

Vita & Violet
By
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(Denys Monologue, Act II)

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A hotel in Amiens, France, 1921. Denys, a British soldier, confronts his upper class wife, Violet, who has deserted him and eloped with her lover, Vita Sackville-West.

DENYS

You're so spoiled. All I wanted was to love you. You have no idea. You've always had money and houses. It's all a game with you. You've no idea about the world, really. The world is France, outside this town, it's Ypres, it's the Somme, Passendale. It's not over, the war. You think you can go back to the old life--your dancing and cafes, your smug artist friends who call themselves "souls," who think they're better than other people. How inconvenient the war must have been. You're not better than other people. You don't know anything. Everything's changed. We can't hold this empire, treat the rest of the world like servants. We'd have lost the war if the Yanks hadn't bailed us out. This bloody treaty, making the Germans pay, We're making them hate us more than ever. We're making another war. In twenty years they'll be right back, only this time they'll be dropping bombs at Knole. I had a man in my outfit. He took a shell in the spine. He doesn't walk now, what's left of him. He gets about in a chair. I went to see him. The family home in Sussex. His parents say nothing about it. They look at him like he's disgraced them somehow. He just wheels about the house. I heard his father say to him, "Old boy, can you keep your chair off the carpet in the library. It's wearing a groove in the rug."

(HE breaks down and weeps.)

It's wearing a groove in the rug.

(HE tries to stop but cannot.)

I'm sorry.

(HE stumbles out.)