

(HANNAY waits. Looks around. Tentatively opens the door.)

(Music starts.)

(Shadows dance. He closes the door.)

(Music stops.)

(tries again)

(Music starts.)

(Shadows dance. He closes the door.)

(Music stops.)

(a last tiny look)

(Music starts.)

(Shadows dance. He closes the door.)

(Music stops.)

(a voice from behind him:)

VOICE. Mr. Hammond?

(HANNAY swings round. PROFESSOR JORDAN is seated in an armchair.)

PROFESSOR. So sorry to have kept you.

HANNAY. It's quite alright.

PROFESSOR. So you're from Annabella Schmidt?

HANNAY. I am yes.

PROFESSOR. Do you have any news?

HANNAY. She's been murdered!

PROFESSOR. *Murdered!?* Oh dear, yes, of course.
The Portland Mansions affair. Quite dreadful. And

now the police are after you.

HANNAY. They are rather!

PROFESSOR. Well don't worry about them. I managed to put them off the scent. They'll be far away by now.

HANNAY. Thanks awfully.

PROFESSOR. (*smiling kindly*) Not at all old chap.

HANNAY. I didn't do it!

PROFESSOR. Of course you didn't do it Mr. – Mr. Hannay. I suppose it's safe to call you by your real name now?

HANNAY. Quite safe.

PROFESSOR. Jolly good. But tell me – why did you come all the way to Scotland to tell me about it?

HANNAY. Because I believe she was trying to tell you about some secret top secret air ministry...secret and she was killed by a foreign agent who was interested too.

PROFESSOR. Really? Well I'm so glad you told me! And risking your life into the bargain! How can I ever thank you?

(**HANNAY** *smiles modestly. Then presses on urgently.*)

HANNAY. The thing is professor, she was looking for something!

PROFESSOR. Yes?

HANNAY. Something called –

PROFESSOR. Go on.

HANNAY. The Thirty-Nine Steps! If we can find out what the Thirty-Nine Steps are then –

(The professor stands. Still smiling.)

PROFESSOR. So – let me get this quite clear – oh I'm so sorry – you must be exhausted! Do take a seat Mr. Hannay.

(He stands. Proffers him his own armchair. HANNAY sits rather awkwardly. The PROFESSOR smiles.)

PROFESSOR. Better?

HANNAY. Thank you.

PROFESSOR. So did she tell you what this foreign agent looked like?

HANNAY. There wasn't time. Oh! There was one thing. Part of his little finger was missing.

PROFESSOR. Which little finger?

HANNAY. This one I think.

(holds up a little finger)

PROFESSOR. Are you sure it wasn't – this one?