



**Global Grey ebooks**

# **UNCLE SILAS**

**Sheridan Le Fanu**

# **UNCLE SILAS**

**SHERIDAN LE FANU**



Uncle Silas by Sheridan Le Fanu.

First published in 1864.

This ebook edition was published by Global Grey on the 22nd March 2025.

This book can be found on the site here:

[globalgreyebooks.com/uncle-silas-ebook.html](http://globalgreyebooks.com/uncle-silas-ebook.html)

Global Grey 2025

[globalgreyebooks.com](http://globalgreyebooks.com)

# Contents

A Preliminary Word

I. Austin Ruthyn, Of Knowl, And His Daughter

II. Uncle Silas

III. A New Face

IV. Madame De La Rougierre

V. Sights And Noises

VI. A Walk In The Wood

VII. Church Scarsdale

VIII. The Smoker

IX. Monica Knollys

X. Lady Knollys Removes A Coverlet

XI. Lady Knollys Sees The Features

XII. A Curious Conversation

XIII. Before And After Breakfast

XIV. Angry Words

XV. A Warning

XVI. Doctor Bryerly Looks In

XVII. An Adventure

XVIII. A Midnight Visitor

XIX. Au Revoir

XX. Austin Ruthyn Sets Out On His Journey

XXI. Arrivals

XXII. Somebody In The Room With The Coffin

XXIII. I Talk With Doctor Bryerly

XXIV. The Opening Of The Will

XXV. I Hear From Uncle Silas

XXVI. The Story Of Uncle Silas

XXVII. More About Tom Charke's Suicide

XXVIII. I Am Persuaded

XXIX. How The Ambassador Fared

XXX. On The Road

XXXI. Bartram-Haugh

XXXII. Uncle Silas  
XXXIII. The Windmill Wood  
XXXIV. Zamiel  
XXXV. We Visit A Room In The Second Storey  
XXXVI. An Arrival At Dead Of Night  
XXXVII. Doctor Bryerly Emerges  
XXXVIII. A Midnight Departure  
XXXIX. Cousin Monica And Uncle Silas Meet  
XL. In Which I Make Another Cousin's Acquaintance  
XLI. My Cousin Dudley  
XLII. Elverston And Its People  
XLIII. News At Bartram Gate  
XLIV. A Friend Arises  
XLV. A Chapter-Full Of Lovers  
XLVI. The Rivals  
XLVII. Doctor Bryerly Reappears  
XLVIII. Question And Answer  
XLIX. An Apparition  
L. Milly's Farewell  
LI. Sarah Matilda Comes To Light  
LII. The Picture Of A Wolf  
LIII. An Odd Proposal  
LIV. In Search Of Mr. Charke's Skeleton  
LV. The Foot Of Hercules  
LVI. I Conspire  
LVII. The Letter  
LVIII. Lady Knollys' Carriage  
LIX. A Sudden Departure  
LX. The Journey  
LXI. Our Bed-Chamber  
LXII. A Well-Known Face Looks In  
LXIII. Spiced Claret  
LXIV. The Hour Of Death  
LXV. In The Oak Parlour  
Conclusion

# I. Austin Ruthyn, Of Knowl, And His Daughter

It was winter—that is, about the second week in November—and great gusts were rattling at the windows, and wailing and thundering among our tall trees and ivied chimneys—a very dark night, and a very cheerful fire blazing, a pleasant mixture of good round coal and spluttering dry wood, in a genuine old fireplace, in a sombre old room. Black wainscoting glimmered up to the ceiling, in small ebony panels; a cheerful clump of wax candles on the tea-table; many old portraits, some grim and pale, others pretty, and some very graceful and charming, hanging from the walls. Few pictures, except portraits long and short, were there. On the whole, I think you would have taken the room for our parlour. It was not like our modern notion of a drawing-room. It was a long room too, and every way capacious, but irregularly shaped.

A girl, of a little more than seventeen, looking, I believe, younger still; slight and rather tall, with a great deal of golden hair, dark grey-eyed, and with a countenance rather sensitive and melancholy, was sitting at the tea-table, in a reverie. I was that girl.

The only other person in the room—the only person in the house related to me—was my father. He was Mr. Ruthyn, of Knowl, so called in his county, but he had many other places, was of a very ancient lineage, who had refused a baronetage often, and it was said even a viscounty, being of a proud and defiant spirit, and thinking themselves higher in station and purer of blood than two-thirds of the nobility into whose ranks, it was said, they had been invited to enter. Of all this family lore I knew but little and vaguely; only what is to be gathered from the fireside talk of old retainers in the nursery.

I am sure my father loved me, and I know I loved him. With the sure instinct of childhood I apprehended his tenderness, although it was never expressed in common ways. But my father was an oddity. He had been early disappointed in Parliament, where it was his ambition to succeed. Though a clever man, he failed there, where very inferior men did extremely well. Then he went abroad, and became a connoisseur and a collector; took a part, on his return, in literary and scientific institutions, and also in the foundation and direction of some charities. But he tired of this mimic government, and gave himself up to a country life, not that of a sportsman, but rather of a student, staying sometimes at one of his places and sometimes at another, and living a secluded life.

Rather late in life he married, and his beautiful young wife died, leaving me, their only child, to his care. This bereavement, I have been told, changed him—made him more odd and taciturn than ever, and his temper also, except to me, more severe. There was also some disgrace about his younger brother—my uncle Silas—which he felt bitterly.

He was now walking up and down this spacious old room, which, extending round an angle at the far end, was very dark in that quarter. It was his wont to walk up and down thus, without speaking—an exercise which used to remind me of Chateaubriand's father in the great chamber of the Château de Combourg. At the far end he nearly disappeared in the gloom, and then returning emerged for a few minutes, like a portrait with a background of shadow, and then again in silence faded nearly out of view.

This monotony and silence would have been terrifying to a person less accustomed to it than I. As it was, it had its effect. I have known my father a whole day without once speaking to me. Though I loved him very much, I was also much in awe of him.