

CHAPTER 1

My name is David Balfour and my adventures began early in the month of June in 1751, when I took out the key for my father's house for the last time. Mr. Campbell, the minister of Essendean, was standing by the garden gate, waiting for me.

“Good morning, David. I will walk with you as far as the **ford**,” he told me. Mr. Campbell was my guardian as both my parents had died. We walked down the road in silence for a while.

“Are you sad that you are leaving Essendean?” Mr. Campbell eventually asked me.

“If I knew where I was going or what was going to happen to me, I might be. Essendean is a very good place and I have been very happy here, but I have never been anywhere else. Now that my mother and father are dead, I will be no closer to them in Essendean than I would in Hungary. If I knew that I was going to have the chance to become a better person where I was going, then I would be happy to leave,” I replied.

“Oh? Very well, David. Now it is up to me to tell you your **fortune** as far as I can. When your mother died, your father didn't want to live without her. He started to get tired of life and so he gave me some letters. They are all about your **inheritance**.

ford (n) a shallow part of a river where you can walk across

fortune (n) a very large amount of money

inheritance (n) money or property that you receive from someone when that person dies

‘As soon as I am gone,’ he said to me, ‘I want the house ready and all my belongings sold. Then give my son this letter and send him to the House of Shaws, which is not far from Cramond. That is where I am from so that is where my son should return to. He is a smart boy and I know that he will be safe and have a good life wherever he goes.’ You sold the house and all of your father’s belongings, so here is the letter,” Mr. Campbell said.

“The House of Shaws!” I cried, “How is my father connected to the House of Shaws?”

“I don’t know for sure, but the family that lives there has the same surname as you. They are the Balfours of Shaw, an ancient and honest house. The letter that your father asked me to give you is the last thing to close your father’s affairs,” Mr. Campbell said as he gave me the letter.

The letter was addressed *To the hands of Ebenezer Balfour, Esquire of Shaws, in his House of Shaws, delivered by my son, David Balfour*. My heart was beating very quickly at the **prospect** of rich relatives. I was a 17-year-old boy that had only ever been the son of poor parents in the Forest of Ettrick.

“Mr. Campbell, **if you were in my shoes**, would you go?” I asked him.

prospect (n) the possibility that something will happen
if you were in my shoes = if you were in my situation

“I am sure that I would go **without a second thought**. You’ll be able to walk to Cramond in two days. If the worst comes to worst and your rich relatives don’t want to know you, you can walk back again. Now, I must tell you about the dangers of the world before you go,” Mr. Campbell said as he sat down on a **boulder** next to the road. He told me all about the evils of the world and all the temptations I would need to resist. When he was done with that, he told me about how I should behave in a great house like the House of Shaws.

“Just remember, David, you might have been born a gentleman, but you have been raised as a country boy. Don’t do anything to shame us. Be kind and polite to the staff of the house and always think before you speak. Remember that Ebenezer Balfour is a **laird** and you should always treat him with respect no matter how he treats you,” Mr. Campbell warned me.

“I will do my best,” I told him.

“Now, there are the small matters. I have a packet that contains four things,” he told me as Mr. Campbell struggled to pull the packet out of his pocket. “The first thing in the packet is the money from your father’s books that I sold. The other three things are gifts that Mrs. Campbell and I wanted you to have. The first is round, which you will like the first time you use it, but it’s only a drop of water in sea. The second is flat, square and

without a second thought (phrase) acting immediately

boulder (n) a very large rounded piece of rock

laird (n) a man who owns a large amount of land in Scotland

written upon and will help you all your life. The third is a cube that I pray will see you to a better land,” Mr. Campbell told me as he gave me the **odd** package. Then he got up from the boulder, said a prayer for me, shook my hand and walked back to his home.

I stood and watched him until he disappeared from sight. He hurried away from me and didn’t look back as he went. It made me think that he was sad to see me go and I felt guilty that I was happy to be leaving. I was from a rich family and I had new relatives to meet.

I sat down on the boulder that Mr. Campbell had used and opened the package he had given me. The cube thing was a Bible. The round thing was a shilling piece and the square thing was a yellow piece of paper that had written on it:

To make Lily of the Valley Water – take the flowers of the Lily of the Valley, distil them in sack and drink a spoonful or two when you need it.

There was a list of all the things that the Lily of the Valley Water would **cure**. When I had finished reading the piece of paper, I put the things into my own bundle of belongings, crossed the ford and went up the hill on the other side. When I reached the top of the hill, I turned around and looked back at Kirk Essendean for the last time. Then I made my way to the House of Shaws.

odd (adj) strange

cure (v) to make someone healthy after an illness

It was before noon on the second day when I arrived in Cramond. I stopped a few people to ask the way to the House of Shaws. They were all very surprised that I was trying to reach the house. At first, I thought that it was because I was wearing the clothes of a poor, country boy, but after the third person was surprised, I realised that the Balfours of Shaws must be very strange people. I saw a man coming down the road on a cart and stopped to ask him if he had heard of the House of Shaws.

“Yes, why?” he said, looking just like the others had.

“It’s a great house?” I asked.

“It is a big and grand house,” he said.

“What about the people?” I asked.

“There’s no people there,” the man said.

“What? Not even Mr. Ebenezer?” I was now surprised.

“Oh the laird is there if that’s who you want. Why are you interested?” the man asked.

“I was told I could get a job there,” I lied.

“What?” he cried, “Well, it’s none of my business, but you look like a decent boy. You should stay away from the House of Shaws,” he said and drove off.

I asked a few other people about the House of Shaws, and all of them told me to stay away from there. I was very disappointed to find that so many people all thought that Mr. Ebenezer was such a strange man and clearly wasn't well liked. If it would have only taken an hour, I would have gone straight back to Essendean. My adventures would have been over and I would have been back with Mr. Campbell. But when I had walked for two days, it seemed silly to not go to the House of Shaws and at least finish the journey I had begun.

The sun was setting when I finally found someone who would tell me where the House of Shaws was. It was an ugly building that stood in a very pretty valley.

“What? That!” I asked as my heart sank.

“That is the House of Shaws!” the women told me, “Blood built it, blood stopped the building of it, blood shall bring it down. Black be its fall! If you see the laird, tell him that Jennet Clouston has **put a curse** on him, his house and all within. Black be their fall!” she cried before she turned and walked away.

I was so scared. I had heard stories about witches and curses, and I felt like I had just met one. Hearing her speak about Mr. Ebenezer Balfour and curses had taken all the strength out of my legs.

put a curse (phrase) to say a word or phrase so that something bad may happen

I sat on the ground and stared at the house. The more I looked, the lovelier the land around it looked. I sat there as the sun went down before I walked towards the house. The closer I got to the house, the worse it looked. One side of the house had never been finished and bats flew in and out of the side of it. It was night when I got to the door and knocked on it. I waited for someone to come to answer it. When no one did, I knocked again.

I thought about running away, but I was angry that they were ignoring the door. Therefore, instead of running, I kicked and hammered the door with my fists and I shouted for Mr. Balfour to answer the door.

“It’s **loaded**,” a man called out. I looked up and a man was leaning out of the window above me with a **blunderbuss** in his hand.

“I have come here with a letter for Mr. Ebenezer Balfour of Shaws. Is he here?” I asked.

“Leave the letter on the doorstep and go,” the man replied.

“I will not. It is a letter of introduction that I am supposed to give him,” I replied.

“A what?” the man asked sharply. I repeated myself. “Who are you?” he asked.

loaded (adj) (of a gun) having bullets in it

blunderbuss (n) an old-fashioned kind of gun



“It’s loaded” a man called out. I looked up and a man was leaning out of the window above me with a blunderbuss in his hand.

“I am David Balfour,” I said which seemed to shock the man as he nearly dropped his blunderbuss.

“Is your father dead?” he asked. I was so surprised by the question that I couldn’t find my voice to answer him. “He must be dead; otherwise, you wouldn’t be here. I will come and let you in,” the man said.

It didn’t take him long to answer the door, but as soon as I was in the house, he shut and bolted the door behind me.

“Go into the kitchen and touch nothing,” the man said to me as he locked the door. When he was done, he came into the kitchen and said, “Let me see the letter.”

“The letter is for Mr. Balfour,” I said.

“And who do you think I am? Give me Alexander’s letter,” he said **gruffly**.

“You know my father’s name?” I asked.

“It would be strange if I didn’t know my brother’s name. I am your uncle, David. Now give me the letter and sit down to eat,” he told me.

He put some porridge on the table in front of me. I was very disappointed by the House of Shaws, but I gave my uncle the letter and sat down to eat the porridge.

“Do you know what is in this letter?” he asked me as he read it.

gruffly (adv) with a deep and rough voice

“No, it was still sealed,” I replied.

“Then why are you here?” he asked.

“To give you the letter,” I said between mouthfuls of porridge.

“No, you have some hope of getting something from me,” he told me.

“When I found out I might have family, I thought they might help me start my new life. But I am not a beggar. I am not here to take anything from you that you don’t want to give without me asking for it. I maybe poor, but I have friends who would be happy to help me,” I replied.

“Oh ho! Don’t take that tone with me,” he said as he sat and ate his own porridge. I was so angry with him.

“Has your father been dead long?” he asked.

“Three weeks,” I said.

“He was a secret and silent man. Did he ever talk about me?” my uncle asked.

“No, I didn’t know that he had a brother until you told me that you were my uncle,” I replied.

“Dear me! He never spoke of Shaws?” he asked.

“No, sir,” I said.

Test 3

Answer the questions below.

1. What is the name of the leader of the Appin Clan?
2. What is the name of the village that the House of Shaws is near to?
3. How many times did Alan whistle at the house of James of the Glens?
4. How much is one Scots pound in English money?
5. What is the name of the mountain that Cluny lived on?
6. What is the name of the forest that Alan and David are reunited in?
7. What is David told to defend in the round house?
8. What was the name of the island that David was shipwrecked on?
9. How many men did David kill in the round house fight?
10. What did Mr. Rankeillor tell David to call Alan in his story?

Test 4

Put the list in order by entering the numbers 1 to 10 in the gaps below.

- a. ___ Alan and David swapped stories about their lives.
- b. ___ David went back to the House of Shaws with Alan.
- c. ___ The ship ran over Alan's boat.
- d. ___ The Red Fox was shot by a man in a black coat with metal buttons.
- e. ___ David and Alan fell out and argued.
- f. ___ Mr Campbell gave David the recipe for Lily of the Valley Water.
- g. ___ Robin Oig came to ask David if he was related to the Balfours of Braith.
- h. ___ Maclean and David played word games in French and Latin.
- i. ___ Mrs. Stewart sent Alan and David money and their wanted poster.
- j. ___ Captain Hoseason kidnapped David.

GRAMMAR CHECK

Test 1

Choose the correct answer.

- 1- Unlike other planets, the Earth has mainly mild temperatures, makes it a great place for living things to survive.
a) what b) which c) that
- 2- Stars may look the same from Earth they are all of different sizes temperatures.
a) but / and b) so / that c) as / as
- 3- My friends asked me if I could join their trip to the mountains. I agreed and suggested in my car.
a) to go b) go c) going
- 4- Among all the planets in the solar system, Earth and Mercury to have the densest compositions.
a) are known b) have known c) know
- 5- the people who visit our newly-opened restaurant each day look for consistency and quality.
a) Much of b) Each of c) Most of
- 6- A total of 45 people from the building due to the fire on the top floor the other night.
a) were evacuated b) are evacuated c) have been evacuated
- 7- In the past, rich people had servants or slaves to carry them. A rich person sat in a seat or in a bed that was lifted and carried along.
a) lied b) lay c) laid
- 8- Around a thousand people when fire through crowds at a party at an amusement park.
a) were injured/ripped b) injured/ripped c) had injured/was ripped
- 9- It is to find a place to keep a bike to find a parking place for a car, especially in busy streets.
a) easy enough / like b) too easy / as c) easier / than

Test 2

Choose the correct answer.

When it got close to night, we¹ down on the opposite side of the rocks to the soldiers. They had already searched this side of the valley and² the opposite way to us. After we were sure that they were going the other way, we set off slowly,³ sure that we kept⁴ sight as we moved. Our process was slow, but the sun was going down and the night would hide us.

1. a) have climbed b) climbed c) climb
2. a) were going b) have gone c) are going
3. a) are made b) making c) have made
4. a) out of b) for c) at

One night, the captain came to the forecandle and told me I was the new cabin boy. Ransome⁵ and his body was thrown over the side of the ship into the sea. My berth⁶ from the forecandle to the round house,⁷ the captain, Mr. Riach and Mr. Shuan slept. It was Mr. Shuan that⁸ Ransome, and he was sitting in the round house⁹ miserable.

5. a) have killed b) killed c) had been killed
6. a) is moved b) was moved c) moved
7. a) that b) which c) where
8. a) has killed b) had killed c) was killed
9. a) looking b) looked c) to look

VOCABULARY CHECK

Test-1

Match the definitions (1-10) on the right with the words (a-j) on the left.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| a. ___ insane | 1. to shake violently |
| b. ___ quarrel | 2. dishonest; dangerous |
| c. ___ treacherous | 3. careful |
| d. ___ shudder | 4. to say someone or something is bad or wrong |
| e. ___ vast | 5. very serious |
| f. ___ stern | 6. an angry argument between people |
| g. ___ taunt | 7. mentally ill |
| h. ___ wary | 8. very large |
| i. ___ denounce | 9. a wide smile that shows your teeth |
| j. ___ grin | 10. to make somebody angry by saying insulting things to them |

Test 2

Complete the sentences with the words below.

prospect

accomplice

gloomier

quarrel

decent

puzzled

taunted

bizarre

unfamiliar

fleeing

implicate

1. Although there is no evidence, his enemies are trying to him in the murder of the journalist.
2. An in the robbery of London bank told the authorities that the bank's assistant manager was also involved.
3. They had a because of a very silly issue last night.
4. There was no that they would want to work on the same project together. That's why I am surprised.
5. The outlook for the country's future is much because of the poor economic conditions and political instability.
6. He is a person that most people would trust.
7. Her behaviour at the party last night painfully embarrassed me.
8. The police managed to catch the criminals before the country.
9. The boy started crying because his friends him for his weight.
10. I stopped reading the book as it had many words.
11. The mystery of how pyramids were built has people for centuries.