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**Riversdale Court**

**Forrest-Grant**

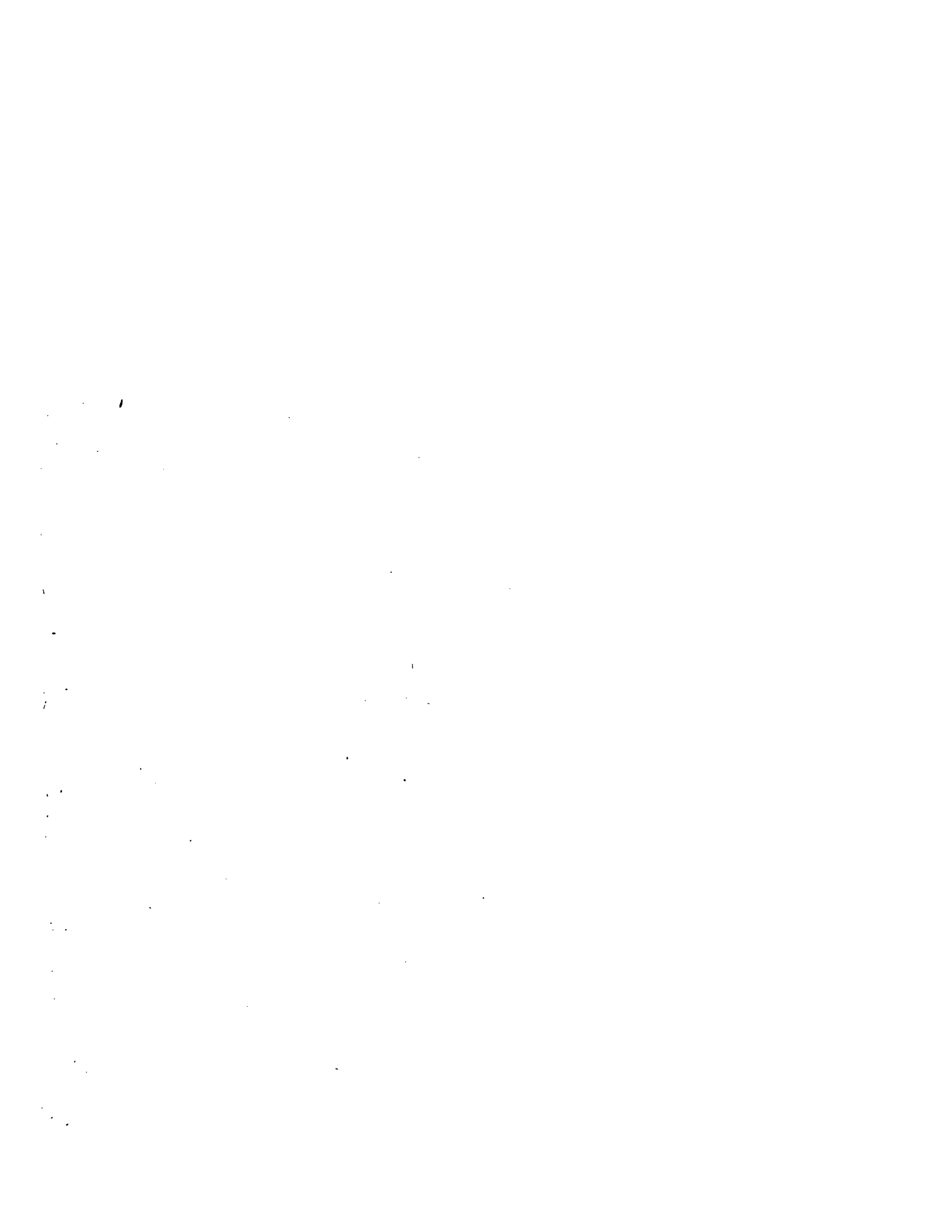
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**Title: Riversdale Court**

**Author: Forrest-Grant**

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**RIVERSDALE COURT**



# RIVERSDALE COURT.

*I* Nobel.

BY

MRS. FORREST-GRANT,

AUTHOR OF 'FAIR, BUT NOT WISE,' 'THE MAGIC OF LOVE,' ETC.

*IN THREE VOLUMES.*

VOL. II.



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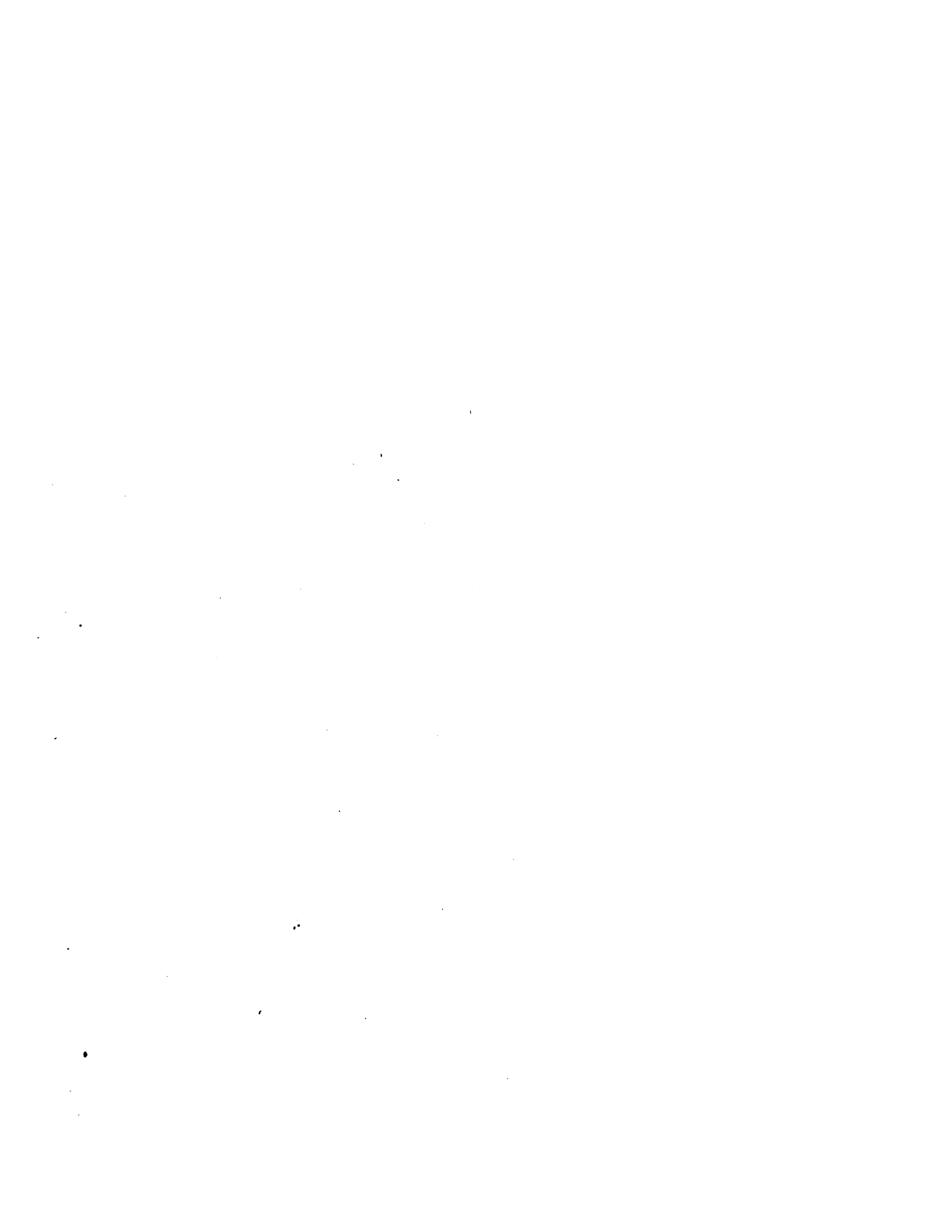
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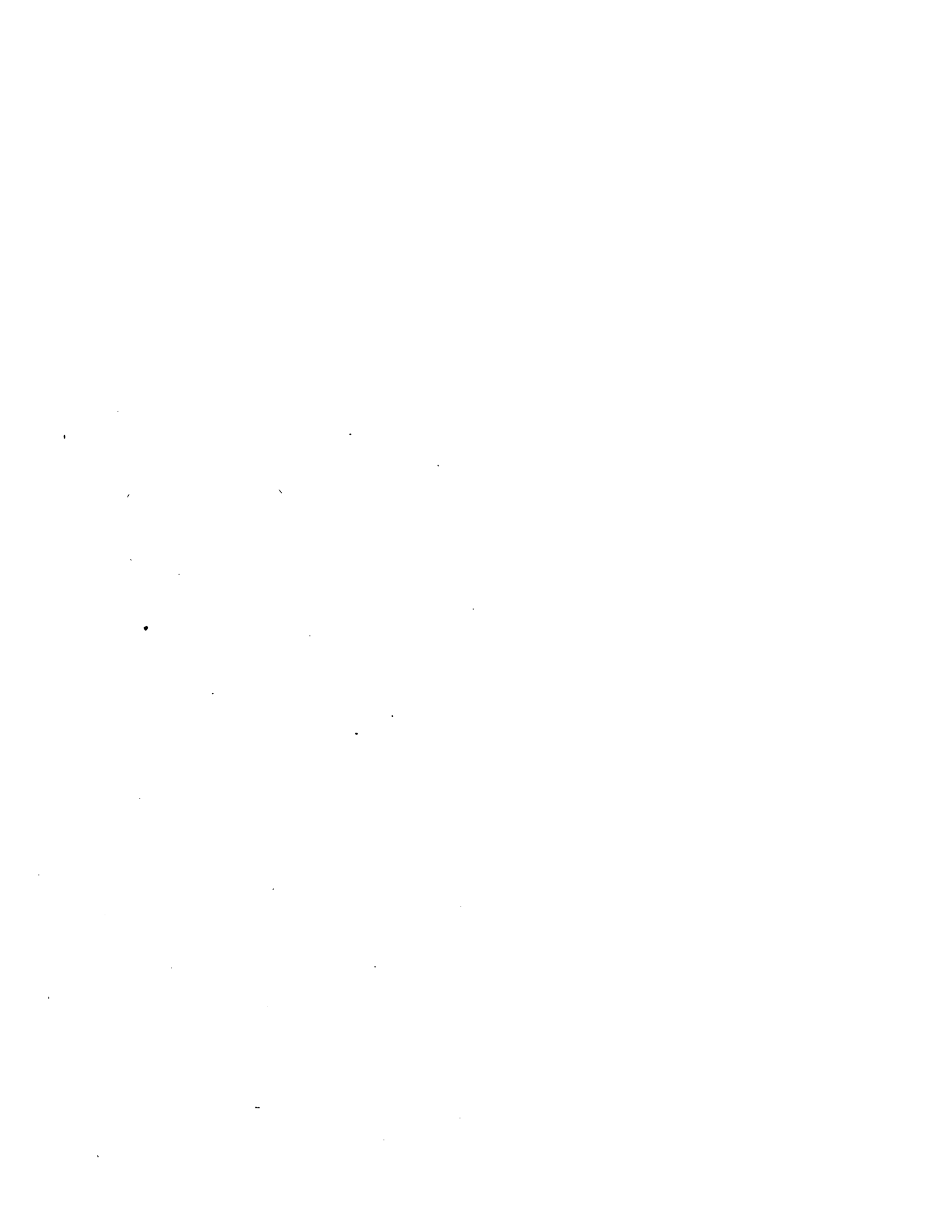
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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FETE.

THURSDAY, the morning of the fête, presented itself in the brightest attire and temper. Soft smiling sunshine, blue sky, flecked here and there with light fleecy clouds, foliage and flowers sparkling with dewdrops, while over the distant hills and dales rested a picturesque veil of thin grey mist. And the voice of the morning was as cheering as it looked; the birds chirped and sang, the children laughed, and everybody talked hopefully and joyously. How happy I felt as I sped about the beautiful gardens before breakfast, listening and gazing, and gathering this sweet flower and that, and

drinking in at every sense the charming sounds and scents filling earth, air, and sky!

“Oh, the day is perfect, dear mammy!” cried I, dancing into the breakfast-room with some half-open roses in my hand, and laying them on the table before grandmamma, the while I warmly pressed my customary kiss on her faded but still soft cheek. “It is impossible to express how heart-cheering it all looks and feels! Just the weather—just everything we could possibly desire!”

My grandmother smiled lovingly upon me.

“My little girl is an impersonation of this morning; I need no other description,” she replied, taking up the flowers.

“And it is so comforting to think how few hearts there are in Riversdale to-day which will not respond to ours,” I continued, seating myself at the table; “and those which cannot are only hindered by sickness or the infirmities of age, not through mental distress.”

Early in the forenoon the whole village, indeed all the cottage neighbourhood, presented as lively and bright a scene of life and colour as can be imagined. A good-sized field opening into it was devoted that day to the service

of men and boys for cricket, football, and other games; while for those who preferred sedentary amusements and rest, or for the aged, several seats were arranged in shady spots, with small tables near, on which lay a plentiful supply of newspapers, magazines, &c., wherewith to entertain themselves, while smoking a pipe of tobacco, also provided by dear, thoughtful grandmamma. To further render their enjoyment of the day as complete as she could, that solicitude was obviated which might have proved in some measure, especially to the poorest, a cloud dimming the brightness of their pleasures—the loss of their day's wages. Every labouring man, woman, and boy, therefore, had made up to them the deficiency in their weekly gains which their presence at the fête would necessarily occasion. Thus pecuniary anxieties were effectually laid to rest. This might, of course, have been easily remedied by electing Saturday as the day of entertainment, but for several reasons the rector and grandmamma objected to such a choice.

By three o'clock the orchard and field were all astir and a-flutter with neatly dressed,