

**DEIRDRE OF THE
SORROWS; A PLAY**

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Deirdre of the sorrows; a play by John M. Synge

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JOHN M. SYNGE

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SORROWS; A PLAY**

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SORROWS. A PLAY
BY JOHN M. SYNGE

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PERSONS IN THE PLAY

LAVARCHAM, *Deirdre's nurse*

OLD WOMAN, *Lavarcham's servant*

OWEN, *Conchubor's attendant and spy*

CONCHUBOR, *High King of Ulster*

FERGUS, *Conchubor's friend*

DEIRDRE

NAISI, *Deirdre's lover*

AINNLE, *Naisi's brother*

ARDAN, *Naisi's brother*

TWO SOLDIERS

SCENE—*Act I, Lavarcham's house on Slieve Fuadh. Act II, Alban. Early morning in the beginning of winter. Outside the tent of Deirdre and Naisi. Act III, Tent below Emain Macha*

DEIRDRE OF THE SORROWS

ACT I

Lavarcham's house on Slieve Fuadh. There is a door to inner room on the left, and a door to open air on the right. Window at back, and a frame with a half-finished piece of tapestry. There are also a large press and heavy oak chest near the back wall. The place is neat and clean but bare. Lavarcham, woman of fifty, is working at tapestry frame. Old Woman comes in from left.

OLD WOMAN.

She hasn't come yet, is it, and it falling to the night?

LAVARCHAM.

She has not. . . . (*Concealing her anxiety.*) It's dark with the clouds are coming from the west and south, but it isn't later than the common.

OLD WOMAN.

It's later, surely, and I hear tell the Sons of Usna, Naisi and his brothers, are above chasing

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hates for two days or three, and the same awhile since when the moon was full.

LAVARCHAM, *more anxiously.*

The gods send they don't set eyes on her—(*with a sign of helplessness*) yet if they do itself, it wasn't my wish brought them or could send them away.

OLD WOMAN, *reprovingly.*

If it wasn't, you'd do well to keep a check on her, and she turning a woman that was meant to be a queen.

LAVARCHAM.

Who'd check her like was made to have her pleasure only, the way if there were no warnings told about her you'd see troubles coming when an old king is taking her, and she without a thought but for her beauty and to be straying the hills.

OLD WOMAN.

The gods help the lot of us. . . . Shouldn't she be well pleased getting the like of Conchubor, and he middling settled in his years itself? I don't know what he wanted putting her this wild place to be breaking her in, or putting

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myself to be roasting her supper and she with no patience for her food at all. (*She looks out.*)

LAVARCHAM.

Is she coming from the glen?

OLD WOMAN.

She is not. But whisht—there's two men leaving the furze—(*crying out*) it's Conchubor and Fergus along with him. Conchubor'll be in a blue stew this night and herself abroad.

LAVARCHAM, *settling room hastily.*

Are they close by?

OLD WOMAN.

Crossing the stream, and there's herself on the hillside with a load of twigs. Will I run out and put her in order before they'll set eyes on her at all?

LAVARCHAM.

You will not. Would you have him see you, and he a man would be jealous of a hawk would fly between her and the rising sun. (*She looks out.*) Go up to the hearth and be as busy as if you hadn't seen them at all.