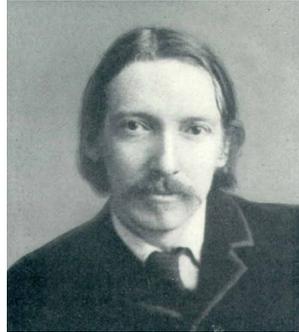


# KIDNAPPED

by Robert Louis Stevenson



## THE AUTHOR

Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson (1850-1894) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, to staunch Presbyterian parents who were appalled when he turned to agnosticism in his early twenties. Stevenson suffered from respiratory problems throughout his life. During his childhood illnesses, he spent his time reading and particularly enjoyed the novels of Sir Walter Scott, with which his adventure tales are often compared. He was drawn to writing early in life, but his parents encouraged him to undertake a more profitable profession, so he studied engineering and eventually turned to law, even passing the bar exam. He soon turned to writing, however, beginning with magazine essays and two travelogues describing his trips to the Continent to seek relief for his ailments. In Europe he met Fanny Osbourne, a married American woman who soon divorced her husband to marry Stevenson. They lived for a while in San Francisco, then moved back to Scotland, and eventually settled in Samoa, where Stevenson found some relief for his tuberculosis, but died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1894 at the age of 44.

Stevenson is best known as a writer of adventure stories. His reputation was established with the publication of *Treasure Island* in 1883, followed by *The Black Arrow* (1884), *Kidnapped* (1886), and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889). All but the last were published first as serials in the boys' magazine *Young Folks* and had much more in common with the historical novels of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) than contemporaries of Stevenson like Charles Dickens and George Eliot. The work generally considered to be his masterpiece, however, is a novelette written in a mere three days in 1886 - *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

*Kidnapped* takes place in 1751, shortly following the Scottish rebellion against England led by Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745; Alan Breck Stewart, James of the Glens, Colin Campbell (the "Red Fox"), Cluny Macpherson, and Robin Oig are all historical characters. Like his other adventure novels, the book was intended for young readers but has been enjoyed by adults as well. It reflects not only the author's Scottish heritage, but also the division in Scotland between the staunch Presbyterian Lowlanders, loyal to the British crown, and the Catholics of the Highlands who sought the restoration of the Stuarts. More political than most of his works, it also incorporates Stevenson's opposition to the ways in which the British imposed their culture on other societies by force.

## **PLOT SUMMARY**

### CHAPTER I - I Set Off Upon My Journey to the House of Shaws

Sixteen-year-old David Balfour, the protagonist and narrator, has just buried his father, a country schoolmaster, and sets off from Essendean for the home of his uncle, the laird of the House of Shaws, with a letter of introduction from his father Alexander. The local minister bids him farewell and gives him sound advice, expecting that he will be received in the great house of his kinsman.

### CHAPTER II - I Come to My Journey's End

On the second day of his journey he passes by the city of Edinburgh and begins to ask directions to his uncle's home, but is surprised at the negative reaction he gets from those he queries, especially regarding his Uncle Ebenezer. David is tempted to turn back, but decides that, having come this far, he ought to follow things through to his destination. When he arrives he finds the house in an advanced state of decay. An old woman he encounters calls down a curse on the house and its laird for the 1219<sup>th</sup> time because of the bloodshed with which they are associated. The closer he gets to the house the worse it looks. When he finally works up the courage to knock, his uncle opens an upstairs window and threatens him with a blunderbuss. When David identifies himself, his uncle realizes that David's father is dead and reluctantly admits him to the house.

### CHAPTER III - I Make Acquaintance with My Uncle

David is rudely ushered into the kitchen, which is almost completely devoid of furnishings, and offered some vile-looking porridge. Ebenezer demands the letter, the contents of which are unknown to David. The old man is suspicious of David's intentions and asks if his father had said anything of him or the House of Shaws; David responds that he had not, which seems to please him. He then shows David to his room, refusing to light a candle because of the expense. The room is so cold and the bed so damp that David winds up sleeping in his bedroll on the floor. When he wakes in the morning he again is served porridge. Ebenezer says that he intends to do right by his nephew and set him up in a proper occupation, but warns him not to attempt to correspond with his friends back home. When Ebenezer prepares to go out in the morning, he refuses to leave David alone in the house and determines to lock him out, but David won't stand for such treatment. He offers to leave, but his uncle insists that he stay.

### CHAPTER IV - I Run a Great Danger in the House of Shaws

Ebenezer Balfour eats nothing but porridge, speaks little, and what he says is abrupt and rude, so David occupies his time reading books in the library, which is surprisingly well-stocked. As he explores the books, he discovers a note in his father's handwriting indicating that he gave the book to Ebenezer on his fifth birthday. This seems odd because David assumed Ebenezer was the elder brother, and he can hardly imagine a toddler writing such an inscription. When he asks his uncle about his father, the old man becomes violent, then claims the reaction is because of his grief at the loss of his only brother. David begins to suspect that his uncle is trying to keep something from him; perhaps even the rightful ownership of the estate.

After dinner, Ebenezer tells David that he had set aside money for him before his birth that was now worth forty pounds. David perceives this to be a lie and wonders what is behind this strange assertion. His uncle tells him to step outside while he fetches the money. When he calls him back inside, he presents him with thirty-seven golden guineas, asking in return that he help around the house and garden. Ebenezer then gives him a key and tells him to climb the outside stairs to the tower at the top of the house and bring down a chest containing some papers, but refuses to give him a light. Only because of lightning flashes is David able to discover that the stairs to the tower are uneven and filled with gaps; he now knows that his uncle intended him to fall and be killed, so he continues on his hands and knees until the steps end entirely, long before reaching the top of the tower. He then climbs carefully back down and sees his uncle waiting at the door in anticipation. David creeps up behind him, and when he seizes his shoulders, the old man passes out. David then rummages through the cupboard and finds money, medicine, and liquor, along with a dirk, which he puts into his waistband. When his uncle revives, he plies him with questions, which Ebenezer promises to answer in the morning. David then locks his uncle in his room for the night and builds a fire the likes of which the old house had not seen in many a year.

#### CHAPTER V - I Go to the Queen's Ferry

David, now convinced he has the upper hand, looks to uncover his uncle's secrets, but has no real idea of what the future holds for him. Ebenezer promises to answer his questions when they are done eating, but as they eat breakfast a young cabin boy in sailor's uniform knocks at the door with a letter for Ebenezer. The letter is from Elias Hoseason, the captain of the brig *Covenant*, indicating that they must meet. Ebenezer suggests that David accompany him to the ship, and thence to the lawyer, one Mr. Rankeillor. David agrees, thinking that his uncle dare not attempt violence in a public place and hoping to gain useful information from the lawyer. As they walk to the shore, Ransome, the cabin boy, tells David all about the ship and its captain, praising both to the skies, though David doubts his word and suspects that the boy has been soundly abused and that the ship is nothing less than "hell upon the seas." David informs his uncle that nothing in heaven or earth could compel him to board such a ship.

#### CHAPTER VI - What Befell at the Queen's Ferry

At the inn, Ransome takes them to meet Captain Hoseason. Ebenezer sends David out of the room while he and the captain transact their business. As David and Ransome drink ale in the tavern, they strike up a conversation with the landlord, who tells David that his father was the elder son, and rumors were about that Ebenezer had killed him to get the estate, though David knew that this was not so. He now knows for certain that he is the rightful laird of Shaws, however. Soon Hoseason approaches and invites David to see the ship, at the same time warning that his uncle means mischief. He offers to let him off near the lawyer's office, and David foolishly complies. When he realizes that his uncle is not on board, he knows that the captain has tricked him, and the last thing he sees before being knocked unconscious is his uncle in the ship's boat on the way to shore staring at him with an evil grin.

## CHAPTER VII - I Go to Sea in the Brig "Covenant" of Dysart

When David wakes up, he is bound hand and foot in the belly of the ship. He soon gets seasick, but after a few days gets over it but still suffers from a fever. He is cared for by Riach, the second mate, who accuses the captain of trying to murder the boy. Hoseason denies the charge and reluctantly agrees to have David moved to the forecabin, where he soon comes to know many of his rough-hewn shipmates. The sailors return most of his money, which they had divided among themselves, and tell him that he is to be sold into slavery when they reach the Carolinas. One day Riach comes to him and David tells him his entire story, after which the second mate encourages him to write letters to Mr. Campbell, the minister in Essendean, and the lawyer Rankeillor, which he promises to deliver, hoping in the process to gain for David both his freedom and his rightful place in the world.

## CHAPTER VIII - The Round-House

One day the first mate, Mr. Shuan, beats Ransome so badly that he kills him, and the captain summons David to take his place as cabin boy in the roundhouse. When he gets there the captain and the mates are dealing with the murder. Hoseason insists that the whole matter be hushed up and everyone told that the boy fell overboard. David soon becomes accustomed to his duties, which largely involve serving food and drink to the three officers whenever they call for them. The work is easy and he is well-fed. The captain and Riach even tell him stories of their travels, though Shuan never regains his right mind after the murder of Ransome.

## CHAPTER IX - The Man with the Belt of Gold

Throughout most of the voyage the weather had been foul, and as a result the *Covenant* was able to make little headway. One night, in a dense fog, the ship strikes a small boat, sinking it and killing its entire crew except for one man, who manages to grab hold of the ship's bowsprit and haul himself aboard. The man is well-dressed, well-armed, and has polished manners. The captain is suspicious because the man speaks with a Scottish brogue but wears French garments. He thus suspects him of being a Jacobite - a supporter of the Stuart dynasty that, in exile in France, continued to lay claim to the British throne now occupied by George II. The stranger admits to being a supporter of Bonnie Prince Charlie and to have taken part in the Jacobite rebellion in 1745, but offers Hoseason a handsome reward if he will let him ashore in France. The captain refuses, but agrees to set him down in Scotland for half the gold in his money-belt. The stranger tells him that the money is not his, that it belongs to his highland chieftain in exile, but offers sixty guineas for safe passage. They strike a bargain, and the captain immediately leaves the roundhouse.

David is initially repelled by this Jacobite rebel and smuggler, but the two soon strike up a conversation. When David goes to get the stranger a drink, he overhears the officers plotting to kill him and steal his gold. Their problem is that the muskets and ammunition are all in the roundhouse. They tell David to bring them out when he takes the drink to the stranger and offer him a reward and help when they reach Carolina if he does. But when he goes into the roundhouse he tells the stranger about the plot against him and agrees to fight with him against the villains of the ship's crew. The Jacobite then introduces himself as Alan Breck Stewart. Stewart makes sure that only one entrance to the roundhouse is open, then gives David the job of loading the pistols. The plan is for Alan to fight all who try to come in the door while David guards the locked back door and the skylight.

## CHAPTER X - The Siege of the Round-House

Soon the captain appears at the open door to the roundhouse and Alan draws his sword, prepared to fight. Hoseason retreats to gather his men for the attack, which soon comes at both doors. Stewart kills Shuan, the first one through the door, while David drives off the men preparing to attack the back door with a battering ram with a few wild shots. They back off to discuss a new plan of attack. When night falls they rush the cabin door while two men crash through the skylight. While Alan deals with the mob at the door, David shoots the two coming through the skylight. Soon the invaders are routed again and Alan throws the bodies of the dead out the door. As Alan and David take turns keeping watch, the crew nurses their wounds.

## CHAPTER XI - The Captain Knuckles Under

Since the roundhouse contains all the wine and the best food, Alan and David enjoy a fine breakfast while the officers make do with what normally is fed to the crew. To reward David for his bravery, Alan cuts a silver button off his coat and gives it to him, telling him that if he ever is in need of help, Alan's friends will come to his aid at the sight of the button. Before long Riach asks for a parley between Alan and the captain. After some negotiations the captain agrees to put Alan and David off in Scotland for sixty guineas, and Alan gives Hoseason a bottle of brandy in exchange for two buckets of water to wash out the roundhouse.

## CHAPTER XII - I Hear of the "Red Fox"

As the ship sails in good weather and with a fine wind behind, David and Alan tell one another their stories. Alan speaks of the feud between the Stewarts and the Campbells, of his father's renown as a swordsman, and of his service in the English army, from which he deserted to join the Scottish cause. He now carries a royal commission from the King of France, but knows it will do little to protect him should the English get their hands on him. David wonders why he has returned in the face of such danger, and Alan tells him that he is carrying money to support his chief, who is in exile in France. All of this is organized by James Stewart, the chief's half-brother. Alan then speaks of his arch-enemy, Colin Campbell, the Red Fox, who after being appointed as the King's factor, tried to deprive the Stewarts of their land, driving the peasants off and letting their farms to beggars. Alan has vowed vengeance against him, but David reminds him that Christianity forbids the taking of revenge.

## CHAPTER XIII - The Loss of the Brig

Captain Hoseason is having trouble sailing the ship, both because of the loss of his first mate and because the crew is shorthanded. During the night he asks Alan to help him pilot the brig. Stewart is no sailor, but he recognizes that they are approaching a Torran Rocks, a ten-mile stretch of reefs. They try to navigate their way through the rocks, but just as they appear to have gained safety, the wind changes and drives the ship hard onto the reef. A great wave capsizes the craft, and David is thrown overboard. Grasping a yardarm, he makes his way to shore, cold and exhausted.

## CHAPTER XIV - The Islet

When morning comes, David climbs to the top of a nearby hill. He sees no sign of the ship or its boat, both of which appear to have sunk, nor does he see any sign of life on what is apparently an uninhabited island known as Earraid. He laments the fact that he has neither the supplies nor the skills of famous marooned sailors like Robinson Crusoe. In the days that follow he lives on raw shellfish, meanwhile looking with longing eyes at the smoke rising from dwellings on the nearby islands of Iona and Ross. The constant rain keeps him in misery, and to make matters worse, he realizes that he has a hole in his pocket and most of his money has been lost. On the third day he sees a fishing boat, but his calls to the fishermen are ignored. The next day, however, the fishing boat returns and the fishermen manage to communicate to him that at low tide he can simply walk to the inhabited island of Mull nearby.

## CHAPTER XV - The Lad with the Silver Button: Through the Isle of Mull

David soon finds a house and learns that his shipmates, including Alan Breck Stewart, had made it safely ashore. When David identifies himself with his silver button, the old man who lives in the house gives him the directions he needs to follow Alan to Torosay. After a good meal and a sound night's sleep, David takes off after his friend. As he travels he sees poor peasants working their fields, dressed in rags because the kilt and tartan had been forbidden ever since the rebellion of 1745. He finds his way difficult because he speaks no Gaelic and the peasants know little English. On the way he asks two men for help, one of whom cheats him and the other of whom tries to rob him. He finally arrives at an inn in Torosay, but Alan Breck Stewart is nowhere to be found.

## CHAPTER XVI - The Lad with the Silver Button: Across Morven

David then takes a ferry from Torosay to the mainland. On the way they pass a ship full of emigrants bound for the American colonies, all of whom are mourning the fact that they are leaving their kinsmen behind. When David is able to have a private conversation with the captain of the ferry, he asks him about Alan Breck Stewart. When he shows his silver button, the captain tells him that Alan is in France, but that he has been instructed to see David safely ashore. He warns him, however, never to use Alan's name in public for fear that he might be overheard by the wrong people. The captain then tells David to spend the night in an inn onshore, then travel across Morven to the home of John of the Claymore, and from there to proceed to the house of James Stewart, otherwise known as James of the Glens. As he travels, he is to avoid all Whigs, Campbells, and redcoats. On the way he encounters a missionary from Edinburgh named Henderland, who informs him of the conditions in the Highlands and invites him to stay in his home for the night.

## CHAPTER XVII - The Death of the Red Fox

The next day Henderland finds one of his parishioners who is willing to take David across the loch into the territory of the Stewart clan and lets him off near the wood of Lettermore. As David eats his lunch, he considers whether he should try to find Alan or return home and deal with the situation there. As he ponders his decision, four men led by Colin Campbell ride past. David stops them and asks for directions to the house of James of the Glens. They wonder why he wants to go there, but as they speak a shot rings out from the woods and the Red Fox falls dead. David pursues

the murderer, but he gets away. As English soldiers arrive, Campbell's lawyer takes David for an accomplice of the murderer, hired to bring his master to a halt so the sniper could get a clean shot. As the soldiers fire at him, David starts running and is pulled to safety by none other than Alan Breck Stewart, who is not in France after all. The soldiers pursue them, but Alan loses them by backtracking into Lettermore again.

#### CHAPTER XVIII - I Talk with Alan in the Wood of Lettermore

David, suspecting that Alan is responsible for the murder he has just witnessed, is appalled and doesn't know how to react. He tells Alan that they must part company because the Highlander does not follow the ways of God. After telling David a story about a man and the fairies, he insists that he would never kill a man in a way that brought trouble on his own kinsmen, and certainly would not do so armed with nothing more than a fishing rod, though he admits distracting the soldiers while the shooter made his escape. When he swears on his dirk, David accepts his word. Now both are on the run, sought by the authorities, and Alan warns David that he can expect no justice from the Campbells. As they travel, Alan tells David about the aftermath of the shipwreck. Hoseason and his surviving crew members had tried to capture and kill Alan, but Riach prevented them and allowed Alan to escape.

#### CHAPTER XIX - The House of Fear

They arrive at the home of James of the Glens at 10:30 that night. Alan introduces David, though without giving his name, and soon discovers that the entire household is in a panic, knowing that someone will have to pay for the death of Colin Campbell and that the Campbells are none too particular about who might bear the brunt of their wrath. The servants are hurriedly burying the guns and swords, and are about to bury Alan's fancy French clothes, but he quickly rescues them, and while he is changing into them, James's son gives fresh Highland garments to David. They provision the two for their journey, then James tells Alan that he will offer a reward for their capture in order to prove his innocence of the recent murder. David wonders why he doesn't offer a reward for the real killer, but both James and Alan are aghast at the suggestion; what if the man should be caught? This all makes no sense to David, but he consents, at which point the wife of James of the Glens embraces and kisses him for his kindness to her family.

#### CHAPTER XX - The Flight in the Heather: The Rocks

As they travel, Alan stops at each house they pass to spread the word about the murder. Soon they reach a raging river and barely manage to cross the top of a waterfall by leaping from one rock to another. They hide in a depression in the rocks, and by morning a camp of redcoats has come within half a mile of their refuge. They lay concealed without food or water for most of the day in the broiling sun, but eventually slip away, find water and eat a repast of cold oatmeal, and go on their way after sunset.

#### CHAPTER XXI - The Flight in the Heather: The Heugh of Corrynakiegh

The sun has not yet risen when Alan and David reach a lovely and secure cleft in a mountaintop called the Heugh of Corrynakiegh, where they stay and rest for five days. The place

is sufficiently hidden to allow them to build a fire, and they spend their days catching trout by hand. When they are not fishing, Alan teaches David how to use a sword. After a time he sends a note by the hand of a friend in a nearby village to James of the Glens to send the money that he is transport, but find that James has been thrown in jail by the Campbells. The messenger also brings a copy of the wanted poster offering a reward for the capture of Alan and David. The description of Alan is accurate, but that of David is vague and wrong with regard to his attire. David soon realizes that he would be perfectly safe if he separated from Alan, since no one could identify him by the description on the poster. He has no desire to do so, however.

## CHAPTER XXII - The Flight in the Heather: The Muir

With redcoats in pursuit, Campbells to the south, and the north contrary to the directions that both wish to travel, they decide to head eastward into the moorlands despite the fact that the moors provided neither hiding place, shelter, nor sustenance. They take turns resting and watching in the heat of the day, and one time David falls asleep during his watch. When he wakes, he sees horse soldiers advancing on them in the distance. Alan leads him rapidly toward a nearby mountain, hoping that they can find a hiding place on its slopes. As they scramble through the heather, they manage to elude the soldiers. By nightfall both are totally exhausted. No sooner do they think themselves safe but they fall into an ambush. Four ragged men leap out of the heather and subdue them. After a brief conversation with the men, Alan assures David that they are the sentries set out by Cluny Macpherson, a clan leader outlawed by Parliament, in hiding from the authorities, but a friend of the Stewarts. Alan quickly falls asleep, but David is too weary to do so, and when morning comes the sentries literally carry him to Cluny's hiding place.

## CHAPTER XXIII - Cluny's Cage

They soon arrive at Cluny's Cage, a shelter in a thicket at the top of a steep precipice. Cluny welcomes them and offers a toast to the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne of England. They discover that Bonnie Prince Charlie himself had once been a guest in the Cave. After dinner the men settle down to play cards. David, who has been brought up to eschew gambling in any form, declines; Cluny takes offense, but Alan assures him that the boy means no disrespect. David goes to sleep, but soon grows ill with a fever, only vaguely conscious for two days of what is going on around him. At one point Alan wakes him to ask for a loan; he apparently is losing at cards after initially winning large sums. The next morning David is better, but Alan admits he has lost everything. Cluny then offers to give their money back. David is reluctant to take it as a matter of pride and asks Cluny privately for advice. The clan chieftain, though he strongly objects to the lowlander's moral scruples, which to him smack too much of Covenanter stringency, tells him to take the money, and the two shake hands.

## CHAPTER XXIV - The Flight in the Heather: The Quarrel

That night Alan and David are led to a safe hiding place by one of Cluny's scouts. David is angry with Alan for losing his money and upset that his friend has placed him in such danger, but he is reluctant to part with him. Nonetheless, he can't bring himself to speak with or even look at Alan as they travel. Eventually Alan apologizes, but David clearly is still angry and Alan asks if he intends to leave him. David responds that he would never leave a friend in desperate need. Alan,

in turn, is distressed because David is unwilling to forget his offense and act as if nothing had happened. Before he leaves them, the scout advises them to travel through Campbell territory because it is least likely to be infested with redcoats. For three days the weather is miserable, cold, and wet. All this time David remains cold toward his companion, and Alan finally takes David's lack of forgiveness as justification for him to forgive himself. He thus regains his cheerful demeanor, which makes David even more sullen and resentful, both toward Alan and toward himself for his refusal to pardon his friend. He thinks he is dying and hopes Alan will feel terrible after he dies.

Able to bear the situation any longer, David determines to pick a quarrel and get his anger off his chest. He repeatedly insults Alan and finally draws his sword on him, challenging him to a duel. Alan refuses, insisting that such a fight would be simple murder, and throws his sword aside. David, now genuinely repentant for his harsh words, almost collapses from his illness and begs Alan for help, asking if he will forgive him after he dies. At this point both of them break down and acknowledge their wrongs against one another and Alan carries David toward a nearby house.

#### CHAPTER XXV - In Balquidder

The first house at which they arrive is from a clan friendly to the Stewarts. David is promptly put to bed, and a doctor is called to minister to him. After a week he is able to get out of bed, and by the time a month has passed he is fit to travel again. Soldiers and magistrates alike leave them alone, for which they are quite thankful. His hosts bring one of the wanted posters to him for his entertainment, but no one in the entire clan makes the least move to give him up to the authorities. While he is recuperating he receives a visit from Robin Oig, a member of the Macgregor clan, sworn enemies of the Stewarts. As Robin is about to leave, Alan enters; the two exchange words and are about to fight. At this point David's host proposes a bagpipe competition instead. Robin wins easily, finishing with an air that is a favorite of the Stewart clan, and Alan admits that he is beaten and forgets his quarrel.

#### CHAPTER XXVI - We Pass the Forth

As they prepare to continue their journey, Alan decides that they should make straight for the bridge over the river feeding the Firth of Forth because their enemies would be looking for them to take a roundabout route. Two days later they pass the line into the lowlands of Scotland. As they approach the Bridge of Stirling, they find that it is guarded by a sentry. They travel along the shore as Alan tries to think of a way across. David is in agony because he can see the house of Mr. Rankeillor, his lawyer on the opposite side. They stop at a pub to buy some food from a comely maid, and Alan comes up with an idea. He proposes that David make the girl feel sorry for him by pretending to be ill, and in the process obtain the use of a boat. Alan practically carries David back to the inn and tries to talk the girl into getting them a boat. Only when David mentions his lawyer's name, however, is she willing to help them. After nightfall she herself rows them across the firth.

#### CHAPTER XXVII - I Come to Mr. Rankeillor

They are now in David's home territory, where Alan is both a stranger and a wanted outlaw. Alan thus remains in hiding while David goes into Queensferry. He soon realizes that he is shabbily dressed and has no means of proving his identity. He wanders the streets, ashamed to ask anyone

for directions to the lawyer's house, but by chance he stumbles on the very place just as Rankeillor himself is leaving. The lawyer comes up to him and kindly asks him his business. David introduces himself and Rankeillor brings him into his office and asks him to tell his story. At this point he says no more than that he believes himself to have some rights in the estate of Shaws. The lawyer asks him details about his birth and parentage, then David gives him the short version of his travails at the hands of his uncle and Captain Hoseason. Of the two months between the shipwreck and the day of the conversation he says nothing specific. David then hears that Mr. Campbell, the minister from Essendean, had come looking for him shortly after his disappearance, and that Ebenezer Balfour had told him and the lawyer a less-than-plausible series of lies. When Hoseason showed up and claimed that David had drowned, he gave the lie to Ebenezer's invented tale. After obtaining a promise of safety for Alan, David tells Rankeillor his whole story, though the lawyer warns him not to mention his outlaw friend or any other Highlanders by name. When the story is done, the lawyer assures David that his troubles are behind him, then leads him upstairs for a hot bath, some fresh clothes, and the first good meal he has enjoyed in many a day.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII - I Go in Quest of My Fortune

After he refreshes himself, David is called aside by Rankeillor, who tells him the story of his family. David's father, Alexander Balfour, and his younger brother, Ebenezer, both fell in love with the same woman. Alexander won her affection, but Ebenezer reacted so violently that Alexander gave her up to him. She, having no desire to be in the middle of a tug of war, rejected both of them. Between Alexander's weakness and Ebenezer's petulance, they finally came to an agreement - the elder would get the girl while the younger would get the estate, though Alexander rightly could have claimed both for himself. As a result, David's parents were poor throughout their lives while Ebenezer became a mean-spirited miser, hated by all who knew him.

Rankeillor assures David that he is the rightful heir of the estate, but warns him that he may have trouble proving his identity and advises him to make a bargain with his uncle, allowing him to remain in the house while giving David a suitable allowance until Ebenezer dies. David is willing to settle in this way, but doubts that his uncle will cooperate. He then proposes a plan to which the lawyer reluctantly agrees. Rankeillor then writes out a legal agreement that they intend to force Ebenezer to sign. That night they go out into the town; Rankeillor conveniently forgets his glasses so he cannot swear to the identity of anyone involved in their little gambit, and they are joined by Alan. David fills Alan in on the plan, then introduces him to the lawyer under a false name. They arrive at the house of Shaws late at night, and Alan knocks firmly at the door.

#### CHAPTER XXIX - I Come into My Kingdom

Alan keeps knocking, and eventually Ebenezer appears at the door with a blunderbuss. He invites Alan in, but the latter insists on carrying on their conversation on the doorstep. Alan tells Ebenezer that he and his friends rescued David from a shipwreck and have imprisoned him in the dungeon of a Highland castle. Alan demands a ransom for the return of Ebenezer's nephew, but the old man says he doesn't want him back. Alan then asks how much he will pay to make sure that David never comes back. Ebenezer hems and haws until Alan asks how much he paid Hoseason to kidnap him in the first place. Ebenezer at first denies it, then finally names the price, at which point Rankeillor and David step out from behind the bushes, now in possession of all the proof they need of Ebenezer's perfidy. They then escort him inside, and within an hour Rankeillor has secured an

agreement by which Ebenezer remains in possession of house and lands during his lifetime, the lawyer is to supervise the running of the estate, and David is to receive two-thirds of the income.

## CHAPTER XXX - Good-bye!

The next morning Rankeillor gives David a bank draft and two letters of introduction; the former is to help him get Alan out of the country, while the letters will give him access to people who are responsible for dealing with the murder of Colin Campbell and the accusation against James of the Glens. A few days later David and Alan say their sad farewells, and David continues on to Edinburgh to deal with the legal affairs with which he has been charged.

## MAJOR CHARACTERS

- David Balfour - The protagonist and first-person narrator is a young man of seventeen who becomes inadvertently embroiled with outlaws in the Scottish Highlands after being kidnapped at the instigation of his mean and miserly uncle.
- Ebenezer Balfour - David's uncle, a mean and grasping miser who has stolen his brother's inheritance and is determined that David will never obtain it. He arranges for David to be kidnapped and taken as a slave to the American colonies.
- Mr. Campbell - The Presbyterian pastor in Essendean who serves as David's guardian when he is orphaned and seeks to find him when he disappears.
- Mr. Rankeillor - The lawyer for the Balfour family, he assists David to obtain his rightful fortune after he returns from his adventures.
- Elias Hoseason - Captain of the brig *Covenant*, he kidnaps David at his uncle's bidding and carries him aboard the ship.
- Ransome - The cabin boy on the *Covenant*; David tries to "civilize" him to little effect, and he is eventually beaten to death by the first mate.
- Mr. Shuan - The first mate of the *Covenant*, he is an angry drunk who murders Ransome in a drunken fit; he never regains his wits as a result and is killed by Alan Breck Stewart in the assault on the roundhouse.
- Mr. Riach - The second mate of the *Covenant*, he befriends David and seeks to help him.
- Alan Breck Stewart - A Jacobite rebel who rescues David from the *Covenant* and leads him on many adventures, becoming his fast friend in the process.
- Mr. Henderland - A traveling catechist, or missionary, he helps David when he is left alone in the Highlands.

- James Stewart - Known as James of the Glens, he is the half-brother of the chief of the Stewart clan.
- Colin Campbell - The Red Fox, he is the King's factor and the sworn enemy of the Stewarts. When he is murdered in the wood of Lettermore, Alan and David are initially blamed for it, though in the end James Stewart is executed for the crime.
- Cluny Macpherson - A disenfranchised Scottish clan leader who goes into hiding in the mountains and assists David and Alan when they are running from the authorities.

### NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“That is the house of Shaws! Blood built it; blood stopped the building of it; blood shall bring it down.” (Jennet Clouston, ch.2, p.11)

“I numbered over before him the points on which I wanted explanation: why he lied to me at every word; why he feared that I should leave him; why he disliked it to be hinted that he and my father were twins - ‘Is that because it is true?’ I asked; why he had given me money to which I was convinced I had no claim; and, last of all, why he had tried to kill me.” (David, ch.4, p.37-38)

“No class of man is altogether bad; but each has its own faults and virtues; and these shipmates of mine were no exception to the rule.” (David, ch.7, p.63)

“Wherever ye go and show that button, the friends of Alan Breck will come around you.” (Alan, ch.11, p.101)

“Alan’s morals were all tail-first; but he was ready to give his life for them, such as they were.” (David, ch.18, p.178)

“So I went like a sick, silly, and bad-hearted schoolboy, feeding my anger against a fellow-man, when I would have been better on my knees, crying on God for mercy.” (David, ch.24, p.253)

### ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Kidnapped*, like his other adventure stories, was intended for an audience of young boys and was serialized in a magazine called *Young Folks*, but in the years since its publication has been enjoyed by people of all ages. What about the book would make it particularly appealing to young boys? What qualities does it possess that would cause it to appeal to young girls and adults as well? Be specific in your choice of characteristics and be sure to support them with examples from the narrative.

2. Discuss the question of pride as it is portrayed in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*. Is it viewed as a positive or negative character trait? In what ways? Give examples of ways in which the main characters manifest pride and evaluate the treatment of the issue on the basis of the Bible's teaching on the subject.
3. Discuss the question of forgiveness as it is portrayed in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, especially with regard to the relationship between David Balfour and Alan Breck Stewart. Be sure to address other incidents besides the quarrel in chapter twenty-four. Evaluate the treatment of the issue on the basis of Scripture's teaching on the subject, consulting passages such as Matthew 7:1-5, 18:21-35 and Luke 7:36-50.
4. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* is a coming-of-age story. In what ways does the protagonist grow and mature from boyhood to manhood in the course of the novel, which in reality covers less than three months? Is the change he undergoes credible? Why or why not? Be sure to support your arguments with details from the novel.
5. What are the positive and negative characteristics of the way of life in the Scottish Highlands as portrayed in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*? Discuss how the author communicates these qualities through characters, incidents, and dialogue in the novel.
6. The villains in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* are for the most part minor characters who appear only briefly in the narrative. The closest to a full-blown villain that the novel portrays is the protagonist's uncle, Ebenezer Balfour. Despite his wealth, he is miserly, bitter, and fearful. Analyze his character. What makes him the way that he is? Is he deserving of the pity and mercy that David and his lawyer extend to him at the end of the novel? Why or why not?
7. The two most important characters in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, David Balfour and Alan Breck Stewart, are opposites in many ways. What is the basis for their friendship? In what ways does each bring to the relationship something the other lacks? Which of the two do you find more admirable, and why?
8. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, David Balfour and Alan Breck Stewart live by very different moral codes, though in the end they come to respect one another greatly. In chapter 18, David says of his new friend, "Alan's morals were all tail-first; but he was ready to give his life for them, such as they were." Describe the differences between the two and evaluate each on the basis of Scripture.
9. Prior to writing his adventure stories, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote two travelogues. The experience he gained writing descriptive prose paid dividends in his novels, particularly *Kidnapped*, where the main characters travel all over the Scottish Highlands in the course of the narrative. How does the ability of the author to describe places vividly contribute to the reader's ability to enjoy the book and visualize what David and Alan are experiencing? Be sure to use quotations from the novel's descriptive passages in your analysis.

10. Early Disney animated features often focused on the poor girl who becomes a princess and meets a handsome prince, after which the two live happily ever after. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, like his other adventure novels, was written for boys, and thus to some extent pictures young men who rise from humble origins to wealth and reputation. In what ways, then, is the story line of *Kidnapped* similar to tales like *Cinderella* and *Beauty and the Beast*? How are the narratives different, and to what extent do these differences stem from the differences between boys and girls?
11. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, to what extent is Alan Breck Stewart, intended to be the focus of the novel, an admirable character? What are his positive and negative traits? Why would he naturally appeal to the audience of schoolboys for whom Stevenson wrote the novel?
12. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, to what extent does Alan Breck Stewart serve as a mentor and father-figure to David Balfour? David clearly has been well brought up by his own father, yet he clearly has many things to learn about life and the world when the story begins. How does the roguish Alan Breck fill in these gaps in his education? Is David a better person because of his encounter with the Scottish outlaw? Why or why not?
13. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* portrays the author's conviction that every human being contains within himself both good and evil; that no one is either completely good or totally evil. Stevenson deals with this same issue in a very different way in a very different novel written in the same year, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In what ways do the two stories communicate the same view of the essence of human nature? Do the two novels contain any significant differences in the ways in which they view mankind?
14. Many adventure stories center on a naive young man who is guided to maturity by a colorful and experienced rogue. Among such stories are Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Compare and contrast the two in terms of the relationships between the principals and the roles they play in the stories. Which of the young men is more admirable? Which of the older characters? Why do you think so? Support your arguments with details from both the novel and the play.
15. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* are coming-of-age stories. Compare and contrast the two novels, both in terms of their protagonists and in terms of the factors the authors employ to bring about the maturation process. Which of the two, David Balfour or Pip, do you find more admirable? Why?
16. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* are coming-of-age stories. Compare and contrast the two novels, both in terms of their protagonists and in terms of the factors the authors employ to bring about the maturation process. Which of the two Davids do you find more admirable? Why?

17. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* are coming-of-age stories. Stevenson and Dickens are both noted for their ability to create memorably eccentric characters, and this is certainly true of the villains of these two novels. Compare and contrast the money-grubbing antagonists in the two books - Ebenezer Balfour and either Edward Murdstone or Uriah Heep. Pay particular attention to their greed, hypocrisy, and the tactics they employ in seeking to gain the fortunes of the protagonists.
18. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby* are coming-of-age stories. Compare and contrast the two novels, both in terms of their protagonists and in terms of the factors the authors employ to bring about the maturation process. Which of the two, David Balfour or Nicholas, do you find more admirable? Why?
19. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and William Shakespeare's *Henry IV, part 2* are coming-of-age stories. Compare and contrast the novel and the play, both in terms of their protagonists and in terms of the factors the authors employ to bring about the maturation process. Which of the two, David Balfour or Prince Hal, do you find more admirable? Why?
20. Both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* are circular novels, ending where they began after the central character undergoes all sorts of adventures; the latter is even subtitled *There and Back Again*. Compare and contrast the circular plot structures of the two novels, giving special attention to the nature of the journeys involved, the qualities of the protagonists, and the lessons they learn through the adventures they experience.
21. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* is a first-person narrative. To what extent is David Balfour a reliable narrator? Any storyteller will show some form of bias in the way he relates his tale. How is this true of the novel's protagonist? How does his knowledge or lack thereof influence the way he relates his adventures? How do his beliefs influence the point of view reflected in the narrative?
22. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* was originally published as a serial in a boys' adventure magazine. Discuss the ways in which the author's writing technique reflects the requirements of a serial narrative. Be sure to consider such matters as the use of foreshadowing and cliff-hangers.
23. In some of his later writings, Robert Louis Stevenson compared the plight of the Scottish Highlanders to that of the Samoan natives under British colonial authority. To what extent does *Kidnapped* give support to the connection? Discuss the stereotypical view of the Highlanders held by the English and the Scottish Lowlanders alike and how the stereotypes are similar to those associated with conquered peoples throughout the Age of Imperialism.

24. European imperialists have often been criticized for destroying the native cultures of those they conquered. To what extent is that criticism shared by the author in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*? Is this a criticism with which the protagonist and narrator ultimately agree or disagree? What role does Alan Breck Stewart play in his transformation? Support your arguments with specifics from the novel.
25. In chapter twenty-four of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, the two main characters have an argument in which each seems incapable of respecting the other's point of view or of seeing any fault in his own. Finally, though, David Balfour reaches the point where he says, "So I went like a sick, silly, and bad-hearted schoolboy, feeding my anger against a fellow-man, when I would have been better on my knees, crying on God for mercy." What important lesson does David learn from this exchange? Does Alan learn a similar lesson? What passages of Scripture would communicate the value of what the two gain from their verbal conflict?
26. Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* both center on young men caught up in the Scottish rebellion of 1745. Compare and contrast the two protagonists. Consider their fundamental characters, their growth and change as the stories progress, and their heroic (or not so heroic) qualities. Be sure to cite specifics from both novels in your analysis.
27. Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* both contain colorful Scottish rebels who play a major role in shaping the characters of the protagonists. Compare and contrast Fergus Mac-Ivor and Alan Breck Stewart, both in terms of their personal qualities and their impact on Edward Waverley and David Balfour, respectively.
28. Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* both dwell in loving detail on the setting of the Scottish Highlands. How does the rugged landscape of the Highlands play a role in the plots of the two stories, and how does the setting contribute to changes in the characters of the protagonists?