


Fortunes by Luke Sutherland

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SPEAKERS

Tron Creative, Charlie, Danny Krass, Lottie Jack, Evie



Danny Krass 00:02

Hi, my name's Danny Krass and welcome to Earwig, your sonic theatre podcast specifically designed for listening on headphones. This is the last regular episode of season 1, episode 6 and today we present Fortunes by Luke Sutherland, directed by Finn den Hertog. Our performers today are George Anton, Saskia Ashdown and Ann Louise Ross. Original music is composed and performed by Alison Stringer and all other production, arrangement and sound design by me, Danny Krass. As it's our last episode of the season, a special thank you to Viviane, Daisy and everyone at the Tron who helped make this happen. So here it is. Fortunes by Luke Sutherland.



Charlie 00:45

My Gran was of her time.



Evie 00:47

That's one way of putting it.



Charlie 00:48

Oh come on.

E Evie 00:49
You're not gonna let her off the hook, Dad?

C Charlie 00:51
Look, if we're going to do this, let's do it properly. Evie, you're a mother now. You can express yourself in a mature- - reasonable, cons- Evie, Evie! Evie?

E Evie 01:01
No, I'm not doing it.

C Charlie 01:15
Hi. Um. Let's see where we go with this, yeah? As a kid in the '70s I'd stay weekends at my Gran's, up as late as I liked, eating whatever I wanted. Horror films, James Bond, long baths, and her- always with a fag lit, kicking off during the news about papers, savages sluts, perverts, drugs. But I never felt more loved than when I was at hers.

E Evie 01:46
The violins-

C Charlie 01:47
Aye come on. She died February '95. Evie here was born two days later. After the funeral, sortin' out Gran's belongings, I found her old leather handbag. Inside, there's a bunch of letters, notes and a King James Bible. And inside that, there's this folded sheet of A4 with a defaced family tree on it. I hadn't time to dwell, new dad and all that. So I put it up in the attic. Job done. Skip 12 years. Evie's doing the school project about ancestry and-

E Evie 02:27
Eh, we to trace the last 150 years of our family. Lucky for me, Gran had done it already. The tree she made went back over 300 years to Innis Persie. But it was weird. You've not only got Innis and her son James both dying in 1678, but James his wife's name was blacked-out with felt-tip. And see in the Bible, there were these two marked passages. Exodus 22:18. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" and Genesis 9:25 and he said "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Spooked me out, but you

were like a dog with a bone.

C Charlie 03:07

I know. I know. I can't help it. The stuff in that handbag kept me occupied for the next 13 years. Gran did some job- photocopies from the National Record office in Edinburgh. She'd letters from academics as far away as North Carolina, from distant relatives and this one letter from a Lottie Jack and Glen Lyon dated April 1983. Right, the whole thing begins with Andrew Dalrymple, son of a banker who lived in rural Perthshire in the mid 1600s. Age of 17 he was involved in an fray here in Perth. To keep them from jail, his dad who had connections in Glasgow, got him a job on board a ship ferrying prisoners from Scotland to Barbados, where they were sold as indentured servants to the owners of sugar plantations. The molasses bought with the profits was brought back for processing and Glasgow's new sugar refineries. Of course the whole enterprise expands exponentially. Indentured labor simply isn't plentiful enough-

E Evie 04:03

Dad, you're churning it out like you're reading the football scores.

C Charlie 04:06

I'm getting the facts right.

E Evie 04:07

The facts. Long story short, by the time Dalrymple's 23, he's a married father of one with a house and lands. Rolling in it on account of investing in Glasgow's colonial shenanigans. Sugar, tobacco, rum, and, yeah, slavery. The guy's fortune is drenched in blood.

C Charlie 04:25

OK, eh, back to history. In the winter of 1672 Dalrymple's daughter took ill with a burning fever. The local doctor recommended a priest to administer last rites. Instead, Dalrymple rode three miles to the house of Innis Persie in Clunie and asked her for help.

E Evie 04:46

Innis, the one from the top of Gran's family tree.



Charlie 04:49

Right. She was known as a charmer, a woman in possession of forgotten knowledge, called upon to do anything from curing ingrown toenails to boosting fertility.



Evie 05:00

So Innis cures the baby. Dalrymple pays her two guineas for that and sets up her 16 year old son James as help to the gamekeeper on his estate. Then he's off again, destroying hundreds more lives to keep him in duck feather quilts. And this is the bit you think, 'mate, you really are dick'.



Charlie 05:17

Evie-



Evie 05:17

He's come back after six months away with a 14 year old girl bought at auction in Virginia. And I think of this poor wee orphan, heart goin' like the clappers, dumped in a cold country house in a driech arse-end of beyond, surrounded by these upper-class parsnips and my blood boils.



Charlie 05:38

Look, at the time, it was fashionable for well-heeled British families to have black servants.



Evie 05:44

Like that's an excuse?



Charlie 05:45

No, it - it's not an excuse.



Evie 05:48

No.



Charlie 05:49

It's just a fact.



Evie 05:50

And they call her Margaret. Never mind her natural name was probably something beautiful. Anyway, she wasn't there a month and she tried to escape.



Charlie 06:00

And James found her, and brought her back. Over the next three months she made another six attempts. After the last of those, Dalrymple had James give her 10 lashes.



Evie 06:12

Unbelievable. 14 years old.



Charlie 06:16

Yeah. The next four years were quiet. When the head gamekeeper retired, James took over. Margaret nannied Dalrymple's daughter and waited on his wife, while Dalrymple saw to Margaret's private education.



Evie 06:31

She escaped again on the 21st of September 1677. Good job.



Charlie 06:36

The most satisfying find of my research was this broadside from the 25th of September 1677. It reads; "run away from her master on the eighth instant, a negro woman named Margaret of about 18 years, well set, very black, speaks good English with a blue gown and a brass collar about her neck on which are engraved these words: "Andrew Dalrymple, Caputh, 1673. Whoever apprehends her so as she may be brought to the said Mr. Dalrymple at Balvidoch House will receive two guineas reward. Let any entertain her at their peril."



Evie 07:18

Horrific. That's where Margaret disappears from the official records. And it's how we got to meet Lottie Jack. Her letter to Gran.



Lottie Jack 07:31

"Dear Isla, your suspicions about your family are halfway correct. But there's far too much to set down here. Visit me. I have no phone. And I will happily put you right. Tuesdays and Fridays 10am to 3pm are best. Yours faithfully, Lottie Jack."



Evie 07:56

Her people, I suppose, are Scottish travelers, and she's like this living library of traveler history, as well as a custodian of traditional Scottish ballads and songs. Whatever, when she sings, I cry. End of. That first time we went to see her in Glen Lyon, before we'd even introduced ourselves, she was like "your grandmother was quite a character." Character. Like when what folks really mean is racist or homophobic or just a bit of a wanker.



Charlie 08:29

Evie, be fair.



Evie 08:30

Well, that's what it means.



Charlie 08:33

According to Lottie, James and Margaret had planned her final escape attempt together. The whipping had traumatised James.



Evie 08:41

He was traumatised?



Charlie 08:43

He laid it on as light as possible.

E Evie 08:45
Hmmm.

C Charlie 08:47
He abhorred slavery. I was, I was so relieved.

E Evie 08:53
Yeah, seeing you cry when Lottie told us James had saved Margaret- oh Dad.

L Lottie Jack 09:03
Under cover of darkness, James and Margaret made for his hoose. Innis hit the roof. If they were caught, they'd all be thrown in prison, or worse. And yet there was no way she'd allow Margaret to go back. So Innis says, "I know people who work on the river Tay." They disguised Margaret as a boy and hid her on a barge bound for Dundee. From there, she traveled with a group of Romani to Edinburgh and from there on into England. Those Romani were my people. We're practically relatives, you and me. James desperately wanted to go with Margaret. It was only then that Innis realised there was something 'atween them. She said "If you go son, we're finished." You'd have been as well to walk into Lady Margaret's bed chamber and carry her oot, screamin'. James replied that Dalrymple had walked in there on many a night himsel'. Innis asked Margaret if this was true. Margaret nodded and James swore on the spot that he'd never leave her again.

C Charlie 10:31
Innis told James to ride immediately the eight miles to Dunkeld, where he was to secure the services of a boat man. Ride back with the news, then present for work as usual first thing in the morning. The boat man agreed. The following night he ferried James and a disguised Margaret down the Tay to Dundee. Next afternoon, a tearful Dalrymple found Innis washing clothes on the banks of Cloony loch. He says "Where's James?" Innis says, "I saw him only this morning. He's been rising early to find your precious slave." "She is beyond precious to me," Dalrymple replied. Aye right. Look, Evie. I'm not here to excuse rape.

E Evie 11:13
Oh, but-



Charlie 11:15

We've o- we only have Lottie's word for what happened.



Evie 11:20

Oh, dad.



Charlie 11:20

I'm convinced.



Evie 11:21

Dad!



Charlie 11:22

I'm convinced Dalrymple was in love with Margaret! Isn't it possible that she despite everything would-



Evie 11:28

Why would someone fall in love with their rapist?



Charlie 11:33

Because he wasn't a rapist. They were lovers.



Evie 11:37

He had her whipped.



Charlie 11:39


I know. I think-




Evie 11:41

I honestly think that you just can't handle that our people, white Scots, did this kind of


thing.

 Charlie 11:44
Our people, hmm.


 Evie 11:45
Christ. They were good at it.

 Charlie 11:46
I- Right fine.


 Evie 11:53
Dad-

 Charlie 11:54
Nope.

 Evie 11:54
Are we good to start again?

 Charlie 12:12
Yeah. Course, I- Yeah.

 Evie 12:16
You happy?

 Charlie 12:18
Oh, with you, always, yeah. I just lose it sometimes, you know. Just-



Evie 12:23

Right, get on with it then.



Charlie 12:24

Yep yeah yeah. Right. James had been away with Maragret a week when news came in that his mother was being detained at Dalrymple's house, where she had confessed under torture, to being a witch. Dalrymple's livestock was stricken. Wax effigies of his wife and daughter, both of whom are gravely ill have been found in Innis' house along with other evil charms.



Evie 12:47

So James rushes back. Dalrymple and the law are waiting for him. And they take him to the tollbooth in Edinburgh where they've got his mum. Witchcraft, harboring a runaway slave- evidence against them is overwhelming. But the thing that gets me is neighbours who Innis had helped came forward as witnesses for the prosecution. Then Dalrymple's wife and kid both die during the trial. Lottie's convinced Dalrymple poisoned them himself.



Charlie 13:12

I just can't help but see Dalrymple as a tragic case, y'know, driven mad by love.



Evie 13:18

Greedy, murdering, sadistic, exploitative, entitled-



Charlie 13:22

Yeah yeah, that's too easy.



Evie 13:24

What, cause it's obvious? Innis and James both confessed under torture. The transcripts are just sad. I mean, what kind of state must they have been in to claim to have sent their spirits to kill Dalrymple's wife and daughter? And they mention a familiar called Hock who'd appear as a black hare. They attended a sabbat near Clunie Loch where they met the devil in the form of- hold on-

L Lottie Jack 13:47
A tall black man, smartly dressed in a white hat and fine leather boots, who went along the throng hand in hand with an albino girl. They were attended at all times by a great stag that spoke with the voice of a woman.

E Evie 14:17
Apparently they flew, drank the blood of an unbaptized bairn and took part in an orgy.

C Charlie 14:24
Mother and son. Innis and James were strangled and burned at Castle Esplanade in Edinburgh- 13th November 1678. According to Lottie, Margaret was there in disguise with a newborn.

E Evie 14:43
I just, I can't imagine how Margaret must have felt being in that crowd with James' daughter. Did he and Innis see them? Did they see the baby? I- I hope so. I hope that they died knowing they'd never end, 'cause here we are. Right? Grandad?

C Charlie 15:04
Granddad. Huh. Hey, a bit too early, some would say. But Olivia, my granddaughter, her hair- her hair's this beautiful raven color. Eyes to match.

E Evie 15:23
And her middle name's Margaret after her nine-times great-grandmother. Your gran'll be turning in her grave with that big black felt-tip.

C Charlie 15:32
You know, you're doin' hope my granny used to do. Judgin' someone on one unfortunate aspect of their character.

E Evie 15:40
Unfortunate? Oh. See Olivia, my daughter, barely a year old but come the time, you're

going to hear all about it.



Tron Creative 16:07

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