

Sir Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*, London: Dent, 1982.

Chapter 12

‘Cousin Francis,’ said Miss Vernon, addressing me by the same title she used to give to the other Obaldistones, although I had, properly speaking, no title to be called her kinsman, ‘I have encountered this morning a difficult passage in the *Divina Commedia* of Dante; will you have the goodness to step to the library and give me your assistance? and when you have unearthed for me the meaning of the obscure Florentine, we will join the rest at Birkenwood-bank, and see their luck at unearthing the badger.’

I signified, of course, my readiness to wait upon her. Rashleigh, made an offer to accompany us. ‘I am something better skilled,’ he said, ‘at tracking the sense of Dante through the metaphors and elisions of his wild and gloomy poem, than at hunting the poor inoffensive hermit yonder out of his cave.’

‘Pardon me, Rashleigh,’ said Miss Vernon, ‘but as you are to occupy Mr. Francis’s place in the counting-house, you must surrender to him the charge of your pupil’s education at Osbaldistone Hal. We shall call you in, however, if there is any occasion; so pray do not look so grave upon it.’

(p. 116)