

An Inspector Calls by J.B Priestley

The Inspector is questioning Mrs Birling about the suicide of a young girl. Her daughter and husband are also in the room and have already been subject to questioning.

MRS BIRLING:

If you think you can bring any pressure to bear on me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken. Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation. The girl asked for assistance. We are asked to look carefully into the claims made upon us. I wasn't satisfied with the girl's claim and so I used my influence to have it refused. And in spite of what's happened to the girl since, I consider I did my duty. So if I prefer not to discuss it any further, you have no power to make me change my mind, I've done nothing wrong - and you know it.

Oh stop it, both of you. And please remember before you start accusing me of anything again that it wasn't I who had her turned out of her employment - which probably began it all.

The girl had begun by telling us a pack of lies. Afterwards, when I got at the truth, I discovered that she knew who the father was, she was quite certain about that, and so I told her it was her business to make him responsible. If he refused to marry her - and in my opinion he ought to be compelled to - then he must at least support her.

She said that the father was only a youngster - silly, wild, and drinking too much. That there couldn't be a question of marrying him - it would be wrong for them both. He had given her money, but she didn't want to take any more money from him. All a lot of nonsense - I didn't believe a word of it. As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money!

You're quite wrong to suppose I shall regret what I did. I was perfectly justified in advising my Committee not to allow her claim for assistance. I'm sorry she should have come to such a horrible end. But I accept no blame for it at all.

First the girl herself. Secondly I blame the young man who was the father of the child. He ought to be dealt with very severely. And if you'd take some steps to find this young man and then make sure that he's compelled to confess in public his responsibility - instead of staying here asking quite unnecessary questions - then you really would be doing your duty.

I'm glad to hear it. And now, no doubt, you'd like to say good night.

Waiting for what? But surely...I mean....It's ridiculous...I don't believe it....I won't believe it.