

Mrs. Hawking Pilot V3

By

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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 man 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 vicious 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, a tall, working-class girl with dark hair and an earnest face, a little too broad and strong to be fashionable. There is no one to accompany or greet her, so alone she carries the bags with all her worldly possessions through her first steps 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. Gloved fingers run 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 sets 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. The gloved hand holds out the paper to match it to 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 briefly flits across Mary's face.

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 onto 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.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mary walks past a newsboy selling papers. She spots 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

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 tolls the hour as she goes.

EXT. DOWNTOWN ROOFTOPS - DAY

At the sound of the bells, the figure in black abruptly stops the hunt and takes off in the opposite direction, running along the ledges and leaping from rooftop to rooftop. 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

After my dear uncle's passing, she dismissed all the staff. She's a remarkable woman, I'm terribly fond of her, but... she has queer ideas at times.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

NATHANIEL

Truly, 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 from her chair to help him up in a well-practiced nurse's carry.

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. A whip-thin blonde of forty, 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 takes the teacup Nathaniel made for himself out of his hands and drinks.

MRS. HAWKING

Only by your dress. India linen in October. Well, Nathaniel, 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.

She drops moodily into a chair as Mary hands over her references.

MARY

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

MRS. HAWKING

Indeed. Well, you're not uneducated, and I 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 I can stand to have you on.

She heaves herself up from the chair.

MARY

Thank you, madam! When shall I move in my things?

MRS. HAWKING

Nathaniel! I said I did not want anyone in the house.

NATHANIEL

Auntie, may I remind you that you have chased all your other options off?

Mrs. Hawking seethes a moment, then stares at Mary hard.

MRS. HAWKING

Very well. You shall be tested straightaway it seems.

NATHANIEL

How excellent! The Colonel would have wanted me to take care of you.

MRS. HAWKING

Bless him for that.

She storms out. 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. She really is quite remarkable, but... she's become so withdrawn of late. I worry if things go on. 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, who pores away over notes.

MARY

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

Mrs. Hawking glances up to stare at her.

MARY

To learn my duties. If you'll tell me what they are. I would very much like to make myself useful.

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 wanders through the fine house with her rags and mop, taking in its subtle strangeness. The rooms are ordered and spartan, devoid of any personal touch, and most seem entirely uninhabited, left under a layer of dust. She goes to open the door to the study, but Mrs. Hawking slips in ahead of her with a glare, slamming the door in her face.

Mary goes through practically bare cupboards in a heroic struggle to pull together a meal. She carries it upstairs on a tray just in time to see Mrs. Hawking pull on her hat and stride out of the house.

Mary examines the few effects in the parlor, seeking some indication of who her strange employer is. On a shelf, a leather bound appointment book is a fraction out of place. She cannot help but open and read.

INSERT: Celeste Fairmont, 31 Haviland Street, Wednesday, 6 o'clock.

Mrs. Hawking snatches the book from her hands with a frown, 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 tea for Mrs. Hawking, who nods mild approval.

MARY
Thank you, madam. It does a soul
good to be useful, as my sister
likes to say.

MRS. HAWKING
Your sister! You've family living?
Then why upon your return did this
sister not take you in? It was my
understanding that was the done
thing when it came to unmarried
young 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 cleans in the Colonel's old study. She notices the
shelves of regimental photographs and medals for excellent
service, forgotten beneath the dust. Then she comes across a
service knife, bright as the day it was made.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - DAY

As she tidies the room, Mary gazes up at the Colonel's
portrait. She begins to pick up as Mrs. Hawking enters, but
her mistress settles her with a gesture. At this small
overture, Mary decides to take a chance.

MARY

So this is your late husband?

By subtle degrees, Mrs. Hawking grows colder.

MRS. HAWKING

The Colonel Reginald Prescott
Hawking? Yes.

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.

Mrs. Hawking exits. Mary looks back at the mantelpiece. The
wood is covered with gouges and cuts.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mary carries a stack of linens as Mrs. Hawking shows a posh
woman, CELESTE FAIRMONT, to the parlor. When Mrs. Hawking
notices her, she casts a sharp look and closes the door.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

The stillness of the London night is broken with a crash. From the alleyway the masked figure in black barrels out with a gang of ruffians chasing. The men make a grab, but the slim black specter spins with a roundhouse kick, knocking one assailant back. Another strikes out with a knife, but the figure twists, taking a graze to the abdomen before slashing the man with their own blade. The figure bounds from an ashcan to scale a nearby wall and race down the rooftops. From the ground the men rally in pursuit.

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

Celeste Fairmont, prim and proper, waits fitfully in her home. The sound of her own doorbell makes her jump, but having sent the servants out, 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

I, ah, I cannot precisely say-

Voices and footsteps crash from outside.

EXT. FAIRMONT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The ruffians storm onto the street, yelling as they search.

INT. FAIRMONT ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

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

INT. FAIRMONT PARLOR - NIGHT

A dark figure pries the window open and begins to climb in. Mrs. Fairmont cries out as Mary rushes to seize hold of the poker at the fireplace. So armed, she throws herself between Mrs. Fairmont and the intruder. The masked figure in black drops to the floor.

MARY

Stop! Stop right there!

The figure is bent to one side in pain, but straightens to pull down the hood. A braid of familiar blonde tumbles out.

MRS. HAWKING

Mary?

MARY

Mrs. Hawking!?

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Mrs. Hawking runs past a stunned Mary to peer out the front window.

MRS. HAWKING

Blast, they're here!

MRS. FAIRMONT

What are we to-?

They freeze at a hard thumping at the door. Mrs. Hawking ducks into a cupboard, leaving the others to gape. Mrs. Fairmont looks to Mary in terror as the thumping continues. 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 readies 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 front 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-

MRS. FAIRMONT

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

MRS. HAWKING

Despite that rabble, this is not simply the work of an alley gang. I expect there shall soon be a pageboy 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
 dangerous and shameful secrets of
 the most powerful personages in the
 country, and he 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,
 nor the nursery furnishings.

MRS. FAIRMONT

You promised me you would not pry!

MRS. HAWKING

Circumstances have changed! I know this man, Celeste. If I am to help you against him, I must understand what it is at stake. Brockton's men broke in looking for what 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 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 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... whispers... from society ladies, their washerwomen, women of all standings... that when a lady finds herself in a predicament, there is someone... someone who can take extraordinary action to help.

Mary gapes, then stares at Mrs. Hawking.

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 embraces 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 BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mary tends to the slice on Mrs. Hawking's abdomen, marveling at her lean corded frame rippled with 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? If you will not see a doctor?

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 hard. 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

The next 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... it's the best thing I ever heard anyone do. I heard what Mrs. Fairmont said. Not just for the society ladies. For the washerwomen and the scullery maids and the house girls, 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 all my years, I did nothing 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.

INT. MRS. HAWKING'S STUDY - DAY

Mary follows Mrs. Hawking eagerly into her personal study. The girl's eyes go wide at the sight of it, covered over with maps, books, notes, weapons, and gear.

MRS. HAWKING

For the case at present, we must consider how best to overcome the varied challenges presented by Mrs. Fairmont's predicament.

She opens 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.

The third knife flies into the wall. As Mary inspects them, Mrs. Hawking takes out her sewing kit to fix the cut in her stealth suit from the fight.

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 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 choked with 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.

INT. DUCAL HOUSE - DAY

MRS. HAWKING (V.O.)

I have been out of the roar of things for some time now, but I daresay the Hawking name can still secure an invitation.

In a magnificent house, a butler assists the grandly attired duchess with her correspondence. He regards a letter in snobbish skepticism, until the lady reads the name of Victoria Hawking. She snatches it from his hands and hurries off to attend to it.

MRS. HAWKING (V.O.)

And there are those that owe me a favor or two.

INT. DRESS PARLOR - DAY

Grand ladies are fitted by dressmakers in an upscale shop.

MRS. HAWKING (V.O.)

And we shall have to see about
acquiring you a suitable gown.

MARY (V.O.)

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

MRS. HAWKING (V.O.)

It was your plan, Miss Stone.

As Mary enters the couturiers stare her down, until she hands over Mrs. Hawking's card. They sweep her past the ladies to measure and drape her with fabric.

INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT

They ride in the darkened coach to the ball.

MARY

Do you really believe I shall
manage at an affair for high
society?

MRS. HAWKING

You shall quickly learn, child, in
this trade 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.

The carriage pulls up, and they begin to disembark.

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. At last Mrs. Hawking stalks in, a panther reluctantly 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 where a valet stands guard. If Brockton keeps secrets in this house, we'll find them in there.

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

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, sliding 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, 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 discover 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.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

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. 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 the Bombay Club.

MARY

What is the Bombay Club?

MRS. HAWKING

It is a supper club for distinguished soldiers of the empire. 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 useful.

The two continue their preparations.

INT. BOMBAY CLUB DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Wealthy men in white tie finish up in the dining room. As
footmen serve at table, maids carry dishes and prepare
rooms. Mary works among in their black and white dress, ears
and eyes open. She glances around for Mrs. Hawking, who is
nowhere to be seen, until a rustle behind a curtain reveals
her lurking nearby.

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 and nods subtly as she passes.

INT. BOMBAY CLUB SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary waits nervously 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 shall
 continue observing until I learn
 his identity.

MARY
 But where from?

Mrs. Hawking wedges the service knife into the moulding around the fireplace. She steps up onto the handle and climbs to the mantle to the mounted rhinoceros head all the way up into the rafters.

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 wrenches it out of the wood just as the door pushes open. In desperation she stashes it in the cushions of a high-backed chair. She drops down pretending 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.

Mary crawls behind a sofa on the far side of the room.

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!

INT. RAFTERS - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Hawking tenses up in her perch above.

INT. BOMBAY CLUB SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary cringes from her hiding place. She casts about in
desperation, until at last Nathaniel wanders in to her side
of the room. She spring up suddenly behind the sofa.

MARY

(urgent whisper)
Mr. Hawking!

Startled, he turns to her.

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's 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 Walter, 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. 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 leads the way to the door. 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 THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MRS. HAWKING'S STUDY - NIGHT

Mary pours Nathaniel a brandy as he gapes in shock at all the tools and weapons in Mrs. Hawking's study. 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, rage mounting at the sight of them in there.

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 and strides out. Nathaniel and Mary follow her.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

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 stops short.

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.

Nathaniel steps past her. He dithers a moment, hoping for something to make it all right, but there is nothing. He exits. At the sound of the door, Mrs. Hawking snarls and storms into the parlor, with Mary chasing after.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

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, then stops and turns back.

MARY

No. No, madam. What would you have done!? If I hadn't been there- if I hadn't asked Mr. Hawking 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 spins the service knife and stabs it down into the mantel.

MRS. HAWKING

Well, that for their care! When my father had no thought for me, I was left to do 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 faithful dogs and pliant sheep.

MARY

I have been a servant in other peoples' houses all my life! You think you need explain that 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? Why risk so much for people if you think so little of them?

MRS. HAWKING

Your forget yourself, Miss Stone.

MARY

You do God's work when you give help 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, madam, then I've no more use for my place than you do for yours.

Mrs. Hawking stares at her intensely. Shocked at her own passion, Mary quickly curtsies, then hurries from the room.

INT. HAWKING PARLOR - NIGHT

The next evening, 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 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 notices the service knife still sunk into the mantelpiece. He frees it with effort.

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. Poor little Gabriel. She will not utter his name.

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. MRS. HAWKING'S STUDY - NIGHT

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

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

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 FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. GRAINGER ESTATE - NIGHT

The fine old country house is empty but for Brockton's men patrolling, with 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. 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. Mrs. Hawking materializes from the darkness, 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 steps 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

(MORE)

MRS. HAWKING (cont'd)
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, until he offers her the Colonel's knife.
At last she takes it.

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

She presses a folded piece of paper 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
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 hunt through the darkened halls.

MARY

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

Mrs. Hawking stops in her tracks.

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

(MORE)

MRS. HAWKING (cont'd)
 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.

They can hear the men patrolling beyond the hall.

MRS. HAWKING
 They'll do. Mary, if you wish to
 leave, it must be now.

MARY
 Not a chance, madam.

They burst out of the hallway and lay into the men.

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, cries out in joy as he collapses into her 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 can still ruin

(MORE)

LORD BROCKTON (cont'd)
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 FIVE

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 assistant. 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.