

ЛЕГКО ЧИТАЕМ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ
ЛЕГКО ЧИТАЕМ ПО-АНГЛИЙСКИ

Роберт Льюис Стивенсон
ПОХИЩЕННЫЙ

Уровень 2

Robert Louis Stevenson
KIDNAPPED

*Адаптация текста,
составление упражнений,
комментария и словаря
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1.

I will begin the story of my adventures with a morning in June, 1751, when I left for the last time my father's house. The sun began to shine as I went down the road.

Mr. Campbell, the minister of Essendean, was waiting for me by the garden gate, good man!

"Well, Davie," said he, "I will go with you as far as the ford." And we walked in silence.

"Are you sorry to leave Essendean?" said he.

"Why, sir," said I, "Essendean is a good place, and I have been very happy there; but I have never been anywhere else. My father and mother are both dead, and I would go to a new place willingly."

"Very well, Davie," said Mr. Campbell. "When your mother was gone, and your father was near his end, **he gave me in charge a letter**¹, which he said was your inheritance. 'Give my boy this letter and send him off to the house of Shaws, not far from

Cramond. That is the place I came from,' he said, 'and it's where my boy should return.'"

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

"I don't know," said Mr. Campbell. "But the name of that family, Davie, is your name — Balfours of Shaws: an old, honest house of good reputation. Your father, too, was **a man of learning**³; he conducted school in the best way; and he didn't have the manner or the speech of a common teacher; I invited him to meet the gentry; and all well-reputed gentlemen had pleasure in his society. Here is your father's letter."

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

"Mr. Campbell," I asked, "and **if you were in my shoes, would you go?**"⁴

"Of course," said the minister, "I would, of course. A boy like you can get to Cramond (which is near Edinburgh) in two days of walk. If your relations don't want to have you, you can walk back and come to my door. And, Davie, remember that, though of a good family, you've lived your life in the country. In that great house show yourself as a nice

boy, listen more, say less. As for the lord, remember he's the lord; it's a pleasure to obey a lord."

"Well, sir," said I, "I promise you I'll try to do it."

"Very well said," replied Mr. Campbell.

With that he took me in his arms, said good-bye to me, and went back home.

I walked over the ford and up the hill. I took my last look of Essendean, where I had lived all my life.

On the second day, coming to the top of a hill, I saw Edinburgh. I came by a house and asked how to get to Cramond; and so, from one house to another walked to the west of the capital.

When I was near Cramond I began to ask the way to the house of Shaws. It seemed to surprise those to whom I spoke. After two, or maybe three people had given me the same look and the same answer, I began to think there was something strange about the Shaws.

To set this fear at rest⁵, I changed my questions. When I saw a fellow coming along in his cart, I asked him if he had ever heard of a house they called the house of Shaws.

He stopped his cart and looked at me, like the others.

"Yes," said he.

"Is it a great house?" I asked.

"Yes," said he. "The house is big."

“What are the people like?” said I.

“People?” cried he. “There’re no people there — nobody who can be called people.”

“What?” said I, “not Mr. Ebenezer?”

“Oh, yes,” said the man, “there’s the lord if you want him. What do you want there?”

“I was told that I would get a position,” I said.

“What?” cried the man. “Well, boy,” he added, **“it’s none of my business but keep clear of the Shaws⁶.”**

The next person I came across was a barber; and knowing well that barbers were great gossips, I asked him what kind of a man was Mr. Balfour of the Shaws.

“Not a man, not a man at all,” said the barber and began to ask me what my business was; but I said as little as I could and walked on.

The more I heard, the less I liked it. What kind of a house was this? or what kind of a gentleman was it? If an hour’s walk could have brought me back to Essendean, I would have returned to Mr. Campbell’s.

But I had to do it, out of self-respect. I didn’t like what I heard, and I began to walk slowly, still asking my way.

It was afternoon when I met a woman coming down a hill; and she, when I had put my usual question, pointed to a great building standing in the next valley. The country was pleasant round it with low

hills and woods and fields; but the house looked like a ruin; no road led to it; no smoke rose from any of the chimneys; and there was no garden.

“That is the house of Shaws!” the woman cried with anger. “Blood built it; blood stopped the building of it; blood will bring it down. See here!” she cried again — “If you see the lord, tell him what you hear; tell him that Jennet Clouston has called down the curse on him and his house!”

And the woman turned and was gone. I stood where she left me, **with my hair on end**⁷. In those days people still believed in witches and were afraid of a curse.

I sat down and stared at the house of Shaws. The more I looked, the nicer the countryside looked with the fields and sheep. At last the sun went down, and then I saw smoke go up above the house of Shaws, that meant someone had lit it.

So I walked along a little path in the grass that led to the house. It seemed one wing of the house had not been finished. The upper floors stood unfinished and showed stairs against walls. Many windows had no glass in them.

As I got closer I saw a little fire in the lower windows. I came up to the house and heard some sounds inside. The door was a great piece of wood and I knocked.

2.

I stood and waited. The house was silent. I knocked again and listened. I thought of running away; but I was too angry to do so, and I began to knock on the door, and to shout out aloud for Mr. Balfour. I heard a sound overhead, and looking up, saw a man's head and a pistol at one of the windows.

"I have come here with a letter," I said, "to Mr. Ebenezer Balfour of Shaws. Is he here?"

"From whom is it?" asked the man with the pistol.

"It doesn't matter," said I, for I was growing very angry.

"You can put it on the doorstep, and **be off with you**⁸."

"I will do no such thing," I cried. "I will deliver it into Mr. Balfour's hands."

"Who are you?" was the next question.



“They call me David Balfour,” said I.

With a curious change of voice, the next question was:

“Is your father dead?”

I was so much surprised that I could not answer, but stood staring.

“Yes,” the man said, “he must be dead, no doubt; and that’s why you’re at my door. I’ll let you in.”

Presently the door was opened and shut again behind me as soon as I was in.

“Go into the kitchen and don’t touch anything,” said the voice and I entered the kitchen.

It was the barest room I had ever seen. Half-a-dozen dishes stood on the shelves; the table was laid for supper with a bowl of porridge, a spoon, and a cup of beer. There was nothing else in that great empty kitchen but chests along the wall and a cupboard with a padlock.

The man who came into my kitchen with me was stooping and narrow-shouldered; and his age might be between fifty and seventy. He was long unshaved, and he neither took his eyes away from me nor looked me straight in the face. He seemed like an old servant, who had been left in charge of that big house.

“Are you hungry?” he asked. “You can eat that porridge.”

I said I feared it was his own supper.

“Oh,” said he, “I can do without it. I’ll take beer.” He drank the cup about half out, and then suddenly held out his hand.

“Let’s see the letter,” said he.

I told him the letter was for Mr. Balfour; not for him.

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

“You know my father’s name?”

“It would be strange if I didn’t,” he replied, “for he was my brother; and though you don’t seem to like either me or my house, I’m your uncle, Davie. So give me the letter.”

I gave him the letter, and sat down to the porridge. My uncle turned the letter over and over in his hands.

“What brought you here?” he asked suddenly.

“To give the letter,” said I.

“No,” said he, cunningly, “you have had some hopes, haven’t you?”

“Yes, sir,” said I, “when I was told that I had well-to-do relatives, I indeed hoped that they might help me in my life. But I am no beggar, I have friends of my own that will help me.”

Uncle Ebenezer drank the beer, and said: “If you’re dry you’ll find water behind the door.”

To this I gave no answer, standing and looking at my uncle with an angry heart.

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

“Three weeks, sir,” said I.

“He was a secret man, Alexander, a silent man,” he continued. “He never said much when he was young. Did he speak of me?”

“I never knew, sir, till you told it me yourself, that he had any brother.”

He seemed strangely satisfied, but whether with himself, or me, or with my father, I did not know.

“I’m glad I let you in. And now come to your bed,” he said.

To my surprise, he lit no lamp or candle, but went into the dark passage, up the steps, and paused before a door, which he unlocked. He told me to go in, for that was my room. I did as he told me and asked for a light to go to bed with.

“I shall never agree to lights in a house. I’m afraid of fires. Good-night to you, Davie,” said Uncle Ebenezer.

Before I had time to say anything else, he closed the door, and I heard him lock me in from the outside.

I did not know whether to laugh or cry. The room was cold, and the bed was damp. I lay down on the floor and fell asleep.

In the morning I opened my eyes and found myself in a great room with fine furniture and three nice windows. Ten years ago, or perhaps twenty, it had

been a pleasant a room; but damp, dirt, mice and spiders **had done their worst since then**⁹. The windows were broken.

As I was very cold, I knocked and shouted till my uncle came and let me out. He took me back to the kitchen, where he had lit the fire and was making porridge. The table was laid with two bowls and two spoons, but one cup of beer. He asked me if I would like to drink beer, and I said I would.

He took another cup from the shelf; and then, to my great surprise he poured half from one cup to the other.

After breakfast my uncle Ebenezer unlocked a chest, and took out of it a pipe and tobacco, from which he cut a little and locked it up again. Then he sat down at one of the windows and smoked.

I began to say that I must have the dry bed and bedclothes, for I could not sleep in such a damp bed.

“Is this my house or yours?” said he and then suddenly, “I didn’t mean that. What’s mine is yours, Davie.” He went on to ask me to stay in the house with him.

Presently he opened a chest, and got out a very old coat and a good hat, and locked all up again, and **was about to leave**¹⁰, when a thought stopped him.

“**I cannot leave you by yourself in the house**¹¹,” said he. “I’ll have to lock the house.”