

Kidnapped

By

Robert Louis Stevenson

KIDNAPPED
BEING
MEMOIRS OF THE ADVENTURES OF
DAVID BALFOUR
IN THE YEAR 1751

HOW HE WAS KIDNAPPED AND CAST AWAY; HIS SUFFERINGS IN
A DESERT ISLE; HIS JOURNEY IN THE WILD HIGHLANDS;
HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH ALAN BRECK STEWART
AND OTHER NOTORIOUS HIGHLAND JACOBITES;
WITH ALL THAT HE SUFFERED AT THE
HANDS OF HIS UNCLE, EBENEZER
BALFOUR OF SHAWS, FALSELY
SO CALLED

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF AND NOW SET FORTH BY
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
WITH A PREFACE BY MRS. STEVENSON

PREFACE TO THE BIOGRAPHICAL EDITION

While my husband and Mr. Henley were engaged in writing plays in Bournemouth they made a number of titles, hoping to use them in the future. Dramatic composition was not what my husband preferred, but the torrent of Mr. Henley's enthusiasm swept him off his feet. However, after several plays had been finished, and his health seriously impaired by his endeavours to keep up with Mr. Henley, play writing was abandoned forever, and my husband returned to his legitimate vocation. Having added one of the titles, *The Hanging Judge*, to the list of projected plays, now thrown aside, and emboldened by my husband's offer to give me any help needed, I concluded to try and write it myself.

As I wanted a trial scene in the Old Bailey, I chose the period of 1700 for my purpose; but being shamefully ignorant of my subject, and my husband confessing to little more knowledge than I possessed, a London bookseller was commissioned to send us everything he could procure bearing on Old Bailey trials. A great package came in response to our order, and very soon we were both absorbed, not so much in the trials as in following the brilliant career of a Mr. Garrow, who appeared as counsel in many of the cases. We sent for more books, and yet more, still intent on Mr. Garrow, whose subtle cross-examination of witnesses and masterly, if sometimes startling, methods of arriving at the truth seemed more thrilling to us than any novel.

Occasionally other trials than those of the Old Bailey would be included in the package of books we received from London; among these my husband

found and read with avidity:--

THE
TRIAL
OF
JAMES STEWART
in Aucharn in Duror of Appin
FOR THE
Murder of COLIN CAMPBELL of Glenure, Esq;
Factor for His Majesty on the forfeited
Estate of Ardfhiel.

My husband was always interested in this period of his country's history, and had already the intention of writing a story that should turn on the Appin murder. The tale was to be of a boy, David Balfour, supposed to belong to my husband's own family, who should travel in Scotland as though it were a foreign country, meeting with various adventures and misadventures by the way. From the trial of James Stewart my husband gleaned much valuable material for his novel, the most important being the character of Alan Breck. Aside from having described him as "smallish in stature," my husband seems to have taken Alan Breck's personal appearance, even to his clothing, from the book.

A letter from James Stewart to Mr. John Macfarlane, introduced as evidence in the trial, says: "There is one Alan Stewart, a distant friend of the late Ardsziel's, who is in the French service, and came over in March last, as he said to some, in order to settle at home; to

others, that he was to go soon back; and was, as I hear, the day that the murder was committed, seen not far from the place where it happened, and is not now to be seen; by which it is believed he was the actor. He is a desperate foolish fellow; and if he is guilty, came to the country for that very purpose. He is a tall, pock-pitted lad, very black hair, and wore a blue coat and metal buttons, an old red vest, and breeches of the same colour." A second witness testified to having seen him wearing "a blue coat with silver buttons, a red waistcoat, black shag breeches, tartan hose, and a feathered hat, with a big coat, dun coloured," a costume referred to by one of the counsel as "French cloathes which were remarkable."

There are many incidents given in the trial that point to Alan's fiery spirit and Highland quickness to take offence. One witness "declared also That the said Alan Breck threatened that he would challenge Ballieveolan and his sons to fight because of his removing the declarant last year from Glenduror." On another page: "Duncan Campbell, change-keeper at Annat, aged thirty-five years, married, witness cited, sworn, purged and examined ut supra, depones, That, in the month of April last, the deponent met with Alan Breck Stewart, with whom he was not acquainted, and John Stewart, in Auchnacuan, in the house of the walk miller of Auchofragan, and went on with them to the house: Alan Breck Stewart said, that he hated all the name of Campbell; and the deponent said, he had no reason for doing so: But Alan said, he had very good reason for it: that thereafter they left that house; and, after drinking a dram at another house, came to the deponent's house, where they went in, and drunk some drams, and Alan Breck renewed the former

Conversation; and the deponent, making the same answer, Alan said, that, if the deponent had any respect for his friends, he would tell them, that if they offered to turn out the possessors of Ardshiel's estate, he would make black cocks of them, before they entered into possession by which the deponent understood shooting them, it being a common phrase in the country."

Some time after the publication of Kidnapped we stopped for a short while in the Appin country, where we were surprised and interested to discover that the feeling concerning the murder of Glenure (the "Red Fox," also called "Colin Roy") was almost as keen as though the tragedy had taken place the day before. For several years my husband received letters of expostulation or commendation from members of the Campbell and Stewart clans. I have in my possession a paper, yellow with age, that was sent soon after the novel appeared, containing "The Pedigree of the Family of Appine," wherein it is said that "Alan 3rd Baron of Appine was not killed at Flowdown, tho there, but lived to a great old age. He married Cameron Daughter to Ewen Cameron of Lochiel." Following this is a paragraph stating that "John Stewart 1st of Ardsheall of his descendants Alan Breck had better be omitted. Duncan Baan Stewart in Achindarroch his father was a Bastard."

One day, while my husband was busily at work, I sat beside him reading an old cookery book called The Compleat Housewife: or Accomplish'd Gentlewoman's Companion. In the midst of receipts for "Rabbits, and Chickens mumbled, Pickled Samphire, Skirret Pye, Baked Tansy," and other forgotten delicacies, there were directions for the preparation

of several lotions for the preservation of beauty. One of these was so charming that I interrupted my husband to read it aloud. "Just what I wanted!" he exclaimed; and the receipt for the "Lily of the Valley Water" was instantly incorporated into Kidnapped.

F. V. DE G. S.

DEDICATION

MY DEAR CHARLES BAXTER:

If you ever read this tale, you will likely ask yourself more questions than I should care to answer: as for instance how the Appin murder has come to fall in the year 1751, how the Torran rocks have crept so near to Earraid, or why the printed trial is silent as to all that touches David Balfour. These are nuts beyond my ability to crack. But if you tried me on the point of Alan's guilt or innocence, I think I could defend the reading of the text. To this day you will find the tradition of Appin clear in Alan's favour. If you inquire, you may even hear that the descendants of "the other man" who fired the shot are in the country to this day. But that other man's name, inquire as you please, you shall not hear; for the Highlander values a secret for itself and for the congenial exercise of keeping it I might go on for long to justify one point and own another indefensible; it is more honest to confess at once how little I am touched by the desire of accuracy. This is no furniture for the scholar's library, but a book for the winter evening school-room when the tasks are over and the hour for bed draws near; and honest Alan, who was a grim old fire-eater in his day has in this new avatar no more desperate purpose than to steal some young gentleman's attention from his Ovid, carry him awhile into the Highlands and the last century, and pack him to bed with some engaging images to mingle with his dreams.

As for you, my dear Charles, I do not even ask you to like this tale. But perhaps when he is older, your son will; he may then be pleased to find his father's name on the fly-leaf; and in the meanwhile it pleases me to set it there, in memory of many days that were happy and some (now perhaps as pleasant to remember) that were sad. If it is strange for me to look back from a distance both in time and space on these bygone adventures of our youth, it must be stranger for you who tread the same streets--who may to-morrow open the door of the old Speculative, where we begin to rank with Scott and Robert Emmet and the beloved and inglorious Macbean--or may pass the corner of the close where that great society, the L. J. R., held its meetings and drank its beer, sitting in the seats of Burns and his companions. I think I see you, moving there by plain daylight, beholding with your natural eyes those places that have now become for your companion a part of the scenery of dreams. How, in the intervals of present business, the past must echo in your memory! Let it not echo often without some kind thoughts of your friend,

R.L.S. SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH.

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CHAPTER I

I SET OFF UPON MY JOURNEY TO THE HOUSE OF SHAWS

I will begin the story of my adventures with a certain morning early in the month of June, the year of grace 1751, when I took the key for the last time out of the door of my father's house. The sun began to shine upon the summit of the hills as I went down the road; and by the time I had come as far as the manse, the blackbirds were whistling in the garden lilacs, and the mist that hung around the valley in the time of the dawn was beginning to arise and die away.

Mr. Campbell, the minister of Essendean, was waiting for me by the garden gate, good man! He asked me if I had breakfasted; and hearing that I lacked for nothing, he took my hand in both of his and clapped it kindly under his arm.

"Well, Davie, lad," said he, "I will go with you as far as the ford, to set you on the way." And we began to walk forward in silence.

"Are ye sorry to leave Essendean?" said he, after awhile.

"Why, sir," said I, "if I knew where I was going, or what was likely to become of me, I would tell you candidly. Essendean is a good place indeed, and I have been very happy there; but then I have never been anywhere else. My father and mother, since they are both dead, I shall

be no nearer to in Essendean than in the Kingdom of Hungary, and, to speak truth, if I thought I had a chance to better myself where I was going I would go with a good will."

"Ay?" said Mr. Campbell. "Very well, Davie. Then it behoves me to tell your fortune; or so far as I may. When your mother was gone, and your father (the worthy, Christian man) began to sicken for his end, he gave me in charge a certain letter, which he said was your inheritance. 'So soon,' says he, 'as I am gone, and the house is redd up and the gear disposed of' (all which, Davie, hath been done), 'give my boy this letter into his hand, and start him off to the house of Shaws, not far from Cramond. That is the place I came from,' he said, 'and it's where it befits that my boy should return. He is a steady lad,' your father said, 'and a canny goer; and I doubt not he will come safe, and be well lived where he goes.'"

"The house of Shaws!" I cried. "What had my poor father to do with the house of Shaws?"

"Nay," said Mr. Campbell, "who can tell that for a surety? But the name of that family, Davie, boy, is the name you bear--Balfours of Shaws: an ancient, honest, reputable house, peradventure in these latter days decayed. Your father, too, was a man of learning as befitted his position; no man more plausibly conducted school; nor had he the manner or the speech of a common dominie; but (as ye will yourself remember) I took aye a pleasure to have him to the manse to meet the gentry; and those of my own house, Campbell of Kilrennet, Campbell of Dunswire,

Campbell of Minch, and others, all well-kenned gentlemen, had pleasure in his society. Lastly, to put all the elements of this affair before you, here is the testamentary letter itself, superscribed by the own hand of our departed brother."

He gave me the letter, which was addressed in these words: "To the hands of Ebenezer Balfour, Esquire, of Shaws, in his house of Shaws, these will be delivered by my son, David Balfour." My heart was beating hard at this great prospect now suddenly opening before a lad of seventeen years of age, the son of a poor country dominie in the Forest of Ettrick.

"Mr. Campbell," I stammered, "and if you were in my shoes, would you go?"

"Of a surety," said the minister, "that would I, and without pause. A pretty lad like you should get to Cramond (which is near in by Edinburgh) in two days of walk. If the worst came to the worst, and your high relations (as I cannot but suppose them to be somewhat of your blood) should put you to the door, ye can but walk the two days back again and risp at the manse door. But I would rather hope that ye shall be well received, as your poor father forecast for you, and for anything that I ken come to be a great man in time. And here, Davie, laddie," he resumed, "it lies near upon my conscience to improve this parting, and set you on the right guard against the dangers of the world."

Here he cast about for a comfortable seat, lighted on a big boulder

under a birch by the trackside, sate down upon it with a very long, serious upper lip, and the sun now shining in upon us between two peaks, put his pocket-handkerchief over his cocked hat to shelter him. There, then, with uplifted forefinger, he first put me on my guard against a considerable number of heresies, to which I had no temptation, and urged upon me to be instant in my prayers and reading of the Bible. That done, he drew a picture of the great house that I was bound to, and how I should conduct myself with its inhabitants.

"Be soople, Davie, in things immaterial," said he. "Bear ye this in mind, that, though gentle born, ye have had a country rearing. Dinnae shame us, Davie, dinnae shame us! In yon great, muckle house, with all these domestics, upper and under, show yourself as nice, as circumspect, as quick at the conception, and as slow of speech as any. As for the laird--remember he's the laird; I say no more: honour to whom honour. It's a pleasure to obey a laird; or should be, to the young."

"Well, sir," said I, "it may be; and I'll promise you I'll try to make it so."

"Why, very well said," replied Mr. Campbell, heartily. "And now to come to the material, or (to make a quibble) to the immaterial. I have here a little packet which contains four things." He tugged it, as he spoke, and with some great difficulty, from the skirt pocket of his coat. "Of these four things, the first is your legal due: the little pickle money for your father's books and plenishing, which I have bought (as I have explained from the first) in the design of re-selling at a profit to

the incoming dominie. The other three are gifties that Mrs. Campbell and myself would be blithe of your acceptance. The first, which is round, will likely please ye best at the first off-go; but, O Davie, laddie, it's but a drop of water in the sea; it'll help you but a step, and vanish like the morning. The second, which is flat and square and written upon, will stand by you through life, like a good staff for the road, and a good pillow to your head in sickness. And as for the last, which is cubical, that'll see you, it's my prayerful wish, into a better land."

With that he got upon his feet, took off his hat, and prayed a little while aloud, and in affecting terms, for a young man setting out into the world; then suddenly took me in his arms and embraced me very hard; then held me at arm's length, looking at me with his face all working with sorrow; and then whipped about, and crying good-bye to me, set off backward by the way that we had come at a sort of jogging run. It might have been laughable to another; but I was in no mind to laugh. I watched him as long as he was in sight; and he never stopped hurrying, nor once looked back. Then it came in upon my mind that this was all his sorrow at my departure; and my conscience smote me hard and fast, because I, for my part, was overjoyed to get away out of that quiet country-side, and go to a great, busy house, among rich and respected gentlefolk of my own name and blood.

"Davie, Davie," I thought, "was ever seen such black ingratitude? Can you forget old favours and old friends at the mere whistle of a name? Fie, fie; think shame."

And I sat down on the boulder the good man had just left, and opened the parcel to see the nature of my gifts. That which he had called cubical, I had never had much doubt of; sure enough it was a little Bible, to carry in a plaid-neuk. That which he had called round, I found to be a shilling piece; and the third, which was to help me so wonderfully both in health and sickness all the days of my life, was a little piece of coarse yellow paper, written upon thus in red ink:

"TO MAKE LILLY OF THE VALLEY WATER.--Take the flowers of lilly of the valley and distil them in sack, and drink a spooneful or two as there is occasion. It restores speech to those that have the dumb palsey. It is good against the Gout; it comforts the heart and strengthens the memory; and the flowers, put into a Glasse, close stopt, and set into ane hill of ants for a month, then take it out, and you will find a liquor which comes from the flowers, which keep in a vial; it is good, ill or well, and whether man or woman."

And then, in the minister's own hand, was added:

"Likewise for sprains, rub it in; and for the cholic, a great spooneful in the hour."

To be sure, I laughed over this; but it was rather tremulous laughter; and I was glad to get my bundle on my staff's end and set out over the ford and up the hill upon the farther side; till, just as I came on the green drove-road running wide through the heather, I took my last look of Kirk Essendean, the trees about the manse, and the big rowans in the kirkyard where my father and my mother lay.