

Quotations in *Sive* by John B. Keane

Learning Intentions

- Memorise **key quotes** for:
 - Characters: Words that reveal personality or motivations.
 - Themes: Phrases that encapsulate major ideas.
 - Imagery or Symbols: Words or phrases that enhance understanding of the text's style.

Quotations in *Sive* are pivotal for understanding its characters, themes, and style. Memorising key quotes allows students to analyse character motivations, the play's central ideas, and the imagery that enhances its dramatic power. Below is an analysis under the given headings.

Characters: Words that Reveal Personality or Motivations

Sive

- *"I'll never marry him! I'll never marry anyone but Liam Scuab!"*
 - **Analysis:** This quote reveals Sive's determination to resist societal and familial pressures. It highlights her youthful innocence and her desire for true love, contrasting with the greed-driven motives of others.
- *"I have no mother, no father to protect me."*
 - **Analysis:** Sive's vulnerability is evident here, underscoring her isolation and lack of agency.

Mena Glavin

- *"It's money, Mike, money! Do you think money is easy got these days?"*
 - **Analysis:** Mena's obsession with wealth drives her manipulation of Sive. This line reveals her prioritisation of financial gain over familial love and morality.
- *"She'll go to the church like any other girl and marry the man!"*
 - **Analysis:** Mena's authoritarian tone highlights her dominance in the household and her disregard for Sive's happiness.

Mike Glavin

- *"I'll not have the girl forced into a marriage she doesn't want."*
 - **Analysis:** Although Mike initially shows some resistance to the arranged marriage, his eventual passivity highlights his weak-willed nature and inability to protect Sive.

Thomasheen Seán Rua

- *"Marry her off to Sean Dóta and put money in your pocket."*
 - **Analysis:** Thomasheen's blunt statement reveals his opportunism and lack of empathy, as he treats Sive as a commodity.

Liam Scuab

- “*I will take her away from here, away from the greed and the meanness.*”
 - **Analysis:** Liam’s words express his love and determination to rescue Sive, contrasting with the selfishness of other characters.
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Themes: Phrases that Encapsulate Major Ideas

Greed and Materialism

- “*What is a girl but a piece of merchandise?*” (Thomasheen Seán Rua)
 - **Analysis:** This quote encapsulates the theme of commodification, reflecting how women are treated as property in the play’s rural Irish setting.

Love and Relationships

- “*Sive, I love you. I’ll always love you.*” (Liam Scuab)
 - **Analysis:** Liam’s declaration highlights the theme of genuine love, contrasting sharply with the transactional nature of the arranged marriage.

Power and Oppression

- “*You’ll do as you’re told, and that’s an end to it.*” (Mena)
 - **Analysis:** This line underscores the oppressive dynamics within the household, with Mena exerting control over both Sive and Mike.

Isolation and Tragedy

- “*The bog has claimed another.*” (Thomasheen Seán Rua)
 - **Analysis:** The bog becomes a symbol of the community’s moral decay and the inevitability of tragedy when societal norms are driven by greed.
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Imagery or Symbols: Words or Phrases that Enhance Understanding of the Text’s Style

The Bog

- “*She’s dead, in the bog.*”
 - **Analysis:** The bog symbolises entrapment and the inescapable consequences of societal greed and oppression.

The Letter

- “*Burn it. It’s nothing but trouble.*” (Mena)

- **Analysis:** The destroyed letter symbolises the suppression of Sive's voice and her hope for freedom, highlighting the theme of control.

The Match

- “*A grand match for any girl in the parish.*” (Thomasheen Seán Rua)
 - **Analysis:** The match becomes a symbol of societal expectations and the transactional nature of marriage, devoid of emotional connection.

Conclusion

Quotations from *Sive* reveal the complex dynamics between characters, the moral dilemmas driving the narrative, and the play's broader critique of societal values. Memorising and analysing these quotes allow students to engage deeply with the text's exploration of greed, love, power, and tragedy. These key lines also highlight Keane's dramatic style, ensuring their relevance for Leaving Certificate exams