

A Study of Lexical Collocations in the Short Story “Eveline” by James Joyce

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Abstract

Collocation plays an important role to understand a text and grasp the meaning of words. So, collocation can be considered as one key to understand texts easily. The aim of the present research is to analyze lexical collocations in the short story ‘Eveline’ by James Joyce. The objectives are to identify lexical collocations found in the short story and to find out the most and the least frequent use of lexical collocations. The theory of lexical collocation by Benson et al. was applied to analyze the data in the short story. In accordance with Benson et al. (1997), seven types of lexical collocation: L₁ (Verb + Noun/ Pronoun or Prepositional phrase) (creation/activation), L₂ (Verb + Noun) (eradication/ nullification), L₃ (Adjective + Noun), L₄ (Noun + Verb), L₅ (Noun 1 of Noun 2), L₆ (Adverb + Adjective), L₇ (Verb + Adverb) were studied. The L₁ type was mostly found and L₃, L₄, L₅ and L₆ were rarely used in this short story. The least frequent type of collocation found in the story was L₇, and L₂ was not found in this short story.

Keywords: collocation, text, short story

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that collocations play an important role in second language learning. Collocations enhance learner’s oral communication, listening comprehension and reading speed. So it has become one of the central concerns in second language learning and teaching. In recent years, more researchers and language teachers have advocated the significance of collocations in language development and teaching. Collocations are regarded as an important part of L2 lexical development (Ellis, 1996). As Ellis (2001) argues, collocational knowledge is the essence of language knowledge. The collocational competence should be improved when learners want to improve his or her communicative skill. Nakata (2006) stated that learners have to acquire a large number of collocations to be able to produce and comprehend ideas accurately and naturally. So, collocation is an important role in second language learning and teaching. But if learners lack collocational competence, they do not understand a large set of items which expresses complex ideas simply and exactly and they cannot express precisely their thoughts. So, collocation can be considered one key to achieving the text easily and it can help learners to understand more quickly and grasp the meaning of the words exactly. As collocation plays an important role in studying English literature, there are many studies on it. The present study has been made as an attempt to explore lexical collocations found in the short story “Eveline” written by James Joyce.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The present paper aims at investigating the use of lexical collocation found in the short story “Eveline” by James Joyce.

The objectives are:

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- (1) to identify and analyze the categories of lexical collocations found in the short story "Eveline" written by James Joyce
- (2) to study the frequency of categories of lexical collocations in the story
- (3) to find out the most and the least frequent type of the lexical collocations used in the story

Research Questions

The major aim of this study is to investigate the following research questions:

1. Which types of lexical collocations are found in the short story?
2. How frequently do they occur in the story? What are the most and the least frequently used types of lexical collocations in the story?
- 3.

Literature Review

This chapter consists of theoretical background of the research comprising various definitions of collocation suggested by some linguists and the theory of collocation proposed by Benson et al. (1997), the related researches to the present research, biography of the author, James Joyce and synopsis of the short story "Eveline".

Theoretical Background

The term "collocation" was first introduced by Firth (1957) and he was the father and developer of collocation. This term has its origin in the Latin verb 'collocate' which means 'to set in order to arrange'. Many linguists provide the definitions of collocation differently.

Various Definitions of Collocation

Benson (1990) defined collocation as the occurrence of two or more words within a short span of each other, and at the same time, McCarthy (1984) highlighted the importance of collocation in language teaching and argued that collocation is a marriage contract between words and it forms an important organizing principle in the vocabulary of any language. Palmer (1983) reported that the term 'collocation' was already used as a technical but rather vague term in linguistic field. He defined collocation as 'a succession of two or more words that must be learned as an integral whole and not pieced together from its component parts'.

Collocations are words that occur together with high frequency and refer to the combination of words that have a certain mutual expectancy. "The combination is not a fixed expression but there is a greater chance than likelihood that the words will co-occur" (Jackson, 1988, p.96). Also McCarten (2007, p.5) stated that the way in which two or more words are typically used is generally called collocation. Stubbs (2002, p.215) defined collocation as the habitual co-occurrence of two unordered content words, or of a content word and a lexical set.

Theory of Collocation by Benson et al. (1997)

Benson et al. (1997) (cited in "Do English language learners know collocations?" by Malgorzata Martynsuka (n.d.)) define collocation as specified, identified, non-idiomatic, recurrent combinations. In their dictionary (*The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English, 1986*), they divide them into two groups: lexical and grammatical collocations.

Lexical Collocation

Lexical collocations do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or clauses. Typical lexical collocations consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. There are seven types of lexical collocations.

1. L₁ = verb (which means creation/action) + noun/ pronoun/ prepositional phrase
e.g. come to an agreement

2. L₂ = verb (which means eradication/cancellation) + noun
e.g. reject an appeal
3. L₃ = adjective + noun
e.g. strong tea
4. L₄ = noun + verb naming the activity which is performed by a designate of this noun
e.g. bombs explode
5. L₅ = noun 1 of noun 2
e.g. a piece of advice
6. L₆ = adverb + adjective
e.g. sound asleep
7. L₇ = verb + adverb
e.g. apologize humbly

Previous studies on Collocation with different trends are a study of collocation in ‘To Build a Fire’ by Jack London by Wai Wai Thaw (2015, Magway University). The aim of this research is to find out what kinds of lexical collocation are used in “To Build a Fire” and to observe the most and least frequent use of lexical collocation.

The next research is “The English Adjective Lexical Collocation” by Siti Aisah, Gunadarma University, 2009. The main aims are to describe the English adjective collocations, other word classes that collocate with the English adjective, the most frequent combination of adjective collocations and to describe the meaning of adjective collocations.

Biography of the Author

James Augustine Joyce was an Irish novelist, short story writer, poet, teacher, and literary critic. He was born in Dublin on 2 February 1882. He attended Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit boys' school in County Kildare, until his father lost his job as a Rates Collector in 1891. His family moved house for the fourth time since Joyce's birth. They also sold off their last remaining Cork property. Despite increasing poverty and upheaval, Joyce managed to win a prize for his excellent exam results and wrote an essay on Ulysses which, arguably, sowed the seeds for Joyce's 1922 masterpiece of the same name. In 1896 Joyce was made prefect of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a devotional society. Joyce is best known for [Ulysses](#) (1922), a landmark work in which the episodes of [Homer's *Odyssey*](#) are paralleled in a variety of literary styles, most famously stream of consciousness. Other well-known works are the short-story collection [Dubliners](#) (1914), and the novels [A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man](#) (1916) and [Finnegans Wake](#) (1939). His other writings include three books of poetry, a play, his published letters and occasional journalism. He contributed to the [modernist avant-garde](#) movement and is regarded as one of the most influential and important writers of the 20th century.

(<https://writersinspire.org/content/james-joyce-biography>)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Joyce)

Summary of the short story

Eveline is a young woman living in Dublin with her father. Her mother is dead. Dreaming of a better life beyond the shores of Ireland, Eveline plans to elope with Frank, a sailor who is her secret lover (Eveline's father having forbidden Eveline to see Frank after the two men fell out), and start a new life in Argentina. With her mother gone, Eveline is responsible for the day-to-day running of the household: her father is drunk and only reluctantly tips up his share of the weekly housekeeping money, and her brother Harry is busy working and is away a lot on business (another brother, Ernest, has died).

Eveline herself keeps down a job working in a shop. On Saturday nights, when she asks her father for some money, he tends to unleash a tirade of verbal abuse, and is often drunk. When he eventually hands over his housekeeping money, Eveline has to go to the shops and buy the food for the Sunday dinner at the last minute. Eveline is tired of this life, and so she and Frank book onto a ship leaving for Argentina. But as she is just about to board the ship, Eveline suffers a failure of resolve, and cannot go through with it. She wordlessly turns round and goes home, leaving Frank to board the ship alone.

(<https://interestingliterature.com/2017/07/a-summary-and-analysis-of-james-joyces-eveline>)

Research methodology

In this research, the researchers studied the short story "Eveline" investigating sentence by sentence to find out the lexical collocations in the short story. First, the data were collected from each sentence according to Benson et al. (1997). Secondly, the frequencies of each kind of lexical collocations were counted in each sentence and converted to percentage. Finally, the use of different kinds of lexical collocation was discussed.

According to Benson et al. (1997), there are seven types of lexical collocation, labelled from L₁ to L₇.

L₁ = verb (which means creation/action) + noun/ pronoun/ prepositional phrase

L₂ = verb (which means eradication/nullification) + noun

L₃ = adjective + noun

L₄ = noun + verb naming the activity which is performed by a designate of this noun

L₅ = noun 1 of noun 2

L₆ = adverb + adjective

L₇ = verb + adverb

Description of the Data

Description of the data consists of Data Collection and Data Analysis.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data were collected and analyzed according to the definition of lexical collocation by Benson et al. (1997).

Table (1) Sample analysis of different types of lexical collocation from the short story

Sr. No.	Sentence No.	Sentence	Collocation	Type
1.	1. 5.	She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue . The man out of the last house passed on his way home ; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses.	sat at the window invade the avenue passed on his way home	L ₁
2.	2.	Her head was leaned against the	the window curtains	L ₃

	5.	window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne . The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses .	dusty cretonne the last house the concrete pavement the cinder path the new red houses	
3.	3. 15.	Few people passed. Everything changes.	Few people passed Everything changes	L ₄
4.	8.	The children of the avenue used to play together in that field—the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters.	The children of the avenue	L ₅
5.	9. 12.	Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up . Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive.	too grown up so bad	L ₆
6.	27. 56.	Of course she had to work hard , both in the house and at business. He was standing at the gate, his peaked cap pushed back on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze.	work hard tumbled forward	L ₇

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this session, the findings of different types of lexical collocation found in the short story 'Eveline' will be presented and discussed. The use of different types of lexical collocation was identified and classified according to Benson et al. (1997): Verb + Noun/ Pronoun or Propositional phrase (creation or activation) (L₁), Verb + Noun (eradication or nullification) (L₂), Adjective + Noun (L₃), Noun + Verb (L₄), Noun 1 of Noun 2 (L₅), Adverb + Adjective (L₆), Verb + Adverb (L₇). Then, the number of different types of lexical collocation in the short story 'Eveline' was counted and presented in percentage.

Table (2) Lexical Collocations Found in the Short Story 'Eveline'

Lexical Collocation Type	Pattern	Frequency	Percentage (%)
L ₁	Verb + Noun/ Pronoun or Prepositional phrase (creation or activation)	102	42.86
L ₂	Verb + Noun	0	0
L ₃	Adjective + Noun	76	31.93
L ₄	Noun + Verb	12	5.04

L ₅	Noun 1 of Noun 2	32	13.45
Lexical Collocation Type	Pattern	Frequency	Percentage (%)
L ₆	Adverb + Adjective	10	4.20
L ₇	Verb + Adverb	6	2.52
	Total	238	100

In table (2), James Joyce used collocations 102 times in the structure of L₁, 76 times in L₃, 12 times in L₄, 32 times in L₅, 10 times in L₆ and 6 times in L₇. Among them, L₁ collocation type was mostly found in the short story. It was 42.86 %. The second one was the L₃ type. It was 31.93%. Then, the next one was the L₅ type.

L₁ type of lexical collocation was mostly found in this short story. Most of the L₁ type collocations made the reader see the setting of the story and the main character's indecision whether she would elope with her lover Frank and live in a new country happily or she would remain in her own country and live with her family with difficulties.

The author used the collocations such as 'passed on his way home', 'sat at the window', 'invade the avenue' and 'heard his footsteps' at the beginning of the story. Through these collocations, the author gave the reader some information that the main character Eveline felt something very serious and she was involved in her deep thoughts. The collocations 'bought the field', 'built houses' and 'saw her father coming' indicated the childhood memories of the main character. The author employed the L₁ type collocation very skillfully to convey the information he wanted to give to the reader. By using the collocations 'looked around the room', 'dusted once a week' and 'see again those familiar objects', the author expressed how Eveline recalled what she did in her house. She looked at the things that she was familiar with for years and the things that she dusted for many years. Indeed, these L₁ type collocations indicated that although she had decided to elope with Frank, she was reluctant to do so because she had to look after her old father and younger brothers. Moreover, she felt that she would not have a chance to see those things again in the future.

The author used the L₁ type collocations such as 'had shelter and food', 'had those where she had known all her life' to express Eveline's feelings concerned with her house before she went away with her lover Frank. She was indecisive. She was not sure whether she should elope with Frank or not. If she decided not to go away with him, she would remain in the same situation. She had her house, food and people whom she knew well. But, she had to work hard and her life was difficult in her town.

The author employed the L₁ type collocations 'say of her', 'run away with a fellow', 'filled up by advertisement' and 'had an edge on her' very effectively to indicate the fact that if Eveline went away with Frank, the ladies of the Stores would gossip about her. By using the L₁ type collocations 'gave her entire wages', 'gave her the money' and 'do her marketing', the author expressed the quarrel between Eveline and her father concerning money on Saturday nights. Her brother and she had to support the family as her father did not earn enough money. But, her father did not want to give her his hard-earned money. After a long quarrel with her father, he gave her his money and let her shop the provisions.

Because of the L₁ type collocations 'had hard work', 'went to school regularly' and 'got their meals regularly', the reader came to realize that Eveline had to look after the two young children and keep the house. It was hard work for a young lady of nineteen. Moreover,

James Joyce used the L₁ type collocations such as ‘explore another life’, ‘go away with him’, ‘live with him’ and ‘had a home’ to show Eveline’s imagination that she would lead a new life with her lover Frank in Buenos Ayres. The collocations ‘remembered the first time’ and ‘was standing at the gate’ described how Eveline met with Frank and became familiar with him.

By using the L₁ type collocations ‘took her’, ‘sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre’ and ‘sang about the lass’, the author portrayed the scene of the two lovers who watched a movie together for the first time. Eveline was very excited at that time. The collocations ‘had tales of distant countries’, ‘told her the names of the ships’ and ‘told her stories of the terrible Patagonians’ expressed the fact that Frank told Eveline about his life as a sailor and the experiences he had faced. Through the L₁ type collocations ‘had found out the affairs’, ‘had forbidden her’ and ‘had quarreled Frank’, the reader came to know that her father knew all about their love affairs and asked her to stop meeting with Frank.

Due to the L₁ type collocations ‘remembered the last night’, ‘heard a melancholy air of Italy’ and ‘mused the pitiful vision of her mother’s life’, the reader came to realize the fact that Eveline remembered the night her mother passed away. Remembering that night made her feel sad. Through the collocations ‘would save her’, ‘would give her life’, ‘had a right’, ‘would take her’ and ‘would fold her’, the author gave the reader some information that Eveline thought of getting a happy life in a new place if she married Frank. She wanted to escape from her present life that was a bit difficult for her.

By employing the L₁ type collocations ‘held her hand’, ‘was speaking to her’, ‘answered nothing’, ‘prayed to God’, ‘blew a long mournful whistle’, ‘awoke a nausea’ and ‘clanged upon her heart’, the author expressed Eveline’s strong emotions. There was a dilemma in the mind of Eveline. She had to decide whether she went away with Frank to live in a new country or she continued to live with her family. If she chose the first one, she would possess a new happy life with Frank in Buenos Ayres, and if she chose the second one, she would have a difficult, but warm life with her father and younger brothers.

The L₁ type collocations ‘felt him seize her hand’, ‘tumbled about her heart’, ‘was driving her into them’, ‘would drown her’, ‘gripped with both hands’ and ‘clutched the iron’ gave the reader some information about how Eveline deeply felt when the ship was about to leave. Through the L₁ type collocations ‘sent a cry of anguish’, ‘called to her’, ‘set her white face’ and ‘gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition’, the author tried to help the reader visualize Eveline’s emotions when she decided not to go away with her lover to Buenos Ayres. Indeed, she loved him a lot and wanted to have a happy life with him. However, she could not leave her father and her younger brothers as she knew that they were totally depending on her. If she left them, they would have a very difficult life. Thus, she was determined not to elope with Frank. As a result, she was heart-broken and her heart was empty. Her love on her family weighed more than her love on Frank. In fact, she did what she should do.

The second most frequently used lexical collocation was the L₃ type. It was used 31.93%. It was 76 times out of 238 collocations. The collocations ‘the window curtains’, ‘dusty cretonne’, ‘the concrete pavement’, ‘the cinder path’ and ‘the new red houses’ were found to be used in the L₃ type. These collocations described the background of the setting vividly. Through the collocations ‘other people’s children’, ‘little brown houses’, ‘bright brick houses’ and ‘shining roofs’, the author indicated the childhood memories of Eveline. The use of collocations ‘its familiar objects’, ‘those familiar objects’ and ‘many years’ stated that Eveline had to take the duty of dusting the things in her house for many years. By using the collocations ‘her new home’ and ‘a distant unknown country’, the author tried to express the fact that at that time Eveline had decided to elope with Frank and live in Buenos Ayres.

Besides, the collocations ‘The invariable squabble’, ‘Saturday nights’ and ‘his hard-earned money’ expressed the usual quarrel between Eveline and his father concerning the money to shop provisions. Because of the collocations ‘hard work’, ‘a hard life’, ‘a wholly undesirable life’, the writer let the reader know that Eveline had to struggle a lot and she had a difficult life. Through the collocations ‘her mother’s illness’, ‘the close dark room’, ‘a melancholy air’, ‘the pitiful vision’ and ‘her mother’s life’, the author indicated the situation of Eveline’s mother who was going to die.

By using the collocations ‘the swaying crowd’, ‘the wide doors’, ‘the black mass’, ‘the quay wall’ and ‘illumined portholes’, the author portrayed the last scene of Eveline and her lover ‘Frank’ very romantically. Frank had to go back to his country and Eveline was going along with him to live in a new place with him. The collocations ‘a long mournful whistle’, ‘silent fervent prayer’, ‘the iron railing’, ‘a cry of anguish’, ‘her white face’, and ‘a helpless animal’ showed the intense emotions of Eveline when she had decided not to go away with her lover to live in a new country and to stay with her family in her old place. Indeed, she loved Frank very much. But she had to give priority to her father and younger brothers who would face a lot of difficulties if she was not with them.

In this story, L₅ type collocation was used 32 times out of 238, that is 13.45%. The author used the L₅ type collocations cleverly in this short story. In the L₅ type collocation ‘the odour of dusty cretonne’, the author gives the reader what kind of smell dusty cretonne was. The author employed this collocation so skillfully that the reader felt the smell of cretonne in their noses. By using the collocation ‘the children of the avenue’, the reader could visualize the children playing and running in the avenue. Through the L₅ type collocations ‘the name of the priest’, ‘the coloured print of the promises’ and ‘a school friend of her father’, the author tried to describe Eveline’s thoughts concerned with the priest who was a friend of her father and the promises she had given to her mother.

By employing the L₅ type collocations, ‘danger of her father’s violence’ and ‘her load of provisions’, the author wanted to convey the reader how Eveline’s father made Eveline feel frightened. Eveline felt that she was mistreated and unloved. Because of the collocation ‘a face of bronze’, the reader could visualize the appearance of the face of Frank. Through the collocations ‘tales of distant countries’, ‘the names of the ships’, ‘the names of the different services’ and ‘stories of the terrible Patagonians’, the reader came to know the experiences Frank had throughout his sailor life vividly. The author created a vivid picture of the night Eveline’s mother passed away through the L₅ type collocations ‘the last night of her mother’s illness’, ‘the other side of the hall’, ‘a melancholy air of Italy’ and ‘the pitiful vision of her mother’s life’. By employing the L₅ type collocations ‘a maze of distress’, ‘all the seas of the world’, ‘a cry of anguish’ and ‘no sign of love or farewell or recognition’, Joyce could clearly portray the intense emotions of Eveline when she went to the docks to meet Frank who offered to take her away to Buenos Ayres with him.

The L₄ type collocation was 5.04% of the frequency that the collocations were used in the short story. It was 12 times out of 238. The collocation ‘Few people passed’ implied that there were only few people on the pavement and so also Eveline was isolated thinking of her present life and past life. The collocation ‘Everything changes’ means that some of the acquaintances of Eveline were dead and some had left their avenue. She thought that everything and everyone changed except her. Through the L₄ type collocations ‘The evening deepened’ and ‘her time was running out’, the author tried to show how Eveline was involved in her reflections and how she tried to make her decision. Through the collocations ‘She trembled’, ‘she stood up’ and ‘she must escape’, the author could show his skilful writing by portraying the situation of Irish social environments via Eveline. On one hand, Eveline wanted

to keep promises to her mother. On the other hand, she wanted to escape from her present life that was a bit difficult for her.

The L₆ type collocation was used 10 times out of 238, 4.20%. By using the L₆ type collocations ‘too grown up’, ‘so many’, ‘rather happy’, and ‘so bad’, the author conveyed the childhood memories of Eveline to the readers vividly. Because of the collocations ‘very kind, open-hearted’ and ‘awfully fond of,’ the reader came to realize what kind of person Frank was. He was very kind and open-hearted, and fond of music and singing songs. Through the L₆ type collocations ‘fairly bad’ and ‘very nice’, the author gave the opposite points of view of Eveline concerning her father. On Saturday nights, her father did not want to give her his money to buy provisions. He was bad on those days. But, one day when she was ill, he read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. The author cleverly showed the reader why Eveline did not run away with Frank and decided to stay at her home with her family.

The least frequently used lexical collocation was the L₇ type. It was 6 times out of 238, 2.52%. Through the L₇ type collocations ‘dusted once a week’ and ‘worked hard’, the author presented that Eveline had to do the household work all by herself and she had a difficult life in her house. By using the L₇ type collocation ‘tumbled forward’, Joyce tried to make the reader visualize Frank’s appearance. He also portrayed Eveline as a typical Irish girl by using the collocation ‘heard again’. Although Eveline decided to run away with Frank, she could not do so when she heard her mother’s voice again to keep the family together. The author used the L₇ type collocations beautifully to portray the characters in the story more vividly.

By studying lexical collocations, learners can look at Joyce’s ‘Eveline’ at a feminist angle. The author shows the oppression and struggle of women in the twentieth century, setting up a clear outline in the story through the relationship of Eveline with her lover, her obligations as a young unmarried woman, societal expectations of her and most importantly, her relationship with her family.

CONCLUSION

This research has focused on the study of lexical collocations used in the short story “Eveline” by James Joyce. The use of different types of lexical collocations found in the short story “Eveline” was identified and classified according to Benson et al. (1997).

In the short story ‘Eveline’, L₁ (Verb + Noun/ Pronoun or Prepositional Phrase) (creation or activation) collocation was mostly found. L₃ (Adjective + Noun) collocation was second mostly found. L₃ (Adjective + Noun), L₄ (Noun + Verb), L₅ (Noun₁of N₂) and L₆ (Adverb + Adjective) collocations were properly used. The least kind of lexical collocation found in this short story was L₇ (Verb + Adverb). However, L₂ type collocation (eradication/nullification) was not found in the story.

Lexical collocation plays an important role in learning a language and it can be of great help in reading a short story. In this story, the author, James Joyce, was able to use the collocations so skillfully that the reader was able to visualize the main character Eveline, her thoughts, her ideas and her memories vividly. Through the use of lexical collocations, learners are able not only to understand the text but also to enrich their knowledge of vocabularies. Moreover, learners are able to connect the links of words properly by studying collocations. Besides, learners can understand the meanings of a large set of items which express complex ideas and thoughts simply and exactly by learning the use of collocations thoroughly. Therefore, students and teachers who are learning English should pay more attention in studying collocations to better understand texts.

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Appendix

Eveline (James Joyce)

She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue.¹ Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne.² She was tired.³

Few people passed.⁴ The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses.⁵ One time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children.⁶ Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses in it—not like their little brown houses but bright brick houses with shining roofs.⁷ The children of the avenue used to play together in that field—the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters.⁸ Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up.⁹ Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick; but usually little Keogh used to keep nix and call out when he saw her father coming.¹⁰ Still they seemed to have been rather happy then.¹¹ Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive.¹² That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up her mother was dead.¹³ Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England.¹⁴ Everything changes.¹⁵ Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home.¹⁶

Home!¹⁷ She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from.¹⁸ Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided.¹⁹ And yet during all those years she had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken harmonium beside the coloured print of the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque.²⁰ He had been a school friend of her father.²¹ Whenever he showed the photograph to a visitor her father used to pass it with a casual word: 'He is in Melbourne now.'²²

She had consented to go away, to leave her home.²³ Was that wise?²⁴ She tried to weigh each side of the question.²⁵ In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her.²⁶ O course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business.²⁷ What would they say of her in the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow?²⁸ Say she was a fool, perhaps; and her place would be filled up by advertisement.²⁹ Miss Gavan would be glad.³⁰ She had always had an edge on her, especially whenever there were people listening.³¹

'Miss Hill, don't you see these ladies are waiting?'³²

'Look lively, Miss Hill, please.'³³

She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores.³⁴

But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that.³⁵ Then she would be married—she, Eveline.³⁶ People would treat her with respect then.³⁷ She would not be treated as her mother had been.³⁸ Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence.³⁹ She knew it was that that had given her the palpitations.⁴⁰ When they were growing up he had never gone for her like he used to go for Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl but latterly he had be-gun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother's sake.⁴¹ And no she had nobody to protect her.⁴² Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the country.⁴³ Besides, the invariable squabble for money on

Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably.⁴⁴ She always gave her entire wages—seven shillings—and Harry always sent up what he could but the trouble was to get any money from her father.⁴⁵ He said she used to squander the money, that she had no head, that he wasn't going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night.⁴⁶ In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday's dinner.⁴⁷ Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions.⁴⁸ She had hard work to keep the house together and to see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly.⁴⁹ It was hard work—a hard life—but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life.⁵⁰

She was about to explore another life with Frank.⁵¹ Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted.⁵² She was to go away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres where he had a home waiting for her.⁵³ How well she remembered the first time she had seen him; he was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit.⁵⁴ It seemed a few weeks ago.⁵⁵ He was standing at the gate, his peaked cap pushed back on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze.⁵⁶ Then they had come to know each other.⁵⁷ He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home.⁵⁸ He took her to see *The Bohemian Girl* and she felt elated as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him.⁵⁹ He was awfully fond of music and sang a little.⁶⁰ People knew that they were courting and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused.⁶¹ He used to call her Poppens out of fun.⁶² First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him.⁶³ He had tales of distant countries.⁶⁴ He had started as a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada.⁶⁵ He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services.⁶⁶ He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and he told her stories of the terrible Patagonians.⁶⁷ He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday.⁶⁸ Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him.⁶⁹

'I know these sailor chaps,' he said.⁷⁰

One day he had quarrelled with Frank and after that she had to meet her lover secretly.⁷¹

The evening deepened in the avenue.⁷² The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct.⁷³ One was to Harry; the other was to her father.⁷⁴ Ernest had been her favourite but she liked Harry too.⁷⁵ Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her.⁷⁶ Sometimes he could be very nice.⁷⁷ Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire.⁷⁸ Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth.⁷⁹ She remembered her father putting on her mother's bonnet to make the children laugh.⁸⁰

Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne.⁸¹ Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing.⁸² She knew the air.⁸³ Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could.⁸⁴ She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again in the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy.⁸⁵ The organ-player had been ordered to go away and given sixpence.⁸⁶ She remembered her father strutting back into the sickroom saying:

'Damned Italians! Coming over here!'⁸⁷

As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother's life laid its spell on the very quick of her being—that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness.⁸⁸ She trembled as she heard again her mother's voice saying constantly with foolish insistence:

'Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!'⁸⁹

She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror.⁹⁰ Escape!⁹¹ She must escape!⁹² Frank would save her.⁹³ He would give her life, perhaps love, too.⁹⁴ But she wanted to live.⁹⁵ Why should she be unhappy?⁹⁶ She had a right to happiness.⁹⁷ Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms.⁹⁸ He would save her.⁹⁹ She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall.¹⁰⁰ He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again.¹⁰¹ The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages.¹⁰² Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay wall, with illumined portholes.¹⁰³ She answered nothing.¹⁰⁴ She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a maze of distress, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty.¹⁰⁵ The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist.¹⁰⁶ If she went, tomorrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres.¹⁰⁷ Their passage had been booked.¹⁰⁸ Could she still draw back after all he had done for her?¹⁰⁹ Her distress awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer.¹¹⁰

A bell clanged upon her heart.¹¹¹ She felt him seize her hand:

'Come!'¹¹²

All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart.¹¹³ He was drawing her into them: he would drown her.¹¹⁴ She gripped with both hands at the iron railing.¹¹⁵

'Come!'¹¹⁶

No! No! No!¹¹⁷ It was impossible.¹¹⁸ Her hands clutched the iron in frenzy.¹¹⁹ Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish¹²⁰.

'Eveline! Evvy!'¹²¹

He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow.¹²² He was shouted at to go on but he still called to her.¹²³ She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal.¹²⁴ Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.¹²⁵