

An Inspector Calls – Key Quotes

Mr Birling

‘heavy looking, rather portentous man’

‘a hard-headed practical man of business’

‘Yes, my dear, I know – I’m talking too much.’

‘perhaps we may look forward to a time when Crofts and Birlings are no longer competing but are working together’

‘The Germans don’t want war’

‘unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable’

‘mixed up together like bees in a hive’

‘community and all that nonsense’

‘a man has to mind his own business and look out for himself and his own.’

‘I know the Brumley police officers pretty well’

‘This is Gerald Croft, the son of Sir George Croft’

‘the wretched girl’s suicide’

‘she’d had a lot to say – far too much – so she had to go of course.’

(Eric) ‘You’re not the kind of father a chap could go to when he’s in trouble. That’s why.’

‘I must say Sybil, that when this comes out at the inquest, it isn’t going to do us much good.’

‘The whole story’s just a lot of moonshine.’

Mrs Birling

'Arthur, you're not supposed to say such things.'

(To Sheila) 'when you're married, you'll realise that men with important work to do sometimes have to spend all their time and energy on their business. You'll have to get used to that, just as I had.'

(To Inspector Goole) 'You know of course that my husband was Lord Mayor only two years ago...'

'Girls of that class.'

(On Eric's drinking) 'he's only a boy.'

IG to Mrs B 'You're a member, a prominent member, of the Brumley Women's Charity Organization, aren't you?'

'We've done a great deal of useful work in helping deserving causes.'

'I didn't like her manner. She impertinently made use of our name.'

'I did nothing I'm ashamed of.'

IG to Mrs B. 'She came to you for help at a time when no woman could have needed it more.'

'She was claiming elaborate fine feelings and scruples that were simply absurd in a girl of her position.'

'I blame the young man. He ought to be dealt with very severely.'

Gerald

(To Sheila) 'I hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be.'

Mr B to G. 'I have an idea that your mother – Lady Croft ... feels you might have done better for yourself socially.'

(Sheila to Gerald) 'Except for last summer when you wouldn't come near me.'

'My God! ...I've suddenly realized – taken it in properly – that she'd dead!'

'I didn't install her there so I could make love to her.'

'I didn't feel about her as she felt about me.'

Eric

'I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty.'

(Mrs B) 'You stole money!'

'You're not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble. That's why.'

'You killed her – and the child she'd have had too – my child'

'You're beginning to pretend as if nothing's really happened at all. And I can't see it like that. The girl's still dead, isn't she?'

'we helped to kill her.'

Sheila

'except for all last summer when you never came near me.'

In response to mother's comment that women must get used to their husbands working all the time: 'I don't believe I will.'

'But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people.'

'I felt rotten about it at the time and now I feel a lot worse.'

'She was very pretty and looked like she could take care of herself.'

'I hate to think how much he knows that we don't know yet.'

'I know I'm to blame and I'm desperately sorry.'

'he's giving us rope so that we'll hang ourselves.'

'You were the wonderful fairy prince. You must have enjoyed it, Gerald.'