

# Who is the greater villain

Literature



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My definition of a villain is a wicked person or a criminal. The definition I have taken from The Oxford Study Dictionary tells me that a villain is 'a person who is guilty or capable of great wickedness; a wrongdoer, a criminal; or a character in a story whose evil actions or motives are important in the plot'.

This helps me determine that Dunstan is a villain because he fits this description. We understand that Dunstan is both a wicked person and a criminal because he steals Silas Marner's gold.

I believe that Dunstan is the more dominant brother and that he may have also tricked his brother into a marriage with Molly Farren. This is because in the novel we are told 'the delusion was partly due to a trap laid for him by Dunstan.' This indicates he was somehow tricked into it, maybe because Molly was a bar maid Dunstan had somehow gotten his brother drunk. I believe that Godfrey is more of a coward because he is scared to tell his father about Molly Farren. All the villainous things Godfrey has done, such as taken money from one of his father's tenants and given it to Dunstan he has done because he is a coward, not because he is villainous.

The villagers see Godfrey as a 'fine open-faced, good-natured young man.' They seem concerned that he is going to lose Nancy Lammeter. 'If he went on in that way, he would lose Miss Nancy Lammeter.' The villagers also realize there is something wrong with Godfrey. 'For Mr Godfrey didn't look half so fresh-coloured and open as he used to do.' We are not yet told what is wrong with Godfrey so we are intrigued to read on. We feel concerned for his well-being and this makes us pity him in a way.

Godfrey is also described as 'Once hopeful.' This also makes us pity him, which takes our mind off him being a villain.

The writer also describes a room as 'fading grey' which links with Godfrey's mood at that current time. This makes us more concerned and curious to what is wrong with him. The whole atmosphere is made to be dark and depressing. We are told the room is decorated with 'guns, whips and foxes' brushes'. This indicated brutality and violence and it contrast with Godfrey because he seems very fragile at that moment in time.

'He seemed to be waiting and listening for someone's approach, and presently the sound of a heavy step, with an accompanying whistle, was heard across the large empty hall.' This makes us wonder whom it is that Godfrey is waiting for. The approaching person seems very carefree as he is whistling. His 'heavy step' indicates that he is a strong man and has authority. As Godfrey is in such a depressive mood we assume he is afraid of this approaching person.

The villagers see Dunstan as 'a spiteful, jeering fellow'. This makes us believe he is a villain because the villagers are indicating it. This makes us wonder what he has done to be portrayed as this.

As we read on we find out that the villagers think Godfrey is 'not half so fresh-coloured and open faced as he used to be'. This makes us wonder what is wrong and makes us feel sorry for him because he has obviously encountered some miss-fortune.

We find out that the approaching person is Godfrey's brother Dunstan. This makes us wonder if there is some kind of feud going on between them, and if there is, why?

Dunstan speaks to Godfrey in 'a mocking tone'. This makes us dislike Dunstan because our first impressions of him are that he is cruel.

When Dunstan entered the room, the family dog went and hid. This tells us the dog is afraid of him and makes us think that he is a very angry person. We are told he has been drinking 'more than is good for him.' This also makes us think of him being disorderly and argumentative.

We find out that Godfrey took money off one of his father's tenants and lent it to Dunstan. This makes us wonder if we had the right opinion of Godfrey, until Dunstan continues to taunt him.

'It was your brotherly love that made you do it.' We then find out that Dunstan is bribing Godfrey with the fact he had married Molly Farren in secret. We also find out that she is a drunk. This makes us feel very sorry for Godfrey and the situation his brother has put him in.

Godfrey is described to be 'quivering' this indicates he is very afraid that his brother will tell his father about Molly. This helps us decide that Dunstan is more of a villainous person because he is bribing his brother to pay back money that he lent to him out of trust.

Dunstan tells Godfrey to sell his favourite horse so that he can pay back the money. This shows us how spiteful and selfish Dunstan is and how he doesn't care about how his brother feels.

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When Godfrey suggests that he might tell his father about Molly himself, just to stop his brother blackmailing him, Dunstan 'perceived that he had overshot his mark' this shows us that he is the one who wants to tell his father, and he is not actually bothered that his father needs to know, just that he can bribe Godfrey.

Dunstan offers to take wildfire and sell him for Godfrey so that he can produce the money.

Godfrey that comments 'yes I daresay - trust my horse to you!'. This indicates that he knows that his brother is like and he has done things like this more than once. This makes us pity Godfrey even more because we can see there is nothing he can do to alter the situation. Dunstan still says things to mock his brother, like 'You never hold trumps, you know; I always do'. This shows us that even though Godfrey could tell his father about the money his brother had spent - if there wasn't the chance of Dunstan telling his father about Molly - his brother still tries to taunt his brother again.

The dog, which earlier hid from Dunstan, comes to lie by Godfrey for him to stroke her. This indicates that Godfrey is the gentler brother and Dunstan is by far, the most aggressive and cruel.

This helps us conclude that Godfrey is more of a coward than a villain because he cannot bring himself to stand up to his brother or tell his father about Molly, whereas Dunstan is very villainous because he is a liar and a cheat and is blackmailing his brother for his own convenience.