

Richard Carvel — Volume 07 eBook

Richard Carvel — Volume 07 by Winston Churchill

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MY FRIENDS ARE PROVEN

At the door of my lodgings I was confronted by Banks, red with indignation and fidgety from uneasiness.

“O Lord, Mr. Carvel, what has happened, sir?” he cried. “Your honour’s agent ‘as been here since noon. Must I take orders from the likes o’ him, sir?”

Mr. Dix was indeed in possession of my rooms, lounging in the chair Dolly had chosen, smoking my tobacco. I stared at him from the threshold. Something in my appearance, or force of habit, or both brought him to his feet, and wiped away the smirk from his face. He put down the pipe guiltily. I told him shortly that I had heard the news which he must have got by the packet: and that he should have his money, tho’ it took the rest of my life: and the ten per cent I had promised him provided he would not press my Lord Comyn. He hesitated, and drummed on the table. He was the man of business again.

“What security am I to have, Mr. Carvel?” he asked.

“My word,” I said. “It has never yet been broken, I thank God, nor my father’s before me. And hark ye, Mr. Dix, you shall not be able to say that of Grafton.” Truly I thought the principal and agent were now well matched.

“Very good, Mr. Carvel,” he said; “ten per cent. I shall call with the papers on Monday morning.”

“I shall not run away before that,” I replied.

He got out, with a poor attempt at a swagger, without his customary protestations of duty and humble offers of service. And I thanked Heaven he had not made a scene, which in my state of mind I could not have borne, but must have laid hands upon him. Perhaps he believed Grafton not yet secure in his title. I did not wonder then, in the heat of my youth, that he should have accepted my honour as security. But since I have marvelled not a little at this. The fine gentlemen at Brooks’s with whom I had been associating were none too scrupulous, and regarded money-lenders as legitimate prey. Debts of honour they paid but tardily, if at all. A certain nobleman had been owing my Lord Carlisle thirteen thousand pounds for a couple of years, that his Lordship had won at hazard. And tho’ I blush to write it, Mr. Fox himself was notorious in such matters, and was in debt to each of the coterie of fashionables of which he was the devoted chief.

The faithful Banks vowed, with tears in his eyes, that he would never desert me. And in that moment of dejection the poor fellow’s devotion brought me no little comfort. At such times the heart is bitter. We look askance at our friends, and make the task of



comfort doubly hard for those that remain true. I had a great affection for the man, and had become so used to his ways and unwearying service that I had not the courage to refuse his prayers to go with me to America. I had not a farthing of my own—he would serve me for nothing—nay, work for me. “Sure,” he said, taking off my coat and bringing me my gown,—“Sure, your honour was not made to work.” To cheer me he went on with some foolish footman’s gossip that there lacked not ladies with jointures who would marry me, and be thankful. I smiled sadly.

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"That was when I was Mr. Carvel's heir, Banks."

"And your face and figure, sir, and masterful ways! Faith, and what more would a lady want!" Banks's notions of morality were vague enough, and he would have had me sink what I had left at hazard at Almack's. He had lived in this atmosphere. Alas! there was little chance of my ever regaining the position I had held but yesterday. I thought of the sponging-house, and my brow was moist. England was no place, in those days, for fallen gentlemen. With us in the Colonies the law offered itself. Mr. Swain, and other barristers of Annapolis, came to my mind, for God had given me courage. I would try the law. For I had small hopes of defeating my Uncle Grafton.

The Sunday morning dawned brightly, and the church bells ringing brought me to my feet, and out into Piccadilly, in the forlorn hope that I might see my lady on her way to morning service,—see her for the last time in life, perhaps. Her locket I wore over my heart. It had lain upon hers. To see her was the most exquisite agony in the world. But not to see her, and to feel that she was scarce quarter of a mile away, was beyond endurance. I stood beside an area at the entrance to Arlington Street, and waited for an hour, quite in vain; watching every face that passed, townsmen in their ill-fitting Sunday clothes, and fine ladies with the footmen carrying velvet prayerbooks. And some that I knew only stared, and others gave me distant bows from their coach windows. For those that fall from fashion are dead to fashion.

Dorothy did not go to church that day.

It is a pleasure, my dears, when writing of that hour of bitterness, to record the moments of sweetness which lightened it. As I climbed up to my rooms in Dover Street, I heard merry sounds above, and a cloud of smoke blew out of the door when I opened it.

"Here he is," cried Mr. Fox. "You see, Richard, we have not deserted you when we can win no more of your money."

"Why, egad! the man looks as if he had had a calamity," said Mr. Fitzpatrick.

"And there is not a Jew here," Fox continued. "Tho' it is Sunday, the air in my Jerusalem chamber is as bad as in any crimps den in St. Giles's. 'Slife, and I live to be forty, I shall have as many underground avenues as his Majesty Louis the Eleventh."

"He must have a place," put in my Lord Carlisle.

"We must do something for him," said Fox, "albeit he is an American and a Whig, and all the rest of the execrations. Thou wilt have to swallow thy golden opinions, my buckskin, when we put thee in office."

I was too overwhelmed even to protest.



"You are not in such a cursed bad way, when all is said, Richard," said Fitzpatrick.
"Charles, when he loses a fortune, immediately borrows another."

"If you stick to whist and quinze," said Charles, solemnly, giving me the advice they were forever thrusting upon him, "and play with system, you may make as much as four thousand a year, sir."

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And this was how I was treated by those heathen and cynical macaronies, Mr. Fox's friends. I may not say the same for the whole of Brooks's Club, tho' I never darkened its doors afterwards. But I encountered my Lord March that afternoon, and got only a blank stare in place of a bow.

Charles had collected (Heaven knows how!) the thousand pounds which he stood in my debt, and Mr. Storer and Lord Carlisle offered to lend me as much as I chose. I had some difficulty in refusing, and more still in denying Charles when he pressed me to go with them to Richmond, where he had rooms for play over Sunday.

Banks brought me the news that Lord Comyn was sitting up, and had been asking for me that day; that he was recovering beyond belief. But I was resolved not to go to Brook Street until the money affairs were settled on Monday with Mr. Dix, for I knew well that his Lordship would insist upon carrying out with the agent the contract he had so generously and hastily made, rather than let me pay an abnormal interest.

On Monday I rose early, and went out for a bit of air before the scene with Mr. Dix. Returning, I saw a coach with his Lordship's arms on the panels, and there was Comyn himself in my great chair at the window, where he had been deposited by Banks and his footman. I stared as on one risen from the dead.

"Why, Jack, what are you doing here?" I cried.

He replied very offhand, as was his manner at such times:

"Blicke vows that Chartersea and Lewis have qualified for the College of Surgeons," says he. "They are both born anatomists. Your job under the arm was the worst bungle of the two, egad, for Lewis put his sword, pat as you please, between two of my organs (cursed if I know their names), and not so much as scratched one."

"Look you, Jack," said I, "I am not deceived. You have no right to be here, and you know it."

"Tush!" answered his Lordship; "I am as well as you." And he took snuff to prove the assertion. "Why the devil was you not in Brook Street yesterday to tell me that your uncle had swindled you? I thought I was your friend," says he, "and I learn of your misfortune through others."

"It is because you are my friend, and my best friend, that I would not worry you when you lay next door to death on my account," I said, with emotion.

And just then Banks announced Mr. Dix.

"Let him wait," said I, greatly disturbed.

“Show him up!” said my Lord, peremptorily.

“No, no!” I protested; “he can wait. We shall have no business now.”

But Banks was gone. And I found out, long afterward, that it was put up between them.

The agent swaggered in with that easy assurance he assumed whenever he got the upper hand. He was the would-be squire once again, in top-boots and a frock. I have rarely seen a man put out of countenance so easily as was Mr. Dix that morning when he met his Lordship’s fixed gaze from the arm-chair.

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"And so you are turned Jew?" says he, tapping his snuffbox. "Before you go ahead so fast again, you will please to remember, d—n you, that Mr. Carvel is the kind that does not lose his friends with his fortune."

Mr. Dix made a salaam, which was so ludicrous in a squire that my Lord roared with laughter, and I feared for his wound.

"A man must live, my Lord," sputtered the agent. His discomfiture was painful.

"At the expense of another," says Comyn, dryly. "That is your motto in Change Alley."

"If you will permit, Jack, I must have a few words in private with Mr. Dix," I cut in uneasily.

His Lordship would be damned first. "I am not accustomed to be thwarted, Richard, I tell you. Ask the dowager if I have not always had my way. I am not going to stand by and see a man who saved my life fall into the clutches of an usurer. Yes, I said usurer, Mr. Dix. My attorney, Mr. Kennett, of Lincoln's Inn, has instructions to settle with you."

And, despite all I could say, he would not budge an inch. At last I submitted under the threat that he would never after have a word to say to me. By good luck, when I had paid into Mr. Dix's hand the thousand pounds I had received from Charles Fox, and cleared my outstanding bills, the sum I remained in Comyn's debt was not greatly above seven hundred pounds. And that was the end of Mr. Dix for me; when he had backed himself out in chagrin at having lost his ten per centum, my feelings got the better of me. The water rushed to my eyes, and I turned my back upon his Lordship. To conceal his own emotions he fell to swearing like mad.

"Fox will get you something," he said at length, when he was a little calmed.

I told him, sadly, that my duty took me to America.

"And Dorothy?" he said; "you will leave her?"

I related the whole miserable story (all save the part of the locket), for I felt that I owed it him. His excitement grew as he listened, until I had to threaten to stop to keep him quiet. But when I had done, he saw nothing but good to come of it.

"Od's life! Richard, lad, come here!" he cried. "Give me your hand. Why, you ass, you have won a thousand times over what you lost. She loves you! Did I not say so? And as for that intriguing little puppy, her father, you have pulled his teeth, egad. She heard what you said to him, you tell me. Then he will never deceive her again, my word on't. And Chartersea may come back to London, and be damned."

CHAPTER XLIII

ANNAPOLIS ONCE MORE

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Three days after that I was at sea, in the Norfolk packet, with the farewells of my loyal English friends ringing in my ears. Captain Graham, the master of the packet, and his passengers found me but a poor companion. But they had heard of my misfortune, and vied with each other in heaping kindnesses upon me. Nor did they intrude on my walks in the night watches, to see me slipping a locket from under my waistcoat—ay, and raising it to my lips. 'Twas no doubt a blessing that I had lesser misfortunes to share my attention. God had put me in the way of looking forward rather than behind, and I was sure that my friends in Annapolis would help me to an honest living, and fight my cause against Grafton.

Banks was with me. The devoted soul did his best to cheer me, tho' downcast himself at leaving England. To know what to do with him gave me many an anxious moment. I doubted not that I could get him into a service, but when I spoke of such a thing he burst into tears, and demanded whether I meant to throw him off. Nor was any argument of mine of use.

After a fair and uneventful voyage of six weeks, I beheld again my native shores in the low spits of the Virginia capes. The sand was very hot and white, and the waters of the Chesapeake rolled like oil under the July sun. We were all day getting over to Yorktown, the ship's destination. A schooner was sailing for Annapolis early the next morning, and I barely had time to get off my baggage and catch her. We went up the bay with a fresh wind astern, which died down at night.

The heat was terrific after England and the sea-voyage, and we slept on the deck. And Banks sat, most of the day, exclaiming at the vast scale on which this new country was laid out, and wondering at the myriad islands we passed, some of them fair with grain and tobacco; and at the low-lying shores clothed with forests, and broken by the salt marshes, with now and then the manor-house of some gentleman-planter visible on either side. Late on the second day I beheld again the cliffs that mark the mouth of the Severn, then the sail-dotted roads and the roofs of Annapolis.

We landed, Banks and I, in a pinnace from the schooner, and so full was my heart at the sight of the old objects that I could only gulp now and then, and utter never a word. There was the dock where I had paced up and down near the whole night, when Dolly had sailed away; and Pryse the coachmaker's shop, and the little balcony upon which I had stood with my grandfather, and railed in a boyish tenor at Mr. Hood. The sun cast sharp, black shadows. And it being the middle of the dull season, when the quality were at their seats, and the dinner-hour besides, the town might have been a deserted one for its stillness, as tho' the inhabitants had walked out of it, and left it so. I made my way, Banks behind me, into Church Street, past the "Ship" tavern, which brought memories of the brawl there, and of Captain Clapsaddle forcing the mob, like chaff, before his sword. The bees were humming idly over the sweet-scented gardens, and Farris, the clock-maker, sat at his door, and nodded. He jerked his head as I went by with a cry of "Lord, it is Mr. Richard back!" and I must needs pause, to let him bow over

my hand. Farther up the street I came to mine host of the Coffee House standing on his steps, with his hands behind his back.

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"Mr. Claude," I said.

He looked at me as tho' I had risen from the dead.

"God save us!" he shouted, in a voice that echoed through the narrow street. "God save us!"

He seemed to go all to pieces. To my bated questions he replied at length, when he had got his breath, that Captain Clapsaddle had come to town but the day before, and was even then in the coffee-room at his dinner. Alone? Yes, alone. Almost tottering, I mounted the steps, and turned in at the coffee-room door, and stopped. There sat the captain at a table, the roast and wine untouched before him, his waistcoat thrown open. He was staring out of the open window into the inn garden beyond, with its shade of cherry trees. Mr. Claude's cry had not disturbed his reveries, nor our talk after it. I went forward. I touched him on the shoulder, and he sprang up, and looked once into my face, and by some trick of the mind uttered the very words Mr. Claude had used.

"God save us! Richard!" And he opened his arms and strained me to his great chest, calling my name again and again, while the tears coursed down the furrows of his cheeks. For I marked the furrows for the first time, and the wrinkles settling in his forehead and around his eyes. What he said when he released me, nor my replies, can I remember now, but at last he called, in his ringing voice, to mine host:

"A bottle from your choicest bin, Claude! Some of Mr. Bordley's. For he that was lost is found."

The hundred questions I had longed to ask were forgotten. A peace stole upon me that I had not felt since I had looked upon his face before. The wine was brought by Mr. Claude, and opened, and it was mine host who broke the silence, and the spell.

"Your very good health, Mr. Richard," he said; "and may you come to your own again!"

"I drink it with all my heart, Richard," replied Captain Daniel. But he glanced at me sadly, and his honest nature could put no hope into his tone. "We have got him back again, Mr. Claude. And God has answered our prayers. So let us be thankful." And he sat down in silence, gazing at me in pity and tenderness, while Mr. Claude withdrew. "I can give you but a sad welcome home, my lad," he said presently, with a hesitation strange to him. "'Tis not the first bad news I have had to break in my life to your family, but I pray it may be the last." He paused. I knew he was thinking of the black tidings he had once brought my mother. "Richard, your grandfather is dead," he ended abruptly.

I nodded wonderingly.

"What!" he exclaimed; "you have heard already?"

"Mr. Manners told me, in London," I said, completely mystified.

"London!" he cried, starting forward. "London and Mr. Manners! Have you been to London?"

"You had my letters to Mr. Carvel?" I demanded, turning suddenly sick.

His eye flashed.

"Never a letter. We mourned you for dead, Richard. This is Grafton's work!" he cried, springing to his feet and striking the table with his great fist, so that the dishes jumped.

"Grafton Carvel, the prettiest villain in these thirteen colonies! Oh, we shall hang him some day."

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"Then Mr. Carvel died without knowing that I was safe?" I interrupted.

"On that I'll lay all my worldly goods," replied Captain Daniel, emphatically. "If any letters came to Marlboro' Street from you, Mr. Carvel never dropped eyes on 'em."

"What a fool was I not to have written you!" I groaned.

He drew his chair around the table, and close to mine.

"Had the news that you escaped death been cried aloud in the streets, my lad, 'twould never have got to your grandfather's ear," he said, in lower tones. "I will tell you what happened, tho' I have it at second hand, being in the North, as you may remember. Grafton came in from Kent and invested Marlboro' Street. He himself broke the news to Mr. Carvel, who took to his bed. Leiden was not in attendance, you may be sure, but that quack-doctor Drake. Swain sent me a message, and I killed a horse getting here from New York. But I could no more gain admittance to your grandfather, Richard, than to King George the Third. I was met in the hall by that crocodile, who told me with too many fair words that I could not see my old friend; that for the present Dr. Drake denied him everybody. Then I damned Dr. Drake, and Grafton too. And I let him know my suspicions. He ordered me off, Richard—from that house which has been my only home for these twenty years." His voice broke.

"Mr. Carvel thought me dead, then."

"And most mercifully. Your black Hugo, when he was somewhat recovered, swore he had seen you killed and carried off. Sooth, they say there was blood enough on the place. But we spared no pains to obtain a clew of you. I went north to Boston, and Lloyd's factor south to Charleston. But no trace of the messenger who came to the Coffee House after you could we find. Hell had opened and swallowed him. And mark this for consummate villany: Grafton himself spent no less than five hundred pounds in advertising and the like."

"And he is not suspected?" I asked. This was the same question I had put to Mrs. Manners. It caused the captain to flare up again.

"'Tis incredible how a rogue may impose upon men of worth and integrity if he but know how to smirk piously, and never miss a service. And then he is an exceeding rich man. Riches cover a multitude of sins in the most virtuous community in the world. Your Aunt Caroline brought him a pretty fortune, you know. We had ominous times this spring, with the associations forming, and the 'Good Intent' and the rest being sent back to England. His Excellency was at his wits' end for support. It was Grafton Carvel who helped him most, and spent money like tobacco for the King's cause, which, being interpreted, was for his own advancement. But I believe Colonel Lloyd suspects him, tho' he has never said as much to me. I have told Mr. Swain, under secrecy, what I

think. He is one of the ablest lawyers that the colony owns, Richard, and a staunch friend of yours. He took your case of his own accord. But he says we have no foothold as yet."

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When I asked if there was a will the captain rapped out an oath.

"Sdeath! yes," he cried, "a will in favour of Grafton and his heirs, witnessed by Dr. Drake, they say, and another scoundrel. Your name does not occur throughout the length and breadth of it. You were dead. But you will have to ask Mr. Swain for those particulars. My dear old friend was sadly gone when he wrote it, I fear. For he never lacked shrewdness in his best days. Nor," added Captain Daniel, with force, "nor did he want for a proper estimation of Grafton."

"He has never been the same since that first sickness," I answered sadly.

When the captain came to speak of Mr. Carvel's death, the son and daughter he loved, and the child of his old age in the grave before him, he proceeded brokenly, and the tears blinded him. Mr. Carvel's last words will never be known, my dears. They sounded in the unfeeling ears of the serpent Grafton. 'Twas said that he was seen coming out of his father's house an hour after the demise, a smile on his face which he strove to hide with a pucker of sorrow. But by God's grace Mr. Allen had not read the prayers. The rector was at last removed from Annapolis, and had obtained the fat living of Frederick which he coveted.

"As I hope for salvation," the captain concluded, "I will swear there is not such another villain in the world as Grafton. The imagination of a fiend alone could have conceived and brought to execution the crime he has committed. And the Borgias were children to him. 'Twas not only the love of money that urged him, but hatred of you and of your father. That was his strongest motive, I believe. However, the days are coming, lad, when he shall have his reward, unless all signs fail. And we have had enough of sober talk," said he, pressing me to eat. "Faith, but just now, when you came in, I was thinking of you, Richard. And—God forgive me! complaining against the lot of my life. And thinking, now that you were taken out of it, and your father and mother and grandfather gone, how little I had to live for. Now you are home again," says he, his eyes lighting on me with affection, "I count the gray hairs as nothing. Let us have your story, and be merry. Nay, I might have guessed you had been in London, with your fine clothes and your English servant."

'Twas a long story, as you know, my dears. He lighted his pipe and laid his big hand over mine, and filled my glass, and I told him most of that which had happened to me. But I left out the whole of that concerning Mr. Manners and the Duke of Chartersea, nor did I speak of the sponging-house. I believe my only motive for this omittance was a reluctance to dwell upon Dorothy, and a desire to shield her father for her sake. He dropped many a vigorous exclamation into my pauses, but when I came to speak of my friendship with Mr. Fox, his brow clouded over.

"Ad's heart!" he cried, "Ad's heart! And so you are turned Tory, and have at last been perverted from those principles for which I loved you most. In the old days my

conscience would not allow me to advise you, Richard, and now that I am free to speak, you are past advice."

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I laughed aloud.

“And what if I tell you that I made friends with his Grace of Grafton, and Lord Sandwich, and was invited to Hichinbroke, his Lordship’s seat?” said I.

His honest face was a picture of consternation.

“Now the good Lord deliver us!” he exclaimed fervently. “Sandwich! Grafton! The devil!”

I gave myself over to the first real merriment I had had since I had heard of Mr. Carvel’s death.

“And when Mr. Fox learned that I had lost my fortune,” I went on, “he offered me a position under Government.”

“Have you not friends enough at home to care for you, sir?” he said, his face getting purple. “Are you Jack Carvel’s son, or are you an impostor?”

“I am Jack Carvel’s son, dear Captain Daniel, and that is why I am here,” I replied. “I am a stouter Whig than ever, and I believe I might have converted Mr. Fox himself had I remained at home sufficiently long,” I added, with a solemn face. And, for my own edification, I related how I had bearded his Majesty’s friends at Brooks’s, whereat he gave a great, joyful laugh, and thumped me on the back.

“You dog, Richard! You sly rogue!” And he called to Mr. Claude for another bottle on the strength of that, and we pledged the Association. He peppered me with questions concerning Junius, and Mr. Wilkes, and Mr. Franklin of Philadelphia. Had I seen him in London? “I would not doubt a Carvel’s word,” says the captain, “(always excepting Grafton and his line, as usual), but you may duck me on the stool and I comprehend why Mr. Fox and his friends took up with such a young rebel rascalion as you—and after the speech you made ’em.”

I astonished him vastly by pointing out that Mr. Fox and his friends cared a deal for place, and not a fig for principle; that my frankness had entertained rather than offended them; and that, having a taste for a bit of wild life and the money to gratify it, and being of a tolerant, easy nature withal, I had contrived to make many friends in that set, without aiming at influence. Whereat he gave me another lick between the shoulders.

“It was so with Jack,” he cried; “thou art a replica. He would have made friends with the devil himself. In the French war, when all the rest of us Royal Americans were squabbling with his Majesty’s officers out of England, and cursing them at mess, they could never be got to fight with Jack, tho’ he gave them ample provocation. There was Tetherington, of the 22d foot,—who jeered us for damned provincials, and swaggered through three duels in a week,—would enter no quarrel with him. I can hear him say:



'Damn you, Carvel, you may slap my face and you will, or walk in ahead of me at the general's dinner and you will, but I like you too well to draw at you. I would not miss your company at table for all the world.' And when he was killed," Captain Daniel continued, lowering his voice, "some of them cried like women, Tetherington among 'em,—and swore they would rather have lost their commissions at high play."

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We sat talking until the summer's dusk grew on apace, and one thing this devoted lover of my family told me, which lightened my spirits of the greatest burden that had rested upon them since my calamity befell me. I had dwelt at length upon my Lord Comyn, and upon the weight of his services to me, and touched upon the sum which I stood in his debt. The captain interrupted me.

"One day, before your mother died, she sent for me," said he, "and I came to Carvel Hall. You were too young to remember. It was in September, and she was sitting on the seat under the oak she loved so well,—by Dr. Hilliard's study.

"The lace shawl your father had given her was around her shoulders, and upon her face was the smile that gave me a pang to see. For it had something of heaven in it, Richard. She called me 'Daniel' then for the second time in her life. She bade me be seated beside her. 'Daniel,' she said, 'when I am gone, and father is gone, it is you who will take care of Richard. I sometimes believe all may not be well then, and that he will need you.' I knew she was thinking of Grafton," said the captain. "'I have a little money of my own, Daniel, which I have saved lately with this in view. I give it into your charge, and if trouble comes to him, my old friend, you will use it as you see fit.'

"It was a bit under a thousand pounds, Richard. And when she died I put it out under Mr. Carroll's direction at safe interest. So that you have enough to discharge your debt, and something saved against another emergency."

He fell silent, sunk into one of those reveries which the memory of my mother awoke in him. My own thoughts drifted across the sea. I was again at the top of the stairs in Arlington Street, and feeling the dearest presence in the world. The pale oval of Dorothy's face rose before me and the troubled depths of her blue eyes. And I heard once more the tremble in her voice as she confessed, in words of which she took no heed, that love for which I had sought in vain.

The summer dusk was gathering. Outside, under the cherry trees, I saw Banks holding forth to an admiring circle of negro 'ostlers. And presently Mr. Claude came in to say that Shaw, the town carpenter, and Sol Mogg, the ancient sexton of St. Anne's, and several more of my old acquaintances were without, and begged the honour of greeting me.

CHAPTER XLIV

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

I lay that night in Captain Clapsaddle's lodgings opposite, and slept soundly. Banks was on hand in the morning to assist at my toilet, and was greatly downcast when I refused him this privilege, for the first time. Captain Daniel was highly pleased with the honest

fellow's devotion in following me to America. To cheer him he began to question him as to my doings in London, and the first thing of which Banks must tell was of the riding-contest in Hyde Park, which I had omitted. It is easy to imagine how this should have tickled the captain, who always had my horsemanship at heart; and when it came to Chartersea's descent into the Serpentine, I thought he would go into apoplexy. For he had put on flesh with the years.

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The news of my return had spread all over town, so that I had a deal more handshaking to do when we went to the Coffee House for breakfast. All the quality were in the country, of course, save only four gentlemen of the local Patriots' committee, of which Captain Daniel was a member, and with whom he had an appointment at ten. It was Mr. Swain who arrived first of the four.

This old friend of my childhood was a quiet man (I may not have specified), thin, and a little under stature, with a receding but thoughtful forehead. But he could express as much of joy and welcome in his face and manner as could Captain Daniel with his heartier ways.

"It does me good to see you, lad," he said, pressing my hand. "I heard you were home, and sent off an express to Patty and the mother last night."

"And are they not here?" I asked, with disappointment.

Mr. Swain smiled.

"I have done a rash thing since I saw you, Richard, and bought a little plantation in Talbot, next to Singleton's. It will be my ruin," he added. "A lawyer has no business with landed ambitions."

"A little plantation!" echoed the captain. "Od's life, he has bought one of his Lordship's own manors—as good an estate as there is in the province."

"You overdo it, Daniel," said he, reprovingly.

At that moment there was a stir in the doorway, and in came Mr. Carroll, the barrister, and Mr. Bordley and Colonel Lloyd. These gentlemen gave me such a welcome as those warm-hearted planters and lawyers knew how to bestow.

"What, he!" cried Mr. Lloyd, "I'm stamped and taxed if it isn't young Richard Carvel himself. Well," says he, "I know one who will sleep easier o' nights now,—one Clapsaddle. The gray hairs are forgot, Daniel. We had more to-do over your disappearance than when Mr. Worthington lost his musical nigger. Where a deuce have you been, sir?"

"He shall tell us when we come back," said Mr. Bordley. "He has brought our worthy association to a standstill once, and now we must proceed about our business. Will you come, Richard? I believe you have proved yourself a sufficiently good patriot, and in this very house."

We went down Church Street, I walking behind with Colonel Lloyd, and so proud to be in such company that I cared not a groat whether Grafton had my acres or not. I remembered that the committee all wore plain and sober clothes, and carried no

swords. Mr. Swain alone had a wig. I had been away but seven months, and yet here was a perceptible change. In these dignified and determined gentlemen England had more to fear than in all the mobs at Mr. Wilkes's back. How I wished that Charles Fox might have been with me.

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The sun beat down upon the street. The shopkeepers were gathered at their doors, but their chattering was hushed as the dreaded committee passed. More than one, apparently, had tasted of its discipline. Colonel Lloyd whispered to me to keep my countenance, that they were not after very large game that morning,—only Chipchase, the butcher. And presently we came upon the rascal putting up his shutters in much precipitation, although it was noon. He had shed his blood-stained smock and breeches, and donned his Sunday best,—a white, thick-set coat, country cloth jacket, blue broadcloth breeches, and white shirt. A grizzled cut wig sat somewhat awry under his bearskin hat. When he perceived Mr. Carroll at his shoulder, he dropped his shutter against the wall, and began bowing frantically.

“You keep good hours, Master Chipchase,” remarked Colonel Lloyd.

“And lose good customers,” Mr. Swain added laconically.

The butcher wriggled.

“Your honours must know there be little selling when the gentry be out of town. And I was to take a holiday to-day, to see my daughter married.”

“You will have a feast, my good man?” Captain Daniel asked.

“To be sure, your honour, a feast.”

“And any little ewe-lambs?” says Mr. Bordley, very innocent.

Master Chipchase turned the colour of his meat, and his wit failed him.

“‘Fourthly,’” recited Mr. Carroll, with an exceeding sober face, “‘Fourthly, that we will not kill, or suffer to be killed, or sell, or dispose to any person whom we have reason to believe intends to kill, any ewe-lamb that shall be weaned before the first day of May, in any year during the time aforesaid.’ Have you ever heard anything of that sound, Mr. Chipchase?”

Mr. Chipchase had. And if their honours pleased, he had a defence to make, if their honours would but listen. And if their honours but knew, he was as good a patriot as any in the province, and sold his wool to Peter Psalter, and he wore the homespun in winter. Then Mr. Carroll drew a paper from his pocket, and began to read: “Mr. Thomas Hincks, personally known to me, deposeth and saith,—”

Master Chipchase’s knees gave from under him.

“And your honours please,” he cried piteously, “I killed the lamb, but ’twas at Mr. Grafton Carvel’s order, who was in town with his Excellency.” (Here Mr. Swain and the captain

glanced significantly at me.) “And I lose Mr. Carvel’s custom, there is twelve pounds odd gone a year, your honours. And I am a poor man, sirs.”

“Who is it owns your shop, my man?” asks Mr. Bordley, very sternly.

“Oh, I beg your honours will not have me put out—”

The wailing of his voice had drawn a crowd of idlers and brother shopkeepers, who seemed vastly to enjoy the knave’s discomfiture. Amongst them I recognized my old acquaintance, Weld, now a rival butcher. He pushed forward boldly.

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"And your honours please," said he, "he has sold lamb to half the Tory gentry in Annapolis."

"A lie!" cried Chipchase; "a lie, as God hears me!"

Now Captain Clapsaddle was one who carried his loves and his hatreds to the grave, and he had never liked Weld since the day, six years gone by, he had sent me into the Ship tavern. And when Weld heard the captain's voice he slunk away without a word.

"Have a care, Master Weld," says he, in a quiet tone that boded no good; "there is more evidence against you than you will like."

Master Chipchase, after being frightened almost out of his senses, was pardoned this once by Captain Daniel's influence. We went thence to Mr. Hildreth's shop; he was suspected of having got tea out of a South River snow; then to Mr. Jackson's; and so on. 'Twas after two when we got back to the Coffee House, and sat down to as good a dinner as Mr. Claude could prepare. "And now," cried Colonel Lloyd, "we shall have your adventures, Richard. I would that your uncle were here to listen to them," he added dryly.

I recited them very much as I had done the night before, and I warrant you, my dears, that they listened with more zest and eagerness than did Mr. Walpole. But they were all shrewd men, and kept their suspicions, if they had any, to themselves. Captain Daniel would have me omit nothing,—my intimacy with Mr. Fox, the speech at Brooks's Club, and the riding-match at Hyde Park.

"What say you to that, gentlemen?" he cried. "Egad, I'll be sworn he deserves credit,—an arrant young spark out of the Colonies, scarce turned nineteen, defeating a duke of the realm on horseback, and preaching the gospel of 'no taxation' at Brooks's Club! Nor the favour of Sandwich or March could turn him from his principles."

Modesty, my dears, does not permit me to picture the enthusiasm of these good gentlemen, who bore the responsibility of the colony of Maryland upon their shoulders. They made more of me than I deserved. In vain did I seek to explain that if a young man was but well-born, and had a full purse and a turn for high play, his principles might go hang, for all Mr. Fox cared. Colonel Lloyd commanded that the famous rose punch-bowl be filled to the brim with Mr. Claude's best summer brew, and they drank my health and my grandfather's memory. It mattered little to them that I was poor. They vowed I should not lose by my choice. Mr. Bordley offered me a home, and added that I should have employment enough in the days to come. Mr. Carroll pressed me likewise. And big-hearted Colonel Lloyd desired to send me to King's College, as was my grandfather's wish, where Will Fotheringay and my cousin Philip had been for a term. I might make a barrister of myself. Mr. Swain alone was silent and thoughtful, but I did not for an instant doubt that he would have done as much for me.

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Before we broke up for the evening the gentlemen plied me with questions concerning the state of affairs in England, and the temper of his Majesty and Parliament. I say without vanity that I was able to enlighten them not a little, for I had learned a deeper lesson from the set into which I had fallen in London than if I had become the confidant of Rockingham himself. America was a long way from England in those days. I regretted that I had not arrived in London in time to witness Lord Chatham's dramatic return to politics in January, when he had completed the work of Junius, and broken up the Grafton ministry. But I told them of the debate I had heard in St. Stephen's, and made them laugh over Mr. Fox's rescue of the King's friends, and the hustling of Mr. Burke from the Lords.

They were very curious, too, about Mr. Manners; and I was put to much ingenuity to answer their queries and not reveal my own connection with him. They wished to know if it were true that some nobleman had flung a bottle at his head in a rage because Dorothy would not marry him, as Dr. Courtenay's letter had stated. I replied that it was so. I did not add that it was the same nobleman who had been pitched into the Serpentine. Nor did I mention the fight at Vauxhall. I made no doubt these things would come to their ears, but I did not choose to be the one to tell them. Mr. Swain remained after the other gentlemen, and asked me if I would come with him to Gloucester Street; that he had something to say to me. We went the long way thither, and I was very grateful to him for avoiding Marlboro' Street, which must needs bring me painful recollections. He said little on the way.

I almost expected to see Patty come tripping down from the vine-covered porch with her needlework in her hand, and the house seemed strangely empty without her. Mr. Swain had his negro, Romney, place chairs for us under the apple tree, and bring out pipes and sangaree. The air was still, and heavy with the flowers' scent, and the sun was dipping behind the low eaves of the house. It was so natural to be there that I scarce realized all that had happened since last I saw the back gate in the picket fence. Alas! little Patty would never more be smuggled through it and over the wall to Marlboro' Street. Mr. Swain recalled my thoughts.

"Captain Clapsaddle has asked me to look into this matter of the will, Richard," he began abruptly. "Altho' we thought never to see you again, we have hoped against hope. I fear you have little chance for your property, my lad."

I replied that Captain Daniel had so led me to believe, and thanked him for his kindness and his trouble.

"'Twas no trouble," he replied quickly. "Indeed, I wish it might have been. I shall always think of your grandfather with reverence and with sorrow. He was a noble man, and was a friend to me, in spite of my politics, when other gentlemen of position would not invite me to their houses. It would be the greatest happiness of my life if I could restore

his property to you, where he would have had it go, and deprive that villain, your uncle, of the fruits of his crime.”

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"Then there is nothing to be got by contesting the will?" I asked.

He shook his head soberly.

"I fear not at present," said he, "nor can I with honesty hold out any hope to you, Richard. Your uncle, by reason of his wealth, is a man of undue influence with the powers of the colony. Even if he were not so, I doubt greatly whether we should be the gainers. The will is undoubtedly genuine. Mr. Carvel thought you dead, and we cannot prove undue influence by Grafton unless we also prove that it was he who caused your abduction. Do you think you can prove that?"

"There is one witness," I exclaimed, "who overheard my uncle and Mr. Allen talking of South River and Griggs, the master of the slaver, in the stables at Carvel Hall."

"And who is that?" demanded Mr. Swain, with more excitement than I believed him capable of.

"Old Harvey."

Your grandfather's coachman? Alas, he died the day after Mr. Carvel, and was buried the same afternoon. Have you spoken of this?"

"Not to a soul," said I.

"Then I would not. You will have to be very careful and say nothing, Richard. Let me hear what other reasons you have for believing that your uncle tried to do away with you."

I told him, lucidly as possible, everything I have related in these pages, and the admission of Griggs. He listened intently, shaking his head now and then, but not a word out of him.

"No," he said at length, "nothing is there which will be admitted, but enough to damn him if you yourself might be a witness. I will give you the law, briefly: descendible estates among us are of two kinds, estates in fee simple and estates in fee tail. Had your grandfather died without a will, his estate, which we suppose to be in fee simple, would have descended to you as the son of his eldest son, according to the fourth of the canons of descent in Blackstone. But with us fee simple estates are devisable, and Mr. Carvel was wholly within his right in cutting off the line of his eldest son. Do you follow me?"

I nodded.

"There is one chance," he continued, "and that is a very slim one. I said that Mr. Carvel's estate was supposed to be in fee simple. Estates tail are not devisable. Our

system of registration is far from infallible, and sometimes an old family settlement turns up to prove that a property which has been willed out of the direct line, as in fee simple, is in reality entailed. Is there a possibility of any such document?"

I replied that I did not know. My grandfather had never brought up the subject.

"We must bend our efforts in that direction," said the barrister. "I shall have my clerks make a systematic search."

He ceased talking, and sat sipping his sangaree in the abstracted manner common to him. I took the opportunity to ask about his family, thinking about what Dolly had said of Patty's illness.

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"The mother is as well as can be expected, Richard, and Patty very rosy with the country air. Your disappearance was a great shock to them both."

"And Tom?"

He went behind his reserve. "Tom is a d—d rake," he exclaimed, with some vehemence. "I have given him over. He has taken up with that macaroni Courtenay, who wins his money,—or rather my money,—and your cousin Philip, when he is home from King's College. How Tom can be son of mine is beyond me, in faith. I see him about once in two months, when he comes here with a bill for his satins and his ruffles, and along face of repentance, and a lot of gaming debts to involve my honour. And that reminds me, Richard," said he, looking straight at me with his clear, dark eyes: "have you made any plans for your future?"

I ventured to ask his advice as to entering the law.

"As the only profession open to a gentleman," he replied, smiling a little. "No, you were no more cut out for an attorney, or a barrister, or a judge, than was I for a macaroni doctor. The time is not far away, my lad," he went on, seeing my shame and confusion, "when an American may amass money in any way he chooses, and still be a gentleman, behind a counter, if he will."

"I do not fear work, Mr. Swain," I remarked, with some pride.

"That is what I have been thinking," he said shortly. "And I am not a man to make up my mind while you count three, Richard. I have the place in Talbot, and no one to look after it. And—and in short I think you are the man."

He paused to watch the effect of this upon me. But I was so taken aback by this new act of kindness that I could not say a word.

"Tom is fast going to the devil, as I told you," he continued. "He cannot be trusted. If I die, that estate shall be Patty's, and he may never squander it. Captain Daniel tells me, and Mr. Bordley also, that you managed at Carvel Hall with sense and ability. I know you are very young, but I think I may rely upon you."

Again he hesitated, eying me fixedly.

"Ah," said he, with his quiet smile, "it is the old noblesse oblige. How many careers has it ruined since the world began!"

CHAPTER XLV

THE HOUSE OF MEMORIES

I was greatly touched, and made Mr. Swain many awkward acknowledgments, which he mercifully cut short. I asked him for a while to think over his offer. This seemed to please rather than displease him. And my first impulse on reaching the inn was to ask the captain's advice. I thought better of it however, and at length resolved to thrash out the matter for myself.

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The next morning, as I sat reflecting, an overwhelming desire seized me to go to Marlboro' Street. Hitherto I could not have borne the sight of the old place. I gulped down my emotion as the gate creaked behind me, and made my way slowly to the white seat under the big chestnut behind the house, where my grandfather had been wont to sit reading his prints, in the warm weather. The flowers and the hedges had grown to a certain wildness; and the smell of the American roses carried me back-as odours will-to long-forgotten and trivial scenes. Here I had been caned many a day for Mr. Daaken's reports, and for earlier offences. And I recalled my mother as she once ran out at the sound of my cries to beg me off. So vivid was that picture that I could hear Mr. Carvel say: "He is yours, madam, not mine. Take him!"

I started up. The house was still, the sun blistering the green paint of the shutters. My eye was caught by those on the room that had been hers, and which, by my grandfather's decree, had lain closed since she left it. The image of it grew in my mind: the mahogany bed with its poppy counterpane and creamy curtains, and the steps at the side by which she was wont to enter it; and the 'prie-dieu', whence her soul had been lifted up to God. And the dresser with her china and silver upon it, covered by years of dust. For I had once stolen the key from Willis's bunch, crept in, and crept out again, awed. That chamber would be profaned, now, and those dear ornaments, which were mine, violated. The imagination choked me.

I would have them. I must. Nothing easier than to pry open a door or window in the north wing, by the ball-room. When I saw Grafton I would tell him. Nay, I would write him that day. I was even casting about me for an implement, when I heard a step on the gravel beside me.

I swung around, and came face to face with my uncle.

He must have perceived me. And after the first shock of my surprise had passed, I remarked a bearing on him that I had not seen before. He was master of the situation at last,—so it read. The realization gave him an easier speech than ever.

"I thought I might find you here, Richard," he said, "since you were not at the Coffee House."

He did not offer me his hand. I could only stare at him, for I had expected anything but this.

"I came from Carvel Hall to get you," he proceeded smoothly enough. "I heard but yesterday of your return, and some of your miraculous adventures. Your recklessness has caused us many a trying day, Richard, and I believe killed your grandfather. You have paid dearly, and have made us pay dearly, for your mad frolic of fighting cut-throats on the highroad."

The wonder was that I did not kill him on the spot. I cannot think what possessed the man,—he must have known me better.

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"My recklessness!" I shouted, fairly hoarse with anger. I paid no heed to Mr. Swain's warning. "You d—d scoundrel!" I cried, "it was you killed him, and you know it. When you had put me out of the way and he was in your power, you tortured him to death. You forced him to die alone with your sneering face, while your shrew of a wife counted cards downstairs. Grafton Carvel, God knows you better than I, who know you two well. And He will punish you as sure as the crack of doom."

He heard me through, giving back as I came forward, his face blanching only a little, and wearing all the time that yellow smile which so fitted it.

"You have finished?" says he.

"Ay, I have finished. And now you may order me from this ground you have robbed me of. But there are some things in that house you shall not steal, for they are mine despite you."

"Name them, Richard," he said, very sorrowful.

"The articles in my mother's room, which were hers."

"You shall have them this day," he answered.

It was his way never to lose his temper, tho' he were called by the vilest name in the language. He must always assume this pious grief which made me long to throttle him. He had the best of me, even now, as he took the great key from his pocket.

"Will you look at them before you go?" he asked.

At first I was for refusing. Then I nodded. He led the way silently around by the front; and after he had turned the lock he stepped aside with a bow to let me pass in ahead of him. Once more I was in the familiar hall with the stairs dividing at the back. It was cool after the heat, and musty, and a touch of death hung in the prisoned air. We paused for a moment on the landing, beside the high, triple-arched window which the branches tapped on windy winter days, while Grafton took down the bunch of keys from beside the clock. I thought of my dear grandfather winding it every Sunday, and his ruddy face and large figure as he stood glancing sidewise down at me. Then the sound of Grafton's feet upon the bare steps recalled the present.

We passed Mr. Carvel's room and went down the little corridor over the ball-room, until we came to the full-storied wing. My uncle flung open the window and shutters opposite and gave me the key. A delicacy not foreign to him held him where he was. Time had sealed the door, and when at last it gave before my strength, a shower of dust quivered in the ray of sunlight from the window. I entered reverently. I took only the silverbound prayer-book, cast a lingering look at the old familiar objects dimly defined, and came out

and locked the door again. I said very quietly that I would send for the things that afternoon, for my anger was hushed by what I had seen.

We halted together on the uncovered porch in front of the house, that had a seat set on each side of it. Marlboro' Street was still, the wide trees which flanked it spreading their shade over walk and roadway. Not a soul was abroad in the midday heat, and the windows of the long house opposite were sightless.

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"Richard," said my uncle, staring ahead of him, "I came to offer you a home, and you insult me brutally, as you have done unreprieved all your life. And yet no one shall say of me that I shirk my duty. But first I must ask you if there is aught else you desire of me."

"The black boy, Hugo, is mine," I said. I had no great love for Hugo, save for association's sake, and I had one too many servants as it was; but to rescue one slave from Grafton's clutches was charity.

"You shall have him," he replied, "and your chaise, and your wardrobe, and your horses, and whatever else I have that belongs to you. As I was saying, I will not shirk my duty. The memory of my dear father, and of what he would have wished, will not permit me to let you go a-begging. You shall be provided for out of the estate, despite what you have said and done."

This was surely the quintessence of a rogue's imagination. Instinctively I shrank from him. With a show of piety that 'turned me sick he continued:

"Let God witness that I carry out my father's will!"

"Stop there, Grafton Carvel!" I cried; "you shall not take His name in vain. Under this guise of holiness you and your accomplice have done the devil's own work, and the devil will reward you."

This reference to Mr. Allen, I believe, frightened him. For a second only did he show it.

"My—my accomplice, sir!" he stammered. And then righting himself: "You will have to explain this, by Heaven."

"In ample time your plot shall be laid bare, and you and his Reverence shall hang, or lie in chains."

"You threaten, Mr. Carvel?" he shouted, nearly stepping off the porch in his excitement.

"Nay, I predict," I replied calmly. And I went down the steps and out of the gate, he looking after me. Before I had turned the corner of Freshwater Lane, he was in the seat, and fanning himself with his hat.

I went straight to Mr. Swain's chambers in the Circle, where I found the good barrister and Captain Daniel in their shirt-sleeves, seated between the windows in the back room. Mr. Swain was grave enough when he heard of my talk with Grafton, but the captain swore I was my father's son (for the fiftieth time since I had come back), and that a man could no more help flying at Grafton's face than Knipe could resist his legs; or Cynthia his back, if he went into her stall. I had scarce finished my recital, when Mr.

Renwick, the barrister's clerk, announced Mr. Tucker, which caused Mr. Swain to let out a whistle of surprise.

"So the wind blows from that quarter, Daniel," said he. "I thought so."

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Mr. Tucker proved to be the pettifogger into whose hands Grafton had put his affairs, taking them from Mr. Dulany at Mr. Carvel's death. The man was all in a sweat, and had hardly got in the door before he began to talk. He had no less astonishing a proposition to make than this, which he enunciated with much mouthing of the honour and sense of duty of Mr. Grafton Carvel. His client offered to Mr. Richard Carvel the estate lying in Kent County, embracing thirty-three hundred acres more or less of arable land and woodland, with a fine new house, together with the indented servants and negroes and other chattels thereon. Mr. Richard Carvel would observe that in making this generous offer for the welfare of his nephew, Mr. Tucker's client was far beyond the letter of his obligations; wherefore Mr. Grafton Carvel made it contingent upon the acceptance of the estate that his nephew should sign a paper renouncing forever any claims upon the properties of the late Mr. Lionel Carvel. This condition was so deftly rolled up in law-Latin that I did not understand a word of it until Mr. Swain stated it very briefly in English. His quiet laugh prodigiously disconcerted the pettifogger, who had before been sufficiently ill at ease in the presence of the great lawyer. Mr. Tucker blew his nose loudly to hide his confusion.

"And what say you, Richard?" said Mr. Swain, without a shade of accent in his voice.

I bowed my head. I knew that the honest barrister had read my heart when he spoke of noblesse oblige. That senseless pride of cast, so deep-rooted in those born in our province, had made itself felt. To be a factor (so I thought, for I was young) was to renounce my birth. Until that moment of travail the doctrine of equality had seemed very pretty to me. Your fine gentleman may talk as nobly as he pleases over his Madeira, and yet would patronize Monsieur Rousseau if he met him; and he takes never a thought of those who knuckle to him every day, and clean his boots and collect his rents. But when he is tried in the fire, and told suddenly to collect some one else's rents and curse another's negroes, he is fainthearted for the experiment. So it was with me when I had to meet the issue. I might take Grafton's offer, and the chance to marry Dorothy was come again. For by industry the owner of the Kent lands would become rich.

The room was hot, and still save for the buzzing of the flies. When I looked up I discovered the eyes of all three upon me.

"You may tell your client, Mr. Tucker, that I refuse his offer," I said.

He got to his feet, and with the customary declaration of humble servitude bowed himself out.

The door was scarce closed on him when the captain had me by the hands.

"What said I, Henry?" he cried. "Did I not know the lad?"

Mr. Swain did not stir from his seat. He was still gazing at me with a curious expression. And then I saw the world in truer colour. This good Samaritan was not only taking me into his home, but would fight for my rights with the strong brain that had lifted him out of poverty and obscurity. I stood, humbled before him.

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"I would accept your kindness, Mr. Swain," I said, vainly trying to steady my voice, "but I have the faithful fellow, Banks, who followed me here from England, dependant on me, and Hugo, whom I rescued from my uncle. I will make over the black to you and you will have him."

He rose, brushed his eyes with his shirt, and took me by the arm. "You and the captain dine with me to-day," says he. "And as for Banks, I think that can be arranged. Now I have an estate, I shall need a trained butler, egad. I have some affairs to keep me in town to-day, Richard. But we'll be off for Cordon's Pride in the morning, and I know of one little girl will be glad to see us."

We dined out under the apple tree in Gloucester Street. And the captain argued, in his hopeful way, that Tucker's visit betrayed a weak point in Grafton's position. But the barrister shook his head and said that Grafton was too shrewd a rogue to tender me an estate if he feared me. It was Mr. Swain's opinion that the motive of my uncle was to put himself in a good light; and perhaps, he added, there was a little revenge mixed therein, as the Kent estate was the one Mr. Carvel had given him when he cast him off.

A southerly wind was sending great rolls of fog before it as Mr. Swain and I, with Banks, crossed over to Kent Island on the ferry the next morning. We traversed the island, and were landed by the other ferry on the soil of my native county, Queen Anne's. In due time we cantered past Master Dingley's tavern, the sight of which gave me a sharp pang, for it is there that the by-road turns over the bridge to Carvel Hall and Wilmot House; and force of habit drew my reins to the right across the horse's neck, so that I swerved into it. The barrister had no word of comment when I overtook him again.

'Twas about two o'clock when we came to the gate Mr. Swain had erected at the entrance to his place; the land was a little rolling, and partly wooded, like that on the Wye. But the fields were prodigiously unkempt. He drew up, and glanced at me.

"You will see there is much to be done with such fallows as these," said he. "The lessees from his Lordship were sportsmen rather than husbandmen, and had an antipathy to a constable or a sheriff like a rat to a boar cat. That is the curse of some of your Eastern Shore gentlemen, especially in Dorchester," he added; "they get to be fishmongers."

Presently we came in sight of the house, long and low, like the one in Gloucester Street, with a new and unpainted wing just completed. That day the mist softened its outline and blurred the trees which clustered about it. Even as we swung into the circle of the drive a rounded and youthful figure appeared in the doorway, gave a little cry, and stood immovable. It was Patty, in a striped dimity gown with the sleeves rolled up, and her face fairly shone with joy as I leaped from my horse and took her hands.

"So you like my surprise, girl?" said her father, as he kissed her blushing face.



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For answer she tore herself away, and ran through the hall to the broad porch in front.

"Our barrister is come, mother," we heard her exclaiming, "and whom do you think he has brought?"

"Is it Richard?" asked the gentler voice, more hastily than usual.

I stepped out on the porch, where the invalid sat in her armchair. She was smiling with joy, too, and she held out her wasted hands and drew me toward her, kissing me on both cheeks.

"I thank God for His goodness," said she.

"And the boy has come to stay, mother," said her husband, as he stooped over her.

"To stay!" cries Patty.

"Gordon's Pride is henceforth his home," replied the barrister. "And now I can return in peace to my musty law, and know that my plantation will be well looked after."

Patty gasped.

"Oh, I am so glad!" said she, "I could almost rejoice that his uncle cheated him out of his property. He is to be factor of Gordon's Pride?"

"He is to be master of Gordon's Pride, my dear," says her father, smiling and tilting her chin; "we shall have no such persons as factors here."

At that the tears forced themselves into my own eyes. I turned away, and then I perceived for the first time the tall form of my old friend, Percy Singleton.

"May I, too, bid you welcome, Richard," said he, in his manly way; "and rejoice that I have got such a neighbour?"

"Thank you, Percy," I answered. I was not in a state to say much more.

"And now," exclaims Patty, "what a dinner we shall have in the prodigal's honour! I shall make you all some of the Naples biscuit Mrs. Brice told me of."

She flew into the house, and presently we heard her clear voice singing in the kitchen.

CHAPTER XLVI

GORDON'S PRIDE

The years of a man's life that count the most are often those which may be passed quickest in the story of it. And so I may hurry over the first years I spent as Mr. Swain's factor at Gordon's Pride. The task that came to my hand was heaven-sent.

That manor-house, I am sure, was the tidiest in all Maryland, thanks to Patty's New England blood. She was astir with the birds of a morning, and near the last to retire at night, and happy as the days were long. She was ever up to her elbows in some dish, and her butter and her biscuits were the best in the province. Little she cared to work samplers, or peacocks in pretty wools, tho' in some way she found the time to learn the spinet. As the troubles with the mother country thickened, she took to a foot-wheel, and often in the crisp autumn evenings I would hear the bumping of it as I walked to the house, and turn the knob to come upon her spinning by the twilight. She would have no English-made linen in that household. "If mine scratch your back, Richard," she would say, "you must grin and bear, and console yourself with your virtue." It was I saw to the flax, and learned from Ivie Rawlinson (who had come to us from Carvel Hall) the best manner to ripple and break and swingle it. And Mr. Swain, in imitation of the high example set by Mr. Bordley, had buildings put up for wheels and the looms, and in due time kept his own sheep.

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If man or woman, white or black, fell sick on the place, it was Patty herself who tended them. She knew the virtue of every herb in the big chest in the storeroom. And at table she presided over her father's guests with a womanliness that won her more admiration than mine. Now that the barrister was become a man of weight, the house was as crowded as ever was Carvel Hall. Carrolls and Pacas and Dulanys and Johnsons, and Lloyds and Bordleys and Brices and Scotts and Jennings and Ridouts, and Colonel Sharpe, who remained in the province, and many more families of prominence which I have not space to mention, all came to Gordon's Pride. Some of these, as their names proclaim, were of the King's side; but the bulk of Mr. Swain's company were stanch patriots, and toasted Miss Patty instead of his Majesty. By this I do not mean that they lacked loyalty, for it is a matter of note that our colony loved King George.

I must not omit from the list above the name of my good friend, Captain Clapsaddle.

Nor was there lack of younger company. Betty Tayloe, who plied me with questions concerning Dorothy and London, but especially about the dashing and handsome Lord Comyn; and the Dulany girls, and I know not how many others. Will Fotheringay, when he was home from college, and Archie Brice, and Francis Willard (whose father was now in the Assembly) and half a dozen more to court Patty, who would not so much as look at them. And when I twitted her with this she would redden and reply: "I was created for a housewife, sir, and not to make eyes from behind a fan." Indeed, she was at her prettiest and best in the dimity frock, with the sleeves rolled up.

'Twas a very merry place, the manor of Gordon's Pride. A generous bowl of punch always stood in the cool hall, through which the south winds swept from off the water, and fruit and sangaree and lemonade were on the table there. The manor had no ball-room, but the negro fiddlers played in the big parlour. And the young folks danced till supper time. In three months Patty's suppers grew famous in a colony where there was no lack of good cooks.

The sweet-natured invalid enjoyed these festivities in her quiet way, and often pressed me to partake. So did Patty beg me, and Mr. Swain. Perhaps a false sense of pride restrained me, but my duties held me all day in the field, and often into the night when there was curing to be done, or some other matters of necessity. And for the rest, I thought I detected a change in the tone of Mr. Fotheringay, and some others, tho' it may have been due to sensibility on my part. I would put up with no patronage.

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There was no change of tone, at least, with the elder gentlemen. They plainly showed me an added respect. And so I fell into the habit, after my work was over, of joining them in their suppers rather than the sons and daughters. There I was made right welcome. The serious conversation spiced with the wit of trained barristers and men of affairs better suited my changed condition of life. The times were sober, and for those who could see, a black cloud was on each horizon. 'Twas only a matter of months when the thunder-clap was to come—indeed, enough was going on within our own province to forebode a revolution. The Assembly to which many of these gentlemen belonged was in a righteous state of opposition to the Proprietary and the Council concerning the emoluments of colonial officers and of clergymen. Honest Governor Eden had the misfortune to see the justice of our side, and was driven into a seventh state by his attempts to square his conscience. Bitter controversies were waging in the Gazette, and names were called and duels fought weekly. For our cause “The First Citizen” led the van, and the able arguments and moderate language of his letters soon identified him as Mr. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, one of the greatest men Maryland has ever known. But even at Mr. Swain’s, amongst his few intimate friends, Mr. Carroll could never be got to admit his ‘nom de guerre’ until long after ‘Antilon’ had been beaten.

I write it with pride, that at these suppers I was sometimes asked to speak; and, having been but lately to England, to give my opinion upon the state of affairs there. Mr. Carroll honoured me upon two occasions with his confidence, and I was made clerk to a little club they had, and kept the minutes in my own hand.

I went about in homespun, which, if good enough for Mr. Bordley, was good enough for me. I rode with him over the estate. This gentleman was the most accomplished and scientific farmer we had in the province. Having inherited his plantation on Wye Island, near Carvel Hall, he resigned his duties as judge, and a lucrative practice, to turn all his energies to the cultivation of the soil. His wheat was as eagerly sought after as was Colonel Washington’s tobacco.

It was to Mr. Bordley’s counsel that the greater part of my success was due. He taught me the folly of ploughing with a fluke,—a custom to which the Eastern Shore was wedded, pointing out that a double surface was thus exposed to the sun’s rays; and explained at length why there was more profit in small grain in that district than heavy tobacco. He gave me Dr. Eliot’s “Essays on Field Husbandry,” and Mill’s “Husby,” which I read from cover to cover. And I went from time to time to visit him at Wye Island, when he would canter with me over that magnificent plantation, and show me with pride the finished outcome of his experiments.

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Mr. Swain's affairs kept him in town the greater part of the twelve months, and Mrs. Swain and Patty moved to Annapolis in the autumn. But for three years I was at Gordon's Pride winter and summer alike. At the end of that time I was fortunate enough to show my employer such substantial results as to earn his commendation—ay, and his confidence, which was the highest token of that man's esteem. The moneys of the estate he left entirely at my order. And in the spring of '73, when the opportunity was suddenly offered to buy a thousand acres of excellent wheat land adjoining, I made the purchase for him while he was at Williamsburg, and upon my own responsibility.

This connected the plantation on the east with Singleton's. It had been my secret hope that the two estates might one day be joined in marriage. For of all those who came a-courting Patty, Percy was by far the best. He was but a diffident suitor; he would sit with me on the lawn evening after evening, when company was there, while Fotheringay and Francis Willard made their compliments within,—silly flatteries, at which Patty laughed.

Percy kept his hounds, and many a run we had together' in the sparkling days that followed the busy summer, when the crops were safe in the bottoms; or a quiet pipe and bottle in his bachelor's hall, after a soaking on the duck points.

And this brings me to a subject on which I am loth to write. Where Mr. Singleton was concerned, Patty, the kindest of creatures, was cruelty itself. Once, when I had the effrontery to venture a word in his behalf, I had been silenced so effectively as to make my ears tingle. A thousand little signs led me to a conclusion which pained me more than I can express. Heaven is my witness that no baser feeling leads me to hint of it here. Every day while the garden lasted flowers were in my room, and it was Banks who told me that she would allow no other hands than her own to place them by my bed. He got a round rating from me for violating the pledge of secrecy he had given her. It was Patty who made my shirts, and on Christmas knitted me something of comfort; who stood on the horse-block in the early morning waving after me as I rode away, and at my coming her eyes would kindle with a light not to be mistaken.

None of these things were lost upon Percy Singleton, and I often wondered why he did not hate me. He was of the kind that never shows a hurt. Force of habit still sent him to Gordon's Pride, but for days he would have nothing to say to the mistress of it, or she to him.

CHAPTER XLVII

VISITORS

It was not often that Mr. Thomas Swain honoured Gordon's Pride with his presence. He vowed that the sober Whig company his father brought there gave him the vapours. He snapped his fingers at the articles of the Patriots' Association, and still had his cocked

hats and his Brussels lace and his spyglass, and his top boots when he rode abroad, like any other Tory buck. His intimates were all of the King's side,—of the worst of the King's side, I should say, for I would not be thought to cast any slur on the great number of conscientious men of that party. But, being the son of one of the main props of the Whigs, Mr. Tom went unpunished for his father's sake. He was not uncondemned.

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Up to 1774, the times that Mr. Swain mentioned his son to me might be counted on the fingers of one hand. It took not a great deal of shrewdness to guess that he had paid out many a pretty sum to keep Tom's honour bright: as bright, at least, as such doubtful metal would polish. Tho' the barrister sought my ear in many matters, I never heard a whimper out of him on this score.

Master Tom had no ambition beyond that of being a macaroni; his easy-going nature led him to avoid alike trouble and responsibility. Hence he did not bother his head concerning my position. He appeared well content that I should make money out of the plantation for him to spend. His visits to Gordon's Pride were generally in the late autumn, and he brought his own company with him. I recall vividly his third or fourth appearance, in October of '73. Well I may! The family was preparing to go to town, and this year I was to follow them, and take from Mr. Swain's shoulders some of his private business, for he had been ailing a little of late from overwork.

The day of which I have spoken a storm had set in, the rain falling in sheets. I had been in the saddle since breakfast, seeing to an hundred repairs that had to be made before the cold weather. 'Twas near the middle of the afternoon when I pulled up before the weaving house. The looms were still, and Patty met me at the door with a grave look, which I knew portended something. But her first words were of my comfort.

"Richard, will you ever learn sense? You have been wet all day long, and have missed your dinner. Go at once and change your clothes, sir!" she commanded severely.

"I have first to look at the warehouse, where the roof is leaking," I expostulated.

"You shall do no such thing," replied she, "but dry yourself, and march into the dining room. We have had the ducks you shot yesterday, and some of your experimental hominy; but they are all gone."

I knew well she had laid aside for me some dainty, as was her habit. I dismounted. She gave me a quick, troubled glance, and said in a low voice:

"Tom is come. And oh, I dare not tell you whom he has with him now!"

"Courtenay?" I asked.

"Yes, of coarse. I hate the sight of the man. But your cousin, Philip Carvel, is here, Richard. Father will be very angry. And they are making a drinking-tavern of the house."

I gave Firefly a slap that sent her trotting stable-ward, and walked rapidly to the house. I found the three of them drinking in the hall, the punch spilled over the table, and staining the cards.

“Gad’s life!” cries Tom, “here comes Puritan Richard, in his broad rim. How goes the crop, Richard? ’Twill have to go well, egad, for I lost an hundred at the South River Club last week!”

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Next him sat Philip, whom I had not seen since before I was carried off. He was lately come home from King's College; and very mysteriously, his father giving out that his health was not all it should be. He had not gained Grafton's height, but he was broader, and his face had something in it of his father. He had his mother's under lip and complexion. Grafton was sallow; Philip was a peculiar pink,—not the ruddy pink of heartier natures, like my grandfather's, nor yet had he the peach-like skin of Mr. Dix. Philip's was a darker and more solid colour, and I have never seen man or woman with it and not mistrusted them. He wore a red velvet coat embroidered with gold, and as costly ruffles as I had ever seen in London. But for all this my cousin had a coarse look, and his polished blue flints of eyes were those of a coarse man.

He got to his feet as Tom spoke, looking anywhere but at me, and came forward slowly. He was loyal to no one, was Philip, not even to his father. When he was got within three paces he halted.

"How do you, cousin?" says he.

"A little wet, as you perceive, Philip," I replied.

I left him and stood before the fire, my rough wool steaming in the heat. He sat down again, a little awkwardly; and the situation began to please me better.

"How do you?" I asked presently.

"I have got a devilish cold," said he. "Faith, I'll warrant the doctor will be sworn I have been but indifferent company since we left the Hall. Eh, doctor?"

Courtenay, with his feet stretched out, bestowed an amiable but languid wink upon me, as much as to say that I knew what Mr. Philip's company was at best. When I came out after my dinner, they were still sitting there, Courtenay yawning, and Tom and Philip wrangling over last night's play.

"Come, my man of affairs, join us a hand!" says the doctor to me. "I have known the time when you would sit from noon until supper."

"I had money then," said I.

"And you have a little now, or I am cursed badly mistook. Oons! what do you fear?" he exclaimed, "you that have played with March and Fox?"

"I fear nothing, doctor," I answered, smiling. "But a man must have a sorry honour when he will win fifty pounds with but ten of capital."

"One of Dr. Franklin's maxims, I presume," says he, with sarcasm.

“And if it were, it could scarce be more pat,” I retorted. “’Tis Poor Richard’s maxim.”

“O lud! O my soul!” cries Tom, with a hiccup and a snigger; “’tis time you made another grand tour, Courtenay. Here’s the second Whig has got in on you within the week!”

“Thank God they have not got me down to osnabrig and bumbo yet,” replies the doctor. Coming over to me by the fire, he tapped my sleeve and added in a low tone:

“Forbearance with such a pair of asses is enough to make a man shed bitter tears. But a little of it is necessary to keep out of debt. You and I will play together, against both the lambs, Richard. One of them is not far from maudlin now.”

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"Thank you, doctor," I answered politely, "but I have a better way to make my living." In three years I had learned a little to control my temper.

He shrugged his thin shoulders. "Eh bien, mon bon," says he, "I dare swear you know your own game better than do I." And he cast a look up the stairs, of which I quite missed the meaning. Indeed, I was wholly indifferent. The doctor and his like had passed out of my life, and I believed they were soon to disappear from our Western Hemisphere. The report I had heard was now confirmed, that his fortune was dissipated, and that he lived entirely off these young rakes who aspired to be macaronies.

"Since your factor is become a damned Lutheran, Tom," said he, returning to the table and stripping a pack, "it will have to be picquet. You promised me we could count on a fourth, or I had never left Inman's."

It was Tom, as I had feared, who sat down unsteadily opposite. Philip lounged and watched them sulkily, snuffing and wheezing and dipping into the bowl, and cursing the house for a draughty barn. I took a pipe on the settle to see what would come of it. I was not surprised that Courtenay lost at first, and that Tom drank the most of the punch. Nor was it above half an hour before the stakes were raised and the tide began to turn in the doctor's favour.

"A plague of you, Courtenay!" cries Mr. Tom, at length, flinging down the cards. His voice was thick, while the Selwyn of Annapolis was never soberer in his life. Tom appealed first to Philip for the twenty pounds he owed him.

"You know how damned stingy my father is, curse you," whined my cousin, in return. "I told you I should not have it till the first of the month."

Tom swore back. He thrust his hands deep in his pockets and sank into that attitude of dejection common to drunkards. Suddenly he pulled himself up.

"Shblood! Here's Richard t' draw from. Lemme have fifty pounds, Richard."

"Not a farthing," I said, unmoved.

"You say wha' shall be done with my father's money!" he cried. "I call tha' damned cool—Gad's life! I do. Eh, Courtenay?"

Courtenay had the sense not to interfere.

"I'll have you dishcharged, Gads death! so I will!" he shouted. "No damned airs wi' me, Mr. Carvel. I'll have you know you're not wha' you once were, but, only a cursht oversheer."

He struggled to his feet, forgot his wrath on the instant, and began to sing drunkenly the words of a ribald air. I took him by both shoulders and pushed him back into his chair.

“Be quiet,” I said sternly; “while your mother and sister are here you shall not insult them with such a song.” He ceased, astonished. “And as for you, gentlemen,” I continued, “you should know better than to make a place of resort out of a gentleman’s house.”

Courtenay’s voice broke the silence that followed.

“Of all the cursed impertinences I ever saw, egad!” he drawled. “Is this your manor, Mr. Carvel? Or have you a seat in Kent?”

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I would not have it in black and white that I am an advocate of fighting. But at that moment I was in the mood when it does not matter much one way or the other. The drunken man carried us past the point.

"The damned in—intriguing rogue'sh worked himself into my father's grashes," he said, counting out his words. "He'sh no more Whig than me. I know'sh game, Courtenay—he wants t' marry Patty. Thish place'll be hers."

The effect upon me of these words, with all their hideous implication of gossip and scandal, was for an instant benumbing. The interpretation of the doctor's innuendo struck me then. I was starting forward, with a hand open to clap over Tom's mouth, when I saw the laugh die on Courtenay's face, and him come bowing to his legs. I turned with a start.

On the stairs stood Patty herself, pale as marble.

"Come with me, Tom," she said.

He had obeyed her from childhood. This time he tried, and failed miserably.

"Beg pardon, Patty," he stammered, "no offensh meant. Thish factor thinks h' ownsh Gordon's now. I say, not'll h' marries you. Good fellow, Richard, but infernal forward. Eh, Courtenay?"

Philip turned away, while the doctor pretended to examine the silver punch-ladle. As for me, I could only stare. It was Patty who kept her head, and made us a stately curtsy.

"Will you do me the kindness, gentlemen," said she, "to leave me with my brother?"

We walked silently into the parlour, and I closed the door.

"Slife!" cried Courtenay, "she's a vision. What say you, Philip? And I might see her in that guise again, egad, I would forgive Tom his five hundred crowns!"

"A buxom vision," agreed my cousin, "but I vow I like 'em so." He had forgotten his cold.

"This conversation is all of a piece with the rest of your conduct," said I, hotly.

The candles were burning brightly in the sconces. The doctor walked to the glass, took snuff, and burnished his waistcoat before he answered.

"Sure, a fortune lies under every virtue we assume," he recited. "But she is not for you, Richard," says he, tapping his box.

“Mr. Carvel, if you please,” I replied. I felt the demon within me. But I had the sense to realize that a quarrel with Dr. Courtenay, under the circumstances, would be far from wise. He had no intention of quarrelling, however. He made me a grand bow.

“Mr. Carvel, your very obedient. Hereafter I shall know better than to forget myself with an overseer.” And he gave me his back. “What say you to a game of billiards, Philip?”

Philip seemed glad to escape. And soon I heard their voices, mingling with the click of the balls. There followed for me one of the bitterest half hours I have had in my life. Then Patty opened the hall door.

“Will you come in for a moment, Richard?” she said, quite calmly.

I followed her, wondering at the masterful spirit she had shown. For there was Tom all askew in his chair, his feet one way and his hands another, totally subdued. What was most to the point, he made me an elaborate apology. How she had sobered his mind I know not. His body was as helpless as the day he was born.

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Long before the guests thought of rising the next morning, Patty came to me as I was having the mare saddled. The sun was up, and the clouds were being chased, like miscreants who have played their prank, and were now running for it. The sharp air brought the red into her cheeks. And for the first time in her life with me she showed shyness. She glanced up into my face, and then down at the leaves running on the ground.

"I hope they will go to-day," said she, when I was ready to mount.

I began to tighten the girths, venting my feelings on Firefly until the animal swung around and made a vicious pass at my arm.

"Richard!"

"Yes."

"You will not worry over that senseless speech of Tom's?"

"I see it in a properer light now, Patty," I replied. "I usually do—in the morning."

She sighed.

"You are so—high-strung," she said, "I was afraid you would—"

"I would—?"

She did not answer until I had repeated.

"I was very silly," she said slowly, her colour mounting even higher, "I was afraid that you would—leave us." Stroking the mare's neck, and with a little halt in her voice, "I do not know what we should do without you."

Indeed, I was beginning to think I would better leave, though where I should go was more than I could say. With a quick intuition she caught my hand as I put foot in the stirrup.

"You will not go away!" she cried. "Say you will not! What would poor father do? He is not so well as he used to be."

The wild appeal in her eyes frightened me. It was beyond resisting. In great agitation I put my foot to the ground again.

"Patty, I should be a graceless scamp in truth," I exclaimed. "I do not forget that your father gave me a home when mine was taken away, and has made me one of his family. I shall thank God if I can but lighten some of his burdens."

But they did not depart that day, nor the next; nor, indeed, for a week after. For Philip's cold brought on a high fever. He stuck to his bed, and Patty herself made broth and dainties for him, and prescribed him medicine out of the oak chest whence had come so much comfort. At first Philip thought he would die, and forswore wine and cards, and some other things the taste for which he had cultivated, and likewise worse vices that had come to him by nature.

I am greatly pleased to write that the stay profited the gallant Dr. Courtenay nothing. Patty's mature beauty and her manner of carrying off the episode in the hall had made a deep impression upon the Censor. I read the man's mind in his eye; here was a match to mend his fortunes, and do him credit besides. However, his wit and his languishing glances and double meanings fell on barren ground. No tire-woman on the plantation was busier than Patty during the first few days of his stay. After that he grew sulky and vented his spleen on poor Tom, winning more money from him at billiards and picquet. Since the doctor was too much the macaroni to ride to hounds and to shoot ducks, time began to hang exceeding heavy on his hands.

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Patty and I had many a quiet laugh over his predicament. And, to add zest to the situation, I informed Singleton of what was going forward. He came over every night for supper, and to my delight the bluff Englishman was received in a fashion to make the doctor writhe and snort with mortification. Never in his life had he been so insignificant a person. And he, whose conversation was so sought after in the gay season in town, was thrown for companionship upon a scarce-grown boy whose talk was about as salted, and whose intellect as great, as those of the cockerouse in our fable. He stood it about a se'nnight, at the end of which space Philip was put on his horse, will-he-nill-he, and made to ride northward.

I sat with my cousin of an evening as he lay in bed. Not, I own, from any charity on my part, but from other motives which do me no credit. The first night he confessed his sins, and they edified me not a little. On the second he was well enough to sit up and swear, and to vow that Miss Swain was an angel; that he would marry her the very next week and his father Grafton were not such a stickler for family.

“Curse him,” says his dutiful and loyal son, “he is so bally stingy with my stipend that I am in debt to half the province. And I say it myself, Richard, he has been a blackguard to you, tho’ I allow him some little excuse. You were faring better now, my dear cousin, and you had not given him every reason to hate you. For I have heard him declare more than once ’pon my soul, I have—that he would rather you were his friend than his enemy.”

My contempt for Philip kept me silent here. I might quarrel with Grafton, who had sense enough to feel pain at a well deserved thrust. Philip had not the intelligence to recognize insult from compliment. It was but natural he should mistake my attitude now. He leaned forward in his bed.

“Hark you, Richard,” whispers he, with a glance at the door, “I might tell you some things and I chose, and—and it were worth my while.”

“Worth your while?” I repeated vaguely.

He traced nervously the figures on the counterpane. Next came a rush of anger to redden his face.

“By Gad, I will tell you. Swear to Gad I will.” Then, the little cunning inherited from his father asserting itself, he added, “Look you, Richard, I am the son of one of the richest men in the colony, and I get the pittance of a backwoods pastor. I tell you ’tis not to be borne with. And I am not of as much consideration at the Hall as Brady, the Irish convict, who has become overseer.”

I little wondered at this. Philip sank back, and for some moments eyed me between narrowed lids. He continued presently with shortened breath:

“I have evidence—I have evidence to get you back a good share of the estate, which my father will never miss. And I will do it,” he cries, suddenly bold, “I will do it for three thousand pounds down when you receive it.”

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This was why he had come with Tom to Talbot! I was so dumfounded that my speech was quite taken away. Then I got up and began pacing the room. Was it not fair to fight a scoundrel with his own weapons? Here at last was the witness Mr. Swain had been seeking so long, come of his own free will. Then—Heaven help me!—my mind flew on. As time had passed I had more than once regretted refusing the Kent plantation, which had put her from whom my thought never wandered within my reach again. Good Mr. Swain had erred for once. 'Twas foolish, indeed, not to accept a portion of what was rightfully mine, when no more could be got. And now, if what Philip said was true (and I doubted it not), here at last was the chance come again to win her without whom I should never be happy. I glanced at my cousin.

“Gad’s life!” says he, “it is cheap enough. I might have asked you double.”

“So you might, and have been refused,” I cried hotly. For I believe that speech of his recalled me to my senses. It has ever been an instinct with me that no real prosperity comes out of double-dealing. And commerce with such a sneak sickened me. “Go back to your father, Philip, and threaten him, and he may make you rich. Such as he live by blackmail. And you may add, and you will, that the day of retribution is coming for him.”

CHAPTER XLVIII

MULTUM IN PARVO

I lost no time after getting to Annapolis in confiding to Mr. Swain the conversation I had had with my cousin Philip. And I noticed, as he sat listening to my account in the library in Gloucester Street, that the barrister looked very worn. He had never been a strong man, and the severe strain he had been under with the patriots’ business was beginning to tell.

He was very thoughtful when I had finished, and then told me briefly that I had done well not to take the offer. “Tucker would have made but short work of such evidence, my lad,” said he, “and I think Master Philip would have lied himself in and out a dozen times. I cannot think what witness he would have introduced save Mr. Allen. And there is scarcely a doubt that your uncle pays him for his silence, for I am told he is living in Frederick in a manner far above what he gets from the parish. However, Philip has given us something more to work on. It may be that he can put hands on the messenger.”

I rose to go.

“We shall bring them to earth yet, Richard, and I live,” he added. “And I have always meant to ask you whether you ever regretted your decision in taking Gordon’s Pride.”

“And you live, sir!” I exclaimed, not heeding the question.

He smiled somewhat sadly.

“Of one thing I am sure, my lad,” he continued, “which is that I have had no regrets about taking you. Mr. Bordley has just been here, and tells me you are the ablest young man in the province. You see that more eyes than mine are upon you. You have proved yourself a man, Richard, and there are very few macaronies would have done as you did. I am resolved to add another little mite to your salary.”

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The “little mite” was of such a substantial nature that I protested strongly against it. I thought of Tom’s demands upon him.

“I could afford to give you double for what you have made off the place,” he interrupted. “But I do not believe in young men having too much.” He sighed, and turned to his work.

I hesitated. “You have spent time and labour upon my case, sir, and have asked no fee.”

“I shall speak of the fee when I win it,” he said dryly, “and not before. How would you like to be clerk this winter to the Committee of Correspondence?”

I suppose my pleasure was expressed in my face.

“Well,” said he, “I have got you the appointment without much difficulty. There are many ways in which you can be useful to the party when not helping me with my affairs.”

This conversation gave me food for reflection during a week. I was troubled about Mr. Swain, and what he had said as to not living kept running in my head as I wrote or figured. For I had enough to hold me busy.

In the meantime, the clouds fast gathering on both sides of the Atlantic grew blacker, and blacker still. I saw a great change in Annapolis. Men of affairs went about with grave faces, while gay and sober alike were touched by the spell. The Tory gentry, to be sure, rattled about in their gilded mahogany coaches, in spite of jeers and sour looks. My Aunt Caroline wore jewelled stomachers to the assemblies,—now become dry and shrivelled entertainments. She kept her hairdresser, had three men in livery to her chair, and a little negro in Turk’s costume to wait on her. I often met her in the streets, and took a fierce joy in staring her, in the eye. And Grafton! By a sort of fate I was continually running against him. He was a very busy man, was my uncle, and had a kind of dignified run, which he used between Marlboro’ Street and the Council Chamber in the Stadt House, or the Governor’s mansion. He never did me the honour to glance at me. The Rev. Mr. Allen, too, came a-visiting from Frederick, where he had grown stout as an alderman upon the living and its perquisites and Grafton’s additional bounty. The gossips were busy with his doings, for he had his travelling-coach and servant now. He went to the Tory balls with my aunt. Once I all but encountered him on the Circle, but he ran into Northeast Street to avoid me.

Yes, that was the winter when the wise foresaw the inevitable, and the first sharp split occurred between men who had been brothers. The old order of things had plainly passed, and I was truly thankful that my grandfather had not lived to witness those scenes. The greater part of our gentry stood firm for America’s rights, and they had behind them the best lawyers in America. After the lawyers came the small planters and

most of the mechanics. The shopkeepers formed the backbone of King George's adherents; the Tory gentry, the clergy, and those holding office under the proprietor made the rest.

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And it was all about tea, a word which, since '67, had been steadily becoming the most vexed in the language. The East India Company had put forth a complaint. They had Heaven knows how many tons getting stale in London warehouses, all by reason of our stubbornness, and so it was enacted that all tea paying the small American tax should have a rebate of the English duties. That was truly a master-stroke, for Parliament to give it us cheaper than it could be had at home! To cause his Majesty's government to lose revenues for the sake of being able to say they had caught and taxed us at last! The happy result is now history, my dears. And this is not a history, tho' I wish it were. What occurred at Boston, at Philadelphia, and Charleston, has since caused Englishmen, as well as Americans, to feel proud. The chief incident in Annapolis I shall mention in another chapter.

When it became known with us that several cargoes were on their way to the colonies, excitement and indignation gained a pitch not reached since the Stamp Act. Business came to a standstill, plantations lay idle, and gentry and farmers flocked to Annapolis, and held meetings and made resolutions anew. On my way of a morning from Mr. Swain's house to his chambers in the Circle I would meet as many as a dozen knots of people. Mr. Claude was one of the few patriots who reaped reward out of the disturbance, for his inn was crowded. The Assembly met, appointed committees to correspond with the other colonies, and was prorogued once and again. Many a night I sat up until the small hours copying out letters to the committees of Virginia, and Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. The gentlemen were wont to dine at the Coffee House, and I would sit near the foot of the table, taking notes of their plans. 'Twas so I met many men of distinction from the other colonies. Colonel Washington came once. He was grown a greater man than ever, and I thought him graver than when I had last seen him. I believe a trait of this gentleman was never to forget a face.

"How do you, Richard?" said he. How I reddened when he called me so before all the committee. "I have heard your story, and it does you vast credit. And the gentlemen tell me you are earning laurels, sir."

That first winter of the tea troubles was cold and wet with us, and the sun, as if in sympathy with the times, rarely showed his face. Early in February our apprehensions concerning Mr. Swain's health were realized. One day, without a word to any one, he went to his bed, where Patty found him. And I ran all the way to Dr. Leiden's. The doctor looked at him, felt his pulse and his chest, and said nothing. But he did not rest that night, nor did Patty or I.

Thus I came to have to do with the good barrister's private affairs. I knew that he was a rich man, as riches went in our province, but I had never tried to guess at his estate. I confess the sums he had paid out in Tom's behalf frightened me. With the advice of Mr. Bordley and Mr. Lloyd I managed his money as best I could, but by reason of the non-importation resolutions there was little chance for good investments, —no cargoes

coming and few going. I saw, indeed, that buying the Talbot estate had been a fortunate step, since the quantities of wheat we grew there might be disposed of in America.

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When Dr. Leiden was still coming twice a day to Gloucester Street, Mr. Tom must needs get into a scrape with one of the ladies of the theatre, and come to me in the Circle chambers for one hundred pounds. I told him, in despair, that I had no authority to pay out his father's money. "And so you have become master, sure enough!" he cried, in a passion. For he was desperate. "You have worked your way in vastly well, egad, with your Whig committee meetings and speeches. And now he is on his back, and you have possession, you choose to cut me off. 'Slife, I know what will be coming next!"

I pulled him into Mr. Swain's private room, where we would be free of the clerks. "Yes, I am master here," I replied, sadly enough, as he stood sullenly before me. "I should think you would be ashamed to own it. When I came to your father I was content to be overseer in Talbot, and thankful for his bounty. 'Tis no fault of mine, but your disgrace, that his son is not managing his business, and supporting him in the rights of his country. I am not very old, Tom. A year older than you, I believe. But I have seen enough of life to prophesy your end and you do not reform."

"We are turned preacher," he says, with a sneer.

"God forbid! But I have been in a sponging-house, and tasted the lowest dregs. And if this country becomes free, as I think it will some day, such as you will be driven to England, and die in the Fleet."

"Not while my father lives," retorts he, and throws aside the oiled silk cape with a London name upon it. The day was rainy. I groaned. My responsibility lay heavy upon me. And this was not my first scene with him. He continued doggedly:—"You have no right to deny me what is not yours. 'Twill be mine one day."

"You have no right to accuse me of thoughts that do not occur to men of honour," I replied. "I am slower to anger than I once was, but I give you warning now. Do you know that you will ruin your father in another year and you continue?"

He gave me no answer. I reached for the ledger, and turning the pages, called off to him the sums he had spent.

"Oh, have done, d—n it!" he cried, when I was not a third through. "Are you or are you not to give me the money?"

"And you are to spend it upon an actress?" I should have called her by a worse name.

"Actress!" he shouted. "Have you seen her in The Orphan? My soul, she is a divinity!" Then he shifted suddenly to whining and cringing. "I am ruined outright, Richard, if I do not get it."



Abjectly he confessed the situation, which had in it enough material for a scandal to set the town wagging for a month. And the weight of it would fall; as I well knew, upon those who deserved it least.

"I will lend you the money, or, rather, will pay it for you," I said, at last. For I was not so foolish as to put it into his hands. "You shall have the sum under certain conditions."

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He agreed to them before they were out of my mouth, and swore in a dozen ways that he would repay me every farthing. He was heartily tired of the creature, and, true to his nature, afraid of her. That night when the play was over I went to her lodging, and after a scene too distressing to dwell upon, bought her off.

I sat with Mr. Swain many an hour that spring, with Patty sewing at the window open to the garden. Often, as we talked, unnoticed by her father she would drop her work and the tears glisten in her eyes. For the barrister's voice was not as strong as it once was, and the cold would not seem to lift from his chest. So this able man, who might have sat in the seats of Maryland's high reward, was stricken when he was needed most.

He was permitted two visitors a day: now 'twas Mr. Carroll and Colonel Lloyd, again Colonel Tilghman and Captain Clapsaddle, or Mr. Yaca and Mr. Bordley. The gentlemen took turns, and never was their business so pressing that they missed their hour. Mr. Swain read all the prints, and in his easier days would dictate to me his views for the committee, or a letter signed Brutes for Mr. Green to put in the Gazette. So I became his mouthpiece at the meetings, and learned to formulate my thoughts and to speak clearly.

For fear of confusing this narrative, my dears, I have referred but little to her who was in my thoughts night and day, and whose locket I wore, throughout all those years, next my heart. I used to sit out under the stars at Gordon's Pride, with the river lapping at my feet, and picture her the shining centre of all the brilliant scenes I had left, and wonder if she still thought of me.

Nor have I mentioned that faithful correspondent, and more faithful friend, Lord Comyn. As soon as ever I had obtained from Captain Daniel my mother's little inheritance, I sent off the debt I owed his Lordship. 'Twas a year before I got him to receive it; he despatched the money back once, saying that I had more need of it than he. I smiled at this, for my Lord was never within his income, and I made no doubt he had signed a note to cover my indebtedness.

Every letter Comyn writ me was nine parts Dolly, and the rest of his sheet usually taken up with Mr. Fox and his calamities: these had fallen upon him very thick of late. Lord Holland had been forced to pay out a hundred thousand pounds for Charles, and even this enormous sum did not entirely free Mr. Fox from the discounters and the hounds. The reason for this sudden onslaught was the birth of a boy to his brother Stephen, who was heir to the title. "When they told Charles of it," Comyn wrote, "said he, coolly: 'My brother Ste's son is a second Messiah, born for the destruction of the Jews.'"

I saw no definite signs, as yet, of the conversion of this prodigy, which I so earnestly hoped for. He had quarrelled with North, lost his place on the Admiralty, and presently the King had made him a Lord of the Treasury, tho' more out of fear than love. Once in a while, when he saw Comyn at Almack's, he would desire to be remembered to me,

and he always spoke of me with affection. But he could be got to write to no one, said my Lord, with kind exaggeration; nor will he receive letters, for fear he may get a dun.

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Alas, I got no message from Dorothy! Nor had she ever mentioned my name to Comyn. He had not seen her for eight months after I left England, as she had been taken to the Continent for her health. She came back to London more ravishing than before, and (I use his Lordship's somewhat extravagant language) her suffering had stamped upon her face even more of character and power. She had lost much of her levity, likewise. In short, my Lord declared, she was more of the queen than ever, and the mystery which hung over the Vauxhall duel had served only to add to her fame.

Dorothy having become cognizant of Mr. Marmaduke's trickery, Chartersea seemed to have dropped out of the race. He now spent his time very evenly between Spa and Derresley and Paris. Hence I had so much to be thankful for,—that with all my blunders, I had saved her from his Grace. My Lord the Marquis of Wells was now most conspicuous amongst her suitors. Comyn had nothing particular against this nobleman, saying that he was a good fellow, with a pretty fortune. And here is a letter, my dears, in which he figures, that I brought to Cordon's Pride that spring:

“10 *South Parade, Bath,*
“March 12, 1774.

“*Dear Richard:*—Miss Manners has come to Bath, with a train behind her longer than that which followed good Queen Anne hither, when she made this Gehenna the fashion. Her triumphal entry last Wednesday was announced by such a peal of the abbey bells as must have cracked the metal (for they have not rung since) and started Beau Nash a-cursing where he lies under the floor. Next came her serenade by the band. Mr. Marmaduke swore they would never have done, and squirmed and grinned like Punch when he thought of the fee, for he had hoped to get off with a crown, I warrant you. You should have seen his face when they would accept no fee at all for the beauty! Some wag has writ a verse about it, which was printed, and has set the whole pump-room laughing this morning. “She was led out by Wells in the Seasons last night. As Spring she is too bewildering for my pen,—all primrose and white, with the flowers in her blue-black hair. Had Sir Joshua seen her, he would never rest content till he should have another portrait. The Duc de Lauzun, who contrived to get two dances, might give you a description in a more suitable language than English. And there was a prodigious deal of jealousy among the fair ones on the benches, you may be sure, and much jaundiced comment. “Some half dozen of us adorers have a mess at the Bear, and have offered up a prize for the most appropriate toast on the beauty. This is in competition with Mrs. Miller. Have you not heard of her among your tobacco-hills? Horry calls her Mrs. ‘Calliope’ Miller. At her place near here, Bath Easton Villa, she has set up a Roman vase bedecked with myrtle, and into

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this we drop our bouts-rimes. Mrs. Calliope has a ball every Thursday, when the victors are crowned. T'other day the theme was 'A Buttered Muffin,' and her Grace of Northumberland was graciously awarded the prize. In faith, that theme taxed our wits at the Bear,—how to weave Miss Dolly's charms into a verse on a buttered muffin. I shall not tire you with mine. Storer's deserved to win, and we whisper that Mrs. Calliope ruled it out through spite. 'When Phyllis eats,' so it began, and I vow 'twas devilish ingenious. "We do nothing but play lasquet and tennis, and go to the assembly, and follow Miss Dolly into Gill's, the pastry-cook's, where she goes every morning to take a jelly. The ubiquitous Wells does not give us much chance. He writes 'vers de societe' with the rest, is high in Mr. Marmaduke's favour, which alone is enough to damn his progress. I think she is ill of the sight of him.

"Albeit she does not mourn herself into a tree, I'll take oath your Phyllis is true to you, Richard, and would live with you gladly in a thatched hut and you asked her. Write me more news of yourself.

"Your ever affectionate
"Comyn

"P.S. I have had news of you through Mr. Worthington, of your colony, who is just arrived here. He tells me that you have gained a vast reputation for your plantation, and likewise that you are thought much of by the Whig wiseacres, and that you hold many seditious offices. He does not call them so. Since your modesty will not permit you to write me any of these things, I have been imagining you driving slaves with a rawhide, and seeding runaway convicts to the mines. Mr. W. is even now paying his respects to Miss Manners, and I doubt not trumpeting your praises there, for he seems to like you. So I have asked him to join the Bear mess. One more unfortunate!" P.S. I was near forgetting the news about Charles Fox. He sends you his love, and tells me to let you know that he has been turned out of North's house for good and all. He is sure you will be cursed happy over it, and says that you predicted he would go over to the Whigs. I can scarce believe that he will. North took a whole week to screw up His courage, h-s M-j-sty pricking him every day. And then he wrote this: "'Sir, his Majesty has thought proper to order a new Commission of the Treasury to be made out, in which I do not see your name.' Poor Charles! He is now without money or place, but as usual appears to worry least of all of us, and still reads his damned Tasso for amusement.

"C."

Perchance he was to be the Saint Paul of English politics, after all.

CHAPTER XLIX

LIBERTY LOSES A FRIEND

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Mr. Bordley's sloop took Mr. Swain to Gordon's Pride in May, and placed him in the big room overlooking the widening river. There he would lie all day long, staring through the leaves at the water, or listening to the sweet music of his daughter's voice as she read from the pompous prints of the time. Gentlemen continued to come to the plantation, for the barrister's wisdom was sorely missed at the councils. One day, as I rode in from the field, I found Colonel Lloyd just arrived from Philadelphia, sipping sangaree on the lawn and mopping himself with his handkerchief. His jolly face was troubled. He waved his hand at me.

"Well, Richard," says he, "we children are to have our first whipping. At least one of us. And the rest are resolved to defy our parent."

"Boston, Mr. Lloyd?" I asked.

"Yes, Boston," he replied; "her port is closed, and we are forbid any intercourse with her until she comes to her senses. And her citizens must receive his gracious Majesty's troopers into their houses. And if a man kill one of them by any chance, he is to go to England to be tried. And there is more quite as bad."

"'Tis bad enough!" I cried, flinging myself down. And Patty gave me a glass in silence.

"Ay, but you must hear all," said he; "our masters are of a mind to do the thing thoroughly. Canada is given some score of privileges. Her French Roman Catholics, whom we fought not long since, are thrown a sop, and those vast territories between the lakes and the Ohio and Mississippi are given to Quebec as a price for her fidelity. And so, if the worst comes to worst, George's regiments will have a place to land against us."

Such was the news, and though we were some hundreds of miles from Massachusetts, we felt their cause as our own. There was no need of the appeal which came by smoking horses from Philadelphia, for the indignation of our people was roused to the highest pitch. Now Mr. Swain had to take to his bed from the excitement.

This is not a history, my dears, as I have said. And time is growing short. I shall pass over that dreary summer of '74. It required no very keen eye to see the breakers ahead, and Mr. Bordley's advice to provide against seven years of famine did not go unheeded. War was the last thing we desired. We should have been satisfied with so little, we colonies! And would have voted the duties ten times over had our rights been respected. Should any of you doubt this, you have but to read the "Address to the King" of our Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia. The quarrel was so petty, and so easy of mending, that you of this generation may wonder why it was allowed to run. I have tried to tell you that the head of a stubborn, selfish, and wilful monarch blocked the way to reconciliation. King George the Third is alone to blame for that hatred of race against race which already hath done so much evil. And I pray God that a great historian may

arise whose pen will reveal the truth, and reconcile at length those who are, and should be, brothers.

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By October, that most beautiful month of all the year in Maryland, we were again in Annapolis: One balmy day 'twas a Friday, I believe, and a gold and blue haze hung over the Severn—Mr. Chase called in Gloucester Street to give the barrister news of the Congress, which he had lately left. As he came down the stairs he paused for a word with me in the library, and remarked sadly upon Mr. Swain's condition. "He looks like a dying man, Richard," said he, "and we can ill afford to lose him."

Even as we sat talking in subdued tones, the noise of a distant commotion arose. We had scarce started to our feet, Mr. Chase and I, when the brass knocker resounded, and Mr. Hammond was let in. His wig was awry, and his face was flushed.

"I thought to find you here," he said to Mr. Chase. "The Anne Arundel Committee is to meet at once, and we desire to have you with us." Perceiving our blank faces, he added: "The 'Peggy Stewart' is in this morning with over a ton of tea aboard, consigned to the Williams's."

The two jumped into a chaise, and I followed afoot, stopped at every corner by some excited acquaintance; so that I had the whole story, and more, ere I reached Church Street. The way was blocked before the committee rooms, and 'twas said that the merchants, Messrs. Williams, and Captain Jackson of the brig, were within, pleading their cause.

Presently the news leaked abroad that Mr. Anthony Stewart, the brig's owner, had himself paid the duty on the detested plant. Some hundreds of people were elbowing each other in the street, for the most part quiet and anxious, until Mr. Hammond appeared and whispered to a man at the door. In all my life before I had never heard the hum of an angry crowd. The sound had something ominous in it, like the first meanings of a wind that is to break off great trees at their trunks. Then some one shouted: "To Hanover Street! To Hanover Street! We'll have him tarred and feathered before the sun is down!" The voice sounded strangely like Weld's. They charged at this cry like a herd of mad buffalo, the weaker ones trampled under foot or thrust against the wall. The windows of Mr. Aikman's shop were shattered. I ran with the leaders, my stature and strength standing me in good stead more than once, and as we twisted into Northwest Street I took a glance at the mob behind me, and great was my anxiety at not being able to descry one responsible person.

Mr. Stewart's house stood, and stands to-day, amid trim gardens, in plain sight of the Severn. Arriving there, the crowd massed in front of it, some of the boldest pressing in at the gate and spreading over the circle of lawn enclosed by the driveway. They began to shout hoarsely, with what voices they had left, for Mr. Stewart to come out, calling him names not to be spoken, and swearing they would show him how traitors were to be served. I understood then the terror of numbers, and shuddered. A chandler, a bold and violent man, whose leather was covered with grease, already had his foot on the steps, when the frightened servants slammed the door in his face, and closed the lower

windows. In vain I strained my eyes for some one who might have authority with them. They began to pick up stones, though none were thrown.

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Suddenly a figure appeared at an upper window,—a thin and wasted woman dressed in white, with sad, sweet features. It was Mrs. Stewart. Without flinching she looked down upon the upturned faces; but a mob of that kind has no pity. Their leaders were the worst class in our province, being mostly convicts who had served their terms of indenture. They continued to call sullenly for “the traitor.” Then the house door opened, and the master himself appeared. He was pale and nervous, and no wonder; and his voice shook as he strove to make himself heard. His words were drowned immediately by shouts of “Seize him! Seize the d—d traitor!” “A pot and a coat of hot tar!”

Those who were nearest started forward, and I with them. With me ’twas the decision of an instant. I beat the Chandler up the steps, and took stand in front of the merchant, and I called out to them to fall back.

To my astonishment they halted. The skirts of the crowd were now come to the foot of the little porch. I faced them with my hand on Mr. Stewart’s arm, without a thought of what to do next, and expecting violence. There was a second’s hush. Then some one cried out:

“Three cheers for Richard Carvel!”

They gave them with a will that dumfounded me.

“My friends,” said I, when I had got my wits, “this is neither the justice nor the moderation for which our province is noted. You have elected your committee of your free wills, and they have claims before you.”

“Ay, ay, the committee!” they shouted. “Mr. Carvel is right. Take him to the Committee!”

Mr. Stewart raised his hand.

“My friends,” he began, as I had done, “when you have learned the truth, you will not be so hasty to blame me for an offence of which I am innocent. The tea was not for me. The brig was in a leaky and dangerous state and had fifty souls aboard her. I paid the duty out of humanity—”

He had come so far, when they stopped him.

“Oh, a vile Tory!” they shouted. “He is conniving with the Council. ’Twas put up between them.” And they followed this with another volley of hard names, until I feared that his chance was gone.

“You would best go before the Committee, Mr. Stewart,” I said.

“I will go with Mr. Carvel, my friends,” he cried at once. And he invited me into the house whilst he ordered his coach. I preferred to remain outside.

I asked them if they would trust me with Mr. Stewart to Church Street.

“Yes, yes, Mr. Carvel, we know you,” said several. “He has good cause to hate Tories,” called another, with a laugh. I knew the voice.

“For shame, Weld,” I cried. And I saw McNeir, who was a stanch friend of mine, give him a cuff to send him spinning.

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To my vast satisfaction they melted away, save only a few of the idlest spirits, who hung about the gate, and cheered as we drove off. Mr. Stewart was very nervous, and profuse in his gratitude. I replied that I had acted only as would have any other responsible citizen. On the way he told me enough of his case to convince me that there was much to be said on his side, but I thought it the better part of wisdom not to commit myself. The street in front of the committee rooms was empty, and I was informed that a town meeting had been called immediately at the theatre in West Street. And I advised Mr. Stewart to attend. But through anxiety or anger, or both, he was determined not to go, and drove back to his house without me.

I had got as far as St. Anne's, halfway to the theatre, when it suddenly struck me that Mr. Swain must be waiting for news. With a twinge I remembered what Mr. Chase had said about the barrister's condition, and I hurried back to Gloucester Street, much to the surprise of those I met on their way to the meeting. I was greatly relieved, when I arrived, to find Patty on the porch. I knew she had never been there were her father worse. After a word with her and her mother, I went up the stairs.

It was the hour for the barrister's nap. But he was awake, lying back on the pillows, with his eyes half closed. He was looking out into the garden, which was part orchard, now beginning to shrivel and to brown with the first touch of frosts.

"That is you, Richard?" he inquired, without moving. "What is going forward to-day?"

I toned down the news, so as not to excite him, and left out the occurrence in Hanover Street. He listened with his accustomed interest, but when I had done he asked no questions, and lay for a long time silent. Then he begged me to bring my chair nearer.

"Richard,—my son," said he, with an evident effort, "I have never thanked you for your devotion to me and mine through the best years of your life. It shall not go unrewarded, my lad."

It seemed as if my heart stood still with the presage of what was to come.

"May God reward you, sir!" I said.

"I have wished to speak to you," he continued, "and I may not have another chance. I have arranged with Mr. Carroll, the barrister, to take your cause against your uncle, so that you will lose nothing when I am gone. And you will see, in my table in the library, that I have left my property in your hands, with every confidence in your integrity, and ability to care for my family, even as I should have done."

I could not speak at once. A lump rose in my throat, for I had come to look upon him as a father. His honest dealings, his charity, of which the world knew nothing, and his plain

and unassuming ways had inspired in me a kind of worship. I answered, as steadily as I might:

“I believe I am too inexperienced for such a responsibility, Mr. Swain. Would it not be better that Mr. Bordley or Mr. Lloyd should act?”

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"No, no," he said; "I am not a man to do things unadvisedly, or to let affection get the better of my judgment, where others dear to me are concerned. I know you, Richard Carvel. Scarce an action of yours has escaped my eye, though I have said nothing. You have been through the fire, and are of the kind which comes out untouched. You will have Judge Bordley's advice, and Mr. Carroll's. And they are too busy with the affairs of the province to be burdened as my executors. But," he added a little more strongly, "if what I fear is coming, Mr. Bordley will take the trust in your absence. If we have war, Richard, you will not be content to remain at home, nor would I wish it."

I did not reply.

"You will do what I ask?" he said.

"I would refuse you nothing, Mr. Swain," I answered. "But I have heavy misgivings."

He sighed. "And now, if it were not for Tom, I might die content," he said.

If it were not for Tom! The full burden of the trust began to dawn upon me then. Presently I heard him speaking, but in so low a voice that I hardly caught the words.

"In our youth, Richard," he was saying, "the wrath of the Almighty is but so many words to most of us. When I was little more than a lad, I committed a sin of which I tremble now to think. And I was the fool to imagine, when I amended my life, that God had forgotten. His punishment is no heavier than I deserve. But He alone knows what He has made me suffer."

I felt that I had no right to be there.

"That is why I have paid Tom's debts," he continued; "I cannot cast off my son. I have reasoned, implored, and appealed in vain. He is like Reuben,—his resolutions melt in an hour. And I have pondered day and night what is to be done for him."

"Is he to have his portion?" I asked. Indeed, the thought of the responsibility of Tom Swain overwhelmed me.

"Yes, he is to have it," cried Mr. Swain, with a violence to bring on a fit of coughing.

"Were I to leave it in trust for a time, he would have it mortgaged within a year. He is to have his portion, but not a penny additional."

He lay for a long time breathing deeply, I watching him. Then, as he reached out and took my hand, I knew by some instinct what was to come. I summoned all my self-command to meet his eye. I knew that the malicious and unthinking gossip of the town had reached him, and that he had received it in the simple faith of his hopes.



“One thing more, my lad,” he said, “the dearest wish of all—that you will marry Patty. She is a good girl, Richard. And I have thought,” he added with hesitation, “I have thought that she loves you, though her lips have never opened on that subject.”

So the blow fell. I turned away, for to save my life the words would not come. He missed the reason of my silence.

“I understand and honour your scruples,” he went on. His kindness was like a knife.

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"No, I have had none, Mr. Swain," I exclaimed. For I would not be thought a hypocrite.

There I stopped. A light step sounded in the hall, and Patty came in upon us. Her colour at once betrayed her understanding. To my infinite relief her father dropped my fingers, and asked cheerily if there was any news from the town meeting.

On the following Wednesday, with her flag flying and her sails set, the Peggy Stewart was run ashore on Windmill Point. She rose, a sacrifice to Liberty, in smoke to heaven, before the assembled patriots of our city.

That very night a dear friend to Liberty passed away. He failed so suddenly that Patty had no time to call for aid, and when the mother had been carried in, his spirit was flown. We laid him high on the hill above the creek, in the new lot he had bought and fenced around. The stone remains:

Here LIETH

*Henry Swain, barrister.
Born may 13, 1730 (O.S.);
Died October 19, 1774.
Fidus Amicis atque Patrice.*

The simple inscription, which speaks volumes to those who knew him, was cut after the Revolution. He was buried with the honours of a statesman, which he would have been had God spared him to serve the New Country which was born so soon after his death.