

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 1: Railway Station

(We see a family, mother father grandmother and a little boy. The servants are carrying very large suitcases, and a trunk. Mother is carrying a very young boy).

Father:

He is going to be gone for so long. Poor lad!

Mother:

Richard does need a decent education, dear. He is running wild out here. He is going to Eton and then Oxford and becoming a proper gentleman: the only one in our family.

Father:

But he is so young! I managed very well without a formal education: can't he? Why can't he stay here, in New Zealand with the rest of us?

Gran:

I'm afraid that for once, Son, I agree with your wife

(Father looks shocked)

Gran:

The boy's running wild. Just yesterday he set fire to the neighbour's cat.

Father:

That was an accident

Mother:

He rewired the entire house, so that if you picked up the telephone, you got electrocuted!

Gran:

I don't like new technology much, and that little incident didn't help, any.

Father:

But.....

Mother:

And he keeps disappearing... Oh, where's he gone, now? He was here a few minutes ago.

(Mother spots her son and calls out)

Richard! Where have you been? (Tries to embrace him, when he runs up to her)

Richard (struggling out of her grasp)

Nowhere. Come on! I don't want to be late for the train-love you daddy-love you mummy-love you gran- Bye little brother!!!

(He leaps on the train as it pulls off and everybody waves. Just as the train goes round the bend, a very 'out of breath' man staggers on the platform yelling and brandishing a catapult, angrily, at Richard)

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Man:

I'll get you for that you little brat!

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Scene 2: a train,
(a young girl, and a governess is sitting in the train compartment, looking out of the window.

(A porter comes in)
Silverville stop miss

Dawson:
Thankyou. Come child.

Porter:
Trust you had a pleasant journey miss

Dawson:
Well it was a pleasant one, except that people keep attempting to make conversation

Porter:
Um sorry miss. I'll take you bags shall I?

Dawson:
Are you a porter? Come on Alice, let's get you to the house.

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Scene 3: Hallway of a comfortable house

(There is a knocking on the front door. The servant hurries forwards and opens it. The governess and the ward are standing in the doorway).

Mother (she is looking a tiny bit older) (walking through into the hallway)
Who is it Jenny?

Jenny:
It's the governess home with the new ward Ma'am

Mother:
Thank you. Good morning Miss Dawson, and Alice, too. Welcome to Creedy House. I am Mrs O'Leary. I trust your journey From London wasn't too strenuous?

Dawson:
I was tolerable thankyou mam. Although the sea voyage was a little trying

Alice:
Thank you Mrs O'Leary. I'm sorry for all of the trouble.

Mother:
It's no trouble at all, my child. We're delighted to have you as our ward. Jenny, show Alice and her governess upstairs, make sure they are comfortable. It's a very long way from London: all the way to New Zealand, they must be positively exhaustive.

Jenny:
Follow me mam

(They traipse off)

Grandmother:
Is that that little girl, then?

Mother:
Yes indeed. Such a mousy little thing. I thought that coming from London she'd have the airs and graces of a fine young miss.
Gran:

Ooh: she is a fine young lady, though. We'll be beating off the young men with chairs.

Mother:
Mother!

Gran:
I'm not your mother, if I was, I would be too ashamed to show my face in public.

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Scene 4: (time lapse with a fast paced piano music, and a golden tint)

Young Alice settling in. And growing up

She is introduced to Father, and they hit off, she is going long walks with granny

This is where she grows up. She is playing hide and seek with her young female friends and young Timothy. They are running in and out from behind trees, in the garden. As they duck in and out they change and get older this happens three times. Until they become the age they are now.

Alice:

(Collapsing on the ground out of breath)

That is it! I am done! You win Dilly

Dilly:

(Laughs)

You now owe me that beautiful pink ribbon.

Timothy:

Well it will suit you better than I, I suppose.

Dilly:

And what, pray sir, would you do with a pink ribbon?

Timothy:

Wear it gaily.

Alice:

I think you would look charming, wearing it.

Dilly:

Well you can't have it. I'm wearing it, on my new hat

Alice:

For tea!

Dilly:

What?

Timothy:

(Giggles)

Oh dear cousin Alice you have confused her again.

(The maid comes running)

Jenny:

Miss Alice! Miss Alice! Where are you miss?

Alice:

Here Jenny, what is it?

Jenny:

(Out of breath)

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The mistress wants me to inform you that a Mr Fitzgerald is visiting.

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Scene 5: Living room

(Alice is sitting dressed nicely opposite a rather boring young man in black and grey. There is complete silence. The young man is looking pleased with himself, but a little shy. Mother is looking happy and Alice is trying not to look bored).

Mother:

Dear Mr. Fitzgerald you are so amusing with your tales, tell us another one

Herbert (pretending reluctance)

Well.....

Gran:

I hear one more of those awful dull tales, I'll stab me own eyes out wi' a fork. That's if I don't just turn up my toes and die now, anyway.

Mother:

Mother in law, do not insult our guest, please.

Herbert:

I do understand. I have, perhaps, overstayed a little. Thank you for everything Mrs Fitzgeralds: senior and junior. Goodbye Miss Dearheart. I hope to see you again, soon.

(He leaves)

Mother:

Grandmother. How dare you! See what you have done?

Gran:

Saved Alice from anymore boredom?

Mother:

Do you know how hard I worked to get him to come? He is very shy. It took ages.

Gran:

Why are you so interested in this boring young man, then, egh?

Mother:

Because his family is the oldest in the district and he is a very eligible bachelor..... Alice is going to marry him

Gran:

What him? Poor Alice! Oh well I'm off, I can't stand here match making all day. If you like him so much. Why don't you marry him? Anyway, when is Richard coming back from England?

Mother:

Next week, now, mother.

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Scene 6: Alice's friend's drawing room.

(Alice is sitting with a girl friend of hers, sewing)

Alice:

Do you remember Richard, Dilly?

Dilly:

I remember him vaguely. He was always dirty...covered in spots. He used to fire pine cones at the adults and was always pulling our hair. A horrid boy.

Alice:

But that was eight years ago. Perhaps he has changed.

Dilly:

Doubt it. He's probably less spotty, but I doubt his behaviour has changed...

(Dilly looks out of the window and promptly has a mini silent panic attack, Alice carries on not noticing)

Alice:

His behaviour must have changed in some ways. He has been mixing with the high society in London and Oxford, in England. Some of it must have rubbed off on him, don't you think Dilly? (Turns to Dilly, at the window) Dilly? Are you alright?

Dilly: (turning her face half back into the room)

Um do you remember when I said that he might have slightly less spots?

Alice:

Yes?

Dilly:

Well that was a bit of an understatement...

(Alice turns around to the window and both girls gawp at a handsome stranger as he walks past)

Alice:

How do you know it is him?

Dilly:

Well who else in Silverville do you know who is a- new b- wears an Eton tie and c - dresses so smart?

Alice:

But it can't be him, he doesn't look anything like Mr and Mrs O'Leary...

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Scene 7: Garden of the O'Leary's house

(Richard is walking up the garden path, Lulu, his little sister, runs into him)

Lulu:
Umph!

Ms Dawson (Governess):
Lulu! Watch where you are going! What do you say to the nice gentleman?

Lulu:
'Scuse me sir- sorry to bother you sir- but can you shift sir?

Dawson:
Lulu! That is very rude say sorry to Mister...?

Richard:
O'Leary, Richard O'Leary.

Lulu:
Heh:that's a coincidence, my big brother is called Richard O'Leary, and he's coming back today.

Richard:
Well if this is my house, and I am called Richard O'Leary then I probably am your big brother. You are Lucie I presume? And you are?

Dawson:
Ms Dawson. I am Lulu's governess. Pleased to meet you sir

Richard:
Pleased to meet you Ms Dawson. Now, if you will excuse me, I need to hail mi' venerable parents.

Ms Dawson:
We will come with you: Lulu!? (holds out her hand to Lulu)

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Scene 8: Parlour

Alice, Mother and Fitzgerald, are all sitting in silence and Richard suddenly bursts in, and grabs Fitzgerald and kisses him thoroughly on both cheeks.

Richard:

Brother! Long time no see! (Holds him out at arm's length and scrutinizes him) Why you have suddenly become terribly drab all of a sudden and really almost, sort of "grown up"!! Well, you must let me fix that!

(Richard bounds over to Alice, kisses her on both cheeks and holds her out for scrutiny, as well)

Mother! How I have missed you! Still as charming, and as young as ever. (Looks closely) come to think of it you are even younger then when I left. Same as you Grandmother (looking at Mother). (Looks at grandmother) although father has changed the most. Have you found the fountain of eternal youth, without telling me?

Mother:

Richard! Don't be silly! Put Alice down, and apologize to Mr Fitzgerald, immediately!

Richard:

Alice? Mr Fitzgerald? I thought that there was something wrong. I do apologize, my dear. I see now that to mistake you as my mother is possibly the gravest insult I could give to a lady as pretty was you. But Mr Fitzgerald, that offer on clothing advice still stands, although you're not my brother.

Fitzgerald:

Um, thankyou... If you will excuse me Mrs O'Leary, I must be going, my Mother is waiting for me. Thankyou, goodbye.
(Leaves)

Richard: (speaking over Fitzgerald's thank you's)

So, you're young Alice, egh?

Mother:

Richard! How dare you insult our guest! I hoped that a while at Eaton and Oxford would have cured you of your bad manners, but I see that all it has done is made you better at being rude.

Richard:

Rude! Dear Mother I was not being rude. In fact I offered to help the poor man, so that at least then he would have a chance in the 'matches of love' (pretend sigh and waggles eyebrows). Although, I doubt that someone as charming as this young lady, would consider a bore like him.

(Alice tries not to laugh, behind her hand)

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Mother:

Alice is your sister and...

Richard:

Uh....last time I checked, the only sister I had was about ten and was called Lucie, and this charming maiden is most definitely not ten years old

Mother:

You will not marry or flirt with Alice, she has been brought up to think of you as a brother, and it would be against her morals to even think of you as anything but a brother. Isn't that right Alice? You are the eldest son, Richard, and our hope for the future. You need to marry a rich, or well established young lady. Not young Alice here, charming as she is.

(Awkward silence):

Mother:

Now that that is clear, I want you to find the rest of the family and say hello to them.

(Alice goes to leave)

Mother:

No Alice you stay in here with me

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Scene 9: Hallway

(Richard is wandering around the house trying to find family members. He keeps walking into the governess: kitchen doorway; hallway, coming out of his bedroom)

Richard:

O I do beg pardon again Madam. We really do seem to keep to keep meeting each other.

Governess:

(*Giggles*)

It must mean something, Sir.

(Richard walks out into the Study and meets his father).

Richard:

Doctor Livingstone I presume?

Father:

Hello young man, who are you?

Richard:

If you are Dr Livingstone, eerrr, sorry Mr O'Leary, then you are my father.

Father:

Gets up Son! I'm sorry for not recognizing you. You have come early. I thought that you did look familiar. My, you've got big! You're taller than your old man. Have you met your mother and Lulu, and our ward, Alice? I was in the war wi' 'er dad, you know.

Richard:

Yes I have.....

Father:

Aye, she's a poor girl to marry such a boring suitor. He's a good boy I'm sure, but not spark of 'go' in him. I think that you should try for her, ma boy!

Richard:

Mother doesn't think so, Father.

Father:

Never mind her. Come on! Let's find your brother and some o' rest o' family.

(They wander off arm in arm. They go to the back garden where they find Timothy sketching a maid).

Father:

Timothy my boy! Your brother is back from Cambridge!

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Timothy:

Welcome back brother!

Richard:

Thanks, Timmy. Still painting? You must be a very good artist, by now!

Timothy:

I specialise in 'still life' and was trying to sketch that herbaceous border when Lettie decided to take up sun bathing and block the view. But I did not want to disturb her, So I'm afraid that I'm having to do the middle bit from memory.

(Lettie gasps and storm off. Richard convulses: trying not to laugh)

Timothy:

What got into her?

Richard:

I suspect that the posing for an hour for nothing was a bit irksome.

Timothy:

If she wanted me to draw her she could have just asked.

Father:

Ahhh: the innocence of youth. Come let's go and find little Lulu.

Richard:

I've met her, already, but ever since then, her governess keeps bumping into me

Timothy:

Yes she does that, but ever since I told her I like pink ribbons, I have difficulties even finding her

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Scene 10: Dining Room

(The whole family is sitting around the dinner table).

Father:

You know what? I think that it would be fitting to have some sort of celebration with you coming home and all, Richard!

Gran:

Aye: that's right, Son. I could do wi' a knees up!

Mother:

I don't see why a good game of whist with the Fitzgeralds would do any harm..

Gran:

Ha! Trust her to choose the most boring of families in the village to play the most boring of games with. You could at least play poker.

Mother:

Gambling is uncivilized.

Gran:

How would you know?

Richard:

How about a ball?

Timothy:

Well that does sound more fun than whist, but...

Alice:

I would like to go to a ball. I've only been to one. That was when Ms Woodhouse got married, and I was only seven.

Gran:

Well that's awful. A young girl who has only been to one ball? That's decided. Son, we are having a ball.

Mother:

But...

Gran:

Ball! We are having one! No butss!

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Scene 11: Ball night

We see the family getting dressed with the aid of servants:

Father is standing distractedly while the butler puts out his clothes, insisting about certain items

Mother is ordering two tired looking maids about

Grandmother and another maid are having a laugh over tightening her corset

Timothy and his young servant are fussing over which waistcoat in a rather overly involved way

Richard is matching cravats to his waistcoat, while waltzing around the room

Alice is wriggling and having her hair done by a giggling maid

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Scene 12: Ballroom

(Alice does not have a partner, and is sitting alone, so Richard approaches her)

Richard:

Would Miss Alice kindly accept this dance with her humble Neighbour?

(Alice goes to answer but....)

Mother:

No! (Mother leans over) Alice is not dancing tonight. She is not very well.

(Alice gives a sad smile and Richard is put off. Later in that evening we see Alice dancing with Fitzgerald).

Richard:

(To Timothy)

Look! It's Alice and she IS dancing. I thought mother said that she wasn't dancing tonight on account of not feeling well

Timothy:

Apparently, that is what her Mother said to all of the chaps.

Richard:

She obviously didn't say it to Fitzgerald!

Timothy

Now brother, it's women's business. Though she is not our actual sister, you should come to think of her as one.

Richard:

She is not my sister! She is the daughter of father's friend, who happens to live with us. It's like saying that I must think of Fitzgerald as my brother because he seems to live with us!

Timothy:

Well, if this carries on, he will be a sort of relative.

Richard:

(Shivers)bleurhg! I do not want such a creature to be part of my family! (Notices he has been too loud, and nods at his neighbor who is staring at him) Oh, Good day, Mr. Wilson.....(turns back to Timothy and hisses) He's so boring! Anything you can do to dissuade Mother?

Timothy:

Brother, you've only known Alice for six days! Anyway, Fitzgerald may be poor-ish, but he is part of a very old and well established family, here, in Silverville.

Richard:

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He is both boring AND poor. He would be living off Alice in both riches and humour. He would drain her, She would end up being like his mother over there

Timothy:

(Looking at Mrs. Fitzgerald, a sour-looking, frowzy woman)) God Forbid! Look the dance has finished. You try and get a dance with her, now, and I will try and distract Fitzgerald so that he doesn't get chance to ask her

Richard:

You know: for a country bumpkin of a brother, you are pretty wiley, you know!

Timothy:

Thank YOU...Go ON.....

(Richard hurries over to Alice, and Timothy goes to talk to Fitzgerald)

Richard:

Alice, I see that you are better! May I perhaps have the honour of the next dance?

Alice:

(Looking rather pained)

I'm afraid not Richard, Mr Fitzgerald has booked all of my dances

Richard:

All!?

Mother (suddenly appearing from, behind Alice)

Yes: "all". He is such a charming young man and such a good dancer too.

Richard:

Well why don't YOU dance with him mother, and let Alice dance with another partner for a change?

Mother:

I can't dear. He has asked her. And besides, Alice likes it.... don't you Alice?

Alice:

(Embarrassed and meek)

Yes Mother.

Mother:

Ah! The next dance. Off you go to Fitzgerald, now dear. (Turns to Richard and whispers furiously) and as for you Richard, I warned you about messing with Alice's wedding plans!

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Scene 13: Ballroom (later on)

(Richard is sitting on a chair, drinking. He is joined by his grandmother who is a bit out of breath from dancing, fanning herself and not too discretely tugging at her corset)).

Richard:

Curse all women..... ..Oh, your presence excepted, Gran.

Gran:

Ooh! Where did THAT come from? Aren't there enough good looking ladies in this room trying to get your attention to satisfy you, then?

Richard:

Yes, but the only one of note is dancing with that bore of a lawyer. She doesn't even look at me.

Gran:

Well, why don't you.....

Richard:

And he can't even dance

Gran:

.W.....

Richard:

Sorry. Do continue, Gran

Gran:

As I was SAYIN'..... before being interrupted: you should show off your social processes (sic) to young Alice, then she thinks that yer someink other than an affected windbag!

Richard:

If it were not for your advanced years and being a member of the opposite gender, Gran, I would slap you with a glove. 'Affected windbag' indeed. I'll show you how well an affected windbag can dance and sing!Right! Now..... to find a pretty one...(looks around ballroom)

Gran:

I'll introduce you to a pretty one. She's reet (sic) dim, and will laugh at anything. Come along young windbag

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(Richard is introduced to another young woman and they dance. We see them dancing the night away and Alice is often caught watching them. Richard dances with all of the women in the room).

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Scene 14: Street scene

(Alice walks down to Dillie's house and is let in).

Dilly:

Alice! Have you come here to tell us what Mr O'Leary is like?

Alice:

Well..... he is an old man who has grey hair and....

Dilly:

No, silly! We mean Richard O'Leary!

Girl no 1:

Yes! You must tell us! (all agog)

Alice:

Didn't you dance with him last night?

Girl no 2:

Yes, but we want to know what he's really like? Is he actually that witty, and sweet?

Dilly:

He said he liked my hair.

Girl no 1:

Did you see him dancing with Charlotte, the miller's daughter?

Dilly:

Yes, apparently she got sent a bouquet of flowers!

Girl no 2:

Oooh! I heard that her father is thinking about her dowry

Alice:

I'm pretty sure that ...

Girl no 1:

Are his eyes actually that dreamy? Or was it just me?

Alice:

Well, ladies, (in a pet) it was very nice talking with you. I'm afraid that I've got to run some errands...er, goodbye! (picks up bag and parasol)

Dilly:

See you soon. We'll drop by: VERY soon....

Girl no 2:

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...to see Mr O'Leary... (They all collapse in giggles as Alice leaves the room)

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Scene 15: By the river (or a park)

(Alice is walking on her own and is met by Richard)

Richard:
Mind if I join you?

Alice (feeling guilty and trying not to be encouraging)
If you feel you have to.

(There is an awkward silence then both try and speak at the same time)

Richard:
I..

Alice:
Did...

Richard:
You go

Alice:
Did you really send a giant bouquet of flowers to the millers daughter?

Richard:
Who's she?

Alice:
Thought so. You don't remember any girl you meet. They are just toys to you. Do you know how excited my friends are about you? They all think you love them individually.

Richard:
Not my fault is it? I just danced and made conversation. It's not my fault that they have never met a gentleman, before.

Alice:
Gentleman?! Ha! Fitzgerald is a better gentleman than you.

Richard:
Fitzgerald?! Excuse me, but he is nothing but a boring clerk, who has too much mauvaise honte for conversation and dances like a blacksmith!

Alice:
Well at least he is not a cheat, who enjoys making women's life a misery!

Richard:
Well neither am I !

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Alice:

Tell that to the miller's daughter. She is so convinced that you intend to pop the question that her father is getting her dowry arranged!

(Alice storms off leaving Richard behind)

Richard:

Well..... that went well.....

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Scene 16: House courtyard/garden

Dawson:

Why good morning Mr O'Leary. Fancy meeting you here!

Richard:

Good morning Miss Dawson

Dawson:

Oh, dear, why so sad? The stock market had a bad turn?

Richard:

What? No, I'm just a bit bored, and tired that's all.

Dawson:

Oh dear! Why don't you come with me? I have my day off and I am going fishing, do you want to help?

Richard:

Well fishing does sound fun, and I am pretty good at it, but where are the rods?

Dawson:

Oh I tickle the trout until they laugh. Then I pull them out.

(We see them being watched from a window by the cook and one of the maids)

Cook (through open window)

Will yer look at that? Dressed up all fine! Where do you think she's going?

Maid:

Well she SAID she were (sic) going shopping.

Second maid:

(Who has just come in)

That's not what she said to Mr O'Leary

Cook:

What'd she say then?

Seconds maid:

She said she were going fishing

Cook:

With whose tackle I wonder...

Maid:

Cook!! (Looks appalled) Anyway she is a lady and he is a gentleman so nothing will happen

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Cook:

Oh I'm not worried about him misbehaving, but I'm not so sure about her though. She can swear like a fishwife, when she wants, you know. She's no "lady"! Although I don't know half the words she uses, she just puts that "la di da" air ON, yer know.

Second maid:

Do you think that mistress should be told about this?

Cook:

I don't think it's that serious, do you?

Maid:

Oh, I don't know... she has been awful pernickety about her dress and keeps following Mr O'Leary about all the time.

Second maid:

And she has been letting things slip while teaching Miss Lulu. Why yesterday, she was missing for half of the day and I had to look after the little menace, mysen (sic).

Cook:

Well, we'll keep an eye on them, and if it gets worse we'll tell the mistress. Otherwise, though, keep quiet, girls: we don't want a scandal!

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Scene 16: Breakfast Room (at table: a few days later)

Richard:

I think I will go out shooting today, will you come with me Father?

Father:

.Err.....

Mother:

No! He can't. It sets off his rheumatism

Richard:

Timothy?

Timothy:

I'm sorry brother, but I cannot bear to see animals suffer. I'll eat them yes, but I will not kill them.

Richard:

Oh, alright. I will drop by the village to see if anyone else wants to go shooting. Maybe the vicar will. Farewell cruel family!

(Later we see him and another man walking through the forest, laughing).

Richard:

Ah dear! You my man are hilarious! Good grief: I don't think I have laughed this hard since good old Cheeswright accidentally wobbled on his bike and knocked the Dean of Baliol off the bridge

Man:

Thank you. You're not so bad yourself. Although your laughter must have scared off the game, because I ain't seen so much as a wood pigeon all day.

(We see, at a distance away from them, Dawson carefully falling over, purposefully, and moaning and asking if Lulu can get some help).

Dawson:

Lulu! I think I have twisted my ankle, go and fetch help.

Lulu:

(Rolls her eyes, unimpressed)

Seriously? ...Oh alright.

(She wanders off and Dawson pretends to be all weak, holding her hand to her head).

Richard's friend:

Hey I can hear something?

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Richard:
Do you think it may be finally some game?

R's friend (walking forward and listening):
I don't know! It sounds odd.

(Both men then crouch down and ready their guns, when Lulu walks into view).

Richard:
Ah! Lulu! What are you doing out here? We almost shot you!!

Friend:
Where is your governess?

Lulu (reluctantly)
She says that she has hurt her ankle

Richard:
Well it's lucky you bumped into us isn't it

Lulu:
(Non comitally)
Hummm

Man:
Well come on then! where is she?

Lulu:
Over there...

(They walk in the pointed direction. Dawson hears them coming and makes herself look suitably 'attractive while distressed').

Dawson(weakly)
Lulu! Is that you?

Lulu:
No it's the scary bogeyman who eats the fingers off lying little girls!

Richard:
Lulu. Stop being silly. It's me, Dawson. What have you done now?

Dawson:
I fell over while walking with Lulu and I think I have damaged my ankle. It hurts and won't let me put my weight on it

Richard:
It sounds like a bit of a sprain. Hey Carter! Will you hold my gun? Here put your arms around my shoulder and you can lean on me

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Dawson:

(Overdoing the grateful)

Thank you so much, Master Richard. This is sooo kind of you. Ouch! My foot!

Richard:

Are you alright?

Dawson(weakly)

Ohhh....

Lulu:

Oh don't fuss. (To Carter) She's having the time of her life!

Friend (whispers to Lulu)

You know, I think you just might be right....

(They all walk off assisting Miss Dawson and carrying her things).

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Scene 17: house: Sewing Room

(Mother is sitting sewing, when her lady's maid comes in)

Mother:
Yes Pearson?

Pearson:
Um Mam: sorry for intruding, I don't want to seem rude, I mean I know it's not my place.....

Mother:
Get on with it

Pearson:
Well I felt like I should warn you Mam: the governess, Dawson, has her eye on Mr O'Leary

Mother:
I'm sure my husband can keep his enthusiasm at bay and look after himself

Pearson:
No Mam I mean Mr Richard O'Leary

Mother:
Richard? How serious has it become?

Pearson:
Well I don't think that he is affected yet Mam, but she is certainly working at it

(Lulu comes running in).

Lulu:
Mama, Dawson has hurt her ankle in the woods and Richard is helping her! He sent me to ask the servants to get a bowl of hot water and a sofa ready.

Mother:
(Looking at Pearson)
I SEE. Get that organized, Pearson, and while you are at it, can you get mother-in-law?
Tell her that I want a few words.

(Pearson runs off.)

(We see people bringing Dawson into the Breakfast room and fussing over Dawson).

(Meanwhile grandmother goes to mother's bedroom)

Grandmother:
This had better be good: am just in t' middle of a good glass of porter . What's all o' fuss about?

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Mother:

It has been noticed that Dawson has set her cap at my Richard!

Gran:

Well? So has every other female in this benighted village !

Mother:

Yes. But Dawson has been particularly, shall we say, persistent? She just today 'accidentally' sprained her ankle. Right near where Richard was shooting. She has been so obvious that even little Lulu has noticed.

Gran:

Go on...I'm listening

Mother:

I know that we normally have completely opposite world views...

Gran:

Yep! Mine is right and you still insist on being wrong.

Mother:

Either way, I think that you agree with me, that Richard marrying Dawson would be disastrous. I mean, the woman may be a lady, but imagine having her as a daughter in law....(shudders)

Gran:

Well, you'd know how I feel, then, I suppose!

Mother:

What? Never mind. Do we have a temporary alliance on this point?

Grandmother:

I don't see why not.

Mother:

Right. Well I will try and scare her off. If that doesn't work we will have to find something else to do

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Scene 18: A Riverbank

(Alice is coming back from the shops and is walking quite relaxedly)

Richard:

I thought you would walk by here

Alice:

I hear you have been getting the governess's hopes up. We all know you will never marry her. Yet you still play games with her. You are hopeless. You are the only other bachelor gentleman apart from Fitzgerald in this town and you.....

Richard:

Will you please stop comparing me to Fitzgerald.

Alice:

I could never compare you from Fitzgerald

Richard:

That's probably because I am far superior, for example his neckties, his boots, oh, and his h.....

Alice:

ACTUALLY, I was going to say inferior in all ways! You are incapable of loving anyone but yourself!

Richard:

Oh so you think that I am incapable of loving? Ha! Well I will show you that I can be a very responsible and loving person! Good day to you Miss Alice!

(He storms off leaving Alice very angry and confused).

Alice:

He is getting more unstable everyday: lord help the girl who ends up with him!

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Scene 19: Breakfast table

(The whole family is sitting there, but there is a spare chair next to Richard, which he has piled a load of books on .Everyone keeps noticing it. The governess comes down dressed to the nines, Richard whips away the books, and she sits on the chair. Everyone stares at her).

Dawson:

Good morning Richard

(Gran chokes and spits her tea back into her cup):

“Richard”?!

Mother:

Richard, what is going on here?

Richard:

Mother. Dawson is my fiancé. We are to be married in two weeks.

Everyone:

WHAT?!

Father:

How.....?

Mother:

Ughhh.....(Faints)

Grandmother:

By Erry!

Alice: (very shocked)

Why?

Richard:

Well. There was talk going around that I was flirty and breaking girls hearts for nothing. So I have proof that I was not flirting. I am as capable of loving another being as anyone else! Dawson is the perfect match for me

Father:

Son, I make it my duty not to mess with the affairs of my children and leave that to my wife, but even I cannot sit here in silence.

Mother:

You don't think that you are marrying this.....this...

Gran:

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Hussy! Baggage!..Gr...

Mother (loudly)

Yes, Mother!...(saccharinely) Just proving a point, Richard?

Richard:

Ye..esss, but also, besides that, there is no one else to marry

Dawson:

And you will all have to respect me now, when I have married your heir! No more Dawson this and Dawson that! And that demon, you call a child, will no longer be allowed to insult me!

Mother:

Oh! (faints again and father helps her out. Alice has to leave, in distress, and Richard watches her reactions owlshly. Grandmother is left alone with Richard and Miss Dawson)).

Gran:

Miss Dawson, you just made an enemy out of Esmerelda Ernwright. If you have anything that needs hiding, I suggest you do it now, because I will find it. And you boy, will you be sorry you ever set foot in this house. As for you Richard, you've got a LOT of thinking to do.

(She leaves)

Dawson:

I thought that she was an O'Leary ?

Richard: (in semi shock, mouth working on its own)

Ernwright is her maiden name: she's a Lancashire woman: Grandad was Irish. She only uses her maiden name when she is being very serious, or when swearing. I don't know why.

Dawson:

We're going to be married! Oh how I dreamed of this day! Do you think I should make Alice my Maid of Honour?

Richard: (still in shock)

Yes dear.

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Scene 20: The Servants Hall.

Jenny:

.....and then the mistress fainted.

Cook:

Oh dear! We were too late in warning them. I never thought that he would fall for that hussy so fast!

Pearson:

No, he hasn't really fallen for her. I've seen lovers before. He's doing it to prove a point, yunno.... Or so he said, anyways.....as well as being true love, yunno!

Cook:

Oh that's him to the core. He hasn't changed from when he were (sic) a boy...
If he weren't to big id smack him for the grief he causes

Jenny:

Old Mrs O has sworn vengeance on that Dawson. I'd hate to be her, if Mrs O finds anything on her, like!

Time lapses:

The servants tell the various townspeople (Cook: in the little shop telling the female owner; Maid 1: outside the church with another young woman; Maid 2: telling a man in a workshop...all the listeners look appalled!)

Dawson is going wedding shopping, smiling up (sickeningly) at Richard, and is then in the house envisaging the wedding breakfast table. Mother is seen fretting in her room
Gran is writing lots of letters, while scowling and muttering to herself.

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Scene 21: Alice's Bedroom

(Alice writing in her diary and saying it out loud)

Alice:

How shall I put this.....I know....Richard is going to be married soon, I hope that No no no.....let's try today was a particularly fine Aaaah! Wh his writing a dairy entry so hard? He is getting married. Is is as simple as that. I don't understand why this is affecting me. I mean, I grieve with the family at his unsuitable choice, but I feel something more. A loss... perhaps... The best way to describe it, hmph: "I blame myself for his sudden..... Oh dear. This is really not helping matters. I'd better go and see if I am needed for anything

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Scene 22: Street

(We see Alice and Dilly walking to the post office on their way they hear raised voices and seen a small crowd ahead. They hurry to the source and find Dawson having a yelling match with an old man).

Alice:

What do you think is going on?

Dilly:

Isn't that Dawson?

Alice (pushing through the small crowd)

Dawson what's wrong?

Dawson:

This old man is slandering me.

Old man:

No oi am not. Oi be telling the truth.

Dawson:

I am taking you to court, and am suing you and getting you thrown out of town. How dare you! I will see you in court you old slanderer!

Alice:

Dawson, what IS going on?

Dawson:

That despicable creep is trying to dirty my good name just days before my wedding. I'm not going to let him do it: I'm a respectable woman, I am!

Alice:

But what is he saying about you that is so bad, Dawson?

Old Man (breaking in on the conversation and waving his finger in Dawson's face)

'Er be a bad 'un, Miss and 'there is those what know it! She's no better 'un what she should be, Miss and I'll tell 'ee that if...

Dawson: (breaking in)

Oh shut up you old ditherer. I told you not to stick your oar in when you don't know what's going on!

Alice:

I think that you should come back with me to the house, Dawson, before my mother gets to hear of rowdiness in the village and then there'll be terrible trouble.

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Dawson:

Stop calling me Dawson, I am not your governess anymore

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Scene 23: Courthouse.

(The entire village is there, looking shocked, agog and avid. Father is the magistrate).

Usher:
Everyone rise for his Honour!

(Father comes in wearing magistrate's robes).

Mr O'Leary:
State your case. What is the complaint against this man?

Dawson:
He has threatened to ruin my good name with awful slander in an attempt to blackmail me just a few days before my wedding

Man:
That's a lie. Oi made no attempt to blackmail this girl. Oi am 'er husband's uncle and oi was sent by 'er husband to find her and tell 'er that 'e is now out of prison and she is to go join 'im.

(Audience gasps with shock)

Dawson:
I never had a husband! I never was married!

Old Man:
Well, oi loik that. It's a bit stiff loik, when the loiks of moi poor nevvv gets 'iself banged up fer just a few months, loik, fer someat and nuffing and then 'is lawful wedded wife' goes and does a runner. 'Eart broken, 'e were! Me nevvv goes an' aks me, knowing that 'is sentence were over in a few weeks, loik, 'Oncle will ye find me wife who oi 'ere is gone to New Zealand? He said that she would probably be calling herself her maiden name Dawson and not 'er married name of Jones.

Dawson:
I am not married! I demand that you cease with this slander immediately!

Old Man:
Oi be looking all over Auckland for many a month, now, 'an it took me long enough an all to get 'ere, it did...all for this hussy who's no better than she should be!

Mr O'Leary:
Order in court! Sir, do you have any proof of her being wed?

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Man:

Oi did 'ave a bit of a certificate yunno, but oi think an it got lost over in t' storm (searching his jacket pockets)

Dawson:

So you see your honour? This man's slander does not have any grounds, but hearsay. I demand that this imposter is made to pay damages.

Man:

Well don't blame me for doing what oi thought was roight (frantically now searching his trousers)

Dawson:

Right? You tried to ruin my name

Old Man:

Oi tried to tell you, if you had listened: your husband is looking for you and 'e is very angry. 'E wants 'is rights, 'e does. A man wants 'is rights!

Magistrate (Mr. O'Leary):

It would seem that Mr...er...Entwhistle has no proof of his assertion that he represents a young man in England, er....?

Old Man:

Pentonville!...er, Islington, me lawd

Magistrate:

...and in the light of this foul slander upon the good name of..

Old Man (still digging in his rear pocket, frantically):

Oi knowed what Oi got it, it was just that me trousers are a bit messy loik!

(All ladies in the audience, gasp, look ill, and fan themselves, or cover their ears, at the phrase 'messy trousers')

Magistrate:

...foul slander upon the name of Miss Dawson, Mr. Entwhistle is to pay a fine of one dollar and warned not to commit same again. Let this be a lesson to you, Mr. Entwhistle. The lady goes free without a stain on her good name: Good day, Miss Dawson.

Dawson:

Good day to your honour. I am glad that I am proved a respectable woman. (She exits her stand, looking self satisfied).

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Scene 24: The inside of a church

(Everyone is sitting on rows the family is simmering, angrily, in silence. Richard is waiting at the altar and Timothy is best man. Suddenly Paisirs D' Amour strikes up and Dawson comes through the door. Alice and Lulu are flower bearers. Grandmother and father are sitting side by side).

Gran:

Doesn't she know what the song is about?

Father:

She doesn't speak French

Gran:

Well I don't, but even I know that it's about "Chagrins Damoor"... regrets of love... Dun't seem like the sort of song like you have at a wedding to me. But at least it's a bit of a laugh

Priest:

Do you, Marjory Dawson, take Richard O'Leary to be your lawfully wedded husband?

Dawson:

I do

Priest:

Do you, Richard O'Leary, take Marjorie Dawson to be your lawfully wedded wife?

Richard:

I do

Priest:

If anybody has a reason why these two people should not be married, speak now or forever hold your peace!

(A man stands up at the back of the church, with a scrape of chairs)

Jones:

'Yep! Burt Jones..... And Ive got a good un!

Priest:

Well....er, speak then, I suppose...

Jones:

Yes, well, my problem is: she's already married!

Richard:

To whom?

Jones:

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To me!

(Dawson screams and runs out of the church, Jones runs after her)

Jones:

Get back here you old baggage

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Scene 25: Dining room/ wedding reception
(Everyone is eating)

Gran: (with satisfaction written all over her face)
You don't mess with an Ernwright ! (to herself)

Richard:
Grandmother. Tell me. Do you know anything about this?

Gran:
I had nothing to do with it. I was just writing letters to old friends in Lancashire and I mentioned the wedding of a certain Miss Dawson, the rest did it itself.

Richard:
Well, I suppose that I'm glad you did it, really. I suspect that It would have been hard work living an eternity with her, when I could be spending it with someone else. I was just cutting off my nose to spite my face, really.
(Looks at Alice)

Gran:
Yer not the brightest of boys are you, Richard? You were going to marry someone you don't like just because you can't have the one you do want, and then to make it worse you pretend to do it to prove that you can marry someone? Not the best way to win a girl's heart, lovey.

Richard:
But....

Gran:
Listen to one who is much older than you, love. Alice is quite like you, in a way, and the more you insult Fitzgerald, the more likely she is to marry him just to spite you. Two can play at that game for eternity. So just be nice, and for heaven's sake, don't mention marriage until she does.

Richard:
(Gets up and starts to walk off)
So what has happened to my fiancé to be?

Gran:
I think that she and her husband be having 'marital retributions'!

Alice (walking over, ignoring Richard and sitting down near Gran):
So what was the story of Dawson?

Gran:
From what I can put together, they were a husband and wife jewellery thieves team. But he got caught. She sold him out, pretending ignorance, and, when the trial was over, she took the jewellery and fled to New Zealand pretending to be a governess.

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Alice:

So what is going to happen to her?

Gran:

Oh her husband is rather mad at her selling him out so, he is taking her back to London to spend some time in jail, as well, now. Well, if you will excuse me I have your Mother to gloat over.....coooee! Helen!.....

(She gets up and walks off)

Richard:

Sooo...

Alice:

You idiot, Richard !

(She walks off leaving him a bit embarrassed).

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Scene 26: Lawyer's house, his study.

(Fitzgerald is sitting in the study studying when his Mother comes in)

Mrs Fitzgerald:

Still studying son? You should be out with Alice.

Fitzgerald:

Mother, I cannot spend all my days with her. She has other things to do.

Mrs:

What else does she have to do? You are the only interesting person in this tiny town.

Fitzgerald:

She's got that oaf, Richard, to keep her company

Mrs:

You can't let that loud bully steal your wife?

Fitzgerald:

She is not my wife

Mrs:

You mean you haven't asked her yet ?

Fitzgerald:

Well no. Even if I did, I highly doubt she would accept me.

Mrs:

How could she not? She knows you are the only man in the area, of education and of her class, too, that she can marry. I'm not going to let you put this off any longer. I am having a bridge party and I will make sure that you two will have some time alone. And don't try and wriggle out of it. I would like some grandchildren before I die!

(Storms out)

Fitzgerald:

Sighs. Oh dear. Now what are we going to do?

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Scene 27: The Fitzmaurice's Sitting Room; a bridge party.

(Mrs Fitz is trying to organise people into tables)

Mrs F:

Herbert, could you perhaps sit with Alice, myself and Ms O'Leary?

Mr Fitz jnr (aka Herbert):

Could I possibly sit with Timothy? You see, he promised to show me his watercolours?

Gran: (listening in, *dirty laugh*)

Hehehe

Mrs F:

Well, perhaps Alice can go and sit with you?

Gran:

I think Alice should sit wi' me, Richard, and Jason

Mr O'Leary (aka Jason):

Sounds good to me, come on, youngsters, let me and your gran show you how bridge is actually played.

Mrs Fitz:

Well Mrs O'Leary, that went well.! (ironically) I thought you said Alice would do as she was told?

Mrs O'Leary jnr.:

She does: it's mother in law. She sticks her oar in all the time.

Mr Fitz snr (sitting next to Mrs. Fitzgerald, but getting up):

Well if you ladies will excuse me. I am going to watch O'Leary's game.

(Shots of the evening passing uneventfully. Herbert joins a game with Timothy, Alice and Gran. Everyone is yawning)

Gran:

Ohh deary, I'm getting tired of playing cards! What these old toes need is a dance! Say Timothy, you're a pianner basher, play us a dancing song. Come on, upon your feet youngsters! Let's see if you can keep up with me and Mr Fitzgerald, that is if you'd oblige an old woman, Sir ?

Mr Fitz snr:

Certainly ma'am: delighted to oblige.

Mrs F: (hissing)

Hubert, this is your chance! Go and dance with Alice!

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(Gran overhears this and elbows Mr. O'Leary Snr. into action)

Gran:

Go get Alice before she has to dance with that awful bore Hubert! Go ON!

Mr O:

Righty. Ho, Mother. (Goes over to Alice) Alice, m'dear would you do an old man the honour of a jig?

Alice:

Certainly sir

Richard:

I say, young Fitz, shake a leg! There aren't enough damsels in here, unfortunately. Shall I whip into a bonnet and a petticoat and give you a whirl?

Herbert:

Um, very kind of you I'm sure, but I'm afraid I will have to decline (looks a bit sour)

Richard:

Humph! Suit yourself, I'm sure. I think I'm a rather good dancer though, and could have taken the woman's role with aplomb! I'll have to wiggle on my own (wiggles)

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Scene 28: O'Leary's Bedroom

(Later that evening. Mother and father are in their bed).

Mother:

Well that evening failed tragically

Father:

I thought it was quite a fun evening.

Mother:

You and grandmother conspired together to make sure that Alice never had a moment alone with Herbert

Father:

It's just that I don't think Herbert seemed quite that keen, dear.

Mother:

Rubbish. He's a sensible boy and can recognise a good bargain when he sees it!

Father:

Yes dear. Sorry dear. Good night dear.

Mother:

You won't get round me like that, you know..... (she turns away from him).

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 29: Breakfast room (O'Leary's)

(Grandmother and Mother are sitting over tea having an argument. Alice is coming down stairs).

Mother:

Mother in law, I would really appreciate it if you left matchmaking to the younger generation

Gran:

The younger generation!...oooh, like you, then? (Changes to a frown) You seem hellbent on bringing about a miserable marriage for poor Alice!

Mother:

Alice's and Fitzgerald's marriage would be perfect.

Gran:

No it wouldn't. He is a boring little fart who doesn't give two tosses about the girl. They would live in the eternal shade of you and his ruddy mother, too.

Mother:

Well who do YOU want her to marry? Richard, that's who! You must be mad! He is the heir. He is supposed to marry above himself, or at least on the same level.

Gran:

Well, Alice is a gentleman's daughter who is richer than us.

Mother:

Yes, but she is nouveau riche....yes, admittedly like us, but Richard has got to marry into a family of OLD wealth. Alice will do very well with Fitzgerald.

(Alice is standing outside the door listening in and getting increasingly angry ,. She finally runs off upstairs).

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Scene 30: Alice's bedroom. (She is talking to her dolls)

Alice:

I hate how everyone is trying to organize my life. I do not want to marry anyone now. I am very grateful for what they have done for me taking me in and feeding me, but, you see teddy, I am a grown woman.even though I am talking to you.....I don't want all of my life organised for me. I would much prefer to marry for love than for anything else, even if the choice is made by my mother. What should I do? I don't want to marry Fitzgerald. He's OK, but I don't love him as I believe that girls are supposed to love their husbands....and anyway, he's got smelly breathe and his hands are cold and damp! Do you think I could fake temporary insanity... Talking to a teddy bear... You know I could possibly carry it off? No they would make me marry him anyway, then they would lock me up. No. The only way I can make everyone stop marrying me off is to become a nun...

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Scene 31: Village

(Alice is hurrying down the road to a house. She is wearing dull black clothes, with no hair ornaments and has acquired a rosary. She arrives at a small serious house and knocks0.

Alice: (to herself)

Please be home. Please be home.

Alice:

Sister Margaret! You are home!.... Er, are you very busy?

Margaret:

Only doing the Lord's work, Sister. Can I help you?

(Alice grabs her arm and sidles in)

Alice:

I've come to you with a request.

Margaret:

What is it Sister? I cannot help you with money, for I am poor, I am afraid.

Alice:

No it's of a sort of spiritual matter.

Margaret:

Oh I might be able to help you there, Sister. Are you starting to see the evils of your lavish life style?

Alice:

Sort of. It's a bit complicated. You see I want to be a nun. Like you.

Margaret:

Me?! I am not a nun! Nor will I ever be! That is the realm of Papistry! How dare you! Where , may I ask, has this ridiculous notion of yours come from?

Alice:

My family keeps trying to marry me off to different people!

Margaret:

It is a daughter's duty, in your case, being a ward is no different, to obey your parents, in all matters and to marry whoever they say is worthy. How dare you be so presumptuous as to choose another way for yourself? I would not be surprised if your parents do not know of your journey here! And you are unchaperoned, too! Young lady, you are going straight back home with me and I am going to tell them about this astonishing behavior.....acolyte of the Whore of Babylon, indeed !!

Alice:

But you can't! I don't want to go back!

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Margaret (grabbing her):

Oh, indeed I can, you young hussy! We are going to see your parents, immediately!

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 32: O'Leary's Hallway, downstairs.

(Alice is standing outside the parlour. We are hearing voices inside and she is standing there looking very ashamed).

Mother:
(Opening door)
Come in

(Alice does and stands awkwardly in the middle of the room. The entire family is sitting or strolling around the room. Margaret is sitting looking self-righteous). Mother sits down, leaving Alice standing)

Mother:
Is this true?

Alice:
...Yes..

(Father, Grandmother, and Richard have gone a funny colour, trying to look serious)

Mother:
Do you think that your behaviour was entirely.... reasonable?

Alice:
....No....

(Father makes a funny noise, and he, Richard, and grandmother are obviously dying of laughter).

(Alice is insanely embarrassed. Mother is enraged and confused. Timothy is quite amused and Margaret is outraged. Father makes his way over to Alice. Still shaking with suppressed laughter).

Father:
My child,....sorry: ahem... My child *snorts* we all have had problems in one way or another. But...*dissolves in laughter* never... Ahem, sorry, never have any of us thought of joining a nunnery

Alice:
Well you are a man

(Fresh outbursts of laughter)

Richard:
(Wiping a tear from his eye)
Well, we could become monks, you know. You seem, however, to have insulted Sister Margaret.

Alice:

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How? Why?

Richard:

She is a Quaker Protestant and firmly believes that nuns and Catholicism are the work of the devil. So you coming to her asking to be a nun, was a bit like asking a Muslim if he wants a whiskey !

Alice:

Oh,....I'm so sorry, Sister Margaret, I thought that 'Sister' meant that you were a nun! I am so sorry.

(Margaret nods her head acceptingly, if a bit huffily).

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 33: In the Garden

(Alice is sitting drawing with Timothy and Lulu is playing)

Timothy:

I am so glad everything has gone back to normal. You're not going to be a nun, Dawson is "got rid of", and mother seems to have relaxed in her insane marriage plans for you and Fitzgerald

Alice:

You do, however, have two of the most embarrassing moments in my lifetime in that list!

Timothy:

Sorry, Alice.

Dilly:

(Comes running)

Alice! Alice! You will never believe what has happened

Alice:

What other disaster have you come to plague me, now?!

Dilly:

Not a disaster! The miller's daughter, Hatty, has just been proposed to by Mr Wysworth! Can you imagine? He's got all those farms and he's really handsome, too!

Alice:

Oh, that's wonderful! I hope they are very happy together. Do you want to tell me all about it over tea?

Dilly:

Oh, I'm sorry Alice, but I've got to run and tell the other girls. This is so exciting! Do you think that Hatty will let me be one of her bridesmaids: I'm prettier than Charlotte, and wouldn't be giggling all the time like that stupid Violet!
(Runs off)

Alice:

Timothy, is it just me, or is everything conspiring to constantly bring up the subject of marriage?

Timothy:

Well... I'm afraid I can't really help you there. Being the youngest son, I am not very pressured to enter matrimony

Alice:

Indeed: it's easy for men, unless, I suppose, you are the eldest. But even so.....(sighs and looks in the distance).

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 34: The Garden

(Richard is standing on the lawn, scanning the country side with binoculars)

Richard:

(To himself):

I can't see anything that looks remotely like a 'pa'..... I don't know what Mother is complaining about. It's well over to the left and not even ON our land ... Helloooo: what's that?

(We see Alice's hat on one side of a tree and Fitzgerald kneeling as if proposing on the other side of the tree. Suddenly he gets up and rushes as if to hug someone and disappears behind the tree).

Richard:

No! But it's HER hat! She's actually said yes?! Oh this unbelievable! That is the last time I make a decision about a woman!

(He storms off)

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Scene 35: In a lane

(We see Alice hurrying home , and Timothy meets her, catching up with her, on the way).

Timothy:

Alice! You forgot your hat.

Alice:

Timothy! Thank you! I was in a terrible hurry and I ran out the house, and. I cannot believe that I forgot my hat. I got awful stares running around with my head out. But anyway: I won!

Timothy:

What did you win?

Alice:

Two beautiful pairs of gloves: one for summer, one for winter.

Timothy:

Bravo! But if you will excuse me, I've got to dash, Alice: urgent errand! (Races ahead of her)

Alice (calling out to his retreating figure)

Thanks, Timmy!

(She carries on walking to the house. She gets to the door and walks into Richard coming out)

Alice:

Good morning Richard! (happy sing-song voice)

Richard:

Well you WOULD say that. (scowls)

Alice:

Well of COURSE I would say that. It has been a 'to do' day!

Richard:

Oh, yes! It HAS been a 'to do' day, and a 'things won' day, too, I think!

Alice:

Oh, yes: it went swimmingly!

Richard:

Oh, that's what you call that sort of thing, is it?

Alice:

Well, I suppose so: it was really quite delicious!

SILVERVILLE (Working title) 2014

Richard:

“Delicious”? Ugh!

Alice:

Yes, and he gave me two lots of them!

Richard:

Oh, perleeeez!

Alice:

Well, you wouldn't know about these things, but we girls treasure them: especially when they are so soft and caressing!

Richard:

THAT'S IT! I'm off! WOMEN!

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Scene 36: O'Leary's Hallway

(Richard is dragging his suitcase down the hallway away from the stairs towards the front door).

Mr O'Leary :

Richard! But what's got into you, boy?! You've just come all the way home to New Zealand from Oxford, and now you're proposing to suddenly go back?!

Richard:

There's nothing for me here, Father!

Father:

Don't be ridiculous lad! There's me and your mother! There's your family, too! I thought that you were going to start training for a profession?

(Alice comes down the stairs, enquiringly, after hearing the noise)

Richard: (Looking daggers at her)

Profession, huh! What do I want one of those for?

Father:

To support yourself and then a wife, Son!

Richard (violently rolling his eyes):

Looks like I won't be getting one of those, Father. I seem to be unlucky in that quarter.....don't I, Alice?! (Vindictively)

Alice (starting to cry):

What's the matter? Why are you angry with me and why are you going, Richard?

Father:

More to the point: where do you think that you are going, on my allowance, then, hmm?

Richard:

Father, I am perfectly able to budget, you know. I have calculated that if I'm careful, I can make my yearly allowance last for two years by living in France and Italy. I have a mind to be an engineer, you know, Father and could do with seeing some of the big canals and bridges that are going up there, you know.

Alice:

But it's so sudden! What will Mama say? Have you told her, yet?

Richard:

No: I was just taking my case out to the carriage for James and then I was going to tell her quickly and get it over suddenly, you know. (Resumes lugging case to doorway)

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Alice:

Richard! (Sobs)....This is too cruel! Why are you suddenly going? Why are you angry with me?

Richard:

Why should I be angry with you, Alice? You're just a delicate girl who likes "soft and caressing things" (sarcastically mimics a little girl).

Alice:

But you ARE angry: you're shouting at me!

Richard:

No I'm NOT!

Alice:

Yes you ARE: you've got a bee in your bonnet about something and it's not MY fault!

Richard:

Oh, not a WOMAN'S fault! Why should my going to Europe be a WOMAN'S fault?.....I'll write to you from Paris, Father! (Slams the door)

Father:

Richard! Richard: your Mother! What about.....oh, lad !(quieter voice)

(Alice bursts out sobbing and rushes back upstairs)

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Scene 37: Upper Hallway of O'Leary's

Mother: (running up the stairs in her nightie, shawl and paper curlers)

Tim ! (sing song voice) Tim! (Louder) Where IS that boy? Betty! (Betty comes out of a bedroom with a pillow)...have you seem Tim, anywhere?

Betty:

No, Mum.

Mother:

Well SOMEONE must have seen him!

Betty:

Yes, mum

Mother:

Well where is he, then?

Betty:

I 'AVEN'T seen 'im, mum

Mother:

Well, why did you say that you had, girl?

Betty:

I did.....

Mother: (going into Tim's room)

His bed hasn't been slept in!.....ohhhhh, my boy, has run off! (Wails)

Lucy (appearing in her bedroom doorway, in her nightie, and rubbing her eyes):

Mama, what's the matter? (Betty, shaking her head, goes into Lucy's bedroom with a pillow)

(in Tim's bedroom: Mother is looking under the bed, and under the bedclothes and in the wardrobe):

Your brother has left us suddenly and just gone off, without a word, with Alice's 'intended'!

Lucy:

Why was he Alice's 'intended', Mama? What did she intend to do with him?

Mother:

Silly girl! Her intended husband, of course!

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Lucy:

But DID she intend to have him, then?

Mother:

Of course she would have “intended” to have him: given a bit of time and encouragement!

Lucy:

How do you know that Tim’s gone?

Mother:

He left a note on the table in the hall: he’s gone sketching in the Italian Lakes with Herbert!

Lucy:

Ooh: how romantic! So, Herbert prefers Tim to Alice, then?!

Mother:

Lucy! Think what you’re saying dear! Don’t be ridiculous! It’s not that Herbert prefers Tim to Alice: it’s just that young men usually accompany each other on holidays. Herbert can’t go with Alice, until she’s married him!

Lucy:

So, do you think that Herbert’s got bored with waiting, then?

Mother (heading out of the door):

I don’t know, but I suspect that Richard has got something to do with this and I’m going to find him and get this thing cleared up!

(Lucy stares at the by now empty doorway and sucks her thumb)

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Scene 38: Train station

(We see Richard lugging his suitcase along the platform and the train with its engine running, about to leave. R suddenly spies his brother, Tim, leaning out of an open carriage doorway)

Richard:

Hello, old chap! What on earth are you doing here? Is that Fitzgerald in there?

Tim:

Oh, hello, Richard: yes, it's Herbert

(Herbert shouts from the interior)

Morning, old boy!

Richard:

Well, why are you both here?

Tim:

We could ask YOU that!

Richard:

Me? Oh, that's easy: I'm off to Europe for a tour!

Tim:

Good grief, man: just like that?!

Richard:

What do you mean: 'just like that'?

Tim:

Well, it's a bit sudden, isn't it?

Richard:

I suppose so, but one has to face up to things, sometime. I suppose you and Fitzzy are off to Hamilton, then?

Tim:

No: didn't you hear? We're off to Europe, too?

Richard:

What, Herbert's broken it off with Alice?

Herbert (from inside)

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Broken what off?

Richard:
Your engagement!

Herbert:
Engagement?! To Alice? I'm NOT engaged to anyone!

Richard:
Well, where are you going, then?

Herbert:
I'm going sketching along Lake Como, with Tim!

Tim:
Yes: I'm going with Herbert (looks fondly back into the carriage)

Richard:
Ugh: with HERBERT?.....(suddenly realizes)...Oh, with HERBERT! (drops suitcase and throws hands up and waves them in the air....runs back along platform shouting):
She's mine! She's mine! Aaaaaalice!

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Scene 39: Garden

(Alice is sitting dejectedly on a bench)

Richard (enters garden):
Alice you here!

Alice;
What are...I thought you were gone!

Richard:
Yes, I went to the station..

Alice;
But why...

Alice, I met Tim and Herbert...

Alice:
But what have they..

Richard:
Herbert is going to Italy with TIM..

Alice:
Yes, but....

Richard:
So you're not with Herbert, my darling!

Alice:
..."darling"....?

Richard:
You're free!

Alice:
I didn't say I wasn't! What do y....

Richard:

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My love! My own one! Will you say yes?

Alice:

“Yes”?!

Richard:

Yes to me!

Alice;

Yes to your what? I always say yes to you, Richard...?!

Richard:

“Yes” to your marrying me: you dear girl!

Alice:

Ohhhh!

Richard:

Is that a yes?

Alice:

Ohhhhhh, (begins to sniff and sob)...you mean you're not angry anymore?

Richard:

Angry? I want to marry you, Alice!

Alice:

Ohhhh, yes...(sniffs, sobs and wipes nose on Richard's shoulder. Richard looks in raptures)

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Scene 40: Drawing Room

(Grandma and Father are sitting down, father trying to read a book. Mother is fussing around, muttering and straightening photos. Richard dashes into the room, holding Alice's hand)

Richard:

Mother! Father! I'm going to marry Alice!

All:

WHAT?

Richard:

I'm going to marry Alice!

Mother:

Richard: you're back! They said you'd gone!

Father:

I thought you were going to Europe!

Mother:

Richard, Tim's gone away with Alice's intended!

Alice:

He's NOT my intended

Mother:

He would have been if he stayed!

Alice:

Don't you think that the fact that he's run off means that he didn't want to be my intended, Mother?

Grandmother:

She's got a point there, woman!

Mother:

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Kindly stay out of this Mother-in-law! Alice, what is all of this rubbish?

Richard:

It's not rubbish, Mother! I have proposed to Alice and she has accepted me.

Mother:

Oh, I'm sure that she HAS accepted you. She's not stupid: she knows brains and looks when she sees it!

Richard:

Well, so do I, Mother and I'm marrying her!

Mother:

Yes, but you've got to marry money and influence. Alice hasn't got anyone left in England: only a maiden aunt, and she's not going to help you with your career! How about a dowry? Alice will be comfortable, but not exactly rich! How is that going to help you get on in life?! Don't be a fool, boy!

Father:

Now don't be like that, Ida! Alice is one of us, and I would give her a bit, like, towards the setting up.

Mother:

Oh, no, you don't! If Richard wants to be an idiot, he can reap as he sows! We'll see how he gets his engineer training AND keeps a wife at the same time....never mind about a possible family: all on the allowance you give him and Alice's bit of money!

Grandmother:

Ooh, we DO rule the roost don't we, Ida? The thing IS, that you forget where your husband's money came from! My Bert left me comfortably off, as well as leaving some'at for our son! I've got more than I know what to do with! Richard, love, I'll give Alice her dowry and you'll be snug little pigeons while you train for an engineer...AND there'll be a bit left over.....(looking back over at Mother). So THERE: Miss High and Mighty! Richard and Alice can wed and you can't stop them!

Mother:

Oh, Mr O'Leary! How can you stand by and watch me used like this?!

Father:

Now, dear, Mother didn't...

(Mother gets up and rushes out with handkerchief at nose)

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Grandmother (High sing song voice):

Bye, Ida!

Now, lovin's, you just go and bill and coo in the garden, while your Granny has a peep in her account books! (Grins at her son)

(Richard and Alice run out holding hands)

Scene 41: In church

(At the front, looking at the altar)

Priest:

Do you, Alice Meedham take this man, Richard O'Leary to be your lawful wedded husband?

Alice:

I do

Priest:

And do you, Richard O'Leary take this woman, Alice Meedham, to be your lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, in sickness, and in health?

Richard (looks lovingly at Alice)

I do

Priest:

Is there anyone here who sees any reason why these two may not be wed? Speak now, or forever hold your peace!

Grandmother (calls out):

Anyone has any funny ideas and they'll be dealing with ME!

(Mother's jaw drops and she looks scandalized, father looks embarrassed, the congregation titter, and Alice has to hide her smiles in her bouquet. Organ music immediately starts)

(Shot changes to outside the church. Alice and Richard emerge, people throw confetti and bells peal)