

You Never Can Tell Summary

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The play opens on an August morning in 1896 in a dentist's chamber that is well-furnished and spacious, but the chamber bears the hallmarks of Victorian poverty. The dentist's name is Mr. Valentine who is thirty years old and he has rented his chamber. Six weeks have passed since then and he has had no patients. But for the first time, he got a patient named Dolly, who came to England from Madeira, one of the most famous cities in Portugal, she was 18 years old and she came to see her dentist. Dr. Valentine tells Dolly that she is his first patient and that he will have to pay five shillings for tooth extraction and another five shillings for gas. Dolly is surprised to hear about the doctor's first patient. She surprisingly tells her why he doesn't practice at the hospital. Valentine humorously and scientifically replies that even though she is his first patient, he needn't worry as he is a trained doctor. Then he very skillfully pulls Dolly's teeth. But she doesn't want gas because she has to pay five shillings more. Then Dolly asks Valentine why he charges five shillings for everything. Valentine humorously replies that he wishes people would call him the Five Shilling Doctor. However, in the meantime, Dolly's wayward twin brother Philip appears in the chamber. Philip is a remarkable young man because he always observes human nature. He looks at the doctor out of curiosity and decides that the doctor is not a rich man because he is living alone on the beach without his parents. Later, these three young men soon developed a friendship.

Invite Valentine to Lunch: Then, Dolly invites Valentine to join them for a lunch party. But Valentine politely tells her that she can't join them for lunch because she doesn't know her parents very well. But in the end, Valentine agrees to go to lunch. He went inside to change his clothes for lunch.

Mrs. Clandon and Gloria's appearance: Meanwhile, Mrs. Clandon, who is a feminist, and her eldest daughter Gloria arrive at the doctor's chamber because Dolly is late returning to the Marine Hotel. Valentine comes from inside his chamber. Dolly introduces Valentine to her mother and older sister who is her mother's perfect disciple. Here begins love at first sight between Valentine and Gloria. Meanwhile, Doctor Valentine's parlor maid informs him that his landlady wishes to speak to him now. Valentine tells his maid to tell the landlord that there are four patients in his chamber now and he will see him in a few minutes. Mrs. Clandon was surprised by the doctor's behavior. She gets curious and asks the doctor why he is lying. He politely replies that Dolly will be his only patient in six weeks, which is why his landlord is

forcing him to give up his property but today his lie will establish his business. Mrs. Clandon is now convinced. Valentine asks them to stay a while so he can talk to his landlord.

Children question mother about father's identity: Valentine leaves and Mrs. Clandon's three children want to know about their father's identity. In reply, Mrs. Clandon says that their father is a backdated person, and she does not want to talk about him. Valentine returns. Mrs. Clandon tells him she has to go to a hotel to talk to an old friend of hers. She also tells Valentine to bring his landlord to the lunch party. In the meantime, Mr. Crampton comes into the chamber because his teeth are bothering him so much and he wants to pull out his annoying tooth. Mr. Crampton looks at Dolly very passionately. Dolly asks Mr. Crampton about his age and why he is looking at her like that. Mr. Crampton tells her that he is fifty-seven and Dolly looks like his mother. Dolly asks him why she looks like his mother instead of her daughter. Mr. Crampton then becomes furious, and Dolly is surprised because the old man hates his daughter. Gloria, Dolly, and Phillip leave the chamber. Half past Valentine's lunchtime. Mr. Crampton also agreed to go to lunch.

Conversation between Valentine and Mr. Crampton about married life: Then Valentine and Mr. Crampton talk about married life. Valentine is very positive about married life, but Mr. Crampton is very pessimistic. Valentine then asks Mr. Crampton why he is negative about marriage. Mr. Crampton angrily replies that he is not a bachelor. Valentine asks his landlady about Mrs. Crampton's family, and wife. He tells him that his wife left him eighteen years ago, and he doesn't know where she is with his three children.

Uncovering Mr. Crampton's Identity: On the balcony of the resort hotel, Mrs. Clandon talks to Finch McComas about socialism, which Mrs. Clandon hates. McComas urges Mrs. Clandon to abandon her ideology. Mrs. Clandon proudly declares that her ideology will not perish because she raised Gloria with her strong ideals. McComas says that Gloria should leave her own way. However, McComas asks Mrs. Clandon why she asked him to come here. Mrs. Clandon jokingly replies that she has not seen him for a long time. McComas then asks her to tell the real reason. She tells him that she asked him to come here to tell her three children about Mr. Crampton. Mrs. Clandon tells Dolly that Mr. McComas is as much your father's friend as mine: and he will tell you your father's story better than I can.

McComas begins to speak but Dolly questions what his father looks like. She asks him how old her father is. McComas replied that her father is seventy-five years old and now living in the city. He is a very rich man. Dolly then asks her father's name. McComas answered Mr. Crampton. Dolly is delighted but Philip is angry and cannot accept Mr. Crampton as his father. McComas tells Philip that he has no right to choose his father from his own point of view. The

whole atmosphere is closed because this morning they meet Mr. Crampton and invite him to lunch. Mrs. Clandon and Gloria go inside the hotel. Meanwhile, Philip asks a waiter named William Boone to play a trick on Mr. Crampton. The waiter agreed. Mr. Crampton arrives at the hotel with Valentine. The waiter respectfully informs Mr. Crampton that he is going to lunch with his children and family. Mr. Crampton is now surprised and warns the waiter and forbids him to play such fun with him. The waiter politely replies that he's not kidding him because a lawyer named McComas has already told the kids the whole story. Now Mr. Crampton is even more furious and threatens Valentine for this. Valentine begs Mr. Crampton not to get excited. At lunch, Mr. Crampton approached the table, but he was greatly insulted by his three children. He was affected by the children's anger. But the saddest thing for Mr. Crampton is that his children have not learned good manners. Here the playwright satirizes the so-called Victorian modernism through the luncheon and the behavior of the children.

The love between Gloria and Valentine: Now the scene turns to Gloria and Valentine. Valentine admires Gloria's beauty. But on the other hand, Gloria blindly adheres to her feminist ideology. She mentions that she has no inclination towards marriage and adds that a woman who has self-respect cannot marry. Dolly and Phillip inform Mrs. Clandon that Gloria is in love with Valentine. Mrs. Clandon talks to Gloria about the matter. She convinces Gloria not to accept Valentine's love.

Mrs. Clandon's Concept of Family: Mrs. Clandon explains to Gloria the type of family. According to Ms. Clandon, families are generally of two types - consanguineous families and male-dominated families. She proudly declares that her family is a family based on mutual understanding so why should Gloria get married? There is no need for her to get married.

Scientific Explanation of Love: Now the scene turns to Gloria's anger. Gloria learns that Valentine has already proposed to several women. When Gloria questions Valentine about it, he admits it without hesitation. He says it's a man's natural instinct to propose to women in order to find a true partner. Now, he has found his perfect partner because of which he will not propose to anyone else. But Gloria doesn't believe it. But Valentine explains that when he saw Gloria, he felt oxygen running through his blood. Gloria also admitted that she felt the same way. Valentine also explains that their relationship is like a chemical reaction. As in a chemical reaction, a new substance is formed when at least two elements are mixed, similarly, the relationship between a man and a woman is prolonged because through such a relationship a new person comes into this world. Now Gloria is reassured and kisses Valentine. But after that, Valentine learns from Bohun, a disguised waiter, that Gloria also had several romantic relationships before falling in love with Valentine. Finally, the young counselor settled the matter. Meanwhile, Mr. Crampton's children and his wife, Mrs. Clandon, also received him.

Meanwhile, Valentine is extremely unhappy, but Waiter Boone reassures Valentine and advises "You never can tell".

LxNotes