

## Key Scenes in *Sive* by John B. Keane

### Learning Intentions

- Be familiar with **significant moments**:
  - **Why they are pivotal**: Do they reveal character traits, advance the plot, or highlight a theme?

Memorise **quotations** from these scenes and be able to analyse them

John B. Keane's *Sive* is a tragic drama filled with pivotal moments that reveal character traits, drive the plot, and highlight central themes like greed, love, and societal oppression. Here are the significant scenes, their importance, and key quotations to analyse.

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### The Marriage Proposal Scene

#### Why It's Pivotal:

This scene sets the central conflict in motion. Thomasheen Seán Rua proposes an arranged marriage between Sive and the older, wealthy farmer Sean Dóta. The tension between greed and morality is immediately established as Mena and Thomasheen conspire to exploit Sive for financial gain.

#### What It Reveals:

- **Character Traits**:
  - Mena's manipulative nature and greed are evident in her eagerness to secure the match.
  - Mike Glavin's passivity is highlighted as he hesitates but ultimately allows himself to be swayed.
- **Themes Highlighted**:
  - The commodification of women in rural Irish society.
  - The destructive power of greed and societal pressure.

#### Key Quotations:

- *"It's money, Mike, money! Do you think money is easy got these days?"* (Mena)
    - **Analysis**: Mena's line encapsulates her fixation on financial gain, showing how materialism drives her decisions.
  - *"I'll not have the girl forced into a marriage she doesn't want."* (Mike)
    - **Analysis**: Although Mike voices resistance, his ultimate inaction demonstrates the weakness of his moral stance.
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### Sive's Resistance to the Marriage

### Why It's Pivotal:

Sive's refusal to accept the arranged marriage is a critical moment that underscores her strength and the oppressive forces she faces. Her resistance highlights the theme of personal freedom versus societal constraints.

### What It Reveals:

- **Character Traits:**
  - Sive's innocence and determination to fight for her happiness.
  - Mena's cruelty as she dismisses Sive's feelings entirely.
- **Themes Highlighted:**
  - The conflict between individual desires and societal expectations.
  - The lack of autonomy granted to women.

### Key Quotations:

- *"You'll go to the church like any other girl and marry the man!"* (Mena)
    - **Analysis:** Mena's harsh tone illustrates her authoritarian role in Sive's life, reinforcing the theme of oppression.
  - *"I'll never marry him! I'll never marry anyone but Liam Scuab!"* (Sive)
    - **Analysis:** Sive's declaration demonstrates her love for Liam and her resistance to societal and familial control.
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## The Destruction of the Letter

### Why It's Pivotal:

This scene marks a turning point in the play. The letter from Liam, offering Sive hope and a chance at freedom, is intercepted and destroyed by Mena. This act isolates Sive further and cements Mena's role as the primary antagonist.

### What It Reveals:

- **Character Traits:**
  - Mena's malicious intent and willingness to manipulate and harm Sive.
  - Sive's increasing vulnerability and despair.
- **Themes Highlighted:**
  - The theme of control and the suppression of individual voices.
  - The importance of communication and how its loss intensifies conflict.

### Key Quotations:

- *"Burn it. It's nothing but trouble."* (Mena, about Liam's letter)
    - **Analysis:** This line symbolises Mena's determination to destroy any chance of happiness for Sive, reinforcing the theme of greed.
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## Sive's Death

### Why It's Pivotal:

Sive's suicide is the tragic climax of the play. It highlights the devastating consequences of greed, manipulation, and societal oppression. Her death forces the characters—and the audience—to confront the moral failures that led to this outcome.

### What It Reveals:

- **Character Traits:**
  - Sive's ultimate despair and loss of hope.
  - Mena's selfishness and lack of remorse become starkly apparent.
- **Themes Highlighted:**
  - The cost of societal and familial greed.
  - The failure of community and family to protect the vulnerable.

### Key Quotations:

- *"She was too good for the likes of us."* (Mike, after Sive's death)
    - **Analysis:** Mike's lament reveals his guilt and recognition of his own complicity in Sive's tragedy.
  - *"She was my blood and I failed her."* (Nanna)
    - **Analysis:** Nanna's grief reflects the play's theme of familial responsibility and the consequences of neglect.
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## The Aftermath

### Why It's Pivotal:

The final scene reflects on the devastation caused by greed and societal pressure. The characters are left to grapple with their guilt and loss, forcing the audience to consider the moral lessons of the play.

### What It Reveals:

- **Character Traits:**
  - Mike's regret and helplessness.
  - Mena's lack of empathy and accountability.
- **Themes Highlighted:**
  - The long-term consequences of moral failure.
  - The importance of empathy and compassion.

### Key Quotations:

- *"The bog has claimed another."* (Thomasheen)
    - **Analysis:** The bog serves as a metaphor for the oppressive and destructive nature of the society depicted in the play.
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## Conclusion

The key scenes in *Sive* reveal the depth of its characters and the tragic inevitability of its plot. Each moment advances the narrative while highlighting themes of greed, love, oppression, and societal failure. The pivotal moments and accompanying quotations offer a powerful critique of human behaviour and societal norms, making *Sive* a timeless and thought-provoking drama