

THE WARDEN (FINAL)
MICHAEL SYMMONS ROBERTS

Based on the novel by Anthony Trollope

ACT 1, SCENE 1

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

FX: SOUNDTRACK GRADUALLY BUILDS AS SHE REACHES THE END OF THIS
PIECE, AS IF, LIKE PROSPERO, SHE CONJURES THE SCENE FOR US.

There is a county in the west of
England, not so widely known
but which is, nonetheless,
very dear to those who know it
well. I could say it was always
peaceful here, that birds
praise the day and that
the good folk of this county live
in harmony from year to year. But
that would not be gospel. We do
live under God though, and how
could we not, with our own
bishop, a dean, an archdeacon and
all their numerous chaplains,
vicars and hangers-on? But that's
not even half the story. All of
human life is here: the greedy and
the good, the loving and the lost,
the noble and the... well, I think
it best to let visitors decide for
themselves. But this I will say:
for us who live here, this place is
a little taste of heaven, conjured
by the good Lord out of birdsong...
church bells... bees wings... and
a slow breeze in the summer
leaves... I give you...
Barsetshire.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

WARDEN, ELEANOR AND BOLD ARE HAVING TEA IN THE WARDEN'S
GARDEN, SERVED BY MRS BAXTER.

HARDING

Mrs Baxter, you have surpassed
yourself. This is your best seed
cake ever.

MRS BAXTER

You're too kind, Mr Harding.

BOLD

It is wonderful.

MRS BAXTER

Would you like some more, Dr Bold?

BOLD

I must resist, or I shall be unable
to leave this chair.

HARDING

I'm afraid I'm powerless to resist it.
I have reached the age where I have
given up resistance.

MRS BAXTER

I'm glad to hear it. Help yourself.

SHE GOES BACK INTO THE HOUSE.

MRS BAXTER (CONT'D)

(v/o)

I like to think I am as
indispensable to this diocese as my
Lord Bishop himself. Where would
they be without tea and cake? It is
my daily joy to serve the saintly
Mr Harding, and the lovely Eleanor.

ELEANOR

Papa, can I tell Dr Bold about the
party?

HARDING

(eating cake)

I think you just have done, my
dear?

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

'Warden of Hiram's Hospital',
that's Mr Harding's title.

Centuries back, a certain John Hiram set up this place
in his will, to care for tired old workmen, known as
the bedesmen. I feed them too, and
a greedy ungrateful gaggle they
are.

BOLD

A party? How delightful! What's the

occasion?

HARDING

It is Nelly's birthday, unless
you're proposing to give us another
occasion to celebrate?

ELEANOR

(tongue-in-cheek)

Please excuse my father, Dr Bold.
He has reached the age where he has
given up discretion.

BOLD

(flustered)

Well, a birthday party sounds
delightful...

HARDING

Forgive me, Dr Bold. I didn't mean
to make you blush.

MRS BAXTER COMES BACK INTO THE GARDEN

MRS BAXTER

Would anybody like more tea?

ELEANOR

Your timing is impeccable, Mrs
Baxter, as ever.

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

My timing is always impeccable, and
so is my hearing. No-one would
accuse me of being a busybody, not
for a second. But a good
housekeeper will know what's what.
She can't help herself.

BOLD

I'm afraid I must leave you. My
sister is expecting me home for
dinner.

ELEANOR

I'll see you out, Dr Bold.

THEY GET UP TO HEAD TO THE GARDEN GATE.

HARDING

I hope I haven't driven you away.

BOLD
Of course you haven't.

HARDING
The garden is so lovely at this
time of year.

BOLD
And please
do invite me to the party.

HARDING
You will be first on the list.

*ELEANOR AND BOLD AT A DISTANCE FROM THE TABLE, AS THEY WALK
TO THE GATE, HUSHED CONVERSATION*

ELEANOR
John, please forgive my father's
wit.

BOLD
(stumbling over his words)
There's nothing to forgive. I do
dare to hope that... at some
stage... I mean... what your father
said...

ELEANOR
What are you trying to say?

BOLD
I don't know, Eleanor. Forgive me.

ACT 1, SCENE 3

*INT BOLD SURGERY AFTERNOON. DR JOHN BOLD IS ATTENDING TO THE
BAD LEG OF ABEL HANDY.*

MARY
There you are, Mr Handy. Is that
too tight?

ABEL HANDY
No, ma'am, it's right for me.

MARY
I'll get your coat and stick.
SHE WALKS OUT

BOLD

You must keep this dressing on, and
come back tomorrow so we can change
it for you. That tincture will hurt
for an hour or two, but it should
help to salve the wound.

ABEL HANDY

Dr Bold, I am in your debt. And
your good wife's. She's a fine
woman, Sir.

BOLD

Miss Bold is my *sister*, Mr Handy.
But you owe us no debt.

ABEL HANDY

If I could pay you at tuppence a
week...

BOLD

I wouldn't hear of it.

ABEL HANDY

But more than that I cannot...

BOLD

No, no, no. This physician will not
take a penny of your pittance. And
you may tell your fellow-bedesmen
at Hiram's Hospital that my surgery
is theirs, if ever they should need
it.

ABEL HANDY

You are in all truth, Sir, doing
the work of the Lord himself,
tending to the needs of poor
pensioners.

BOLD

O come, come, Mr Handy. I don't
want your money but I don't think
you can claim abject poverty.

ABEL HANDY

How come?

BOLD

John Hiram's will must be worth a
great deal of money.

ABEL HANDY

Oh, that all goes to the Warden,
Sir.

BOLD

Well, I'm sure Mr Harding makes
certain you are well looked after.

ABEL HANDY

Each of us gets a pension of sixty
two pounds, eleven shillings and
fourpence.

BOLD

(shocked)

Is that all?

ABEL HANDY

It was less than that before. We
get a tuppence more now.

BOLD

Are you sure?

ABEL HANDY

I count it every week, Sir.

BOLD

And do you know how much John
Hiram's legacy produces every year?

ABEL HANDY

That's not my business, Sir.

BOLD

Then I shall make it mine.

MARY

(coming back in)

Here you are, Mr Handy.

ABEL HANDY

Much obliged, Madam...

AS HE LEAVES

ABEL HANDY (CONT'D)

And to you, Sir...

THE DOOR CLOSES BEHIND HIM

BOLD

Did you hear that, Mary?

MARY
(wary, unhappy)
I heard you say you would make
something your business.

BOLD
I sense a grave injustice...

MARY
Be careful, John. You cannot fight
everyone's battles for them. You do
not have the constitution.

BOLD
Oh, Mary...

MARY
I'm serious, John. You were sick
for weeks when you took up the case
of that turnpike woman.

BOLD
She was robbing the poor! I had to!
I will be careful. But this does
sound like a case of grave
injustice.

MARY
So it may be. But why do you have
to take it on yourself?

BOLD
I expected your support. Where's
your Methodism? Your radicalism?

MARY
I just worry about you, John.

ACT 1, SCENE 4

MRS BAXTER
(v/o)
Now, I can smell trouble before I
see it. Any housekeeper can, it
comes with the job. And the air in
Hiram's Hospital is thick this
afternoon.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF WARDEN'S CELLO BEING PLAYED TO THE
BEDESMEN IN THE GARDEN IN BACKGROUND.

MRS BAXTER (CONT'D)

(V/O)

Everything looks the same. Mr
Harding is giving his afternoon
recital with his cello, and the
Bedesmen are sitting in the garden
enjoying the sunshine.

So even now as the click of his
bootsteps meets my ears, I know
something is amiss.

THE TUNE FINISHES, AND BUNCE APPLAUDS.

BUNCE

Bravo, Mr Harding, Sir. Bravo.
Another one if you please.

HARDING

Oh, Bunce, you are too kind.

THE CELLO PLAYING PETERS

OUT, AS WE HEAR JOHN BOLD STRIDING UP TOWARDS THE WARDEN.

HARDING

(surprised)

Dr Bold.

BOLD

I should like to speak with you, Mr
Harding.

HARDING

Well, that would be most agreeable,
but I am in the middle of my
afternoon recital for the bedesmen.

BOLD

Then pray, don't let me disturb
you. I shall wait.

HARDING

Oh, it's nothing.

BOLD

May we converse in private, Mr
Harding? In your study, perhaps?

HARDING

(flustered)

Well, yes, of course.
(standing up, to the
bedesmen)

Good bedesmen, you are spared. The
recital is over for this afternoon,
as I must speak to Dr Bold.

(bedesmen disperse, Bold
and Harding head indoors)

MRS BAXTER
May I fetch you some tea, Sir?

HARDING
Thank you, Mrs Baxter. Will you
have some tea?

BOLD
No, thank you. I cannot stay long.

MRS BAXTER
Do call if you change your mind,
Sir. I'll leave you to your
business.

HARDING
(*shutting the door*)
Thank you, Mrs Baxter.
(*to Bold*)
Now, you have me worried, Dr Bold.
There isn't some trouble between
you and Eleanor, is there? She will
be home shortly, and will be
delighted to find you here.

BOLD
No, no Sir. It's nothing to do with
Eleanor. I wish to speak to you
about the Hospital.

HARDING
Well, anything I can tell you I
shall be most happy...

BOLD
It's about the accounts.

HARDING
Then, my dear fellow, I can tell
you nothing, for I'm as ignorant as
a child. All I know is that they
pay me £800 a year. You'll need to
speak to the diocesan steward about
that.

BOLD
(surprised)
Eight hundred!

HARDING
I know nothing more, I'm afraid.
Now tell me, is old Abel Handy's
leg on the mend yet? He's had a
terrible ulcer.

BOLD
His leg will be fine, if he keeps
the dressing clean. But Mr Harding,
I hope you won't object to
discussing what I have to say about
the hospital.

HARDING
(sighs)
Very well.

BOLD
I have the greatest regard for you,
Mr Harding. The truest respect, the
most sincere...

HARDING
Thank you, thank you, Mr Bold. I'm
much obliged, but never mind all
that. I'm as likely to be in the
wrong as any man. More likely I'm
sure.

BOLD
...But Mr Harding, I must express
what I feel, lest you should think
there is personal enmity in what
I'm going to do.

HARDING
Personal enmity! Going to do! Why,
you're not going to cut my throat
are you?

HARDING CHUCKLES, BUT BOLD DOES NOT JOIN IN.

BOLD
I fear there is reason to think
that the founder John Hiram's will
is not being carried out to the

letter, Mr Harding. And I feel duty
bound to look into the matter.

HARDING

Very well. I've no objection on
earth. How could I?

BOLD

In doing this, I may appear to be
interfering with you, and I do hope
you will forgive me for doing so.

HARDING

Dr Bold, if you act justly, say
nothing in this matter but the
truth, and use no unfair weapons in
carrying out your purposes, then I
shall have nothing to forgive. Pray
do what you consider to be your
duty. I will offer you no obstacle.

SOUND OF ELEANOR COMING HOME.

Ah! Here is Eleanor. Now Dr Bold,
will you join us for tea?

BOLD

(flustered, getting up to
leave)

I, I cannot, I'm afraid, Mr
Harding. I have other business...

HARDING

(opening the door and
calling)

Mrs Baxter! Would you show the good
doctor out?

MRS BAXTER

Of course, Sir.

ELEANOR

(from down the hallway)

Dr Bold! I didn't expect to see you
here.

BOLD

Miss Harding. You will think me
very impolite but I'm afraid I have
some urgent, er...

11.

He rushes out

BOLD (CONT'D)

(calling back)
Thank you, Mrs Baxter.

ELEANOR
Well, he was in a hurry.

MRS BAXTER
I think he has some business, Miss
Eleanor.

ELEANOR
Well, we shall have tea without
him.

ACT 1, SCENE 6

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Business. Yes, he has business
alright. Other people's business,
but that won't stop him stepping in
with both boots. Bold by name, and
bold by nature.

HARDING

(calling)

Mrs Baxter! I'm not hungry this
evening. Too much sun, I think.

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

I can't get Mr Harding to eat a
scrap tonight, even though I cooked
his favourite. He sits in his chair
in silence, drawing an imaginary
bow across an imaginary cello. It
helps him to think. But it doesn't
help poor Miss Eleanor to stop
being worried sick about her
father.

ACT 1, SCENE 7

INT, WARDEN'S STUDY. ELEANOR KNOCKS AND COMES IN.

ELEANOR

Father.

HARDING

My dear.

ELEANOR

It was lamb tonight.

HARDING

Too much sun this afternoon...

ELEANOR

You never miss Mrs Baxter's lamb
stew.

HARDING

I am not going to starve. One
night's fast will do me no harm.

ELEANOR

What has worried you so much,
Father? Is it something Dr Bold
said?

HARDING

It is nothing about you and Dr
Bold, my dear Nelly.

ELEANOR

Then what?

HARDING

It's hospital business. I cannot
talk about it until I have resolved
it in my own mind.

ELEANOR

Maybe I can help you to resolve it.

HARDING

Bless you, Nelly. You cannot. This
is for me to resolve alone.

ELEANOR

Could the Archdeacon help you to
resolve it? He's very decisive.

HARDING

Oh, he is indeed. Theophilus will
know about it soon enough. But I
must be clear in my own mind first.

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

So, he sits up most of the night
playing silent sacred songs on his
imaginary cello, and she lies awake
most of the night worrying about

her father, and wondering just what
her suitor might have said to cause
him such distress.

ACT 1, SCENE 8

INT, BOLD'S KITCHEN, EVENING. THEY ARE SITTING, READING.

BOLD
Thank you, Mary.

MARY
For what?

BOLD
Dinner. It was delicious.

MARY
Same brisket we have every week,
John. But I'm glad you liked it.

BOLD
Are you in the Jupiter again?

MARY
John!

BOLD
Who's going to hear me in our
kitchen?

HE FLICKS THROUGH THE NEWSPAPER

MARY
If it ever gets out that a woman
writes it...

BOLD
Ah, here you are: 'From the Pew',
by Mary Bold.

MARY
No! 'From the Pew' by Zecharia!

BOLD
What are you chiding the nation for
this week?

MARY
It is about turning the other cheek.

BOLD

Ah.
HE FOLDS UP THE NEWSPAPER.

MARY
Aren't you going to read it?

BOLD
Later.

PAUSE
Mary, what about turning the other
cheek if you are not the injured
party?

MARY
I'm sorry?

BOLD
If someone strikes us, we must not
strike back, rather turn the other
cheek. But what if that blow, that
injustice, is being meted out on
someone poorer and weaker than we
are? Should we strike back then, on
behalf of the weak?

MARY
Is this your new cause? Are you
planning to strike someone?

BOLD
I don't know.

MARY
I'm afraid I don't follow you.

BOLD
Not many will, I fear.

ACT 1, SCENE 9
INT, BISHOP'S PALACE, MORNING

BISHOP
Ah, Septimus! There are very few
joys left for an old churchman like
me, but your company is chief in
their number.

HARDING
I cannot offer much joy this
morning, Bishop.

BISHOP

I thought you looked less than your usual full-blooded self, Septimus.

You can tell your oldest friend.
Come, come...

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

So, Mr Harding tells the Bishop all about John Bold and his holy mission to clean up the finances of Hiram's Hospital. And the old Bishop listens to his friend and nods like the sage he is, then when Mr Harding finishes he says just what Eleanor said last night...

BISHOP

I think we should refer this to the Archdeacon. The Archdeacon will sort it all out.

HARDING

But Bishop, did you ever read John Hiram's will?

BISHOP

I think I may have done, thirty, forty years ago when I first came here.

HARDING

And do you remember the details?

BISHOP

Well, not the details. But I know for sure that I as Bishop have the absolute right to confer the wardenship on whomever I see fit.

HARDING

But the question is, Bishop, who has the power to decide how the funds from John Hiram's will are to be distributed?

BISHOP

Oh, I'm sure there's a statute barring the bedesmen from any

increase in income beyond the
measure that keeps them in comfort.
Men more learned than you and I
have pored over this will and
judged its provision to be fair and
legal.

HARDING
Yes, I'm sure...

BISHOP
And what's more, Septimus, there's
natural justice at work here.

HARDING
I'm not sure what you mean.

BISHOP
Are the men in your care not
comfortable?

HARDING
I believe they are, Sir. I've never
heard them complain, and if they
want for anything they have only to
say and...

BISHOP
Exactly. And did you not raise
their pittance by two pence a day
per man, from your own purse?

HARDING
Well, yes.

BISHOP
Then there is no debate. Your
income reflects the due difference
in rank and responsibility of a
diligent clergyman, who is - I
might add - the very fine precentor
of this Cathedral. And as long as
the bedesmen's needs are met, then
there is nothing to discuss.

HARDING
I'm afraid Dr Bold thinks there is.

BISHOP
Then Dr Bold can take it up with
the Archdeacon.

PAUSE

HARDING

But Bishop, suppose I find that
young Dr Bold is right, and I am
wrong?

BISHOP

Septimus, the man stands opposed to
all that we hold dear! And if he gets his way he will shut
down the cathedral and distribute
all its funds among Methodists and
Baptists and other savage tribes.
He is an enemy of the church!

He probably doesn't believe in the
Trinity!

HARDING

Come now, Bishop. He's a good man.
In fact, I like Dr Bold very much,
personally. And Eleanor is very
fond of him.

ACT 1, SCENE 10

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Families complicate matters at the
best of times, but in a small town
like Barchester, well, it's a real
tangle. Not only is Mr Harding
threatened by the very man who
wants to marry his Eleanor, but the
Bishop is to unleash Dr.
Theophilus Grantly, the formidable
Archdeacon, as defender of the
church. And of course the
Archdeacon is married to Mr
Harding's elder daughter Susan. And
I may not have mentioned another
family connection, the Archdeacon
is the Bishop's son. Yes, no-one
here quite believes it either. How
could that mild old cleric have
produced the force of nature known
as Archdeacon Grantly? You may
wonder why John Bold would wish to
join this of all families? Well, if
he does, he's going a funny way
about it.

ACT 1, SCENE 11

INT, SKULPIT'S ROOM, MORNING. ABEL HANDY IS TRYING TO GET THE PETITION COMPLETE, WITH SKULPIT'S SIGNATURE.

ABEL HANDY

Come on, Skulpit, you old fool!
Sign it!

FX: SKULPIT COUGHS.

ABEL HANDY (CONT'D)

We need all the bedesmen's names on
this petition, that's what the Dr
said.

BUNCE

(intruding)

Abel Handy! What are you plotting?

ABEL HANDY

You get off your high horse, Bunce. No-one
put you in charge of us.

BUNCE

No. Mr Harding is our Warden, and
I'll thank you to remember it.

ABEL HANDY

And he does very nicely on it. With
our money.

BUNCE

How dare you?

ABEL HANDY

Dr Bold says we are entitled to one
hundred pounds a year each.

BUNCE

And what are you going to do with
these riches? Do you want for
anything?

ABEL HANDY

That's not the point.

BUNCE

Has Mr Harding ever refused you
anything you asked for?

ABEL HANDY

If Skulpit signs this, we shall
have a majority.

BUNCE

Skulpit's not a well man. Look at
him! This petition will not help
him. It will bring nothing but
grief upon us!

ABEL HANDY

Skulpit's name on this, and then
they'll have to talk to us.

BUNCE

Abel Handy, you are a traitor!
Plotting behind a good man's back!
You wait till the Archdeacon gets
wind of this.

ACT 1, SCENE 12

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Oh, he's got wind of it alright.
Imagine if you will the country
roads between Plumstead Episcopi -
residence of Archdeacon Theophilus
Grantly, and the path leading up to
Hiram's Hospital. Woe betide any
sunstruck cow or ale-struck
farmhand who gets in the way of
this red-faced defender of the
faith as he rides like a fury into
Barchester, muttering under his
breath.

ACT 1, SCENE 13

*EXT, WARDEN'S GARDEN, AFTERNOON. ARCHDEACON'S FURIOUS
MURMURING CROSS-FADES INTO CELLO IN GARDEN AGAIN. ARCHDEACON
STORMS IN, SLAMMING THE GARDEN GATE BEHIND HIM. CELLO STOPS
ABRUPTLY.*

HARDING

Oh, Archdeacon!

ARCHDEACON

Warden!

HARDING

We weren't expecting

you. Do join us...

ARCHDEACON
(flustered)
I need to speak with you, most
urgently.

HARDING
We can speak over tea, you would be
very welcome...

ARCHDEACON
This cannot wait.
(to Bedesmen)
Alright, off you go. All of you.
The recital is over.

BUNCE
The Warden was halfway through his
favourite piece, Sir.

ARCHDEACON
Back to your rooms! All of you! I
need to speak to the Warden
immediately.

THE MEN SHUFFLE AWAY, AND ARCHDEACON DRAGS HARDING BY THE ARM
INTO A CORNER OF THE GARDEN.

ARCHDEACON (CONT'D)
Put down that fiddle and walk with
me.

HARDING
Slow down, Theophilus, slow down! I'm not as
limber as I was.

ARCHDEACON
(hushed, urgent)
That petition. Why on earth did you
let them sign a petition?

HARDING
Have you seen my roses? Great joy,
they give me...

ARCHDEACON
The authority you have in this
place, and a friend like Bunce. Why
o why did you not just destroy it?

HARDING

Destroy their petition? How could
I? It's what they believe.

ARCHDEACON

It is not! That's precisely what it
isn't! It's what that pestilent
enemy of the just John Bold
believes! It's him, filling their
heads with his poison!

HARDING

Please be temperate, Theophilus.
Eleanor is very fond of Dr Bold,
and so am I.

ARCHDEACON

Then you are very foolish,
Septimus!

HARDING

Perhaps I am.

ARCHDEACON

He will stop at nothing to destroy
us! His sister Mary is a Methodist!
Did you know that!

HARDING

I had heard something...

ARCHDEACON

She spends every Sunday in that
tawdry little chapel, plotting to
bring down the Church of England.

HARDING

I'm sure she doesn't...

ARCHDEACON

And rumour has it she's behind that
dreadful 'From the Pew' column in
the Jupiter!

HARDING

Rumours are nothing more than...

ARCHDEACON

...But don't worry, we will defeat
John Bold. I have taken legal
advice. And I'm told that we must

secure Sir Abraham Haphazard. Oh yes, I shall not have the slightest fear in leaving the case in Sir Abraham's hands. Queen's Counsel, a thorough churchman, a seat in Parliament. I think Sir Abraham will not be long in letting Master Bold know what he's about. I fancy I hear Sir Abraham cross-questioning him in court.

HARDING

Has the petition gone to the Bishop?

ARCHDEACON

Yes, my father has it. Not that he's given it much notice. I took it off his hands. They will sorely wish they had destroyed it themselves.

HARDING

But why shouldn't they petition?

ARCHDEACON

Why shouldn't they? Why shouldn't They?! I'll let them know exactly why they shouldn't. Get them together now. Here in the garden.

HE STRIDES OFF, RINGS A BELL ATTACHED TO THE WALL OF THE HOSPITAL, AND CALLS OUT.

ARCHDEACON (CONT'D)

All bedesmen please gather immediately in the garden!

HARDING

But you've only just dismissed them!

THEY BEGIN TO GATHER.

HARDING (CONT'D)

(hushed, to Archdeacon)
I'd much sooner treat this matter quietly, Theophilus.

ARCHDEACON

Quietly! Do you wish to be ruined 'quietly'?

HARDING

Well, if I am to be ruined, yes.

ARCHDEACON

Nonsense, Warden. I tell you,
something must be done. We must act
now. Decisively.

BUNCE

(to Archdeacon)

The bedesmen are all gathered, Sir.

ARCHDEACON

Thank you, Bunce.

HARDING

(to Archdeacon)

Would you excuse me if I go inside?

ARCHDEACON

For heaven's sake, don't let us
have divisions in the camp. Let us
all pull together. Come warden,
don't be afraid of your duty.

*(to the assembled
bedesmen)*

Now, my men! Your good friend, the
warden here, and myself, and my
lord the bishop, on whose behalf I
wish to speak to you, would all be
very sorry indeed, if you should
have any just ground of complaint.
Any just ground of complaint on
your part would be dealt with at
once without the necessity of a
petition.

BUNCE

Hear, hear, Sir.

ARCHDEACON

Thank you, Bunce. Without the
necessity of any petition at all.
However, I'm told that you have
addressed a petition to my lord the
bishop. Is that correct?

THERE IS AN AWKWARD SILENCE.

ABEL HANDY

Yes, we has.

ARCHDEACON

So, pray tell me. What is it you want that you haven't got here?

ABEL HANDY

A hundred a year.

ARCHDEACON

A hundred a year! One. Hundred. Per. Year. And you dare to talk about John Hiram's will? When John Hiram built a hospital for worn-out old labouring men, do you think he intended to make gentlemen of them?

No, no, my men. I'll tell you what John Hiram meant. He meant that twelve poor old worn-out workers, men who could no longer support themselves, who would starve if not protected by the hand of charity, such men should come here in their poverty and wretchedness, and find within these walls shelter and food before their death, and a little leisure to make their peace with God.

HARDING

(hushed, to archdeacon)

The men look tired. May I let them go now?

ARCHDEACON

I haven't finished. Now let me ask you bedesmen a question. Do you think that you are worse off than John Hiram intended to make you?

Have you not twice better food, twice a better bed, ten times more money in your pocket than you were ever able to earn for yourselves before you were lucky enough to get into this place? Yes? And now you send a petition to the bishop asking for a hundred pounds a year!

I tell you what, my friends; you are made fools of by wicked men who are acting for their own ends. You will never get a hundred pence a

year more than you have now. It is
very possible that you may get
less; it is possible that my lord
the bishop, and your warden, may
make changes...

HARDING
(interrupting)

... No, no, my friends. I want no
changes - at least no changes that
shall make you worse off than you
are now, as long as you and I live
together.

BUNCE
God bless you, Mr Harding!
'GOD BLESS YOU' IS ECHOED BY OTHER BEDESMEN

HARDING
Come, Archdeacon, would you take a
small sherry?

ARCHDEACON
(to Harding, as they walk)
Very well. I think I spoke to them
plainly.

HARDING
Oh, you were plain enough.

ARCHDEACON
With those sort of people one must
be plain, or one will not be
understood.

HARDING
I'm sure they understood.

ARCHDEACON
They know we are not afraid of
them. I'll take a sherry, then I'll
go up to the palace and answer that
petition of theirs.

ACT 1, SCENE 14
INT, BOLD'S HOUSE, MORNING.

MARY
(opening a letter)
How lovely, John! We are invited to the
Warden's tea party.

BOLD

Yes, it's in Eleanor's honour. I
have an invitation here.

MARY

Mine is from Eleanor herself, for
both of us.

BOLD

And mine is handwritten by the
Warden, requesting the pleasure of
my company.

MARY

How odd?

BOLD

I think Eleanor was writing the
official invitations. The Warden's
card is especially for me.

MARY

Well, I suppose we should write
separate answers, saying we shall
be both be very happy.

BOLD

You'll go, of course, Mary. But I
cannot. I wish I could, with all my
heart.

MARY

Why not?

BOLD

I fear I cannot go to Mr Harding's
house any more as a friend. Not at
present.

MARY

Oh, John! Why not? You've quarelled
with Eleanor, have you?

BOLD

No. I've no quarrel with Eleanor.

MARY

Then come to the party.

BOLD

There's something I must tell you,

Mary.

MARY
(worried)
What?

BOLD
I've taken up the case of the
twelve old men of Hiram's Hospital,
and that brings me into contact
with Mr. Harding. I may have to
oppose him, interfere with him,
perhaps injure him.

MARY
Oh no, John! So that's the cause
you've picked up for those old men?

BOLD
I feel I have no choice.

MARY
I don't understand.

BOLD
I'm not sure I can explain it. Not
in a way that will convince you.

MARY
Try.

BOLD
John Hiram made a will, and left a
charity for certain poor old men,
but the proceeds, instead of going
to the men, go chiefly into the
pocket of the warden.

MARY
And you mean to take away Mr
Harding's share of it?

BOLD
I don't know what I mean yet. I
mean to inquire about it. I mean to
see who is entitled to this money.
I mean to see that justice be done
to the poor men of Barchester. I
mean, in short, to put the matter
right, if I can.

MARY

And why are you the man to do this,
John?

BOLD

You might ask the same question of
anyone. Who do these old men belong
to? If we are to act on that
principle, the weak will never be
protected!

MARY

But is there no-one else who could
pursue this? No-one but you, who
have known Mr Harding for so long?

BOLD

That's woman's logic all over,
Mary! If the thing itself be right
to do, then what has friendship to
do with it? Because I esteem Mr.
Harding, is that a reason that I
should neglect my duty?

MARY

Don't you have a duty to Mr. Harding
too?

BOLD

I would have thought that you of
all people, with your radical
chapel credentials, would support
me in challenging corruption in the
established church!

MARY

Corruption? I'm not listening to this.
(walking away)

BOLD

Well, what else would you call it?

MARY

There's plenty of corruption in the
Church of England, but poor Mr
Harding is the wrong target.

BOLD

I disagree.

MARY

And what about Eleanor?

BOLD

There is no necessity now to talk
about Eleanor.

But this I will say: if she has the
kind of spirit for which I give her
credit, she will not condemn me for
doing what I believe to be my duty.

PAUSE

MARY

Oh, John. Think better of this. You
are going to make yourself, and
her, and her father miserable. You
are going to make all of us
miserable. You'll make yourself ill
again. And for what? A dream of
justice. You will never make those
twelve men happier than they are
now.

BOLD

You simply don't understand it.

MARY

John, please.

BOLD

My mind is not in doubt. I could
never respect myself again were I
to give way now.

ACT 1, SCENE 15

INT, WARDEN'S HOUSE. THE WARDEN'S TEA PARTY.

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

It's hard work for a housekeeper, a
tea party. The hours I put in
baking and brewing, and making sure
they all keep full cups and
plates... But this one is at least
diverting. There are fat old ladies
in fine silk dresses, slim young
ladies in gauzy muslin frocks, old
gentlemen stood up with their backs
to the empty fireplace, and young
gentlemen clustered near the door,

with too little courage to attack
the muslin frocks. And the loudest
voice in the room, of course, is
the Archdeacon's...

ARCHDEACON

The wolves are circling around the
church. Have you heard those
fearful rumours of the mad reforms
at Oxford? Even Oxford, yes!

MRS BAXTER

In a quiet corner, Miss Eleanor is
in conversation with her suitor's
sister, Mary Bold.

ELEANOR

(hushed)

I knew something was wrong, Mary, but
papa wouldn't tell me.

MARY

(hushed)

He's trying to protect you, I'm
sure. And to protect your affection
for my brother.

ELEANOR

(upset)

Why is John doing this?

MARY

He believes it's his duty.

ELEANOR

(angry and upset)

His duty! To destroy my father's
reputation!

MARY

I know, I know...

ELEANOR

And I was fool enough to think him
fond of me.

MARY

He thinks the world of you,
Eleanor.

ELEANOR

(hushed, upset)
Clearly he does not.

MARY
(hushed)
Please, Eleanor, forgive John if
you can.

ACT 1, SCENE 16
INT LONDON PUB, EVENING. TOM TOWERS IS SITTING AT A TABLE,
AND JOHN BOLD PUTS TWO DRINKS DOWN.

TOM TOWERS
Thank you very much, Sir.

BOLD
It's my pleasure, Mr Towers.

TOM TOWERS
Cheers! No, the pleasure is mine to
meet the brother of the mysterious
Miss 'From the Pew'! We've never
seen her, you know. She files her
copy as Zecharia, refuses payment,
but she writes so beautifully.

BOLD
My sister is very humble.

TOM TOWERS
I'm sure she is.

BOLD
But it's not my sister I've come to
discuss.

TOM TOWERS
Oh, really? D'you want a column in
the Jupiter too?

BOLD
No, no. Nothing like that. But I do
have a story that might interest
you.

TOM TOWERS
Well... you will find me a most
attentive listener, Dr Bold.

ACT 1, SCENE 17
INT, WARDEN'S STUDY, EVENING. AFTER THE PARTY.

HARDING

Yes, my dear. It seemed to go
delightfully.

ELEANOR

But it was odd that Dr Bold wasn't
there. D'you know why not?

HARDING

He was invited. I wrote to him
myself. I'm sure he would want to
celebrate your birthday if he
possibly could.

ELEANOR

But do you know why he didn't?

HARDING

(sighs)

Have you been talking to someone?

ELEANOR

Mary.

HARDING

I see. I was trying to keep you out
of all this.

ELEANOR

Oh, papa. What will come of it?
Will he put you in danger?

HARDING

What sort of danger?

ELEANOR

Danger of trouble. Danger of loss.

HARDING

Come here, Nelly.

HE KISSES HER FOREHEAD

HARDING (CONT'D)

I want you to know that John Bold
is no enemy of mine, and I will do
nothing to discourage your
affections. Your heart must not be
torn apart out of loyalty to some
old clergyman!

ACT 1, SCENE 18

EXT, CATHEDRAL CLOSE, MORNING. ELEANOR IS WALKING THROUGH THE
CATHEDRAL CLOSE. JOHN BOLD IS WAITING FOR HER.

BOLD

Miss Harding! Eleanor!

SHE KEEPS WALKING. HE RUNS TO KEEP UP WITH HER.

BOLD (CONT'D)

My sister tells me that you had a
delightful party yesterday evening?
I was so sorry I couldn't be there.

SHE KEEPS WALKING, WITHOUT RESPONDING TO HIM.

BOLD (CONT'D)

I believe, Miss Harding, that you
understand why at this moment...

SHE KEEPS WALKING

BOLD (CONT'D)

I think my sister explained to
you...

ELEANOR

(cold, angry)

Mary told me everything.

BOLD

Your father is all that is kind and
generous. I do hope you will not
judge me too harshly...

SHE STOPS, TO CONFRONT HIM

ELEANOR

You may be sure of one thing. If I
see my father attacked by those who
ought to know and love him, then I
shall judge them to be wrong, and I
shall set myself against them.

BOLD

I have nothing but respect for your
father.

ELEANOR

(furious, upset)

I gave my heart to you, John Bold.
And my father gave his too. It
seems we were both fools.

SHE WALKS AWAY.

BOLD

(running after her again)

Eleanor, if I'd thought for one
moment you might doubt my affection
for you...

ELEANOR

(as she walks)

I have heard enough!

BOLD

(still pursuing)

Eleanor, my dear Eleanor.

ELEANOR

(stops to face him)

No. No, John Bold. Not YOUR dear.
Not now.

SHE TURNS AND STRIDES AWAY. HE STANDS, STUNNED.

BOLD

(to himself)

Oh my Lord. What have I done?

ACT 2, SCENE 1

INT, WARDEN'S BREAKFAST ROOM, MORNING.

MRS BAXTER

Your newspaper, Mr Harding.

HARDING

Thank you, Mrs Baxter. The tea
party went well, I think?

MRS BAXTER

I think it was a great success,
Sir.

HARDING

And not least because of your great
efforts in the kitchen, Mrs Baxter.
They were very much appreciated.

MRS BAXTER

It's my pleasure, Sir.

SHE TURNS TO WALK AWAY

HARDING

Are there any of those wonderful
scones left?

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Not two minutes later, and I'm in
the kitchen loading up a plate with
scones when...

HARDING SCREAMS AND WE HEAR A TEACUP SMASH ON THE FLOOR

MRS BAXTER (CONT'D)

I rush through, of course, but he's
run out of the house...

HARDING STUMBLING THROUGH THE GARDEN, MUMBLING
HARDING

'...only in the Church of England'

BEDESEMEN ARE SITTING READING THE NEWSPAPER ON A BENCH IN THE
GARDEN

ABEL HANDY

Mr Harding! Have you seen the
Jupiter this morning?

HARDING

'...could such a state of moral
indifference...'

MRS BAXTER

So, clutching his copy of the
Jupiter, poor Mr Harding stumbles
across to the Bishop's Palace, and
bursts into the Lord's breakfast
room, where he finds the Bishop and
the Archdeacon with a copy of the
Jupiter in hand.

HARDING

Oh my Lord Bishop, what can be
done? 'Moral indifference!'

ARCHDEACON

Calm down, Warden. Calm down. It is
time to act.

ACT 2, SCENE 2

INT, BOLDS' BREAKFAST ROOM, MORNING.

BOLD

(reading from the Jupiter)

'We are informed that the warden of

an old alms-house attached to
Barchester Cathedral is in receipt
of twenty-five times the annual
income appointed for him by the
will of the founder...'

MARY

Oh, John. What have you done?

BOLD

(shaken)

Listen, Mary. 'We at the Jupiter
must express an opinion that
nowhere but in the Church of
England, and only there among its
priests, could such a state of
moral indifference be found.'
'Moral indifference'! Where did
they get a phrase like that?

MARY

Poor Mr Harding must be
inconsolable.

BOLD

I have to say, Mary, although it is
gratifying to see a just cause
taken up by the Jupiter, I do find
the language intemperate. And I
worry...

MARY

...that you will lose Eleanor?

BOLD

Yes.

MARY

Well, you should have thought of
that before you started all this.

ACT 2, SCENE 3

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

In Plumstead Episcopi, the
Archdeacon is plotting. Well, he's
not actually plotting. He's locked
in his study reading a scurrilous
book and pretending to be plotting.

SUSAN BURSTS INTO HIS STUDY. HE FUMBLES TO HIDE THE BOOK.

ARCHDEACON

Susan! Do please knock, so you
don't disturb my concentration. I'm
working on the Hiram's Hospital
case.

SUSAN

Well, you'll want to see this then.
Delivered just now by the diocesan
steward.

ARCHDEACON

Thank you, thank you...

*HE TAKES THE LETTER, AND STARTS TO READ. SUSAN GOES BACK TO
THE GARDEN*

SUSAN

(calling as she leaves)
I'm in the garden with the
children, if you'd like to join us.

A MINUTE LATER, ARCHDEACON CRIES OUT 'YES!' IN TRIUMPH, AND
DASHES INTO THE GARDEN, WHERE WE CAN HEAR CHILDREN PLAYING.

ARCHDEACON

Yes! Yes! Yes!

SUSAN

Theophilus! Are you alright?

ARCHDEACON

This is everything I'd hoped for,
and more! That pestilent demon Bold
will be knocked off his perch with
this alright!

SUSAN

Theophilus! Please be temperate in
front of the children.

ARCHDEACON

Yes, yes, yes! I must go, Susan! My
father has to see this.

ACT 2, SCENE 4

INT, BISHOP'S PALACE, AFTERNOON.

ARCHDEACON

You tell him, Father.

BISHOP
Septimus, we have some good news.

HARDING
Oh?

BISHOP
Sir Abraham's learned opinion on
the case has come through at last.

HARDING
And is it favourable?

ARCHDEACON
More than favourable, Mr Harding.
In the opinion of the finest lawyer
in the land, John Bold doesn't have
a leg to stand on!

HARDING
But how, Archdeacon?

ARCHDEACON
The gist of the matter is this.
Under Hiram's will there is
provision for two paid servants for
the hospital.

One to look after the money -
that's the diocesan steward - and
one to look after the men - and
that's you. The will says those
servants will be paid, so there's
no argument about that.

BISHOP
That does seem clear...

ARCHDEACON
But the pay they are given must be
set at a fit rate for the market
value of the period in question,
and the only appointed judges of
that market value are the managers
of the hospital.

HARDING
And who are the managers of the
hospital?

ARCHDEACON

Oh, let them find that out. That's another question. They've brought the case against you, and that's the wrong target. In Sir Abraham's opinion, a jury would throw this out in five minutes.

HARDING

But if the managers chose to allot sixteen hundred a year, instead of eight, and if I am one of the managers myself, then that can hardly be a just arrangement.

ARCHDEACON

That's beside the point entirely. Because the managers would not do that. The point is that these pestilent dissenters cannot interfere with an arrangement which everyone knows is just and serviceable to the church.

PAUSE

BISHOP

Septimus? What do you say? Are you relieved?

PAUSE

HARDING

What about the Jupiter?

ARCHDEACON

Oh, the Jupiter can break no bones. And besides, the matter is too trivial to be mentioned again in any newspaper.

HARDING

May I walk, Bishop?

BISHOP

Where?

HARDING

Up and down your parlour, Bishop.

BISHOP

Of course, Septimus. If it helps

you.

MR HARDING PACES UP AND DOWN

BISHOP (CONT'D)

We thought you would be comforted
by this...

HARDING

I have read that Jupiter article
over and over again.

BISHOP

Don't torture yourself.

ARCHDEACON

It's good for lighting fires,
that's all.

HARDING

If it can be proved that I have a
just and honest right to this
salary, as God well knows I always
deemed I had, then I shall be happy
to retain it. I have the well being
of my child to look to, and I am
too old to miss without pain some
of the comforts I enjoy. I am as
anxious as you are to prove that I
am not corrupt, but I cannot do it
at such a cost as this. Those
words... 'moral indifference'... I
cannot forget them.

ARCHDEACON

It's just some tawdry little
newspaper man trying to make a name
for himself!

HARDING

(almost in tears)

I cannot bear it. Please, my Lord
Bishop, tell me what I should do?

BISHOP

You shall do just what your heart
tells you to be right. Theophilus,
please don't advise the Warden to
do anything which is painful.

ARCHDEACON

Well, Father. There are two kinds of advice. There is advice that may be good for the present, and there is advice that may be good for days to come. Now, I cannot bring myself to give the former, if it be incompatible with the latter.

BISHOP

I see, yes, I see...

ARCHDEACON

What would happen if one of us backed down in the face of this attack? Is it not plain that such attacks would be renewed until the whole Church of England falls to the ground?

HARDING

But those accusations! I mean, 'moral indifference'...

ARCHDEACON

If you were to throw up the wardenship now, to relinquish what is yours by right and in law, you would encourage every cantankerous dissenter in England to make a similar charge against the church. I can fancy nothing more weak or wrong or selfish. It is not that you think there is justice in these charges against you. You would only yield to them through cowardice.

BISHOP

Cowardice?

HARDING

Cowardice is a very strong word...

ARCHDEACON

Yes! Would it not be cowardice?

HARDING

It is so wounding...the Jupiter...

ARCHDEACON

So in a fit of passion, you want to throw up the only maintenance that

Eleanor has. And it wouldn't stop there. If you have no future right to that income, you have no past right either, so you would receive demands for repayment of years of your income.

HARDING
(rattled)

But I do not have that money...

ARCHDEACON
And even aside from yourself and your family, you owe it to the church to bear with this affliction. You owe it to my father here, who instituted you, you owe it to those who will come after you into the priesthood. By upholding one another we may support our great cause without blushing and without disgrace.

BISHOP
My goodness, Theophilus.

ARCHDEACON
I hope you both agree with me?

BISHOP
Yes, I suppose so...

ARCHDEACON
And you, warden?

PAUSE

ARCHDEACON (CONT'D)
Warden?

HARDING
Do not press me for an answer just at present, please. I will do nothing lightly in this matter, and whatever I do I will give you and the bishop notice.

ACT 2, SCENE 5

EXT, WARDEN'S GARDEN, EVENING. WARDEN IS PLAYING HIS CELLO,
AS IS HIS EARLY EVENING CUSTOM. BUT MOST OF THE MEN ARE NOT
THERE. HE REACHES THE END OF A PIECE.

HARDING

Bunce, where are the other bedesmen
this evening?

BUNCE

(angry)

I don't wish to talk about them,
Sir. Fired up with money and
treachery, they are!

HARDING

I see. Perhaps I've played enough
for now.

BUNCE

Please, Sir. Carry on. It gladdens
my heart.

HARDING

(reluctant)

I'm sorry, Bunce. I cannot play. I
haven't the heart for it tonight.

BUNCE

I'm sorry for your trouble, Mr
Harding. If there was anything to
cheer you, I should be glad to know
it.

HARDING

My friend. My dear old friend.
There is nothing. God's will be
done.

HE GETS UP AND STARTS TO WALK IN

HARDING (CONT'D)

And I have work to do. Good work,
precentor's work. I have to prepare
the music for Sunday.

ACT 2, SCENE 6

INT, WARDEN'S STUDY, EARLY EVENING. WARDEN IS SCRATCHING AWAY
AT A MUSICAL SCORE, MAKING NOTES FOR THE CHOIR. ELEANOR
CREEPS UP BEHIND HIM.

ELEANOR
Papa?

HARDING
Nelly, my dear. You frightened me!

ELEANOR
You've been working for hours.

HARDING
I have to get these scores ready
for Sunday, or the choir will have
nothing to sing.

ELEANOR
Let them make it up!
THEY LAUGH

MRS BAXTER
(v/o)
She knows, better than anyone, how
to lift her Father out of his
despond. She sits on his lap, as
she has since she was a tiny girl,
and puts her arms around his neck.

ELEANOR
Papa, won't you tell me what it is?

HARDING
You know what it is, my dear.

ELEANOR
But is there some new sorrow that
torments you?

HARDING
Oh, it's nothing new my dear. I
mustn't be a dull companion. Come,
let's have some music.

*HE TRIES TO GET UP TO BREAK THE MOOD, BUT SHE WILL NOT LET
HIM.*

ELEANOR
No, papa. I will not let you go
until you talk to me.

HARDING

(teasing)

You are a most disobedient
daughter.

ELEANOR

I know about the hospital, and the
petition, and what that cruel
newspaper has said. But what else?
If there be some new cause for
sorrow, then let's be sorrowful
together.

HARDING

(welling up)

My darling child. Why should you be
unhappy before it is necessary. It
may come to that, if we must leave
this place, but why should your
young days be clouded?

ELEANOR

Is that it, papa? Is that all? If
that is it then give it up. Give it
up! I could live anywhere. As long
as we have bread to eat, and light
in our hearts, then what does it
matter?

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

So he holds his daughter tight and
lets himself sob, for he's been
holding those tears in for weeks.

WARDEN QUIETLY SOBBING IN B/G, COMFORTED BY ELEANOR.

ACT 2, SCENE 7

INT, BOLD'S HOUSE, MORNING.

Mary is ushering Eleanor into her sitting-room.

MARY

John will not be long, Eleanor. May
I get you some tea?

ELEANOR

I've just had breakfast with my
father, thank you. What time will
Dr Bold return?

MARY

He'll be back soon, because he has
to catch the London train at
eleven.

ELEANOR
I must see your brother before he
goes.

MARY
Of course. I know he'll be
delighted to see you.

ELEANOR
I don't think he'll want to hear
what I have to say.

MARY
Oh Eleanor, please remember that
despite all this business, John
loves you better than anything in
the world.

ELEANOR
Mary, that is nonsense.

MARY
No, no...

*BOLD INTERRUPTS BY RETURNING, AND WALKING STRAIGHT INTO THE
ROOM, IS TAKEN BY SURPRISE TO FIND ELEANOR THERE.*

BOLD
Oh! I must apologise for
interrupting your conversation,
Miss Harding. You must think me
very impolite.

MARY
Miss Harding has come to speak with
you, John. I explained that you are
about to leave for London.

BOLD
Of course, it would be my pleasure.
And I have some time before the
train.

MARY
(leaving)
I have a visit to make myself, if
you'll excuse me, Eleanor.

ELEANOR
Of course.

*THE DOOR CLOSSES BEHIND MARY. ATMOSPHERE IS STRAINED AND
TENSE.*

BOLD
(nervous)
London is a very stupid town. I
detest having to leave Barchester
to go there, but needs must... And
it's so hot in the city. The summer
breezes here make it far more...
pleasant. How is your father,
Eleanor?

ELEANOR
My father is not very well.

BOLD
I'm very sorry to hear that.

ELEANOR
I especially want to speak to you
about my father, Dr Bold.

BOLD
Of course.

ELEANOR
Papa is very unhappy, very unhappy
indeed, about this affair of the
hospital. You would weep for him if
you could see how wretched it has
made him.

BOLD
Oh, Eleanor, there's no-one here,
you can call me John...

ELEANOR
(*holding back tears*)
Dr Bold, anyone would weep for my
father now; but an old friend as
you are, indeed you should. He is
an altered man. His cheerfulness
has gone. And his sweet temper, and
his kind, happy tone of voice. You
would hardly know him if you saw
him. And if this goes on, he will

break his heart and die.

*(she begins to cry into
her handkerchief)*

I dare to hope that it was not you
personally who wrote those savage
things in the newspaper?

BOLD

Oh, Eleanor. It was not, it was
not...

ELEANOR

And I know that Mary would not
write such things. Her Jupiter
column is...

BOLD

...oh no, Mary would never dream
of..

ELEANOR

...but that newspaper has nearly
killed him. Papa cannot bear to
think that people should so speak
of him, as avaricious, dishonest,
robbing the old men...

BOLD

I have never used those words, Miss
Harding, I...

ELEANOR

I'm sure you have not used those
words. But you started this, and if
it goes on, it will kill him. Dr
Bold, my father does not care about
money...

BOLD

Of course not. There is no man
alive less in thrall to money than
the Warden.

ELEANOR

He would give up the hospital and
his salary tomorrow, only he
cannot. The Archdeacon says it
would be cowardly, and that he
would be damaging the church.

Whatever happens, papa will not do that. Oh, how I wish he would.

BOLD

No-one who knows Mr Harding accuses him for a moment.

ELEANOR

But it is he that has to bear the punishment, he that suffers. And what for? What has he done wrong? He that never had an unkind thought in his life, never said an unkind word...

BOLD

Nobody blames Mr Harding personally.

ELEANOR

(angry)

Then why should he be persecuted? Why is he singled out for scorn and disgrace? And why did you begin all this? You whom we all so... so valued.

BOLD

(upset)

I had no intention to harm Mr Harding. It... it was a public duty... I had to...

ELEANOR

Dr Bold. I have come here to implore you to abandon this. To spare my father. I know how much I am asking. But I pray that you will listen, because this is for my father. I pray. I beg of you Dr Bold, do not drive to distraction a man who has loved you so well.

BOLD

(chastened, upset)

I would give you my soul, Eleanor, if it would serve you. You know my feelings for you.

ELEANOR

Don't say that. I do not ask
anything for myself. I ask it for
my father.

BOLD

Everything I have is yours, if you
will accept it. My house, my heart,
my all. My every hope is centred in
you, and when I see you in sorrow
as you are now, every nerve in my
body suffers.

ELEANOR

No! There can be no talk of love
between us. Will you protect my
father from the evil you have
brought upon him?

BOLD

Oh, Eleanor, I will do anything.

ELEANOR

I will not leave here till you
promise me. I'll kneel in front of
you now until you promise me.

(she kneels)

Will you leave my father to die in
peace in his own home?

BOLD

Do not kneel before me, Eleanor. It
shames me...

ELEANOR

Promise me that my father is safe,
and I will get up. One word. One
word will do. And I shall never
trouble you again.

BOLD

I will promise to do what I can for
your father, but what do you mean
'never trouble me again?'

ELEANOR

You will spare my father?

BOLD

All I can do, I will do.

ACT 2, SCENE 8

MARY IS WALKING THROUGH THE CATHEDRAL, AND FINDS BOLD THERE SITTING IN A PEW. IN THE BACKGROUND, THERE'S THE SOUND OF A CHOIR REHEARSING IN THE HUGE ACOUSTIC OF THE BUILDING. THE CONVERSATION IS WHISPERED AS SHE SITS DOWN NEXT TO HIM.

MARY

John? What are you doing here? I thought you were going to London.

BOLD

It's a quiet place to think. Does it offend your Methodist principles?

MARY

I'm just here to put some pamphlets at the back.

BOLD

The vergers will remove them. You're wasting your time.

MARY

Two people have already picked them up...

BOLD

Two souls won back from the monstrous Church of England.

MARY

Why are you talking like this, John? Are you angry with me?

BOLD

No. Not you.

MARY

Are you angry with Eleanor?

BOLD

Far from it.

MARY

She is just trying to protect her father...

BOLD

And I have agreed to desist.

MARY
(relieved)
Thank the Lord.

BOLD
But it's not that simple, is it?
Although I began this proceeding,
there are many others involved now.
A runaway train is not easy to
stop.

ACT 2, SCENE 9
INT, WARDEN'S HOUSE, DAY.

ELEANOR
Papa, may I disturb you?

HARDING
Of course, Nelly. I'm still working
on Sunday's anthems, so disturbance
is welcome.

ELEANOR
I have some good news, Papa. I have
spoken to Dr Bold, and he asks me
to tell you that he has abandoned
his lawsuit.

HARDING
Dr Bold is an honourable man, and
he will act as he thinks right.
But...

ELEANOR
But what?

HARDING
I'm afraid it cannot alter my
purpose.

ELEANOR
I thought you would be happy, Papa.
He's going to stop the whole case!

HARDING
Dr Bold has set great people to
work, and I doubt they are within
his control. Have you seen this?

HE PICKS UP THE NEWSPAPER

ELEANOR

Why do you still read the Jupiter,
Papa? It is poison.

HARDING

Dr Bold can't have these newspapers
unwritten, my dear. And he can't
say they won't be read by every
clergyman up and down the land.

ELEANOR

But they will see it for what it
is.

HARDING

Yes, they will see it for what it
is, a list of truths. All the facts
in this story are correct.

ELEANOR

But the conclusion...

HARDING

The only fitting conclusion I can
see is that I have no right to be
here.

ELEANOR

(shocked)
No right?

HARDING

No right to continue as the Warden
of Hiram's Hospital, living off the
fat of a will intended for charity.

ELEANOR

But Dr Bold has withdrawn his
complaint.

HARDING

He must do what he believes to be
right. And so must I.

ACT 2, SCENE 10

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

Poor John Bold doesn't know what's
hit him. I saw him pacing the

Cathedral Close that morning like a
bear with a head full of bees, and
no-one could comfort or talk to
him. Sometimes, a man like Dr Bold
doesn't know how much he cares for
a lady until he thinks he's lost
her. And it's not hard to see how
he thinks he's lost poor Eleanor.
What did he expect? Setting upon
her father like that. Can he ever
make amends?

ACT 2, SCENE 11
SOUND OF ARCHDEACON'S CHILDREN PLAYING ON THE LAWN OUTSIDE
PLUMSTEAD EPISCOPI.

MRS BAXTER
No-one can fault him for trying,
and as he dismounts his horse on
the lawn at Plumstead Episcopi,
it's a idyllic scene, with those
young scamps Henry and Griselda
Grantly playing prince and princess
in the garden. Delusions of
grandeur, inherited from their
papa.

BOLD
(to Henry and Griselda)
Would your majesties mind taking
care of my horse while I talk to
your father?

MRS BAXTER
And my my... Doesn't the Archdeacon
look pleased with himself as he
comes out to greet this visitor.

BOLD WALKS TOWARDS THE HOUSE, BUT ARCHDEACON COMES OUT TO
MEET HIM, CALLING ACROSS THE LAWN.

ARCHDEACON
Ah, Dr Bold. What can I do for you
on this fine afternoon?

BOLD
I hope you'll excuse my calling
uninvited, Dr Grantly.

ARCHDEACON
Of course, of course. You couldn't

have picked a better day to visit.

BOLD

Shall we talk inside?

ARCHDEACON

It's such a beautiful afternoon, Dr Bold, and I fancy the conversation will be brief, so let's stay out here.

BOLD

Very well. I have come to tell you that my campaign is over.

ARCHDEACON

Ah. So, you are desirous of abandoning your attack upon Mr Harding.

BOLD

There was no attack, Sir, I can assure you...

ARCHDEACON

Well, let's not quarrel about words. I think most men would call an endeavour to strip every shilling of income from an old man an attack, but if you don't like the word...

BOLD

I intend to put an end to the legal proceedings which I have commenced.

ARCHDEACON

Well, I can't say I'm surprised. Carrying a losing lawsuit, when one has nothing to gain, but everything to pay, is not pleasant.

BOLD

You misinterpret my motives, Sir. But I didn't come to talk about my motives. I've told you what I came to say. Good Day, Dr Grantly.

ARCHDEACON

One moment, one moment.... You engage me in conversation in my own

garden unannounced, you should at least hear what I have to say.

BOLD
Very well.

ARCHDEACON
Having exposed a gentleman who is one of your warmest friends to all the ignominy which the press could heap upon him, having ostentatiously declared that it was your 'duty as a man of high public virtue' to protect those poor old fools you have humbugged up at the hospital, you now find the game costs more than it's worth, eh? Well, it's a pity you took so long to reach this decision. Has it occurred to you that we may not choose to end the matter? That we may find it necessary to punish the injury you have done to us? And the costs! D'you have any idea how much it costs to secure the services of the Attorney General?

BOLD
I do not, Sir. But I'm sure any costs can be settled if Mr Harding's lawyer contacts my lawyer.

ARCHDEACON
Let me tell you what my opinion is, Dr Bold. I think that we shall not allow you to withdraw this matter from the courts.

BOLD
You can do as you please, Dr Grantly. Good afternoon...

ARCHDEACON
Hear me out, Sir! I have here in my hands the final opinion on this matter of Sir Abraham Haphazard.

BOLD
I see.

ARCHDEACON

In which he declares most explicitly that you have no leg to stand on, that Mr Harding is as safe in his hospital as I am here in my rectory, that a more futile attempt to destroy a man was never made. That is the opinion of the very first lawyer in the land. And you expect me to bow before you when you graciously offer to stop torturing that poor old man? I wish you good afternoon, Dr Bold, for I am busy.

BOLD

I came here, Dr Grantly, with the kindest feelings, and they have been grossly outraged by your treatment!

ARCHDEACON

I have chosen not to let my father-in-law be ruined! What an outrage to your feelings!

BOLD

The time will come, Dr Grantly, when you will understand why I called upon you today.

ACT 2, SCENE 12

MRS BAXTER

I like to get to the hospital early, before anyone's stirring, so I can make Mr Harding his breakfast. But as I'm opening the garden gate this bright Barchester morning...

HARDING

Oh, Mrs Baxter, I am sorry.

MRS BAXTER

Nearly knocked me off my feet there, Mr Harding.

HARDING

I'll not be needing breakfast, Mrs

Baxter.

MRS BAXTER

Are you alright, Mr Harding? I've
been worried about you.

ELEANOR

(calling and running up
from the house)
Papa! Papa! Where are you going?
It's barely dawn.

HARDING

I didn't mean to wake you, Nelly.

MRS BAXTER

I'll go and get the breakfast on,
Sir.

SHE LEAVES

ELEANOR

Thank you, Mrs Baxter.

HARDING

I must hurry, Nelly. I have a train
to catch.

ELEANOR

Why didn't you say? Where are you
going?

HARDING

I've been awake all night, my dear,
thinking and praying. And I've
decided upon a course of action.

ELEANOR

Oh Papa, do be careful.

ACT 3, SCENE 1

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Mr Harding isn't the only soul
heading for London this morning
with his mind full of Barchester.
Picture if you will a train on its
way from the north, and a very self-important
little man sitting on it
as he does each day, reading his
copy of The Jupiter.

TRAIN GUARD
All tickets please? Sir! Sir!

TOM TOWERS
Alright, alright. Can't you see I'm
reading.

TRAIN GUARD
Only doing my job, Sir.

TOM TOWERS
Yes, well I'm trying to do mine.

MRS BAXTER
And he is. Because as one of the
staff writers on The Jupiter, it is
no doubt part of Tom Towers' job to
read his own stories on his way
into the office, and to smile down
from Mount Olympus at the poor folk
who have to suffer his
thunderbolts.

TRAIN COMES TO A HALT IN STATION

TRAIN GUARD
All change, please. This is the end
of the line.

EVERYONE GETS UP TO LEAVE, EXCEPT TOWERS.

TRAIN GUARD (CONT'D)
.... And you, Sir. All change,
please.

TOM TOWERS
(*muttering to himself*)
You're a pocket tyrant, aren't you?

MRS BAXTER
And this morning's Jupiter gives Mr
Towers more than his usual share of
delight, because his campaign to
bring down poor Mr Harding is on pages, 2, 3...

ACT 3, SCENE 2
INT. TOM TOWERS' OFFICE. SOUND OF NEWSROOM BEHIND HIM.
TOM TOWERS
...4 and 5. Four pages of detailed

argument. My dear Bold, this is
catching fire! On my train this
morning, everyone was reading it!
Everyone!

BOLD
That's what I've come to discuss,
Tom.

TOM TOWERS
I mean, the power of it! This paper
in my hands can change the world!

HE BRANDISHES THE NEWSPAPER
Who would have dreamt twenty years
ago that the sword of justice would
be made of paper!

BOLD
I want to ask you to oblige me in
an important matter, Tom.

TOM TOWERS
Well, fire away, John. Keep me
nourished. We make a fine team.
What else can you give me?

BOLD
I've abandoned the lawsuit.

TOM TOWERS
(disinterested)
Oh yes.

BOLD
Yes, I've given it up. I needn't
trouble you with all the history;
but the fact is that the conduct of
Mr Harding - Mr Harding is the...

TOM TOWERS
...He's the man who takes all the
money and does nothing...

BOLD
...his conduct in this matter has
been so unselfish, so open, so
excellent that I cannot proceed
with this lawsuit to his detriment.

TOM TOWERS

It will cost you a fortune in legal fees.

BOLD

A few hundred, yes. Perhaps three. I can't help that, and I'm prepared for it.

TOM TOWERS

How refreshing to hear a man talking about three hundred pounds in such indifferent terms. But I'm sorry you're giving up the case. It injures a man to take up a cause and not carry it through.

But you've lit a fire, that's the important thing. You'll have seen a copy of 'The Almshouse?'

BOLD

'The Almshouse'? No.

TOM TOWERS

(rooting around looking for a copy)

I have it somewhere...

BOLD

Is this the writer with the foolish pen name? I've read about it.

TOM TOWERS

Mr Popular Sentiment's new novel. Here it is. Now, borrow it. Read it. Though I suspect you'll be familiar with most of it already.

BOLD

I don't read novels.

TOM TOWERS

It's a direct attack on the whole corrupt edifice, and I have great expectations it will bring down the church in Rochester, Dulwich, St Cross, but especially in Barchester.

BOLD

Oh no.

TOM TOWERS

Oh yes. It's clear from reading it that Sentiment has been down to Barchester and got the whole story there. Indeed, I thought he must have heard it all from you.

BOLD

I've never met the man. I told him nothing.

TOM TOWERS

The fire has gone too far to be quenched now. The building must go. The timbers are all rotten. You are on the verge of a great victory.

BOLD

I could not continue, because I found I was in the wrong.

TOM TOWERS

Well, I disagree. But if that's what your conscience tells you, of course you must abandon it.

BOLD

And I came here this morning to ask you to abandon it too.

TOM TOWERS

(laughs)

To ask me? But you were the one who brought this to the Jupiter!

BOLD

Yes. The Jupiter has taken this matter up very strongly, and Mr Harding has felt it very deeply.

And I thought that if I could explain to you that he personally has been blameless, these articles might be discontinued.

TOM TOWERS

My dear fellow. I cannot answer for the Jupiter.

BOLD

But if you saw that these articles

were unjust, I have no doubt you
could put a stop to them.

TOM TOWERS
No, I cannot.

BOLD
Come on, Towers. I have no doubt
that you wrote those articles
yourself, and very well written
they were. It would be a great
favour if you will in future
abstain from any personal allusion
to poor Mr Harding.

TOM TOWERS
My dear Bold. Let me explain. None
who are connected with the public
press can listen to any outside
interference.

BOLD
Interference! I don't want to
interfere.

TOM TOWERS
Ah, but you do. What else is this?
Surely your sister has explained
the importance of the freedom of
the press to you?

BOLD
Mary?

TOM TOWERS
Indeed, our star columnist
Zecharia.

BOLD
I think you'll find a letter on its
way to you, resigning her column.

TOM TOWERS
(indifferent)
Oh well, that's a shame.

BOLD
She's been shocked by the tone of
these stories about Mr Harding.

TOM TOWERS

So, you have come here to try to
stop certain remarks appearing in a
public newspaper.

BOLD

Well, I suppose so...

TOM TOWERS

And suppose for a moment that I had
this power, and used it to change
the Jupiter's cause as you wish?
Wouldn't that be a most terrible
abuse? The public is defrauded if
private motives influence the
public press. The Jupiter must make
a stand!

ACT 3, SCENE 3

B/G SOUND OF MR HARDING WALKING THROUGH BUSY LONDON STREETS,
WITH NEWSPAPER VENDORS CALLING 'JUPITER' AS HE PASSES.

61.

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

The Jupiter is making its stand on
every street corner as poor Mr
Harding bustles his way to the
Chapter Hotel near St Paul's
Cathedral, the London hotel of
choice for every churchman. He
drops off his bags and checks that
a certain Archdeacon Grantly has
not yet checked in. For all his
holiness, Mr Harding is no
innocent. He knows he ca't
resign his post without talking to
the Archdeacon, but he doesn't
relish that encounter. So, he's
written a letter...

HARDING

(v/o)

My dear Dr Grantly, it is with
great regret and after much
consideration that I...

MRS BAXTER

(v/o))

...And he sent it to Plumstead
Episcopi just before he caught his
train...

HARDING

(v/o)

...have decided to set this matter
to rest in the only way my
conscience will allow...

MRS BAXTER

(v/o))

...in the sure knowledge that it
would set the Archdeacon on a mercy
mission to London...

ARCHDEACON

What!? What!? What!? In the name of
all that is good!

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

... to try to stop the Warden
ruining his campaign to save the
church...

ARCHDEACON

On the very brink of victory!

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

So having ascertained that his son-in-
law has not arrived in London,
and reminded himself that -
formidable though he is - not even
the Archdeacon can alter the train
timetables, Mr Harding knows he has
until early evening to fulfil his
mission.

HARDING

(*to House of Commons
policeman*)

Officer, I am here on clergy
business.

POLICEMAN

I'm afraid no-one can enter the
Houses of Parliament without a
formal letter, Sir.

HARDING

(*rooting in his pocket*)

Sir Abraham Haphazard is acting on
my behalf at the moment, and I have

a letter here...

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

It would be with some excitement
that Mr Harding made his first
visit to the Houses of Parliament,
were it not on such a grave
mission.

POLICEMAN

I'm afraid that even your letter
won't get you in to meet Sir
Abraham until this evening, Sir. He
cannot be interrupted.

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

Only to find Sir Abraham in court
all day.

HARDING

Not until this evening? Well, I
shall have to return then. I have
important business to discuss with
him.

ACT 3, SCENE 4

ARCHDEACON AND SUSAN ON TRAIN.

ARCHDEACON

I'm sorry to have to say this,
Susan, but your Father is behaving
like a selfish and cowardly old
fool!

SUSAN

Calm down, Theophilus. You'll need
a doctor by the time we reach
London.

ARCHDEACON

How can I calm down?

TRAIN GUARD

All tickets please?

SUSAN

Here you are.

TRAIN GUARD

Thank you kindly. Ooh! Man of the cloth are you, Sir? Have you seen the Jupiter this morning?

ARCHDEACON
How dare you!

ACT 3, SCENE 5
SOUND B/G OF BUSY LONDON AFTERNOON - HORSE DRAWN CARRIAGES ON COBBLED STREETS, ETC.

MRS BAXTER
(V/O)
What is an unsettled clergyman to do with an afternoon to himself in London? Mr Harding can't wait for Sir Abraham for five hours at the Houses of Parliament, and he can't go back to the hotel for fear of meeting his son-in-law.

HORSE AND CARRIAGE NEARLY RUNS HIM OVER, AND THE DRIVER CALLS: 'WATCH OUT, YOU IDIOT!'

HARDING
I'm sorry, I'm sorry!

MRS BAXTER
(v/o)
And he doesn't feel himself at all, poor man. He feels that every pair of eyes is on him, that they've all read every bad word in the Jupiter about him. So he staggers down the Strand until he sees a sign for 'Chops and Steaks, Coffee and Cigars'...

HE ENTERS THE COFFEE HOUSE

WAITRESS
Will you be dining, Sir?

HARDING
I think I will, yes, thank you.

WAITRESS
I'll put you in the back room. It's quieter there.

MRS BAXTER
(v/o)

So he slowly eats his chop and potatoes, but the grace he says over his meal is a bit longer than usual.

HARDING

(v/o)

O Lord, I am so sorry to bring your church into such disrepute. Give me the strength to do what is right, for I am full of fears. Can I support dear Nelly on 150 pounds a year? And shall I be a worthy servant of the parishioners of Crabtree Parva? I know that Nelly is in love with Dr Bold and he with her. Help him to see, O Lord, that since his actions have brought this circumstance upon us, he may make haste to marry Nelly and secure her future. O Lord, give me the strength.

ACT 3, SCENE 6

INTERIOR, SIR ABRAHAM HAPHAZARD'S OFFICE, PARLIAMENT.

SIR ABRAHAM

I'm very sorry to have kept you waiting so long, Mr Warden. And sorry for keeping you up at so disagreeable an hour.

HARDING

No, no. Sir Abraham, it is I who should apologise to you for making a claim on your time.

SIR ABRAHAM

Nonsense, nonsense. It's a pleasure to meet the man behind such an interesting case.

HARDING

Yes, Sir Abraham. About the case...

SIR ABRAHAM

... And I'm pleased to say, Mr Warden, that all our trouble about this lawsuit has come to an end. Of course they must pay all the costs, so the remaining expense to you and

Dr Grantly will be trifling.

HARDING

I fear I don't quite understand
you, Sir Abraham.

SIR ABRAHAM

Don't you know that their attorneys
have withdrawn the suit?

HARDING

I had heard something, but I'm
afraid that doesn't take away the
crucial problem.

SIR ABRAHAM

What 'crucial problem', Sir?

HARDING

That the affairs of Hiram's
Hospital are not arranged according
to the will of its founder.

SIR ABRAHAM

(laughs dismissively)

None of such institutions are, Mr
Harding, nor can they be. The
altered circumstances in which we
live do not admit to it.

HARDING

Do those circumstances give me the
right to eight hundred a year? Sir
Abraham, what I want you to tell me
is this - am I, as Warden, legally
entitled to all the proceeds of the
property, after the due maintenance
of the twelve bedesmen?

SIR ABRAHAM

Well, 'legally entitled' is not the
most apposite way of framing such a
question...

HARDING

Am I entitled, Sir Abraham?

SIR ABRAHAM

All I need to tell you, Mr Harding,
is that it would be madness to
raise any further question on this

matter. The suit has been
abandoned, and all will continue as
before.

HARDING
May I sit down?

SIR ABRAHAM
Well, of course, of course! Forgive me
pacing. I cannot sit down until my
day's work is done.

PAUSE

SIR ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
Are you quite well, Sir? What are
you doing with your hands?

HARDING
Oh, yes. I'm quite alright. I'm a
cellist, you see.

SIR ABRAHAM
But you have no cello.

HARDING
I find it gives me solace, helps me
to think.

SIR ABRAHAM
There is nothing to think about, Mr
Harding. You have no power to raise
a legal suit when the other party
has withdrawn.

HARDING
I can resign as Warden.

SIR ABRAHAM
What! Throw it up altogether?

HARDING
Did you see those articles in the
Jupiter?

SIR ABRAHAM
Of course I heard about them. My
time is too precious to read such
nonsense.

HARDING

Well, I read them all.

SIR ABRAHAM

Hadn't you better wait till Dr
Grantly is in town with you, before
you take such a serious step?

HARDING

I cannot wait.

SIR ABRAHAM

Unless of course, you have private
means sufficient for your wants, so
resignation would not injure you.

HARDING

Oh no, I haven't a sixpence.

SIR ABRAHAM

God bless me! Then how do you mean
to live?

HARDING

There is a small living available
in the church of Crabtree Parva...

SIR ABRAHAM

I really think, Mr Harding, that
you must wait for the Archdeacon.

There is not the slightest
necessity to resign. You have come
here to ask my advice, and my
advice is that a man is never the
best judge of his own position.

HARDING

A man is the best judge of what he
feels himself. I'd sooner beg for
bread than read another article
like those in the Jupiter.

SIR ABRAHAM

Nonsense!

HARDING

Especially if you feel, as I do,
that the Jupiter writer has truth
on his side.

SIR ABRAHAM

Sir, I believe you have an

unmarried daughter.

HARDING

I do.

SIR ABRAHAM

Then pray, how can you put your
young daughter in the way of such
financial peril?

HARDING

My God knows how much I love my
daughter. But I would sooner that
we should both beg than live in
comfort on money which is truly the
property of the poor.

SIR ABRAHAM

Mr Harding...

HARDING

...I cannot boast of my conscience,
Sir, when it required the violence
of a public newspaper to awaken it.
But now it is awake, I must obey
it.

ACT 3, SCENE 7

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

After a day like that, a man needs
to clear his head, so Mr Harding
walks back to St Paul's Chapter
House Hotel. When he arrives it's
gone midnight, but he isn't the
only soul awake. Oh no...

SUSAN

Papa! I thought you were never
coming back! I've been so worried.

HARDING

I'm afraid the attorney general
could only meet me at the end of
his day, Susan. Great men have
their way.

ARCHDEACON

And what, pray, were you doing with
the Attorney General? You do

realise it is not customary for
clients to go direct to their
counsel?

HARDING
Isn't it? Well, at any rate, I've
done it.

ARCHDEACON
O good heavens!

SUSAN
And Papa, what did you say to Sir
Abraham?

HARDING
I asked him to explain John Hiram's
will to me. He couldn't explain it
in the only way that would have
satisfied me, so I resigned the
wardenship.

ARCHDEACON
Resigned it! Resigned it!

HARDING
At least I told him that I would
resign, so of course I must do so
now.

ARCHDEACON
Not at all. Nothing you said to Sir
Abraham can in any way bind you.
And I'm sure he didn't advise such
a step.

HARDING
He did not.

ARCHDEACON
In fact, I'm sure he must have
advised you to consult your
friends.

HARDING
He did.

ARCHDEACON
Then your threat of resignation
amounts to nothing, and we are just
where we were before.

HARDING

You must be very tired, Susan.
Wouldn't you like to go to bed?

SUSAN

I shall go when you go, Papa.

ARCHDEACON

Why did you leave Barchester so
suddenly this morning, without
giving us any notice?

HARDING

I'm afraid I've had a very tiring
day, and I really can't think any
longer. I should go to bed.

ARCHDEACON

At least promise me to take no
further step without consultation.

HARDING

*(gets up to light a
candle)*

I must get a candle for the stairs.

SUSAN

It would be madness to throw
in your preferment. What will you
live on?

HARDING

I have in mind the small living as
vicar of Crabtree Parva.

ARCHDEACON

You can't live on that!

HARDING

It will be humble, but honest!

ARCHDEACON

It's pitiful! It's not a living at
all, unless it's combined with
other jobs.

HARDING

Then I shall find other jobs.

ARCHDEACON

How do you propose to pay the fees
outstanding to Sir Abraham, without
a proper income?

HARDING

He said it would be trifling.

ARCHDEACON

Trifling to him, yes! But not to
us!

HARDING

Well, I shall have to sell my
furniture. It is all I have to
sell.

SUSAN

Think of Eleanor, Papa.

ARCHDEACON

I do think of Nelly. Of course.

SUSAN

How will she live?

HARDING

God that feeds the young ravens,
will take care of us also.

ARCHDEACON

(enraged)

Pish! If the ravens persisted in
refusing the food prepared for
them, they wouldn't be fed at all!

ACT 3, SCENE 8

MRS BAXTER

Now. Lest you were scandalised by
Dr Grantly shouting at a tired old
man, it must be said that he has
his father-in-law's best interests
at heart. He's just got a strange
way of showing it. But I'm worried
too. How can an elderly gentleman
and his daughter live on a pittance
in Crabtree Parva? They'll be
ruined. They won't be able to pay
for a housekeeper, so the diocese
will send me to some God-forsaken
vicarage out of town. Nobody wants

to lose them. So Dr and Mrs Grantly
sleep fitfully and waken very
early, keen to be in the breakfast
room before Mr Harding comes down.

SOUNDS OF BREAKFAST ROOM.

ARCHDEACON

(hushed)

He can't resign in any case. The
Bishop won't allow it.

SUSAN

(hushed)

I'm as anxious as you are,
Theophilus, but please try to be
patient with him.

ARCHDEACON

(hushed)

Your father is like a child! To
throw up the hospital living
because some scoundrel scribbles in
a newspaper!

SUSAN

Please leave this to me.

ARCHDEACON

I must be at the House at 8.30, So
I'll have to leave it to you.

SUSAN

Good.

WARDEN ENTERS THE ROOM.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Good Morning, Papa! Please join us. The tea is
still hot.

HARDING

Then I shall. Thank you, my dear.

SHE POURS HIS TEA.

SUSAN

And would you like some bacon?

HARDING

I shall sip my tea first, while I

wake up.

SUSAN

I thought we might spend some time
together today, Papa. Perhaps we
could walk to Hyde Park?

HARDING

I must catch the one o'clock train
home, my dear.

SUSAN

We go back on the four o'clock
train, will you not wait and travel
with us?

HARDING

Eleanor will expect me back sooner,
and I've so much to do.

ARCHDEACON

(under his breath)
So much to do!

SUSAN

I suppose you won't be done with
your meetings by one, Theophilus?

ARCHDEACON

I very much doubt it. I have 'so
much to do'.

SUSAN

Then I suggest you go and start
doing it, Theophilus, and leave me
to talk to Papa.

ARCHDEACON

Very well.

GETTING UP TO LEAVE

ARCHDEACON (CONT'D)

I shall see you in Barchester,
Warden.

HARDING

I'm sure you will.

ARCHDEACON

And I beseech you to take no

further steps without speaking to
the bishop. If you owe me nothing,
at least you owe that to my father.
Good Day.

HE LEAVES

SUSAN
Papa, this is a most serious
business.

HARDING
Indeed it is.

HE RINGS A BELL FOR SERVICE.

HARDING (CONT'D)
Waiter, please could you bring me
pen, ink and paper? Thank you.

SUSAN
Are you going to write, Papa?

HARDING
Yes, my dear. I'm going to write my
letter of resignation to the
Bishop.

SUSAN
Pray, pray Papa, please put it off
until our return, until you've
spoken to the Bishop.

HARDING
If I wait until I return to
Barchester, I might, perhaps, be
prevented.

SUSAN
But for my sake, for Eleanor's...

HARDING
It is for your sake and Eleanor's
that I do this. I hope, at least,
that my children may never have to
be ashamed of their father.

ACT 3, SCENE 9

MRS BAXTER
(v/o)

So in front of his loving daughter,
Susan, and amid the cluttered cups
and plates of the breakfast table,
the Warden writes a letter to his
old friend.

HARDING

(v/o)

My Lord Bishop, It is with the
greatest pain that I feel myself
constrained to resign into your
Lordship's hands the wardenship of
the hospital at Barchester, which
you so kindly conferred upon me. I
need not explain the circumstances
which have made this step appear
necessary to me....

MRS BAXTER

(v/o)

I say he writes his letter to the
Bishop, but in fact he writes two
letters. One official, and one
personal.

HARDING

(v/o)

My Dear Bishop, I cannot send you
the official letter...

(transitions to BISHOP's voice reading the letter)

BISHOP

...without a

warmer expression of thanks for all
your kindness to me. I know you
will understand, and perhaps pity,
the weakness which has made me
resign from the hospital. I am not
made of calibre strong enough to
withstand public attack. I know,
dear friend, that there is a small
living at Crabtree Parva, and I
hope that you will allow me to
serve as vicar there.

(transitions back to HARDING's voice)

HARDING

Please let me

have a line from you to say that
you forgive me for what I am doing.

I am, now as always, yours most
affectionately, Septimus Harding.

ACT 3, SCENE 10

*TRAIN LEAVING IN BACKGROUND. WARDEN WALKS UP TO ELEANOR, WHO
IS IN A HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE. HE CLIMBS IN.*

HARDING
My dear, how did you know which
train I was on?

ELEANOR
I've been meeting every London
train today, Papa.
(to horse)
Come on. Giddy up!

THE HORSE MOVES, AND THEY SET OFF.

HARDING
I'm sorry, Nelly. I hope I haven't
worried you.

ELEANOR
All that matters is to have you
back. You have not been yourself
these recent weeks, Papa.

HARDING
I am at peace now, Nelly. As long
as you can still respect me when
I'm the vicar of little Crabtree
Parva?

ELEANOR
Of course! I'm just glad you're at
peace.

HARDING
I hope this hasn't shaken your
affection for Dr Bold, Nelly. He is
a good man, and he loves you.

ELEANOR
I know that, Papa. I know that.

ACT 3, SCENE 11

INT GRANTLY BEDROOM EVENING. ARCHDEACON AND SUSAN ARE GETTING
READY FOR BED.

ARCHDEACON
(tetchy)
Where is my nightshirt, dear?

SUSAN
I am not the keeper of your
nightshirt.

ARCHDEACON
I always leave it on the bed so I
can find it.

SUSAN
It would appear that you don't
always do that.

ARCHDEACON
Why are you short-tempered with me?
(finds his nightshirt)
Ah! You see, it was under my
pillow.

SUSAN
(indignant)
Short-tempered? Me? Theophilus, you
have been in a blind fever for
days...

ARCHDEACON
That odious John Bold will see this
as a victory!

SUSAN
... he has abandoned the case.

ARCHDEACON
(he stops, and sits on the
bed)
Are you so innocent, Susan? He only
dropped the case because he wants
to marry your sister!

SUSAN
(annoyed, gets up to
continue dressing)
I knew it! I knew you'd drag
Eleanor into this.

ARCHDEACON

(irritated)

I must say your father is most
imprudent if he allows this
courtship to continue.

SUSAN

He always was imprudent.

ARCHDEACON

Well, if he doesn't take more care,
that John Bold will be off with
Eleanor!

SUSAN

I think he will be, whether papa
takes care or no. And why not?

ARCHDEACON

(furious)

Why not!? Why not!? That pestilent,
interfering upstart! John Bold -
the most vulgar young person I ever
met! Do you want to see him
meddling with our family's affairs?

SUSAN

I don't warm to Dr Bold. He is a
good deal too conceited for me; but
then Eleanor does like him, and it
would be the best thing in the
world for papa if they were to
marry. He longs to see Nelly happy.

ARCHDEACON

Good Heavens, Susan!

ACT 3, SCENE 12

INT HIRAM'S HOSPITAL PARLOUR, EVENING.

ELEANOR

Thank you, Mrs Baxter. It's most
kind of you to stay late.

MRS BAXTER

You just call me if you'd like more
cake, or perhaps a sherry?

ELEANOR

Tea will be perfect, thank you.

MRS BAXTER
Very good, Miss.

MRS BAXTER LEAVES.

ELEANOR
So, Dr Bold. What have we to
discuss?

BOLD
Well, I was hoping I could...

ELEANOR
(interrupting)
Before you start, I wanted to thank
you for all you have done to heal
the harm to my father.

BOLD
I wish I could have stopped it
completely...

ELEANOR
Oh, the Jupiter. I won't have it in
the house now.

BOLD
I cannot read it either, and my
sister has stopped... you know she
wrote a column...

ELEANOR
Yes, Mary told me. I didn't wish
her to suffer for this.

BOLD
She cannot bring herself to write
for them. You know, Eleanor, that I
regret the harm I did to your
father more than anything I have
ever done.

ELEANOR
I know. And he knows it too.

BOLD
I was doing it, I thought, for the
best of motives. I never dreamt...

ELEANOR
You don't have to say all this.

BOLD
I have already said it to your
father.

ELEANOR
And he forgives you. Completely.

BOLD
But do you?

ELEANOR
Of course.

BOLD
I mean, completely?

ELEANOR
I don't know what else I can
say.

BOLD
You could say that you love me even
a fraction as much as I love you,
Eleanor.

ELEANOR
(responding)
Oh, John...

BOLD
I carry you in my heart every
second of every day and every
night. If you cannot return that
love then I will still bear it.
Nothing will ever change that. But
if I dared to hope that you
might...

ELEANOR
I do return it, John.

BOLD
(excited, emotional)
You do?

ELEANOR
I do.

ACT 3, SCENE 13
EXT WARDEN'S GARDEN. EARLY EVENING. THE WARDEN IS ADDRESSING
THE BEDESMEN.

HARDING

Now friends. I wish to drink your
healths before we part company, but
first, a few words. There has
lately, I believe, been some
misunderstanding between us. And as
a result, I have thought it best to
go.

ABEL HANDY

We never wanted to drive your
reverence away!

HARDING

No, Mr Handy. I'm sure you did not
wish to turn me out. This is my
choice. I am not a very good hand
at a lawsuit, as you may guess. And
when it seemed that our quiet life
would be disturbed, I thought it
better to go. I am neither angry
nor offended with any man in the
hospital.

BUNCE

Then you're a holy man, Mr Harding.

HARDING

Oh no, Bunce, I am far from that.
But please forgive me if I offer
some advice. Some gentleman will
take my place here very soon. And I
hope and pray that you will receive
him in a kindly spirit and raise no
further question as to the amount
of his income, for all your wants
and needs are adequately provided
for here.

ABEL HANDY

God bless your reverence, we knows
it now.

BUNCE

Yes, Mr Harding. I believe they do
understand it now, now that they've
driven from under the same roof
with them such a master as not one
of them will ever know again. Now
that they're like to be in sore

want of a friend.

HARDING

(welling up)

Come, come, Mr Bunce. You mustn't
speak so...

ABEL HANDY

We none of us never wanted to do Mr
Harding no harm. If he's going now,
it's not our doing. And I don't see
for why Mr Bunce speaks against us.

BUNCE

Because you've ruined yourselves,
and you've ruined me too! That's
why!

HARDING

Nonsense, Bunce. There's nobody
ruined here. I hope you'll all let
me leave you as friends. I'm sure
you'll have a good friend in your
new warden, and if ever you want
another, I shan't be far away.
Now, please charge your glasses for
a toast.

MURMURS OF GRATITUDE FROM THE BEDESMEN.

MRS BAXTER

But not everyone is reconciled to
this turn of events. Oh no. Over by
the rose bushes, Mr Harding's
daughter Susan is trying to calm
her husband...

ARCHDEACON

(hushed)

It's a disgrace! Your father has
caved in, and we shall all pay the
price.

SUSAN

(hushed)

Keep your voice down, Theophilus.
Is it so terrible? I haven't seen
Papa so glad for weeks.

ARCHDEACON

(hushed)

How can he be glad? He's been
ruined!

MRS BAXTER

...And if the Archdeacon looked a
little florid in the cheek, he'll
turn to beetroot when he hears
this...

HARDING

And I have one more announcement to
make, a very special one. Nelly,
come and stand by my side.

ELEANOR

Oh, Papa. You embarrass me.

HARDING

It is with the very greatest joy
and pride that I can tell you what
Nelly told me last night. That she
and the good Dr John Bold are
engaged to be married.

BUNCE

(shocked)

Well, bless my soul...

ABEL HANDY

To Dr Bold?

HARDING

Now. Please raise your glasses!

SOUND OF CLINKING GLASSES

HARDING (CONT'D)

God bless the Bedesmen of Hiram's
Hospital! May you live contented,
and die trusting in the Lord Jesus
Christ, and thankful to Almighty
God for the good things he has
given you. Cheers!

*THEY ALL DRINK A TOAST, WITH THE BEDESMEN SAYING 'TO MR
HARDING'.*

BUNCE

Mr Harding, please, please play us
something.

HARDING

I cannot impose that on all these
good people. And ruin my daughter's
good news!

ELEANOR

Oh, go on, Papa. I'd love you to
play something.

BUNCE

For me too, Sir. I pray.

MRS BAXTER

Your cello is here, Sir. I thought
it would be a fine way to finish
the party.

HARDING

It seems I have no choice, then.

HE TAKES THE CELLO, AND CALLS OUT TO HIS GUESTS

HARDING (CONT'D)

I apologise to those of a musical
disposition. I am about to play.

*THERE ARE CHEERS AND A RIPPLE OF APPLAUSE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.
THE CELLO MUSIC ENDS THE PLAY, BUT MRS BAXTER - OVER THE
MUSIC - GIVES US HER SIGN-OFF.*

MRS BAXTER

(V/O)

I couldn't live anywhere but
Barsetshire. And who in their sound
mind would wish to? On a summer's
day, at a garden party, with Mr
Harding happy again, it really is a
glimpse of heaven, or the closest
I've seen.