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SF PERUSALS

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

A Drama in Three Acts

by Jay Presson Allen

Adapted from the Novel
by Muriel Spark

A Samuel French Acting Edition



New York Hollywood London Toronto
SAMUELFRENCH.COM

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THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE, by Jay Presson Allen, adapted from the novel by Muriel Spark, directed by Michael Langham, was presented by Robert Whitehead in association with Robert W. Dowling at the Helen Hayes Theatre, N.Y.C.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In Order of Appearance)

SISTER HELENA ..... *Denise Huot*
MR. PERRY ..... *Douglas Watson*
JEAN BRODIE ..... *Zoe Caldwell*
SANDY ..... *Amy Taubin*
JENNY ..... *Diana Davila*
MONICA ..... *Catherine Burns*
MARY MACGREGOR ..... *Kathryn Baumann*
MISS MACKAY ..... *Lennox Milne*
GORDON LOWTHER ..... *Joseph Maher*
TEDDY LLOYD ..... *Roy Cooper*
MCCREADY ..... *Brooks Morton*
MISS CAMPBELL ..... *Sheila Coonan*
CITIZENS, GIRL GUIDES, SCHOOLGIRLS: *Roberta Maxwell, Celia Watson, Nora Heflin, Mady Heflin, Jane Actman, Doreen Miller, Donna Conforti, Stephanie Shepphard, Jami Fields, Jim Oyster, Brooks Morton, Janice Mars, Jack Knight.*

ACT ONE

The action of the play occurs in Edinburgh, Scotland, now, and from 1931 to 1933.

ACT TWO

The action continues from 1933 to 1936.

ACT THREE

The action continues two and a half years later.

NOTICE: In programs, posters, house boards and any other advertising for this play, the names of Jay Presson Allen and Muriel Spark must be of the same size and no less than one-third the size of the title.

PRODUCTION NOTE

This play can be staged effectively on a bare stage, with drapes or a cyclorama, and the use of area lighting. Only the minimum of props needed to establish the various scenes should be used. Since long stage waits between scenes are of course undesirable, it is suggested that the actors themselves bring on the necessary pieces of furniture: for example, a desk on rollers and the chairs for the classroom and office scenes; lockers, also on rollers, for the locker room scenes, etc. Imaginative direction along these lines can appreciably enhance the play's values.

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

MR. PERRY *sits quietly on convent bench. From behind, a* NUN *approaches silently. She stands quietly for a moment before she speaks.*

HELENA. I am Sister Helena.

(*Startled, the* MAN *rises, faces her.*)

MR. PERRY. Sister Helena. I'm so very glad to meet you. At last. (*Impulsively, he thrusts out his hand, then tentatively withdraws it.*) I'm afraid I don't know what's customary. Doesn't one . . . shake hands? In a convent?

HELENA. (*Blandly.*) I have no idea. This is the first time in twenty-seven years that question has come up. (*She does not take his hand, but sits instead.*)

MR. PERRY. A cloistered nunnery is pretty exotic territory to a Baptist from West Virginia.

HELENA. Total immersion?

MR. PERRY. What? Oh, yes. When I was four.

HELENA. Only four? Didn't it frighten you? Being ducked?

MR. PERRY. Yes. I bit the preacher's hand. But he just pushed me under until I choked and let go.

HELENA. And did this experience confirm you in the Baptist persuasion?

MR. PERRY. It confirmed me in the persuasion that if

someone holds you under water long enough, you will drown. (*A moment of silence.*) Sister Helena . . . I know that only a Papal dispensation frees you to receive visitors —journalists like myself—

HELENA. Forces. The Papal dispensation was enforced on me. Since my writing has become so surprisingly well known—

MR. PERRY. Well, when a book called *The Transfiguration of the Common Place,* written by a cloistered nun, becomes what we Americans refer to as a runaway best seller . . . it is bound to create enormous excitement. My publishers have sent me almost three thousand miles because of that excitement.

HELENA. I quite understand, Mr. Perry—I am like Balzac's dancing dog . . . it isn't the dance that's so wondrous, but that it's done by a dog. So it is with a *thinking* nun.

MR. PERRY. Thousands of readers have found your book profoundly illuminating. They are *naturally* curious, and particularly about the autobiographical implications—

HELENA. (*Coldly.*) There are *no* autobiographical implications in my book.

MR. PERRY. (*Cautiously.*) Are you serious?

HELENA. Mr. Perry, what do you think my book is about?

MR. PERRY. I think at its heart . . . it is about the destruction and reconstruction of a soul.

HELENA. (*Flatly.*) I think—at its heart—it is about the cultivation of spiritual common sense.

MR. PERRY. "That's what makes horse races."

HELENA. (*Smiles.*) I will try to answer your questions, Mr. Perry.

MR. PERRY. Thank you, Sister Helena. You grew up and were educated here in Edinburgh . . . but not as a Catholic. Were your parents strong Calvinists?

HELENA. My family held no extreme or passionate beliefs.

MR. PERRY. Was that remiss of them?

HELENA. As a child I found their—passivity—*dull.* For stimulation . . . I looked elsewhere.

MR. PERRY. To literature? Were you deeply influenced by your reading?

HELENA. I was influenced by reading *The City of God* by St. Augustine. Do you know it?

MR. PERRY. No, I'm sorry, I've never read it. But, what I actually meant was were you affected by the literature of the period?

HELENA. No, not at all.

MR. PERRY. Then perhaps you came under the influence of some particular person—a teacher, perhaps?

HELENA. A . . . teacher . . . yes, I was quite strongly influenced by a teacher.

MR. PERRY. A man?

HELENA. No. It was . . . a Miss Jean Brodie . . . a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime.

(*LIGHTS dim on convent bench, but* HELENA *and* PERRY *remain visible.*)

ACT ONE

SCENE 2

LIGHTS dim up on classroom. GIRLS *enter to their seats.* BRODIE *enters, takes position behind desk. She brings on Giotto painting which she places over portrait of Stanley Baldwin which has been preset on blackboard.*

GIRLS. Good morning, Miss Brodie.

BRODIE. Little girls. I am in the business of putting old heads on young shoulders, and all my pupils are the creme de la creme. Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life. You girls are my vocation. If I were to receive a proposal of marriage tomorrow from the Lord Lyon King-of-Arms, I would decline it. I am dedicated to you in my prime. And my summer in Italy

has convinced me that I am *truly* in my prime. Prop up your books in case of intruders . . . if there are intruders, we are doing our history. But we will not do our history, rather I want to tell you of my summer and the man I met in the Borghese gardens and of the paintings I saw. Can anyone tell me who is the greatest Italian painter?

LITTLE GIRL. Leonardo da Vinci, Miss Brodie.

BRODIE. That is incorrect. The answer is Giotto; he is my favorite. Observe, little girls, Stanley Baldwin, who got in as Prime Minister and got out again ere long. Our headmistress, Miss Mackay, retains him on the walls because she believes in the slogan, "Safety First." But Safety does not come first. Goodness, Truth and Beauty come first. I want to tell you of a moment in my life when I was very young, though older than the man himself. His name was Hugh. I fell deeply in love with Hugh in the last year of the war, but he fell on Flanders' Field. Louise, are you thinking of doing a day's washing? You have your sleeves rolled up. I won't have to do with girls who roll up the sleeves of their blouses. Roll them down at once, we are civilized beings. He fell the week before Armistice was declared. He fell like an autumn leaf. Remind me to show you the map of Flanders and the spot where my lover was laid to sleep forever, before you were born. He was poor, but a hardworking and clever scholar. He said, when he asked me to marry him, "We shall have to drink water and walk slow." That was Hugh's country way of expressing that we would live quietly. Hugh was killed the day before Armistice was declared. "Come autumn sae pensive in yellow and grey, and soothe me wi' tiding of nature's decay." Robert Burns. Hugh fell like an autumn leaf. (MONICA *beings to sniffle.*) After the Armistice there was a general election and people were saying "Hang the Kaiser." But Hugh was one of the Flowers of the Forest, lying in his grave . . .

(MONICA *is now openly crying. The door opens to admit*

MISS MACKAY, *the Headmistress. She is a brisk, no-nonsense, homely woman.*)

MACKAY. Good morning, Miss Brodie, girls.

GIRLS. Good morning, Miss Mackay.

MACKAY. (*To* BRODIE, *not altogether a compliment.*) What a colorful frock.

BRODIE. Color enlivens the spirit, does it not?

MACKAY. Perhaps . . . (*Gives the* GIRLS *a look, smiles.* MISS MACKAY'S *smiles, however, are never without ambiguity.*) Though I sometimes wonder if the spirits of the girls *need* enlivening. (*At this juncture, a little sob escapes* MONICA.) My word. What can be ailing the spirits of this little girl? (*Addresses* MONICA.)

(*The only answer to this question is another, bolder sob.* SANDY *gives* MONICA *vicious but unseen punch in the back.*)

BRODIE. (*Calmly.*) Monica cries easily.

MACKAY. Well, Monica, perhaps you would like to tell me why you are crying.

BRODIE. (*Calmly.*) She is moved by a story I have been telling. The Battle of Flodden.

MACKAY. (*Disapproving.*) Crying over a history lesson!

BRODIE. It is a moving story. The night before Flodden at the Mercat Cross beside St. Giles, a ghostly herald was heard reading the names of all the noble families of Scotland beginning with the king. After the battle there was not one family that had not suffered grievous loss, as you well know, Miss Mackay.

MACKAY. (*Briskly.*) To be sure. Well, girls, I know you're going to work hard at every subject this year. A good beginning makes a good ending. I hope you all had a splendid holiday and I look forward to your splendid essays on how you spent them. You shouldn't be crying over history at your age. My word! Good morning, Miss Brodie!

BRODIE. Good morning, Miss Mackay. (MISS MACKAY *shoots a look of distrust at* BRODIE, *then notices the Giotto, the deposed Stanley Baldwin. She hesitates, frowns, then, giving one last look of disapproval at* BRODIE, *at Giotto, at the whole* CLASS, *she exits. To* MONICA.) You did well not to answer the question put to you. It is best, when in difficulties, to say never a word, neither black nor white.

SANDY. But you did, Miss Brodie. You were in difficulty and you made up about Flodden.

BRODIE. Sandy, please try to do as I say, not as I do. Remember that you are a child, Sandy, and far from your prime. Now—as I was attempting to say—speech is silver but silence is golden. Mary MacGregor!

MARY. G— G— Golden?

BRODIE. What did I say was golden?

MARY. The fa—falling leaves?

BRODIE. Plainly, you were not listening to me. If you little girls would listen to me, I would make of you the creme de la creme! That is to say, Life's Elite! My teaching methods have been decried in some quarters as unsuitable for a conservative school like Marcia Blaine. That is to say, a school dedicated to the status quo. Can anyone define status quo? Monica? (MONICA *sobs.*) Sandy, define status quo.

SANDY. Does it mean staying the same?

BRODIE. That is correct. I can always depend on Sandy. Staying the same to the point of petrification. P.E.T.R.I.-F.I.C.A.T.I.O.N. But there needs must be a leaven in the lump. I do not intend to devote my prime to petrification. For this refusal I have been the intended victim of many plots. But the gangs who oppose me shall not succeed. If they want to get rid of me they will have to assassinate me.

GIRLS. Oh!

(*LIGHTS dim out on classroom.*)

ACT ONE

SCENE 3

LIGHTS up on HELENA *and* PERRY.

MR. PERRY. In her prime?

HELENA. Yes. She was an expert on Charlotte Bronte's love life . . . We were taught the advantages to the skin of cleansing cream and of the existence of Einstein, and that God had a near-Eastern counterpart named Allah. Miss Brodie marked us as her own, and we became famous in the school. Which is to say, were held in suspicion and not much liked.

MR. PERRY. What is the main thing about Miss Brodie you remember?

HELENA. That she was exciting. The cloisters will be free now. I am permitted to show you the gardens if that would interest you.

MR. PERRY. Oh, yes, of course. But, you were saying about this teacher, that she was exciting. In what way?

HELENA. Well, we were growing up and Miss Brodie . . . Miss Brodie's prime was very real to us . . . and very exciting.

(*LIGHTS out.*)

ACT ONE

SCENE 4

LIGHTS up on gallery.

BRODIE. Now, girls, in this part of the gallery I have been especially wanting to show you Boucher's famous painting of Madame de Pompadour . . .

(GIRL GUIDES *enter Up Right.*)

GIRL GUIDES. There's the Rembrandt!

JENNY. Oh, Girl Guides!

MONICA. A lot of girls at school belong to the Girl Guides!

BRODIE. For those who like that sort of thing, that is the sort of thing they like. Girls . . . voila! Madame de Pompadour!

LLOYD. (*Appears Up Center. Notices* BRODIE, *grins delightedly.*) Ah, the dangerous Miss Brodie!

BRODIE. (*Attempting to hide her excitement at this unexpected meeting with* LLOYD.) By whom, pray, am I considered dangerous?

LLOYD. It is the consensus. Your girls are said to be vastly informed on subjects irrelevant to the accepted curriculum. Most heinous of all, you are said to inculcate no team spirit. Is that true, girls? Does Miss Brodie incite you to shirk your duties on the hockey field?

BRODIE. Girls, this is Mr. Lloyd. As some of you may know, Mr. Lloyd teaches art in the Senior School. Mr. Lloyd, phrases like the "team spirit" are always employed to cut across individualism. Florence Nightingale knew nothing of the team spirit! Her mission was to save life regardless of the team to which it belonged. Cleopatra knew nothing of the team spirit if you read your Shakespeare. And where would the team spirit have got Anna Pavlova? She is the great prima ballerina, and the corps de ballet have the "team spirit."

LLOYD. Ah, Miss Brodie, you ARE dangerous!

BRODIE. Girls! It's time to go home.

MONICA. But it's so early.

BRODIE. Come along, girls.

JENNY. Oh, Miss Brodie!

LLOYD. Miss Brodie, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your post card.

BRODIE. As Mr. Lloyd is an artist, I thought he would appreciate a card depicting one of Giotto's frescoes. Girls! It's time to go home!

LLOYD. Miss Brodie, I've finished that painting. You

know the one I mean. Would you come over to the studio Sunday and tell me what you think of it?

BRODIE. I'm . . . I have another engagement.

LLOYD. (*Confidently demanding.*) Break it.

BRODIE. I couldn't possibly. I'm . . . going to Cramond. Mr. Lowther has invited me to Cramond.

LLOYD. Mr. Lowther, the new music teacher? That Mr. Lowther?

BRODIE. Mr. Lowther . . . has a small boat. He has invited me to go sailing. (*A faint pause.*) This Sunday. (*Holds out her gloved hand to* LLOYD.) Good afternoon, Mr. Lloyd. We must catch the tram. Though I doubt we shall get seats. It is nineteen-thirty-one. And chivalry is dead. (BRODIE *turns and marches off, surrounded by the* GIRLS.)

JENNY. Mr. Lloyd's wife had another baby this summer. That makes five!

SANDY. Oh, well—the Lloyds are Catholic and are made to have lots of babies—by force!

(*LIGHTS out.*)

ACT ONE

SCENE 5

SCHOOLROOM LIGHTS up.

BRODIE. Benito Mussolini is a man of action. He has made Capri a sanctuary for birds. Thousands of birds live and sing today that might well have ended their careers on a piece of toast. (LOWTHER *enters.*) Ah, Mr. Lowther. This is Mr. Lowther, the music teacher. There is a great deal Mr. Lowther can teach you about the modulation of your tones. Mr. Lowther, I entrust you with the creme de la creme. Jenny, dear, let Mr. Lowther hear your tones. (JENNY *sings.*) And I recommend Sandy to you for her

vowel sounds. Sandy's mother is English. Let us hear a vowel sound, Sandy.

SANDY. Snow— Superior— Sewing.

LOWTHER. Now, girls—

BRODIE. Teach my girls something special, Mr. Lowther. Something perhaps from "Traviata." Who can translate that for me? Monica?

MONICA. The fallen woman, Miss Brodie.

BRODIE. Some of my girls are to attend the Carl Rosa performance next month.

LOWTHER. But don't you think . . . I mean "Traviata" is so— (*Blushes.*) uh—so—

BRODIE. (*Archly.*) So romantic? (*Smiles.*) Of course it is. It is *Italian!* What nobler consecration of Verdi's genius than to fire our sluggish Northern passions? Teach my girls an aria!

LOWTHER. (*His eyes wide with admiration.*) Oh! Yes. (*Now ducks his head shyly.*) But . . . perhaps I'd better — better *start off* with a march!

BRODIE. Stand up, little girls. To the music room. And walk with your heads up, up, like Sybil Thorndike. A woman of noble mien.

(LOWTHER *bursts into song.*)

LOWTHER. Page 35.

"March, march Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the de'il dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march Eskdale and Liddledale,
All the blue bonnets are over the border!"

(*He sets the* CHILDREN *marching out of the room, prepared to bring up the rear.*)

BRODIE. (*When most of the* CHILDREN *are well on their way.*) Mr. Lowther— (*Eagerly, he turns back toward her. So does the ever-curious* SANDY.) March on, Sandy. I must have a word with Mr. Lowther. (SANDY *obeys, but puts an elbow into* JENNY'S *side to draw her attention to this interesting development they are being forced to*

quit.) Mr. Lowther . . . I only wanted to ask about the possibility of renting a little boat at Cramond—

LOWTHER. Renting a boat? At Cramond?

BRODIE. Yes . . . (*Sighs.*) I thought that this Sunday I would treat myself to one last day of sun—

LOWTHER. Oh! Oh, Miss Brodie! *I* have a boat!

BRODIE. *Do* you, Mr. Lowther?

LOWTHER. It would give me the *greatest* pleasure—I mean if you would *consider* coming with *me*—

BRODIE. But, I couldn't trouble *you,* Mr. Lowther.

LOWTHER. Oh, Miss Brodie . . . I would have asked you before . . . but I didn't want to be seeming to *push* myself—*please,* Miss Brodie! Say you'll come with me!

BRODIE. (*Smiles.*) Very well. On Sunday.

LOWTHER. (*Beaming ecstatically.*) On Sunday! (*A thought.*) *After* church, of course.

BRODIE. (*Softly, graciously.*) Of course. (*He stands gazing at her, besotted.*) You must go along now, Mr. Lowther. Your *class.*

LOWTHER. Oh! (*He starts, stumbles over his own feet, smiles sheepishly.*) *Sunday.* You'll not forget?

BRODIE. (*Shakes her head.*) Sunday.

ACT ONE

SCENE 6

Some time later. SANDY, JENNY *and* MARY *are in the locker room.* MARY'S *portable GRAMOPHONE is softly playing music from "Traviata." Moonily,* MARY *sits listening.* SANDY *and* JENNY *listen with one ear. They are deeply concerned with a composition.*

LITTLE GIRL. Aren't you coming?

MONICA. Go along. We're busy.

LITTLE GIRL. (*Nastily.*) Oh, the creme de la creme!

SANDY. (*As she writes.*) I tremb-ling-ly . . . await . . . you. (*Sits up, pleased.*) There.

MONICA. Read it all. From the beginning.

SANDY. Mr. Gordon Lowther, Esquire, Cramond House, Cramond, Edinburgh, Scotland, Europe, the World. My *Dear* Delightful Gordon. Your letter has moved me deeply. But, alas, I am dedicated to my girls as is Madame Pavlova, so—

(MISS MACKAY *enters, frowns slightly at the sound of the gramophone, the sight of the* GIRLS. *With great aplomb,* SANDY *pulls her composition book against her chest, smiles serenely at* MISS MACKAY.)

MISS MACKAY. You girls should not be indoors during recreation period. It is a fine morning. Whose gramophone is this?

SANDY. It's Mary's, Miss Mackay.

MISS MACKAY. (*Opera is not in the Marcia Blaine curriculum.* MACKAY *frowns.*) Well, *this* is the period for recreation.

GIRLS. Yes, Miss Mackay.

MISS MACKAY. *Outdoor* recreation.

GIRLS. (*As* MONICA *lifts the arm from the RECORD.*) Yes, Miss Mackay.

MISS MACKAY. (*Calls out to passing teacher.*) Miss Campbell.

(MACKAY *nods, exits.* SANDY *moves to look down the hall until she is certain* MACKAY *is out of hearing. Then she comes back and carefully chooses a spot on the RECORD to replace the needle.*)

MARY. I d—don't think we sh—shou—

SANDY. It doesn't signify what you think, Mary MacGregor.

(SANDY *and* MONICA *listen to the music and smile as it approaches a part they like; then they softly join in.*)

MONICA. I think we should put in something about his black eyes flashing in the moonlight.

MARY. Mr. L—Lowther's eyes aren't b—black.

SANDY. What color are his eyes?

(*The* GIRLS *look at* MARY.)

MARY. (*Confused.*) N—not *black.*

SANDY. This calls for research. Mary, go immediately to the corridor and keep watch. Mr. Lowther has to pass before the period is over. When he does, examine his eyes.

MARY. M—me?

MONICA. Go along. He might come in early.

MARY. (*Doubtfully.*) Why can't one of you go?

SANDY. Because we are the prima ballerinas and you, Mary MacGregor, are the corps de ballet.

(*Silently,* MARY *accepts this judgment, goes.*)

MONICA. Sandy—do you think Mr. Lowther is really the creme de la creme? Maybe it's Mr. Lloyd?

SANDY. The creme de la creme is *us.* "Little girls, you are going to be the creme de la creme." You lead. These are supposed to be the happiest days of our lives.

MONICA. If these are supposed to be the happiest days of our lives, why does Miss Brodie say prime is best?

SANDY. Well, she never got married like our mothers and fathers. They don't have primes.

MONICA. They have sexual intercourse.

SANDY. I don't like to think about it.

MONICA. You don't *have* to. It happens in a flash. On the spur of the moment. It happened to Teenie that works in my father's shop when she was out walking at Puddocky with her boy. They had to get married.

SANDY. You would think the urge would have passed by the time she got her *clothes* off.

MONICA. Yes, that's what I can't understand. If people take their clothes off in front of each other, it's so *rude!* They're bound to be put off their passion.

SANDY. I wouldn't like to have sexual intercourse.

MONICA. Neither would I. I'm going to be pure. Like Bonnie Kilmeny. "Kilmeny was pure as pure could be." Miss Brodie says that means she did not go to the glen in order to mix with men.

SANDY. (*She looks at her composition.*) It really is too bad if Mr. Lowther's eyes aren't black.

MONICA. Sandy, do you think Miss Brodie ever had sexual intercourse with Hugh of Flanders Field? Before he fell?

SANDY. I don't think they did anything like that. Their love was above all that.

MONICA. (*Persistently.*) Maybe. But Miss Brodie said she and Hugh clung to each other with passionate abandon on his last leave . . . but I don't think they took their clothes off. Do you?

SANDY. (*Considers this, then shakes her head.*) No. I can't see it.

(*Now, just as predicted,* MR. LOWTHER *comes down the corridor, passing* MARY. *As soon as he has passed, she comes running excitedly back to the* GIRLS.)

MARY. He came! M—Mr. Lowther! I saw h—him!

SANDY. Well? What color are his eyes?

MARY. H—his eyes?

SANDY. Mary MacGregor, you'll never be one of Life's Elite.

(*A BELL rings: the end of the recreation period.*)

LIGHTS DIM OUT

ACT ONE

SCENE 7

BRODIE *sits alone in the empty classroom, grading papers. We see* TEDDY LLOYD. *He stands in the doorway watching* BRODIE, *until she becomes conscious of his presence, turns.*

LLOYD. (*Teasing.*) Now why do you keep avoiding me when you know I'm *madly* longing to hear *all* about those wild weekends at Cramond.

BRODIE. (*Serenely.*) My girls adore Cramond. It's lovely.

LLOYD. And what about old Lowther? Is he lovely? Is his boat lovely?

BRODIE. (*Refusing to be baited.*) Mr. Lowther's boat is small. But his house is quite large, and the grounds are extensive.

LLOYD. Extensive.

BRODIE. He inherited the place from his mother.

LLOYD. I must assume he inherited his dashing, cavalier ways . . . (*Grins.*) *also* from his *mother*. Look here, I'm going out your way this afternoon. Shall we take the tram together?

BRODIE. Grazie tanto . . . I'm being given a ride by Mr. Lowther. He has a new Morris four-seater.

LLOYD. Has he indeed?

BRODIE. Yes. (*Nervously begins to take up papers, belongings, prepares to leave.*) I haven't had a chance to ask about *your* summer. Did you get away at all?

LLOYD. No, I spent the summer painting.

BRODIE. (*Sharply.*) *Family* portraits? And what have you decided to call your new daughter?

LLOYD. Diedre wants to call her Anastasia, but I'm holding out for Jean.

BRODIE. (*Quite taken aback.*) *Jean?*

LLOYD. (*Blandly.*) After an aunt of mine rumoured to make shrewd investments. (*Cruelly.*) Not unlike yourself.

BRODIE. What do you mean by that?

LLOYD. A bachelor with estates and boats and motor cars is obviously a better investment than a man with a wife and five children.

BRODIE. (*Suddenly flaring with anger.*) *Five children!* Have you never heard of Marie Stopes! Architect for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress!

LLOYD. (*Laughs.*) Ah, yes. An estimable woman. But

you see, my church enjoins me to go forth and be fruitful.

(*He reaches out to touch her face. She pulls quickly back out of his reach.*)

BRODIE. I am quite aware of your unfortunate affiliation with the Church of Rome! I doubt, however, whether that body gives the same interpretation to "go forth" that *you* do!

LLOYD. My church understands human imperfection and forgives it. Why can't you?

BRODIE. I am not interested in human imperfections! I am interested in Beauty! In Art! In Truth!

LLOYD. In art and beauty, maybe. In truth, no. The truth, Jean, is that you bounced into bed with the artist, but you were terrified to wake up with the man. That is the truth. I've finished your portrait, Jean. (*She doesn't answer.*) Don't you want to see it? Come back to the studio. (BRODIE *silently shakes her head.*) Why not?

BRODIE. (*The simplest statement she is ever to make. The simplest and the truest.*) You have a family. I am a teacher.

LLOYD. I had a family last July. You were a teacher last July. (*Again she shakes her head.*) If I had a pound for every time I've heard you say, "I am a teacher!" "I am a teacher! First, last, always!" (*Laughs grudgingly.*) What a firm reminder your post card was. A message from romantic Italy . . . (*Takes post card out of his pocket, reads.*) "The incomparable Giotto frescoes. How triumphantly his figures vibrate with life, casting off the formalities of decadent Byzantium! Yours truly, J. Brodie." (*Looks at her, repockets the card.*) Naturally, I was delighted to hear that old Giotto was still cocking a snoot at decadent Byzantium . . . (*Shrugs.*) That time at the studio . . . I was pleased to feel that it was *I* who enjoyed the tutorial position. (*He takes her wrist, holds it firmly. She does not move in his grasp. She is very still,*

seeming hardly to breathe; her eyes are fixed not on him, but on her own captive wrist.) Come back, Jean. Come back to the studio. (*Matter-of-factly.*) You are the only sex-bestirred object in this stony pile. I *need* you.

(*Gently, he releases his hold on her. She has not moved or looked up, nor has he moved at all away from her. It is only that he has turned her loose, leaving the choice to her. There seems to be no conscious decision. It is simply that she melts compulsively, blindly into his arms. Slowly, deliberately, as if the place they are in were deeply private, they kiss. It is, as it is subsequently described, a long, lingering kiss. But now, quietly, the door opens and we see* MARY MACGREGOR'S *silly little face. Slow to take in what she is seeing, and—once she* has *taken it in—too slow-witted to make a getaway,* MARY *simply stands and stares, until* BRODIE, *finally aware of an alien presence, whirls around.*)

BRODIE. (*Severely.*) *Mary MacGregor.* (*Slowly, dangerously,* BRODIE *advances upon the hapless* GIRL.) Mary MacGregor . . . do you know what happened to *Peeping Tom?* (*She quotes with horrifying dramatic emphasis.*) "His eyes were shrivell'd into darkness in his head . . . and *dropt before him!*"

(*With a bleat of terror,* MARY *flees.*)

LLOYD. Hard lines on old Tom. (BRODIE *stands, worried and undecided, beside the open door.* LLOYD *moves to her and maneuvers the door closed.*) Don't worry, Jean. You've got your girls well trained. You're safe enough from that quarter. It's *me* you've got to worry about. Come back to the studio . . . (*Gently.*) Come to pose again—only to pose.

BRODIE. (*As if awaking, she starts and moves jerkily away from him.*) I will not come to the studio again.

(*Trying to pull off her usual manner, smiles brightly.*) You should paint one of my girls. Paint my Jenny. She's the pretty one.

LLOYD. Hang your girls. It's you I want to paint.

BRODIE. No.

LLOYD. Then to hell with you. (*He goes.*)

BRODIE. (*Calls gently after him.*) You really should paint Jenny, Teddy. You'll like Jenny . . . she's very pretty. . . .

LIGHTS DIM OUT

ACT ONE

SCENE 8

The locker room. Late afternoon. SANDY, JENNY *and* MONICA *are Onstage.* MARY *enters, head down, goes straight to her locker.*

SANDY. Is something wrong? (SANDY *goes to* MARY, *peers curiously at her.*) What's happened to you, Mary? Your face is all funny.

MARY. N—no, it's n—*not!*

SANDY. Yes, it is.

(MARY *tries to get past her. Curious, smelling blood, the* GIRLS *block* MARY'S *way. Suddenly, with no warning,* LLOYD *is upon them.*)

LLOYD. Ah! Miss Brodie's brood, I believe. (MARY *freezes. The* OTHER GIRLS *stare shyly at him. He stares at* MARY.) We met at the Gallery.

GIRLS. (ALL *but* MARY.) Yes, Mr. Lloyd.

(JENNY *steps boldly forward.*)

JENNY. Would you like a rosebud? (*Proffers a bag of sweets.*)

LLOYD. A what?

SANDY. It's the favourite sweet of little Princess Margaret Rose.

(LLOYD *accepts a rosebud, sucks it thoughtfully, eyeing* MARY *for a moment before turning his attention to* SANDY. *He grins, shakes his head in wonder.*)

LLOYD. Unmistakably Brodie. (*To* JENNY, *as he takes her arm and turns her about to get all angles of the face.*) And you, I suppose, are the pretty one. (*Dismissing them.*) Good afternoon, girls.

(*He gives the hangdog* MARY *one last look, grins, then moves on. The* GIRLS *watch him off. There is a weighty pause.*)

GIRLS. Good afternoon, Mr. Lloyd.

SANDY. (*Her curiosity now totally aroused.*) Mary, you are definitely upset about something.

MARY. (*Inventing desperately.*) It's m—my *brother!* I'm ups—set about m—my brother.

SANDY. You're *never* upset about your brother. But you are upset about something.

MONICA. (*Threateningly.*) Tell or I'll pinch you. *Tell.*

MARY. No! I won't tell. I love Miss Brodie and I won't tell!

SANDY. What about Miss Brodie?

MONICA. Tell or we'll shut you in the cubby again!

MARY. You wouldn't d—d—dare!

MONICA. (*Very sinister.*) *Tell.*

MARY. (*Bravely.*) It's n—n—none of y—your b—business— (*With the dispatch of public executioners,* MONICA *and* JENNY *grab* MARY *and push her into a small, low cupboard.*) *Please!* Please! Let m—m—me out!

(SANDY *gives a quick diabolical grin to the* OTHER GIRLS,

then gets down on her knees to speak to MARY. *Her voice a pious travesty of concern for poor* MARY.)

SANDY. Now Mary, dear . . . if something has happened to Miss Brodie, you should tell us. I'll *help* you, Mary. What have you done now?

MARY'S VOICE. She was s—s—s—so angry!

SANDY. (*Reasonably.*) Well, Mary, you know how you *are*. What have you done now?

MARY'S VOICE. N—nothing! I just w—w—went in!

JENNY. In *where?*

MARY'S VOICE. Th—the classroom.

MONICA. So?

MARY'S VOICE. So th—there th—they *were!*

SANDY. (*Patiently.*) There *who* were?

JENNY. Oh! (*Getting the picture, eyes wide, excited.*) Mr. *Lowther?* Miss Brodie and Mr. Lowther?

MARY. No! M—M—Mister L—Lloyd! Th—they were kissing!

MONICA. Mr. *Lloyd?*

SANDY. Mr. *Lloyd?*

(*She stares first at* JENNY, *then at* MONICA. *The* GIRLS *release* MARY. *Relieved to escape, grateful to her tormentors,* MARY *tells all.*)

MARY. I saw th—them! K—kissing! T—t—t—*together!* He had his arm around her.

JENNY. (*Thrilled.*) Mr. Lloyd! Mr. Lloyd's in love with Miss Brodie!

MARY. And sh—sh—she's in l—l—love with M—M—Mister Lloyd!

MONICA. What about Mr. Lowther then?

SANDY. (*Thoughtfully.*) Mr. Lloyd is an artist . . . and Miss Brodie is artistic, too. (*Judiciously.*) Perhaps Miss Brodie really loves Mr. Lloyd but he's married to another so she's working it off on Mr. Lowther. (*The* GIRLS *begin getting out their coats and hats.*) Listen, Mary. Was it a long, lingering kiss?

MARY. (*Miserably.*) I sh—sh—shouldn't h—have t—told you.

SANDY. (*Nods.*) It wasn't very elite of you. But since you did, was it a long, lingering kiss?

MARY. (*Shamefully.*) Yes.

MONICA. (*Rising, taking the center of the Stage.*) Was it like this?

(MONICA, *acting out the scene, pantomimes opening a door, then her eyes pop in a startled way as she gasps and stares. Next, she is* BRODIE *caught in* LLOYD'S *embrace, bent to his will.* MONICA'S *back to the audience as she hugs herself, her hands, on her own back, begin to travel downward, fingers wriggling with little girl prurience, downward, downward, until well-placed upon her own lower hip, one hand suddenly slaps, as if at itself. This sends the* GIRLS *into gales of laughter.* MONICA *is so overcome with success that she attempts to improve on the act by trying to run one foot up and over the calf of the other leg. This maneuver sends her crashing to the floor, but not before* MARY, *carried away, cries out:*)

MARY. That's it! That's it!

(*Before anyone knows exactly how it happened, the party has been joined by* MISS MACKAY, *who gazes coolly down at the prostrate* MONICA.)

MACKAY. It's nearly five o'clock. Time you girls were away. What were you doing, Monica?

MONICA. Just playing, Miss Mackay.

SANDY. (*Quickly.*) Playing opera.

MACKAY. Opera?

SANDY. Yes, Miss Mackay. We've been studying "Traviata."

MACKAY. Monica, show me what you were doing. (MONICA *is understandably hesitant. The* OTHER GIRLS *are stiff with horror.*) Go on. Show me.

(*Impelled by* MACKAY'S *authority,* MONICA *slowly begins to embrace herself. Once the act is begun, however, she defiantly gives herself up to it, and sees it through, although nervously speeding up when she gets to the leg part. Once she is on the floor, she lies still, staring helplessly up at* MACKAY. *It is* SANDY *who comes to the rescue.*)

SANDY. She was doing Violetta expiring for love of Alfredo.

MONICA. (*Quick to back* SANDY *up.*) It's very sad.

MACKAY. (*As* MONICA *gets up.*) Rubbish! Violetta did not "expire" for love of Alfredo. Violetta was a thoroughly silly woman with diseased lungs. If she'd been properly brought up, she'd have been out on the hockey field breathing deeply. Which is precisely what you little girls should be doing. Not playacting at Italian melodrama.

SANDY. Violetta and Alfredo were originally French.

MACKAY. How well informed you are.

MONICA. Miss Brodie took us to see "Traviata" when the Carl Rosa Company came to Edinburgh.

MACKAY. She took you to the opera?

SANDY. She takes us to concerts too, and to art galleries.

MONICA. And the theatre too. We *love* the theatre.

MACKAY. Indeed? How very good of Miss Brodie. I have been interested to see that all you Brodie girls have chosen to take the Classical Course when you move to the Senior School. You, Mary. You know your marks do not reach the required standard. Why do you want so much to go on the classical side?

MARY. M—Miss Brodie pref—prefers it.

MACKAY. It has nothing to do with Miss Brodie. I am curious as to why Miss Brodie ever singled you out, Mary. You are a fine girl, of course . . . but not—*precocious.* (*A beat.*) Now I know that your guardian, Mr. Ealing, makes you a very generous allowance and it occurs to me . . . perhaps it is *you,* Mary, who occasionally

treats Miss *Brodie* to the theatre? It is pleasant to have the means to treat our friends, isn't it?

MARY. (*Blushing miserably.*) B—but—Mr. Lowther p—p—paid for us to s—see "T—T—Traviata."

MACKAY. Mr. Lowther paid for you. Well, it is most kind of Mr. Lowther. I hope you are appreciative.

MARY. Oh, y—yes!

MACKAY. And you, Monica, as regards the Classical Course, you will have to earn your way in life. And your interest in the drama won't prepare you for that. A secretarial course is what you should aim for, my dear.

(MONICA *turns away, deeply offended.*)

JENNY. Miss Brodie says the foundation of real education is the Humanities. They train us to think beyond the narrow life. They train us for heroic action.

MACKAY. Heroic action? The Humanities, the Arts, Music. (*A brief pause.*) Miss Brodie is *very musical.*

SANDY. (*Boldly.*) I think Miss Brodie is more interested in art, Miss Mackay.

MACKAY. What makes you think Miss Brodie prefers art to music, Sandy?

SANDY. She told us so. Music is an interest to her but painting is a passion. (MACKAY *stares fixedly at her.* SANDY *defends herself.*) Miss Brodie *said.*

MACKAY. A passion?

SANDY. Compared to music.

MACKAY. (*Turns her inquiry on* MARY.) Now Mary, I'm sure you are too young to have passions, what are *your* cultural interests?

MARY. (*Nervously.*) S—stories?

MACKAY. Does Miss Brodie tell you stories?

MARY. Oh yes! L—love—love— (*A ferocious poke in the back by* MONICA, *and threatening looks from* SANDY *and* JENNY, *bring* MARY *to her senses. She manages to whisper hoarsely:*) Lovely s—stories!

MACKAY. Umm. Stories like "Traviata"?

SANDY. (*Quickly.*) Stories of history.

JENNY. (*Only an echo behind.*) *History.*

MONICA. Miss Brodie makes history seem like—like the *cinema.*

SANDY. (*Again quickly, attempting to rectify what may have been a mistake on* MONICA'S *part.*) Not the cinema. More like *Shakespeare.*

JENNY. (*Nodding.*) Shakespeare.

MONICA. Shakespeare.

MARY. Shakespeare.

MACKAY. (*Gives them a long look; their closing of ranks is not lost on her. She sighs.*) My, my! What would we do without Miss Brodie. I could wish your arithmetic papers were better. You will have to work hard at ordinary humble subjects for your leaving certificate. Culture cannot compensate for lack of hard knowledge.

GIRLS. No, Miss Mackay.

MACKAY. I am happy to see you are devoted to Miss Brodie. But your loyalty is also due to the school.

GIRLS. Yes, Miss Mackay.

MACKAY. (*She starts off, talking as she moves toward the exit.*) I am always impressed by Miss Brodie's girls. (*A long pause.*) In one way or another.

(*There is a heavy silence after* MACKAY'S *exit. All the* GIRLS *turn toward* SANDY, *whose face is a study.*)

JENNY. What are you thinking about?

SANDY. About Miss Brodie. And Mr. Lloyd.

JENNY. And Mr. Lowther? Don't forget Mr. Lowther. She goes to Cramond every Sunday.

MONICA. So do we.

SANDY. But she never comes home when we do.

MONICA. First he puts out the light. Then their toes touch . . . Then Miss Brodie—

(GIRLS *giggle.*)

SANDY. (*Her eyes narrow as she tries to visualize the*

scene.) Mr. Lowther's legs are so much longer than Miss Brodie's. He would have to wind his around hers . . .

JENNY. (*Whispering.*) Miss Brodie says, "Darling!" She says—

SANDY. "Mr. Lowther, you are the creme de la creme!"

(*The* GIRLS *laugh wildly.*)

JENNY. *Still . . .* (*Looks wisely at* SANDY.) They might have a baby.

SANDY. We'll have to watch Miss Brodie's stomach.

(*Having issued this ukase,* SANDY *turns and smartly marches out, followed by* JENNY, *then* MONICA, *then* MARY *on whom the lights go out, only to segue quickly up on* MISS BRODIE, *crossing to* MISS MACKAY'S *office.*)

LIGHTS OUT ON LOCKER ROOM

ACT ONE

SCENE 9

The office of MISS MACKAY. *There is a desk and chair for the* HEADMISTRESS *and another chair facing her across the desk. There is the same picture of Stanley Baldwin and a bowl of chrysanthemums.* MISS MACKAY *is alone in the room when the lights come up. She is somewhat distracted, as much as she is ever likely to be, tapping a pencil against the desk-top. There is a KNOCK at the door.* MISS MACKAY *straightens up and adjusts her face.* BRODIE *enters with a poised smile.*

BRODIE. (*Glancing at her watch.*) I hope I'm not late. (*A pause.*) Or early.

MACKAY. No! It's 4:15 precisely. You are most punctilious. Thank you for finding the time. Please sit down. My, my! You do wear such *stimulating* colors.

BRODIE. My credo is stimulate, enliven, uplift.

MACKAY. No doubt. But the Marcia Blaine School is essentially conservative and any conservative school must turn out pupils who can read and write and add up. (*Smiles.*) I have observed, Miss Brodie, some of your girls counting on their fingers.

BRODIE. (*Also smiling.*) Miss Mackay, have you summoned me to your eyrie to suggest that I am unqualified to impart the mysteries of multiplication?

MACKAY. Certainly not. (*She continues to smile, refusing to seem intolerant.*) I merely want to point out that we are not what, I believe, is called a progressive school. We do not encourage the—uh—progressive attitudes. Now I have noticed, Miss Brodie, a—a spirit of precocity among your girls. Your special girls.

BRODIE. (*Quickly blocking* MACKAY'S *move.*) Why, *thank you.* I am in my prime and my girls are benefiting from it. I am proud to think that my girls are perhaps more—aware.

MACKAY. (*Pouncing.*) Precisely.

BRODIE. (*Before* MACKAY *can pursue this line of thought.*) To me education is a leading out. The word education comes from the root ex meaning out and duco, I lead. To me, education is simply a leading out of what is already there.

MACKAY. (*Dryly.*) I had hoped there might also be a certain amount of putting *in.*

BRODIE. (*Bravely, foolishly, plunging on.*) That would not be education but intrusion. From the root prefix "in" meaning "in" and the stem "trudo," "I thrust." Ergo to thrust a lot of information into a pupil's head.

MACKAY. (*Sighs deeply.*) To discuss education with such a dedicated teacher is always instructive. But it was not for that I asked you to come here. Miss Brodie.

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