

Mrs. Hawking - 1-Hour Pilot

By

Phoebe Roberts

www.mrshawking.com

51 Morton Street, #2
Waltham, MA 02453
610-597-5115
Breakinglight11@gmail.com

FADE IN:

TEASER

EXT. LONDON TENEMENTS - EARLY EVENING

The fog rolls in from the Thames, as a big, rough man, JOHN COLCHESTER, leans in a doorway smoking a cigarette.

SUPER: London, England, 1880

He barks an order to another man, who takes his place at the door. Colchester moves off, leaving the other to stand guard on the street.

A wiry creature in black crashes down from sky to strike the man to the ground. He gets off a strangled cry before the figure, slim as a whip and face concealed by a hood, subdues him with blows of catlike precision. A sleeper hold finally takes him to a heap on the ground. The figure slips past him into the building as a ship's horn sounds in the distance.

EXT. PORT OF LONDON - EARLY EVENING

The gangplank extends down from a great passenger ship. People pour out of the hold, burdened with luggage. Families disembark huddled together, while others meet their loved ones waiting for them on the docks.

Among all these emerges MARY STONE, walking alone. A tall, working-class girl with dark hair and an earnest face, there is no one to accompany or greet her, but she hefts the bags containing all her worldly possessions and takes her first steps on dry land in London.

INT. TENEMENT ROOM - EARLY EVENING

The rain begins to come down as the hooded figure creeps through the wreckage of dark room. The furnishings are smashed and broken but much finer than the run-down building would suggest. The figure runs gloved fingers over the baseboard trim, with its painted cherub motif.

A man's voice can be heard outside the room, and the masked figure recedes into the shadows. Another ruffian enters, peering around, until the figure leaps out to lay him out with a storm of fierce blows.

The figure kneels to go through the thug's pockets. The masked head bends over the discovery of a scrap of paper with a symbol on it.

INT. DOWNTOWN HOTEL - EARLY EVENING

Mary ducks through the low doorway of a shabby hotel room to find a narrow bed and a leaking ceiling. Sighing, Mary puts her luggage aside and drags over the side table. Climbing on to reach the ceiling, she wads up a cloth to stop up the leak.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PUB - EARLY EVENING

The masked figure creeps along the rooftops of the tenements. A gloved hand holds out the paper to match it to the symbol on the sign of a seedy pub on the street below.

INT. EMPLOYMENT AGENCY - DAY

Mary sits with her back straight in a row of other working girls, all a head shorter than her, in the waiting room of a placement agency. She stands when they call her name.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PUB - DAY

The figure stakes out the pub from the gables across the street.

INT. EMPLOYMENT AGENCY - DAY

Mary sits expectantly across the desk from the prim woman in charge, who regards her references skeptically. The woman hands back the letters with a regretful shake of her head. Disappointment flits across Mary's face, but she does her best to bear up bravely.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PUB - DAY

The figure waits impatiently on the roofs across from the pub, until at last John Colchester and his fellows emerge and make their way down the street. The figure leaps to grasp a drainpipe and slides back down to the ground. The figure waits in the shadows of the alley for a passing cab, then climbs up unnoticed to hitch a ride on the back as it goes after them.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mary makes her way down the street, passing a newsboy selling papers. She spies an oncoming carriage, about to crash through a puddle from the night before. Thinking quickly, she throws out her cloak as it passes, shielding herself and the boy from the splash. The boy looks up at her gratefully, and offers her a free paper in thanks.

Mary thumbs through the paper until she finds the advertisements.

INSERT: "WANTED: maid of all work in house of respectable widow. All inquiries to N. J. Hawking, at Hawking Capital in the Strand."

EXT. DOWNTOWN PUB - DAY

For days, the figure follows John Colchester as he goes about his business, climbing along the gutters and gables, tracking him from above.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mary, dressed as nicely as she's able, strides down the street, apprehensive and determined at once. Big Ben rings the hour as she goes.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ROOFTOPS - DAY

At the sound of the bells, the figure in black stops the hunt. Changing direction, the figure runs along the ledges and leaps from rooftop to rooftop unseen. The bells chime out as Mary hurries along the streets below.

EXT. HAWKING RESIDENCE - DAY

Mary approaches the fine house at the address in her hand.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

NATHANIEL HAWKING, a pleasant, well-dressed gentleman in his twenties, waits reading a newspaper. He glances up as suddenly the final bell tolling in the distance is replaced by the ringing of the doorbell.

ACT ONE

INT. HAWKING DOORWAY - DAY

Nathaniel opens the door to Mary. His gaze jumps several inches when her eye level is higher than expected.

NATHANIEL

Ah, Miss Mary Stone, I presume.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Nathaniel leads Mary inside.

NATHANIEL

Nathaniel Hawking, very pleased to meet you. Your turning up in London may be the solution to our problem.

To Mary's surprise, he takes her coat and waves her to a parlor chair. She sits, ill at ease with the courtesy.

MARY

I understand you advertised on
behalf of a relative?

Mary's surprise is compounded when he offers her a cup of tea. He indicates the portrait of THE COLONEL, a stern military officer over the mantle.

NATHANIEL

My aunt Victoria. She was the wife
of my late uncle, the Colonel
Reginald Prescott Hawking.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

An unseen onlooker approaches from the hall.

NATHANIEL

Remarkable woman, I'm terribly fond
of her, but... she has queer ideas
at times.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

NATHANIEL

After my dear uncle's passing, she
dismissed all the staff. But more
than the help, I think she could do
with the company.

MRS. HAWKING

Is that the girl?

Startled, Nathaniel spins to see MRS. VICTORIA HAWKING appear just behind him. He stumbles backward to the ground.

MRS. HAWKING

How you suffer for me, Nathaniel.

Mary shoots out of her chair to help Nathaniel up.

NATHANIEL

Ah-- thank you, miss. Mary Stone,
may I introduce you to my dear lady
aunt, Mrs. Victoria Hawking?

Mary curtsies. Mrs. Hawking paces around her, all intense eyes and hard edges swathed in elaborate widow's dress. She barely comes to Mary's chin, but her presence is towering.

MRS. HAWKING

So this is what you've brought me. Your given plain, meek young woman, new and friendless in London. I would not have left India for this dreary place, but I suppose there are circumstances that can't be helped.

MARY

Yes, madam. I see you've been told something of my history.

MRS. HAWKING

Only by your dress. India linen in October. Well. At least this one can string two words together. Wherever did you find that last girl, a ward in Colney Hatch?

NATHANIEL

Aunt Victoria, please!

MRS. HAWKING

Very well, then. Tell me your accomplishments.

Mary hands over her references uncomfortably.

MARY

Accomplishments may be too strong a word, madam. But I have many years' keeping house for my family-

MRS. HAWKING

Well. You're not uneducated, and I can see you have a strong back. Can you keep your own counsel and mind your own business?

MARY

I can, Mrs. Hawking.

MRS. HAWKING

And have you the good sense God gave you?

MARY

I very much hope so!

MRS. HAWKING

As do I. In light of that, I suppose you shall do for me.

Mrs. Hawking rises from her chair.

NATHANIEL
So you'll have her on?

MRS. HAWKING
I suppose I can stand to.

NATHANIEL
Oh, I'm so pleased, dear aunt. The
Colonel would have wanted me to
take care of you.

MRS. HAWKING
Bless him for that.

She leaves. Nathaniel turns to Mary, smiling a little too broadly.

NATHANIEL
She is a character. Compared to
what she thought of the others, she
seems quite taken with you.

Nathaniel softens at the look on her face.

NATHANIEL
She'll come round in time. My aunt
has always been of odd habits,
but... I've never worried for her
before. I think you may be
precisely what she needs.

INT. SERVANTS' QUARTERS - DAY

The next morning, Mary carries her bags up into the attic servants' quarters, with five empty beds and dressers in a lonely row. She sits down on one of the beds and sighs.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

Mary approaches Mrs. Hawking in the parlor, poring away over papers and a map.

MARY
I believe that's everything settled
in. I'm quite ready now.

Mrs. Hawking stares at her.

MARY
To learn my duties. If you'll tell
me what they are.

MRS. HAWKING

I shall be frank. I've no idea what to do with you.

Mary fights to keep her disappointment from her face.

INT. HAWKING HOUSE - DAY

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Mary attempts to make herself useful, but is thwarted at every turn.

She goes to carry an armload of broom, mop, bucket, and rags into the study, but Mrs. Hawking strides in just before her and closes the door in her face.

She lays a lovely meal on the dining table, just as Mrs. Hawking grabs her hat and marches out of the house.

She attempts to straighten some papers on Mrs. Hawking's desk. She comes across a leather bound day book full of appointments. She cannot help but open and read.

INSERT: Celeste Fairmont, 31 Haviland Street, Wednesday, 6:00

Mrs. Hawking snatches the book from her hands with a glare, but Mary looks so miserable that even she must take pity.

MRS. HAWKING

I like to take tea in the afternoons.

END MONTAGE.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

Mary lays a tea tray at Mrs. Hawking's elbow. She nods mild approval.

MARY

Thank you, madam. It does a soul good to be of service. As my sister likes to say.

MRS. HAWKING

Your sister! You've family living? Surely not!

MARY

In fact I do, Mrs. Hawking.

MRS. HAWKING

Then why upon your return did this sister not take you in? It was my understanding that such was the done thing when it came to unmarried women thrust suddenly into your predicament.

MARY

In truth... I didn't fancy growing old as just Maiden Aunt Mary in some north country town. I'd rather make my own way of it.

Beat.

MARY

I'm sure you must think me dreadfully silly.

But the look Mrs. Hawking gives her says anything but.

INT. COLONEL'S STUDY - DAY

Mary dusts in the Colonel's old study. She notices the items on the shelves, a regimental photograph, medals for excellent service, all under a layer of dust. Then there is a service knife, bright as the day it was made.

INT. HAWKING'S PARLOR - EVENING

Mary carries in dinner on a tray. As she serves, Mrs. Hawking sees her eyes wander to the the Colonel's portrait.

MRS. HAWKING

My late husband. The Colonel Reginald Prescott Hawking.

MARY

Nathaniel speaks very highly of him. He must have been a great man.

Beat.

MRS. HAWKING

You must ask him sometime. He does love to talk about his uncle.

MARY

I... I am sorry, madam. It must be painful to speak of him.

Mrs. Hawking considers her.

MRS. HAWKING

On one occasion we visited his brother's house in the south country, I remarked on a fine red rosebush. It was... nothing, a meaningless murmur of idle conversation. But for me, he dug up that bush with his own hands, carried it back on his lap, and planted in the garden behind the house. Because he could not see that I do not care one whit about rosebushes.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mary carries an armful of linens down the hall. She looks through the open door of the parlor, where Mrs. Hawking is showing in a well-dressed woman, CELESTE FAIRMONT. Mrs. Hawking notices her, and with a sharp look, she closes it.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

Late that night, Celeste Fairmont, prim and proper, waits fitfully in her home. The sound of her own doorbell makes her jump, until at last she rises to answer it.

INT. FAIRMONT ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

She gasps when she sees it is Mary.

MARY

Mrs. Celeste Fairmont? Forgive the intrusion at this hour, but I've recently come into the employ of Mrs. Victoria Hawking.

MRS. FAIRMONT

Mrs. Hawking sent you?

MARY

Ah- not as such. But madam didn't come home last night, and according to her appointment book, she was engaged to see you.

MRS. FAIRMONT

She was here last night... but I cannot precisely say-

Voices and footsteps crash from outside.

EXT. FAIRMONT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A gang of ruffians storms onto the street, knocking over ash cans and yelling as they search for something.

INT. FAIRMONT ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mary and Mrs. Fairmont stare out the front window until the window in the parlor begins to rattle.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

A dark figure pries it open and begins to come in. Mrs. Fairmont cries out as Mary rushes to seize hold of the poker at the fireplace. She throws herself between Mrs. Fairmont and the intruder. The masked figure in black springs down to the floor.

MARY

Stop! Stop right there!

The figure has a hand clamped to one side in pain, but straightens to pull down the hood.

MRS. HAWKING

Mary?

MARY

Mrs. Hawking!?

Mrs. Hawking runs to peer through the front window.

MRS. HAWKING

Blast, they're here!

MRS. FAIRMONT

What are we to-?

They freeze at a hard thumping at the door. They gape as Mrs. Hawking ducks into a cupboard. Mrs. Fairmont looks in terror at Mary at the sound of another THUMP THUMP THUMP. At last Mary opens the door to John Colchester.

COLCHESTER

There's a dangerous person about.
We was after them just now but it
seems they've disappeared. You
haven't seen nothing?

He pushes past Mary into the house, looking around.

MARY

I'm sure we've no idea.

INT. CUPBOARD - CONTINUOUS

As Colchester draws near, Mrs. Hawking draws a knife in the darkened cupboard.

COLCHESTER

What are you all doing up and about at this hour?

MARY

We were disturbed by the noise in the wee hours of the morning!

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

Mary throws open the door.

MARY

Now I must insist that you leave. You have frightened Mrs. Fairmont quite enough.

Colchester looks around once more, then nods.

COLCHESTER

Right, then. Good evening to you... ladies.

Mary slams the door behind him. Mrs. Hawking emerges from the cabinet as the men can be heard clearing off outside.

MRS. HAWKING

That was quite splendid of you, Mary.

MARY

Mrs. Hawking! This is- this is- when you didn't return last night- I beg your pardon, but-

MRS. FAIRMONT

Never mind that! Did you find the culprits? Who are they?

MRS. HAWKING

Despite that rabble, this is not the work of simply an alley gang. I expect there shall be a pageboy soon with a rather serious letter for you.

MRS. FAIRMONT

Why?

MRS. HAWKING

Because someone means to blackmail you.

Mrs. Fairmont gasps.

MRS. HAWKING

We must discuss, Mrs. Fairmont, just what it is you've done.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairmont huddles in her chair as Mrs. Hawking paces.

MRS. HAWKING

This is quite serious, madam. I believe it to be the work of Lord Cedric Brockton.

MRS. FAIRMONT

The undersecretary to the minister? But he's a well-born, prominent man! Why, he's hosting the queen's ball in celebration of the new Afghan victory!

INT. PARLIAMENT - DAY

Lord Cedric Brockton, a sharp, well-mannered older man, attends an assembly. As a vote is cast, he regards an MP with a sly, knowing look.

MRS. HAWKING (V.O.)

Outwardly, yes, but he is one of the most dangerous blackmailers in Europe. His network of spies and operatives gather for him the secrets of the most powerful personages in the country, those secrets that would destroy them were they ever made known, and exacts a heavy price to keep them concealed.

The man hesitates, then casts his vote. Brockton smiles.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

MRS. FAIRMONT
Heaven help me.

MRS. HAWKING
I investigated the rooms you rented
in my tracing of those men. There
was no mistaking the cherub trim
along the baseboard, nor the
remains of the nursery you
furnished.

MRS. FAIRMONT
You promised me you would not pry!

MRS. HAWKING
Circumstances have changed! I know
this man, Celeste, I know how he
operates. If I am to help you
against him, I must understand what
it is at stake. Brockton's men that
broke in, it was clear that they
were looking for something.
Something you've been hiding. Tell
me who it was, Mrs. Fairmont, that
they were looking for.

Mrs. Fairmont wrestles with it, then relents.

MRS. FAIRMONT
Not looking for. They found him.
They found my son. My boy, my
Gabriel. They've stolen away my
boy.

Mrs. Hawking tenses at this. Mary gasps.

MARY
Why in God's name would they take
your child?

MRS. HAWKING
For the same reason, I would
imagine, that you should keep him
in rented rooms and may visit him
only on occasion.

MRS. FAIRMONT
I was young. I made a mistake. And
when Gabriel was born, my father
sent him away. I would never do
anything to compromise our good

(MORE)

MRS. FAIRMONT (cont'd)
names, you must understand that.
But... I could not leave my boy.

MARY
Were the police of no assistance?

MRS. FAIRMONT
I could not go to the police! Our
reputation, Jacob's career would be
at stake! But I had heard...
something that women whispered of,
society ladies, their washerwomen,
women of all standings... that when
a lady finds herself in a
predicament that she cannot resolve
alone... there is someone...
someone outside the usual workings
of society, who can take
extraordinary action to help.

MRS. HAWKING
And that is where I come in.

Mary gapes.

MRS. HAWKING
This world offers so little
recourse to women when its presses
become too great. Someone must step
outside all of that to do what's
necessary.

She turns to Mrs. Fairmont.

MRS. HAWKING
This shall not be a simple
operation, madam. But I will do
everything that is in my power to
see you through.

Mrs. Fairmont clings to her in desperate gratitude. Mrs.
Hawking winces and tenses her left side.

MRS. FAIRMONT
Oh, my goodness, you're hurt! We
should- we should send for someone.

MRS. HAWKING
No doctors, Celeste!

Mrs. Hawking pushes away, but Mary steps forward surely.

MARY
Please- allow me.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

Mary tends to the slice on Mrs. Hawking's abdomen. She marvels at her lean muscle covered over with the ripples of old wounds.

MARY
You have... so many scars. Does this happen... often? In this work that you do?

MRS. HAWKING
On occasion. You may count how often.

MARY
And... what do you do?

MRS. HAWKING
I manage well enough on my own.

MARY
But... you've no other assistance? Is there no one trustworthy?

MRS. HAWKING
I cannot chance it. Discovery by the wrong person could mean the end of everything.

MARY
I think you make a great mistake in that.

MRS. HAWKING
You are out of turn, Miss Stone! It is an easy thing to say when you need not fear your blasted husband putting a stop to you for what he thinks is your own good.

MARY
He never knew? In twenty years of marriage?

MRS. HAWKING
One can hide anything from anyone if one so chooses.

MARY

You couldn't hide it from me.

Mrs. Hawking stares at her. Mrs. Fairmont returns with linen and alcohol. Mary soaks the cloth.

MARY

There will be pain, madam.

MRS. HAWKING

I have no fear of that.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

Mary lays the tea as Mrs. Hawking enters.

MRS. HAWKING

No more of this nonsense, now. I'd have your intentions, if you please.

MARY

Forgive me, my intentions?

MRS. HAWKING

You know my business now. And this is not something I'll allow to come out. So enough of this. What do you want from me, Mary?

MARY

Madam... I want to help.

Mrs. Hawking stares.

MARY

Madam, what you do... what you're doing for Mrs. Fairmont... it's the best thing I ever heard anyone do. I heard what Mrs. Fairmont said. Not just for the society ladies. The washerwomen and the scullery maids and the house girls too. Women precisely like me, who have nowhere else to turn.

MRS. HAWKING

Money makes little difference; all we women are caught.

Beat.

MRS. HAWKING

You've no idea how dangerous it is.

MARY

I can be brave if the circumstance calls for it.

MRS. HAWKING

So I've seen. But it's more than that. What I do... is unacceptable in the eyes of society. If such effort should fail, or so much as be discovered... I assure you, we shall come to envy the painted birds in parlor cages. And any hope of decent reputation shall be dashed forever.

MARY

Madam... I have lived a respectable life. For my first twenty years, I did nothing with myself except keep house for my father, and care for my unwell mother. And when they passed, and I had nothing more left... I realized how little that was. How little that was to make a life.

Beat.

MARY

And there's no money or place in the world that fixes your child taken from you. What you're doing for these people... more than anything, that means something. And that is what I would like to do.

MRS. HAWKING

I am accustomed to working alone.

MARY

As I said before. Everyone has need of help sometime. I can be brave, and I have a strong back and the good sense God gave me. Please... let me help you.

MRS. HAWKING

Good heavens. I must be losing my mind.

Beat.

MRS. HAWKING
 God help us. All right, brave girl.
 All right.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MRS. HAWKING'S STUDY - DAY

Mary follows eagerly as Mrs. Hawking strides into her study, covered over with maps, books, notes, and gear.

MARY
 Are you at work on the case?

MRS. HAWKING
 Indeed, considering how best to overcome the varied challenges presented by Mrs. Fairmont's predicament.

She finds a case of slim silver knives and holds one up.

MRS. HAWKING
 Challenge the first-

MARY
 The safety of the child.

MRS. HAWKING
 Correct. To rescue the boy from the villain's clutches.

She throws the knife to stick in a well-worn spot on the wall. Mary thrills as she she raises another.

MRS. HAWKING
 Challenge the second-

MARY
 The security of her reputation.

MRS. HAWKING
 -To prevent the child's existence from reaching the public.

She hurls the second knife beside the first.

MRS. HAWKING
 And finally, challenge the third...

Mary furrows her brow in thought, then shakes her head.

MRS. HAWKING

That would be the villain himself.
Lord Cedric Brockton conceals the
traces of his enterprise as well as
any man I've tangled with.

A third knife flies into the wall. As Mary inspects them,
Mrs. Hawking shakes out her black stealth costume to examine
it. She takes out her sewing kit to fix a tear.

MRS. HAWKING

I've returned a missing child or
two in my time, but in this my
usual methods have not served. My
thought had been to trace his
lackeys back to where they were
keeping the boy, but I've been
trailing them for days and seen no
sign.

Mary lights up with an idea.

MARY

Madam... if I may suggest... what
was it that Mrs. Fairmont said,
about... about Lord Brockton
hosting a ball?

MRS. HAWKING

Yes, some society nonsense in
celebration of yet another victory
for the Empire.

MARY

Perhaps that's the place to gather
intelligence.

MRS. HAWKING

By attending this ball? But it
shall be full of people then.

MARY

It's a way into his house! There
might be something useful to
discover there!

MRS. HAWKING

Surely he is not keeping the boy in
his own house.

MARY

No, but there may be something,
something he wishes to keep close
in his own den.

MRS. HAWKING

Hm. There is logic to it.

She casts aside her sewing and stands.

MARY

So you shall go?

MRS. HAWKING

I shall. Now, we must prepare, and we haven't much time. I have been out of the roar of things for some time now, but I daresay the Hawking name can still secure an invitation. And of course we shall have to see about acquiring you a suitable gown.

She grabs a tape from her kit to measure Mary.

MARY

A gown? For me? I... I may come along with you?

MRS. HAWKING

It was your plan, Miss Stone.

MARY

But shan't it be an affair for high society?

MRS. HAWKING

You shall quickly learn, child, if you are to ply this trade for long you must master the art of disguising yourself as something you are not. For you, it shall be as high society. For me, it shall be as a creature that can bear to spend the evening in whalebone stays. Besides, when it comes to facades one must put on, society is a common one. I imagine you shall manage it no worse than most.

INT. BROCKTON'S BALLROOM - EVENING

The grandly decorated ballroom at Lord Brockton's London home is full of society guests in elegant attire. Mary walks among them uncertainly in a beautiful blue ball gown, a nearby gentleman looking her up and down. At last Mrs. Hawking appears, stalking like a panther draped in black evening dress. She walks past Mary to address her over her shoulder.

MRS. HAWKING

There you are. I've observed the lay of the house, and there is a locked study on the second floor from which the valet keeps chasing away the guests. If Brockton keeps sensitive material in this house, that will be the place.

Mary keeps glancing uncomfortably behind her.

MRS. HAWKING

Are you quite all right?

MARY

That gentleman there is staring at me. Can he tell I don't belong?

MRS. HAWKING

I imagine, Miss Stone, it is because we have dressed you in entirely too becoming a gown. Fortunately, I have been able to turn this distasteful consequence to our advantage.

MARY

What do you mean?

MRS. HAWKING

When I observed how many were murmuring about the mysterious young woman, I may have given them the impression you were a niece of the viceroy of India, sent home to escape a scandal with a prominent soldier.

MARY

Me? But I am no- why?

MRS. HAWKING

Brockton is a blackmailer, Mary. He is always interested in persons with secrets. While he sounds you out for his wicked purpose, I shall take advantage of his distraction.

MARY

I don't know how to act like the niece of the viceroy! He'll see right through me!

MRS. HAWKING

See that he doesn't. You were raised in India, make use of your experience!

MARY

But madam- very well.

Mrs. Hawking nods, pleased, and walks off. Mary frets for a moment, then works to get into character, affecting the body language and carriage of a viceroy's niece.

INT. BROCKTON'S SECOND FLOOR - EVENING

Mrs. Hawking observes Brockton's valet hovering about the study door. She bumps into another guest and drops her reticle before backing off apologetically. As she bends to collect it, she removes a spool of very fine wire and strings it across the top stair.

INT. BROCKTON'S BALLROOM - EVENING

Mary is startled out of her rehearsal when Lord Brockton appears at her shoulder.

LORD BROCKTON

I don't believe we've met.

MARY

(posh accent)

O-oh? Ought we to?

LORD BROCKTON

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Lord Cedric Brockton and I would like to personally welcome you to my party.

MARY

Oh, this is your house? It's- it's a dear little place!

LORD BROCKTON

You must know, miss, everyone is buzzing about you and yet no one seems to know your name.

MARY

Ah... my uncle calls me... Tigerlily!

INT. BROCKTON'S SECOND FLOOR - EVENING

Mrs. Hawking watches as a woman trying to go down the stairs trips spectacularly on her wire trap. At her cry, the valet abandons his post to help her. In the commotion, Mrs. Hawking approaches the study door, flicking fine little lockpicking tools out of her sleeve.

INT. BROCKTON'S BALLROOM - EVENING

LORD BROCKTON

You must find London so very dull
by comparison.

MARY

Good heavens, you've no idea! Why,
if I so chose, I could ride to
finishing school on the back of an
elephant!

LORD BROCKTON

My goodness! Whatever could draw
you away from all that?

MARY

Oh, well, you know how things are!
Uncle dear thought I was becoming
too popular with some of his,
well...

LORD BROCKTON

Soldiers, miss?

MARY

My lord! What sort of lady do you
take me for? Fraternizing with
enlisted men?

Beat.

MARY

They were all officers!

They laugh uproariously, Mary delighted that she's pulling it all off. Over his shoulder, she spies Mrs. Hawking returning.

MARY

Oh, but I've said too much, Uncle
John would be furious with me!
Please excuse me, Lord Cedric,
lovely party you've thrown!

She all but runs away. Brockton turns, beaming, until he spots the approach of Mrs. Hawking.

LORD BROCKTON
Why, fancy that. You're in attendance this evening.

Mrs. Hawking tenses, but turns to face him.

MRS. HAWKING
You know me, sir?

LORD BROCKTON
I am certainly aware of Mrs. Colonel Reginald Prescott Hawking. It's been some time since you've made an appearance in society.

MRS. HAWKING
Haven't you heard? My husband died, I've been in mourning.

LORD BROCKTON
To be sure. Still, you've something of a reputation for reclusion. It is, then, remarkable that you should develop associations with no fewer than three ladies with whom I've had business in the last several years.

Beat.

LORD BROCKTON
I make a point of observing such things, Mrs. Hawking. Particularly when there is a discernable pattern of the enterprise in question going awry. When such things occur, I take pains to learn why.

MRS. HAWKING
Perhaps you have made a wrong move.

LORD BROCKTON
Perhaps you have, madam. For your own wellbeing, I advise you to make no more.

He bows and smiles at her pleasantly.

LORD BROCKTON

I am glad to have finally made your acquaintance. Do enjoy the rest of the party.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - NIGHT

Mrs. Hawking broods and paces, her gown partially disassembled. Mary rushes in through the front door.

MARY

Oh, madam! That was- oh, how grand that was! I've never been so carried off!

MRS. HAWKING

Mary-

MARY

When Lord Brockton came over, I thought I would faint! But I didn't, I managed it, I can hardly believe myself!

MRS. HAWKING

Mary, please! Brockton spoke to me just before we left. He suspects.

Mary gets a hold of herself at this.

MRS. HAWKING

Regrettably, he is more observant than most of our adversaries. Now even if we recover the boy, Mrs. Fairmont's secret is still in his power. We must find some intelligence we may hold over him, to force him to keep his silence.

MARY

Oh, my. But we can't leave poor Gabriel in that man's clutches.

MRS. HAWKING

Better off as Mrs. Fairmont may be.

MARY

Madam! How can you say such a thing?

MRS. HAWKING

She is trapped into the obligation of motherhood, and yet risks destroying herself to fulfill it.

MARY

What else can she do? She loves him.

MRS. HAWKING

Of course, of course.

MARY

You did find something that could help, didn't you?

Mrs. Hawking grins.

INT. MRS. HAWKING'S STUDY - NIGHT

Mary examines a piece of fancy watermarked stationary with writing on it.

MRS. HAWKING

The note was unsigned and the envelope bore no postmark, but the text spoke very frankly of someone agreeing to secret away the child as a condition of Brockton's continued silence. I have no doubt he has imposed upon another of his victims to hide the boy away.

MARY

But it doesn't say who this man is, or where he's keeping Gabriel.

MRS. HAWKING

Unfortunately, no. That we shall have to determine by another means.

Mrs. Hawking takes the page to study.

MRS. HAWKING

See here. The language is that of an educated man... and contains several noteworthy turns of phrase, such as... "...which I should say is far aboon the call of my debt..." and "...for the concealment of a cobby boy..." which are very distinctly of the Yorkshire dialect. So it is safe to say the writer is a man of some background, raised in the county.

MARY
That's astounding!

MRS. HAWKING
A trifle. Now, as for the paper...
it is very fine, certainly
expensive...

She holds it up to the gaslamp to show the watermark.

MRS. HAWKING
And this watermark... I've seen it
before. This is the stationary of a
member of the Bombay Club.

MARY
What is the Bombay Club?

MRS. HAWKING
It is a supper club for
distinguished soldiers of the
empire and their relations. The
Colonel belonged to it, and my
nephew does in his honor. It is the
sort of place where such men escape
to in order to congratulate one
another for their victories over
savages armed with darts and
spears.

MARY
Why, what luck! If Mr. Hawking
belongs as well, perhaps he can
help!

MRS. HAWKING
Certainly not! Nathaniel would only
stand in our way and behave as if
it were for our own good.

MARY
Perhaps if we explained to him--

MRS. HAWKING
Mary, it is out of the question. No
man will brook a challenge to his
comfortable order of things. You
will learn this too in time.

Mary looks down as Mrs. Hawking considers.

MRS. HAWKING

Regardless, the club seems to be our best lead at present. We shall have to investigate for any members with a background in Yorkshire.

She begins gathering up her equipment. She finds the knife Mary saw on the shelf in the Colonel's study.

MRS. HAWKING

The Colonel's old service knife. Leaving it was one of the few useful things he ever did for me. Women are not permitted as guests, of course, but we'll disguise you as one of the maids. As long as you keep your head down, no one should trouble over you.

MARY

And what of you?

She pulls on her stealth hood.

MRS. HAWKING

I do not intend to be seen at all.

MARY

Oh, my. Madam... does this mean you're pleased with me?

MRS. HAWKING

I am. As another set of wits and another pair of hands, you acquitted yourself... quite well.

Mary glows.

MARY

As I said. It does a soul good to be of service.

The two continue their preparations.

INT. BOMBAY CLUB DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Wealthy, well-bred men in white tie finish up dinner in the club dining room. As footmen serve at table, maids carry dishes from the kitchen and prepare the rooms. Among them is Mary in their black and white dress, ears and eyes open as she works. She glances around for Mrs. Hawking, who is nowhere to be seen, until a rustle behind a curtain reveals her lurking near enough to hear the conversation.

One gentleman, SIR WALTER GRAINGER, is tense and distracted over his plate. A friend beside him leans over.

GENTLEMAN

What's got you this evening? Not much can put you off your beef.

SIR WALTER

(Yorkshire accent)

Leave it for now. There's precious little for it.

He pushes back from the table and stands. Mary circles around the room near Mrs. Hawking's hiding place. Mary nods, and Mrs. Hawking nudges Mary as she passes.

INT. BOMBAY CLUB SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary waits nervously around the room for Grainger, startling when Mrs. Hawking emerges from her hiding place beneath a sideboard.

MARY

Madam, he's coming!

MRS. HAWKING

Then I'll be quick. I intend to observe the man from hiding until I learn his identity.

MARY

But where?

She draws the service knife and wedges it into the moulding around the fireplace. She steps up onto the blade and climbs from there to the mantle to the mounted rhinoceros head all the way up into the rafters. Mary gapes.

MRS. HAWKING

I have found to my advantage people seldom look up.

Voices and footsteps can be heard just outside the door.

MRS. HAWKING

Mary, the knife!

Mary grabs it and with effort wrenches it out of the wood just as the door is pushed open. In desperation she stashes it in one of the high-backed chairs. She drops down to pretend to scrub the floor as Sir Walter enters, followed by Cedric Brockton.

SIR WALTER

I've had quite enough, sirrah. I've paid you your money, I've hidden your documents, I've secreted away your stolen boy! Do you mean to bleed me dry?

LORD BROCKTON

A few pounds and favor or two are a small price to pay to harbor mistakes like yours, my lord.

SIR WALTER

Now you dog me to my club! I've had near enough of your poison.

LORD BROCKTON

You'll drink it up and more before I'm through. Unless you want the peerage to know what sort of man Sir Walter Grainger truly is.

Sir Walter leans in fiercely a moment, before stalking off in submission.

LORD BROCKTON

So I thought, my lord.

Sir Walter drops down in the chair and discovers the knife.

LORD BROCKTON

What's that doing here?

SIR WALTER

I know this knife. It belonged to the Colonel. Old Colonel Reginald Hawking.

LORD BROCKTON

Hawking!

Mary cringes. She casts about in desperation, until Nathaniel wanders in, examining his pocket watch.

MARY

(urgent whisper)

Mr. Hawking!

He turns in her direction.

NATHANIEL

Mary? What the devil are you-!?
Good lord, did Aunt Victoria fire you?

MARY

Never mind that! You must take Lord Brockton from the room! It is for your aunt, he must not find her here!

NATHANIEL

What? But how could she-?

MARY

There's no time! Take them from the room, and get back that knife!

She spins him and shoves him toward the men. Nathaniel does his best to rally.

NATHANIEL

What ho, gentlemen, I was... hoping I might interest everyone in a game of cards. I think we're a large enough company for a decent rubber.

Sir Walter, glad for the escape, rises with his brandy, but Brockton raises his walking stick to stop him.

LORD BROCKTON

Forgive me, sir, but- Hawking, did you say?

Nathaniel steps between them.

NATHANIEL

Ah- yes, I did, my lord! Nathaniel Hawking's the name- the late Colonel's my uncle. My good graces! You found Uncle's service blade! Oh, I'm ever so grateful. We were terribly close, I would have been most distraught if I'd lost it for good.

Brockton hands it over, hackles lowering.

LORD BROCKTON

Of course, sir. I ask because I recently had the pleasure of meeting of the late Colonel's wife.

NATHANIEL

Oh, did you? Ah- how is the old girl? Doesn't go out much, I hear, since my uncle passed. She's quite lost in the world without him.

Nathaniel shepherds them out. Mary freezes when Brockton approaches, but he looks right through her.

LORD BROCKTON
Out of the way, girl.

Another maid comes in to clean up. Mary hurries to help, but Mrs. Hawking leaps down right behind the maid and drops her with a blow to the back of the head.

MRS. HAWKING
Oh, blast it!

MARY
My God!

Mrs. Hawking wheels on her.

MRS. HAWKING
Calm yourself, she'll wake. What have you done? I told you, you were not expose our work to anyone! Least of all Nathaniel!

Nathaniel bursts back in.

NATHANIEL
Brockton's occupied with the other gentlemen. Aunt Victoria! What is the meaning of all this? Why- why on earth are you dressed this way?

MRS. HAWKING
Nathaniel, do not speak a word more! Mary, make your escape, we have what we came for. I shall deal with you at home.

She pulls her mask back down and sneaks out the window. Nathaniel looks to Mary in shock.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - NIGHT

Mary pours Nathaniel a brandy. The Colonel's knife is still in his hand.

NATHANIEL
Surely, Mary, surely this must all be a joke!

MARY

I promise you, sir, it's all true.

NATHANIEL

But- it's madness! Breaking into buildings! Knives and bullets! Games of cat and mouse with... society blackmailers!

He takes a slug, choking as Mrs. Hawking storms in from the hall.

NATHANIEL

Good lord, you're here! Madam, I- madam, I hardly know what to say!

MRS. HAWKING

Then say nothing, Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL

Am I to understand that you have been- going out on these... ventures... for some time now?

MRS. HAWKING

Since before you wore trousers.

She snatches the knife out of his hand.

NATHANIEL

Madam! Have you lost your mind!? What in the world possessed you?

MRS. HAWKING

If you cannot see that, then I cannot explain.

NATHANIEL

Whatever did Uncle think of all this?

MRS. HAWKING

I did not trouble for your uncle's approval any more than I do yours.

NATHANIEL

No. No, this won't do at all. Aunt Victoria, I must lay down the law on- I must insist that you put an immediate stop to all this madness.

MRS. HAWKING
What did you say?

NATHANIEL
I must insist. I forbid you to
continue in this business.

MRS. HAWKING
You forbid me? You forbid me? You
dare to interfere in that which you
so little understand!?

NATHANIEL
The Colonel would want-

MRS. HAWKING
Nathaniel! Do not speak again of
what the Colonel would want!

Beat.

NATHANIEL
Very well. We'll- we'll speak of
this later. When you're feeling
better.

He dithers helplessly a moment, then goes to the door.

NATHANIEL
Good evening, dear aunt.

He waits, hoping for something to make it all right, but
there is nothing. He exits. Mary rushes forward.

MARY
We'll speak to him. We'll make him
understand-

Mrs. Hawking whirls on her.

MRS. HAWKING
How dare you? Over the course of
years I have worked to carry this
delicate operation upon which so
many desperate people depend. And
you see fit upon just a few
days' experience to place it all in
jeopardy!

Mary cringes under the force of her rage.

MRS. HAWKING

But I suppose I should have expected no more; you are an ignorant child, and I was a fool to bring you into this. Leave me now, I can no longer bear to look at you.

Mary begins to slink off, but then she turns to face her.

MARY

No. No, madam. What would you have done!? If I hadn't been there- if I hadn't asked Nathaniel to cover your tracks- what would you have done?

MRS. HAWKING

I have managed my endeavors for years before a house girl deigned to lend her expertise! And I protected the information from my fool of nephew and the husband that lived in this house until you revealed everything! This would have been no different.

MARY

But it is different! You said it yourself, Cedric Brockton is a more formidable opponent than you've faced before. You could have lost everything!

MRS. HAWKING

I will yet if Nathaniel has his way.

MARY

Madam, he saved you! He cares for you!

MRS. HAWKING

His uncle cared for me too, and he would have kept me like a bird in a cage. Oh, our men all care for us, our nephews and husbands and fathers. As your father did, Mary, and mine, so far as they can keep us under their power.

She grabs the service knife and stabs it down into the mantle.

MRS. HAWKING

Well, that for their care! When my father had no thought for me, I was left to my own way and did as I pleased! It was when he had a care that he sold me to the Colonel whether I would or no! All that mattered was that I was of use. Tell me, Mary, was your father any different?

Mary says nothing.

MRS. HAWKING

Of course not. They're all of a kind. If you place your trust in them, they will betray you, until we are the faithful dogs and pliant sheep they wish us to be.

MARY

I have been a servant in other peoples' houses all my life! You think you need explain to me?

MRS. HAWKING

I will permit that of no one! Neither foolish women nor beastly men!

MARY

Is that the sum of it, then? The women are fools and the men are beasts? But why risk so much for people if you think so little of them all?

MRS. HAWKING

Your forget yourself, Miss Stone.

MARY

You do God's work when you give help and protection to those in need, but how can you save them if you don't think them worth saving? I hear the contempt in you for even Mrs. Fairmont as she fears for her husband and her son.

MRS. HAWKING

She wouldn't require saving if it weren't for that man and that boy.

MARY

That boy is the child of her body-
and you won't even speak his name.
It's Gabriel!

MRS. HAWKING

I know his name!

MARY

The souls in question matter,
madam, yours as well. This
cannot only be your vengeance. For
the sake of those you save, and for
your own sake, it must be more than
that.

MRS. HAWKING

Do not presume to judge me, girl.
It is not your place.

MARY

And yet this must mean something
better! If that is outside my
place, well, then, madam, I've
no more use for my place than you
do for yours.

Mrs. Hawking stares at her intensely. Mary takes a few deep
breaths, shocked at her own passion. She quickly curtsies,
then hurries from the room.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

The next day, Mary frets alone in the parlor. The bell rings
and she lets in a sheepish Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL

Hello, Mary. Is my aunt at home...
and do you think she'll see me?

MARY

Oh, goodness, no! I mean, she's not
at home. I haven't seen her since
last night.

Nathaniel looks away, ashamed, and Mary takes a chance.

MARY

Mr. Hawking... forgive me for
saying so, but... you don't know
what it's like, sir. You who have a
decent family, and a little money,
and everyone's always listened to

(MORE)

MARY (cont'd)
 what you have to say. Without
 that... someone like Mrs. Hawking
 could be the only hope one has.

NATHANIEL
 Truly? She... saves people? My God.
 All this time, I'd no idea. And...
 the Colonel had no idea.

MARY
 She feared he would have stopped
 her.

NATHANIEL
 As I tried to. Oh, Mary. You must
 understand... Uncle Reginald meant
 a great deal to me. That meant,
 when he passed, that I'd try to
 step into his shoes and be the one
 to look after things.

He spies the service knife, still buried in the mantle. He
 frees it with effort and regards it.

NATHANIEL
 And he loved my aunt, Mary. He only
 meant to take care of her.

MARY
 Whatever your uncle meant... she's
 become so angry. Angry at all the
 world. Even the child she's set out
 to rescue. She will not utter the
 poor thing's name. It's Gabriel.

NATHANIEL
 Indeed? Oh, heavens.

Mary looks at him. He shifts uncomfortably.

NATHANIEL
 Well... that was what Uncle
 Reginald wanted to name their boy.

MARY
 Their boy? They- they had a child?

NATHANIEL
 Ah- not quite so. Poor little
 fellow was stillborn. It happened
 many years ago, I was just a boy
 myself. At any rate, where is she?

MARY

I don't know! I'm afraid she's gone
to Sir Walter's home on her own.

NATHANIEL

Oh, no. If Lord Brockton is as
dangerous as you say, why-

MARY

Oh, if only we knew... oh!

INT. STUDY - DAY

Mary and Nathaniel pore over Mrs. Hawking's appointment
book.

MARY

My God, she did, she wrote a note!
"Grainger estate... bring Mrs.
F..."

NATHANIEL

What does that mean?

MARY

It means we must hire a hansom
straightaway. There's no time to
lose!

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

Mary runs in to grab the poker from beside the fireplace.
Nathaniel follows her.

NATHANIEL

But wait! This is a powerful man!
What can we do against the likes of
him?

MARY

Nathaniel. The Colonel would want
you to be brave.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

The fine old country house is empty but for Brockton's men patrolling through it, the lord himself overseeing like the spider at the center of the web.

Mrs. Hawking creeps in the shadows in her stealth suit, observing their patterns, gauging their strength. Without their noticing, she cuts each man off from his fellows, taking them out one by one.

INT. GRAINGER STUDY - NIGHT

Sir Walter sits smoking in the dark, near shaking with nerves. Suddenly Mrs. Hawking springs out of hiding, and he leaps out of his chair in shock.

SIR WALTER

Good lord! Who are you!?

MRS. HAWKING

Never mind that. Where is the boy?
Do you have him?

SIR WALTER

It wasn't my doing, Brockton forced me to it! He threatened to ruin me unless I kept the child for him. But that is all I know of the matter, he's told me nothing else!

MRS. HAWKING

The child, he's here in the house?

SIR WALTER

Yes, there was no time to move him.

MRS. HAWKING

Move him? Why?

SIR WALTER

Don't you see? Brockton knew you were coming. He's snicked you in his trap! When they realize you're here, they'll kill you- whoever you are.

MRS. HAWKING

I shall handle his lordship and his men. But there is not much time, Sir Walter. Find yourself a pen and paper, if you wish to free yourself from Brockton's grasp.

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

Brockton paces like a caged tiger as Colchester bursts in.

COLCHESTER

Lordship, he's here! He just tried to get at the boy's room but we ran him off!

BROCKTON

Who is it?

COLCHESTER

Can't rightly tell, sir, he's wearing a mask. But he's lightning quick, and I'd stake me life he's the same body what was tracking us the other day!

BROCKTON

Whoever it is, catch him! I want that intruder found! Take your men and go!

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

Mrs. Hawking drops down another guard. As she lays him out, footsteps can be heard hurrying down the hall. She drags the body back and moves into the shadows, knife at the ready—until Mary enters with her poker. Mrs. Hawking leaps out to meet her.

MARY

Madam! Thank heaven it's you!

MRS. HAWKING

Mary! You found me.

MARY

I would have come with you. If you'd asked.

MRS. HAWKING

Sometimes it is useful to have reinforcements your enemy does not expect. And... I owe you more than orders. But for now, did you follow my instructions?

MARY

Yes, madam. Nathaniel! She's here!

Nathaniel ushers in Mrs. Fairmont.

MRS. HAWKING
You brought Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL
Only to help, Auntie, I swear it.

She glares at him a moment, then decides.

MRS. HAWKING
Very well, then. We may as well
make use of you.

She pulls a folded piece of paper from her pocket and
presses it into his hands.

MRS. HAWKING
Here. Read this with care and carry
it out exactly as written. Can you
do this for me?

NATHANIEL
Yes, I'll be at it forthwith.

MARY
Good man. Good luck, Nathaniel!

NATHANIEL
To you as well.

They clasp hands, then Nathaniel dashes off. Mary leads Mrs.
Fairmont forward.

MARY
But I don't understand why you
wanted Mrs. Fairmont here.

MRS. HAWKING
Because you were right about other
things as well, Mary. Mrs.
Fairmont, your child is at hand.

MRS. FAIRMONT
Oh, thank God! May I see him? Will
you take me to him?

MRS. HAWKING
Madam, I must ask you to be very
brave. You must go in and retrieve
your son.

MRS. FAIRMONT
Me? But Brockton's men are
everywhere!

MRS. HAWKING

Miss Stone and I will deal with them. But someone must retrieve the child. He is in the chamber at the end of the east wing, waiting only for you to go and rescue him.

MRS. FAIRMONT

I can't!

MRS. HAWKING

You can, Celeste. That is your boy in there... that is your Gabriel. You can do this for Gabriel.

Mrs. Fairmont gathers her courage, clutching Mrs. Hawking's hands tightly.

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

Mary and Mrs. Hawking make their way through the darkened halls.

MARY

Nathaniel told me about... about your boy. Your Gabriel.

For a moment Mrs. Hawking stops.

MARY

Madam, I- forgive me.

MRS. HAWKING

I told you Nathaniel could not keep his mouth shut.

Beat.

MRS. HAWKING

You called it my vengeance, Mary, but perhaps I can be forgiven for it. I was not meant for the lot of women... and certainly not that part of it. I must have wished a thousand times for it to just... begone. Like some burrowing beast from the hollow of a rotted-out tree. But then, when it was... well, I had not wanted that. But I suppose that was the way of it. My nature did not fit into any part of life with the Colonel.

MARY

Was he very bad to you?

MRS. HAWKING

That man would have done anything in the world for me except for what I wanted. Him and his damned red rosebush.

There are voices are footsteps.

MRS. HAWKING

They're coming. Mary, if you wish to leave, it must be now.

MARY

Not a chance, madam.

A gang of men crash into the hallway.

RUFFIAN

Oi! There!

They attack, and Mrs. Hawking and Mary lay in.

INT. GRAINGER HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairmont hurries through the darkened halls, the sounds of battle in the distance. A guard rushes by to join in, but she presses herself into the shadows and he passes unheeding. With a gasp she pushes onward.

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

Mrs. Hawking takes out man after man with an athletic show of martial arts, while Mary pounds away at them with her poker.

INT. GRAINGER HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lord Brockton runs from room to room, searching for his men. He is horrified to find them lying in battered heaps where Mrs. Hawking left them.

INT. EAST WING ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairmont comes to the last door at the end of the east wing. Finding it locked, she kicks at it until it breaks open. Her son Gabriel, cheeks red with tears, looks to her in disbelieving joy as she collapses into his arms.

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

Mrs. Hawking takes out their final attacker, and she pulls down her hood and turns to Mary in triumph. Then Lord Brockton bursts in, brandishing a gun.

LORD BROCKTON
Stand down!

They turn to face him, and Brockton is genuinely shocked.

LORD BROCKTON
My God. Victoria Hawking? You yourself? I knew you had a hand in this somehow, but that you came yourself... you must be even madder than I thought.

Colchester stumbles in.

COLCHESTER
It's the boy, boss, he's gone!

LORD BROCKTON
What!?

He whirls on Mrs. Hawking.

LORD BROCKTON
How!? What did you do!?

MRS. HAWKING
What I set out to do, sir, returned the boy to the arms of his mother where he belongs.

LORD BROCKTON
Go now, you dolt, find him! Stop him before he escapes!

Colchester scrambles out.

LORD BROCKTON
It's no matter anyway! I still know Celeste Fairmont's secret. Even without the boy, I still can ruin her. And you, now that I know what you are up to as well!

NATHANIEL
I wouldn't try that, if I were you.

He strides in, a packet of papers in his hand.

LORD BROCKTON

What? Nathaniel Hawking, isn't it?
Have you and your whole blasted
family gone mad?

MRS. HAWKING

Nathaniel has been of some
assistance to me. It seems he's
found some secrets of yours as
well.

LORD BROCKTON

What are you talking about?

NATHANIEL

You rely too much upon the fear you
instill in your victims, Lord
Brockton. You should not
have entrusted such information to
one who hates you as Sir Walter
Grainger does.

LORD BROCKTON

Grainger is in my power!

NATHANIEL

I've found the documents you
ordered him to keep, my lord. Bits
and pieces of the evidence you held
over the heads of London
society. And what do you think
they'll do to you once you no
longer have that particular club to
wield?

Brockton swings the gun wildly between him and Mrs. Hawking.

LORD BROCKTON

I'll- I'll ruin that idiot
Grainger. I'll ruin all of you!

NATHANIEL

You do and we'll see you're brought
down with us.

Brockton shakes the gun at him.

LORD BROCKTON

People know you, Hawking, you have
position and a family in this city!
Does your reputation mean so little
to you? You would risk your own
good name just to help this
madwoman?

NATHANIEL

That is exactly what I would do, my lord. Will you risk yours?

Beat. With a cry he spins toward Mrs. Hawking again, but she is on him in a flash, snatching the gun from his hand.

MRS. HAWKING

That's enough, Cedric. We will be going now.

Nathaniel and Mary turn to leave, Mrs. Hawking following behind.

LORD BROCKTON

No! No, blast you, you couldn't! You're just a woman!

MRS. HAWKING

And you, just a man.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG:

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - NIGHT

Mary pours tea as Mrs. Hawking slouches in a parlor chair. Nathaniel leans against the fireplace.

MARY

I've received a note from Mrs. Fairmont. Gabriel is restored to her, and they are home safe and sound.

NATHANIEL

Ah, thank God. That was... a wonderful thing you did there. I owe you an apology, Aunt Victoria.

MRS. HAWKING

As much as I owe you a debt of thanks, for what you've done this day. I shall consider us even if you shall.

She stands and holds out her hand. He takes it in his.

NATHANIEL

I always knew you were a remarkable woman... I only didn't know how.

MRS. HAWKING

Nathaniel... the Colonel would have been proud of you.

Nathaniel cannot help but beam.

NATHANIEL

Well. I should be on my way home now. Good evening, ladies.

He bows, then exits through the front door.

MRS. HAWKING

I do owe Nathaniel a great deal of thanks. He brought you to me, Mary.

The bell rings. Mary goes to answer it, leading in Grace Monroe, a working-class woman with a quick, anxious air.

GRACE

Begging your pardon, is this the house of Mrs. Victoria Hawking?

MARY

It is. Who may I say is calling?

GRACE

Grace Monroe, miss. Please, I've just got to see the lady.

MRS. HAWKING

I am she. What brings you here, Miss Monroe?

GRACE

Oh, madam, I've heard all about you. How you help women in rough spots. I'm in a proper one now, madam, and I ain't got nowhere else to turn.

MRS. HAWKING

Indeed, Miss Monroe. Please, have a seat, and tell us what the trouble is.

Mrs. Hawking gestures to a chair, and Grace thrills at the hospitality. She sits, then casts a nervous glance at Mary.

GRACE

Thank you kindly, madam. And, if I might ask... who might this be with you?

MRS. HAWKING

This is Miss Mary Stone. My
associate. You may trust her as you
would me.

Mary smiles. She sits beside Grace and lays a hand on hers.

MARY

Please, Miss Monroe. I'm certain we
shall be able to help you.

FADE OUT.