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KIDNAPPED

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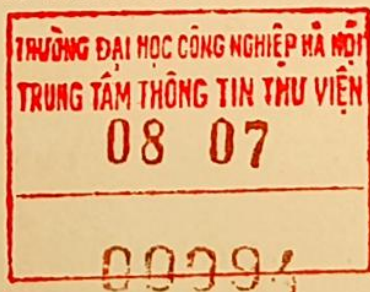


KIDNAPPED

The years after 1745 were an unhappy time for Scotland. The Highlanders had fought against King George of England, and lost, and now his soldiers were driving many Highlanders out of their homes.

David Balfour is from the Scottish Lowlands and is not worried by the English soldiers. When he leaves his home to begin a new life, he is not looking for trouble and danger. But trouble quickly comes to him. He meets his rich uncle, who is not at all pleased to learn that he has a poor nephew. One danger follows another, and David finds himself in the Highlands, where he meets Alan Breck, a proud Stewart. The Stewarts hate both the English and the Campbells, who work for King George, so Alan is a dangerous friend for David to have.

Then murder is done, and David and Alan are on the run for their lives across the mountains . . .





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Thriller & Adventure

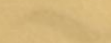
Kidnapped

Stage 3 (1000 headwords)

*The Adventures of David Balfour
in the Year 1751*

*Read by
Clare West*

*Illustrated by
William Rawell*



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Robert Louis Stevenson

Kidnapped

The Adventures of David Balfour
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CONTENTS

STORY INTRODUCTION	i
1 David meets his uncle	1
2 Kidnapped!	14
3 David is alone	26
4 Escape through the heather	34
5 David comes home	48
MAP: from Essendean to Earraid	25
MAP: from Earraid to Edinburgh	46
GLOSSARY	58
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	60
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	61
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	64
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	68
ABOUT BOOKWORMS	69

I

David meets his uncle

It was early in the month of June, 1751, when I shut the door of our house behind me for the last time. All my life I had lived in the quiet little village of Essendean, in the Lowlands of Scotland, where my father had been the dominie, or schoolteacher. But now that he and my mother were both dead, I had to leave the house. The new dominie would soon arrive, and *he* would teach at the school and live in the dominie's house. So, although I was only seventeen, there was nowhere for me to live, and no reason for me to stay in Essendean.



I shut the door behind me for the last time.

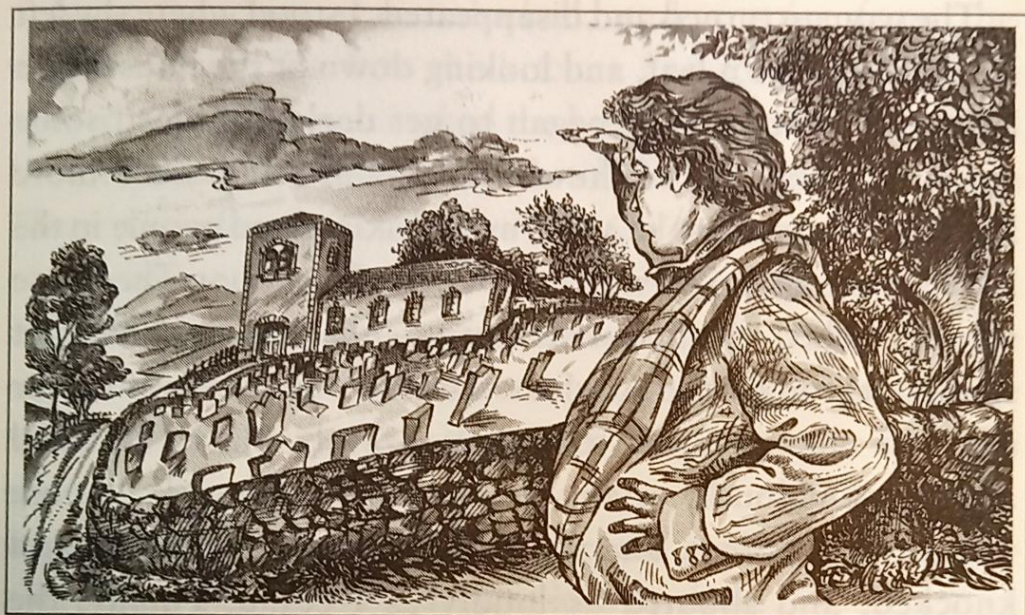
But my heart was beating with excitement as I walked down the road, because in my hand I carried the letter that my father had given me just before he died. 'Davie,' he had said, 'when I am dead, take this to the house of Shaws, near Cramond. That's where I came from, and that's where you must go. Put this letter into the hands of Ebenezer Balfour.'

Balfour! The same name as my own! It was the first time I had heard of any of our family outside Essendean.

So I decided to walk to Cramond, hoping that perhaps this Mr Balfour, in his fine big house, would receive me kindly, and help me to become a rich man one day. With my plaid over my shoulder, I walked fast up the hill away from the village. What an adventure, to leave that sleepy place, where nothing ever happened, and go to a great, busy house, to be with rich and important people of my own name and blood! But when I reached the top of the hill, I turned a little sadly, to take my last look at the dominie's house, and Essendean churchyard, where my father and mother lay.

My journey northwards took almost two days. By midday on the second day I could see the smoking chimneys of Edinburgh in front of me, and soon I arrived in Cramond.

Now I began to ask people on the road for the house of Shaws. Their answers worried me a little. Some people seemed surprised, some afraid, and some angry, when I spoke the name of Ebenezer Balfour. I could not understand this, but it was too far to go back to Essendean that day, and I wanted to find the rest of the Balfour family very much. So I continued on my way, and when I met a dark, wild-looking



I took my last look at Essendean churchyard.

woman coming towards me, I asked her where the house of Shaws was. She took me to the top of the next hill, and showed me a large building standing alone in the bottom of the next valley. Although the fields around were green, and the farmland was excellent, the house itself looked unfinished and empty. Part of its roof was missing. There was no road to it, and no smoke coming from any of its chimneys, nor was there any garden.

‘That!’ I cried. ‘No, it can’t be!’

‘It is!’ cried the woman angrily. ‘That is the house of Shaws! Blood built it, blood stopped the building of it, and blood shall bring it down! Black is the heart of Ebenezer Balfour! Ye can tell him from me that I hope to see him die, and his house fall down around him!’