

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THE WORKS OF ROBERT
LOUIS STEVENSON –
SWANSTON EDITION.
VOLUME 15

Роберт Льюис Стивенсон

**The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson
– Swanston Edition. Volume 15**

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Robert Louis Stevenson
The Works of Robert Louis
Stevenson – Swanston Edition, Vol. 15

DEACON BRODIE OR THE DOUBLE LIFE

A MELODRAMA IN FIVE ACTS AND EIGHT TABLEAUX

PERSONS REPRESENTED

William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights, Housebreaker and Master Carpenter
Old Brodie, the Deacon's Father
William Lawson, Procurator-Fiscal, the Deacon's Uncle

ANDREW AINSIE,
HUMPHREY MOORE,
GEORGE SMITH, } Robbers in the Deacon's Gang

Captain Rivers, an English Highwayman
Hunt, a Bow Street Runner
A Doctor
Walter Leslie
Mary Brodie, the Deacon's Sister
Jean Watt, the Deacon's Mistress
Vagabonds, Officers of the Watch, Men-servants

The Scene is laid in Edinburgh. The Time is towards the close of the Eighteenth Century. The Action, some fifty hours long, begins at eight p.m. on Saturday and ends before midnight on Monday

Note. —*Passages suggested for omission in representation are enclosed in parentheses, thus ()*

ACT I

TABLEAU I The Double Life

The Stage represents a room in the Deacon's house, furnished partly as a sitting-, partly as a bed-room, in the style of an easy burgess of about 1780. C., a door; L.C., second and smaller door; R.C., practicable window; L., alcove, supposed to contain bed; at the back, a clothes-press and a corner cupboard containing bottles, etc.

Mary Brodie *at needlework*; Old Brodie, *a paralytic, in wheeled chair, at the fireside, L.*

SCENE I

To these, Leslie, C

Leslie. May I come in, Mary?

Mary. Why not?

Leslie. I scarce knew where to find you.

Mary. The dad and I must have a corner, must we not? So when my brother's friends are in the parlour he allows us to sit in his room. 'Tis a great favour, I can tell you; the place is sacred.

Leslie. Are you sure that "sacred" is strong enough?

Mary. You are satirical!

Leslie. I? And with regard to the Deacon? Believe me, I am not so ill-advised. You have trained me well, and I feel by him as solemnly as a true-born Brodie.

Mary. And now you are impertinent! Do you mean to go any further? We are a fighting race, we Brodies. O, you may laugh, sir! But 'tis no child's play to jest us on our Deacon, or, for that matter, on our Deacon's chamber either. It was his father's before him: he works in it by day and sleeps in it by night; and scarce anything it contains but is the labour of his hands. Do you see this table, Walter? He made it while he was yet a 'prentice. I remember how I used to sit and watch him at his work. It would be grand, I thought, to be able to do as he did, and handle edge-tools without cutting my fingers, and getting my ears pulled for a meddlesome minx! He used to give me his mallet to keep and his nails to hold; and didn't I fly when he called for them! and wasn't I proud to be ordered about with them! And then, you know, there is the tall cabinet yonder; that it was that proved him the first of Edinburgh joiners, and worthy to be their Deacon and their head. And the father's chair, and the sister's work-box, and the dear dead mother's footstool – what are they all but proofs of the Deacon's skill, and tokens of the Deacon's care for those about him?

Leslie. I am all penitence. Forgive me this last time, and I promise you I never will again.

Mary. Candidly, now, do you think you deserve forgiveness?

Leslie. Candidly, I do not.

Mary. Then I suppose you must have it. What have you done with Willie and my uncle?

Leslie. I left them talking deeply. The dear old Procurator has not much thought just now for anything but those mysterious burglaries —

Mary. I know! —

Leslie. Still, all of him that is not magistrate and official is politician and citizen; and he has been striving his hardest to undermine the Deacon's principles, and win the Deacon's vote and interest.

Mary. They are worth having, are they not?

Leslie. The Procurator seems to think that having them makes the difference between winning and losing.

Mary. Did he say so? You may rely upon it that he knows. There are not many in Edinburgh who can match with our Will.

Leslie. There shall be as many as you please, and not one more.

Mary. How I should like to have heard you! What did uncle say? Did he speak of the Town Council again? Did he tell Will what a wonderful Bailie he would make? O, why did you come away?

Leslie. I could not pretend to listen any longer. The election is months off yet; and if it were not – if it were tramping up-stairs this moment – drums, flags, cockades, guineas, candidates, and all! – how should I care for it? What are Whig and Tory to me?

Mary. O, fie on you! It is for every man to concern himself in the common weal. Mr. Leslie – Leslie of the Craig! – should know that much at least.

Leslie. And be a politician like the Deacon! All in good time, but not now. I hearkened while I could, and when I could no more I slipped out and followed my heart. I hoped I should be welcome.

Mary. I suppose you mean to be unkind.

Leslie. Tit for tat. Did you not ask me why I came away? And is it usual for a young lady to say “Mr.” to the man she means to marry?

Mary. That is for the young lady to decide, sir.

Leslie. And against that judgment there shall be no appeal?

Mary. O, if you mean to argue! —

Leslie. I do not mean to argue. I am content to love and be loved. I think I am the happiest man in the world.

Mary. That is as it should be; for I am the happiest girl.

Leslie. Why not say the happiest wife? I have your word, and you have mine. Is not that enough?

Mary. Have you so soon forgotten? Did I not tell you how it must be as my brother wills? I can do only as he bids me.

Leslie. Then you have not spoken as you promised?

Mary. I have been too happy to speak.

Leslie. I am his friend. Precious as you are, he will trust you to me. He has but to know how I love you, Mary, and how your life is all in your love of me, to give us his blessing with a full heart.

Mary. I am sure of him. It is that which makes my happiness complete. Even to our marriage I should find it hard to say “Yes” when he said “No.”

Leslie. Your father is trying to speak. I’ll wager he echoes you.

Mary (*to Old Brodie*). My poor dearie! Do you want to say anything to me? No? Is it to Mr. Leslie, then?

Leslie. I am listening, Mr. Brodie.

Mary. What is it, daddie?

Old Brodie. My son – the Deacon – Deacon Brodie – the first at school.

Leslie. I know it, Mr. Brodie. Was I not the last in the same class? (*To Mary.*) But he seems to have forgotten us.

Mary. O, yes! his mind is wellnigh gone. He will sit for hours as you see him, and never speak nor stir but at the touch of Will’s hand or the sound of Will’s name.

Leslie. It is so good to sit beside you. By and by it will always be like this. You will not let me speak to the Deacon? You are fast set upon speaking yourself? I could be so eloquent, Mary – I would touch him. I cannot tell you how I fear to trust my happiness to any one else – even to you.

Mary. He must hear of my good fortune from none but me. And, besides, you do not understand. We are not like other families, we Brodies. We are so clannish, we hold so close together.

Leslie. You Brodies, and your Deacon!

Old Brodie. Deacon of his craft, sir – Deacon of the Wrights – my son! If his mother – his mother – had but lived to see!

Mary. You hear how he runs on. A word about my brother and he catches it. 'Tis as if he were awake in his poor blind way to all the Deacon's care for him and all the Deacon's kindness to me. I believe he only lives in the thought of the Deacon. There, it is not so long since I was one with him. But indeed I think we are all Deacon-mad, we Brodies. – Are we not, daddie dear?

Brodie (*without, and entering*). You are a mighty magistrate, Procurator, but you seem to have met your match.

SCENE II

To these, Brodie and Lawson

Mary (*curtseying*). So, uncle! you have honoured us at last.

Lawson. *Quam primum*, my dear, *quam primum*.

Brodie. Well, father, do you know me? (*He sits beside his father, and takes his hand.*)

(Old Brodie. William – ay – Deacon. Greater man – than – his father.)

Brodie. You see, Procurator, the news is as fresh to him as it was five years ago. He was struck down before he got the Deaconship, and lives his lost life in mine.

Lawson. Ay, I mind. He was aye ettling after a bit handle to his name. He was kind of hurt when first they made me Procurator.)

Mary. And what have you been talking of?

Lawson. Just o' thae robberies, Mary. Baith as a burgher and a Crown offeecial, I tak' the maist absorbing interest in thae robberies.

Leslie. Egad, Procurator, and so do I.

Brodie (*with a quick look at Leslie*). A dilettante interest, doubtless! See what it is to be idle.

Leslie. 'Faith, Brodie, I hardly know how to style it.

Brodie. At any rate, 'tis not the interest of a victim, or we should certainly have known of it before; nor a practical tool-mongering interest, like my own; nor an interest professional and official, like the Procurator's. You can answer for that, I suppose?

Leslie. I think I can; if for no more. It's an interest of my own, you see, and is best described as indescribable, and of no manner of moment to anybody. (It will take no hurt if we put off its discussion till a month of Sundays.)

Brodie. You are more fortunate than you deserve. What do you say, Procurator?

Lawson. Ay is he! There's no' a house in Edinburgh safe. The law is clean helpless, clean helpless! A week syne it was auld Andra Simpson's in the Lawn-market. Then, naething would set the catamarans but to forgather privily wi' the Provost's ain butler, and tak' unto themselves the Provost's ain plate. And the day, information was laid down before me offeecially that the limmers had made infraction, *vi et clam*, into Leddy Mar'get Dalziel's, and left her leddyship wi' no' sae muckle's a spune to sup her parritch wi'. It's unbelievable, it's awful, it's anti-christian!

Mary. If you only knew them, uncle, what an example you would make! But, tell me, is it not strange that men should dare such things, in the midst of a city, and nothing, nothing be known of them – nothing at all?

Leslie. Little, indeed! But we do know that there are several in the gang, and that one at least is an unrivalled workman.

Lawson. Ye're right, sir; ye're vera right, Mr. Leslie. It had been deponed to me offeecially that no' a tradesman – no' the Deacon here himsel' – could have made a cleaner job wi' Andra Simpson's shutters. And as for the lock o' the bank – but that's an auld sang.

Brodie. I think you believe too much, Procurator. Rumour's an ignorant jade, I tell you. I've had occasion to see some little of their handiwork – broken cabinets, broken shutters, broken doors – and I find them bunglers. Why, I could do it better myself.

Leslie. Gad, Brodie, you and I might go into partnership. I back myself to watch outside, and I suppose you could do the work of skill within?

Brodie. An opposition company? Leslie, your mind is full of good things. Suppose we begin to-night, and give the Procurator's house the honours of our innocence?

Mary. You could do anything, you two!

Lawson. Onyway, Deacon, ye'd put your ill-gotten gains to a right use; they might come by the wind, but they wouldna gang wi' the water; and that's aye a *solatium*, as we say. If I am to be robbit, I would like to be robbit wi' decent folk; and no' think o' my bonnie clean siller dirling among jads and dicers. 'Faith, William, the mair I think on't, the mair I'm o' Mr. Leslie's mind. Come the night, or come the morn, and I'se gie ye my free permission, and lend ye a hand in at the window forbye!

Brodie. Come, come, Procurator, lead not our poor clay into temptation. (Leslie *and* Mary *talk apart*.)

Lawson. I'm no muckle afraid for your puir clay, as ye ca't. But hark i' your ear: ye're likely, joking apart, to be gey and sune in partnership wi' Mr. Leslie. He and Mary are gey and pack, a'boday can see that.

Brodie. "Daffin, and want o' wit" – you know the rest.

Lawson. *Vidi, scivi, et audivi*, as we say in a Sasine, William.) Man, because my wig's pouthered do you think I havena a green heart? I was aince a lad mysel', and I ken fine by the glint o' the e'e when a lad's fain and a lassie's willing. And, man, it's the town's talk; *communis error fit jus*, ye ken.

Old Brodie. Oh!

Lawson. See, ye're hurting your faither's hand.

Brodie. Dear dad, it is not good to have an ill-tempered son.

Lawson. What the deevil ails ye at the match? 'Od man, he has a nice bit divot o' Fife corn-land, I can tell ye, and some Bordeaux wine in his cellar! But I needna speak o' the Bordeaux; ye'll ken the smack o't as weel's I do mysel'; onyway it's grand wine. *Tantum et tale*. I tell ye the *pro*'s, find you the *con*'s, if ye're able.

Brodie. (I am sorry, Procurator, but I must be short with you.) You are talking in the air, as lawyers will. I prefer to drop the subject (and it will displeas me if you return to it in my hearing).

Leslie. At four o'clock to-morrow? At my house? (*To* Mary.)

Mary. As soon as church is done. (*Exit* Mary.)

Lawson. Ye needna be sae high and mighty, onyway.

Brodie. I ask your pardon, Procurator. But we Brodies – you know our failings! (A bad temper and a humour of privacy.)

Lawson. Weel, I maun be about my business. But I could tak' a doch-an-dorach, William; *superflua non nocent*, as we say; an extra dram hurts naeboday, Mr. Leslie.

Brodie (*with bottle and glasses*). Here's your old friend, Procurator. Help yourself, Leslie. O no, thank you, not any for me. You strong people have the advantage of me there. With my attacks, you know, I must always live a bit of a hermit's life.

Lawson. 'Od, man, that's fine; that's health o' mind and body. Mr. Leslie, here's to you, sir. 'Od, it's harder to end than to begin with stuff like that.

SCENE III

To these, Smith and Jean, C

Smith. Is the king of the castle in, please?

Lawson (*aside*). Lord's sake, it's Smith!

Brodie (*to Smith*). I beg your pardon?

Smith. I beg yours, sir. If you please, sir, is Mr. Brodie at home, sir?

Brodie. What do you want with him, my man?

Smith. I've a message for him, sir; a job of work, sir.

Brodie (*to Smith; referring to Jean*). And who is this?

Jean. I am here for the Procurator, about my rent. There's nae offence, I hope, sir.

Lawson. It's just an honest wife I let a flat to in Libberton's Wynd. It'll be for the rent?

Jean. Just that, sir.

Lawson. Weel, ye can just bide here a wee, and I'll step down the road to my office wi' ye.

(*Exeunt Brodie, Lawson, Leslie, C.*)

SCENE IV

Smith, Jean Watt, Old Brodie

Smith (*bowing them out*). Your humble and most devoted servant, George Smith, Esquire. And so this is the garding, is it? And this is the style of horticulture? Ha, it is! (*At the mirror.*) In that case George's mother bids him bind his hair. (*Kisses his hand.*) My dearest Duchess – (*To Jean.*) I say, Jean, there's a good deal of difference between this sort of thing and the way we does it in Libberton's Wynd.

Jean. I daursay. And what wad ye expeck?

Smith. Ah, Jean, if you'd cast affection's glance on this poor but honest soger! George Lord S. is not the nobleman to cut the object of his flame before the giddy throng; nor to keep her boxed up in an old mouse-trap, while he himself is revelling in purple splendours like these. He didn't know you, Jean: he was afraid to. Do you call that a man? Try a man that is.

Jean. Geordie Smith, ye ken vera weel I'll tak' nane o' that sort o' talk frae you. And what kind o' a man are you to even yoursel' to the likes o' him? He's a gentleman.

Smith. Ah, ain't he, just! And don't he live up to it? I say, Jean, feel of this chair.

Jean. My! look at yon bed!

Smith. The carpet too! Axminster, by the bones of Oliver Cromwell!

Jean. What a expense!

Smith. Hey, brandy! The deuce of the grape! Have a toothful, Mrs. Watt. (*Sings—*

“Says Bacchus to Venus:
There's brandy between us,
And the cradle of love is the bowl, the bowl!”)

Jean. Nane for me, I thank ye, Mr. Smith.

Smith. What brings the man from stuff like this to rotgut and spittoons at Mother Clarke's? But ah, George, you was born for a higher spear! And so was you, Mrs. Watt, though I say it that shouldn't. (*Seeing Old Brodie for the first time.*) Hullo! it's a man!

Jean. Thonder in the chair. (*They go to look at him, their backs to the door.*)

Smith. Is he alive?

Jean. I think there's something wrong with him.

Smith. And how was you to-morrow, my valued old gentleman, eh?

Jean. Dinna mak' a mock o' him, Geordie.

Old Brodie. My son – the Deacon – Deacon of his trade.

Jean. He'll be his feyther. (*Hunt appears at door C., and stands looking on.*)

Smith. The Deacon's old man! Well, he couldn't expect to have his quiver full of sich, could he, Jean? (*To Old Brodie.*) Ah, my Christian soldier, if you had, the world would have been more variegated. Mrs. Deakin (*to Jean*), let me introduce you to your dear papa.

Jean. Think shame to yoursel'! This is the Deacon's house; you and me shouldna be here by rights; and if we are, it's the least we can do to behave dacent. (*This is no' the way ye'll mak' me like ye.*)

Smith. All right, Duchess. Don't be angry.

SCENE V

To these, Hunt, C. (He steals down, and claps each one suddenly on the shoulder.)

Hunt. Is there a gentleman here by the name of Mr. Procurator-Fiscal?

Smith (*pulling himself together*). D – n it, Jerry, what do you mean by startling an old customer like that?

Hunt. What, my brave 'un? You're the very party I was looking for!

Smith. There's nothing out against me this time?

Hunt. I'll take odds there is. But it ain't in my hands. (*To Old Brodie.*) You'll excuse me, old gentleman?

Smith. Ah, well, if it's all in the way of friendship!.. I say, Jean (you and me had best be on the toddle). We shall be late for church.

Hunt. Lady, George?

Smith. It's a – yes, it's a lady. Come along, Jean.

Hunt. A Mrs. Deacon, I believe. (*That was the name, I think?*) Won't Mrs. Deacon let me have a queer at her phiz?

Jean (*unmuffling*). I've naething to be ashamed of. My name's Mistress Watt; I'm weel kennt at the Wyndheid; there's naething again' me.

Hunt. No, to be sure there ain't; and why clap on the blinkers, my dear? You that has a face like a rose, and with a cove like Jerry Hunt, that might be your born father? (*But all this don't tell me about Mr. Procurator-Fiscal.*)

Smith (*in an agony*). Jean, Jean, we shall be late. (*Going with attempted swagger.*) Well, ta-ta, Jerry.

SCENE VI

To these, C., Brodie and Lawson (greatcoat, muffler, lantern)

Lawson (*from the door*). Come your ways, Mistress Watt.

Jean. That's the Fiscal himsel'.

Hunt. Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, I believe?

Lawson. That's me. Who'll you be?

Hunt. Hunt the Runner, sir; Hunt from Bow Street; English warrant.

Lawson. There's a place for a' things, officer. Come your ways to my office with me and this guid wife.

Brodie (*aside to Jean, as she passes with a curtsey*). How dare you be here? (*Aloud to Smith*.) Wait you here, my man.

Smith. If you please, sir. (*Brodie goes out, C.*)

SCENE VII

Brodie, Smith

Brodie. What the devil brings you here?

Smith. Confound it, Deakin! Not rusty?

Brodie. (And not you only: Jean too! Are you mad?)

Smith. Why, you don't mean to say, Deakin, that you have been stodged by G. Smith, Esquire? Plummy old George?)

Brodie. There was my uncle the Procurator —

Smith. The Fiscal? He don't count.

Brodie. What d'ye mean?

Smith. Well, Deakin, since Fiscal Lawson's Nunkey Lawson, and it's all in the family way, I don't mind telling you that Nunkey Lawson's a customer of George's. We give Nunkey Lawson a good deal of brandy – G. S. and Co.'s celebrated Nantz.

Brodie. What! does he buy that smuggled trash of yours?

Smith. Well, we don't call it smuggled in the trade, Deakin. It's a wink and King George's picter between G. S. and the Nunks.

Brodie. Gad! that's worth knowing. O Procurator, Procurator, is there no such thing as virtue? (*Allons!* It's enough to cure a man of vice for this world and the other.) But hark you hither, Smith; this is all damned well in its way, but it don't explain what brings you here.

Smith. I've trapped a pigeon for you.

Brodie. Can't you pluck him yourself?

Smith. Not me. He's too flash in the feather for a simple nobleman like George Lord Smith. It's the great Captiving Starlight, fresh in from York. (He's exercised his noble art all the way from here to London. "Stand and deliver, stap my vitals!") And the North Road is no bad lay, Deakin.

Brodie. Flush?

Smith (*mimicking*). "Three graziers, split me! A mail, stap my vitals! and seven demned farmers, by the Lard –"

Brodie. By Gad!

Smith. Good for trade, ain't it? And we thought, Deakin, the Badger and me, that coins being ever on the vanish, and you not over sweet on them there lovely little locks at Leslie's, and them there bigger and uglier marine stores at the Excise Office...

Brodie (*impassible*). Go on.

Smith. Worse luck!.. We thought, me and the Badger, you know, that maybe you'd like to exercise your *helbow* with our free and galliant horseman.

Brodie. The old move, I presume? The double set of dice?

Smith. That's the rig, Deakin. What you drop on the square you pick up again on the cross. (Just as you did with G. S. and Co.'s own agent and correspondent, the Admiral from Nantz.) You always was a neat hand with the bones, Deakin.

Brodie. The usual terms, I suppose?

Smith. The old discount, Deakin. Ten in the pound for you, and the rest for your jolly companions every one. (*That's the way we does it!*)

Brodie. Who has the dice?

Smith. Our mutual friend, the Candleworm.

Brodie. You mean Ainslie? – We trust that creature too much, Geordie.

Smith. He's all right, Marquis. He wouldn't lay a finger on his own mother. Why, he's no more guile in him than a set of sheep's trotters.

(Brodie. You think so? Then see he don't cheat you over the dice, and give you light for loaded. See to that George, see to that; and you may count the Captain as bare as his last grazier.

Smith. The Black Flag for ever! George'll trot him round to Mother Clarke's in two twos.) How long'll you be?

Brodie. The time to lock up and go to bed, and I'll be with you. Can you find your way out?

Smith. Bloom on, my Sweet William, in peaceful array. Ta-ta.

SCENE VIII

Brodie, Old Brodie; to whom, Mary

Mary. O Willie, I am glad you did not go with them. I have something to tell you. If you knew how happy I am, you would clap your hands, Will. But come, sit you down there, and be my good big brother, and I will kneel here and take your hand. We must keep close to dad, and then he will feel happiness in the air. The poor old love, if we could only tell him. But I sometimes think his heart has gone to heaven already, and takes a part in all our joys and sorrows; and it is only his poor body that remains here, helpless and ignorant. Come, Will, sit you down, and ask me questions – or guess – that will be better, guess.

Brodie. Not to-night, Mary; not to-night. I have other fish to fry, and they won't wait.

Mary. Not one minute for your sister? One little minute for your little sister?

Brodie. Minutes are precious, Mary. I have to work for all of us, and the clock is always busy. They are waiting for me even now. Help me with the dad's chair. And then to bed, and dream happy things. And to-morrow morning I will hear your news – your good news; it must be good, you look so proud and glad. But to-night it cannot be.

Mary. I hate your business – I hate all business. To think of chairs, and tables, and foot-rules, all dead and wooden – and cold pieces of money with the King's ugly head on them; and here is your sister, your pretty sister, if you please, with something to tell, which she would not tell you for the world, and would give the world to have you guess, and you won't? – Not you! For business! Fie, Deacon Brodie! But I'm too happy to find fault with you!

Brodie. “And me a Deacon,” as the Procurator would say.

Mary. No such thing, sir! I am not a bit afraid of you – nor a bit angry neither. Give me a kiss, and promise me hours and hours to-morrow morning?

Brodie. All day long to-morrow, if you like.

Mary. Business or none?

Brodie. Business or none, little sister! I'll make time, I promise you; and there's another kiss for surety. Come along. (*They proceed to push out the chair, L.C.*) The wine and wisdom of this evening have given me one of my headaches, and I'm in haste for bed. You'll be good, won't you, and see they make no noise, and let me sleep my fill to-morrow morning till I wake?

Mary. Poor Will! How selfish I must have seemed! You should have told me sooner, and I wouldn't have worried you. Come along. (*She goes out, pushing chair.*)

SCENE IX

Brodie

(He closes, locks, and double-bolts the doors)

Brodie. Now for one of the Deacon's headaches! Rogues all, rogues all! (*Goes to clothes-press and proceeds to change his coat.*) On with the new coat and into the new life! Down with the Deacon and up with the robber! (*Changing neck-band and ruffles.*) Eh God! how still the house is! There's something in hypocrisy after all. If we were as good as we seem, what would the world be? (The city has its vizard on, and we – at night we are our naked selves. Trysts are keeping, bottles cracking, knives are stripping; and here is Deacon Brodie flaming forth the man of men he is!) – How still it is!.. My father and Mary – Well! the day for them, the night for me; the grimy cynical night that makes all cats grey, and all honesties of one complexion. Shall a man not have *half* a life of his own? – not eight hours out of twenty-four? (Eight shall he have should he dare the pit of Tophet.) (*Takes out money.*) Where's the blunt? I must be cool to-night, or ... steady, Deacon, you must win; damn you, you must! You must win back the dowry that you've stolen, and marry your sister, and pay your debts, and gull the world a little longer! (*As he blows out the lights.*) The Deacon's going to bed – the poor sick Deacon! *Allons!* (*Throws up the window and looks out.*) Only the stars to see me! (*Addressing the bed.*) Lie there, Deacon! sleep and be well to-morrow. As for me, I'm a man once more till morning. (*Gets out of the window.*)

TABLEAU II Hunt The Runner

The Scene represents the Procurator's Office

SCENE I

Lawson, Hunt

Lawson (*entering*). Step your way in, Officer. (*At wing.*) Mr. Carfrae, give a chair to yon decent wife that cam' in wi' me. Nae news?

A Voice without. Naething, sir.

Lawson (*sitting*). Weel, Officer, and what can I do for you?

Hunt. Well, sir, as I was saying, I've an English warrant for the apprehension of one Jemmy Rivers, *alias* Captain Starlight, now at large within your jurisdiction.

Lawson. That'll be the highwayman?

Hunt. That same, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal. The Captain's given me a hard hunt of it this time. I dropped on his marks at Huntingdon, but he was away North, and I had to up and after him. I heard of him all along the York road, for he's a light hand on the pad, has Jemmy, and leaves his mark. I missed him at York by four-and-twenty hours, and lost him for as much more. Then I picked him up again at Carlisle, and we made a race of it for the Border; but he'd a better nag, and was best up in the road; so I had to wait till I ran him to earth in Edinburgh here and could get a new warrant. So here I am, sir. They told me you were an active sort of gentleman, and I'm an active man myself. And Sir John Fielding, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, he's an active gentleman likewise, though he's blind as a *himage*, and he desired his compliments to you (sir, and said that between us he thought we'd do the trick).

Lawson. Ay, he'll be a fine man, Sir John. Hand me owre your papers, Hunt, and you'll have your new warrant *quam primum*. And see here, Hunt, ye'll aiblins have a while to yoursel', and an active man, as ye say ye are, should aye be grinding grist. We're sair forfeuchen wi' our burglaries. *Non constat de personã*. We canna get a grip o' the delinquents. Here is the *Hue and Cry*. Ye see there is a guid two hundred pounds for ye.

Hunt. Well, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal (I ain't a rich man, and two hundred's two hundred. Thereby, sir), I don't mind telling you I've had a bit of a worry at it already. You see, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, I had to look into a ken to-night about the Captain, and an old cock always likes to be sure of his walk; so I got one of your Scots officers – him as was so polite as to show me round to Mr. Brodie's – to give me full particulars about the 'ouse, and the flash companions that use it. In his list I drop on the names of two old lambs of my own; and I put it to you, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, as a gentleman as knows the world, if what's a black sheep in London is likely or not to be keeping school in Edinburgh?

Lawson. *Coelum non animum*. A just observe.

Hunt. I'll give it a thought, sir, and see if I can't kill two birds with one stone. Talking of which, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, I'd like to have a bit of a confab with that nice young woman as came to pay her rent.

Lawson. Hunt, that's a very decent woman.

Hunt. And a very decent woman may have mighty queer pals, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal. Lord love you, sir, I don't know what the profession would do without 'em!

Lawson. Ye're vera richt, Hunt. An active and a watchful officer, I'll send her in till ye.

SCENE II

Hunt (*solus*). Two hundred pounds reward. Curious thing. One burglary after another, and these Scots blockheads without a man to show for it. Jock runs east, and Sawney cuts west; everything's at a deadlock and they go on calling themselves thief-catchers! (By Jingo, I'll show them how we do it down South! Well, I've worn out a good deal of saddle-leather over Jemmy Rivers; but here's for new breeches if you like.) Let's have another queer at the list. (*Reads.*) "Humphrey Moore, otherwise Badger; aged forty, thick-set, dark, close-cropped; has been a prize-fighter; no apparent occupation." Badger's an old friend of mine. "George Smith, otherwise the Dook, otherwise Jingling Geordie; red-haired and curly, slight, flash; an old thimble-rig; has been a stroller; suspected of smuggling; an associate of loose women." G. S., Esquire, is another of my flock. "Andrew Ainslie, otherwise Slink Ainslie; aged thirty-five; thin, white-faced, lank-haired; no occupation; has been in trouble for reset of theft and subornation of youth; might be useful as King's evidence." That's an acquaintance to make. "Jock Hamilton otherwise Sweepie," and so on. ("Willie M'Glashan," hum – yes, and so on,

and so on.) Ha! here's the man I want. "William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights, about thirty; tall, slim, dark; wears his own hair; is often at Clarke's, but seemingly for purposes of amusement only; (is nephew to the Procurator-Fiscal; is commercially sound, but has of late (it is supposed) been short of cash; has lost much at cock-fighting;) is proud, clever, of good repute, but is fond of adventures and secrecy, and keeps low company." Now, here's what I ask myself: here's this list of the family party that drop into Mother Clarke's; it's been in the hands of these nincompoops for weeks, and I'm the first to cry Queer Street! Two well-known cracksmen, Badger and the Dook! why, there's Jack in the Orchard at once. This here topsawyer work they talk about, of course that's a chalk above Badger and the Dook. But how about our Mohock-tradesman? "Purposes of amusement!" What next? Deacon of the Wrights? and Wright in their damned lingo means a kind of carpenter, I fancy? Why, damme, it's the man's trade! I'll look you up, Mr. William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights. As sure as my name's Jerry Hunt, I wouldn't take one-ninety-nine in gold for my chance of that 'ere two hundred!

SCENE III

Hunt; *to him*, Jean

Hunt. Well, my dear, and how about your gentleman friend now? How about Deacon Brodie?

Jean. I dinna ken your name, sir, nor yet whae ye are; but this is a very poor employ for ony gentleman – it sets ill wi' ony gentleman to cast my shame in my teeth.

Hunt. Lord love you, my dear, that ain't my line of country. Suppose you're not married and church'd a hundred thousand times, what odds to Jerry Hunt? Jerry, my Pamela Prue, is a cove as might be your parent; a cove renowned for the ladies' friend (and he's dead certain to be on your side). What I can't get over is this: here's this Mr. Deacon Brodie doing the genteel at home, and leaving a nice young 'oman like you – as a cove may say – to take it out on cold potatoes. That's what I can't get over, Mrs. Watt. I'm a family man myself; and I can't get over it.

Jean. And whae said that to ye? They lee'd whatever. I get naething but guid by him; and I had nae richt to gang to his house; and O, I just ken I've been the ruin of him!

Hunt. Don't you take on, Mrs. Watt. Why, now I hear you piping up for him, I begin to think a lot of him myself. I like a cove to be open-handed and free.

Jean. Weel, sir, and he's a' that.

Hunt. Well, that shows what a wicked world this is. Why, they told me – . Well, well, "here's the open 'and and the 'appy 'art." And how much, my dear – speaking as a family man – now, how much might your gentleman friend stand you in the course of a year?

Jean. What's your wull?

Hunt. That's a mighty fancy shawl, Mrs. Watt. (I should like to take its next-door neighbour to Mrs. Hunt in King Street, Common Garden.) What's about the figure?

Jean. It's paid for. Ye can sweir to that.

Hunt. Yes, my dear, and so is King George's crown; but I don't know what it cost, and I don't know where the blunt came from to pay for it.

Jean. I'm thinking ye'll be a vera clever gentleman.

Hunt. So I am, my dear; and I like you none the worse for being artful yourself. But between friends now, and speaking as a family man —

Jean. I'll be wishin' ye a fine nicht. (*Curtisies and goes out.*)

SCENE IV

Hunt (*solus*)

Hunt. Ah! that's it, is it? "My fancy man's my 'ole delight," as we say in Bow Street. But which *is* the fancy man? George the Dook, or William the Deacon? One or both? (*He winks solemnly.*) Well, Jerry, my boy, here's your work cut out for you; but if you took one-nine-five for that ere little two hundred you'd be a disgrace to the profession.

TABLEAU III

Mother Clarke's

The Stage represents a room of coarse and sordid appearance: settles, spittoons, etc.; sanded floor. A large table at back, where Ainslie, Hamilton, and others are playing cards and quarrelling. In front, L. and R., smaller tables, at one of which are Brodie and Moore, drinking. Mrs. Clarke and women serving.

SCENE I

Moore. You've got the devil's own luck, Deacon, that's what you've got.

Brodie. Luck! Don't talk of luck to a man like me! Why not say I've the devil's own judgment? Men of my stamp don't risk – they plan, Badger; they plan, and leave chance to such cattle as you (and Jingling Geordie. They make opportunities before they take them).

Moore. You're artful, ain't you?

Brodie. Should I be here else? When I leave my house I leave an *alibi* behind me. I'm ill – ill with a jumping headache, and the fiend's own temper. I'm sick in bed this minute, and they're all going about with the fear of death on them lest they should disturb the poor sick Deacon. (My bedroom door is barred and bolted like the bank – you remember! – and all the while the window's open, and the Deacon's over the hills and far away. What do you think of me?)

Moore. I've seen your sort before, I have.

Brodie. Not you. As for Leslie's —

Moore. That was a nick above you.

Brodie. Ay was it. He wellnigh took me red-handed; and that was better luck than I deserved. If I'd not been drunk and in my tantrums, you'd never have got my hand within a thousand years of such a job.

Moore. Why not? You're the King of the Cracksmen, ain't you?

Brodie. Why not! He asks me why not! Gods what a brain it is! Hark ye, Badger, it's all very well to be King of the Cracksmen, as you call it; but however respectable he may have the misfortune to be, one's friend is one's friend, and as such must be severely let alone. What! shall there be no more honour among thieves than there is honesty among politicians? Why, man, if under heaven there were but one poor lock unpicked, and that the lock of one whose claret you've drunk, and who has babbled of woman across your own mahogany – that lock, sir, were entirely sacred. Sacred as the Kirk of Scotland; sacred as King George upon his throne; sacred as the memory of Bruce and Bannockburn.

Moore. O, rot! I ain't a parson, I ain't; I never had no college education. Business is business. That's wot's the matter with me.

Brodie. Ay, so we said when you lost that fight with Newcastle Jemmy, and sent us home all poor men. That was a nick above *you*.

Moore. Newcastle Jemmy! Muck: that's my opinion of him: muck. I'll mop the floor up with him any day, if so be as you or any on 'em 'll make it worth my while. If not, muck! That's my motto. Wot I now ses is, about that 'ere crib at Leslie's, wos I right, I ses? or wos I wrong? That's wot's the matter with you.

Brodie. You are both right and wrong. You dared me to do it. I was drunk; I was upon my mettle; and I as good as did it. More than that, blackguardly as it was, I enjoyed the doing. He is my friend. He had dined with me that day, and I felt like a man in a story. I climbed his wall, I crawled along his pantry roof, I mounted his window-sill. That one turn of my wrist – you know it! – and the casement was open. It was as dark as the pit, and I thought I'd won my wager, when, phewt! down went something inside, and down went somebody with it. I made one leap, and was off like a rocket. It was my poor friend in person; and if he'd caught and passed me on to the watchman under the window, I should have felt no viler rogue than I feel just now.

Moore. I s'pose he knows you pretty well by this time?

Brodie. 'Tis the worst of friendship. Here, Kirsty, fill these glasses. Moore, here's better luck – and a more honourable plant! – next time.

Moore. Deacon, I looks towards you. But it looks thundering like rotten eggs, don't it?

Brodie. I think not. I was masked, for one thing, and for another I was as quick as lightning. He suspects me so little that he dined with me this very afternoon.

Moore. Anyway, you ain't game to try it on again, I'll lay odds on that. Once bit, twice shy. That's your motto.

Brodie. Right again. I'll put my *alibi* to a better use. And, Badger, one word in your ear: there's no Newcastle Jemmy about *me*. Drop the subject, and for good, or I shall drop you. (*He rises, and walks backwards and forwards, a little unsteadily; then returns, and sits, L., as before.*)

SCENE II

To these, Hunt, disguised

He is disguised as a "flying stationer" with a patch over his eye. He sits at table opposite Brodie's, and is served with bread and cheese and beer.

Hamilton (*from behind*). The deevil tak' the cairts!

Ainslie. Hoot, man, dinna blame the cairts.

Moore. Look here, Deacon, I mean business, I do. (*Hunt looks up at the name of "Deacon."*)

Brodie. Gad, Badger, I never meet you that you do not. (*You have a set of the most commercial intentions!*) You make me blush.

Moore. That's all blazing fine, that is! But wot I ses is, wot about the chips? That's what I ses. I'm after that thundering old Excise Office, I am. That's my motto.

Brodie. 'Tis a very good motto, and at your lips, Badger, it kind of warms my heart. But it's not mine.

Moore. Muck! why not?

Brodie. 'Tis too big and too dangerous. I shirk King George; he has a fat pocket, but he has a long arm. (*You pilfer sixpence from him, and it's three hundred reward for you, and a hue and cry from Tophet to the stars.*) It ceases to be business; it turns politics, and I'm not a politician, Mr. Moore. (*Rising.*) I'm only Deacon Brodie.

Moore. All right. I can wait.

Brodie (*seeing* Hunt). Ha, a new face – and with a patch! (There’s nothing under heaven I like so dearly as a new face with a patch.) Who the devil, sir, are you that own it? And where did you get it? And how much will you take for it second-hand?

Hunt. Well, sir, to tell you the truth – (Brodie *bows*) – it’s not for sale. But it’s my own, and I’ll drink your honour’s health in anything.

Brodie. An Englishman, too! Badger, behold a countryman. What are you, and what part of southern Scotland do you come from?

Hunt. Well, your honour, to tell you the honest truth —

Brodie (*bowing*). Your obleeged!

Hunt. I knows a gentleman when I sees him, your honour (and, to tell your honour the truth —

Brodie. *Je vous baise les mains!* [*Bowing.*])

Hunt. A gentleman is a gentleman, your honour (is always a gentleman, and to tell you the honest truth) —

Brodie. Great heavens! answer in three words, and be hanged to you! What are you, and where are you from?

Hunt. A patter-cove from Seven Dials.

Brodie. Is it possible? All my life long have I been pining to meet with a patter-cove from Seven Dials! Embrace me, at a distance. (A patter-cove from Seven Dials!) Go, fill yourself as drunk as you dare, at my expense. Anything he likes, Mrs. Clarke. He’s a patter-cove from Seven Dials. Hillo! what’s all this?

Ainslie. Dod, I’m for nae mair! (*At back, and rising.*)

Players. Sit down, Ainslie. – Sit down, Andra. – Ma revenge!

Ainslie. Na, na, I’m for canny goin’. (*Coming forward with bottle.*) Deacon, let’s see your gless.

Brodie. Not an inch of it.

Moore. No rotten shirking, Deacon!

(Ainslie. I’m sayin’, man, let’s see your gless.)

Brodie. Go to the deuce!

Ainslie. But I’m sayin’ —

Brodie. Haven’t I to play to-night?

Ainslie. But, man, ye’ll drink to bonnie Jean Watt?

Brodie. Ay, I’ll follow you there. *À la reine de mes amours!* (*Drinks.*) What fiend put this in your way, you hound? You’ve filled me with raw stuff. By the muckle deil! —

Moore. Don’t hit him, Deacon; tell his mother.

Hunt (*aside*). Oho!

SCENE III

To these, Smith, Rivers

Smith. Where’s my beloved? Deakin, my beauty, where are you? Come to the arms of George, and let him introduce you. Capting Starlight Rivers! Capting, the Deakin: Deakin, the Capting. An English nobleman on the grand tour, to open his mind, by the Lard!

Rivers. Stupendiously pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Deaking, split me!

Brodie. We don’t often see England’s heroes our way, Captain, but when we do, we make them infernally welcome.

Rivers. Prettily put, sink me! (A demned genteel sentiment, stap my vitals!)

Brodie. O Captain! you flatter me. (We Scotsmen have our qualities, I suppose, but we are but rough and ready at the best. There’s nothing like your Englishman for genuine distinction. He is

nearer France than we are, and smells of his neighbourhood. That d – d thing, the *je ne sais quoi*, too! Lard, Lard, split me! stap my vitals! O such manners are pure, pure, pure. They are, by the shade of Claude Duval!)

Rivers. Mr. Deakin, Mr. Deakin (this is passatively too much). What will you sip? Give it the *hanar* of a neam.

Brodie. By these most *hanarable* hands now, Captain, you shall not. On such an occasion I could play host with Lucifer himself. Here, Clarke, Mother Midnight! Down with you, Captain (*forcing him boisterously into a chair*). I don't know if you can lie, but, sink me! you shall sit. (*Drinking, etc., in dumb-show.*)

Moore (*aside to Smith*). We've nobbled him, Geordie!

Smith (*aside to Moore*). As neat as ninepence! He's taking it down like mother's milk. But there'll be wigs on the green to-morrow, Badger! It'll be twopence and toddle with George Smith.

Moore. O, muck! Who's afraid of him? (*To Ainslie.*) Hang on, Slinkie.

Hunt (*who is feigning drunkenness, and has overheard; aside*). By Jingo!

Rivers. Will you sneeze, Mr. Deakin, sir?

Brodie. Thanks; I have all the vices, Captain. You must send me some of your rappee. It is passatively perfect.

Rivers. Mr. Deakin, I do myself the *hanar* of a sip to you.

Brodie. Topsy-turvy with the can!

Moore (*aside to Smith*). That made him wink.

Brodie. Your high and mighty hand, my Captain! Shall we dice – dice – dice? (*Dumb-show between them.*)

Ainslie (*aside to Moore*). I'm sayin' – ?

Moore. What's up now?

Ainslie. I'm no' to gie him the coggit dice?

Moore. The square ones, rot you! Ain't he got to lose every brass farden?

Ainslie. What'll like be my share?

Moore. You mucking well leave that to me.

Rivers. Well, Mr. Deakin, if you passatively will have me shake a *helbow* —

Brodie. Where are the bones, Ainslie? Where are the dice, Lord George? (*Ainslie gives the dice and dice-box to Brodie; and privately a second pair of dice.*) Old Fortune's counters; the bonnie money-catching, money-breeding bones! Hark to their dry music! Scotland against England! Sit round, you tame devils, and put your coins on me!

Smith. Easy does it, my lord of high degree! Keep cool.

Brodie. Cool's the word, Captain – a cool twenty on the first?

Rivers. Done and done. (*They play.*)

Hunt (*aside to Moore, a little drunk*). Ain't that 'ere Scots gentleman, your friend, too drunk to play, sir?

Moore. You hold your jaw; that's what's the matter with you.

Ainslie. He's waur nor he looks. He's knockit the box aff the table.

Smith (*picking up box*). That's the way *we* does it. Ten to one and no takers!

Brodie. Deuces again! More liquor, Mother Clarke!

Smith. Hooray, our side! (*Pouring out.*) George and his pal for ever!

Brodie. Deuces again, by heaven! Another?

Rivers. Done!

Brodie. Ten more; money's made to go. On with you!

Rivers. Sixes.

Brodie. Deuce-ace. Death and judgment! Double or quits?

Rivers. Drive on! Sixes.

Smith. Fire away, brave boys. (*To Moore.*) It's Tally-ho-the-Grinder, Hump!

Brodie. Treys! Death and the pit! How much have you got there?

Rivers. A cool forty-five.

Brodie. I play you thrice the lot.

Rivers. Who's afraid?

Smith. Stand by, Badger!

Rivers. Cinq-ace.

Brodie. My turn now. (*He juggles in and uses the second pair of dice.*) Aces! Aces again! What's this? (*Picking up dice.*) Sold!.. You play false, you hound!

Rivers. You lie!

Brodie. In your teeth. (*Overturns table, and goes for him.*)

Moore. Here, none o' that. (*They hold him back. Struggle.*)

Smith. Hold on, Deacon!

Brodie. Let me go. Hands off, I say! I'll not touch him. (*Stands weighing dice in his hand.*) But as for that thieving whinger, Ainslie, I'll cut his throat between this dark and to-morrow's. To the bone. (*Addressing the company.*) Rogues, rogues, rogues! (*Singing without.*) Ha! what's that?

Ainslie. It's the psalm-singing up by at the Holy Weaver's. And, O Deacon, if ye're a Christian man —

The Psalm without: —

“Lord, who shall stand, if Thou, O Lord,
Should'st mark iniquity?
But yet with Thee forgiveness is,
That fear'd Thou mayest be.”

Brodie. I think I'll go. “My son the Deacon was aye regular at kirk.” If the old man could see his son, the Deacon! I think I'll — . Ay, who *shall* stand? There's the rub! And forgiveness, too? There's a long word for you! I learnt it all lang syne, and now ... hell and ruin are on either hand of me, and the devil has me by the leg. “My son, the Deacon...!” Eh, God! but there's no fool like an old fool! (*Becoming conscious of the others.*) Rogues!

Smith. Take my arm, Deacon.

Brodie. Down, dog, down! (*Stay and be drunk with your equals.*) Gentlemen and ladies, I have already cursed you pretty heavily. Let me do myself the pleasure of wishing you — a very — good evening. (*As he goes out, Hunt, who has been staggering about in the crowd, falls on a settle, as about to sleep.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT

ACT II

TABLEAU IV Evil and Good

The Stage represents the Deacon's workshop; benches, shavings, tools, boards, and so forth. Doors, C., on the street, and L., into the house. Without, church bells; not a chime, but a slow, broken tocsin.

SCENE I

Brodie (*solus*). My head! my head! It's the sickness of the grave. And those bells go on!.. go on ... inexorable as death and judgment. (There they go; the trumpets of respectability, sounding encouragement to the world to do and spare not, and not to be found out. Found out! And to those who are they toll as when a man goes to the gallows.) Turn where I will are pitfalls hell-deep. Mary and her dowry; Jean and her child – my child; the dirty scoundrel Moore; my uncle and his trust; perhaps the man from Bow Street. Debt, vice, cruelty, dishonour, crime; the whole canting, lying, double-dealing, beastly business! “My son the Deacon – Deacon of the Wrights!” My thoughts sicken at it. (O, the Deacon, the Deacon! Where's a hat for the Deacon, where's a hat for the Deacon's headache? (*Searching.*) This place is a piggery. To be respectable and not to find one's hat.)

SCENE II

To him, Jean, a baby in her shawl, C

Jean (*who has entered silently during the Deacon's last words*). It's me, Wullie.

Brodie (*turning upon her*). What! You here again? (you again!)

Jean. Deacon, I'm unco vexed.

Brodie. Do you know what you do? Do you know what you risk? (Is there nothing – nothing! – will make you spare me this idiotic, wanton persecution?)

Jean. I was wrong to come yestreen; I ken that fine. But the day it's different; I but to come the day, Deacon, though I ken fine it's the Sabbath, and I think shame to be seen upon the streets.

Brodie. See here, Jean. You must go now. I'll come to you to-night; I swear that. But now I'm for the road.

Jean. No' till you've heard me, William Brodie. Do ye think I came to pleasure mysel', where I'm no' wanted? I've a pride o' my ain.

Brodie. Jean, I am going now. If you please to stay on alone, in this house of mine, where I wish I could say you are welcome, stay. (*Going.*)

Jean. It's the man frae Bow Street.

Brodie. Bow Street?

Jean. I thocht ye would hear me. Ye think little o' me; but it's mebbe a braw thing for you that I think sae muckle o' William Brodie ... ill as it sets me.

Brodie. (You don't know what is on my mind, Jennie, else you would forgive me.) Bow Street?

Jean. It's the man Hunt: him that was here yestreen for the Fiscal.

Brodie. Hunt?

Jean. He kens a hantle. He... Ye maunna be angered wi' me, Wullie! I said what I shouldna.

Brodie. Said? Said what?

Jean. Just that ye were a guid frien' to me. He made believe he was awfu' sorry for me, because ye gied me nae siller; and I said, "Wha tellt him that?" and that he lee'd.

Brodie. God knows he did! What next?

Jean. He was that soft-spoken, butter wouldna melt in his mouth; and he kept aye harp, harpin'; but after that let-out, he got neither black nor white frae me. Just that ae word and nae mair; and at the hinder end he just speired straucht out, whaur it was ye got your siller frae.

Brodie. Where I got my siller?

Jean. Ay, that was it. "You ken," says he.

Brodie. Did he? and what said you?

Jean. I couldna think on naething, but just that he was a gey and clever gentleman.

Brodie. You should have said I was in trade, and had a good business. That's what you should have said. That's what you would have said had you been worth your salt. But it's blunder, blunder, outside and in (upstairs, down-stairs, and in my lady's chamber). You women! Did he see Smith?

Jean. Ay, and kennt him.

Brodie. Damnation! – No, I'm not angry with you, but you see what I've to endure for you. Don't cry. (Here's the devil at the door, and we must bar him out as best we can.)

Jean. God's truth, ye are nae vexed wi' me?

Brodie. God's truth, I am grateful to you. How is the child? Well? That's right. (*Peeping.*) Poor wee laddie! He's like you, Jean.

Jean. I thocht he was liker you.

Brodie. Is he? Perhaps he is. Ah, Jeannie, you must see and make him a better man than his father.

Jean. Eh man, Deacon, the proud wumman I'll be gin he's only half sae guid.

Brodie. Well, well, if I win through this, we'll see what we can dae for him between us. (*Leading her out, C.*) And now; go – go – go.

Lawson (*without L.*). I ken the way, I ken the way.

Jean (*starting to door*). It's the Fiscal; I'm awa. (Brodie, L.)

SCENE III

To these, Lawson, L

Lawson. A braw day this, William. (*Seeing Jean.*) Eh. Mistress Watt? And what'll have brocht you here?

Brodie (*seated on bench*). Something, uncle, she lost last night, and she thinks that something she lost is here. *Voilà*.

Lawson. Why are ye no' at the kirk, woman? Do ye gang to the kirk?

Jean. I'm mebbe no' what ye would just ca' reg'lar. Ye see, Fiscal, it's the wean.

Lawson. A bairn's an excuse; I ken that fine, Mistress Watt. But bairn or nane, my woman, ye should be at the kirk. Awa' wi' ye! Hear to the bells; they're ringing in. (Jean *curtsies to both, and goes out C. The bells, which have been ringing quicker, cease.*)

SCENE IV

Lawson (*to Brodie, returning C. from door*). *Mulier formosa superne*, William: a braw lass and a decent woman forbye.

Brodie. I'm no judge, Procurator, but I'll take your word for it. Is she not a tenant of yours?

Lawson. Ay, ay; a bit house on my land in Libberton's Wynd. Her man's awa, puir body; or they tell me sae; and I'm concerned for her (she's unco bonnie to be left her lane). But it sets me brawly to be finding faut wi' the puir lass, and me an elder, and should be at the plate. (There'll be twa words about this in the Kirk Session.) However, it's nane of my business that brings me, or I should tak' the mair shame to mysel.' Na, sir, it's for you; it's your business keeps me frae the kirk.

Brodie. My business, Procurator? I rejoice to see it in such excellent hands.

Lawson. Ye see, it's this way. I had a crack wi' the laddie Leslie, *inter pocula* (he took a stirrup-cup wi' me), and he tells me he has askit Mary, and she was to speak to ye hersel'. O, ye needna look sae gash. Did she speak? and what'll you have said to her?

Brodie. She has not spoken; I have said nothing; and I believe I asked you to avoid the subject.

Lawson. Ay, I made a note o' that observation, William (and assoilzied mysel'). Mary's a guid lass, and I'm her uncle, and I'm here to be answered. Is it to be ay or no?

Brodie. It's to be no. This marriage must be quashed; and hark ye, Procurator, you must help me.

Lawson. Me? ye're daft! And what for why?

Brodie. Because I've spent the trust-money, and I can't refund it.

Lawson. Ye reprobate deevil!

Brodie. Have a care, Procurator. No wry words!

Lawson. Do you say it to my face, sir? Dod, sir, I'm the Crown Prosecutor.

Brodie. Right. The Prosecutor for the Crown. And where did you get your brandy?

Lawson. Eh?

Brodie. Your brandy! Your brandy, man! Where do you get your brandy? And you a Crown official and an elder!

Lawson. Whaur the deevil did ye hear that?

Brodie. Rogues all! Rogues all, Procurator!

Lawson. Ay, ay. Lord save us! Guidsave, to think o' that noo!.. Can ye give me some o' that Cognac? I'm ... I'm sort o' shaken, William, I'm sort o' shaken. Thank you, William! (*Looking piteously at glass.*) *Nunc est bibendum.* (*Drinks.*) Troth, I'm set ajee a bit. Wha the deevil tauld ye?

Brodie. Ask no questions, brother. We are a pair.

Lawson. Pair, indeed! Pair, William Brodie! Upon my saul, sir, ye're a brazen-faced man that durst say it to my face! Tak' you care, my bonnie young man, that your craig doesna feel the wecht o' your hurdies. Keep the plainstones side o' the gallows. *Via trita, via tuta*, William Brodie!

Brodie. And the brandy, Procurator? and the brandy?

Lawson. Ay ... weel ... be't sae! Let the brandy bide, man, let the brandy bide! But for you and the trust-money ... damned! It's felony. *Tutor in rem suam*, ye ken, *tutor in rem suam*. But O man, Deacon, whaur is the siller?

Brodie. It's gone – O how the devil should I know? But it'll never come back.

Lawson. Dear, dear! A' gone to the winds o' heaven! Sae ye're an extravagant dog, too. *Prodigus et furiosus!* And that puir lass – eh, Deacon, man, that puir lass! I mind her such a bonnie bairn.

Brodie (*stopping his ears*). Brandy, brandy, brandy, brandy, brandy!

Lawson. William Brodie, mony's the long day that I've believed in you; prood, prood was I to be the Deacon's uncle; and a sore hearing have I had of it the day. That's past; that's past like Flodden Field; it's an auld sang noo, and I'm an aulder man than when I crossed your door. But mark ye this –

mark ye this, William Brodie, I may be no' sae guid's I should be; but there's no' a saul between the east sea and the wast can lift his een to God that made him, and say I wranged him as ye wrang that lassie. I bless God, William Brodie – ay, though he was like my brother – I bless God that he that got ye has the hand of death upon his hearing, and can win into his grave a happier man than me. And ye speak to me, sir? Think shame – think shame upon your heart!

Brodie. Rogues all!

Lawson. You're the son of my sister, William Brodie. Mair than that I stop not to inquire. If the siller is spent, and the honour tint – Lord help us, and the honour tint! – sae be it, I maun bow the head. Ruin shallna come by me. Na, and I'll say mair, William; we have a' our weary sins upon our backs, and maybe I have mair than mony. But, man, if ye could bring *half* the jointure ... (*potius quam pereas*) ... for your mither's son? Na? You couldna bring the half? Weel, weel, it's a sair heart I have this day, a sair heart and a weary. If I were a better man mysel' ... but there, there, it's a sair heart that I have gotten. And the Lord kens I'll help ye if I can. (*Potius quam pereas.*) (*He goes out.*)

SCENE V

Brodie. Sore hearing, does he say? My hand's wet. But it's victory. Shall it be go? or stay? (I should show them all I can, or they may pry closer than they ought.) Shall I have it out and be done with it? To see Mary at once (to carry bastion after bastion at the charge) – there were the true safety after all! Hurry – hurry's the road to silence now. Let them once get tattling in their parlours, and it's death to me. For I'm in a cruel corner now. I'm down, and I shall get my kicking soon and soon enough. I began it in the lust of life, in a hey-day of mystery and adventure. I felt it great to be a bolder, craftier rogue than the drowsy citizen that called himself my fellow-man. (It was meat and drink to know him in the hollow of my hand, hoarding that I and mine might squander, pinching that we might wax fat.) It was in the laughter of my heart that I tip-toed into his greasy privacy. I forced the strong-box at his ear while he sprawled beside his wife. He was my butt, my ape, my jumping-jack. And now ... O fool, fool! (Duped by such knaves as are a shame to knavery, crime's rabble, hell's tatterdemalions!) Shorn to the quick! Rooked to my vitals! And I must thief for my daily bread like any crawling blackguard in the gutter. And my sister ... my kind, innocent sister! She will come smiling to me with her poor little love-story, and I must break her heart. Broken hearts, broken lives!.. I should have died before.

SCENE VI

Brodie, Mary

Mary (*tapping without*). Can I come in, Will?

Brodie. O yes, come in, come in! (Mary *enters*.) I wanted to be quiet, but it doesn't matter, I see. You women are all the same.

Mary. O no, Will, they're not all so happy, and they're not all Brodies. But I'll be a woman in one thing. For I've come to claim your promise, dear; and I'm going to be petted and comforted and made much of, although I don't need it, and... Why, Will, what's wrong with you? You look ... I don't know what you look like.

Brodie. O nothing! A splitting head and an aching heart. Well! you've come to speak to me. Speak up. What is it? Come, girl! What is it? Can't you speak?

Mary. Why, Will, what is the matter?

Brodie. I thought you had come to tell me something. Here I am. For God's sake out with it, and don't stand beating about the bush.

Mary. O be kind, be kind to me.

Brodie. Kind? I am kind. I'm only ill and worried, can't you see? Whimpering? I knew it! Sit down, you goose! Where do you women get your tears?

Mary. Why are you so cross with me? O, Will, you have forgot your sister! Remember, dear, that I have nobody but you. It's your own fault, Will, if you've taught me to come to you for kindness, for I always found it. And I mean you shall be kind to me again. I know you will, for this is my great need, and the day I've missed my mother sorest. Just a nice look, dear, and a soft tone in your voice, to give me courage, for I can tell you nothing till I know that you're my own brother once again.

Brodie. If you'd take a hint, you'd put it off until to-morrow. But I suppose you won't. On, then, I'm listening. I'm listening!

Mary. Mr. Leslie has asked me to be his wife.

Brodie. He has, has he?

Mary. And I have consented.

Brodie. And...?

Mary. You can say that to me? And that is all you have to say?

Brodie. O no, not all.

Mary. Speak out, sir. I am not afraid.

Brodie. I suppose you want my consent?

Mary. Can you ask?

Brodie. I didn't know. You seem to have got on pretty well without it so far.

Mary. O shame on you! shame on you!

Brodie. Perhaps you may be able to do without it altogether. I hope so. For you'll never have it... Mary! ... I hate to see you look like that. If I could say anything else, believe me, I would say it. But I have said all; every word is spoken; there's the end.

Mary. It shall not be the end. You owe me explanation; and I'll have it.

Brodie. Isn't my "No" enough, Mary?

Mary. It might be enough for me; but it is not, and it cannot be, enough for him. He has asked me to be his wife; he tells me his happiness is in my hands – poor hands, but they shall not fail him, if my poor heart should break! If he has chosen and set his hopes upon me, of all women in the world, I shall find courage somewhere to be worthy of the choice. And I dare you to leave this room until you tell me all your thoughts – until you prove that this is good and right.

Brodie. Good and right? They are strange words, Mary. I mind the time when it was good and right to be your father's daughter and your brother's sister... Now!..

Mary. Have I changed? Not even in thought. My father, Walter says, shall live and die with us. He shall only have gained another son. And you – you know what he thinks of you; you know what I would do for you.

Brodie. Give him up.

Mary. I have told you: not without a reason.

Brodie. You must.

Mary. I will not.

Brodie. What if I told you that you could only compass your happiness and his at the price of my ruin?

Mary. Your ruin?

Brodie. Even so.

Mary. Ruin!

Brodie. It has an ugly sound, has it not?

Mary. O Willie, what have you done? What have you done? What have you done?

Brodie. I cannot tell you, Mary. But you may trust me. You must give up this Leslie ... and at once. It is to save me.

Mary. I would die for you, dear; you know that. But I cannot be false to him. Even for you, I cannot be false to him.

Brodie. We shall see. Let me take you to your room. Come. And, remember, it is for your brother's sake. It is to save me.

Mary. I am a true Brodie. Give me time, and you shall not find me wanting. But it is all so sudden ... so strange and dreadful! You will give me time, will you not? I am only a woman, and... O my poor Walter! It will break his heart! It will break his heart! (*A knock.*)

Brodie. You hear!

Mary. Yes, yes. Forgive me. I am going. I will go. It is to save you, is it not? To save you. Walter ... Mr. Leslie ... O Deacon, Deacon, God forgive you! (*She goes out.*)

Brodie. Amen. But will He?

SCENE VII

Brodie, Hunt

Hunt (*hat in hand*). Mr. Deacon Brodie, I believe?

Brodie. I am he, Mr – ?

Hunt. Hunt, sir: an officer from Sir John Fielding of Bow Street.

Brodie. There can be no better passport than the name. In what can I serve you?

Hunt. You'll excuse me, Mr. Deacon.

Brodie. Your duty excuses you, Mr. Hunt.

Hunt. Your obedient. The fact is, Mr. Deacon (we in the office see a good deal of the lives of private parties; and I needn't tell a gentleman of your experience it's part of our duty to hold our tongues. Now), it comes to our knowledge that you are a trifle jokieous. Of course I know there ain't any harm in that. I've been young myself, Mr. Deacon, and speaking —

Brodie. O, but pardon me, Mr. Hunt, I am not going to discuss my private character with you.

Hunt. To be sure you ain't. (And do I blame you? Not me.) But, speaking as one man of the world to another, you naturally see a great deal of bad company.

Brodie. Not half so much as you do. But I see what you're driving at; and if I can illuminate the course of justice, you may command me. (*He sits, and motions Hunt to do likewise.*)

Hunt. I was dead sure of it: and 'and upon 'art, Mr. Deacon, I thank you. Now – (*consulting pocket-book*) – did you ever meet a certain George Smith?

Brodie. The fellow they call Jingling Geordie? (*Hunt nods.*) Yes.

Hunt. Bad character?

Brodie. Let us say ... disreputable.

Hunt. Any means of livelihood?

Brodie. I really cannot pretend to guess. I have met the creature at cock-fights (which, as you know, are my weakness). Perhaps he bets.

Hunt. (Mr. Deacon, from what I know of the gentleman, I should say that if he don't – if he ain't open to any mortal thing – he ain't the man I mean.) He used to be about with a man called Badger Moore.

Brodie. The boxer?

Hunt. That's him. Know anything of him?

Brodie. Not much. I lost five pieces on him in a fight; and I fear he sold his backers.

Hunt. Speaking as one admirer of the noble art to another, Mr. Deacon, the losers always do. I suppose the Badger cock-fights like the rest of us?

Brodie. I have met him in the pit.

Hunt. Well, it's a pretty sport. I'm as partial to a main as anybody.

Brodie. It's not an elegant taste, Mr. Hunt.

Hunt. It costs as much as though it was. And that reminds me, speaking as one sportsman to another, Mr. Deacon, I was sorry to hear that you've been dropping a hatful of money lately.

Brodie. You are very good.

Hunt. Four hundred in three months, they tell me.

Brodie. Ah!

Hunt. So they say, sir.

Brodie. They have a perfect right to say so, Mr. Hunt.

Hunt. And you to do the other thing? Well, I'm a good hand at keeping close myself.

Brodie. I am not consulting you, Mr. Hunt; 'tis you who are consulting me. And if there is nothing else (*rising*) in which I can pretend to serve you...?

Hunt (*rising*). That's about all, sir, unless you can put me on to anything good in the way of heckle and spur? I'd try to look in.

Brodie. O come, Mr. Hunt, if you have nothing to do, frankly and flatly I have. This is not the day for such a conversation; and so good-bye to you. (*A knocking, C.*)

Hunt. Servant, Mr. Deacon. (*Smith and Moore, without waiting to be answered, open and enter, C. They are well into the room before they observe Hunt.*) (Talk of the devil, sir!)

Brodie. What brings you here? (*Smith and Moore, confounded by the officer's presence, slouch together to right of door. Hunt, stopping as he goes out, contemplates the pair, sarcastically. This is supported by Moore with sullen bravado; by Smith with cringing airiness.*)

Hunt (*digging Smith in the ribs*). Why, you are the very parties I was looking for! (*He goes out, C.*)

SCENE VIII

Brodie, Moore, Smith

Moore. Wot was that cove here about?

Brodie (*with folded arms, half-sitting on bench*). He was here about you.

Smith (*still quite discountenanced*). About us? Scissors! And what did you tell him?

Brodie (*same attitude*). I spoke of you as I have found you. (I told him you were a disreputable hound, and that Moore had crossed a fight.) I told him you were a drunken ass, and Moore an incompetent and dishonest boxer.

Moore. Look here, Deacon! Wot's up? Wot I ses is, if a cove's got any thundering grudge agin a cove, why can't he spit it out, I ses.

Brodie. Here are my answers. (*Producing purse and dice.*) These are both too light. This purse is empty, these dice are not loaded. Is it indiscretion to inquire how you share? Equal with the Captain, I presume?

Smith. It's as easy as my eye, Deakin. Slink Ainslie got letting the merry glass go round, and didn't know the right bones from the wrong. That's *hall*.

Brodie. (What clumsy liars you are!

Smith. In boyhood's hour, Deakin, he were called Old Truthful. Little did he think –)

Brodie. What is your errand?

Moore. Business.

Smith. After the melancholy games of last night, Deakin, which no one deplores so much as George Smith, we thought we'd trot round – didn't us, Hump? – and see how you and your bankers was a-getting on.

Brodie. Will you tell me your errand?

Moore. You're dry, ain't you?

Brodie. Am I?

Moore. We ain't none of us got a stiver, that's wot's the matter with us.

Brodie. Is it?

Moore. Ay, strike me, it is! And wot we've got to do is to put up the Excise.

Smith. It's the last plant in the shrubbery, Deakin, and it's breaking George the gardener's heart, it is. We really must!

Brodie. Must we?

Moore. Must's the thundering word. I mean business, I do.

Brodie. That's lucky. I don't.

Moore. O, you don't, don't you?

Brodie. I do not.

Moore. Then p'raps you'll tell us wot you thundering well do?

Brodie. What do I mean? I mean that you and that merry-andrew shall walk out of this room and this house. Do you suppose, you blockheads, that I am blind? I'm the Deacon, am I not? I've been your king and your commander. I've led you and fed you and thought for you with this head. And you think to steal a march upon a man like me? I see you through and through (I know you like the clock); I read your thoughts like print. Brodie, you thought, has money, and won't do the job. Therefore, you thought, we must rook him to the heart. And therefore, you put up your idiot cockney. And now you come round, and dictate, and think sure of your Excise? Sure? Are you sure I'll let you pack with a whole skin? By my soul, but I've a mind to pistol you like dogs. Out of this! Out, I say, and soil my home no more.

Moore (*sitting*). Now look 'ere. Mr. bloody Deacon Brodie, you see this 'ere chair of yours, don't you? Wot I ses to you is, Here I am, I ses, and here I mean to stick. That's my motto. Who the devil are you to do the high and mighty? You make all you can out of us, don't you? and when one of your plants goes cross, you order us out of the ken? Muck! That's wot I think of you. Muck! Don't you get coming the nob over me, Mr. Deacon Brodie, or I'll smash you.

Brodie. You will?

Moore. Ay will I. If I thundering well swing for it. And as for clearing out? Muck! Here I am, and here I stick. Clear out? You try it on. I'm a man, I am.

Brodie. This is plain speaking.

Moore. Plain? Wot about your father as can't walk? Wot about your fine-madam sister? Wot about the stone-jug, and the dock, and the rope in the open street? Is that plain? If it ain't, you let me know, and I'll spit it out so as it'll raise the roof of this 'ere ken. Plain! I'm that cove's master, and I'll make it plain enough for him.

Brodie. What do you want of me?

Moore. Wot do I want of you? Now you speak sense. Leslie's is wot I want of you. The Excise is wot I want of you. Leslie's to-night and the Excise to-morrow. That's wot I want of you, and wot I thundering well mean to get.

Brodie. Damn you!

Moore. Amen. But you've got your orders.

Brodie (*with pistol*). Orders? hey? orders?

Smith (*between them*). Deacon, Deacon! – Badger, are you mad?

Moore. Muck! That's my motto. Wot I ses is, Has he got his orders or has he not? That's wot's the matter with him.

Smith. Deacon, half a tick. Humphrey, I'm only a light weight, and you fight at twelve stone ten, but I'm damned if I'm going to stand still and see you hitting a pal when he's down.

Moore. Muck! That's wot I think of you.

Smith. He's a cut above us, ain't he? He never sold his backers, did he? We couldn't have done without him, could we? You dry up about his old man, and his sister; and don't go on hitting a pal when he's knocked out of time and cannot hit back, for, damme, I will not stand it.

Moore. Amen to you. But I'm cock of this here thundering walk, and that cove's got his orders.

Brodie (*putting pistol on bench*). I give in. I will do your work for you once more. Leslie's to-night and the Excise to-morrow. If that is enough, if you have no more ... orders, you may count it as done.

Moore. Fen larks. No rotten shirking, mind.

Brodie. I have passed you my word. And now you have said what you came to say, you must go. I have business here; but two hours hence I am at your ... orders. Where shall I await you?

Moore. What about that woman's place of yours?

Brodie. Your will is my law.

Moore. That's good enough. Now, Dook.

Smith. Bye-bye, my William. Don't forget.

SCENE IX

Brodie. Trust me. No man forgets his vice, you dogs, or forgives it either. It must be done: Leslie's to-night and the Excise to-morrow. It shall be done. This settles it. They used to fetch and carry for me, and now ... I've licked their boots, have I? I'm their man, their tool, their chattel. It's the bottom rung of the ladder of shame. I sound with my foot, and there's nothing underneath but the black emptiness of damnation. Ah, Deacon, Deacon, and so this is where you've been travelling all these years; and it's for this that you learned French! The gallows ... God help me, it begins to dog me like my shadow. *There's* a step to take! And the jerk upon your spine! How's a man to die with a night-cap on? I've done with this. Over yonder, across the great ocean, is a new land, with new characters, and perhaps new lives. The sun shines, and the bells ring, and it's a place where men live gladly; and the Deacon himself can walk without terror, and begin again like a new-born child. It must be good to see day again and not to fear; it must be good to be one's self with all men. Happy like a child, wise like a man, free like God's angels ... should I work these hands off and eat crusts, there were a life to make me young and good again. And it's only over the sea! O man, you have been blind, and now your eyes are opened. It was half a life's nightmare, and now you are awake. Up, Deacon, up, it's hope that's at the window! Mary! Mary! Mary!

SCENE X

Brodie, Mary, Old Brodie

Brodie has fallen into a chair, with his face upon the table. Enter Mary, by the side door, pushing her father's chair. She is supposed to have advanced far enough for stage purposes before Brodie is aware of her. He starts up and runs to her.

Brodie. Look up, my lass, look up, and be a woman! I... O, kiss me, Mary! give me a kiss for my good news.

Mary. Good news, Will? Is it changed?

Brodie. Changed? Why, the world's a different colour! It was night, and now it's broad day, and I trust myself again. You must wait, dear, wait, and I must work and work; and before the week is out, as sure as God sees me, I'll have made you happy. O you may think me broken, hounds, but the Deacon's not the man to be run down; trust him, he shall turn a corner yet, and leave you snarling! And you, Poll, you. I've done nothing for you yet; but, please God, I'll make your life a life of gold; and wherever I am, I'll have a part in your happiness, and you'll know it, by heaven! and bless me.

Mary. O Willie, look at him; I think he hears you, and is trying to be glad with us.

Old Brodie. My son – Deacon – better man than I was.

Brodie. O, for God's sake, hear him!

Mary. He is quite happy, Will, and so am I ... so am I.

Brodie. Hear me, Mary. This is a big moment in our two lives. I swear to you by the father here between us that it shall not be fault of mine if this thing fails; if this ship founders you have set your hopes in. I swear it by our father; I swear it by God's judgments.

Mary. I want no oaths, Will.

Brodie. No, but I do. And prayers, Mary, prayers. Pray night and day upon your knees. I must move mountains.

Old Brodie. A wise son maketh – maketh —

Brodie. A glad father? And does your son, the Deacon, make you glad? O heaven of heavens, if I were a good man!

END OF THE SECOND ACT

ACT III

TABLEAU V King's Evidence

The Stage represents a public place in Edinburgh

SCENE I

Jean, Smith, and Moore

They loiter in L., and stand looking about as for somebody not there. Smith is hat in hand to Jean; Moore as usual

Moore. Wot did I tell you? Is he 'ere or ain't he? Now then. Slink by name and Slink by nature, that's wot's the matter with him.

Jean. He'll no' be lang; he's regular enough, if that was a'.

Moore. I'd regular him; I'd break his back.

Smith. Badger, you brute, you hang on to the lessons of your dancing-master. None but the genteel deserves the fair; does they, Duchess?

Moore. O rot! Did I insult the blowen? Wot's the matter with me is Slink Ainslie.

Smith. All right, old Crossed-in-love. Give him forty winks, and he'll turn up as fresh as clean sawdust and as respectable as a new Bible.

Moore. That's right enough; but I ain't a-going to stand here all day for him. I'm for a drop of something short, I am. You tell him I showed you that (*showing his doubled fist*). That's wot's the matter with him. (*He lurches out, R.*)

SCENE II

Smith and Jean, to whom Hunt and afterwards Moore

Smith (*critically*). No, Duchess, he has not good manners.

Jean. Ay, he's an impident man.

Smith. So he is, Jean; and for the matter of that he ain't the only one.

Jean. Geordie, I want nae mair o' your nonsense, mind.

Smith. There's our old particular the Deacon, now. Why is he ashamed of a lovely woman? That's not my idea of the Young Chevalier, Jean. If I had luck, we should be married, and retired to our estates in the country, shouldn't us? and go to church and be happy, like the nobility and gentry.

Jean. Geordie Smith, div ye mean ye'd mairry me?

Smith. Mean it? What else has ever been the 'umble petition of your honest but well-meaning friend, Roman, and fellow-countryman? I know the Deacon's your man, and I know he's a cut above G. S.; but he won't last, Jean, and I shall.

Jean. Ay, I'm muckle ta'en up wi' him; wha could help it?

Smith. Well, and my sort don't grow on apple-trees, either.

Jean. Ye're a fine, cracky, neebourly body, Geordie, if ye wad just let me be.

Smith. I know I ain't a Scotsman born.

Jean. I dinna think sae muckle the waur o' ye even for that; if ye would just let me be.

Hunt (*entering behind, aside*). (Are they thick? Anyhow, it's a second chance.)

Smith. But he won't last, Jean; and when he leaves you, you come to me. Is that your taste in pastry? That's the kind of *harticle* that I present!

Hunt (*surprising them as in Tableau I*). Why, you're the very parties I was looking for!

Jean. Mercy me!

Smith. Damn it, Jerry, this is unkind.

Hunt. (Now this is what I call a picter of good fortune.) Ain't it strange I should have dropped across you comfortable and promiscuous like this?

Jean (*stolidly*). I hope ye're middling weel, Mr. Hunt? (*Going*.) Mr. Smith!

Smith. Mrs. Watt, ma'am! (*Going*.)

Hunt. Hold hard, George. Speaking as one lady's man to another, turn about's fair play. You've had your confab, and now I'm going to have mine. (Not that I've done with you; you stand by and wait.) Ladies first, George, ladies first; that's the size of it. (*To Jean, aside*.) Now, Mrs. Watt, I take it you ain't a natural fool?

Jean. And thank ye kindly, Mr. Hunt.

Smith (*interfering*). Jean...!

Hunt (*keeping him off*). Half a tick, George. (*To Jean*.) Mrs. Watt, I've a warrant in my pocket. One, two, three: will you peach?

Jean. Whatten kind of a word'll that be?

Smith. Mum it is, Jean!

Hunt. *When you've done dancing, George!* (*To Jean*.) It ain't a pretty expression, my dear, I own it. "Will you blow the gaff?" is perhaps more tenderer.

Jean. I think ye've a real strange way o' expressin' yoursel'.

Hunt (*to Jean*). I can't waste time on you, my girl. It's now or never. Will you turn King's evidence?

Jean. I think ye'll have made a mistake, like.

Hunt. Well, I'm...! (*Separating them*.) (No, not yet; don't push me.) George's turn now. (*To George*.) George, I've a warrant in my pocket.

Smith. As per usual, Jerry?

Hunt. Now I want King's evidence.

Smith. Ah! so you came a cropper with *her*, Jerry. Pride had a fall.

Hunt. A free pardon and fifty shiners down.

Smith. A free pardon, Jerry?

Hunt. Don't I tell you so?

Smith. And fifty down? fifty?

Hunt. On the nail.

Smith. So you came a cropper with her, and then you tried it on with me?

Hunt. I suppose you mean you're a born idiot?

Smith. What I mean is, Jerry, that you've broke my heart. I used to look up to you like a party might to Julius CÃ'sar. One more of boyhood's dreams gone pop! (*Enter Moore, L*.)

Hunt (*to both*). Come, then, I'll take the pair, and be damned to you. Free pardon to both, fifty down and the Deacon out of the way. I don't care for you commoners, it's the Deacon I want.

Jean (*looking off stolidly*). I think the kirks are scalin'. There seems to be mair people in the streets.

Hunt. O, that's the way, is it? Do you know that I can hang you, my woman, and your fancy man as well?

Jean. I daur say ye would like fine to, Mr. Hunt; and here's my service to you. (*Going*.)

Hunt. George, don't you be a tomfool, anyway. Think of the blowen here, and have brains for two.

Smith (*going*). Ah, Jerry, if you knew anything, how different you would talk! (*They go off together, R.*)

SCENE III

Hunt, Moore

Hunt. Half a tick, Badger. You're a man of parts, you are; you're solid, you're a true-born Englishman; you ain't a Jerry-go-Nimble like him. Do you know what your pal the Deacon's worth to you? Fifty golden Georges and a free pardon. No questions asked and no receipts demanded. What do you say? Is it a deal?

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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