the girls grow older, they also grow apart. While Sandy completes her last year at Blaine, Jenny enrolls at a school of dramatic art, going on to become an actress.

Eunice Gardiner – A member of the Brodie set famous for "her spritely gymnastics and glamorous swimming," Eunice is at first quiet, and so it is strange that she joins the Brodie set at all; but she soon becomes very entertaining to the other girls, and fits right in. After graduating, Eunice becomes a nurse and marries a doctor.

Mr. Teddy Lloyd – The art teacher at Blaine, Mr. Lloyd is handsome and sophisticated, half Welsh and half English, with red and gold hair. He lost his left arm during World War I. While they are colleagues together at Blaine, Mr. Lloyd falls deeply in love with Miss Brodie and she with him. But Mr. Lloyd is a married man, and so Miss Brodie renounces her love for him altogether, bestowing it instead on Mr. Lowther. So strong is Miss Brodie's love for Teddy despite this, however, that she arranges a plot whereby her student Rose Stanley is to become Mr. Lloyd's lover in her stead. So strong is Mr. Teddy Lloyd's love for Miss Brodie, in turn, that all of the people he paints **portraits** of, including the Brodie girls, resemble Miss Brodie herself. Ultimately, Miss Brodie's plot fails: it is not Rose but Sandy who ends up having a love affair with Mr. Lloyd, in part because Sandy is so interested in Teddy's obsession with Miss Brodie—an obsession which she shares.

Mr. Gordon Lowther – The singing teacher at Blaine, Mr. Lowther resembles Mr. Lloyd but is less attractive, long-bodied and short-legged; he owns a rich estate in Cramond. After Miss Brodie renounces her love for Mr. Lloyd, she becomes intimate with Mr. Lowther. The two of them, unmarried, scandalously begin sleeping together, it would seem, for Miss Ellen Kerr discovers a nightdress which quite likely belongs to Miss Brodie under one of Mr. Lowther's pillows while cleaning his house. To everyone's surprise, Mr. Lowther marries not Miss Brodie in the end but Miss Lockhart.

Miss Mackay – The headmistress of the Marcia Blaine School, Miss Mackay strongly disapproves of Miss Brodie's educational methods, attempting to pump the Brodie girls for incriminating information about their teacher throughout their student years. When Sandy reveals to her Miss Brodie's interest in fascist politics, Miss Mackay at last has what she needs to force Miss Brodie's retirement.

Miss Lockhart – The Senior science teacher at Blaine, Miss Lockhart is, in contrast to Miss Brodie, a teacher dedicated to nothing more than teaching her subject rigorously and well. She does not regard the girls in her class as personalities but as students, which they appreciate. Toward the end of the novel,

Miss Lockhart becomes engaged to Mr. Lowther.

Joyce Emily Hammond – A rich and delinquent girl sent to Blaine as a last resort, Joyce Emily very much wants to attach herself to the Brodie set, but the other girls resist her. Nonetheless, Miss Brodie makes time for Joyce Emily, going so far as to urge this "rather mad" girl to run off to fight for Franco during the Spanish Civil War. Joyce Emily does so and dies in that conflict, a fact which Miss Mackay later uses against Miss Brodie in forcing her to retire.

Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr – The two sewing teachers at Blaine, the Kerr sisters are meek Calvinists who begin housekeeping for Mr. Lowther, and it seems as though one might even marry him. However, Miss Brodie crushes their prospects by becoming intimate with the singing teacher herself. Later, Miss Ellen Kerr discovers what is quite likely Miss Brodie's nightdress under one of Mr. Lowther's pillows, which she tells Miss Mackay about—but as much as she wishes to dismiss Miss Brodie, Miss Mackay recognizes that the nightdress is insufficient proof of scandal to justify Miss Brodie's dismissal.

Miss Gaunt – A gaunt woman, and the sister of a Calvinist minister, Miss Gaunt substitutes for Miss Brodie at Blaine in the autumn of 1931. Unlike Miss Brodie's influence on the classroom, Miss Gaunt's presence in the classroom subtracts, in her students' minds, from the sexual significance of things. She becomes like a sister to Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr and advises them to make their arrangement with Mr. Lowther permanent, but due to Miss Brodie's intervention this does not come to pass.

Hugh – Miss Brodie's lover who died in World War I. Miss Brodie tells her young students about her relationship with Hugh, which so excites Sandy and Jenny that as young girls they write a sexually charged, fictionalized story about him called "The Mountain Eyrie." Miss Brodie later conflates her love for Hugh with her conflicted love for Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Lowther.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Monica Douglas – A member of the Brodie set famous for her mathematical ability and violent anger. After graduating from Blaine, Monica goes into science and marries a man who later demands a separation from her, after she throws a live coal at his sister.

Deirdre Lloyd – Mr. Teddy Lloyd's wife, Deirdre has many children with her husband, in accordance with Roman Catholic custom. She dresses fashionably like a peasant, which Sandy imitates in seducing Mr. Lloyd.

The Three Andrews – Boys with whom some members of the Brodie set converse in the opening scene of the novel, the three Andrews, along with their fellows, are soon shooed away by Miss Brodie.

THEMES

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AUTHORITY AND SOCIAL GROUPS

The students at the Blaine Junior school are young, naïve, and impressionable, which is perhaps why Miss Jean Brodie—as ridiculous as she is from one perspective—can exert her authority so influentially over them, and not just during their childhoods but for a lifetime. Indeed, the insightful Sandy theorizes that Jean Brodie thinks of herself as God, wholly guiltless, wholly in control of her own fate, wholly fulfilled—even though she is perhaps more truly a lonely and eccentric spinster overcompensating for the littleness of her life. Miss Brodie's methods for establishing authority include taking her students into her confidence, as she does in sharing her romantically embellished love life with them, as well as presenting herself as urbane, cosmopolitan, and artistic, in contrast to the other, more narrow-minded adults in their lives. Consequently, Miss Brodie comes to strike her girls as glamorous, daring, and mysterious, and her charisma enthralls them. However, she also exploits more problematic methods of establishing authority, for example, scapegoating Mary Macgregor, who provides the Brodie girls with a common target for their aggression, thereby strengthening the group's identity. The novel repeatedly suggests that these methods are not unlike those used by fascist dictators—e.g., Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco—to generate in the populaces they govern both radical, unflagging loyalty and a herd mentality.

Ironically, although Miss Brodie authoritatively preaches individualism to her girls, they as individuals have almost no identities of their own. Each is famous for something—Sandy for her small piggish eyes and insight, Rose for sex, etc.—but they are far more famous collectively, as the Brodie set. In an even further irony, the only thing holding the Brodie set together is the cult of personality Miss Brodie creates around herself, for the Brodie girls as individuals have "very little in common with each other" other than that. The Brodie set exists, it would seem, by Miss Brodie's authority and for her pleasure alone, and at one point Sandy even imagines that the girls of the set merely add up to "'one big Miss Brodie.'" That being said, the narrator also reveals that being perceived as a social group by others is yet another factor keeping the Brodie girls together—if other students at Blaine didn't think of the Brodie set as a distinct social unit, that unit would fall apart. Many social groups, not just the Brodie set, need other groups to define themselves against, after all. But the novel also contrasts the Brodie set with the Girl Scout Brownies the

Brodie girls encounter in the Meadows (a large public park in Edinburg), for example, as well as the sports teams at Blaine—groups organized not around a charismatic leader but common interests and goals. These, the novel suggests, are the foundation for a healthier community.

EDUCATION VS. INTRUSION

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie is a Bildungsroman, that is, a novel that has as one of its themes the formative years or spiritual education of a person. In developing this theme the novel dramatizes the distinction between education and intrusion. Miss Brodie herself defines education as a leading out of what is already in a student's soul, whereas intrusion, she says, is a planting in a student's mind of what was not there before. Miss Brodie claims to be an educator, whereas she criticizes the headmistress of Blaine, Miss Mackay, for allegedly intruding. The novel as a whole, however, calls into question Miss Brodie's distinction.

Miss Brodie rarely instructs her girls in history or mathematics; instead, she exposes them to poetry, makeup, world cultures from Italy's to Egypt's, as well as radical fascist politics. On the one hand, it does seem to be her intention to open her students' lives to the world, to heighten their awareness, to liberate them from parochial custom and convention. On the other, Miss Brodie primarily "leads out" of her students their sexual curiosity, with stories about her dead lover Hugh and the like. Under Miss Brodie's wing, Sandy and Jenny, for example, become preoccupied with sex, talking and giggling about it, fantasizing and writing about it, going so far as to imagine Miss Brodie having sex with their singing teacher Mr. Lowther. But, hypocritically, Miss Brodie also intrudes: she is a dogmatic teacher, who makes assertions and requires that her students be able to regurgitate them verbatim. She even insinuates her plans into her students' minds—plans as strange and disturbing as having Rose become Mr. Lloyd's lover as her, Miss Brodie's, proxy. This is a rather heinous intrusion indeed.

In contrast, the Senior science teacher Miss Lockhart is the novel's model educator: a priest in relation to her discipline, who does not regard the girls in her class as personalities but, rather more appropriately, as students. She excites their curiosity on the first day by holding up gunpowder in a jar, enough, she says, to blow up the school; it is by leading out their natural curiosity about science that Miss Lockhart is in turn able to provide their now-receptive minds with new information, which Miss Brodie might dismiss as an intrusion but which the novel, perhaps, would simply call good teaching.

SEXUALITY, ONE'S PRIME, AND SPINSTERHOOD

The Brodie set's transition from childhood to adulthood is marked primarily by changing attitudes toward sex: we follow Sandy, for example, from the time she and Jenny gossip about sex and, writing as Miss Brodie in a fictional letter, absurdly, hilariously congratulate Mr. Lowther on a good sexual performance, all the way into her eighteenth year, when she and Mr. Lloyd have an affair. But perhaps Sandy's sexual curiosity is too prematurely and too violently stimulated by Miss Brodie, for even as a young girl she privately develops an ambivalent, even antagonistic attitude toward sex, even imagining herself on a police force with the mission of putting a stop to all sex in Edinburgh altogether.

Miss Brodie, on the other hand, relishes her sexuality; she often reminds her students that she is in her prime, a reference to the height of her energy and beauty and desirability as a woman. She pledges these years, her very best, to romantic involvements, first to Mr. Lloyd, then to Mr. Lowther—the latter affair sparking a scandal within her rather sexually repressive Edinburgh community. Ms. Brodie is not prepared to settle down and marry Mr. Lowther, however, and she is punished with ostracization and persecution at Miss Gaunt's hands, among others. Her most faithful lovers are Mr. Lloyd who paints her obsessively and her girls, who are in ways canvasses that take on her image. In the end, though, all Miss Brodie has to show for her prime are memories of her own charisma and influence, made bittersweet by Sandy's betrayal of her, which may be in part motivated by a complex of sexual revulsion, resentment, and repressed homoerotic attraction on Sandy's part, all directed toward Miss Brodie.

The narrator takes pains to make it clear that Miss Brodie is not merely an eccentric, isolated phenomenon, but rather that there are many spinsters like her in Edinburgh. This claim amounts to an indictment of the sexual repression of the Edinburgh community as a whole, which makes it socially difficult for women to fulfill themselves outside of married life. Miss Brodie's girls who marry tend to shake her influence, as Rose and Monica and Jenny do—but Sandy alone, who vows herself to chastity as a nun, bears profoundly Miss Brodie's spirit.

RELIGION, PREDESTINATION, AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

In early twentieth-century Edinburgh, the influence of Calvinism, a branch of Protestantism, was waning. Calvinists believe that human beings are so inherently and absolutely corrupted by original sin that they can only lead depraved lives, lives unworthy of salvation. However, God in His infinite mercy, and by His mercy alone, nonetheless elected before the world's creation a few people to be saved through Jesus Christ, this election being mysteriously determined not based on faith or virtue or merit, but by God alone. Those elected were elected unconditionally, regardless of their conduct on earth. In the novel, Miss Brodie reacts violently against this doctrine of predestination by usurping God's

function herself—she elects six of her pupils to be her special girls, and predestines them, as it were, to be "'the crème de la crème,'" in what amounts to a secular, sexually charged appropriation of Calvinist thought. She also presumes to shape their fates, most centrally when she plans for Rose Stanley to sleep with Mr. Lloyd as her proxy. She is, in a sense, a maker of plots, just like the deft novelist—Muriel Spark—writing about her.

However, Miss Brodie's plots tend to go awry. It is Sandy, not Rose, who has a love affair with Mr. Lloyd. Though Miss Brodie thinks she can marry Mr. Lowther any time she likes, a day after she makes a pronouncement to this effect it is announced in the newspaper that Mr. Lowther is engaged to Miss Lockhart. And, most crushingly, it is Sandy, one of Miss Brodie's own special girls, indeed, her favorite and most trusted, who betrays her at last to Miss Mackay. The narrative structure of the novel is full of prolepses (fast-forwards) so that present events are juxtaposed with related future events, and these juxtapositions often contrast Miss Brodie's plans and expectations with the reality that comes to pass. For example, though Miss Brodie discusses her deep devotion to her girls and the need for absolute loyalty, the reader knows almost from the beginning of the novel that one of these girls will ultimately betray her. In this way, the narrative creates ironic tension between *Miss Brodie's* predestining and *actual* destiny itself.

As Miss Brodie reacts violently against Calvinism, so does Sandy react violently against the egotism and amorality and potential destructiveness of Miss Brodie's own secular program of election and predestination. She turns to Roman Catholicism (as Spark did herself) for a different vision of life, one where salvation is a function of one's faith and works, and not a product of blind election. Sandy also replaces Miss Brodie's self-election to grace and guiltlessness in herself with a deep sense of culpability before the eyes of God.

INSIGHT, INSTINCT, AND TRANSFIGURATION

Miss Brodie can identify and transfigure common girls into extraordinary women, or such is her hope, anyway. She also has a pressing desire to experience transcendence, through art, sex, even radical politics—and transfiguring her girls so that they bear her image and so that she can in a small way guide their fates is her only real means of transcending the littleness of her life. Calvinism is a central context here: Miss Brodie reacts so strongly against its doctrine of predestination, where one cannot transfigure much less transcend one's destiny, that she goes so far as to elect herself to grace and plays a kind of secular God of Calvin in electing and transfiguring her girls into the "the crème de la crème."

Miss Brodie has two criteria for election (and has good insight into who possesses these, for her girls tend to be among the brightest at Blaine): insight and instinct. Insight has to do with imaginative exuberance and psychological penetration, exemplified by Sandy; instinct has to do with sexual and social charisma, exemplified by Rose. Miss Brodie claims to possess both these qualities herself, although we might question her psychological astuteness: after all, she thinks Rose a carnal girl, when Rose has no interest in sex for the most part; Miss Brodie also thinks that she can trust Sandy absolutely, when Sandy is the Brodie girl least loyal to her in the end. Indeed, the novel as a whole seems in some ways to test or question the value of psychological insight: its pages are largely devoid of psychological analysis of its characters, as though such analysis were incidental to understanding its characters. As such, *we*, as readers, are forced to be the psychologists, to map what characters say and do to their reasons and motivations, especially in regards to Sandy's decision to betray Miss Brodie, which goes unexplained in the novel and is only gestured toward and skirted around.

Ultimately, Miss Brodie's attempts to transfigure the commonplace fail. Rose doesn't sleep with Mr. Lloyd as Miss Brodie plans, Miss Brodie's students pursue commonplace careers as typists and nurses, and Sandy in the end betrays her teacher. Without girls to sculpt and without the arts in her life as represented by Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Lowther, Miss Brodie more and more has nothing to do with herself but obsess over the last great drama of her life which transcends mere schoolteaching, namely her betrayal; and so ends her prime. Sandy, for her part, reacts so radically against Miss Brodie she turns (like Spark herself) to Catholicism, which locates the human desire for transfiguration within the ritual of the Holy Communion, where bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. This position—of reserving transfiguration for sacred as opposed to secular life—is one the novel privileges over Calvinism and, relatedly, Miss Brodie's self-election to grace.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

MR. TEDDY LLOYD'S PORTRAITS

Mr. Teddy Lloyd, the married man who loves and is loved by Miss Jean Brodie, shares her artistic nature. Not only is he the art teacher at Blaine, but he is also a painter of portraits, and has a studio in his home for this purpose. As suggested in a scene when Mr. Lloyd explains the lines and curves of the women in Botticelli's painting *La primavera* to the giggling of his pupils, painting is, for both Mr. Lloyd and Miss Brodie, a medium through which one may touch

on the sexual without experiencing bodily excitement oneself, a medium through which one may experience human emotion but with something of a godlike detachment. In line with this idea, the love between Mr. Lloyd and Miss Brodie plays out only on Mr. Lloyd's canvases, an affair of the spirit, as it were.

"THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE COMMONPLACE"

But this "affair" is so strong that every face Mr. Lloyd paints, be it Rose Stanley or even his own children, seems to resemble Miss Brodie. In this sense, Mr. Lloyd's portraits symbolize the power of Miss Brodie's influence on those around her, a power exerted on her lovers and students alike: just as Mr. Lloyd transfigures everyone into a Miss Brodie, so too does Miss Brodie attempt to transfigure her special girls into copies of her. This is especially the case with Rose, whom Miss Brodie plans to have a love affair with Mr. Lloyd as her, Miss Brodie's own, proxy. However, Miss Brodie's plan for Rose fails, and Miss Brodie's influence over her special girls dissipates as they mature and pursue interests and careers independent of her. At last, only Mr. Lloyd and Sandy remain imprinted with Brodie's image, and their common obsession with her draws the two of them into a love affair.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Harper Perennial edition of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* published in 2009.

❝ 'I am putting old heads on your young shoulders,' Miss Brodie had told them at that time, 'and all my pupils are the crème de la crème.'

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 5

Explanation and Analysis

The novel opens with the "Brodie set," a group of girls joined together by their dedication to an elementary school teacher, Miss Jean Brodie. Although they have aged out of her class at this point in time, the girls are still defined by their relationship with Miss Brodie. Here we see Sandy, the most clear-sighted and analytical of the group, recalling an earlier phrase of Miss Jean Brodie's.

These lines reveal the almost unnatural, intrusive nature of Miss Brodie's concept of education, which she defines as the process of "putting old heads on...young shoulders." This controlling method ensures that the Brodie set will be educated according to Miss Brodie's whims, as opposed to any curriculum. It also foreshadows Mr. Lloyd's disturbing portraits, in which he literally paints Miss Brodie's head on her pupil's shoulders.

The second half of her quote, in which she calls her pupils "the crème de la crème," illuminates Miss Brodie's efforts to choose a select group of students and transform them into exceptional young women through the strength of her influence. This desire to shape the Brodie set's fate is a rebellion against Calvinistic belief. Instead of God determining one's fate, as he does before birth in the Calvinist tradition, it is Miss Jean Brodie herself who has the power to choose souls to elevate to the status of "crème de la crème." This, then, is a secular election and salvation, which Miss Brodie controls.

❝ 'It has been suggested again that I should apply for a post at one of the progressive schools, where my methods would be more suited to the system than they are at Blaine. But I shall not apply for a post at a crank school. I shall remain at this education factory. There must be a leaven in the lump. Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life.'

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 6

Explanation and Analysis

Although none of them are in her class any longer, Miss Brodie still demands her pupils spend time with her. Here, she has taken the six girls on a walk to discuss the details of a "plot" meant to force her to resign.

Although it has been suggested that she work at a "progressive school," Miss Brodie is disdainful of the idea of working at a "crank" school. We sense that Miss Brodie does not want to teach at a progressive school because she might blend in with the other eccentrics, whereas she is seen as radical and exceptional at Blaine, or, as she says, "a leaven in the lump." Miss Brodie wants to maintain her authority over her Brodie set, and she also wants to continue to be associated with an exclusive social group, to be in the middle of a dramatic situation.

She speaks to these dovetailinginterests in her last two lines here, grandly announcing that the Brodie set will be hers for

life. She aims to transfigure these girls into remarkable women. This strident control of her pupils is intrusive and inappropriate, however, despite her claims to the contrary.And for now, the girls simply smile in response, entirely under Miss Brodie's thrall.

❝ 'But safety does not come first. Goodness, Truth and Beauty come first. Follow me.'

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 7

Explanation and Analysis

Here, the narrative shifts six years into the past, and we see the Brodie set's first impression of Miss Jean Brodie. She has led her class of ten-year-olds out into the garden, where they pass a sign that reads "Safety First." Tellingly, Miss Brodie rejects the sign's message, preferring"Goodness, Truth and Beauty" over safety. These values are certainly more transfiguring and loftier than that of safety.

In this moment, Miss Brodie frames herself as being atodds with the rest of the teaching staff at Blaine, and her pupils are struck by the idea that adults can differ from one another. Those girls who will be picked for the Brodie set, we conclude, will follow along a path that diverges from those around them.

Miss Brodie's disregard for her pupil's safety is, on a basic level, both nobly admirable and irresponsible. By privileging loftier ideals over safety, Miss Brodie ends by playing a part, however passive, in the death of Joyce Emily years later.

Chapter 2 Quotes

❝ 'Miss Brodie says prime is best,' Sandy said.
'Yes, but she never got married like our mothers and fathers.'
'They don't have primes,' said Sandy.
'They have sexual intercourse,' Jenny said.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Jenny Gray (speaker), Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 15

Explanation and Analysis

Miss Brodie often tells her pupils that she is in her "prime," by which she means that she is at the peak of her allure, charisma, and influence. A woman's prime, we infer, is the most important and powerful time in her life, personally, professionally, and sexually. Miss Brodie tells her students to anticipate and recognize their primes. Here, Sandy and Jenny, two of the Brodie set, discuss their parents in the context of primes and sexual experience.

This exchange reveals that Sandy and Jenny have intuited that Miss Brodie's prime is somehow related to sexuality. In trying to define the relation between sex and a prime, they agree that their parents do not have primes. However, they do "have sexual intercourse," which in itself strikes the girls as "a stupendous thought." They are both struck by the fact that Miss Brodie is in her prime, but is not married. She is a spinster at the peak of her sexual charisma, which seems contradictory to Sandy and Jenny. Indeed, Miss Brodie's affairs with married and unmarried men alike will be the among the dramatic centers of the text.

This discussion of sex is complicated when Sandy speculates on Mr. Lloyd's newborn baby, saying that the infant is proof that Mr. Lloyd "committed sex with his wife." By saying "committed," Sandy further reveals her ambivalence towards sex by framing it with criminal language.

❝ Sandy looked back at her companions and understood them as a body with Miss Brodie for the head. She perceived herself, the absent Jenny, the ever-blamed Mary, Rose, Eunice, and Monica, all in a frightening little moment, in unified compliance to the destiny of Miss Brodie, as if God had willed them to birth for that purpose.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 30

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Miss Brodie and her set are out walking. Sandy has an impulse to be kind to Mary MacGregor, who is the slow-witted scapegoat of the group. However, her kind impulse is checked by Miss Brodie's voice. Here, she sees herself and her companions as being a unified body with Miss Brodie "for the head." This moment is linked to the theme of Calvinism and predestination.

Sandy sees clearly how Miss Brodie is a kind of God for

herself and the other girls - she has chosen them and is now shaping them in her own image. She controls their fate with a confidence that suggests predetermination. In fact, it seems to Sandy that God himself has willed them all into existence only so that they might serve Miss Brodie. This moment is shocking and disturbing, as we see what the final goal of Miss Brodie's cherished transfiguration is: small replicas of herself, each girl like a piece of her own body.

> Mussolini had put an end to unemployment with his fascisti and there was no litter in the streets. It occurred to Sandy, there at the end of the Middle Meadow Walk, that the Brodie set was Miss Brodie's fascisti, not to the naked eye, marching along, but all knit together for her need and in another way, marching along.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 31

Explanation and Analysis

During the same walk, Miss Brodie tells her girls that they should not join the Girl Guides, or Girl Scout Brownies. At this refusal, Sandy remembers Miss Brodie's admiration for Mussolini's troops, who had ended unemployment and cleaned the streets. Here, we see her drawing a convincing parallel between Mussolini and Miss Brodie herself.

Sandy correctly intuits that she is a part of "Miss Brodie's fascisti," a social group "knit together" by their charismatic and powerful leader. Miss Brodie, as we saw earlier, attempts to transfigure her set into imitations of herself, but here we see that there is a militaristic component to her influence as well. Her set is a kind of social protection - girls that she has groomed to do whatever she might require of them.

Directly following this moment, Sandy thinks of defecting from Miss Brodie's ranks and joining the Girl Guides before a "group-fright siez[es]" her, but the idea seems ridiculous. The dangers of Miss Brodie's invasive methods are on display here, and will only grow more apparent when she encourages Joyce Emily to fight in the Spanish Civil War.

> 'The word "education" comes from the root *e* from *ex*, out, and *duco*, I lead. It means a leading out. To me education is a leading out of what is already there in the pupil's soul. To Miss Mackay it is a putting in of something that is not there, and that is not what I call education, I call it intrusion, from the Latin root prefix *in* meaning in and the stem *trudo*, I thrust.'

Related Characters: Miss Mackay

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

These lines occur during Miss Brodie's long walk with the Brodie set, before Miss Brodie must meet with Miss Mackay - presumably because Miss Mackay wants to question Miss Brodie's methods of instruction. In these lines, Miss Brodie offers up an aggressive, hypocritical defense of her methods.

Miss Brodie claims to "lead out" what is "already" in her pupils' souls, and to be opposed to dogmatic, intrusive methods of normal teaching. However, we see that Miss Brodie is being hypocritical in this moment. Earlier, she mentions that she is putting "old heads on young shoulders," which is an intrusive theory of education if ever there was one. Additionally,Miss Brodie's pupils are victim to their instructor's whims - for example, earlier in the text they are taught that Giotto is a better painter than Da Vinci, merely because Miss Brodie prefers the former. In these lines, then, Miss Brodie is entirely wrong about herself and her methods, and she ironically forces her students to accept her incorrect self-assessment.

Finally, we might compare Miss Brodie's etymology of education with Mussolini's title, Il Duce, which means "the leader."

> And if people take their clothes off in front of each other, thought Sandy, it is so rude, they are bound to be put off their passion for a moment. And if they are put off just for a single moment, *how* can they be swept away in the urge? If it all happens in a flash...

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger

Related Themes:

Page Number: 38

Explanation and Analysis

Here, we get our first glimpse into Sandy's complicated feelings about passion and sexuality. She is daydreaming about having dinner with Alan Breck (a famous historical figure)but is disturbed at the possibility that a dinner would lead to something more. She thinks to herself that being swept away must be avoidable. People must have a moment to think about it before romantic passion takes over them.

Then, Sandy thinks that the act of taking "clothes off" would be rude enough to "put off...passion for a moment." In addition to revealing her discomfort with the idea of sex and passion, this thought is amusing and reveals how young and inexperienced Sandy is.

Finally, this passage reveals Sandy's strong anxieties surrounding passion and the loss of self-control.Sandy highly values thinking, and does not want to be intellectually incapacitated by passion. Her thoughts here also relate to her feelings for Miss Brodie: earlier on the walk Sandy thinks to herself how she loves Miss Brodie, but it also seems that she is afraid of being swept away by her, of losing her identity to her, of losing her self-control. In one sense, Sandy's betrayal of Miss Brodie is an act of recovering herself from passion (which would also make sense as Sandy eventually becomes a nun).

Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ Miss Brodie stood in her brown dress like a gladiator with raised arm and eyes flashing like a sword. 'Hail Caesar!' she cried again, turning radiantly to the window light, as if Caesar sat there.

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 47

Explanation and Analysis

Miss Brodie has returned from her vacation to Europe ina state of excitement after being exposed to European culture and fascist politics. Here, she recalls having seen the Coliseum in Rome where gladiatorshailed Caesar, and then goes on to perform the action for her pupils to see. This is a telling moment, where Miss Brodie reveals how enamored she is with figures of great authority, and the effects they have on their subjects.

From the details that her eyes were "flashing like a sword," and that she turned "radiantly," we understand how impactful a moment this was for Miss Brodie. She is so dedicated to the memory that she nearly conjures Caesar, who seems to sit in front of the window.

She is in love with the idea of a charismatic, monolithic ruler. She envisions Caesar as an ancestorof her admirable Mussolini, who in turn is the model for her own treatment of the Brodie set, according to Sandy.

The fact that she performs this scene for her students in place of a history lesson only confirms her desire to be in a position of inappropriate authority. In addition to reliving her memory, she is showing them how best to follow a leader—how to be a Brodie set of gladiators.

❝ Sandy caught his [Mr. Teddy Lloyd's] glance towards Miss Brodie as if seeking her approval for his very artistic attitude and Sandy saw her smile back as would a goddess with superior understanding smile to a god away on the mountain tops.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Mr. Teddy Lloyd

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 52

Explanation and Analysis

Teddy Lloyd is, along with Mr. Lowther, one of two male teachers at the school whom the Brodie set intuit has feelings for Miss Brodie. Here, he is giving an art lesson to the students while Miss Brodie watches. He shows the students a painting of a Madonna and Child without any religious awe - only a "very artistic attitude." This surprises the religious girls, and Sandy notices that Mr. Lloyd seems to be "seeking [Miss Brodie's] approval" of his attitude.

This brief instant confirms Miss Brodie's assertion that she is in her "prime," as well as fanning the flames of sexual curiosity that run unchecked through the Brodie set. Mr. Lloyd's art lesson is ironically less focused on teaching the girls about art and more interested in gauging Miss Brodie's thoughts, which, we see here, overlap with Mr. Lloyd's. They are a "god" and "goddess" above the young heads of their pupils.

This consideration on Mr. Lloyd's part is a very subtleform of courtship, and the fact that Sandy notices it suggests that she has been primed to take an inappropriate interest in Miss Brodie's personal relationships, which, of course, she has. Miss Brodie speaks frequently about her deceased first great love, who, like Mr. Lloyd, was a soldier. Immediately after the lesson, Monica Douglas tells the Brodie set that

Mr. Lloyd kissed Miss Brodie. The idea seems impossible to them, but they soon become obsessed with it.

The shuttle of the sewing machines went up and down, which usually caused Sandy and Jenny to giggle, since at that time everything that could conceivably bear a sexual interpretation immediately did so to them. But the absence of Miss Brodie and the presence of Miss Gaunt had a definite subtracting effect from the sexual significance of everything, and the trepidation of the two sewing sisters contributed to the effect of grim realism.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Jenny Gray, Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr

Related Themes:    

Page Number: 60

Explanation and Analysis

To understand the significance of this quote, we must remember the earlier sewing lesson scene, when Miss Brodie was present. In that scene, Miss Brodie read aloud to her pupils from *Jane Eyre* as they sewed, and the girls pricked their fingers so that there would be blood on their work. This earlier scene had an erotic, charged atmosphere that is noticeably lacking in the scene introduced in this quotation.

In this scene, Miss Brodie's absence drains the "sexual significance" from everything. The weakened erotic charge is completely snuffed out by the complimentary presenceof Miss Gaunt, whose very name suggests the "grim realism" her presence evokes.

Later in the text, we learn that Miss Brodie took the leave of absenceillustrated here to carry out an affair with Mr. Lowther (as a means of distracting herself from her true passion for Mr. Lloyd). The Brodie set is uniquely attuned to their own sexuality as well as Miss Brodie's, and here we see a different version of the authority and social grouping that has occurred throughout the text.

The Brodie set is still sensitive to the erotic fluctuations caused by Miss Brodie even when she is not present. She maintains her authority over them by priming their sexual curiosity (such as reading *Jane Eyre* to them) and her pull is strong enough that they define their mood even by her absence.

It is seven years, thought Sandy, since I betrayed this tiresome woman [Miss Brodie]. What does she mean by 'betray'? She was looking at the hills as if to see there the first and unbetrayable Miss Brodie, indifferent to criticism as a crag.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 63

Explanation and Analysis

This is an essential moment in the novel's plot. The book makes use of prolepsis (flash-forwards in time) to show us the fate of the Brodie set in their adult years. These flash-forwards focus particularly on Sandy, who is here having lunch with an aged and nostalgic Miss Brodie. Miss Brodie has spent much of the lunch trying to discover which of her set "betrayed" her. And now we learn that it is Sandy, presumably the girl that Miss Brodie suspects the least, who betrayed her teacher.

Sandy thinks of Miss Brodie as "this tiresome woman," which reveals the effort Sandy has made to free herself of Miss Brodie's charismatic spell. Sandy is also confounded by Miss Brodie's suggestion that she has been "betrayed." We understand that "the first and unbetrayable Miss Brodie," that is, the Miss Brodie that led the Brodie set when Sandy was a girl, would not use such a term. It would not, as Sandy herself suggests, have even been possible to betray the woman she used to know.

Sandy then looks out to the hills, searching for the earlier, stronger, more enchanting Miss Brodie as if she were a crag in the hillside. We understand here that although Sandy has made a great effort to break free of Miss Brodie's authority, she is still somewhat caught up in it, or at least nostalgic for it. She pretends not to feel any pull from the present day Miss Brodie, but in fact, Sandy is the member of the Brodie set who remains most faithfully obsessed with Miss Brodie in her adult life.

This was the first time the girls had heard of Hugh's artistic leanings. Sandy puzzled over this with Jenny, and it came to them both that Miss Brodie was making her new love story fir the old... Sandy was fascinated by this method of making patterns was facts, and was divided between her admiration for the technique and the pressing need t prove Miss Brodie guilty of misconduct.

Related Characters: Hugh, Sandy Stranger, Jenny Gray, Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 75

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Miss Brodie has just been speaking about a familiar subject - her lost love, Hugh, who died in the war. However, her story is different this time. For "the first time," Miss Brodie tells the girls that Hugh was an artist - a painter, in fact. It is no coincidence that Mr. Lloyd, her most recent passion, is also a painter.

Sandy and Jenny realize that Miss Brodie is making "her new love story fit the old." In this moment, we see Sandy's ambivalent feelings towards Miss Brodie's manner of living.

First and foremost, Sandy is "fascinated" by Miss Brodie's willingness to treat her own life as a narrative, and to mold the structure to fit her whims. However, Sandy is also struck by a "need to prove Miss Brodie guilty of misconduct." This need will come to motivate many of Sandy future actions - not least her final betrayal of Miss Brodie. Her desire to expose and punish the guilty is also related to her conflicting feelings towards sex and sexuality, as well as her eventualconversion to the Roman Catholic church. Miss Brodie is playing loosely with the facts of her sexual history, and Sandy resents this.

Chapter 4 Quotes

❝ The teachers here [in the Senior school] seemed to have no thoughts of anyone's personalities apart from their specialty in life, whether it was mathematics, Latin or science. They treated the new first-formers as if they were not real, but only to dealt with, like symbols of algebra, and Miss Brodie's pupils found this refreshing at first.

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 80

Explanation and Analysis

The Brodie set has graduated from the Junior school where they were Miss Brodie's pupils, and are now students in the Senior school. This is the period of time when the novel opens. In their beginning weeks with new instructors, the girls are struck by the difference in education they receive. Here, they are treated as students, not as personalities. Instead of intriguing them with sexually charged personal anecdotes like Miss Brodie did, the instructors (especially Miss Lockhart) depend upon the subject matter to excite their pupils.

The Brodie set initially finds this change "refreshing," but we understand from the quotation that this enthusiasm for Senior school is short-lived.

This quote illustrates not only the differences between Miss Brodie and her fellow instructors, but also the stress of having to switch social groups. The Brodie set at first appreciates the anonymityof Senior school - they are not pressured to be personally intriguing, and neither are they expected to obsess over a charismatic teacher. But the novelty of this soon wears off, and the girls become wistful for the strong authority of Miss Brodie, and the familiar roles they played under her control.

❝ 'Phrases like "the team spirit" are always employed to cut across individualism, love and personal loyalties.'

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 82

Explanation and Analysis

Senior school is in many ways designed to pull the Brodie set apart. Miss Brodie is no longer a constant in their lives, the girls are studying different subjects, and, intriguingly, Miss Mackay has conspired to put the girls in different "houses." These houses often compete against one another in teams. Miss Mackay separates the girls in hopes that their newfound team spirit will dissolve their bonds with Miss Brodie, as well as with one another.

However, when they were in Junior school, Miss Brodie always told her girls that "'the team spirit'...cuts across individualism, love, and personal loyalties." This lesson is first and foremost in the set's mind, and so all of them save EuniceGardner (a natural athlete) avoid competitvegames.

It is deeply ironic that Miss Brodie maintains her authority over her set by making claims about individuality. Instead of allowing them to splinter off, like Eunice, and become different people, she manipulates them into staying linked to one another, and to her.

Her [Miss Brodie's] disapproval of the Church of Rome was based on her assertions that it was a church of superstition, and that only people who did not want to think for themselves were Roman Catholics. In some ways, her attitude was a strange one, because she was by temperament suited only to the Roman Catholic Church; possibly it could have embraced, even while it disciplined, her soaring and diving spirit, it might even have normalized her. But perhaps this was the reason that she shunned it…

Related Themes:

Page Number: 90

Explanation and Analysis

Here we see Miss Brodie's complicated and ambivalent thoughts on religion come into focus. She has been going to church every Sunday, but always to different churches. We learn here that the only church she will not attend is the Roman Catholic Church. The reasons that she disdains Roman Catholicism are varied.

Miss Brodie claims that she dislikes it because it is a "church of superstition," and prevents original thought. Perhaps Miss Brodie is wary of superstition because of her own Calivinist upbringing. Her aversion to Roman Catholicism, however, is ironic because the Roman Catholic church - with all of its dramatic imagery and ritual - is perhaps the only church that could "have embraced" and "dicisplinedher soaring and adventurous spirit."

Perhaps Miss Brodie is also opposed to Roman Catholicism because it is a religion largely based on guilt, which she absolutely refuses to feel, even as she continues having an affair with Mr. Lowther. Specific denominations aside, we understand that Miss Brodie lacks strong religious convictions because she worships what might be called the god within herself.

It was twenty-five years before Sandy had so far recovered from a creeping vision of disorder that she could look back and recognize that Miss Brodie's defective sense of self-criticism had not been without its beneficent and enlarging effects; by which time Sandy had already betrayed Miss Brodie and Miss Brodie was laid in her grave.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 91

Explanation and Analysis

Related to the fact that Miss Brodie could not respect the guilt-based religion of the Roman Catholic Church, she lives her life with a "defective sense of self-criticism." This means that Miss Brodie does not feel guilt - she does not reproach herself for making immoral choices. Here, we see Sandy considering this trait of Miss Brodie's, and coming to appreciate it in a way that she had not been able to do as a girl.

Sandy, we remember, spent her adolescenceobsessed with Miss Brodie, but also disturbed by her willingness to bend the truth of her life and manipulate her students. Miss Brodie's inability to feel guilt, when combined with these other failings, gave rise to Sandy's "creeping vision of disorder." Miss Brodie was a chaotic force, and Sandy, who as a girl was drawn to control and cool, analytic thought, found this chaosunsettling.

However, "twenty-five years" later, after thedamage has been done on both sides (Sandy betrayed Miss Brodie, and Miss Brodie stunted the development of many of her pupils), Sandy realizes that Miss Brodie's refusal to self-criticize had "benefic[ial] and enlarging effects." This is a bittersweet moment. It highlights Sandy's constant consideration of Miss Brodie, as well as the deeply complicated legacy - both positive and negative - that Miss Brodie left behind.

Chapter 5 Quotes

'Do you know, Sandy dear, all my ambitions are for you and Rose. You have got insight, perhaps not quite spiritual, but you're a deep one, and Rose has got instinct, Rose has got instinct.'

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie (speaker), Sandy Stranger, Rose Stanley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 114

Explanation and Analysis

Miss Brodie is speaking to Sandy in the fall of 1931. Sandy is in her early teenage years and Miss Brodie is in the heyday of her affair with Mr. Lowther. The Brodie set is maturing into themselves, and Miss Brodie here takes it upon herself to claim that, out of all the girls, she only has "ambitions" for two of them: Sandy and Rose. She chooses these two girls because she feels they represent the two greatest

characteristics a woman can have: insight and instinct.

Sandy has insight, which Miss Brodie defines as intellectual ability and analytical penetration. Rose, on the other hand, has instinct, which here means physical appeal, grace, and erotic power. Miss Brodie conceives of herself as having both insight and instinct, and so we might see her trying to recreate the whole of herself in two spiritual daughters, each of whom is half of her.

It's a mistake, of course, that Miss Brodie should place so much trust in Sandy and Rose. Eventually, Rose will cast off her influence and Sandy will betray her.

> In fact, it was the religion of Calvin of which Sandy felt deprived, or rather a specified recognition of it. She desired this birthright; something definite to reject. It pervaded the place in proportion as it was unacknowledged. In some ways the most real and rooted people whom Sandy knew were Miss Gaunt and the Kerr sisters who made no evasions about their belief that God had planned for practically everybody before they were born a nasty surprise when they died.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Gaunt, Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr

Related Themes:

Page Number: 115

Explanation and Analysis

Calvinism is, as Sandy has intuited, an enormous influence on Miss Brodie. Instead of flatly rejecting the belief system, Miss Brodie has perverted it by "electing herself to grace" and taking on a God-like role of determining her own fate and the fate of the Brodie set.

Here, Sandy wishes that she could believe seriously in Calvinism (which holds that God elects people to Heaven without reference to their earthly conduct) because it would be "something definite to reject." Instead, her most potent belief is in Miss Brodie herself, which leads eventually to her rejection and betrayal of her teacher and her conversion to Roman Catholicism (the one religion that Miss Brodie refused, and one in which your earthly conduct more directly influences the fate of your soul).

In this passage, Sandy also thinks about Miss Gaunt and the Kerr sisters (who take care of Mr. Lowther and are therefore rivals with Miss Brodie for his time and attention). These women are "the most real and rooted" people that she knows, and although Sandy does not necessarilyrespect their beliefs, she envies their sense of balance and strength. They are the calm foils to the chaos that governs Miss Brodie's life.

> She [Sandy] began to sense what went to the makings of Miss Brodie who had elected herself to grace in a particular way and with more exotic suicidal enchantment than if she had simply taken to drink like other spinsters who couldn't stand it any more.

It was plain that Miss Brodie wanted Rose with her instinct to start preparing to be Teddy Lloyd's lover, and Sandy with her insight to act as informant on the affair. It was to this end that Rose and Sandy had been chose as the crème de la crème.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Jean Brodie, Mr. Teddy Lloyd

Related Themes:

Page Number: 116

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Sandy has a revelation about Miss Brodie's self-elevation as well as Miss Brodie's grand plan for Sandy and Rose. Miss Brodie is a glamorous woman, committed to the idea of a life transfigured and elevated by passion and extraordinary actions. To this end, Miss Brodie has "elected herself to grace" so that she might best control and determine her own fate as well as the fates of her set. She wants to plot the lives of her students like a novelist, or a predestining God.

However, Sandy sees that this control and manipulation is merely an "exotic" version of common actions taken by "other spinsters." While those less imaginative women might "take to drink" to numb the bleakness of their daily lives, Miss Brodie instead finds escape and fantasy in her plans for herself and her girls. The method is different, but the root causes are the same.

We also see the first explicit sketch of Miss Brodie's plan for her two most promising girls - the insightful Sandy and the instinctive Rose. Miss Brodie wants Rose to begin an affair with Mr. Lloyd - to act as Miss Brodie's erotic proxy. Sandy's job will be to inform Miss Brodie about the affair in satisfying detail. Although she pretends to have elevated ambitions for the "creme de la creme" of her girls, Miss Brodie's actual plan is a sordid, disturbing anticlimax.

Chapter 6 Quotes

By the time their [the Brodie girls'] friendship with Miss Brodie was of seven years' standing, it had worked itself into their bones, so that they could not break away without, as it were, splitting their bones to do so.

Related Characters: Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 123

Explanation and Analysis

Although she has long since stopped being their teacher, Miss Brodie still maintains an impressive influence over her girls. Here, these lines reveal just how impossible and painful it would be for the members of the Brodie set to reject their association with Miss Brodie.

We see that doing so would be so difficult primarily because being a member of the Brodie set is the main way in which these girls identify themselves. Miss Brodie has shaped their choices for so long that they are more like her than they are themselves. As such, it would be like "splitting their bones" to break free from her.

Additionally, they would lose their friendships within the group. Miss Brodie's influence is such that none of the Brodie set have been able to assimilatewith their other classmates, or make new friends. So it would not just be with Miss Brodie that they would split, but with one another as well. Seen in this light, we can understand the Brodie set as a unified body - if one of the girls were to "break away," it would be as absurd and violent as a person's arm deciding to abandon the rest of the body.

She [Miss Brodie] thinks she is Providence, thought Sandy, she thinks she is the God of Calvin, she sees the beginning and the end. And Sandy thought, too, the woman is an unconscious lesbian. And many theories from the books of psychology categorized Miss Brodie, but failed to obliterate her image from the canvases of one-armed Teddy Lloyd.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Miss Jean Brodie, Mr. Teddy Lloyd

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 128

Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Lloyd has become a secondary figure of obsession for Sandy, mainly because he is so clearly infatuated with Miss Brodie, a feeling with which Sandy can't help but empathize. The portraits that Mr. Lloyd paints of the Brodie set have one thing in common: they all look like more like Miss Brodie than theirtrue subjects. Sandy reports this to Miss Brodie, who is predictably pleased with the information. She called herself Mr. Lloyd's Muse, and goes on to speculate on when Rose will take her place as the artist's muse, a veiled reference to the affair that Miss Brodie is attempting to orchestrate.

Here, we see Sandy grapple openly with a way of understanding Miss Brodie and pinning her down. Sandy is known for her "insight" - her ability to analyze clearly and deeply - and here, we can read her attempts to define Miss Brodie as a way of wrestling control away from her teacher. If she can classify Miss Brodie, then Miss Brodie will lose some of her magnetic power.

First, Sandy thinks that Miss Brodie has put herself in the position of God. She controls her pupil's fate like the Calvinist God of predetermination, or like an author manipulating characters into pleasing and dramatic narratives. Sandy's next idea - that Miss Brodie is an "unconscious lesbian" - may well be a psychological projection. Sandy herself seems to have homoerotic feelings for Miss Brodie. Her thoughts then become more vague, as she cycles through "many theories" in an attempt to define Miss Brodie. Sandy is ultimately unsuccessful, however, as none of her analytical thinking can erase Miss Brodie from Mr. Lloyd's canvases, and by extension, from his mind as well as Sandy's.

The more she [Sandy] discovered him [Mr. Lloyd] to be in love with Jean Brodie, the more she was curious about the mind that loved the woman. By the end of the year it happened that she had quite lost interest in the man himself, but was deeply absorbed in his mind, from which she extracted, among other things, his religion as a pith from a husk.

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger, Mr. Teddy Lloyd, Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Page Number: 132

Explanation and Analysis

Despite Miss Brodie's plans for Rose and Mr. Lloyd to have an affair, it is actually Sandy who begins sleeping with Mr. Lloyd. She does so for several reasons. Mr. Lloyd and Sandy share an obsession with Miss Brodie, which Sandy can use to manipulate Mr. Lloyd (every time she points out that he has accidentally painted Miss Brodie, Mr. Lloyd kisses her). Also, Sandy has long wanted to thwart Miss Brodie's deterministic plans, and becoming Mr. Lloyd's lover in Rose's place is an efficient way of derailing Miss Brodie's attempts to manipulate her life.

However, as her affair with Mr. Llody continues, Sandy loses interest in "the man himself." Instead, she is consumed by her efforts to understand"the mind that loved [Miss Brodie]." Again, we see "insightful" Sandy throwing the full force of her analytical powers into trying to understand Miss Brodie and the effects she has on people.

In the course of her study of Mr. Lloyd, Sandy "extract[s]" his religion. Mr. Lloyd is a Roman Catholic. Eventually, Sandy becomes a Roman Catholic nun. Sandy may take an interest in Roman Catholicism for a number of reasons. Perhaps she feels guilty about her affair with Mr. Lloyd and thinks that she can most effectively repent as a Roman Catholic. Or, more persuasively, perhaps she is defying Miss Brodie's influence by turning to Roman Catholicism, a faith where one cannot just dismiss one's own guilt as Miss Brodie seems to do. Another option is that in becoming Roman Catholic she becomes like the man whom Miss Brodie loves. Or perhaps it is some messy combination of all of these things.

❝ 'It's only possible to betray where loyalty is due.'

Related Themes:

Page Number: 136

Explanation and Analysis

Sandy says this towards the very end of the novel, long after she betrayed Miss Brodie by reporting on her radical politics, inappropriate teaching methods, and personal indiscretions to the headmistress. Sandy's betrayal led to Miss Brodie's being fired, and the question of who betrayed her obsesses Miss Brodie until she dies. Now, after the death of their teacher, members of the Brodie set come and visit Sandy to discuss the late Miss Brodie. Here, Sandy is speaking with Monica, who tells her that Miss Brodie began to suspectSandy in her last years.

Sandy, instead of either confessing to or refuting the charge that she betrayed Miss Brodie, questions whether a betrayal was even possiblesince a person can only "betray where loyalty is due." In this moment, Sandy reveals the depths of her disillusionment and disappointment in Miss Brodie.

This line recalls Sandy's earlier claim that it was not Miss Brodie who was betrayed at all, but it was Miss Miss Brodie who betrayed the Brodie set. Sandy's lifelong obsession with Miss Brodie has so many facets that it's impossible to pin down a single reason that she makes this claim. However, Sandy might be thinking of the sordid plan that Miss Brodie made for her and Rose, Miss Brodie's hand in the death of Joyce Emily, or Miss Brodie's refusal to feel guilt. As Sandy sees it, Miss Brodie did not earn the girls' loyalty, and so getting her fired wasn't a real "betrayal" at all.

❝ 'What were the main influences of your schooldays, Sister Helena? Were they literary or political or personal? Was it Calvinism?'

Sandy said: 'There was a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime.'

Related Characters: Sandy Stranger (speaker), Miss Jean Brodie

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 137

Explanation and Analysis

As an adult, Sandy is a Roman Catholic nun, well-known for her book, "The Transfiguration of the Commonplace." In the second chapter of the novel, a young man who admires her work comes and speaks with her. The novel ends on their interaction, as he asks her about her early influences.

Although the young man offers up several possibilities, Sandy responds with a single influence: "a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime." It is a tremendous irony that Sandy - who cut so violently against Miss Brodie's plans for her, and who went so far as to betray Miss Brodie - names her old teacher as her single, formative influence. The very fact that Sandy rejected the influence so aggressively is the purest proof that Miss Brodie's influenceendures.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1

A group of five teenage boys and five sixteen-year-old girls are socializing near the gates of the Marcia Blaine School in Edinburgh, Scotland, the boys positioning their bicycles so as to form "a protective fence…between the sexes." The girls belong to the "Brodie set," named after their former teacher Miss Jean Brodie. This is what they have been called ever since they were students at the Junior school, and even their headmistress (later identified as Miss Mackay) calls them this "in scorn"; the girls moved from the Junior to the Senior school at the age of twelve.

The boys and girls are on the brink of sexual maturity and are very conscious of their sexuality: the "protective fence" of bicycles is a sign of this consciousness as well as of sexual tension. For the members of the Brodie set, these boys represent a way of life altogether different from that which they've known at Blaine with Miss Brodie, a life not *organized around Miss Brodie but rather shared with a male partner.*

Even when they are students at the Junior school, the Brodie girls are recognizable as Miss Jean Brodie's pupils because they were "vastly informed on a lot of subjects irrelevant to the authorized curriculum"—everything from Mussolini (the fascist Prime Minister of Italy during World War II) to methods of cleaning the skin with cream and witch-hazel, from Miss Brodie's love life to "those who considered the Bible to be untrue."

Miss Brodie is an unorthodox teacher, instructing students not in accordance with the authorized curriculum but her own interests, which are socially unconventional, even radical, and often inappropriate. This both expands her students' horizons, but also denies them a well-rounded education.

By the age of sixteen, the girls have adapted to the other authority figures at the school, yet remain unmistakably influenced by Miss Brodie. They are famous schoolwide in the sense that they are held in suspicion and disliked; they have no team spirit and have little in common with each other than remaining friends with Miss Brodie, who still teaches at that time in the Junior department despite being "held in great suspicion."

The Brodie girls' group identity is generated by their friendship with Miss Brodie and how she's influenced them, but also by the fact that the other girls at Blaine perceive *the Brodie girls as a group. It is ironic that the Brodie girls have no more solid common ground than friendship with Miss Brodie herself.*

Each girl in the Brodie set is famous for something. Monica Douglas, red-nosed and fat-legged, is a prefect famous for her mathematical ability and violent anger. Rose Stanley is famous for sex. Eunice Gardiner, small and neat, is famous for "her spritely gymnastics and glamorous swimming." Sandy Stranger is notorious for her "small, almost non-existent, eyes" and famous for her vowel sounds, which long ago so enraptured Miss Brodie that she asked Sandy to recite a stanza from Tennyson's poem "The Lady of Shalott." "'Where there is no vision…the people perish,'" Miss Brodie had said on that occasion. The prettiest and most graceful member of the Brodie set is Jenny Gray, who is Sandy's best friend and wants to be an actress.

The girls all have very different interests – no common ground at all. Nonetheless, Miss Brodie's charisma alone draws them together and preserves their group identity. We later learn that what the girls are famous for doesn't necessarily reflect who they really are. For example, though Rose is famous for sex, she never talks about sex, much less indulges in it. Even though Sandy has small eyes, she has very perceptive "vision": she is psychologically insightful, deeply analytical.

The narrative returns to the scene of the boys and girls socializing. One of the five boys, named Andrew, is insulting Jenny about her way of speech. She tells him not to be a lout, but he and two other boys (both also named Andrew) just mimic her, to the laughter of the girls present. Just then the final member of the Brodie set, Mary Macgregor, comes along, accompanied by an outsider to the set, Joyce Emily Hammond, a very rich girl and delinquent sent to Blaine as a last resort. Joyce Emily is trying very hard to become a member of the Brodie set, but there is no chance of it.

Mary's arriving late on the scene reflects her status as a social outsider, even though she is a member of the Brodie set. Group identity tends to be very rigid in the novel, which explains the impossibility of Joyce Emily becoming a Brodie girl. Joyce Emily's desire to become a member of the set, and even more importantly to have a connection to Miss Brodie, will play a crucial role later in the novel.

Joyce Emily says that a teacher is coming, and two of the Andrews depart on their bicycles while the other three boys defiantly remain. The teacher turns out to be Miss Jean Brodie herself. She excuses the boys, walks a way with all of the girls, but soon excuses Joyce as well, leaving the Brodie set "to their secret life as it had been six years ago in their childhood." Following behind, Sandy remembers one of Miss Brodie's sayings from that time: "'I am putting old heads on your young shoulders…and all my pupils are the crème de la crème.'"

Miss Brodie is very protective of the Brodie girls' group identity and directs their lives, in a sense, which is shown by her dismissal of the boys and Joyce Emily. Her image for education—putting old heads on young shoulders—suggests the unnaturalness and intrusiveness of her methods, and also foreshadows Mr. Lloyd's troubling portraits, in which he literally paints Miss Brodie's head onto the girls' shoulders.

As they walk together, Miss Brodie invites the six girls to supper, and insists that Jenny come even though she has plans with the Dramatic Society; for there is a plot afoot, Miss Brodie says, to force her to resign her teaching post (there have been such plots afoot before). It has been suggested that Miss Brodie apply to "one of the progressive schools," but she thinks these schools "crank," eccentric, and insists that Blaine needs her to elevate their program. "'Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life,'" Miss Brodie says. The Brodie set "smile[s] in understanding of various kinds."

Miss Brodie demands that she be the center of her girls' lives, even at the expense of their own interests, like Jenny's in the Dramatic Society. It is ironic that the eccentric Miss Brodie dismisses the progressive schools for being eccentric—perhaps she does not want to teach at such a school for fear of fading into the crowd of eccentric teachers there, preferring to be considered unique, at the heart of a dramatic situation. That the girls smile in various kinds of understanding suggests that they are caught by Miss Brodie's charisma but don't entirely understand her.

Rose asks who is responsible for the plot, and Miss Brodie says that they would discuss that together at supper, assuring the girls nonetheless that those who opposed her would not succeed. The girls agree. Miss Brodie concludes by saying that she is still in her prime, tells the girls that "'it is important to recognize the years of one's prime'"; then she boards a tramcar and departs.

This is the first mention of Miss Brodie's "prime" in the novel—it is, to her mind, the height of her charisma and influence, over her girls, over the Blaine administration, and, we later learn, over men as well. Miss Brodie may well be ironically past her prime in this scene, though: she is on the brink of being betrayed by one of the Brodie set and terminated.

The narrative shifts to six years before. Miss Brodie is leading her new class of ten-year-old girls to the garden for a history lesson. On the way, they stop outside of the headmistress Miss Mackay's office, where a poster of Stanley Baldwin (a British Prime Minister) is hanging, with the words "Safety First." Miss Brodie tells her class that Goodness, Truth, and Beauty come first, not safety. This is the girls' first intimation that Miss Brodie is at odds with the rest of the teaching staff and, indeed, that adults could differ from one another at all.

Miss Brodie shows the girls here that all adults need not be the same, that they can take exciting, life-enlarging paths that conflict with social convention and propriety. Indeed, we might agree that Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are loftier, more transfiguring ideals than safety. However, it is precisely Miss Brodie's disregard for safety which results, if only indirectly, in the death of Joyce Emily years later.

Outside, Miss Brodie then instructs her girls to hold up their books as if doing their history lesson, but tells them instead about her summer holiday in Egypt, among other subjects like skin care. She asks who the greatest Italian painter is, and when one girl responds that it is Leonardo da Vinci, Miss Brodie says, "'That is incorrect. The answer is Giotto, he is my favorite.'"

Although Miss Brodie introduces the girls to high culture, she does so dogmatically, even when it comes to questions of taste like who the greatest Italian painter is. She takes her own opinions for absolute truth.

Next Miss Brodie tells the girls that her prime has truly begun and that they themselves must be able to recognize their primes and live life to the full during those years. Observing meanwhile that Mary is looking at something under her desk, Miss Brodie asks her what it is: "'a comic paper,'" Mary replied. Miss Brodie tells Mary that she is too old for comic papers, takes "the colored sheets" of *Tiger Tim's* from her, and tears the comic paper up "beyond redemption." She then returns to the subject of her prime, checking to make sure that Sandy has been paying attention, which she has.

The paintings of da Vinci and Giotto are here contrasted with Mary's comic paper, an example of low culture. Ironically, though Miss Brodie herself is straying here from the authorized curriculum, she rather severely punishes Mary for doing likewise, suggesting that she is something of a hypocrite: Miss Brodie thinks it permissible to break rules so long as the rules aren't her own.

Later that same autumn, during the hour for English grammar, Miss Brodie also tells her class about a man she had been engaged to (later identified as Hugh). He had died during World War I on Flanders' Field a week before the Armistice. After interrupting herself to chastise Sandy for having her sleeves rolled up, Miss Brodie goes on: her fiancé had been poor, a countryman from Ayrshire (a county in Scotland), and upon proposing he had told her, "'We shall have to drink water and walk slow,'" which, Miss Brodie explains to her class, meant that the couple would have to "'live quietly.'" When Miss Brodie asks Rose what "We shall have to drink water and walk slow" means, the young student just regurgitated her teacher's own translation of the saying.

It is inappropriate that Miss Brodie should spend class time discussing her love life, but it is in this way that she lends a romantic and tragic tint to her life, which draws the girls in. Discussions like these especially stimulate Sandy's sexual curiosity, which only further draws her to the sexually charismatic Miss Brodie. Even though Miss Brodie claims that an education is a "leading out," she often hypocritically demands that her girls be able to regurgitate exactly what she has told them, which is both dogmatic and intrusive.

As Miss Brodie is telling the story of her fiancé, Miss Mackay approaches. Several of the girls in the class are crying at this point over Hugh's fate, and their headmistress inquires as to why. Miss Brodie explains that she has been telling a story as part of their history lesson; Miss Mackay in turn tells the girls that they should not be crying over history at the age of ten. After Miss Mackay goes, Miss Brodie tells her class that they did well in not answering Miss Mackay's question: "'Speech is silver but silence is golden'" she says. She then quizzes Mary as to what she has just said, but Mary hasn't been paying attention. "'If only you small girls would listen to me,'" Miss Brodie had said, "'I would make of you the crème de la crème.'"

One way Miss Brodie exerts her authority over her pupils is by creating an atmosphere of confidentiality and secrecy, which flatters her girls' sense of inclusion and maturity. It is also by slowly feeding them secrets that Miss Brodie earns her students loyalty and at the same time tests just how loyal they are. Whereas Sandy dutifully regurgitates what Miss Brodie says, Mary is not as quick; perhaps this offends Miss Brodie's vanity, which may contribute to an explanation as to why Mary later becomes Miss Brodie's scapegoat.

CHAPTER 2

Mary Macgregor, though she lives to be twenty-four years old, never realizes that Miss Brodie only shares her love story with her pupils. A year after World War II began, Mary joins the Wrens (Women's Royal Naval Service); she is incompetent in the service and much blamed. She meets her first and last boyfriend during this period, a corporal, who ends up deserting her. Thinking back to see if she had ever been happy, it occurs to Mary that it was those first years with Miss Brodie in the nineteen-thirties, listening to her stories and opinions, that had been the happiest time of her life—even though Miss Brodie had called Mary "'such a clumsy girl'" and treated her condescendingly. Mary would later die during the war, while on leave, in a hotel fire.

That Mary thinks her days as a young girl were the best of her life speaks to a stunted emotional life, which can be attributed to Miss Brodie's educational methods, at least indirectly. Furthering this irony is the fact that Miss Brodie and the other Brodie girls so mistreat Mary. This instance of prolepsis (flash-forward) indicates just how far off Miss Brodie's promises to her girls are from the reality—the plans of Junior school teachers, and Miss Brodie herself, often go awry, it would seem.

Sandy Stranger, while Miss Brodie's pupil, also has a feeling that her childhood is supposed to be the happiest time of her life, and on her tenth birthday she tells Jenny Gray as much. The two girls agree that unlike Miss Brodie their parents didn't have primes, only sexual intercourse, which "was still a stupendous thought" to them, one they "had only lately lit upon." Sandy goes on to say that Mr. Lloyd, the one-armed Art master to the Senior girls at Blaine, has just had a baby, and she infers from this that "'he must have committed sex with his wife.'" While the girls continue discussing sex together, Sandy's English mother (all the other schoolgirls' mothers are Scottish) enters the room and asks if all is well, only to be driven away by a ferocious glance from Sandy.

Even though Miss Brodie tells her girls to anticipate and recognize their primes, she also creates an atmosphere which suggests not just to Mary but also to Sandy that their time with her should be their prime. Miss Brodie does not want her girls to have lives of their own, it would seem, but rather wants them to validate and vindicate her own (possibly somewhat stunted) life. Sandy talks about sex as though it were a crime ("'committed sex'"), which suggests that she has been exposed to sex prematurely and which also foreshadows her invention of Sergeant Anne Grey in Chapter 3.

Sandy then pulls out a notebook stashed away in her room, the first page of which bore the title "The Mountain Eyrie." The notebook holds a story written by Sandy and Jenny about Miss Brodie's dead lover Hugh, whom the girls have imagined to be alive. In the story, Hugh returns from the War and seeks out Miss Brodie, only to be told she has taken another lover. In turn, Hugh flees to an eyrie in the mountains, where Sandy and Jenny come upon him; he holds both captive. The story leaves off at the point at which Jenny escapes, Hugh pursues her, and Sandy tells him that Miss Brodie has not in fact taken another lover.

Miss Brodie stimulates her students' imaginations in ways inappropriate to their age. They develop sexual curiosity and unhealthy perspectives on erotic behavior, as the story about Hugh bears witness to: his taking the girls captive is inexplicable, but also seems sexually charged. This is yet another way that Miss Brodie binds together her special girls' group identity: they are bound together by premature sexual curiosity.

Sandy and Jenny resume work on the story, describing how the fictionalized Hugh flings Sandy away to pursue Jenny. The girls discuss the prospect of publishing their story when in their primes, then pretend to be witches, plan on going to an art gallery together to see the statue of a naked Greek god, speculate that Miss Brodie will escort them, and agree that she (Miss Brodie) is above sex. It is soon time for Jenny to go home. As she and her mother leave, Sandy looks out the window and wonders if Jenny shares her feeling of living a double life.

The unhealthiness of the girls' perspective on erotic behavior is revealed more fully here: the masochism of Hugh flinging Sandy in the girls' story, their premature and sexualized desire to see the statue of the naked god, and their privileging of Miss Brodie's not having sex over having sex. Sandy is living a double life in multiple senses: she is a young girl with premature exposure to sex, and she plays out a fantasy life in "The Mountain Eyrie."

The narrative shifts to Miss Brodie's classroom. It is close to the end of the school day, and Miss Brodie is reciting Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott." Sandy, leading her double life to stave off boredom, is daydreaming that the Lady of Shalott herself has written the poem she exists in with white paint left out "'by some heedless member of the Unemployed"; also that the Lady tells her, Sandy, that she is to be "'ill-fated in love.'" Upon this, Sandy cries out in alarm in real life. Miss Brodie asks if Sandy is in pain, tells the girls that composure is one of a woman's best assets, and then supports her case by gesturing to a print of the ever-composed Mona Lisa (a painting by da Vinci).

Miss Brodie wants to be the author of her own life, to transfigure her life into a work of art, which perhaps explains why she's so unorthodox and why her ideals for human conduct so often come from works of art like the Mona Lisa. Sandy, with her active imagination, lives as if in a work of art, interacting with the Lady of Shallot for instance, but at the heart of her fantasies is Miss Brodie: the Lady speaks of the Unemployed, but we later learn that this is a phrase Sandy picked up from Miss Brodie.

Miss Brodie invites Sandy to recite some poetry with her famous half-English vowels, and the narrator informs us that by this point Rose Stanley is not yet famous for sex. In fact, it is Eunice Gardiner who broaches the subject of sex with Sandy and Jenny by pointing out a sexual phrase in the Bible, which induces them to threaten to tell on her. Jenny, however, is famous at this point for her prettiness and her singing. Indeed, the long-bodied, short-legged, red- and gold-haired Mr. Lowther, the girls' singing teacher, sometimes twitches her ringlets as she sings, even while Miss Brodie looks on.

Even though both Sandy and Jenny have sexually charged imaginings, they are nonetheless resistant to explicitly sexual content like the phrase Eunice points out in the Bible. Nonetheless, the girls themselves are beginning to receive sexualized attention, like Mr. Lowther's playing with Jenny's ringlets, which he seems to do out of excessive sexual energy, and as a means of subtly signaling sexual desire to Miss Brodie.

One day after singing class, Miss Brodie gathers her class about her and tells them, "'You girls are my vocation... I am dedicated to you in my prime.'" She then instructs the girls to walk in the composed manner of Sybil Thorndike (a famous English actress); Sandy does so to such an extent that Miss Brodie thinks her walk a parody and chastises her for having "'a frivolous nature.'"

Miss Brodie acts as though her prime endows her with something not unlike divinity, and yet, ironically, she dedicates her prime to teaching school as many women not in their prime can do. This suggests her desire for uniqueness and the frustration of this desire: she is, from one perspective, commonplace.

Back at the classroom, Rose Stanley reports to Miss Brodie that she (Rose) has ink on her blouse; Miss Brodie sends her to have it removed by the science teacher to the Senior girls, Miss Lockhart. Sandy even goes so far once in a while as to intentionally spill ink on her clothing at carefully calculated intervals because she so enjoys going to Miss Lockhart's classroom, where she once saw a lesson in progress that had such order and discipline and productivity that it deeply impressed her as opposed to the freedom of Miss Brodie's class. After Rose, in the present case, returns to the classroom, Miss Brodie asserts that "'art is greater than science.'"

Miss Lockhart is Miss Brodie's foil: academically disciplined, she is not so much interested in her students' personalities as their scientific progress and proficiency. Sandy, it would seem at this point, would rather learn new content from Miss Lockhart than learn yet more about Miss Brodie's personal life. Miss Brodie's privileging of art over science is in one sense a maneuver to discredit Miss Lockhart, perhaps out of a sense of professional and personal insecurity.

This is in 1931, during the first of two winters that the girls spend with Miss Brodie, who has already selected her favorites, the girls who would make up the Brodie set, whom she swore to secrecy before telling them about her personal life and professional feud with Miss Mackay.

Miss Brodie elects her special girls while they're young and impressionable, perhaps to maximize her influence over them, the extent to which she can "transfigure" their lives and make them in her image.

Eunice Gardiner is at first very quiet, and it is strange that she joins the Brodie set at all. Eventually, though, she amuses her peers and Miss Brodie herself by doing cartwheels on the carpet. Miss Brodie calls her "'an Ariel'" (a spirit in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*). After that, Eunice becomes chatty and continues to entertain, though she is not allowed to do cartwheels on Sundays "for in many ways Miss Brodie was an Edinburgh spinster of the deepest dye."

Despite her radical politics, love of art, and willingness to disclose her love life to her students, Miss Brodie is in many ways just as conservative as other Edinburgh spinsters. She is not so unique as one might first be persuaded to believe. The reason she prohibits cartwheels on Sundays is because that is a Christian day of somber rest.

Some twenty-eight years after she did the splits in Miss Brodie's apartment, Eunice, who has become a nurse and married a doctor by now, tells her husband while the two are at home one evening that when they visit Edinburg for the Festival he should remind her to visit Miss Brodie's grave. The two proceed to discuss Miss Brodie, whom Eunice claims "'was sane as anything.'" She also tells her husband that Miss Brodie died after World War II, after being betrayed by an unknown member of the Brodie set and forced to retire.

The second of the novel's major prolepses (flash-forwards). Eunice seems to live a conventional life, which perhaps surprises us given Miss Brodie's expectations for her special girls. Although Eunice clearly has some affection for the deceased Miss Brodie, she doesn't seem as deeply influenced by her. Though it is Sandy who betrays Miss Brodie, it is also Sandy who seems, ironically, most deeply influenced by her former teacher.

The narrator says that it is now time to discuss a long walk Miss Brodie leads her favorites on through the old parts of Edinburgh, one Friday in March. Sandy is walking alongside Mary Macgregor because Jenny is absent from the outing. Sandy is daydreaming about assisting Alan Breck, a Scottish rebel whom Sandy is familiar with after reading Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Kidnapped*. Miss Brodie encourages Mary to speak with Sandy, but Mary says that Sandy won't speak with her. Miss Brodie replies, "'Sandy cannot talk to you if you are so stupid and disagreeable.'"

Even more so than her story about Hugh, Sandy's daydream about Alan Breck is sexually charged. Nonetheless, her active imagination anticipates Miss Brodie's praise, that Sandy is insightful and deep, if not spiritual. Sandy is rude to Mary here, a behavior she seems to have acquired from Miss Brodie herself..

As they walk, Sandy nags at Mary for staring at an Indian student, then for lagging behind and for having poor posture. When an impulse to be kind to Mary comes over her, Sandy hears Miss Brodie's voice, which "arrested the urge." Sandy understands then that the girls are a body with Miss Brodie at the head, obedient to the destiny of Miss Brodie herself, "as if God had willed them to birth for that purpose." She becomes frightened of being kind to Mary then, since doing so would separate her from the group. She resumes nagging Mary "with the feeling that if you did a thing a lot of times, you made it into a right thing."

One of Miss Brodie's most pernicious methods for securing her special girls' group identity is by turning Mary into a scapegoat; having a common outlet for their aggression and adhering to the same social code as pertains to Mary bonds the girls together. Miss Brodie acts like a god, to Sandy's mind, ordaining the fates of her special girls.

The Brodie set and Miss Brodie arrive at the Meadows, a large public park, where they pass a group of Girl Guides, or Girl Scout Brownies. Miss Brodie's students ask her about whether they should join the Brownies and Guides, but she implies that it is not for the crème de la crème. Sandy recalls to herself just then Miss Brodie's admiration for Mussolini's marching troops, the fascisti, whom Miss Brodie has a picture of. Mussolini and his fascisti had put an end to unemployment, Sandy recalls, and it also occurs to her that the Brodie set is like Miss Brodie's fascisti, and that the Girl Guides are too much of a rival fascisti for Miss Brodie to bear. Sandy thinks about joining the Brownies for a moment before "group-fright seized her again…she loved Miss Brodie."

Sandy speculates that the kind of harmful psychology at work among the Brodie set—scapegoating and "group-fright"—is also at work in bonding a mob to a charismatic fascist leader like Mussolini. This suggests the dangers of Miss Brodie's methods, a danger more fully revealed when Miss Brodie later urges Joyce Emily to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Miss Brodie requires absolute loyalty, at least as Sandy perceives it, which is why Miss Brodie dismisses of the Girl Guides. Sandy's thinking about joining the Brownie's foreshadows her eventual betrayal of Miss Brodie.

The girls and Miss Brodie pass through the slums of the Old Town, then to the great square of the Grassmarket. Miss Brodie comments that the Scots owe a lot to the French. As they walk, Sandy feels as though she's in a different country, full of new smells, new shapes, and poor people. The girls hold hands nervously; they see a man proposing to a woman, ringed in by a crowd. Throughout her life, speaking with other people raised in Edinburgh, Sandy is shocked to think about how little she has seen of Edinburgh, how little she has seen of the nineteen-thirties.

As coercive and hypocritical as Miss Brodie may be, she is also genuinely intent on providing her girls with new experiences and a broader perspective on life. She is well traveled, well versed in history, and has a European as opposed to a narrowly local perspective. In contrast, even as a grown woman Sandy has seen relatively little in her lifetime. If only Miss Brodie's influence were more forceful in this particular direction.

The narrative flash-forwards: Sandy, in middle age, is a nun called Sister Helena. She has published a famous psychological treatise, **"The Transfiguration of the Commonplace,"** and is therefore allowed, as no other nuns are, to have visitors. A young man visiting her, speaking with her through a grille, asks her about her formative influences—the poets W.H Auden or T.S. Eliot? the Spanish Civil War? Calvinism (a branch of Christianity)? Sister Helena responds that it is none other than Miss Jean Brodie.

The novel's third major instance of prolepsis (jump forward in time). Sandy, more than any other Brodie girl, is profoundly influenced by her former teacher, and this influence lasts a lifetime (even though it is embodied in part by Sandy's reaction against Miss Brodie). The juxtaposition of this scene with the walk through Edinburgh emphasizes that, perhaps unfortunately, Miss Brodie's influence drives Sandy not out into the world's largeness but into cloistered seclusion.

The narrative shifts back to the long walk Sandy and the rest of the Brodie set are having with Miss Brodie through Edinburgh. As they pass St. Giles's Cathedral, the narrator explains that the girls, brought up per several different Christian denominations, once asked Miss Brodie about religion and she, though "adhering to the strict Church of Scotland habits of her youth," introduced atheism to them, which she herself had learned about having recently taken a course in comparative religion at the University.

Miss Brodie not only shows her girls new places and exposes them to broader historical perspectives, but she also shows them new spiritual perspectives. The Church of Scotland is Calvinist in orientation; Miss Brodie is not so much an atheist herself, but, as Sandy later thinks, someone who thinks herself *to be the predestining God of Calvin.*

The walk now has brought the girls and their teacher to Chambers Street. There Miss Brodie explains that she and Miss Mackay are scheduled to meet, presumably because Miss Mackay wants to question Miss Brodie's methods of instruction. Miss Brodie explains to the girls that her conception of education, from the Latin roots *e* 'out' and *duco* 'lead,' is a leading out of what is already in a girl's soul. In contrast, she describes Miss Mackay as intruding into girls' minds. Miss Brodie also tells the girls that Miss Mackay has accused her of putting ideas into her students' heads. "'Never let it be said that I put ideas into your heads,'" she instructs them before quizzing the daydreaming Sandy on what education is.

Miss Brodie does not lead out what is already in a girl's soul as she claims to do: she certainly intrudes, as when she dogmatically insists that Giotto is a superior painter to da Vinci, or even here, when she tells the girls never to let it be said that she put ideas into their heads – isn't this command itself an intrusive idea? Compare the etymology of "education" which Miss Brodie gives with Mussolini's title, Il Duce, which means "The Leader."

The walk continues. Rose Stanley points out a French car; Miss Brodie chastises her for having a mind "'full of motor cars'" and for not paying attention to her conversation. Sandy, meanwhile, is fantasizing about dinner with Alan Breck, but is disturbed to think of being passionately swept away into having intercourse with him. Surely people have time to think before being swept away, she wonders. She also imagines that it would be rude for people to take their clothes off in front of one another, which she hopes prevents them from getting swept away by passion. The narrator goes on to state that Miss Brodie would later be amazed, awed, and enthused by Rose's playing the role of the great lover, during that time when she became famous for sex. Miss Brodie is not explicitly speaking to the girls about sex just yet, however.

Sandy's fantasies are romantic in nature, but here we have the first indication that she is uncomfortable with the idea of being overwhelmed by passion, and also with the idea of sexual intercourse in general. She highly values thinking, and does not want to be intellectually incapacitated by passion. Her thoughts here also relate to her feelings for Miss Brodie: earlier on the walk Sandy thinks to herself how she loves Miss Brodie, but it also seems that she is afraid of being swept away by her, of losing her identity to her, of losing her self-control. In one sense, Sandy's betrayal of Miss Brodie is an act of recovering herself from passion (which would also make sense as Sandy eventually becomes a nun).

Miss Brodie continues speaking of Miss Mackay, defending her own methods, encouraging her girls to study hard for their end-of-term examinations, and claiming that no one could accuse her of impropriety unless one of her girls betrayed her and distorted the truth. Rose says, "'Miss Mackay has an awfully red face, with the veins all showing,'" but Miss Brodie chastises her, saying it would be disloyal were she, Miss Brodie, to permit talk like that of her superior.

Even early on, without provocation, Miss Brodie is preoccupied with the prospect of getting betrayed, which perhaps indicates that she feels, if only subconsciously, guilty of impropriety. Her protection of Miss Mackay is a model of loyal conduct for her girls.

As the walkers arrive at the end of Lauriston Place, they see a line of unemployed men. Miss Brodie explains the men were waiting for their share of money from the labor bureau, which some would spend on drink instead of food for their families. Miss Brodie tells her girls to pray for these men, and reminds them that Italy had no unemployment problem. Sandy becomes frightened looking at the unemployed men, then thinks of their starving children and wants to cry. She wishes Jenny were with her, "because Jenny cried easily about poor children." Sandy turns to Mary then and tells her to stop pushing, even though Mary claims not to be pushing at all.

As monstrously effective as Mussolini may have been in rooting out unemployment, this passage starkly presents the psychological and moral harm done by the mob mentality on its members. When Sandy becomes afraid and is moved by the plight of the unemployed men's children, her first impulse is to cry with a friend. However, this gentler companionship is denied her, and Sandy instead braces herself and reinforces her group identity by lashing out without cause against Mary.

The long walk is over. Sandy decides not to go to Miss Brodie's for tea, but instead takes the tramcar home. Later, however, when she thinks about Eunice doing somersaults and splits in Miss Brodie's kitchen, she wishes she had gone to tea after all. She then takes out her notebook which holds "The Mountain Eyrie," the "true love story of Miss Bean Brodie," and adds a chapter to it.

Sandy's identity as a member of the Brodie set wavers throughout the novel: she doesn't want to go to tea, and then she wants to; she wants to avoid being swept away by Miss Brodie, but obsesses over Miss Brodie's love life. This wavering makes it psychologically plausible that Sandy should at last betray Miss Brodie.

CHAPTER 3

The narrator says that Miss Brodie is not unique at this point in her prime, and that there are "legions of her kind during the nineteen-thirties," progressive spinsters interested in art and social welfare, assistants with the Scottish Nationalist Movement, feminists who spoke with men man-to-man. Miss Brodie is unique only in that the women like her aren't, for the most part, schoolteachers, who tend to be of a "more orderly type." Miss Brodie is also unique because she trusts herself to change her mind and learn, even on ethical question—even in her prime Miss Brodie is developing, growing.

That Miss Brodie is not an isolated phenomenon suggests that her interests may stem from some fundamental cause shared by other spinsters—perhaps a Calvinist upbringing, perhaps a general feeling of being commonplace and unfulfilled. We are uniquely interested in Miss Brodie not because of her interests, then, but her influence. Spark's portrait of her is subtle, though: coercive as Miss Brodie is, we also admire her desire to enlarge her own perspectives and those of her students. We admire her passion.

The narrative reopens in 1931, a year into Miss Brodie's prime. For the girls in the Brodie set, sex is at this time the be-all and end-all. A suntanned Miss Brodie opens the term by discussing her trip to London and Italy, praising Mussolini as "'one of the greatest men in the world.'" Miss Mackay enters the classroom and encourages the girls to have a good year.

The girls' sexual maturation parallels Miss Brodie's immersion into European culture and fascist politics. Given the evils perpetrated by Mussolini's regime, Miss Brodie's praise for him reads as a warning against making dogmatic historical judgments and perhaps as a warning against Miss Brodie's own tendency to create a group centered around her own charisma.

After Miss Mackay leaves her classroom, Miss Brodie restates that an education is a leading out, calls Mary "'stupid'" for not knowing what the word "nasally" means, and exults over having seen the Coliseum in Rome where gladiators hailed Caesar, among other things. She also gives the girls apples from Mr. Lowther's orchard. The only thing, it would seem, that Miss Brodie doesn't do is to discuss history, which is what her girls are supposed to be studying.

Though Miss Brodie is a woman intent on personal growth, she is also rather repetitive, as her again giving the definition of "education" suggests. In this way, Spark reveals to us Miss Brodie's limitations. The apples from the orchard hint at the love affair to come between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther, and also recall the forbidden fruit the Biblical Adam and Eve ate of in Eden that gave them knowledge of good and evil.

Even before the official opening of her prime, Miss Brodie's colleagues at the Junior school had been turning against her—all save Mr. Gordon Lowther and Mr. Teddy Lloyd, the only men on the staff. Both "were already a little in love with Miss Brodie," and have subconsciously begun to act as rivals for her attention. The girls in the Brodie set realize that Mr. Lowther and Mr. Lloyd are romantically interested in their teacher before Miss Brodie herself does.

Miss Brodie's charisma influences not only her pupils, but also the men in her life. That the Brodie girls perceive this before Miss Brodie herself suggest that their teacher may be a bit romantically inexperienced, even naïve.

Though Mr. Lowther and Mr. Lloyd look like one another, both having red-gold coloring, "habitual acquaintance" proves otherwise. Mr. Lloyd, the art master, is more handsome and more sophisticated, rumored to be half Welsh, half English. He paints with his right arm; he lost his left during World War I.

Mr. Lloyd, like Miss Brodie's first love Hugh, served in World War I, which makes him all the more romantic, even heroic in Miss Brodie's mind, as does the fact that he has an artistic nature.

Miss Brodie's class has up to this point had only one opportunity to size up Mr. Lloyd closely, during an art lesson with Miss Brodie in attendance. The scene is this: Mr. Lloyd is tracing with his pointer the lines of a **painting** by Botticelli, the *Primavera*; the schoolgirls can't suppress their laughter when he traces the lines of the painted ladies' bottoms. Miss Brodie calls the girls "'Philistines'" (that is, ignorant of artistic value). Sandy continues laughing and Miss Brodie chastises her. Mary also continues laughing; she would not have laughed at all had the other girls not laughed, "for she was too stupid," the narrator says, "to have any sex-wits of her own." Nonetheless, Miss Brodie takes Mary by the arm and shuts her out of the room.

"Primavera" refers to the season spring; the word also contains the same root that makes up the word "prime." As such, we might read this scene as Mr. Lloyd making romantic overtures to Miss Brodie, who is of course in her prime, the spring of her life, as it were. The two adults consider the painting with detachment, however, whereas the girls don't see the painting as art so much as a representation of sexualized content. Again, Mary's giggling is misunderstood here and Miss Brodie scapegoats her.

Mr. Lloyd then continues the lesson, turning to a **painting** of Madonna and Child without any sense of religious awe, only a "very artistic attitude," which surprises the religious girls. He turns to Miss Brodie to see if she approves of this attitude, and she smiles "as would a goddess with superior understanding smile to a god."

Mr. Lloyd's lecture on the paintings ironically seem less designed to educate the students in his class than to elicit from Miss Brodie her attitudes toward sex, religion, and art. Based on Miss Brodie's smile, the two have similar attitudes.

It is not long after this that Monica Douglas reports to the Brodie set that she saw Mr. Lloyd kiss Miss Brodie. The other girls don't really believe her, however, and question her over details, like when the kiss occurred, where, and how long it lasted. Sandy, most dissatisfied with Monica's account, reenacts the kiss several times to test its plausibility. When Miss Brodie enters the classroom during the fourth of these reenactments, she asks Sandy what she was doing. "'Only playing,'" the girl says.

It is scandalous that the married Mr. Lloyd should kiss Miss Brodie, which is perhaps why the girls refuse to believe that the two did kiss. The kiss must be especially shocking to Sandy, who earlier says that Miss Brodie is above sex. Just as Sandy reenacts the kiss here, attempting to understand Miss Brodie's mind, later she will have an affair with Mr. Lloyd as a way of getting closer to or understanding Miss Brodie.

All through the term till Christmas, the Brodie set continues to question whether Miss Brodie is capable of being kissed and kissing They decide, at last, to keep the incident a secret. Meanwhile, Miss Brodie changes: she wears newer clothes and an amber necklace, and the girls watch her belly for signs of swelling.

Miss Brodie's love life ironically obsesses her students, when they should be focused on academics instead. Nonetheless, they protect her out of a sense of loyalty by keeping the scandalous kiss a secret.

The other Junior teachers have begun to say good morning to Miss Brodie more graciously at this time as well, but still with an edge of scorn. The only two teachers who do not judge Miss Brodie at all are the two sewing teachers, Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr, who think all of their colleagues who teach academic subjects to be "above criticism." During her class's sewing lessons, Miss Brodie reads aloud from the novel *Jane Eyre* while her girls, listening, prick their thumbs "so that interesting little spots of blood might appear on the stuff they were sewing."

Just as her students are disliked by their peers, so too is Miss Brodie, unorthodox as she is. The Kerr sisters don't judge Miss Brodie, but Miss Brodie later "betrays" them by ruining their romantic prospects with Mr. Lowther. The image of the girls pricking their fingers is sexually charged, as is the novel Jane Eyre; Miss Brodie draws her students' attention by manipulating their sexual feelings.

Singing lessons with Mr. Lowther are different now, for Miss Brodie seems agitated before, during, and after them; she also wears "her newest clothes on singing days." Sandy continues to disbelieve that Monica had seen Miss Brodie kiss Mr. Lloyd; in fact, only Rose, who is not at all and never will be curious about sex, believes Monica. However, later in the nineteen-fifties, when Monica visits Sandy at the convent and comments once again that as a girl she had seen Mr. Lloyd kiss Miss Brodie, Sandy says, "'I know you did.'"

Though Miss Brodie presents herself as unconventional, she breaks social rules in the most conventional way, by having love affairs. This lowers her, it would seem, in Sandy's imagination, but as a girl Sandy refuses to give up her idealization of Miss Brodie.

The narrative shifts back in time: Sandy knew about the kiss even before Miss Brodie tells her about it one day after the end of the war in the nineteen-forties. Sandy and Miss Brodie are eating at the Braid Hills Hotel; Miss Brodie has been forced to retire by this point and is by her own admission past her prime. She tells Sandy that Teddy Lloyd had loved her greatly, but that she had renounced him because he was married, even though the two share what Miss Brodie calls "'the artistic nature.'"

This narrative shift starkly shows what Miss Brodie's prime comes to: termination, impotence, and bittersweet memories. Nonetheless, Miss Brodie's renunciation of Teddy Lloyd is distinctly admirable, idealistically tragic and romantic—and we should certainly might imagine that she took some pleasure in the tragic grandeur of making such a renunciation, in that it was the sort of gesture that might make her life feel like something out of art, like art itself.

During this post-war meal with Sandy, Miss Brodie also recalls the time when in the autumn of 1931 she took a leave of absence, seemingly on account of illness. In her place, the gaunt Miss Gaunt taught her class—far more rigorously and demandingly, to the girls' shock. Even the sewing teachers Miss Ellen and Allison Kerr felt cowed by Miss Gaunt. Sandy and Jenny used to giggle watching the shuttles of the sewing machines go up and down, which reminded them of sex, but Miss Gaunt's presence "had a definite subtracting effect from the sexual significance of everything."

We later learn that Miss Brodie took this leave of absence to carry out a love affair with Mr. Lloyd. Miss Gaunt is, like Miss Lockhart, a foil to Miss Brodie, in subtracting from rather than adding to the sexual charge of her pupils. It is perhaps for this reason that Miss Gaunt exerts a much weaker imaginative draw on the girls than Miss Brodie does.

Sandy recalls to herself that, during one sewing class, Miss Gaunt discussed her brother with Miss Ellen and Allison Kerr, who was the minister of the parish church the three women attended—a fact which made the Kerr sisters nervous around Miss Gaunt. Meanwhile, Sandy was daydreaming about being in love with Mr. Edward Rochester, a character from the novel *Jane Eyre*. She was distracted when Miss Gaunt mentioned that Mr. Lowther was not at school that week, ill like Miss Brodie.

Miss Gaunt and the Kerr sisters are the foremost Calvinists in the novel, and their belief in predestination influences their somber, quiet demeanors. Sandy, on the other hand, seems at this point a disciple of Miss Brodie's religion of self-election, guiltlessness, and sexualized gaiety.

Sandy further recalls to herself that, to break up the sexless gloom imposed by Miss Gaunt, she hypothesized with Jenny that Miss Brodie was having a love affair not with Mr. Lloyd but Mr. Lowther, and Jenny in particular imagined how the two teachers would initiate sexual intercourse together. They paused their conversation when Eunice Gardiner came over, for Eunice had "taken a religious turn," albeit a short-lived one, and therefore "was not to be trusted".

Sandy's hypothesis is insightful indeed. Perhaps a Brodie-Lowther affair is tolerable to her imagination at this point, as the idea of a kiss between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lloyd is not, because Mr. Lowther is for now unmarried. The girls bond over sexual curiosity and excitement, hence Eunice's temporary exile from the Brodie set on account of her religious turn.

The narrative returns to the nineteen-forties, to the meal Miss Brodie and Sandy are sharing at the Braid Hills Hotel. Miss Brodie goes on to tell Sandy that, since she renounced Mr. Lloyd, the love of her prime, she began an affair with Mr. Lowther as a cure. Sandy doubts, however, that this is the whole story. As the meal progresses, Miss Brodie eventually returns to wondering which of the Brodie set betrayed her, thereby forcing her to retire. Was it Mary? Rose? "It is seven years, thought Sandy, since I betrayed this tiresome woman. What does she mean by 'betray'?"

Part of Sandy's insightfulness lies in her suspiciousness: she doesn't take on face value what Miss Brodie tells her. Perhaps she suspects that Miss Brodie renounced Mr. Lloyd because he expected physical intimacy (after all, Sandy later hypothesizes that Miss Brodie is an unconscious lesbian)—we can only speculate. We learn for the first time here that Sandy is Miss Brodie's betrayer.

Back in 1931, after her two weeks' absence, Miss Brodie returns to her teaching post, thereby relieving Miss Gaunt of her duties. Mr. Lowther's singing class goes on as usual, Miss Brodie now playing the accompaniment on the piano. Mr. Lowther no longer plays with Jenny's curls. Sandy is almost sure that Mr. Lowther loves Miss Brodie and that Miss Brodie loves Mr. Lloyd. The narrator also foreshadows here, although only vaguely, that Rose Stanley later becomes involved in the love affair between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lloyd.

It seems that Mr. Lowther originally played with Jenny's curls as a means of being romantically suggestive to Miss Brodie, which he ceases to do because he and Miss Brodie are now involved with one another, with no need for flirtation-by-proxy. Later, Miss Brodie plans for Rose to become Mr. Lloyd's lover in her place, foreshadowed here.

During the Easter term, the Junior girls have to decide whether they will study on the Modern or Classical side at the Senior school. Miss Brodie, insisting the girls' make the choice of their own free will, insinuates a strong preference for the Classical side.

Hypocritically, Miss Brodie tells the girls to make up their own minds, but at the same time plants her ideas and prejudices in their heads.

Only Eunice from the Brodie set considers going on the Modern side. Eunice is too pious at this time for Miss Brodie's liking. When she opts to go to a social gathering rather than accompany Miss Brodie and the set to the Empire Theatre to watch the world famous Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova dance in Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, Miss Brodie criticizes Eunice for allegedly misusing the word "social", and implies that Eunice would be missing out on watching "'a great moment in eternity.'" All that term Sandy daydreams about dancing with Anna Pavlova.

Miss Brodie does not want Eunice to have interests that may lead her to break her loyalty to the Brodie set, hence her disapproval of Eunice's religiousness; she hypocritically praises independent thinking so long as one's independent thoughts align with her own. Pavlova is one of Miss Brodie's models of a composed, independent, artistic woman; to Miss Brodie, art transfigures time.

The narrative rapidly shifts forward to a few weeks before Miss Brodie's death. She is in a nursing home and learns then from Monica Douglas that Sandy had gone to a convent to become a nun. Miss Brodie wonders whether Sandy did that to annoy her, and also wonders whether it might be Sandy who had betrayed her.

Miss Brodie reveals massive egotism in thinking that Sandy's decisions revolve around her. But such a thought is not entirely misguided, and Miss Brodie is correct in at last thinking that Sandy is her betrayer.

The narrative jumps back to the Easter (spring) term of 1931, when the girls are deciding whether to go to the Modern or Classical side. Miss Mackay, at that point the headmistress, who favors the Modern side, invites Sandy, Jenny, and Mary over for tea, to discuss the decision with them. Mary's grades are too low for her to go to the Classical side, which makes her despondent given Miss Brodie's preference for the Classical. Despite Miss Mackay's appeals, Sandy and Jenny also opt for the Classical side, and their grades permit it.

For all her unorthodox methods and progressive, even radical perspectives, it is perhaps strange that Miss Brodie favors the Classical over the Modern. It seems she does so because the Classical promises intellectual grandeur and enlargement, whereas the Modern is more practical and commonplace. The girls favor the Classical largely because Miss Brodie does, and for no better reason.

Miss Mackay then begins speaking generously of Miss Brodie, with the goal of pumping incriminating facts about her out of Sandy, Jenny, and Mary. Miss Mackay asks about the girls' cultural interests, which Mary reports to be stories. When the headmistress goes on to ask what subjects Miss Brodie discusses in her stories, Sandy and Jenny, too readily, as though with premeditation, reply "'History.'" After Miss Mackay excuses the girls, they report back to Miss Brodie some but not all of this conversation.

Miss Mackay searches for incriminating facts about Miss Brodie throughout the novel, and succeeds in finding them only when Sandy betrays her most influential teacher. Here, however, the quick-witted Sandy and Jenny loyally protect Miss Brodie from Miss Mackay's scrutiny. And yet: that they don't tell Miss Brodie absolutely everything suggests that while the girls are loyal they have their tactical secrets, too.

Toward the end of the Easter holidays, Jenny is walking out alone by the Water of Leith (a river in Scotland), when a man calls her over and exposes his genitalia to her. She runs away unharmed, unpursued, to be soon surrounded by horrified family members. A policewoman comes in to question Jenny about the incident.

This episode recalls Sandy's thought that seeing someone undressed might stop up the flow of passion, and it relates metaphorically to secrecy and exposure in the novel. Perhaps Miss Brodie exposes too much of herself for Sandy to love her, hence the betrayal. Sandy's thought about nakedness getting in the way of passion is also just funny, and indicative of her youth and mindset.

These events cause quite a stir among the Brodie set. Sandy, just on the verge of obtaining permission to take walks alone, is denied permission after all. However, the events also provide the girls much to discuss: namely, the man who exposed himself and the policewoman. Indeed, Sandy stops daydreaming about Alan Breck and Mr. Rochester and instead falls in love with this policewoman, whom she questions Jenny about with enthusiasm. Sandy is troubled, though, that the policewoman in real life pronounced the word "nasty" as "nesty."

Sandy, at last, identifies more with the policewoman who protects against sexual exposure than the sex-propagating Miss Brodie. Perhaps Sandy dislikes that the policewoman says "nesty" because Sandy herself, with her English vowels, would say "nasty," and in this one detail Sandy's idealization of the policewoman clashes with the reality.

Nonetheless, Sandy continues to daydream about serving on the Force with the policewoman, whom she names in her imagination Sergeant Anne Grey. Sandy, picking up police jargon by reading the Sunday paper, pretends to be on the Force with Sergeant Grey, with the mission of eliminating sex altogether. Sandy even confides in her imaginary partner that the two need to look into Miss Brodie's "'liaison with Gordon Lowther.'" Sandy and Jenny also begin composing a fictionalized love correspondence between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther.

Sandy's eventual betrayal of Miss Brodie has its roots here, in her disapproval of Miss Brodie's sexuality, her self-exposure. This disapproval, however, is for now private; in public, as when in Jenny's company, Sandy nonetheless giggles about sex and even imagines what Miss Brodie's affairs are like. It won't be until she pulls away from the group identity of the Brodie set that Sandy becomes capable of betraying Miss Brodie.

Back at school after the Easter holidays, Sandy and Jenny keep secret the "Water of Leith affair"; one morning Sandy even goes so far as to ask Jenny to keep it a secret from Miss Brodie. Her reasons for this request are motivated by something that happened earlier that day: Miss Brodie specifically sent Rose to help Mr. Lloyd carry art supplies back to the classroom and it occurred to Jenny and Sandy that Rose looked different. They speculated that she had had her first menstrual cycle. The girls end up forgetting about the man who exposed himself and focus more and more on the policewoman as the term went on.

Sandy seems to associate the Water of Leith affair with her own imaginary role as an investigator of sex. Perhaps she does not want to tell Miss Brodie about the man who exposed himself, then, because doing so would, if only to her mind, blow her cover. Now that Rose has had her first menstrual cycle and in doing so become "mature", she also becomes an object of investigation for Sandy.

During the last few months of her teaching the Brodie girls at Blaine, Miss Brodie makes "herself adorable"—no bickering and no irritability save with Mary. Class is often held outside on benches under an elm, and Miss Brodie elaborates on her love story with the soldier Hugh, claiming for the first time that he was also a talented singer and painter: "I think the painter was the real Hugh,'" she says. It becomes clear to Sandy and Jenny, as they discuss it alone, that Miss Brodie was fitting her old love story about Hugh to her new one involving Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Lowther. Sandy admires this narrative technique, but also feels a "pressing need to prove Miss Brodie guilty of misconduct." That spring, we also learn from the narrator, Jenny's mother is expecting a baby.

Miss Brodie attempts to solidify her influence over her special girls by making herself adorable in their final months together. The imaginative Sandy admires Miss Brodie's creative embellishments on the facts of her life, but seems convinced now more than ever that she must put a stop to Miss Brodie's love affairs—a conviction rooted in Sandy's deeply conflicted attitude toward sex itself.

During a short vacation, while visiting Jenny's aunt in the coastal town of Crail in the Scottish region of Fife, Sandy and Jenny complete their fictionalized love correspondence between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther. At the mouth of a cave, they have written the last of it, where they struggle to put their teacher "in both a favourable and an unfavourable light." They have imagined a sexual encounter between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther set on a storm-embattled Scottish peak called Arthur's Seat, and conclude their series of letters with one in which the fictionalized Miss Brodie declines Mr. Lowther's marriage proposal and, among other things, congratulates her lover "'warmly upon [his] sexual intercourse, as well as [his] singing.'"

Looking back on their almost two years as Miss Brodie's pupils, Sandy and Jenny neither worship nor dislike Miss Brodie, but have matured into an ambivalent attitude toward her. Their imagining of sexual intercourse reflects more the high erotic tenor of the novels they've read than any firsthand experience, and their sexual naiveté is underscored humorously in their having Miss Brodie congratulate Mr. Lowther on his sexual performance. The cave the girls are in is a vaginal image, Arthur's Seat a phallic one.

After completing the love correspondence, Sandy and Jenny read it from end to end, and wonder whether they should cast it out to sea or bury it. They at last decide to bury it, "and never saw it again." They walk back to Crail then, full of plans and joy.

This scene is in a sense a metaphor for Sandy and Jenny's maturation: they bury childhood imaginings, preparing for sexual maturity and life in the Senior school.

CHAPTER 4

By the time the chapter opens, Miss Brodie's girls have become students in the Senior school, "a new life altogether"; the Senior school teachers are all very nice, and they treat the girls not as personalities but as students. Miss Lockhart, the science teacher, dramatically opens class by saying she holds enough gunpowder in her hand to blow up the school. The girls appreciate Senior life at first, as well as the dazzling new subjects they study, including geometry and, on the Classical side, Greek. However, a few weeks in, the "party-game effect of that first week" of Senior school instruction fades.

Miss Brodie's intrusive teaching methods, full of academically irrelevant personal disclosure, give way at the Senior school to impersonal academic instruction. Nonetheless, Miss Lockhart manages to excite the girls with the interest inherent in her subject itself, not with sexually charged worldliness as Miss Brodie did. One might even say that Miss Lockhart "leads out" rather than "intrudes".

Miss Lockhart, the Senior school science teacher, is like a mysterious priest to the girls, with her dangerous chemicals and lab equipment. During the first week of the term, the girls conduct an experiment in which they ignited magnesium; Mary is so frightened that she runs in panic from flame to flame until Miss Lockhart calms her down and tells her not to be so stupid.

This scene foreshadows Mary's death in the hotel fire, some twelve years in the future. Miss Brodie calls Mary stupid to scapegoat her; Miss Lockhart, in contrast, calls Mary stupid for endangering herself by behaving irrationally in the classroom.

Once, years later, when Rose Stanley is visiting Sandy at the convent, she tells the nun, "'When any ill befalls me I wish I had been nicer to Mary.'" The narrator immediately shows us once more the scene in which Miss Brodie, dining with Sandy at the Braid Hills Hotel, wonders if it was Mary who betrayed her. "'Perhaps I should have been kinder to Mary,'" Miss Brodie says on that occasion.

Everyone guiltily wishes they had been kinder to Mary when it is already much too late; the group dynamics of the Brodie set in large part prevent its members from having this epiphany earlier, which is emphasized by the narrative's juxtaposition of past and present.

The Brodie set might easily have lost its identity at this time, both because Miss Brodie is no longer a constant presence in their lives, and also because Miss Mackay attempts to break the girls up. She permits Mary, who had wanted to go on to the Classical side but had been unable because of her poor grades, the opportunity to take Latin implicitly in exchange for information concerning Miss Brodie. However, Mary does not understand what Miss Mackay wants of her, thinking all the teachers in league together, "Miss Brodie and all."

Miss Mackay is not as absolutely upstanding as she first appears: she is willing to do Mary a favor in exchange for information on Miss Brodie, even though the favor might not be to Mary's benefit educationally. Mary does not understand group dynamics: she thinks all adults are working together, when really political infighting is the norm, perhaps to the girls' detriment.

Miss Mackay lays yet another scheme, but this one "undid her." At the Senior school, there are four "houses" and a system in place that encourages competition between the houses. Miss Mackay places the Brodie girls in different houses as much as is possible, to separate them and force them into competition with one another. Team spirit is greatly emphasized at Blaine.

Miss Mackay hopes that a new group dynamic—team spirit— will dissolve the Brodie set, and that this dissolution will perhaps result in one of the Brodie girls betraying their unorthodox teacher.

However, Miss Brodie has trained her girls, perhaps in preparation for their separation, to think that team spirit undercuts individualism, love, and loyalty. Miss Brodie also gave the girls examples of women who rejected team spirit, from Shakespeare's Cleopatra to Helen of Troy, from the actress Sybil Thorndike to the dancer Pavlova. It is impossible to know whether Miss Brodie planned to keep her set together, or if she just worked by instinct, but she succeeds—the girls who had passed through her hands avoid the playing grounds except under compulsion, all save Eunice Gardiner, who is too good an athlete not to compete.

The Brodie girls value individualism thanks to Miss Brodie's instruction, and ironically it is this common value which holds the girls together as a group.

On most Saturday afternoons during this period, Miss Brodie entertains her set over tea. She tells them that her new pupils do not have much potential, which makes her girls "feel chosen." Miss Brodie also inquires about Teddy Lloyd, who teaches the girls' art class. The girls tell her about their first day, when Mr. Lloyd, irritated by how relaxed and chatty and giggly the girls were, smashed a saucer on the floor and told Rose Stanley, whose profile he seemed to admire, to pick it up. Jenny commented to Sandy when Mr. Lloyd smashed the saucer that Miss Brodie had good taste in men. Upon being told of the incident and what Mr. Lloyd had said of Rose's profile, Miss Brodie looks "at Rose in a special way."

As Miss Brodie makes arrangements for the preservation of her girls' group identity, so does she also make plans for their futures, defining the narrative arcs she wants their lives to take. This is especially the case with Rose, whom Miss Brodie here seems to identify as special, and for whom she later plans a love affair with Mr. Lloyd (perhaps for no better reason than that she and Rose seem to have similar Roman profiles) and that by thus connecting Rose to Lloyd she is asserting her own control over Lloyd.

The narrator tells us that, since moving on to the Senior school, Sandy and Jenny's interest in Miss Brodie's love life has moved from being absolutely sexually charged to being "a question of plumbing the deep heart's core." Indeed, now that her mother has given birth to another child and she herself is twelve, Jenny can say with truth that she has moved past interest in sexual research.

Sandy and Jenny's interest in Miss Brodie becomes more psychologically analytical and insightful because they are no longer obsessed with her sex life. This foreshadows Sandy's eventual specialization in psychology.

It is only later, the narrator says fast-forwarding, when Jenny is a forty-year-old actress sixteen years into marriage, that her "buoyant and airy discovery of sex" returns to her, while she is in Rome standing next to a man she didn't know well. This memory still happily astonishes her, and gives her "a sense of the hidden possibilities in all things."

It is fitting that Rome, one of Miss Brodie's favorite cities, is the scene for the middle-aged Jenny's sexual revival. Indeed, what makes sex so interesting to the young girls in the novel is that it transfigures commonplace things into mysteries, excitements, and for Jenny her experience in Rome really does do this.

One Saturday over tea Miss Brodie tells the girls that Mr. Lowther's housekeeper has left him, and that she disliked the housekeeper anyway because she, the housekeeper, allegedly resented Miss Brodie's position as Mr. Lowther's friend and confidante. The next Saturday, Miss Brodie tells the girls that Miss Ellen and Alison Kerr have temporarily taken on the role of housekeepers for Mr. Lowther, and she criticizes them for their inquisitiveness and being "'too much in with Miss Gaunt and the Church of Scotland.'"

Miss Brodie's intimacy with Mr. Lowther is scandalous to an extent (it was not socially acceptable for two unmarried people in 1930s Scotland to be sleeping together), which is why she dislikes his watchful, inquisitive housekeepers. She perhaps also wants full control over Mr. Lowther, and resents rivals for his attention.

In addition to hosting tea on Saturdays, Miss Brodie also sets aside an hour during which she has Sandy and Jenny teach her the Greek they are learning in class. She progresses in the language, although Sandy and Jenny give her different information about the accents. Miss Brodie is determined to share in her special girls' "new life" and what she cannot influence she scorns, like their instruction in geometry, which she regards as merely, needlessly clever. What need had Sybil Thorndike or Anna Pavlova or Helen of Troy for mathematics, after all?

Miss Brodie's intellectual appetite, evinced by her learning Greek, is admirable from one angle, but also intrusive from another. She wants to retain her influence over her special girls, and for her this means involving herself in their new academic lives. Although Miss Brodie scorns mathematics, Monica Douglas for one specializes in it, suggesting the limits of Miss Brodie's influence.

Nonetheless, the girls are dazzled by their new subjects, and would be until in later years the fields of science and math lost their "elemental strangeness" in the young women's minds. For now, though, the girls are so dazzled that Miss Brodie struggles to retain influence over her set. She knows that her main concern is ensuring that none of her special girls should become personally attached to any of their senior teachers; but these teachers seem so indifferent to the girls that Miss Brodie refrains from directly attacking them.

As her special girls outgrow her, the commonplaceness of her own life confronts Miss Brodie. The Senior teachers' indifference to their students as personalities suggests just how perverse and desperate Miss Brodie's vying for influence over her girls really is.

In the spring of 1933, Miss Brodie's Greek lessons with Sandy and Jenny come to an end. The Kerr sisters have begun to enjoy caring for Mr. Lowther and have never been so perky or useful in their lives, especially since the time of their sister's death (mentioned only here in the novel). Miss Gaunt, who has in a sense taken the place of this dead sister, encourages the two women to make the arrangement with Mr. Lowther permanent.

Miss Brodie's absence from her girls' lives is usually motivated by romantic crisis, as here: she fears, not unjustifiably, that one of the Kerr sisters will take her place as the center of Mr. Lowther's affections,.

Up to now, Miss Brodie has visited Mr. Lowther at his house in Cramond on Sundays. On that day she also went to church, rotating over time from denomination to denomination, sect to sect. The only church she disapproves of is the Roman Catholic Church, which is perhaps the only church that could have embraced and disciplined "her soaring and diving spirit." She asserts that it is a church founded on superstition, and she so strongly believes that God supports her no matter what that she feels guiltless about her wrongdoing anyway, even while going to bed with Mr. Lowther.

Miss Brodie has no solid religious convictions, believing more as she does in what might be described as the god within herself. Roman Catholicism, with its dramatic imagery and rituals, is the only branch of Christianity which really could appeal to her, but she dismisses it both because of her own Calvinist background, perhaps, and also because the religion relies heavily on feelings of guilt, which Miss Brodie refuses to have.

The Brodie girls are exhilarated by their former teacher's attitude of self-forgiveness, and only in retrospect recognize its amorality. However, even later on, after Miss Brodie has died, Sandy comes to recognize that "Miss Brodie's defective sense of self-criticism had not been without its beneficent and enlarging effects."

Miss Brodie's attitude of self-forgiveness licenses her to behave as she pleases, even immorally. Perhaps Sandy's recognition of this in part motivates her betrayal. However, Miss Brodie's effect on her girls is complex, both negative and positive.

When it becomes clear that the Kerr sisters have permanently taken up housekeeping for Mr. Lowther, Miss Brodie fancies that her lover is getting thin because of their skimpiness in caring for him—in fact, it is Miss Brodie who was getting thin—so she begins going to Cramond on Saturdays to supervise them (this is what ends the Greek lessons). Miss Brodie is encouraged in this action by her special girls, and the Kerr sisters take her "intrusion" meekly. Miss Brodie also invites her girls in pairs up to Cramond on Saturdays to spend the afternoon with her in Mr. Lowther's residence. The girls notice that Mr. Lowther calls their teacher Jean, a fact they kept to themselves.

The Kerr sisters pose a threat to Miss Brodie's exclusively receiving Mr. Lowther's attention, and so she attempts to dispel any influence they may have over him. The narrator tells us that this is an "intrusion," and in so doing reminds us that Miss Brodie's influence over her girls also stems from intrusiveness, manipulation, and coercion. It is scandalous that Mr. Lowther calls Miss Brodie by her first name, but the girls loyally keep this fact to themselves.

Miss Brodie exults in her victory over the Kerr sisters. She attributes it, in a discussion with Sandy and Jenny, to her ancestry. She explains that she is a descendent of Willie Brodie, a cabinetmaker and designer of gallows, a member of the Town Council of Edinburgh with two mistresses who bore him five children between them. Willie was arrested for robbing the Excise Office, motivated not by money but the exciting danger of burglary; he was imprisoned for the crime, and later died on a gallows of his own devising in 1788. This is the stuff Miss Brodie is made of, and accounted in her mind for her victory.

Willie Brodie and his descendant are rather alike; both hold respected positions but lead scandalous, even immoral double lives: Willie as a burglar and Miss Brodie as Mr. Lowther's lover out of wedlock. Both do what they do, it would seem, not for material gain but for the love of transfiguring one's commonplace life into a life of danger and excitement and intrigue. And, as Willie dies on a gallows of his own devising, so is Miss Brodie betrayed by a girl she cultivates.

Sandy begins to consider not only the question of Miss Brodie's desirability from a man's perspective, but also whether she could sexually surrender herself to Mr. Lowther, especially given that she is, though thinner than before, nonetheless larger than him. For example, before he touches anything in his home, Mr. Lowther would look to Miss Brodie as if for approval, which leads the Brodie girls to assume that Lowther's mother had been a rather oppressive woman.

Sandy's hypothesis that Miss Brodie might not surrender to Mr. Lowther sexually may well be more reflective of Sandy's own reservations about sex than of anything else, a projection of her own thoughts and feelings. The girls' psychological insights into Mr. Lowther are never confirmed or dismissed by the novel.

During the girls' visits to Cramond, Miss Brodie asks them many questions about Mr. Lloyd, including about his wife Mrs. Deirdre Lloyd and children, while Mr. Lowther eats looking mournfully on, fattening up at Miss Brodie's insistence. Mr. Lloyd is a Roman Catholic, she explains to Mr. Lowther one day, hence his many children, six in all including lots of babies. Sandy and Jenny report that Mrs. Lloyd is either past her prime or would never have one. At the end of each Saturday in Cramond with the girls, Miss Brodie always makes it seem as if she returned to Edinburgh instead of staying the nights with Mr. Lowther.

Miss Brodie is still in love with Mr. Lloyd, it would seem, hence her questions about him. She may ask these with Mr. Lowther present in order to remind her current paramour of the sacrifice she made for him, thereby consolidating her authority over him in the relationship. The girls loyally dismiss Mrs. Lloyd in Miss Brodie's own terms: she is not, nor ever will be, in her prime. Miss Brodie's attempts to hide her affair with Mr. Lowther are obligatory but flimsy.

While the Brodie girls never discover evidence as to whether or not Miss Brodie stays the night with Mr. Lowther, Miss Ellen Kerr supposes she has: a nightdress allegedly belonging to Miss Brodie stashed under Mr. Lowther's pillow. At Miss Gaunt's urging, Miss Kerr tells Miss Mackay about this discovery, but Miss Mackay shrewdly reasons that there is no way to prove that the nightdress does in fact belong to Miss Brodie. Nonetheless, urged on by his sister Miss Gaunt, the parish minister advises Mr. Lowther to withdraw from his positions of choirmaster and Elder at the church. Sandy later learns about the nightdress when she, moved by other considerations, betrays Miss Brodie to Miss Mackay.

The novel never confirms that the nightdress belongs to Miss Brodie (although it is highly likely), contributing to its generally wispy and ambiguous effect. Miss Mackay is not fervid in her attempts to dismiss Miss Brodie, but reasonably and coolly assesses the evidence at hand, here as insubstantial. In contrast, Calvinism is an austere, severe religious orientation: on very little evidence of having an affair, Mr. Lowther is asked to withdraw from his posts by the Calvinist minister.

One night in the summer of 1933, Sandy and Jenny are at Mr. Lowther's house at Cramond while Miss Brodie prepares a great ham. She asks them, as she often did, about Mr. Lloyd, and they tell her about two **portraits** in his studio, an amusingly serious one of his family, and one of Rose Stanley, who has been modeling for him. This is exciting to Miss Brodie, as is the fact that Mr. Lloyd only invites the Brodie girls to his studio. Miss Brodie explains to Sandy and Jenny that this is because these girls were "'of my stamp and cut.'"

Miss Brodie takes Mr. Lloyd's interest in her students as evidence that he is still interested in her. She also reveals here that she thinks her influence over the girls has, in a sense, turned them into replicas of her. This passage recalls Sandy's insight that Miss Brodie is turning her special girls into fascisti, and foreshadows the fact that all faces Mr. Lloyd paints come to resemble Miss Brodie's.

On a joint impulse, Sandy and Jenny decide then to run along the beach. When they return to Mr. Lowther's house, they listen to Miss Brodie speak of her forthcoming holiday to Germany, for she admires Hitler, the Chancellor of Germany at that point, very much, thinking him a prophet-figure and even more efficient than Mussolini. For their summer holidays, Sandy and Jenny go to a farm, where they don't think much on Miss Brodie but instead make hay and follow the sheep about.

This holiday contrasts sharply with that during which Sandy and Jenny write a love correspondence between Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther; for here the girls barely think about Miss Brodie at all. Her influence is, to some extent, waning. Miss Brodie is certainly on the wrong side of history in admiring Hitler—her love of the "artisticness" and "efficiency" that are parts of cults of personality are revealed as damaging through the historical monsters she admires.

CHAPTER 5

Fifteen years old at this time, Sandy stands with Mr. Lloyd in his studio admiring the **portrait** he has done of Rose Stanley in her gym tunic. Strangely, Rose's face in the portrait resembles that of Miss Brodie. Mrs. Deirdre Lloyd, also present and dressed fashionably like a peasant, tells her husband to show Sandy "Red Velvet," a portrait of Sandy wrapped in a "swathing of crimson velvet," which makes her look one-armed like Mr. Lloyd and more physically developed than in life. Sandy is surprised to learn that Mr. Lloyd has also painted Monica Douglas and Eunice Gardiner—both images resemble Miss Brodie, which is not true of any of Mr. Lloyd's portraits of people not in the Brodie set.

The novel gestures toward the idea that Mr. Lloyd may indeed be erotically interested in Rose, as Miss Brodie hopes; but later we learn there is no attraction there at all. The portraits reveal how in our imaginations we transfigure people into others depending on how powerful a presence they have in our imaginations: Mr. Lloyd sees himself in Rose, and he sees in all the Brodie girls Miss Brodie herself. This speaks to how like Miss Brodie the Brodie girls have become, how subject to her authority they are.

At this point, it seems to Sandy that the Brodie set might split up—which she thinks "perhaps a good thing." While they are together in his studio, however, Mr. Lloyd confides in Sandy that he desires to paint all the Brodie girls, individually and then all together. Sandy thinks this an attempt to keep the girls a set despite their emerging individuality; she retorts, "'We'd look like one big Miss Brodie,'" and gazes at Mr. Lloyd insolently. He laughs, kisses her "long and wetly," and as she tries to run out of the studio he tells her, "'You're just about the ugliest little thing I've ever seen in my life.'"

Sandy is struggling to recover her individual identity from the group identity of the Brodie set. She insightfully reveals to Mr. Lloyd that she discerns his obsession with Miss Brodie, and this seems to sexually excite him, hence the kiss. Why this might be so remains unclear—perhaps because he recognizes in Sandy's insight and defiance of group identity a piece of Miss Brodie herself.

Sandy then follows Mr. Lloyd downstairs, where she spends most of tea trying to understand her feelings about him kissing and insulting her. She is distracted, however, by the Lloyd children's loudness, and by the Lloyds themselves, who both request that Sandy call them by their first names. Mrs. Lloyd asks Sandy to bring Miss Brodie to tea, but Teddy is resistant to the idea. Mr. Lloyd then asks Sandy about Miss Brodie's relationship with Mr. Lowther: what does she see in him? Sandy replies sharply, "'He sings to her.'" Mrs. Lloyd laughs and said that Miss Brodie sounds "'a bit queer.'" Mr. Lloyd defends her and leaves the room, after which Sandy excuses herself too.

Although we are told again and again that Sandy is psychologically insightful, she struggles to understand her own feelings, suggesting just how difficult it is to psychologize at all. Indeed, the novel tends to avoid psychological analysis of its characters, and instead gives only facts of speech and action which we are left to draw our own conclusions about. Mr. Lloyd questions Sandy about Miss Brodie just as she asks about him: their residual passion is mutual, it seems.

The narrative shifts back to around the time when Miss Ellen Kerr discovers what she believes to be Miss Brodie's nightdress in Mr. Lowther's house. Mr. Lowther over the past two years has considered marrying either one of the Kerr sisters, because Miss Brodie continually refuses to marry him. She would only make love with, and cook for, him. Mr. Lowther broods on the possibility that she prefers Mr. Lloyd's long legs to his short ones.

Like her ancestor Willie Brodie, Miss Brodie is less interested in the material gain to be had, from marriage in her case, than she is in the transfiguring thrill of transgressing social rules. Mr. Lowther's understandable dissatisfaction with the affair lightly foreshadows his engagement to Miss Lockhart.

Miss Brodie confides most of this in her girls as they grow from thirteen to fourteen, fourteen to fifteen, without ever stating or suggesting that she is sleeping with Mr. Lowther, for she is still determining which of the girls she can trust, and wants to alarm no parental suspicions. However, she finds in Sandy a girl in whom she can confide entirely.

It is never made explicit why Miss Brodie feels she can trust Sandy absolutely—perhaps because of all the Brodie girls Sandy is most influenced by, and most resembles in insightfulness, Miss Brodie herself.

In fact, in the autumn of 1935, while the two golf together, Miss Brodie tells Sandy that all of her ambitions are fixed on her and Rose. She asks Sandy if it seems that Jenny is becoming a bit insipid, and Sandy agrees. Miss Brodie goes on to criticize all the Brodie girls, Sandy and Rose excluded. Meanwhile, Sandy recalls to herself having seen Miss Lockhart golfing one Saturday with Mr. Lowther. The scene closes with Miss Brodie praising Sandy for her insight and Rose for her instinct; she also claims that she herself possesses both of these qualities.

Characteristically, Miss Brodie's tactic for making Sandy feel specially chosen is to criticize others. Insight for Miss Brodie refers to intellectual ability, analytical penetration, whereas instinct refers to physical appeal, grace, and erotic power. Miss Brodie here casts Rose and Sandy as her spiritual daughters, but she is mistaken: Rose casts off her influence and Sandy betrays her.

Also around this time, Sandy would stand outside St. Giles's Cathedral or the Tolbooth (an old municipal building in Edinburgh), and think about Calvinism, which had been spoken of only as a joke during her childhood, and which she feels deprived of. Sandy thinks that the Calvinists Miss Gaunt and the Kerr sisters are "the most real and rooted people" she knows, which she attributes to their belief in the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, which holds that God elects people to be sent to Heaven without reference to their conduct on earth. Sandy also senses Calvinism to be a formative influence on Miss Brodie herself: instead of being or not being elected by God to salvation, Miss Brodie "had elected herself to grace."

Miss Brodie defies Calvinism but also absorbs it, as Sandy perceives: she just usurps God's role in the Calvinist scheme by electing herself to grace, to a godlike role. Sandy wishes that she, too, could take Calvinism seriously, so that she could in turn have something to react against. Instead, she reacts against Miss Brodie, resulting later in her conversion to Roman Catholicism, a religion in which one's earthly conduct matters in whether one attains heaven.

Sandy also develops what she thinks of as Miss Brodie's plan, unfolding over many years: Rose with her instinct is to have a love affair with Mr. Lloyd, as a great lover above the common moral code, and Sandy with her insight is to act as the informant on the affair. However, the narrator flashes forward and reveals that Mr. Lloyd has no more than a professional interest in Rose, and that it is Sandy who eventually has the affair with him, with Rose as the informant.

Miss Brodie attempts to plot the lives of her students much as a novelist or predestining god would. But her plots go awry, highlighting her weaknesses and limitations: she casts Sandy and Rose in the opposite roles from those they ultimately play. She desires the affair between Rose and Mr. Lloyd because to her it would signify the fulfillmentof her own passion for him.

It was some time, however, before these things would come to pass. In the interim, Miss Brodie discusses art with Sandy and Rose and tells Rose that she has to realize the power within and fulfill herself, which she predicts will happen in Rose's seventeenth or eighteenth year. Rose is also becoming famous for sex, not because she talks about or indulges in sex, but because she is popular with the boys. Teddy Lloyd completes a **portrait** of all the girls, whom "in a magical transfiguration," all resemble Miss Brodie on Mr. Lloyd's canvas. He paints Rose often because she is instinctively a good model and because she requires the money he gives her to fund her addiction to the cinema.

Miss Brodie seems to be planting the seeds for an affair between Rose and Mr. Lloyd by drawing Rose's attention to art and even setting a deadline, so to speak, for the affair to occur, in Rose's late teens. Ironically, Miss Brodie totally misunderstands Rose, who has no interest in sex, really, much less in Mr. Lloyd. This irony suggests the extent to which the way people are perceived diverges radically from who they really are. Also: Miss Brodie is not as insightful as she flatters herself into thinking she is.

Sandy feels warmly toward Miss Brodie when she sees how misled she is in her idea of Rose, who is not as sexually adventurous as Miss Brodie thinks. Later in life, after she has become a nun, Sandy never feels more affection for Miss Brodie "then when she thought upon Miss Brodie as silly."

The juxtaposition between Sandy's immature obsession with Miss Brodie and her later affection suggests how vulnerable people are to external influences as young people. It also highlights Miss Brodie's humanness and charm.

Even so, the Brodie girls are still considered by their classmates to be lacking in team spirit and to be a social unit unto themselves. Were other people not to perceive them as such, the girls would no doubt have gone each her own way by the time they had reached the age of sixteen. But the girls do not drift apart, not least because they find their position enviable: they are reputed to have more fun than other girls, and this is the truth.

Social groups are defined not just internally but also externally: the way people perceive a group in part solidifies its identity as a group. More than that, the Brodie girls do enjoy being Brodie girls; for all her shortcomings, Miss Brodie does create an engaging, dynamic environment for her special girls.

Miss Brodie also rallies her special girls around her each time her teaching methods are opposed by the school authorities. She tells her girls that if those authorities do not dismiss her on the grounds of her educational methods, they will attempt to dismiss her through slander. She defends her relationship with Mr. Lowther as a close friendship, even though she has neglected him of late. Sandy thinks that this is so because Miss Brodie's sexual feelings are satisfied by proxy, as her plan for Rose to become Mr. Lloyd's lover reaches fulfillment. Miss Brodie claims that, if she wished, she could marry Mr. Lowther tomorrow.

Miss Brodie seems to sense that her dismissal can really only come about if one of her special girls betrays her, for only they have information sufficiently incriminating enough about her. She therefore strengthens their loyalty to her by treating them like her team members in a competition against Miss Mackay's administration. Of course, her relationship with Mr. Lowther is more intimate than a close friendship.

The morning after Miss Brodie makes this announcement, however, it is reported in the newspaper *The Scotsman* that Mr. Lowther has become engaged to Miss Lockhart. Nobody expected it, and Miss Brodie feels betrayed. The term following, Miss Brodie puts her spare energy into her plan for Rose to become Mr. Lloyd's lover and for Sandy to become her informant on the affair. "What energy she had to spare from that," the narrator says, "she now put into political ideas."

It is clear from this passage that Miss Brodie's plan for Rose to become Mr. Lloyd's lover is not just Sandy's invention, but a reality. It is Miss Brodie's final attempt in her prime to direct fate and consummate, if only symbolically, her passionate love for Mr. Lloyd. Her turn to political ideas foreshadows her urging Joyce Emily to fight in the Spanish Civil War.

CHAPTER 6

The headmistress of Blaine, Miss Mackay, never gives up on indirectly pumping the Brodie girls for incriminating evidence on Miss Brodie, but now, seven years into their friendship with her, the girls cannot incriminate their former teacher without incriminating themselves at the same time. One time Miss Mackay tries to trick Sandy into betraying that Miss Brodie drinks too much. But Miss Brodie really doesn't drink much at all, and Sandy says as much.

The girls' loyalty to Miss Brodie is now almost absolute, because were they to incriminate her now they would also incriminate themselves, perhaps of not saying anything sooner. Miss Mackay is grasping at straws in suggesting Miss Brodie drinks too much; she is becoming desperate, and Sandy knows it.

One of Miss Brodie's greatest admirers is Joyce Emily Hammond, a very rich and delinquent girl sent to Blaine as a last resort (she does not act like a delinquent at Blaine, however). Because Joyce Emily has been enrolled in and ejected or removed from so many schools recently, her parents request that they not buy Blaine uniforms for her till a trial period has elapsed. This is granted, and so Joyce Emily goes about in dark green while the other girls wear deep violent. She boasts of having five sets of discarded uniforms in her closet, along with hair she cut from one of her past governess's heads, a post office savings book taken from a past governess, and a burnt pillowcase which Joyce Emily set fire to while a governess's head rested on it.

Joyce Emily is an outsider at Blaine, both because she is a latecomer and also a rather eccentric girl. Her wrongdoings against her governesses make it very plausible that Joyce Emily should have strange and violent desires, as indeed she does: it is later revealed that she wants to fight alongside Franco's fascist Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War. She also seems emotionally unstable, which makes Miss Brodie's later encouragement that she run away to fight all the more destructive and exploitative (a vicarious playing out perhaps of Miss Brodie's own fantasy to play an artistically exalted role in the war).

Joyce Emily very much wants to attach herself to the Brodie set, but those girls disapprove of her because of her green clothes and her shiny car and chauffeur; besides, they are busy studying for examinations and doing other school activities. In fact, nobody wants Joyce Emily less than the Brodie girls, who are among the brightest in the school. The fact of the Brodie set's intelligence, of course, makes it all the more difficult for Miss Mackay to discredit Miss Brodie.

It is ironic that the Brodie set shuns Joyce Emily not because of her past acts of violence, but for superficial things, her clothes and wealth. We learn for the first time that the Brodie girls are exceptionally intelligent. Either Miss Brodie has good insight into a girl's potential, or else her methods aren't as unserviceable as they seem at first glance.

Moreover, the Brodie girls have outside interests, too, at this point in their lives in 1937. Eunice has a boyfriend; Monica and Mary take groceries to people living in slums; Jenny is acting; Rose models for Teddy Lloyd, sometimes accompanied by Sandy who toys with the idea of inducing Mr. Lloyd to kiss her again. The girls also visit Miss Brodie in small groups and all together. So they have little time for Joyce Emily.

When we read about the girls' outside interests, we realize just how little we really know about them. In fact, we know about them almost exclusively in their relations to Miss Brodie, which also suggests just how little Miss Brodie herself must know about them, how limited her influence ultimately is.

Miss Brodie, however, does make time for Joyce Emily. The Brodie girls resent this, but are also relieved that Miss Brodie takes Joyce Emily to tea and the theater alone, without obliging them to share Joyce Emily's company.

Why does Miss Brodie spend time with Joyce Emily? Perhaps because she senses a kindred spirit in her, wild and hungry to transfigure her world into one of excitement.

Joyce Emily brags that her brother, a student at Oxford, has gone off to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and that she, dark and "rather mad," wants to go too and march with a gun. Nobody takes this seriously, however, for everybody at the school is "anti-Franco" if they are anything at all (Francisco Franco was a nationalist general who with others initiated a civil war in Spain, successfully overthrowing the democratic Spanish Republic; after the war, he became the leader of the new fascist Spanish regime). However, Joyce Emily does end up running away to Spain that year; she is swiftly, shockingly killed in an accident when the train she is travelling in is attacked. The school holds a remembrance service for her.

Another reason Miss Brodie may enjoy Joyce Emily's company is because the two uniquely share a passion for fascism. Also, Miss Brodie does indeed take pleasure in plotting the lives of her girls, and Joyce Emily is especially vulnerable to this kind of influence, "rather mad" as she is. It is implied in the novel, but never made explicit, that it is Miss Brodie's encouragement of Joyce Emily's desire to fight which ultimately leads to her dismissal from Blaine.

By their last year at Blaine, only four of the Brodie girls remain: Mary has gone off to be a typist, and Jenny has enrolled at a school of dramatic art. While completing studies at Blaine, Eunice thinks she will go on to study modern languages, but becomes a nurse instead; Monica goes into science, Sandy into psychology. Rose, inheriting her father's instinctive and "merry carnality," makes a good marriage soon after she leaves school and "shook off Miss Brodie's influence as a dog shakes pond-water from its coat."

As the girls reach maturity and leave Blaine, so too does Miss Brodie's influence seem to largely dissipate. The girls follow their own interests, largely independent of Miss Brodie's. Rose, in whom Miss Brodie invests so much hope, ironically shakes off Miss Brodie's influence with ease, as though it were nothing more than childhood silliness.

Miss Brodie will never know how easily Rose shook off her influence. She still confides in Sandy that she thinks Rose and Mr. Lloyd will become lovers, which is not so much a theory as part of Miss Brodie's game in bringing the two together. Sandy perceives that Miss Brodie "was obsessed by the need for Rose to sleep with the man she herself was in love with."

Now that Rose has shaken off her influence, Miss Brodie's highest plan for her "prime" seems doomed to come to nothing. She will not, even symbolically, consummate her love for Mr. Lloyd. And all that will remain of her prime, ultimately, are obsessions and the aftertaste of being betrayed by one of her girls.

Sandy still visits the Lloyds during this period, and indeed has gotten herself "a folkweave shirt" like those that Mrs. Deirdre Lloyd wears. She psychologizes the Lloyds while with them; and when she looks on as Mr. Lloyd paints a **portrait** of Rose nude, Sandy notices that the image emerging resembles Rose but even more than that it resembles Miss Brodie. Sandy has become very interested in Mr. Lloyd's mind, "so involved with Miss Brodie as it was, and not accounting her ridiculous."

In wearing the folkweave shirt, Sandy seems to be preparing herself to take Rose's place as Mr. Lloyd's lover in Miss Brodie's plan. Mr. Lloyd is the only character in the novel as obsessed with Miss Brodie as Sandy is, as his paintings demonstrate. In psychologizing Mr. Lloyd, then, Sandy is also attempting to understand and come to terms with her own obsession.

Sandy has told Miss Brodie—and Miss Brodie loves to hear it—that all of Mr. Lloyd's portraits reflect her. Miss Brodie calls herself Mr. Lloyd's Muse and predicts that Rose will take her place. Sandy, on the other hand, thinks, "She thinks she is Providence… she thinks she is the God of Calvin, she sees the beginning and the end." Sandy also thinks, perhaps based on her readings in psychology, Miss Brodie is "an unconscious lesbian."

It seems that even more than sexual fulfillment, Miss Brodie desires the power to dictate her fate and influence the fates of those around her, to make life into an "artistic" story with beginning, middle, and predestined end. Sandy's hypothesis that Miss Brodie is a lesbian may well be a psychological projection: Sandy does, after all, seem to have homoerotic feelings for Miss Brodie herself.

Much later, after Sandy has become a nun, Rose comes to visit her; Rose has been married for a long time at that point to a successful businessman. The two women agree that Miss Brodie was dedicated to her girls, and Sandy explains that Miss Brodie was forced to retire because of her politics.

It is ironic but touching that Sandy and Rose remember Miss Brodie first and foremost as someone dedicated to her girls. Miss Brodie would perhaps have preferred to be remembered as a great spirit, a formative influence.

Monica also comes to visit Sandy when both are adult women, ostensibly seeking marital advice, for she had thrown a piece of burning coal at her sister-in-law, which caused her husband to demand a separation. The two instead talk of Miss Brodie: Sandy explains that Rose never did sleep with Teddy Lloyd, that Miss Brodie did indeed love the artist, and so her renunciation of him was in fact real, not a mere joke as both Sandy and Monica had thought at the time.

Because Miss Brodie is all the Brodie girls really have in common, their conversation as adults rather naturally falls to her. Although some of the girls' reputations in the novels are undeserved, like Rose's, Monica does indeed live up to hers, as being mathematically talented and angry, suggesting that typecasting isn't necessarily futile.

The narrative shifts back to the summer of 1938, after the last of the Brodie girls have left Blaine. Miss Brodie has gone to Germany and Austria for the summer, while Sandy reads psychology and goes often to the Lloyds' to sit for her own **portrait**, sometimes accompanied by Rose. Once, when Sandy and Mr. Lloyd are all alone because his wife and family are away, Sandy tells him that all his portraits, "even that of the littlest Lloyd baby," are turning out to resemble Miss Brodie, and she gives him an insolent stare. As he had three years before, Mr. Lloyd kisses Sandy, and the two begin a love affair that lasts for five weeks.

It is not Rose but Sandy who serves as Miss Brodie's proxy in becoming Mr. Lloyd's lover. Sandy desires this both to symbolically be Miss Brodie, something she has fantasized about since early childhood in her stories and fictions, and also, perhaps, because she deeply loves and pities Miss Brodie, whose plans for her prime seem to have come to nothing until Sandy intervenes here by having an affair with Mr. Lloyd.

During the time of their affair, Mr. Lloyd paints Sandy a little. She tells him that he is making her look like Miss Jean Brodie in the **portrait** and he begins a new canvas, "but it was the same again." Sandy asks Mr. Lloyd why he is obsessed with Miss Brodie, pointing out her ridiculousness. Mr. Lloyd concedes that she is ridiculous, but tells Sandy to stoop analyzing his mind, an unnatural habit in a girl of eighteen.

Sandy craves insight into her own obsession with Miss Brodie, hence this interview with Mr. Lloyd. Both agree that Miss Brodie is somewhat ridiculous, perhaps because she is overcompensating for her littleness in life—but both are also deeply marked by her, suggesting that influence is deeper than mere authority, that a person's dreams, even if delusional, can have a real grandeur and power to them.

In September, Miss Brodie and Sandy meet at the Braid Hills Hotel, where Miss Brodie discusses Hitler, quite sure that fascism (either Hitlerian or general) will save the world. Sandy is bored. At last Miss Brodie comes to the point: "'Rose tells me you have become his [Mr. Lloyd's] lover,'" she says. Sandy says she has, because Mr. Lloyd interests her. Miss Brodie responds that, as a Roman Catholic, Mr. Lloyd can't think for himself, is all instinct, and therefore not suitable for an insightful person like Sandy.

Sandy's boredom reminds us that, despite her attempts at personal growth, Miss Brodie remains decidedly limited as a person: she repeats her catchphrases often, is prejudiced in her opinions and politics, and has obsessed over Mr. Lloyd for some seven or eight years now. She is nonetheless somewhat insightful: Sandy does indeed grow bored with Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Lloyd continues painting accidental **portraits** of Jean Brodie, even though he recognizes as Sandy does that she is not to be taken seriously. Their affair continues even once Mrs. Lloyd returns with the family, all the more dangerously and excitingly. By the end of the year, however, Sandy has lost interest in Mr. Lloyd the man, but is nonetheless deeply absorbed in his mind. She is especially interested in his Roman Catholic religion, an interest she takes with her even after leaving Mr. Lloyd. Eventually, of course, Sandy becomes a Roman Catholic nun.

Sandy may take an interest in Roman Catholicism for a number of reasons. Perhaps she feels guilty about her affair with Mr. Lloyd and thinks that she can most effectively repent as a Roman Catholic. Or, more persuasively, perhaps she is defying Miss Brodie's influence by turning to Roman Catholicism, a faith where one cannot just dismiss one's own guilt as Miss Brodie seems to do. Another option is that in becoming Roman Catholic she becomes like the man whom Miss Brodie loves. Or perhaps it is some messy combination of all of these things.

The following autumn, Sandy meets Miss Brodie several times, discussing Mr. Lloyd as usual, how his **portraits** all reflect the lover who renounced him. Miss Brodie tells Sandy that, however strange, it is she, Sandy herself, and not Rose who was destined to be the great lover. Miss Brodie also confides in Sandy that she regrets urging the young Joyce Emily to go to Spain to fight for Franco; Sandy had not been aware of Miss Brodie's influence to this effect till that moment.

So strong is Miss Brodie's desire to influence the course of fate that she retrospectively recasts Sandy as Mr. Lloyd's destined lover, as though this were her plan all along. The revelation that Miss Brodie encouraged Joyce Emily to go to Spain is just the incriminating evidence that Sandy needs—or perhaps the evidence that pushes her—to betray Miss Brodie.

That autumn, Sandy returns to Blaine to see Miss Mackay, and tells her that Miss Brodie is still cultivating sets of girls at once precocious and out of key with their classmates. Sandy advises Miss Mackay to attempt to unseat Miss Brodie on the grounds of her fascist political interests. Sandy then explains that she is telling all this to Miss Mackay because she wants to put "'a stop to Miss Brodie.'" When the time comes to force Miss Brodie to retire because of her politics, Miss Mackay does not fail to say to her that it had been a Brodie girl who had betrayed her.

One of the great open questions of the novel is why Sandy does in fact betray Miss Brodie. Does she think it at last morally unacceptable that Miss Brodie encouraged Joyce Emily to fight in Spain? Does she have homoerotic feelings for Miss Brodie with which she herself is deeply uncomfortable? Does she resent Miss Brodie's influence over her? The answer is never definitively given, and it may be all or none of these things. Regardless, in the end, Miss Brodie's own designs and efforts to control events undo her.

Sandy is to leave Edinburgh at the end of the year. When she goes to the Lloyds' to say goodbye, she looks around Mr. Lloyd's studio and sees the **portraits** "on which she had failed to put a stop to Miss Brodie." Sandy is "fuming…with Christian morals" at this point.

This scene suggests that Sandy resents the fact that her affair with Mr. Lloyd was not enough to push Miss Brodie from his mind. Her stern judgment of Miss Brodie is also a judgment against herself, perhaps, for having an affair with a married man.

It is in the end of the summer term of 1939 that Miss Brodie is forced to retire, "on the grounds that she had been teaching Fascism." Sandy has entered the Catholic Church by then, where she meets a number of fascists "much less agreeable than Miss Brodie."

The novel reminds us that Miss Brodie's fascist sympathies are not an eccentricity, but were in fact shared even by nuns at the time. Though that does not make those sympathies acceptable, either.

Miss Brodie writes to Sandy to tell her of her retirement, theorizing that the political question was only an excuse, and that what Miss Mackay really disapproved of was her educational policy. Miss Brodie is most hurt and amazed to believe that one of her own special girls has betrayed her. She tells Sandy that she could suspect any of her girls of the betrayal save Sandy herself. Sandy replies: "'If you did not betray us it is impossible that you could have been betrayed by us."

Miss Brodie is probably correct in thinking that Miss Mackay dismissed her for educational and not political reasons, suspicious as Mackay was of Miss Brodie's influence. Sandy's logic on betrayal seems to be this: people are loyal unless they are themselves betrayed. She is implying that Miss Brodie somehow betrayed her special girls.

Over the years, many Brodie girls contact Sandy after she has become Sister Helena of the Transfiguration and published **"The Transfiguration of the Commonplace."** Jenny writes that Miss Brodie is past her prime and obsessed with the question of who betrayed her. Jenny also visits Sandy, and Sandy tells her, clutching the grille which separates the two women, that Miss Brodie "'was quite an innocent in her way.'" Monica visits Sandy as well, and reports to her that Miss Brodie at last suspects her, Sandy, of the betrayal. "'It's only possible to betray where loyalty is due,'" Sandy says.

For all her pretenses to greatness of spirit, Miss Brodie dies lonely and embittered by her betrayal, at last obsessing (in an ironic reversal of influence) over her unknown betrayer just as Sandy had obsessed for so long over her, Miss Brodie's, love life. Sandy in her maturity also recognizes that Miss Brodie was innocent, perhaps in the sense that she was a victim of social convention and her own limitations.

And then there is the day that the inquiring young man visits Sandy (an incident first described in Chapter 2), speaking with her through the grille which Sandy "clutched more desperately than ever." He asks her about her formative influences from her schooldays—literary? political? personal? Calvinism? Sister Helena responds, "'There was a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime.'"

Sandy clutches her grille because, like Miss Brodie, she yearns to experience the largeness of life. This cloister is something of a self-imposed punishment and exile for her. More than any other Brodie girl, Sandy acted as she did because of Miss Brodie's influence, even though doing so cut against Miss Brodie's own plans for Sandy. That Sandy so completely rejected Miss Brodie's influence is a sign of that influence's continuing effect.

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