

**Robin Oakapple/Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd:** The main protagonist of the story, Robin is barely off stage – especially in act 2. He has previously faked his own death to try to avoid the family curse and is masquerading as a simple farmer. He portrays himself as shy and straightforward – but he also has an aristocratic confidence built into him. There is a duality to the Robin/Ruthven character that should come across in your portrayal. Robin gets swept along by circumstance as everything goes off around him, but all he really wants is a quiet life.

**2 speeches to prepare.**

**ROB. Richard!**

RICH. Robin!

**ROB. My beloved foster-brother, and very dearest friend, welcome home again after ten long years at sea! It is such deeds as you have just described that cause our flag to be loved and dreaded throughout the civilized world!**

RICH. Why, lord love ye, Rob, that's but a trifle to what we have done in the way of sparing life! I believe I may say, without exaggeration, that the marcfil little Tom-Tit has spared more French frigates than any craft afloat! But 'taint for a British seaman to brag, so I'll just stow my jawin' tackle and belay. (ROBIN sighs.) But 'vast heavin', messmate, what's brought you all a-cockbill?

**ROB. Alas, Dick, I love Rose Maybud, and love in vain!**

RICH. You love in vain? Come, that's too good! Why, you're a fine strapping muscular young fellow – tall and strong as a to'-gall'n'-m'st – taut as a fore-stay – aye, and a barrowknight to boot, if all had their rights!

**ROB. Hush, Richard – not a word about my true rank, which none here suspect. Yes, I know well enough that few men are better calculated to win a woman's heart than I. I'm a fine fellow, Dick, and worthy any woman's love – happy the girl who gets me, say I. But I'm timid, Dick; shy, nervous, modest, retiring, diffident, and I cannot tell her, Dick, I cannot tell her! Ah, you've no idea what a poor opinion I have of myself, and how little I deserve it.**

RICH. Robin, do you call to mind how, years ago, we swore that, come what might, we would always act upon our hearts' dictates?

**ROB. Aye, Dick, and I've always kept that oath. In doubt, difficulty, and danger, I've always asked my heart what I should do, and it has never failed me.**

RICH. Right! Let your heart be your compass, with a clear conscience for your binnacle light, and you'll sail ten knots on a bowline, clear of shoals, rocks, and quicksands! Well, now, what does my heart say in this here difficult situation? Why, it says, "Dick," it says – (it calls me Dick acos it's known me from a babby) – "Dick," it says, "you ain't shy – you ain't modest – speak you up for him as is!" Robin, my lad, just you lay me alongside, and when she's becalmed under my lee, I'll spin her a yarn that shall sarve to fish you two together for life!

**ROB. Will you do this thing for me? Can you, do you think? Yes. (feeling his pulse) There's no false modesty about you. Your, what I would call bumptious self-assertiveness (I mean the expression in its complimentary sense) has already made you a bos'n's mate, and it will make an admiral of you in time, if you work it properly, you dear, incompetent old impostor! My dear fellow, I'd give my right arm for one tenth of your modest assurance**

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**ROB. For a week I have fulfilled my accursed doom! I have duly committed a crime a day! Not a great crime, I trust, but still, in the eyes of one as strictly regulated as I used to be, a crime. But will my ghostly ancestors be satisfied with what I have done, or will they regard it as an unworthy subterfuge? (Addressing Pictures.) Oh, my forefathers, wallowers in blood, there came at last a day when, sick of crime, you, each and every, vowed to sin no more, and so, in agony, called welcome Death to free you from your cloying guiltiness. Let the sweet psalm of that repentant hour soften your long-dead hearts, and tune your souls to mercy on your poor posterity!**