



# An Eye for an Eye

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## **An Eye for an Eye** Anthony Trollope

Fred Neville, a young officer in the Hussars, is heir to an earldom, but before taking up his responsibilities resolves to enjoy a year of adventure in Ireland where his regiment is posted. When Fred falls in love and seduces an Irish girl of great beauty and mysterious background, the scene is set for a tragic outcome that far exceeds the adventures Fred had in mind. Written in 1870 but not published until 1879, An Eye For An Eye is arguably the most melodramatic story that Trollope wrote and certainly his frankest and most daring treatment of pre-marital sex.

## **An Eye for an Eye Details**

Date : Published October 25th 2005 by Dodo Press (first published 1879)

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Author : Anthony Trollope

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## From Reader Review An Eye for an Eye for online ebook

### Sarah says

I turn to Trollope for comfort, and he didn't disappoint. The Fallen Woman, the Mad Woman, the heir to the title of earl, and the Irish (with the caveat that the Irish are treated as a typical British Imperialist would treat them) combine to make this a spectacular story, even if it drags in parts. Trollope is to be commended for even raising and clearly vindicating the possibility of a marriage between a Roman Catholic to a staunch Protestant.

But, sigh, as with *Can You Forgive Her*, I was ready to strangle Fred Neville by the end of the novel for his indecision, which is probably exactly what Trollope meant for me to feel....so, success!

Interesting side note, the mad woman Mrs. O'Hara threatens to murder her husband with a dagger in her hand. Witnesses do not consider her mad, and I don't think the actual murder of Fred Neville creates the imbalance, but the ramifications she must face drive her over the edge. The class implication here is obvious, since it would be acceptable for the mad woman to kill her convict husband but not the newly minted Earl of Scroope. I would like to have seen more development of Mrs. O'Hara and her slide into insanity.

And, quite frankly, the fallen woman Kate O'Hara needs a great deal more development. Trollope does make a fine point of how other women are quick to accuse the female but expect and accept such behavior from a future earl.

All that being said, Trollope gives a stunning look into Lady Scroope's breakdown, caused by her insistence on upholding class lines in conjunction with her religious views.

One final note: I have never read a biography on Trollope, so I need one on the shelves. I wonder if he *ever* was in Ireland?!

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### Maan Kawas says

Another great novel by Anthony Trollope! I found it engaging, disturbing, and moving. It is about marriage, family, family reputation, gender, decision-making, actions and consequences, love, and duty. I highly recommend it!

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### Roz says

This was my first book by Trollope. I was impressed by the writing, and I must say that he does characterisation really well. The characters read like real people, and are definitely flawed, making mistakes throughout. Frank Neville, the protagonist, manages to make two promises which completely opposed each other, but they are two promises that he is bound to keep. The priest encourages a relationship that was never meant to be - just in case it does work out. And people choose to keep some secrets. It left for an interesting read. While the plot is predictable, a forbidden love between two people of different classes, it still leaves the reader wondering how it is all going to work out.

However, I can't help but say I was disappointed. While I suppose things worked out as well as they could

have, I think I was hoping for something miraculous. Which is my fault - not the book's.

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### **Elizabeth (Alaska) says**

With this, Trollope shows his versatility. The GR description tells much of the plot line, bordering on a spoiler because the full revelation of the conflict doesn't come until past the halfway point. Fred Neville has made two promises in complete contradiction of each other. It is impossible for him to keep both of them and breaking either of them will compromise his honor.

Trollope has certainly given us plenty of characters who have done wrong. I can't recall him ever giving us a character who had no wiggle room to do what is right. This is a short novel, but the last 75 pages are filled with tension. He had painted himself in a corner - how would he get himself out?

I think you will want to be devoted to Trollope to spend even the short time needed to read this one, but I certainly don't regret my time with it.

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### **Sharon Zink says**

This Victorian novel is a tragedy. The way the story turns out satisfies no one. It is because of the rigid class system in Victorian England. Still, I loved the writing. I kept wondering how Trollope was going to fix everything.

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### **Captain Sir Roddy, R.N. (Ret.) says**

This is my fourth Trollope, and while not the best I've read (that distinction goes to *The Way We Live Now*, so far), it was a good story. I have found that Trollope is a story-teller, and a very good one at that. *An Eye for an Eye* is actually a tale that is much more characteristic of those written by Elizabeth Gaskell, Thomas Hardy or even George Eliot. *An Eye for an Eye* is a tragedy in every sense of the word, and you can see the tragic ending coming like an on-rushing freight train.

Without giving away too much of the plot of this slim little novel (just 201 pages), the gist of the tale revolves around a handsome young Army officer, Fred Neville, whose regiment has been recently billeted in a remote station along the Irish coast. During the course of his jaunts about the wild Irish countryside, Fred meets a beautiful young Irish Catholic woman, Kate O'Hara. Concurrent with his Army duties in Ireland, Fred is selected by his elderly uncle, Lord Scroope, to become the heir apparent and inherit the Scroope wealth, lands, and title. Suffice it to say that his uncle is not particularly interested in Fred bringing a young Irish Catholic woman back to England as the future Lady Scroope. With the dilemma of both loving the young woman and recognizing the responsibility to his family, Fred takes actions and makes promises to Kate and his uncle that creates an impossible situation that can only end badly for everyone.

In *An Eye for an Eye*, Trollope definitely puts his reader 'front-and-center' with many of the social issues of the day, including (1) Catholic vs Protestant, (2) Anglo vs Irish, (3) class differences, and, of course, the (4) gender and sexuality issues that dominate the relationship between Fred and Kate.

Like each of the Trollope novels I've read to date, this was an engaging and well-written story that I quite

enjoyed. I guess I really don't know why I don't read Trollope more often.

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### **Gillian James says**

An extremely predictable story of a young man who is heir to an Earldom and expected to marry a well bred lady but instead falls in love with a poor Irish girl of uncertain decent. The hero is idle, foolish and arrogant with few redeeming features while the heroine has no great qualities other than beauty. Unlike most of Trollope's other novels where there is a whole cast of supporting and often amusing characters this story has concerns only the principle characters and their immediate family and there is little of Trollope's usual humour.

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### **Lindsey says**

Although this was more engaging of a story than the others by Trollope that I've read, I found this to be quite repetitive and predictable. Fred Neville is a young man who finds himself the heir of his uncle, the Earl of Scroope, and tries to balance the expectations of his uncle and society with the promises he made to a young Irish girl he met while in a regiment of hussars. The entire book just goes back and forth between him professing his undying love for her and at the same time promising his uncle he will never marry her. Half the book could have been omitted without any loss of dialogue.

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### **Robert Johnson says**

In the second half of the Nineteenth Century, British author Anthony Trollope spent a number of years in Ireland. He revamped the delivery of the posted mail and he found time to write five novels. As if these achievements were not enough, he also found the time to get married. The first of these novels was "An Eye for an Eye." This tells the story of two doomed lovers. He is the heir to the local Lord plus he holds a commission with the Hussars. She is a cute working class lass. And he is English while she is native Irish. Class differences were a hurdle that love could not vault at this time. Although they have a mutual attraction there can be no future for the pair; just like Romeo and Juliet. But these two are not simply star-crossed lovers. Our hero, Fred, tries to manipulate Rose and other factors of their environment so that he can reap the monetary and social rewards of his Lordship. But the number one barrier to marriage with this Irish, Catholic young woman is the fact that our hero has made her pregnant. As the situation for the lovers becomes more hopeless our hero refuses to become honest with himself and tragically with Rose. To use an old expression, this doesn't end well for Fred. I found this book to be quite readable. The plot moves along quickly and stays on track. That is not always the case in these period pieces. One gripe from this Irish reader is that Trollope allows his Irish characters to speak like country bumpkins. As the forward by Maeve Binchey notes, This makes no sense to mocked are Irish of that period. They were the best speakers of English alive at that time.

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### **Entre mis libros says**

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### **Betsy says**

Running at about 200 pages, this would be a good introduction to Trollope for those who are hesitant to jump into the deep end with one of his much better known, much longer books. Everything about Trollope's style that is so wonderful--the nuances of characters and slender threads of conversation and circumstance that lead to significant, sometimes shattering decisions--it is all here. The book was held back by Trollope himself and the subject matter was considered to be scandalous at the time, though the events described were certainly commonplace--thoughtless but redeemable young man takes a naive young woman, and then tries to justify abandoning her, pregnancy, fierce mother, and all, when his new social elevation throws difficulties in his path. Trollope writes with great sympathy about a young woman who so idolizes her sweetheart that she gives him whatever he wants, and then is bewildered when she is less valued afterward. But he is at his very best when hypocrisy is on the table, and he blasts women who attack their own -- not for having sexual relations out of wedlock, but for being KNOWN to have had them. This book certainly deserves much more readership than it has gotten in Trollope's time and today.

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### **Stephen Brooke says**

'An Eye for an Eye' is not truly Trollope at his best. Perhaps that is why he was hesitant about publishing this novel and 'sat on it' for some time. The plot is the stuff of melodrama but Trollope assiduously avoided that, taking a largely dispassionate (yet sympathetic) approach to our young protagonist who is caught between conflicting views of just what is the right thing to do.

The resolution is a tad cheap as well as a tad predictable. The writing is wordier than we might typically expect with Trollope, with more attention to interior 'psychological' exposition, and there are only occasional glimpses of his satirical wit. Not a bad book but not a good example of the author's work.

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### **Rachel says**

Thoroughly enjoyed this escape to a pocket of fictional history. The pace was a little slower than I'm used to with stories of this era, and the characters were not as fleshed out. But. If I can put the book down and be held in stunned wonder momentarily, that's my measure of a good story.

I used my own imagination to fill things in more than I usually would so I was as immersed and invested as I needed to be to have my fiction receptors 'drenched'.

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### **T P Kennedy says**

Not a bad book - one of the Irish trollopes and thus one of the weaker Trollope books. It's a slight melodrama though with a note of ambiguity. There are no heroes and villains in this work but it's light years from the sophistication and well drawn characters of the palliser or basset series.

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## **Jacque Holst says**

### **Written for the times**

An ageless classic. A young man with a brilliant future, a lovely young girl all innocence. So easy to predict the future. The lives destroyed.

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