

Katherine Mansfield

The unpublished manuscripts: Part VII

Maata

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Introduction

The May 1974 issue of the *Turnbull Library Record* (vol 7, no. 1) carried the Turnbull's 'Maata' manuscripts (Part VI of this series) and explained in an introductory note that we had been unable to locate or identify the owner of the main Maata manuscript of which ours is but a fragment.

Since then, by an extraordinary chance—a long shot indeed—we have traced the manuscript (which is at present on deposit at the Newberry Library, Chicago) and been given permission to publish it in the *Record*.

It consists of Katherine Mansfield's synopsis of 35 projected chapters of a novel, and a draft of Chapters I and II. The Turnbull's 'Maata' pieces, while seeming in some ways related to the plan of Chapter XII, are also sufficiently different from this material in style to suggest that they are later attempts at the story.

For once K. M. has dated the work herself. According to her notes (herewith reproduced) she finished writing the 'plan' on the 2nd of August 1913, finished Chapter I on August 13 and Chapter II on November 16.

The girl Maata is based not on the real life Maata, K. M.'s New Zealand friend, but on herself; and the story, largely autobiographical, is concerned with the episode in her life when, having left New Zealand for the last time at the age of 19, she returned to London, and renewed relationships with Ida Baker and with the Trowell family. Mr Trowell had been K. M.'s music teacher in Wellington, and his twin sons had such promising musical talent that a public subscription in Wellington realised enough money to send them to London for further study. (The subscription list compiled at the time is now in the Turnbull's manuscript collection, and among the many names on it are Harold Beauchamp and Alexander Turnbull.) Mr and Mrs Trowell and their daughter Dolly went with the boys and set up house in Hampstead where K.M. became almost one of the family on her return to London. Having been for a long time romantically interested in one of the twins—Tommy—she now fell in love with the other—Garnet. For a time, while he was touring the provinces in a theatre orchestra they pretended they were married, but then inevitably, she became pregnant and the relationship,