

Sherif could have a Scottish accent

ACT TWO

(Overture)

Scene Nineteen: Sheriff's Office.

(CLOWN 2 has his feet up on the table and is laughing loudly. He is the SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY. Another man has his back to us.)

SHERIFF. Cigarette cases. Pocket watches. Spectacle holders. Ha ha ha! But never a hymn book Mr. Hannay!

(The other man turns. We see it is RICHARD HANNAY. Miraculously recovered. And laughing too.)

Who'd a'thought a hymn book could stop –

(Holds up a silver bullet. Throws it to him.)

– a bullet! Still, I'm not surprised. Some of those hymns are terrible hard to get through.

(They both laugh again.)

And to think I was drinking the villain's champagne only half an hour before!

HANNAY. Right!

SHERIFF. I canna barely believe it. Tea, Mr Hannay?

HANNAY. No thank you.

SHERIFF. Calling himself a professor! Whereas all along he was a –

HANNAY. A spy!

SHERIFF. A spy! Well it's a lesson to us all! Pretty slick sleuthing for an amateur Mr. Hannay!

HANNAY. Thank you.

SHERIFF. Sure about the tea?

HANNAY. Quite sure, thank you! Look here, sheriff, I don't want to rush you or anything but oughtn't we be taking steps? This is serious you know. If it weren't, you don't suppose I'd put myself in your hands with a murder charge hanging over me?

SHERIFF. Ach! Never heed the murder Mr. Hannay! I don't doubt you'll be able to convince Scotland Yard of your innocence as easily as you've convinced me. All I need is a short statement to forward to the proper authority. I've someone coming from the police station next door to take it down. Biscuit?

HANNAY. No biscuit thank you!

SHERIFF. Nice Garibaldi?

HANNAY. Listen, sheriff, there's no time to be lost! He's got the information! And it's absolutely vital to the safety of -

(CLOWN 1 bursts through the door as the CHIEF INSPECTOR.)

INSPECTOR. Are you wishing to see me, sheriff?

SHERIFF. Indeed I am, Chief Inspector! Do you think I enjoy playing for time with a *MURDERER!!!*

HANNAY. *MURDERER???*

CHIEF INSPECTOR. *MURDERER!!!*

SHERIFF. Richard Hannay, you are under arrest! On the charge of wilful murder of a woman unknown in Portland Mansions London on Tuesday last. Take him to the county gaol!

HANNAY. You heard my story! It's true! Every word of it!

SHERIFF. Listen, Hannay! We're not such imbeciles in Scotland as some smart Londoners may think! I don't believe your cock-and-bull story about the professor! Why he's my best friend in the district!

(picks up phone)

Get me Professor Jordan!

HANNAY. If the professor didn't shoot me - where did this bullet come from?

(He holds up the bullet. The SHERIFF and INSPECTOR recoil cowering.)

SHERIFF. *Grab him man!*

(The INSPECTOR grabs HANNAY.)

SHERIFF. *(still holding the phone)* Oh ho ho! You're in deep water Hannay and it's getting deeper by the second!
(He hears a voice on the phone. He snaps into the receiver.)

Yes? Who's there? This is the sheriff of the county here and I'll thank you to - Ah! Professor!

(Practically falls to his knees. Bows to the phone.)

I do beg your pardon most humbly, sir. Just to let you know, sir. We have apprehended the villain, sir! Indeedy we have, sir yes sir. Thank you kindly, sir.

HANNAY. I demand that you allow me to speak to the Foreign Office in London.

SHERIFF. *(laughing)* Foreign Office in London! I'm afraid not Mr. Hannay. Handcuffs Inspector, please!

(The INSPECTOR clicks one handcuff on to HANNAY'S wrist.)

INSPECTOR. Come along quietly, sir please sir.

SHERIFF. *(on phone)* Handcuffs going on now, sir.

HANNAY. *I don't think so!*

(With an abmighty effort, HANNAY pushes the INSPECTOR into the SHERIFF. They both crash to the floor.)

(A window appears. HANNAY does a spectacular leap through it.)

INSPECTOR. He's escaping!! Stop him!! Stop that man!!

(HANNAY runs out. The INSPECTOR follows him blowing his whistle. The SHERIFF stares at the phone in frozen horror. Puts it to his ear.)

SHERIFF. No no. Everything's under control, sir. Everything tickety boo, professor. Indeedy indeedy it is, sir.