

SOME WESSEX STORIES

1) INTERLOPERS AT THE KNAP

Revision One

Written by

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Thomas Hardy's Interlopers at the Knap

It is early dusk and three men are travelling on sturdy cobs along the lane. The best dressed and horsed is FARMER CHARLES DARTON, accompanied by his friend the dairyman, JAPHETH JOHNS and a serving boy, EZRA, of around sixteen years.

Ezra has two baskets around his neck, one containing a dead turkey and the other, some bottles of wine.

JOHNS

D'ye feel like ye can meet yer  
fate like a man, neighbour Darton?

Darton half laughs

DARTON

Aye - call it my fate! Hanging and  
wiving go by destiny.

They walk on in silence, for a while, occasionally peering up, through the gloom at the mild incline which proceeds ahead for a good distance.

DARTON (CONT'D)

Why oi have decided to wed her is  
not only that oi loike her, but  
that oi can do no be'er. Sally is an  
independent, but simple character  
who'll think me as much superior to  
her, as oi used to think that..."you  
know who" oi mean, was superior to  
me.

Johns slowly shakes his head and looks grave.

JOHNS

Eh, Darton..."Simple" is the wrong  
denomination to apply to any woman.  
As yer best man, it makes me blood  
run cold to 'ear it, it does. I think  
that you'll find that yer own Sally  
ain't that simple as she can't see  
'er way through a wardrobe.

DARTON

Which reminds me.....Oi 'ope an she  
received that day dress what oi  
sent 'er by the carrier.

JOHNS

Not a bridal one, then?

DARTON

No...I leave those sort of fal de  
rols to the women!...A good  
serviceable one, moi dress!

He looks up, ahead

DARTON (CONT'D)

That be the turnin'?

2 EXT. ROAD T-JUNCTION - EVENING

2

The daylight has waned further, but there is a full moon, so that the men can see a hand post, under a tree.

Johns indicate to the boy to climb up the neighbouring tree and view the words on this way post.

Ezra, the boy, takes his baskets off and puts them across his saddle, then dismounts and shins up the neighbouring tree.

Ezra lights a match, leans out to scrutinise the sign, but none of them can see a word, there.

DARTON

Canst thee see ought, Ezra?

EZRA

Not a letter, Mr. Darton. It's  
blank as a devil's stare!

DARTON

Then come down, lad.

Ezra scrambles down, remounts his cobb and grumblingly takes up the baskets across his shoulders, again, grunting in discomfort and rubbing his chafed shoulders.

JOHNS

I be thinking we be arrived in a  
land where the natives have lost  
the art o' wroitin!

Darton peers through the gloom to the right.

DARTON

It must be this way.

Darton nods in the other direction, towards a wood.

DARTON (CONT'D)

We'd get lost in them trees.

Darton turns his horse's head and rides off.

The other two follow him.

3

INT. KNAP HOUSE/SITTING ROOM AREA - NIGHT

3

MRS. HALL, a middle-aged woman, in a mob cap, is leaning forward on her chair, replacing hot embers in the fire with the tongs.

Her daughters, SALLY, a handsome, good-humoured young woman of around twenty yrs, is sitting opposite to her, sewing a tea towel.

There is the sound of frying and pots clanging, in the kitchen

Mrs. Hall sits back down and peers up at the mantel clock.

MRS. HALL

Well, eight o'clock and neither dress, nor man.

Sally shrugs, nonchalantly

SALLY

I don't care, I've another dress for travelling....Tweren't as if it were the bridal one.

The clock ticks, Sally sews

MRS. HALL

Well, anyway, I see a kind husband in Farmer Darton and pray that all will go well, love.

Sally stiffens and looks up.

SALLY

Listen!

They both hear some footsteps

Sally gets up and goes to the door, when, without a knock, it opens.

Sally falls back with fright, when she sees a young, very dirty, unkempt man, half starved with hunger and cold walk in and stand near to the doorway.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Agh!....Mam!....A tramp!

Mrs. Hall shoots to her feet and stares

MRS. HALL  
Good grief!

The man looks down, humiliatedly, and sinks into the nearest chair.

He starts coughing.

Sally steps nearer to him and scrutinises him.

She suddenly looks astounded and stands agape.

SALLY  
Ma'am! It's our Phil!...Philip, is this you?!

PHILIP looks up, and stops coughing for a while.

PHILIP  
No, I'm not me!

MRS. HALL  
Oh!...To come home like this!...Are you ill, lad?

PHILIP  
No, no..... I've just had to come home, though, as things went from bad to worse out there.

Mrs. Hall hurries over to him, removes his hat and strokes his hair.

MRS. HALL  
Why didn't you let us know of yer, in the whole of last three years?...Sally, some tea!

Sally puts the kettle on the fire and gets the tea caddy out onto the dresser, along with a tea pot.

Philip coughs, badly, again.

PHILIP  
I kept thinking as things would mend so's I could send good news.

MRS. HALL

Come on...Upstairs to bed... I'm,  
afraid that you'll have to excuse  
us, though, tonight, as Sally is  
celebrating her betrothal to a  
local farmer and.....

She starts to help him up, but he momentarily stops her.

PHILIP

...Mother...I, I have a wife and  
two children as entirely destitute  
as I...

MRS. HALL

..What, back in Australia?

PHILIP

No! Waiting to see you, in the  
stable and...and I hope that you'll  
forgive me, but the carrier, who we  
passed on the road, asked me to  
pass on a dress to Sally a few  
miles back.

Sally turns from brewing the tea at the fire.

SALLY

What's the pro...

Philip stands up, painfully

PHILIP

.....Well, I gave it to HELENA, when  
she came back from getting some  
water for the children. Her gown  
was in shreds and light cotton for  
the Australian sun.

SALLY

Oh! My dr....

Philip turns bitterly away.

PHILIP

...You needn't worry. We'll be gone  
afore break o' day.

MRS. HALL

As if I'd throw my sick son and his  
poor family out on a night like  
this...or anyone, come to that!

Philip collapses with a fit of coughing and the two women both help him out of the chair.

MRS. HALL (CONT'D)  
Come on!...Ye can sleep i' the big bed upstairs and I've got a couple of truckle beds for the little uns.

SALLY  
We'll get you settled and then bring in your wife

They help walk him out of the door.

4 INT. KNAP HOUSE/STAIRCASE - NIGHT 4

The two women struggle up the stairs with Philip who is very weak.

SALLY  
Philip. What did you say your wife is called, please?

PHILIP  
He...Helena.

5 EXT. KNAP HOUSE/BACK YARD - NIGHT 5

Sally and Mrs. Hall hurry across the back yard, past the cow shed to the stable.

They see a lit lamp hanging half in and out of the stable

Mrs. Hall calls, softly.

MRS. HALL  
Helena?

6 INT. KNAP HOUSE/STABLE - NIGHT 6

The two women step softly into the stable

Suddenly out of the dark, Farmer Darton comes forward holding the hand of a tall, pretty, but careworn young woman, wearing a beautiful blue green wool dress. With his other hand, he holds his horse's bridle.

He smiles, uncertainly, at Mrs. Hall

DARTON

Sorry for moi tardiness, Mrs. Hall,  
but we took the wrong road. Moi  
companions have taken their own  
horses down to the inn so as not to  
crowd you.

MRS. HALL

Thank you, Mr. Darton and welcome  
to our home.

Darton turns to the young woman and leaves go of her hand.

DARTON

I found these two children here..

He indicates two small children sitting on some straw

DARTON (CONT'D)

And this young lady wearing the  
dress I sent for Sally.

HELENA

I'm sorry...I just...I mean, I..

MRS. HALL

.....This is Helena, my daughter-in-  
law, and my two grandchildren.

She steps forward and takes Helena's hand, smiling, gently at  
her.

MRS. HALL (CONT'D)

Come along in, my dear.

She turns to Mr. Darton

MRS. HALL (CONT'D)

Come along, Mr. Darton. Supper's  
waiting. My son has just retired to  
bed as he isn't very well, at the  
moment.

Sally rushes forward, picks up the toddler and takes the hand  
of the older, seven year old boy, while smiling and  
whispering encouragingly at them..

The women and children go out to the house and Mr. Darton  
removes his horse's saddle.



7 INT. KNAP HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHT

7

Sally comes down the stairs and, as she does, she observes her mother and Mrs. Hall junior heading into the living room, having removed their shawls and bonnet.

There is a knock at the door and Mrs. Hall turns and now welcomes Mr. Johns into the house.

Sally smiles at and greets him.

8 INT. KNAP HOUSE/DINING ROOM PORTION OF LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 8

The company is seated at table, half hidden from the sitting area by a screen.

The company consists of five people: both the Mrs. Halls, Sally, Darton and Johns. They are all rather silent and awkward. Dart on keeps casting shifty glances at Helena, who, in return seems rather embarrassed and similarly disquieted.

Mrs. Hall and Sally offer the dishes, which REBEKAH, the maid, is bringing in. People help themselves from these dishes.

MRS. Hall holds up her wine glass

MRS. HALL

Drink hearty, Mr Johns. Drink hearty!.....But perhaps cider-wine is not to your taste?

Mr. Johns pours himself some from a jug.

JOHNS

Quite the contrary, Ma'am. I am a cider drinker on my mother's side, you know. She came from these parts.

He drinks from his cup.

JOHNS (CONT'D)

There is this to be said for it.....that it's a more peaceful liquor than most other drinks and don't lead to getting a black eye from an old acquaintance.

The company drink their mulled wine and converse, desultorily.

Sally keeps observing glances passing between Darton and Helena.

MRS. Hall tries to enliven the company, but is pretty much of a failure.

In the end, Johns puts his outdoor coat on and goes off for his horse, at the inn.

There is some more conversation and then they start to break up for the night, with the whole company getting up.

MRS. Hall and Sally bid Darton goodnight, while he is donning his coat, and then they go out with Helena.

Darton adjusts his coat and makes for the door, when suddenly it starts to rain with great violence.

He retreats from the door, appears to think and then reseats himself by the fire to await its stopping.

Helena reappears with a kettle.

Darton looks and stands up

DARTON

Helena!

Helena looks startled and blushes

HELENA

Oh! I'm sorry, Mr. Darton, I was just coming for some hot water for my husband, who is worse.

She hangs the kettle on the boiling hook and remains, standing, looking at it.

DARTON

So I am never to find out how a woman, who refused me, as I thought, because I was just a poor farmer, went off with a man whom...well.....

HELENA

.....He had the prior claim.

DARTON

What? You knew him at the time?

HELENA

Yes. He had gone to Australia and then he sent for me.

DARTON

Ah...That was the mystery!...Well, hum..... that's all past and gone, now.Does your uncle know of your distress?

HELENA

He cast me off and then died, later. He wrote that I had disgraced myself.

Darton takes a step towards her and she looks down.

DARTON

(Earnestly loving)

Well, then, let me take care of the children, at least while you are so unsettled. You belong to another, now, so I can't propose to take care of you,my dear, but.....

SALLY

.....Yes, you can! ...You can..... since you wish it!...My poor brother is dead!....How convenient!!

Helena and Darton jump guiltily apart, as Sally has come upon them without their hearing her.

HELENA

Oh!.....Dead?!

The women turn and run upstairs.

Darton puts his hand to his mouth, in consternation.

The rain has stopped and he wanders towards the door.

10

EXT. KNAP HOUSE/FRONT GARDEN

10

Darton wanders slowly out of the front door and stands, looking up at the sky, near the big tree.

He shakes his head in wonder at this stroke of fate.

The front door opens and Mrs. Hall emerges, not seeing Darton.

She hurries out of the garden by a side gate and, puzzled, he follows her.

11 EXT. KNAP HOUSE/SMALL SIDE PATH - NIGHT 11

MRS. Hall hurries along, pulling her shawl over her head for warmth, with Darton a little way behind her.

12 EXT. KNAP HOUSE/SMALL NEARBY FIELD - NIGHT 12

Mrs. Hall exits the path and enters into a small field, hurrying up to a clump of shrubs, in this small enclosure.

Darton sees that there are two bee skeps there.

He hangs back, when he hears her crying.

He then sees her bending over, tapping on, and talking to the skeps as she carries out the traditional practise of informing the bees of a household death.

Darton hangs back a little and, eventually she leaves the bees and returns in his direction.

He steps towards her

DARTON

What can I do for you in your trouble, Mrs. Hall.

MRS. HALL

(Crying) Oh, nothing, Mr. Darton...Nothing, really (Sniff).  
.....But, um, Sally and I have decided, however, that the wedding must be postponed...You do understand, don't you?

DARTON

Yes! Yes, of course, I understand...Um, will you also tell the mother of your son's children, please, that, as they are now left fatherless, I shall be glad to take the eldest of them, if it would be any convenience to her, and you, and your daughter-in-law.

Mrs. Hall sniffs, pats his hand and looks away

MRS. HALL  
 Certainly I shall tell her. Thank  
 you...Thank you for this, Mr.  
 Darton.  
 (Sniff)

She hurries away.

13 EXT. NEARBY FIELD - NIGHT 13

Darton leaves the small enclosed field and sets off in the  
 gloom, down the rooty slope back to join Johns, at the Kings-  
 Hintock inn stables.

14 INT. KNAP HOUSE/SITTING ROOM AREA - NIGHT 14

Sally is sitting, sadly by the fire, wringing her hands,  
 slowly.

Her mother comes in and sadly kisses her on the top of her  
 head.

Mrs. Hall sits down.

MRS. HALL  
 Helena is laying him out and I've  
 put the children in my room.Can you  
 go to the doctor for the death  
 certificate, in the morning?

SALLY  
 Of course, Mam.

MRS. HALL  
 Um.....Mr. Darton has assented to the  
 postponement, love.

Sally, looks up and smiles, sadly

SALLY  
 Oh, I'm sure he has,  
 Mother.....But, it isn't put off  
 for a week, or a month, or a year.  
 He won't have me, now, and she  
 will.....In one night, I have lost a  
 brother and a husband!

MRS. HALL  
 Oh, love! I'm sure...

Sally stands up

SALLY  
 ...Mother, no!.....No....It's  
 alright!

She raises her hand, shakes her head, slowly and sadly, and walks away, upstairs.

15 EXT./INT. KNAP HOUSE/DARTON' S HOUSE - DAY 15

Montage of:

Darton standing in a field, with a farm managers, gesticulating to some livestock.

Helena and Mrs. Hall working in the kitchen, with the servant, Rebekah.

Helena, Sally and her Mother sewing by the fireplace, at night.

Helena and Sally playing with the children, in the garden.

Darton sitting alone, at night, musing, over the fire.

Helena instructing her eldest boy, of seven who sits at his desk, labouring with his pen.

16 EXT. DARTON'S HOUSE/AN INTAK FIELD - DAY 16

Darton is watching some sheep and one of his men walking towards them, with a crook.

A servant comes out from the house to give Darton a letter which has just arrived.

Darton sees the postmark and hurriedly breaks it open.

He reads

HELENA (V.O.)  
 Mr. Darton, I find that, after a final refusal from a distant relative to aid me and my poor children, I must accept your kind offer to care for my boy. I know that you will do your best by him and so I will not repine. Your ever grateful servant,  
 H.S.

17 EXT. DARTON'S HOUSE/FRONT DRIVE - DAY

17

Helena and Mrs. Hall are in the gig and the driver is seated ready.

Darton is standing holding the seven year old boy's hand and nodding at the women.

Mrs. Hall suddenly remembers and pulls out a note for Darton

MRS. HALL

Oh, I nearly forgot. Here you are,  
Mr. Darton. It's from Sally.

She hands it over and then smiles and nods.

MRS. HALL (CONT'D)

Goodbye.

The cart starts to pull away and Helena smiles and waves, a bit sadly at her son.

HELENA

Goodbye, son!

The boy waves and Darton opens the note, while waving.

He reads

SALLY (V.O.)

Dear Charles,  
I hope you will forgive my  
observation that, after eight  
months, now, and no resumption of  
urgings, on your behalf, for our  
marriage, I take it that your  
feelings for me have fallen away. I  
have learnt of your history with  
Helena and would hardly want to  
come between you both, anyway.

I think that, if you asked her, she  
would have you, and she should be  
given the opportunity, certainly,  
as you already have her son.

You asked me in an old note if I  
was sorry for showing temper in the  
hour of my brother's death, when I  
found my betrothed whispering sweet  
words to my sister-in-law. Well, I  
certainly was surprised, but no,  
I'm not sorry for thus speaking  
boldly, as I did.

(MORE)

SALLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yours sincerely, Sally Hall.

Darton looks up, meditatively.

18 EXT. KNAP HOUSE - DAY

18

It is now winter and Darton pulls up at the Knap with the small boy on the saddle, before him.

Mrs. Hall and Helena come out to meet him.

Darton dismounts and hands down the boy to Helena who covers him with kisses.

BOY

I have a Christmas present for you,  
Mama!

Helena smiles, fondly at him.

DARTON

(To Mrs. Hall)  
Sally not here, then?

MRS. HALL

No. She's away visiting friends.

DARTON

Ah.

They all go into the house.

19 INT. A COW BARN - DAY

19

Johns walks in, followed by Darton

Johns heads towards and picks up a rake

DARTON

Well, it's a year now, but I've actually come over, again, to ask you to be my groom, one more time.

JOHNS

Well a bit of perfume and pomade, and I'll be as right as rain to compliment her. "Better late than never, Sally Hall", I'll say.



DARTON

Er, well, no, Japheth. It's, it's  
the young Mrs. Hall!

Johns appears reproachfully dismayed

JOHNS

Not Sally?!...Why not Sally?...I  
can't believe it!

DARTON

Well it's complicated, but I lost  
Helena to another and then found  
her again...

JOHNS

..Yes, after you'd asked Sally!

Darton scowls

DARTON

I s'pose I can marry where I like!

Johns nods and starts to set off out of the door.

JOHNS

Yes! And I spose I can be groomsman  
where I like!...And it's not wi'  
you!...Excuse me, but I've to 'ave a  
word wi' me cowman.

Johns stalks out and Darton scowls some more.

20 EXT. SMALL RURAL CHURCH - DAY

20

Mrs. Hall, Rebekah, and her husband, plus Helena's son and  
toddler are outside of the door when Darton and Helena exit  
in bridal favours.

The rector and another groomsman follow behind.

Mrs. Hall and Rebekah throw some rice at the bridal couple,  
and smile at them.

Helena and Darton smile at each other.

21 INT./EXT. DAYTON'S FARM - DAY/EVENING

21

Helena, Darton and the two children are eating at the dining  
table. Helena politely, tells Dayton to remove his elbows  
from the table. She smiles, a bit reprovngly, and he, good-  
humouredly complies, nodding.

Helena passes Darton, in the corridor. He is rather muddy, with splashes on his face. He goes to kiss her, but she recoils and points out his splashes, which he merely wipes across with his sleeve. As he goes to kiss her, again, she grimaces and ducks out, hurrying away with a frigid, little smile.

Helena and Darton are at dinner with another thriving farmer. The two farmers are keenly discussing their own pigs and their merits, with regard to size and shape. Helena, who is now pregnant, pours herself some wine, rolls her eyes with boredom and longingly looks at the clock, on the mantel.

22 INT. DARTON'S HOUSE - DAY 22

Montage:

Helena is now advancedly pregnant, and watching her now eight-year old son and three year old girl playing with a ball, in the garden. Darton comes up to her, kisses her, and asks a question and she irritately dismisses him with a wave and a few words. He leaves her.

Darton, in his nightgown, puts out his hand to help Helena into bed, as she is now nearly full term. Helena waves his hand away and nods him away, speaking uninterestedly to him and mounting into bed, herself.

Helena lies dead in the bed. The midwife gives a small bundle to Darton who is half undressed and looking distracted.

23 EXT. DARTON'S HOUSE/GARDEN - DAY 23

Darton stands watching the children play ball and the nurse stand watching while jiggling her bundle. The girl is now five and the boy is now ten.

Darton heaves a sigh of regret and nods, slightly.

24 EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY 24

Darton is riding along on his horse.

Darton comes around a corner, and passes Mrs. Hall and Sally coming back from the village to their house, with their baskets.

He tips his hat and starts to converse, but, after saying hello, they politely and embarrassedly hurry away.

Darton looks after Sally and sighs. She looks very well in her summer hat and ribbons.

25 INT. DARTON'S HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - EVENING 25

The children come in to kiss him goodnight, before they go up to bed in their nightgowns. The nurse is carrying the baby. She nods, smiles at Darton and she shoos the children out in front of her.

Darton reflects on something and appears to come to a decision.

He gets up and pulls the bell cord.

When the man servant appears, Darton gives instructions for the horse to be saddled.

Darton gets his boots from the side of the fire and starts to pull them on.

26 EXT. COUNTRY LANE - EVENING 26

Darton is riding along, looking anxiously ahead up the hill.

27 INT. KNAP HOUSE/SITTING ROOM AREA - NIGHT 27

Sally and her mother are sitting over the fire. Sally is sewing and Mrs. Hall is musing into the fire.

MRS. HALL

Three years ago, this very night,  
it all happened.

Sally shrugs

SALLY

Well..... this very week, anyway.

MRS. HALL

'Tis near enough....(Sighs) Ah  
Sally! If you had managed things  
better, 't'would have been you with  
Mr. Darton, and not Helena!

SALLY

Don't be sentimental, Mother. I  
could hardly marry him after what I  
heard, and I still don't think I  
would, if he were to ask me now!

MRS. HALL

Pish!

She leans forward to poke the fire and Rebekah opens the door and peers in.

REBEKAH

It be Mr.Darton, Ma'am.

Mrs. Hall shoots to her feet.

MRS. HALL

Bring him in! Bring him in!

Rebekah withdraws and Mr. Darton steps in, smiles and half bows.

DARTON

Good Evening, ladies. I hope that I don't disturb you?

MRS. HALL

Oh no! Of course, not, Mr. Darton. I'm just going to make some tea. You'll have a cup, won't you?

DARTON

If it's some of your good bohea, I certainly will, Mrs.Hall.

MRS. HALL

Sally, move up, then Mr. Darton can sit down.

Sally looks up, smiles, slightly and slides along the settle a bit, while, Mrs. Hall bustles out.

28 EXT. KNAP HOUSE/FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

28

Mrs. Hall raises the lamp to see Mr. Darton out, but, before he descends the path, he turns and addresses her.

DARTON

I came to ask your daughter to marry me, but....she won't.

MRS. HALL

Then she's a very ungrateful girl!

DARTON

Oi, or suppose as there's no-one else more favoured?

MRS. HALL

Oh, oi can't say as to that, oi'm  
afraid...Oi be on your said, however  
Mr. Darton. Don't 'e be downcast.  
Oi'll 'ave a few words a wi' 'er!

Darton smiles, sadly, nods and turns away down the path

DARTON

Thank, 'ee, Mrs. Hall.

Mrs. Hall stands on the threshold, holding up her lamp, and  
shakes her head, slowly and sadly.

29

EXT. LANE - NIGHT

29

Darton strides off along the lane, back to the inn where he  
has left his horse.

Suddenly, out of the darkness, comes his old friend, Japheth  
Johns, heading towards the Knap.

DARTON

Japheth!

JOHNS

Darton!

DARTON

Whatever are you doing here?

JOHNS

Well, I'm not proud, and I've come  
to pick up yer leavings, so as to  
speak...It's a shame a bonny lass  
such as Sally should go a wanting  
of a groom, so I've screwed up moi  
courage and intend to ask, tonight.

DARTON

Why tonight?

JOHNS

You know why!...It's just three  
years, tonight, as she was bereft.

DARTON

You think you 'ave a chance?

Johns shrugs

JOHNS

As well as the next man!

Darton smiles and nods, sadly

DARTON  
Then I wish 'e well, Japheth. Good  
luck wi' yer wooing.

JOHNS  
Thanks, neighbour!

Johns strides off and Darton watches him sadly, by the light  
of the full moon.

30

EXT. FIELD - DAY

30

Darton is watching and counting some of his sheep in the  
field and standing near to the wall, near the lane.

Johns walks past and Darton looks at him, over the wall.

DARTON  
Johns!

Johns was walking, looking down, and using his staff in a pre-  
occupied manner.

He looks up.

JOHNS  
Oh, good morning to 'ee, Darton!

DARTON  
'Ow did things go with Sally?

JOHNS  
No good! No good!

He sighs, heavily.

JOHNS (CONT'D)  
P'raps she be secretly still  
sighing for yesen, Darton.

He shakes his head, slowly

JOHNS (CONT'D)  
I don't know..... I don't know.

He starts to walk off.

JOHNS (CONT'D)  
Oi be seeing ye around.

DARTON  
Yes.....Yes..... Good day to ye, Johns.

Darton turns away and whispers to himself

DARTON (CONT'D)  
"Still sighing"....?....I must write!

31 INT. DARTON'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY 31

Darton is dressing and still fighting with his necktie.

There is a knock at the door and a servant brings in a letter.

Darton reads the address

DARTON  
It's her!

He opens it and reads it.

SALLY (V.O.)  
Dear Mr. Darton,  
I am honoured by your kindness in repeating your offer. I'm sorry, and I can't explain my reasons, but must just say that I decline to be married to you. Your faithful friend, Sally Hall.

Darton drops the letter onto the bed and looks sad.

DARTON  
Her reasons? Why can't she say her reasons?

He walks over to the window and stares out

DARTON (CONT'D)  
Well, she can tell them to my face!

32 EXT. KNAP HOUSE - DAY 32

Darton comes out into the small enclosure next to Knap house where the bees are.

Sally is bending down, looking into the skeps, wearing a black veil over her hat.

She sees him and stands up, throwing back the veil.

SALLY

Good Morning, Mr. Darton. What can have brought you here this early?

Darton come up rather close to her and speaks in an impassioned undertone.

DARTON

Sally! I must know your reasons for your refusal. Is it, is it because of soreness from my slighting you years ago, cos I regret that, you know?

Sally smiles, sadly

SALLY

No..... That soreness is long past.

DARTON

Then do you despise me, perhaps?!

SALLY

Well, not really.....It's just that I no longer trust you. You're no longer my hero....Someone special I trust.....to, to..... care for me.

Darton looks away, and is very pained.

DARTON

And will you never marry me?

SALLY

I shall never marry anyone!..... Mr. Darton, do you promise never to trouble me again with this subject, or I shall have to avoid you?

DARTON

Yes, yes.....oi promise then...Oi,oi promise..... Um... well ..... Good day, Sa...Miss Hall.

SALLY

Good day, Mr. Darton.

He turns and walks away, sadly.

Sally turns to the bees, bends, and whispers into the skeps



SALLY (CONT'D)

I'm afraid, little masters, that there won't be any more births and marriages in this house... No... No more births and marriages. It's just you and me, now.

She stands up and watches Darton's retreating back.