

JOHN BLOUNDELLE-BURTON

THE LAND OF BONDAGE

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Содержание

PART I	6
CHAPTER I	6
CHAPTER II	10
CHAPTER III	14
CHAPTER IV	18
CHAPTER V	23
CHAPTER VI	27
CHAPTER VII	31
CHAPTER VIII	36
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	39

John Bloundelle-Burton

The Land of Bondage / A Romance

PREFACE

The groundwork of the following narrative, accompanied by a vast number of papers and documents bearing on the main facts, was related to me by the late Mr. Clement Barclay of Philadelphia, the last descendant of an old Virginian family. On reading over these papers and documents, I was struck by the resemblance which the story bore to the history of another unfortunate young Englishman whose case created much sensation in the English Law Courts at about the same period, *i. e.*, that of the reign of King George II. Recognising, however, that the adventures of Lord St. Amande were not only more romantic than those of that other personage, while his character was of a far more noble and interesting nature, I resolved to utilise them for the purpose of romance in the following pages, which are now submitted to the public. Except that in some few cases, and those the principal, the names have been altered, the characters bear the same names as in the documents, private papers, journals and news-letters handed to me by Mr. Barclay.

J. B. – B.

October, 1904.

PART I

THE NARRATIVE OF GERALD, VISCOUNT ST. AMANDE

CHAPTER I

MY LORD'S FUNERAL

And this was the end of it. To be buried at the public expense!

To be buried at the public expense, although a Viscount in the Peerage of Ireland and the heir to a Marquisate in the Peerage of England.

The pity of it, the pity that it should come to this!

A few years before, viz., in the fourth year of the reign of our late Queen Anne, and the year of Our Lord, 1706, no one who had then known Gerald, Lord Viscount St. Amande, would have ventured to foretell so evil an ending for him, since he and life were well at evens with each other. Ever to have his purse fairly well filled with crowns if not guineas had been his lot in those days, as it had also been to have good credit at the fashioners, to be able to treat his friends to a fine turtle or a turbot at the coffee-houses he used, to take a hand at ombra or at whisk, to play at pass-dice or at billiards, and to be always carefully bedeck't in the best of satins and velvets and laces, and to eat and drink of the best. For to eat and drink well was ever his delight, as it was to frequent port clubs and Locketts or Rummors, to empty his glass as soon as it was filled, to toss down beaker after beaker, while, meantime, he would sing jovial chaunts and songs of none too delicate a nature, fling a handful of loose silver to the servers and waitresses, and ogle each of the latter who was comely or buxom.

Yet now he was being buried at the public expense!

How had it come about? I must set it down so that you shall understand. During this period of wassailing and carousing, of *ridottos* at St. James's and dances at lower parts of the town, for he affected even the haunts at Rotherhithe in his search for pleasure, as he did those in the common parts of Dublin when he was in that, his native, city-and during the time when he varied his pursuits by sometimes frequenting the playhouses where he would regard fondly the ladies at one moment and amuse himself by kicking a shop-boy or poor clerk, or scrivener, at another, and by sometimes retiring into the country for shooting, or hunting, or fighting a main, his heart had become entended towards a young and beautiful girl, one Louise Sheffield.

He had met her in the best class of company which he frequented, for, although bearing no rank herself, she was of the best blood and race, being indeed a niece to the Duke of Walton. Later on you shall see this girl, grown into a woman, full of sorrows and vexations and despite, and judge of her for yourself by that which I narrate. Suffice it, therefore, if I write down the fact that she repaid his love with hers in return and that, although she knew this handsome gallant, Gerald, Lord St. Amande to be no better than a wastrel, a tosspot and a gamer, she was willing to become his wife and to endow him with a small but comfortable fortune that she possessed. Alas! that she should ever have done so, for from that marriage arose all the calamities, the sufferings and the heartaches that are to be chronicled in this narrative.

From the commencement all went awry. George, Marquis of Amesbury, to whom this giddy, unthinking Lord St. Amande was kinsman and heir, did hate with a most fervent hatred John, Duke of Walton, they having quarrelled at the succession of the Queen, when the Marquis espoused the cause of her Majesty, while the Duke was all for proclaiming the Pretender; and thus the whole of Lord St. Amande's family was against the match. The ladies, especially his mother and sister, threw

their most bitter rancour into the scales against the bride, they endeavoured to poison his mind against her by insinuating evil conduct on her part previous to her marriage, and they persuaded the Marquis to threaten my lord with a total withdrawal of his favour, as well as a handsome allowance that he made annually to his heir, if he did not part from her.

At first he would not listen to one word against her—he had not owned his bride long enough to tire of her; also some of her fortune was not yet wasted. Yet gradually, as he continued in his evil courses, becoming still fonder of his glass and rioting, and as her fortune declined at the same time that he felt bitterly the pinch occasioned by the withdrawal of the Marquis's allowance, he did begin to hearken to the reports spread broadcast against his young wife.

She had borne him a child, dead, during his absence in Ireland, and it was after this period that he began to give credence to the hints against her; and thus it was that while he was still in that country he sent to his mother a power of attorney, authorising her to sue to the Lords for a divorce, as his representative. This petition, however, their Lordships refused, dismissing the plea with costs against him, saying that there was no truth in his allegations, and stigmatising them as scandalous.

And then he learnt that he had indeed wronged her most bitterly and, turning upon his mother and sister, went over to England where, upon his knees, he besought his wife for her pardon, weeping many tears of contrition as he did so, while she, loving him ever in spite of all, forgave him as a woman will forgive. Then they passed back to Ireland where, she being again about to become a mother, he cherished her with great care and tenderness, and watched over her until she had presented him with a son.

Yet, such was this man's sometime evil temper and brutality of nature that, on the Duke of Walton refusing to add more money to the gift he had already made her—the original fortune being now quite dissipated—he banished her from his house and she, flying to England, was forced to take refuge with the Duke and, worse still, to leave her child behind.

Now, therefore, you shall see how it befell that, at last, he owed even his coffin and his grave to charity.

When she was gone from him, he, loving the child in his strange way, proclaimed it as his heir, put it to nurse in the neighbourhood, and invariably spoke of it as the future Lord St. Amande and Marquis of Amesbury. But, unfortunately for this poor offspring of his now dead love, he became enamoured of a horrid woman, a German queen, who had come over to England at the time of the succession of King George—for over twenty years had now passed since his marriage with the Duke of Walton's niece—a woman who had set up in Dublin as a court fashioner, lace merchant and milliner. But she had no thought for him, being in truth much smitten with his younger brother, Robert, and she persuaded him that to relieve himself of the dire poverty into which he had fallen, it would be best that he should give out that his son was dead and secrete him, so that he and Robert, who would then be regarded by all men as the heir, could proceed to dispose of the estate. And my lord's intellects being now bemused with much drink and other disordered methods of life, besides that he was in bitter poverty, agreed to do this and gave out that the son was dead and that he and his brother were about to break the entail.

And even this villainy, which might have seemed likely to ward off his penury for at least some years, did nothing of the sort, but, indeed, only brought him nearer to the pauper's grave to which he was hurrying. So greedy was he for money—as also was his brother, who, knowing that while the boy lived *he* could never succeed to the estates, was naturally very willing to dispose of them at any price—that large properties were in very truth sold for not more than, and indeed rarely exceeded, half a year's purchase! How long was it to be imagined that the half of such sums would last this poor spendthrift who no sooner felt his purse heavy with the guineas in it than he made haste to lighten it by odious debaucheries and was sailings and carousings? His clothes, his laces, nay, even his wigs, his swords, and his general wearing apparel had long since gone to the brokers, so that, at the time of selling the properties, he was to be seen going about Dublin with a rusty cutbob upon his once

handsome head, a miserable ragged coat that had once been blue but had turned to green with wear, ornamented with Brandenburg buttons, upon his back, and a common spadron reposing on his thigh and sticking half a foot out of its worn-out sheath, instead of the jewel-hilted swords he had once used to carry.

To conclude, he fell sick about this time-sick of his debauches, sick, it may be, from recollections of the evil he had done his innocent wife and child, and sick, perhaps, from the remembrance of how he had wasted his life and impaired the prospects of his rightful heir. Ill and sick unto death, with not one loving hand to minister to him, no loving voice to say a word of comfort to him, and dying in a garret, to pay for which the woman who rented it to him had now taken his last coat. His wife was in England, sick herself and living on a small trifle left her by her uncle, now dead; his son, sixteen years of age, had escaped from the custody of a ruffian named O'Rourke, by whom he had been kept closely confined and reported dead, and, of all men, most avoided his unnatural father. What time his brother Robert would not have given him a crust to prolong his life and was indeed looking forward to his death with glee and eager anticipation.

So he died, with none by his pallet but the hag who owned the garret and who was waiting for the breath to be out of his body to send that body to the parish mortuary. So he died, sometimes fancying that he was back in the bagnios he had found so pleasant, sometimes weeping for a sight of his child and for the wrongs he had done that child, sometimes, in his delirium, bellowing forth the profligate songs that such creatures as D'Urfey and Shadwell had made popular amongst the depraved. And sometimes, also, moaning for his Louise to come back and pity him, and forgive him once again in memory of the sweetness of their early love.

Now, therefore, you see how this once handsome lordling-and handsome as Apollo he was in his younger days, I have heard his wife say, though wicked as Satan-was brought so low that, from ruffling it with the best, he came to dying in a filthy garret and being buried at the public expense. Alas, alas! who can help but weep and wring their hands when they think on such a thing, and when they reflect on all the evil that Gerald, Lord St. Amande, wrought in his life and the bitter heritage of woe he left behind to those whom he should, instead, have loved and cherished, and made good provision for.

'Twas a dull November day, in the year of our Lord, 1727, and the first of the reign of our present King George II., that the funeral procession-if so poor and mean an interment as this may be so termed-passed over Essex Bridge on its way to the burying ground where the body was to be deposited. Yet how think you a future peer of the realm should be taken to his last home, how think you one of his rank should be taken farewell of? This man had once held the King's commission, he having carried the colours of his regiment at Donauwerth and been present as a lieutenant at Tirlmont, at both of which the great Marlborough had commanded-therefore upon his coffin there should have been a sword and a sash at least, with, perhaps, a flag. He stood near unto a marquise, therefore his coffin should have been covered with purple velvet and the plate upon it should have been of silver. Yet there were no such things. His swords, you know by now, were pawned; his sashes had gone the way of his laces, apparel and handsome wigs. The bier on which he was drawn was, therefore, but a common thing on which the bodies of beggars, of Liffey watermen and of coach-drivers were often also drawn; the coffin was a poor, deal encasement with, nailed roughly on it, some black cloth; the name-plate bearing the description of his rank and standing-oh, hollow mockery! - was of tin.

And yet even this was obtained but at the public expense!

A dull November day, with, rolling in from the Channel, great masses of sea fog, damp and wet, that made the dogs in the street creep closer to the house doors for shelter and warmth, and the swine in the streets to huddle themselves together for greater comfort. A day on which those who had no call to be out of doors warmed themselves over fires, or gathered round tavern tables and drank drams of nantz and usquebaugh; a day which no man would care to think should resemble the day

on which he would himself be put away into the earth for ever. But the melancholy of the elements and the weather were the only part of the wretched funeral of this man for which he had not been responsible. The gloom and the fog and the damp he could not help, since none, whether king or pauper, can fix the date of their death, or choose to die and go to their last home amidst the shining of the sun and the singing of the birds and the blooming of the flowers, in preference to the miseries of the winter. But all else he might have avoided had he so chosen.

For he might have been borne-not to a beggar's grave, but to the tomb of his own illustrious family in England-amidst pomp and honour had he so willed it; the pomp and honour of a Marquis's heir, the pomp and honour of a gallant officer who had fought under the greatest general that England had ever known, and for his mourners he might have had a loving wife and child weeping for his loss.

Only he would not, and so there was not one that day to shed a tear for him.

CHAPTER II

AN UNPEACEFUL PASSING

So the funeral passed over Essex Bridge and by the French Church, on the steps of which there sat a boy who, on its approach, sprang to his feet and, from behind a pillar of the porch, fixed his eyes firmly on those who attended it.

A boy of between fifteen and sixteen years of age, tall and, thus, looking older, and clad partly in rags and partly in clothes too big for him. To be explicit, his hose was torn and mended and torn again, his shoes were burst and broken and his coat which, though threadbare was sound, hung down nearly to his feet and was roomy enough for a man of twenty, to whom indeed it had once belonged till given in charity to its present owner. By the boy's side there stood a big, burly man with a red, kindly face and a great fell of brown hair, himself dressed in the garb of a butcher, and with at the moment, as though he had but just left the block, his sharpening steel hanging at his side. Also, on the steps of the church were one or two gentlemen arrayed in their college gowns and caps, as if they too had strolled forth at the moment from Trinity and had happened upon the spot, while, around and under the stoops of the neighbouring houses, were gathered together several groups of beggars and ragamuffins and idle ne'er-do-wells.

And now you shall hear a strange thing, for, as the bier with its mean burden came close, so that the features of those who accompanied it might be plainly perceived through the fog, the butcher, turning to the lad dressed as a scarecrow, said, "*My lord*, stand forth and show thyself. Here come those who have put it about that you have been dead these two years, and who, if they had their will, would soon have you dead now. Show thyself therefore, I say, Lord St. Amande, and prove that thou art alive."

"Ay, ay, do," one of the collegians added. "If the news from London be true, thy uncle, Robert, has already proclaimed himself the new lord, and it is as well that the contrary should be proved."

Thus solemnly adjured, the boy did stand forth and, figure of fun though he looked, gazed fiercely on those who rode behind his father's coffin.

There were but three mourners-if such these ghouls could be called who followed the body to its last resting place, not with any desire to pay a tribute to the dead, but rather with the desire of satisfying themselves, and one other, their master, that it was indeed gone from the world for ever-two men mounted and a woman in a one-horse hackney coach.

All were evil-looking, yet she was the worst, and, as she peered forth from the window, the beggars all about groaned at her while the students regarded her with looks of contempt. She was the German woman who had come to Dublin when the late King had come to London, and was called Madame Bäuer, and was now no longer young. That she may once have been comely is to be supposed, since the late Herr Bäuer was said to have been a wealthy German gentleman who ruined himself for her-if, indeed, he had ever existed, which many doubted-and also since the dead man now going to his grave had formed a passion for her, while his usurping brother was actually said to be privately married to her. Yet of a certainty, she had no beauty now, her face being of a fiery red, due, it was whispered, to her love of strong waters; her great staring and protuberant eyes were of a watery blue-green hue, and her teeth were too prominent and more like those of an animal. And when the small crowd groaned at her and called her "painted Jezebel" – though she needed no paint, in truth-she gnashed those teeth at them as though she would have liked to tear and rend them ere she sank back into the carriage.

Of the men who followed the bier one was a pale cadaverous-looking person, with about him some remnants of good looks, his features being not ill-formed, though on his face, too, there were the signs of drinking and evil-living in the form of blotches and a red nose that looked more conspicuous because of the lividness of his skin. This man was Wolfe Considine, a gentleman by birth, and of

an ancient Irish family, yet now no better than a hanger-on to Robert St. Amande; a creature who obeyed his orders as a dog obeys its master's orders, and who was so vile and perjured a wretch that for many years, when out of the reach of Lord St. Amande, he had allowed it to be hinted that he was in truth the father of that lord's son, and, if not that, had at least been much beloved by Lord St. Amande's wife. In obedience, perhaps, to his master's orders he wore now no signs of mourning but, instead, rode in a red coat much passementé with tarnished gold lace, as was the case with his hat, and with his demi-peaked saddle quilted with red plush, while the twitter-boned, broken-winded horse he bestrode gave, as well as his apparel, but few signs that his employer bestowed much care upon him. The man who paced beside him was liveried as a servant and rode a better horse, and was doubtless there in attendance on him and the woman in the coach.

Noticing the ominous and glowering looks of the beggars on the sidewalk as well as the contemptuous glances of the students standing by the steps of the French Church, Considine drew his horse nearer to the coach and spoke to the inmate thereof, saying: -

"I' faith, my lady, they seem to bear no good will to us judging by their booings and mutterings, for it cannot be to this poor dead thing that their growls are directed-*he* was beloved enough by them, at any rate, so long as he had a stiver in his purse with which to treat them to a bowl of hypsy or a mug of ale."

The woman in the hackney glanced at the beggars again with her cold, cruel eyes as he spoke, but ere she could reply, if indeed she intended to do so, she shrank back once more, seeing that from the crowd there was emerging an old woman, a hideous creature bent double with age, who leaned upon a stick and who shook as though with the palsy.

"What want you, hag?" asked Considine, while as he spoke he pricked the horse he rode with the spur, as though he would ride over her.

"To look upon the coffin of a gentleman," she answered, waving at the same time her crutch, or stick, so near to the animal's nostrils that it started back, almost unseating its rider. "To look upon the coffin of a gentleman, and not upon such scum as you and that thing there," pointing to the woman who had been addressed as "my lady."

"Proceed," called out Considine to the driver of the bier. "Why tarry you because of this woman. Proceed, I say."

But here a fresh interruption occurred, for, as he spoke, the butcher, motioning to the lad with him to remain where he was, descended the steps of the church and, coming forward, said in a masterful manner: -

"Nay! That shall you not do yet. Wolfe Considine, you must listen to me."

"To thee, rapsallion," said the other, looking down on him, yet noting his great frame as he did so. "To thee. Wherefore, pray, to thee? If you endeavour to stop this funeral the watch shall lay you by the heels, and my lady here shall hale you before a Justice for endeavouring to prevent the interment of her brother-in-law."

"My lady! Her brother-in-law!" repeated the butcher contemptuously, and glancing into the hackney carriage as he did so. "My lady! Her brother-in-law! Why, how can she be either?" and he smiled at the red-faced woman.

"You Irish dog," she said, now protruding her head from the window. "The law shall teach you how I am both, at the same time that it chastises you for your insolence. Let us pass, however."

"You shall not pass until you have heard me. Nay, Wolfe Considine, put not thy hand upon thy sword. There is no courage in thy craven heart to draw it. What! shall he who ran away from Oudenarde-thou knowest 'tis truth; I fought, not ran away, as a corporal there myself-threaten a brave and honest man with his sword? Nay, more, why should he wear one-? I' faith, I have a mind to take it from thee. Yet even that is not the worst, though the Duke did threaten to brand thy back if ever he clapt eyes on thee again."

Here the collegians, in spite of the halted bier with the dreary burden on it, burst into laughter, while Considine trembled with rage and was now white as a corpse himself.

"That, I say, is scarce the worst. You speak of the watch to me-you! Why! call them, call all the officers of the law and see which they shall arrest first. An honest man or a thief. Ay, a thief! I say a thief." He advanced closer to Considine as he spoke. "A thief, I say again."

"Vile wretch! the law shall punish you."

"Summon it, I tell you. Summon it. Then shall we see."

And now, changing his address, which had been up to this moment made to Considine alone, he turned half round to the crowd-which had much augmented since the altercation began and the stopping of the funeral had taken place-and addressing all assembled there, he said in a loud voice so that none but those who were stone deaf could fail to hear his words.

"Listen all you who to-day see the body of the late Lord St. Amande on its way to the grave, listen I say to the villainy of this creature, Wolfe Considine, the tool and minion of the man Robert St. Amande, who now claims to have succeeded to his honours. Hear also how far she," – and he pointed his finger to the hackney carriage where the woman glowered out at him-"has aided both these scoundrels."

"By heavens, you shall suffer for this," exclaimed Considine, "to defame a peer is punishable with the hulks-"

"Tush," answered the other, "I defame no peer, for he is none. The true peer is Gerald St. Amande, the younger, now the Lord Viscount St. Amande since his father's death."

"Thou fool," bellowed Considine, "he is dead long since. 'Tis well known."

"Is it so? Well, let us see. But first answer me, Wolfe Considine, deserter from the colours of Her Majesty Queen Anne's 1st Royal Scots' Regiment, panderer and creature of the usurper Robert St. Amande, purloiner of the body of the present Lord St. Amande-said I not you were a thief? – instigator of murder to the villain, O'Rourke, who would have slain the child or, at least, have shipped him off a slave to the Virginian plantations; traducer of an honest lady's fame who, so far from favouring thee, would not have spat upon thee. Answer me, I say, and tell me if you would know that dead child again were you to set your eyes upon it?"

He hurled forth these accusations against the wretch shivering on his horse with so terrible a voice, accompanied by fierce looks, that the other could do naught but writhe under them and set to work to bawl loudly for the watch as he did so, and to offer a gibing beggar who stood near a crown to run and fetch them, which the beggar refused, so that at last the servant started to find them. But, meanwhile, the butcher again began:

"He is dead long since, is he? Well, we will see." Then beckoning to the lad in rags still standing on the steps of the French Church, he said, "Lord St. Amande, come hither and prove to this perjured villain that thou art no more dead than he who would have had thee so."

Slowly, therefore, I descended-for I who write these lines was that most unhappy child, Lord St. Amande, as perhaps you who read them may have guessed-and slowly in my tatters I went down and stood by him who had succoured me, and fixed my eyes on that most dreadful villain, Wolfe Considine.

Now, the effect upon him was wonderful to witness, for verily I thought he would have had a fit and fallen from his horse. His eyes seemed to be starting forth from his head, his cadaverous face became empurpled, his hands twitched, and all the while he muttered, "Alive! Alive! yet O'Rourke swore that he was safe at the bottom of the Liffey-the traitor! Alive!"

He spoke so low and muttered so hoarsely to himself that I have ever doubted if any other but I and Oliver Quin, the butcher, heard his self-condemnatory words-by which he most plainly acknowledged his guilt and the part he had played in endeavouring to get me made away with. But, ere he could say more, he received support from the woman, Baüer, or "Madam," as she was

generally called, who, descending now from her hackney carriage, thrust aside the beggars around it and advanced towards me.

That she was a woman of courage need not be doubted, for, although these miserable gutter-birds had hitherto been jeering at her to even such an extent as remarking on the redness of her face and the probable cause thereof, she at this time awed them by her manner. Her eyes flaming, her great white teeth gleaming like those of a hunted wolf as it turns to tear its pursuers, she thrust them all aside (she being big and of masculine proportions) and exclaiming, "Out you wretches, away you kennel dogs, stand back, I say, you Irish curs," made her way to me.

"Let me see," she said, seizing me roughly by the collar, "the brat who is to be palmed upon us as the dead child. Let me see him." And then, as she gazed in my face, she burst into a loud, strident laugh, while in her harsh voice and her German accent (which she had always) she exclaimed, "So this is the beggar's brat who is to be thrust in before us as a son of this dead lord," pointing to my father's coffin-"this thing of rags and filth. Man," she said, turning suddenly upon Quin, "man, know you the punishment awarded those who falsely endeavour for their own evil ends to deprive rightful inheritors of what is theirs? You shall so suffer for this vile imposture that you had better have been slain at Oudenarde-of which you boast so freely-than ever have lived to see to-day."

"With the respect due to such as you, Madam Bäuer-"

"Fellow, I am the Viscountess St. Amande."

"Nay. Nay! Even though you be Robert St. Amande's wife-as most people doubt" – she struck at him with her hand as he said this, which blow he avoided easily, so that she over-reached herself and nearly fell, at which the crowd jeered-"even then you are not Lady St. Amande. There is but one, this poor lad's mother, now sick in England but safe from your evil attempts. And, Madam Bäuer, it is more meet that I should ask if *you* know what is the punishment of such malefactors as those who endeavour for their own evil ends to deprive rightful inheritors of what is theirs?"

"The imposition shall not go unpunished, this boy shall indeed be sent to the plantations and, with him, you, you ruffian. I will myself seek out the King sooner than he shall escape."

But here there stepped forth one of the collegians who had been near me all through this most strange scene, a grave and pious youth of twenty years of age-'twas his coat I was wearing-who said:

"By your favour, madam, it is impossible that the boy should be punished. I am from New Ross in the County of Wexford myself," – both she and Considine started at this-"where his father dwelt much. I have known the lad from his birth, as a child myself I took part in the festivities-alas! terrible debaucheries and drinkings! – which this poor dead lord caused to be made in honour of his birth. I have known him all his life, and that he is the present Lord St. Amande none can doubt. Added to which, madam, there must be fully five hundred people in Ireland, including his pastors and teachers, to say nothing of those in England, who can equally speak for him."

"It is a lie," Considine shouted, having now regained something of his courage, "It is a lie. I, too, knew the lad who was son to Lord St. Amande, and he is dead and this brat is not he."

"Mr. Considine," said the young student, his pale face reddening, "I am intended for the Ministry, but being not yet ordained no man may insult me with impunity, nor doubt my word. Much less such a foul braggart as you, therefore, unless you ask my pardon on the moment I will pull you down from off that horse and force you to beg it of me in the mud at my feet." And he advanced towards Considine with his arm outstretched to carry out his threat.

But that person being never disposed to fight with anyone, instantly taking off his hat said:

"Sir, my words were ill chosen. I ask your pardon for them. I should have said that I feared, as I still do, that you are grievously mistaken."

CHAPTER III

A BEGGAR AND AN OUTCAST

And thus, in such a dreadful way and amidst such surroundings-with brawling in the streets and insults hurled over his body from one to another-was my father buried. Alas! unhappily such scenes and terrifying episodes were but a fitting prologue to the stormy life that was henceforth before me for many years; I say a fitting prologue to the future.

When the craven Considine had made, or rather been compelled to make, his amends to Mr. Jonathan Kinchella, the young student, my protector, Quin, announced that, since he had produced the rightful Lord St. Amande and exhibited him to the public at so fitting a moment as his father's funeral procession (so that, henceforth, there were in existence witnesses who could testify to the assertion of my claim), he had no more to say, except that he hoped that the spirit of the dead peer would forgive the interruption in consequence of the good which he wished to do to his son. And he also announced with great cheerfulness the pleasure which he had experienced in being able to tell Mr. Wolfe Considine to his face his appreciation of his character.

"So that," he said to that person, as once more the procession set out, "if, henceforth, any one in Dublin shall be so demented as to deem you an honest man and to be deceived by you, they owe thanks to none but themselves."

"Ay, ruffian!" said Considine, brazening it out, however, "thou art the cock o' the walk for the moment, yet think not to escape punishment. Thou hast to-day threatened and reviled a gentleman of birth and consideration, for which thou shalt clearly suffer; thou hast insulted, slandered and abused a peer and a peeress of His Majesty's realm, for which thou shalt lie in the bilboes and gemmaces. Thou hast also endeavoured to usurp my lord's rightful rank and degree by passing off a base counterfeit of his brother's dead child, for which the punishment is death, or, at least, branding in the hand and being sold to slavery in the plantations, all of which thou and thy accomplice shall most surely receive ere many days are sped."

Then, turning to the driver of the bier, he ordered him to proceed.

"Tut, tut, tut," exclaimed Oliver. "Thou art but an empty windbag, tho' 'tis well that thou hast an accurate knowledge of the law-yet, I misdoubt if it will save thee when thy time comes. But, as thou sayest, let the funeral proceed, and, for further assurance of thy position, young sir," he said to me, "we will accompany it on foot. Let us see who will prevent us."

Then, seizing me by the hand, we set out to follow my father's body.

And now you, my children, for whom I write this narrative (and your children who in the fulness of time shall come after you), have seen in how wretched a manner I, who should have been cradled in luxury, began my existence at my father's death. Had that father been as he should have been, or had even my uncle, Robert, been an honest man, or had the head of our house, the Marquis of Amesbury, looked properly to the rights of his lawful successor, Ulster King-at-Arms would have enrolled me on the certificate of the late lord's death as Gerald St. Amande, Viscount St. Amande, in the peerage of Ireland, and heir apparent of the Marquisate of Amesbury in the peerage of England. Yet, see what really happened. The King-at-Arms refused so to enrol me, on the petition of my uncle-though this was somewhat later, – in spite of much testimony on my behalf from countless people who had known me, and, instead of enjoying luxury, I was a beggar. At the time when I begin this history of my cares and sorrows, and of the wanderings which will be set down in their due Order, and the hardships that I have been forced to endure, I, a tender child, was dependent on strangers for the bread I ate and the clothing I wore. Until I fell in with honest Oliver Quin, himself a poor butcher, I had, after escaping from O'Rourke, who endeavoured to drown me and then kept me in a cellar, been lurking about Dublin, sleeping sometimes on a wharf, sometimes in the many new houses then a-building (three thousand were built in this great city between the accession of the late king and the

year of which I now write, viz., 1727), sometimes against a shop bulk or a glass-house for warmth, and sometimes huddling with other outcasts on the steps and in the stoops of houses and churches. Food I had none but I could beg or wrest from the dogs, or the many swine which then roamed about the streets like dogs themselves. And, sometimes, I and my wretched companions would kill one of these latter stealthily by night, and, having roasted parts of it in some empty house, would regale ourselves thereby. My father I avoided as a pestilence, for him I regarded as the unnatural author of all my sufferings. I knew afterwards that I misjudged him, I knew that he had never meant me to be harmed by O'Rourke, but only kept out of the way so that he might get money for his evil doings, he feeling sure that, when he should die, my succession to the rank, if not the estates (which he had made away with) could not be disputed. But, as I say, I regarded him as my worst enemy, and, when I saw him come reeling down the street jovial with drink, or, on other occasions, morose and sour from ungratified desire for it, I fled from him.

Then I, by great good chance, fell in with Quin, who was but a journeyman butcher earning poor wages and much dissatisfied with his lot, and who, coming from Wexford to Dublin to better that lot, had recognised me at once as the boy who was always styled the Honourable Gerald St. Amade in the county, and, out of the goodness of his heart, succoured me. But what could he do? He himself dwelt near the shambles, earning but eleven shillings a week, which had to suffice for all his wants, so that, if sometimes as I passed his master's shop he could toss me a scrag of mutton or a mouthful of beef-which I found means to cook by some outcast's fire-it was as much assistance as he could render. And from Mr. Jonathan Kinchella, himself but a poor sizar, and, as he stated, also from my neighbourhood and consequently willing to assist me, I could ask nothing. Beyond his "size," which was an allowance of a farthing's worth of bread and beer daily, he had but ten pounds a year from his father wherewithal to clothe himself and find such necessities as he required, above that which he was entitled to as a servitor. Yet was he ever tender to me, and would say when I crept into the college to see him:

"Here, Gerald, is the beer and here the bread. Drink and eat thy fill to such extent as it will go, which is not much. However, for myself I can get more. But I wish I could do more for thee than give thee these poor victuals and cast-off garments. Yet, *tunica pallio propior*, and, as I cannot give thee my skin, I will give thee the best coat I can spare." Which he did, though, poor youth, it was little enough he had for himself, let alone to give away.

From my mother I had, alas! long been parted, for though when I was in my father's keeping, after she had fled from him, she had made many attempts to wrest me from him and to get me away to England, she, too, had come to believe that I had either died in the hands of, or been killed by, the villain O'Rourke, so that of her I had now heard nothing for more than two years. But as Mr. Kinchella had written her informing her of her husband's impending death, of my safety for the time being, and also of the probable usurpation by my uncle, we were looking for some news of her by every English packet that came in. "If her ladyship can compass it," this good and pious young man said on the night after my father's burial, and when he and Oliver and I sat in his room over the fire, "she should come to Dublin at once. There is much to be done at which alone she can help, and it will want all the assistance of her family to outwit thy uncle. Unfortunately my lord did go about the city saying that you were dead and that, therefore, he and his brother were at liberty to dispose of the property, and, thus, there is a terrible amount of evidence to contend against."

"With submission, sir," Oliver said, "surely all that should make in the young lord's favour. For who shall doubt that his mother can swear to him as their child? Then there are the peasants with whom he was placed as an infant at New Ross, and, again, the tutors he was with, both there and here and in England, to say nothing of many servants. While, to add to all, his uncle has made himself a criminal by seconding his father in the false reports of his death and obtaining money thereby. With my lady's evidence and yours and mine alone, to say nothing of aught else, we should surely be able to move the King-at-Arms to enregister him as his father's heir."

Yet, oh, untoward fate! my mother could not come, but in her place sent a letter which, being of much importance as affecting all that afterwards occurred, I here set down, fairly copied.

*From the Viscountess St. Amande, at 5 Denzil Street, Clare Market, ye 29th of November, 1727.
To Mr. Jonathan Kinchella, Student, Trinity College, Dublin.*

Honoured Sir,

My deepest gratitude is due to you for the pains you have been at to write to me under the care of my late uncle's bankers, which communication has safely reached me. Sir, I do most grievously note that my lord and husband, the Viscount St. Amande lyeth sick unto death-(Mr. Kinchella had written when Quin had learned from the woman my father lodged with that there was no hope for him) – and also in dire poverty; and, ill as he hath treated me, I do pray that his end may be peace. Moreover, if you or any friend of yours should see him and he should be able to comprehend your words, I do beseech you to tell him that I forgive him all he has done to me and that, in another and a better world, to which I believe myself to be also hastening, I hope to meet him once more, though, whether he live or die, we can never meet again upon this earth.

But, sir, if the news which you give me of the grievous state in which my lord lies is enough to wring my heart, what comfort and joy shall not that heart also receive in learning that my beloved child, whom I thought dead and slain by his father's cruelty, is still alive, and that he, whom I have mourned as gone from me for ever, should live to be restored to his mother's arms? Yet, alas! I cannot come to him as I fain would and fold him in my arms, for I am sorely stricken with the palsy which creepeth ever on me, though, strange to relate, there are moments, nay hours, when I am free from it, so that sometimes my physician doth prophesy a recovery, which, however, I cannot bring myself to hope or believe. And, moreover, honoured sir, I am without the means to travel to Dublin. My uncle, when he rescued me from my unhappy husband's hands, provided me with one hundred guineas a year, which, at his death last year, he also willed, should be continued to me while parted from my husband. But if he dies that ceases also, since my uncle, the Duke, did naturally suppose that I by settlement shall be well provided for, tho' now I doubt if such is likely to prove the case.

Yet, though well I know my brother-in-law to be a most uncommon bad man and one who will halt at nothing to further his own gains, I cannot believe that the law will allow him to falsely possess himself either of my child's rank and title, or of aught else that may be his inheritance, though I fear there is but little property left, short of his succession to the Marquisate of Amesbury. But, honoured sir, since it is not possible that I can come to my boy, could he not come to me? He would assuredly be as safe in London, if not safer, under the protection of his mother, as in Dublin where, you say, he lurketh, and where, I cannot doubt, his uncle will take steps to bring about harm to him. Here he would be with me and, since my uncle is now dead, it may be that the Marquis will be more kindly disposed towards him and, even at the worst, he cannot refuse to recognise him. Therefore, sir, if the wherewithal could be found for bringing or sending him to London, I would see the cost defrayed out of my small means, on which you may rely.

So, honoured sir, I now conclude, begging you to believe that I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done for my child, and that also I thank the honest man, Mr. Quin, of whom you speak, and I do most earnestly pray that the God of the fatherless and the orphan may reward you for all. And, sir, with my greatest consideration to you, and a mother's fondest love to my child, whom I pray to see ere long, I remain your much obliged and grateful,

Louise St. Amande.

"Gerald," said Mr. Kinchella, when he had concluded reading this letter to me, over which, boy-like, I shed many tears, "her ladyship speaks well. Dublin is no place for thee. If in his lordship's lifetime you were not safe, how shall you be so when now you alone stand between your uncle and two peerages?"

"Yet," I exclaimed, while in my heart there had arisen a wild desire to once more see the dear mother from whom I had been so ruthlessly torn, "yet how could it be accomplished? Surely the cost of a journey to London would be great!"

"I have still a guinea or two in my locker," said Mr. Kinchella, "if that would avail-though I misdoubt it."

"I have a better plan, sir," exclaimed Quin, who was also of the party again on this occasion. "If his young lordship would not object to voyaging to London entirely by sea, there are many cattle-ships pass between that port and this by which he might proceed. Or, again, he might pass from here to Chester, there being many boats to Park Gate, or he might proceed to Milford."

"Yet he is over-young for such a journey," said kind Mr. Kinchella; he being, as ever, thoughtful for me. But I replied:

"Sir, have I not had to endure worse when I was even younger? The deck of a cattle-boat is of a certainty no worse than O'Rourke's cellar, and, however long the passage, of a surety there will be as much provision as was ever to be found in wandering about these streets ere I fell in with you and Oliver. I pray you, therefore, assist me to reach London if it be in your power."

"How much will it cost to defray the expense?" Mr. Kinchella asked of Quin, "by one of these boats? I fear me I have not the wherewithal to enable him to voyage by the packet."

"He can go for nothing, I think," replied the other, "if so be that I speak with one of the drovers who pass over frequently; or at most for a few shillings. He could go under the guise of that drover's boy, or help, and at least he would be safe from danger in that condition. The expense will be from Chester to London, if that is the route observed."

So we discussed matters until it was time for us to quit the college for the night, but, ere the time came for me to journey to England, there occurred so many other things of stirring import that here I must pause to narrate them in their due order, so that the narrative which I have to tell shall be clear and understandable.

CHAPTER IV

INTO THE LAND OF BONDAGE

Quin had made shift to lodge me in his poor room for the last day or so and, so great and kind was his heart, that he had now announced that, henceforth, until I was fairly on my way to London, he would not let me be without the shelter of his roof again.

"For," he said to me that night as we walked back to his abode, "be sure that the chase will be hot after you directly your uncle arrives in the packet. You are known to be once more at large and, consequently, dangerous to his claims, therefore he must put you out of his way somehow ere you can be seen by those who will swear to you as being the rightful Lord St. Amade."

"But," I asked him, for my mind had been forced of late to devise so many shifts that I had become, perhaps, sharper and more acute than other lads of my age. "But what if I were to appear at the Courts, or at the Office of the King-at-Arms, and, boldly stating who and what I am, with witnesses for testimony thereto, claim protection. Would it not be granted me?"

"Ay," replied Quin, thoughtfully. "I doubt not it would be granted thee, and thy uncle would be restrained for a time at least from falsely assuming that which is not his. But such a state of things would not last long. Before many weeks had elapsed you would again be missing, or perhaps not missing but, rather, found. Though I misdoubt me but what, when found, you would not be alive."

I shuddered at this terrifying prospect as he spoke, though too well I knew that what he said might very easily come to pass. O'Rourke had attempted to kill me once before and would do so again if he were paid for it; doubtless Considine would also take my life if he had but the slightest opportunity offered him, and there would be many more who, in such a city as Dublin, could be hired to assassinate me. For, poor and wretched as I was, and roaming about the streets as I did, how easily might I not fall a prey to my uncle's designs! On the other hand, if I could but reach England I must surely be in far greater safety. For though my mother was, as she wrote, in ill health, it was not possible to believe that the Marquis would not extend me his protection as his rightful heir against so wicked a wretch and knave as my uncle, nor that the law would not exert itself more strongly there on my behalf than here, where it was to almost every one's advantage to have me dead. It was the lawyers who had bought up our estates, *my estates*, from my father and uncle at so meagre a price, believing, or pretending to believe, that I was in truth dead; it was not therefore to their interests to have me alive, and to be forced to disgorge those estates. Thus I should get no help from them. Again, O'Rourke would, if he could be found, surely swear that the real Lord St. Amade was dead—since to obtain his reward and also to enable my father and uncle to get the money they wanted, he had in some way obtained a certificate of my death (I learned afterwards that he had palmed off the dead body of a boy resembling me, which had been found in the Liffey, as mine).

I agreed with Oliver, therefore, and also with Mr. Kinchella, whose counsel marched with that of my honest protector, that, at present, Dublin was no place for me and that I must make for London to be safe. Meanwhile I lay close in Quin's room until he should have found a cattle-boat that was passing over to Chester, by which route it was decided I should go, it being more expeditious and exposing me less to the disagreeables of the sea. This was arrived at by my two friends out of the goodness of their hearts, but, could they have foreseen what storms and tempests were yet to be my portion both by sea and land, I doubt if they would have thought it much worth their trouble to secure me from a few hours more or less of discomfort on this particular voyage.

But, at present, there was no such boat going, the cattle being sent over to Park Gate (where all freight for Chester was landed) only about once every two weeks, and thus, as I say, I lay close in Quin's room until such time as he should advise me to be ready for my departure.

During this time of idleness and waiting, there occurred, however, many other things in connection with me, of which I heard from Oliver whenever he came home at night. To wit, my uncle

had arrived by the packet and had at once proceeded to notify to the whole city, both by his own and Considine's voice-whom he sent round to all the coffee-houses and ordinaries, as well as to the wine clubs and usquebaugh clubs-an errand I doubt not highly agreeable to that creature! – as well as by advertisement in the new newsletter entitled "Faulkner's Journal," which was just appearing, that my father had died childless and that he had consequently assumed the rank and style of Viscount St. Amande in the peerage of Ireland.

"Yet," said Oliver to me as I strolled by his side, for it was his custom to take me out a-walking for my health's sake at night after he returned home from his work; he holding me ever by the hand, while in the other he carried a heavy Kerry blackthorn stick, and had a pair of pistols in his pocket, "yet he succeeded not altogether to his satisfaction, nor will he succeed as well as he hopes. The people hiss and hoot at him and insult him as he passes by-Mike Finnigan flung a dead dog, which he had dragged out of the gutter, into his coach but yesterday-and they yell and howl at him to know where the real lord-that's you-is?"

Then again, on another day, he told me that Mr. Kinchella had come to his stall to tell him a brave piece of news, it being indeed no less than the fact that the King-at-Arms had refused to enrol the certificate of his brother having died without issue, while saying also that, from what he gathered, he was by no means sure that such was the case. This, Oliver said Mr. Kinchella told him, had led to a great scene, in which my uncle had insulted the King-at-Arms, who had had him removed from his presence in consequence, while he said even more strongly than before that, from what was told him, he did firmly believe that Mr. Robert St. Amande was endeavouring to bring about a great fraud and to attempt a villainous usurpation of another's rights to which he, at least, would be no party. Now, therefore, was my time, we all agreed, for me to present myself and to claim my rights, and Quin and Mr. Kinchella had even gone so far as to furbish me up in some fitting apparel wherewith to make a more respectable appearance in public, when everything was again thrown into disorder and my hopes blighted by the arrival in Dublin of the new Lord Lieutenant and of the Lord Chancellor Wyndham, than whom no one could have been worse for my cause. He was then an utter stranger to Ireland (though afterwards created Baron Wyndham of Finglass) in spite of having been sent from England to be, at first, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; he knew nothing of the descents of our ancient Irish families, nor, indeed, the names of many of them, and what was worse than all, he had known my uncle in England and was his friend.

"So, poor lad," said Oliver to me a few days later, "thy uncle has now the first trick o' the game. The Lord Chancellor has taken counsel at Mr. St. Amande's suggestion with several of the nobility of Wexford, who have told him they never heard of thy father having had a son, as well they may not, seeing he would associate with none of them but only with the poorer sort. He has also questioned many of the attorneys of this city, who find it to their interest, since they have bought thy estates, to say that either you never lived or are dead now, or else that you were born out of wedlock. And thus-"

"And thus?" I repeated, looking up wistfully at his kindly face.

"And thus-and thus-poor child! thy uncle is now enrolled as the Viscount St. Amande. But courage, courage, my dear, thou shalt yet succeed and prosper. Thy mother's family will surely see to thy rights, and, if not, then will not the Lord raise up a champion for thee?"

Long afterwards I remembered this pious aspiration of dear Oliver, who was himself a most sincere Protestant, and when that champion had appeared, though in how different a guise from what I should have ever dreamed, I came to think that, for the time at least, my good, simple friend had been granted the gift of prophecy.

So the days went on until at last the time drew near for the next cattle-boat to pass over to Chester, and Quin was busily engaged in making arrangements for me to go in it when there befel so strange a thing that I must write it down in full.

Quin came home one night-and, ah! what a bitter December night it was! I remember it now many, many years afterwards, and how the frost stood upon the window panes of the garret and the

cold air stole in through those panes so that I was forced to throw on all the fuel he could afford to keep myself from freezing. Well, I say, Quin came home on this night in a different humour from any I had ever seen him in before, laughing, chattering to himself, chuckling as he removed the heavy frieze surtout he wore, and even snapping his fingers as again and again he would burst out into his laughs. And he produced from that surtout a bottle of nantz but three parts full, and, seizing the kettle, filled it with water and placed it on the fire, saying that ere we went to bed we would drink confusion to all the rascals harbouring in Dublin that night. After which he again laughed and grimaced.

"What ails thee, Oliver?" I asked, "or rather, what has given thee such satisfaction to-night?"

He went on laughing for some time longer until I thought that I was to be debarred from hearing what it was that amused him so much, but at last he said: "I am rejoicing at the chance that has arisen of playing a knave, or rather two knaves, ay, or even three, a trick. And such a grand trick, too; a trick that shall make thy uncle curse the day he ever heard the name of Oliver Quin."

"My uncle!" I exclaimed. "My uncle! Why, what have he and you to do together, Oliver?"

"Listen," he said, and by this time the kettle was boiling and he was making the hyspy, "listen. I have seen O'Rourke to-night and-and I have promised, for the sum of one hundred guineas, to deliver thee into his hands for transportation to the colonies, to Virginia. To Virginia, my lad, thou art bound, so that thou shalt plague thy uncle no more. To Virginia. Ha, ha, ha!" and he burst into so loud a laugh that the rafters of the garret shook with it.

To be sure I understood that Oliver was but joking me-if I had not known his honest nature, his equally honest laugh would have told me so-yet I wondered what this strange discourse should mean! He had, I think, been drinking ere he entered, though not more than enough to excite him and make him merry, but still it was evident to see that, over and above any potations he might have had, something had happened. So I said:

"Go on, Oliver, and tell me about O'Rourke and the plantations, and when I am to be sold into slavery."

"I met O'Rourke this evening," he said, "as I happened into a hipping-hawd¹ on my way home. There the villain was, seated on a cask and dressed as fine as fivepence. On his pate was a great ramilie wig, so please you! clapped a-top of it, and with an evil cock to one side of it, a gold laced hat. He wore a red plush coat-though I doubt me if the fashioner ever made it for him! with, underneath, a blue satin waistcoat embroidered; he had a solitaire stuck into his shirt, gold garters to the knees of his breeches, and, in fine, looked for all the world as if he had come into a fortune and had been spending part of it in buying the cast-off wardrobe of a nobleman."

"But the Virginia plantations, Oliver!" I said; "the plantations!"

"I am coming to them-or, at least, thou art going to them! But first let me tell thee of thy old friend and janitor, O'Rourke. When I entered he was bawling for some sherris, but, on seeing me, he turned away from his boon companions and exclaimed, 'What, my jolly butcher, what my cock o' the walk, oh, oh! What, my gay protector of injured youth and my palmer-off of boys for noble lords! How stands it with thee? Art cold? – 'tis a cold night-tho' thou wilt be in a colder place if my Lord St. Amade catches holt on thee. But 'tis cold, I say; you must drink, my noble slaughterer. What will you? A thimbleful of sherris, maybe, or a glass of Rosa Solis? Here, Madge,' to the waitress, 'give the gentleman to drink,' and he lugged out of his pocket a great silk purse full of golden guineas and clinked it before us.

"'You seem rich and merry, Mr. O'Rourke,' I said. 'Plenty of money now, and brave apparel. Whence comes it all? Hast thou been smuggling off more boys or dragging out some more dead bodies from the river? It seems a thriving trade, at least!' This upset him, Gerald, so he said, 'Hark ye, Mr. Quin, this is no joking matter. When it comes to smuggling boys, it seems to me you are the smuggler more than I. Yet,' he went on, 'let me have a word with thee,' whereon he got off his

¹ A gossiping, chatting, or drinking place.

cask and came over to me. But as he did so he paused and turned round on the men drinking with him, and said, 'Will you stay drinking all night, you dogs? Get home, get home, I say. I will pay for no more liquor to-night; be off, I say. Finish your drink and go,' which the men did as obediently as though they were really dogs, touching their caps and wishing the ruffian and myself and Madge—who was half asleep beside her bottles—good-night.

"Now, Quin," said O'Rourke, drawing a chair up to where I was sitting, and resting his hands on the handle of his sword, which he stuck between his legs, 'listen to me, for I have matter of importance to say to thee, which thy opportune appearance has put into my head!'

"If 'tis any villainy," I said, 'which, coming from you, is like enough—'

"But he interrupted me with, 'Tush, tush! What you call villainy we gentlemen call business. But interrupt no more; listen. Quin, you know well enough that the lad you harbour is no more the Lord St. Amande than I am. I say you know it,' and here he winked at me a devilish wink, and put out his finger and touched me on the chest, while I, waiting to see what was coming, nodded gravely. 'The young lord, I tell you, is dead, drowned in the Liffey—have I not the certificate? Therefore, Quin—drink, man, drink and warm thyself—his uncle is now most undoubtedly, both by inheritance and the Lord Chancellor's enrolment, the rightful lord. But,' and here he paused and looked at me and, when he thought I was not observing, filled my glass again, 'his lordship wishes for peaceable possession of his rights and to harm none, not even thee who hast so grievously slandered him and his. Therefore, if you will do that which is right there is money for you, Quin; money enough to set you up as a flesher on your own account, and a trader in beasts; and, for the evil you have done, there shall be no more thought of it.'

"And what is it I am wanted to do?" I asked, while I made a pretence of faltering, and said, 'If I were sure that the lad I have in keeping were not truthfully the young lord—'

"The young lord is dead, I tell thee—take some more drink, 'tis parlous cold—the young lord is dead. I know it.'

"And therefore you want me to—?"

"Do this. My lord, by whom I mean his uncle, can now, by warrant of the Lord Chancellor, assume his proper station, and hath done so. Only, since he is a man of peace, he wisheth not to fall foul of the young impostor, and would-be usurper, *as you know he is*, Quin,' and again his evil eye drooped at me, 'nor to proceed either to punish him for his cheat nor to have to defend himself from any attempts your lad might make against him in the manner of impugning his title. And, therefore—to use thy thoughts—what would be best is that he should be got out of the way.'

"By murder?" I asked him.

"Nay, nay, never! The Lord forbend. We are gentlemen, not assassins, and so that all should be done peaceably and quietly it would be best to proceed as follows.'

"Here I again interrupted him, Gerald, by saying, 'If I were only sure, if I could be but sure—'

"Sure!" he exclaimed, rapping the table so loudly that the maid started from her nodding to stare at us. 'Sure! Sure! Man, I tell you the boy is dead.' Then, glancing suspiciously at the girl and lowering his voice, he went on again, 'We will proceed as follows. There is a friend of mine who maketh it his business to consign the ne'er-do-wells and prison scourgings of this city to Virginia, where he sells them to the tobacco planters for what they will fetch over and above what he has given for them. Now for a boy such as young Gerald—pish! I mean him whom you *call* young Gerald—he would give as much as twenty guineas, especially on my description of him. But,' he said, again touching me with his finger on the breast so that I felt disposed to fell him to the floor, 'but that is not all. For so that his lordship, who is a noble-minded gentleman if ever there was one, may peaceably enter upon and enjoy his own, subject to no disturbance nor thwarting, he will give two hundred guineas to me for having him safely put aboard my friend's brig, the *Dove*, and shipped to Newcastle, on the Delaware, where he trades.'

"Two hundred guineas,' I said, appearing to dwell upon it; 'tis a goodly sum, and the boy might do well in Virginia. He is a lad of parts.'

"Ay,' he replied, forgetting himself and that he pretended not to know you, 'he is. Smart and brisk, and looking a good two years older than his age. But of the two hundred guineas, all is not for you. I must have my share.'

"That being?' I asked.

"One half,' he replied. 'And think on it, Quin. One hundred golden guineas for thee and more, much more than that; for if you do this service for my lord he will absolve thee from thy contumacy and thine insults, both to his name and to the face of his wife-for his wife she is-and also to Mr. Considine, who is a gay and lightsome blade as ever strutted.'

"That is something,' I said, giving now what appeared my adhesion to his scheme. 'Perhaps I spoke too roughly to them, and I would not lie in the clink for it. Yet to kidnap a boy-for such 'twill be at best, and he, too, sheltering with me and trusting me-is a grave and serious thing, which, if discovered, might send me to the plantations also, if not the gibbet.'

"Have no fear,' he said; 'my lord shall give you a quittance to hold you harmless.'

"He must,' I made answer, 'and more; I must have an earnest of my payment. I will attempt nothing until I receive an earnest.'

"He looked round at the sleeping serving-maid as I spoke, and then he drew forth his silk purse again and shook some guineas out into the palm of his hand, and whispered to me, 'How much will serve, Quin? Eh? Five guineas. Eh? What! More!'

"Ay, more!' I said. 'Many more. That purse contains forty pieces if one. Give me twenty-five as an earnest and twenty-five to-morrow when we meet again and then, provided that I have the remainder an hour before your friend's brig sails, the boy shall be hoisted on board insensible, and the *Dove* may take him to Virginia or the devil either for aught I care.'

"And so," Oliver concluded, "he did it. He paid the guineas down-there they are; look at them, lad! And thou art, therefore, bound for Virginia, there to spend thy life, or at least a portion of it, in slavery on the plantations. Ho, ho, ho!" and again he laughed until the rafters rung once more.

CHAPTER V

THE SPRINGE IS SET

Thus Oliver concluded his narrative of his meeting with O'Rourke.

What came of that meeting you are now to see.

But first I must tell you what his own scheme was, and how he intended to work out upon the head of Robert St. Amande the result of his own villainy. My uncle had been married in early life to a young lady of good family and some means-upon which latter he had more or less managed to exist for several years-belonging to the South of Scotland. She had, however, died in giving birth to a son ere they had been married a twelvemonth, and it was as guardian of this son and custodian of his late wife's property, which that son was to inherit when he attained his twenty-first year, that he had, as I say, principally existed. At least he had done so until he devised the scheme of assisting my father to ease himself of the family property, when, naturally, he found more money coming his way than he had heretofore done, and so, perhaps, ceased his inroads on what remained of that which was due to my cousin on reaching his majority.

Whether, however, Roderick St. Amande-who was named after his grandfather, known as Rich Roderick of Dumfries-would ever live to come into his patrimony, or what remained of it, was a very much questioned subject. For the youth, who was some two years older than I, though not a wit bigger, if so big, had already taken to the most dreadful courses and, young as he was, might sometimes be seen reeling tipsy about the streets of Dublin (in which city his father thought fit to generally keep him); sometimes squabbling and rioting with the watch at nights, and sometimes leering over the blinds of the coffee-houses and wine clubs at any comely girl who happened to be passing up or down the streets. Moreover, I suppose, because since my birth he had always regarded me as an interloper who had come in between him and the future peerages of St. Amande and Amesbury, as, had I never been born, he must have eventually succeeded to them, he had always treated me with great cruelty so long as it was in his power to do so. When I was little better than a baby and he an urchin he saw fit to purloin or destroy the toys given me by my mother and my reckless and unhappy father; because I loved a terrier which a tenant had given me as a pup, that unfortunate creature was found drowned in a pool shortly after Roderick had been seen in the neighbourhood, and there were countless other ill treatments which he pleased to practise towards me. And at the time when I was consigned to O'Rourke by my father, who, in his then bemused state, probably did think that he was only secreting me for a while without dreaming of the harm to be attempted on me, this young villain, as I afterwards knew, was one of the prime instigators of that ruffian to make away with me. And, to conclude, when it was known that I had escaped from O'Rourke's hands he it was who, either on his own behalf or on that of his father, raised the hue and cry upon me until, when my own father lay a-dying in his garret, they saw fit to shift their tactics and give out that I was dead, which both father and son would have been consumedly rejoiced to have me.

Now, Oliver Quin knew all this and accordingly hated him as much as he loved me, and he knew also of the young man's habits, of his love for the bottle and for bottle-songs, of his revellings and reelings in the streets by nights and in the early mornings, sometimes in the company of Considine and sometimes in that of worse almost than he; and he formed his plans accordingly when approached by O'Rourke. Those plans were no less, as doubtless you have ere now perceived or guessed, than to take a great revenge on this youth for all his and his father's transgressions towards me, and, in fact, to ship him off to Virginia in the Dove instead of me and in my place.

Such a scheme was easier to be accomplished than might at first be supposed, for more reasons than one. To begin with, when O'Rourke met Oliver on the second night to unfold his plans and concert measures with him, one of the first things the vagabond told my friend was that he must by no means appear to be concerned in my sending away. "It will not do for me to be seen in the

matter, Quin," he said on that occasion, on which, because of its importance, they were now closeted in a private room of the house where they had encountered each other overnight; "it will not do. Fortune has caused me to be mixed up before in one or two unpleasant jobs with the Lord Mayor's myrmidons-the devil shoot them! – and I must keep quiet awhile. But that matters not, if you are to be trusted. For see, now, see! The *Dove* saileth the instant the wind shifts into the east, which it seems like enough to do at any moment. Therefore must you be ready with the freight which we would have. The captain, a right honest man, will send you word overnight at change of wind that he will up-anchor at dawn, and that, as dawn breaks, you must be alongside of him. He will see that the boy answers to my description-though I have said he is a year or so older than he actually is, so as to make him appear more worth the money-and, when he is aboard, you will receive the payment. Thus, Quin, you will have pouched one hundred and twenty guineas, and my lord will stand thy friend."

"Since the wind shifts, or seems like to shift ere long," Oliver replied, fooling him to the end, "let us conclude. Pay me the remaining seventy five pieces and I will have him ready at any moment."

"Nay, nay, softly," the other answered. "Thou wouldst not trust me too far, I guess, therefore neither must I be too confident. Yet listen! I shall not be on the quay when you put off to the *Dove*, but one who has served me before will be. An honest gentleman he is, too, just back from England where he hath been employed nosing out a Jacobite plot in the north, and to him you will show the lad, whereon he will pay you the guerdon and give you also a letter from my lord which will hold you harmless."

"Is he known to any of us, or to-to, well! to the law and its officers?"

"To none. He hath but just arrived and knows not a soul in Dublin except me and one or two of my friends."

"So be it," said Oliver, well enough pleased to think that this "honest gentleman" would not know the difference between me and my cousin. "So be it. Now, it will be best that the boy should be drugged ere I set out with him-is it not so? – and wrapped in some long cloak so that-"

"Ay, ay," replied the ruffian, "you are brisk. It shall be so. Get a long frieze cloak such as that you wear-the guineas will indemnify you for its cost and buy many another-and for the stupefying him, why, either a dram well seasoned or a crack on the mazard will do his business for him. Only, be sure not to kill him outright. For if you do, you will be twenty guineas short of your count, since he will be no use to the captain then, and you will be forced to fling him into the Liffey for the prawns to make a meal of."

Thus the wretch, who had no more compunction for my life than that it would be twenty guineas lost to him whom he now considered his accomplice, arranged everything, and after a few more instructions to Oliver as well as a further payment of twenty-five guineas as Oliver insisted (two of which afterwards turned out to be Jacks, or bad ones) they parted-the thing being, as O'Rourke remarked gleefully, now well arranged and in train.

"But," he said for his last word, "keep thy eye on the weathercock and be ready for the captain's hint, which he will send to this house. Let not the *Dove* sail without her best passenger."

"She shall not," answered Oliver. "Be sure of that."

"And now, Gerald, for so I shall call thee, lord though thou art," Oliver said to me that night, "we must think for the means for seizing on thy cousin. I know enough of the weather and the many signs it gives to feel sure that it is changing. It gets colder, which presages a north easterly wind, and this will carry the *Dove* out of the river and to sea. Therefore, it behoves us to be busy. To-night is Monday, by Wednesday at daybreak, if I mistake not, the brig will be away. Therefore, to-morrow night we must have the young princeton in our hands. Now, how shall we proceed?"

"He is almost nightly at Macarthy's tavern-I have seen him in passing, when I was hiding with the beggars. Yet," I said, breaking off, "oh, think, Oliver, of what you are about! If you are made accountable for this, you may be sent to prison or worse even."

"Tush, tush! lad!" he answered. "Have no fear for me. Yet it is kind of thee to think of it. Still, there is nought to fear. He goes not on board until I have thy uncle's quittance, though he may say little enough, fearing to commit himself overmuch; and for the rest, when he is gone, why we go, too-only another gait."

"We, too! Why, where shall we go?"

"Where? Why, to England, lad. To London. To thy mother. Shall we not have the wherewithal? We have fifty guineas already; we shall have more than double by Wednesday morning; and then away for Holyhead or Liverpool by the first packet that sails, and so to London."

"But, Oliver, what will you do to live? The guineas will not last for ever."

"No, that is true; but they will go far, and with them I can traffic as a master and not a man. Or I can hoard them for thy use" (how unselfish he was, I thought!) "and go back to work as a journeyman-they say none need want for work in London-and so be ever near to watch and ward over thee."

"Oliver," I exclaimed, "I think that even now the Lord has raised up that champion for me of whom you spoke. It seems that you are mine."

"Nay, there will arise a better for thee than I can ever be; but until he comes I must, perforce, do my best. Now let us make our plans."

And these are the plans we arranged. Knowing that there was no longer any search likely to be made for me-since 'twas certain that those who sought my ruin thought it was as good as accomplished-I was to sally forth next night disguised, and was to prowl about Macarthy's tavern and other haunts of my abandoned cousin until I had safely run him to earth. After this Quin was to be summoned by me from the hipping-hawd where he would be, and, presuming that the captain of the *Dove* had sent the expected word, he was then to keep Mr. Roderick St. Amande in sight until we could secure him.

There was nought else to arrange, for if these plans but fell out as we hoped all must go well; nothing could upset them.

And the next day, when it came, seemed to give promise of one thing at least happening as we desired, the wind was blowing strong from the N.N.E., a wind that would carry the *Dove* well beyond Bray Head, did it but hold for thirty-six hours.

At six o'clock that night, therefore, I, having made a slight meal of some food Oliver had let in the garret for me, banked up the fire, put out the light, and sallied forth to follow the instructions he had given me to find our quarry. Of compunctions as to what I was about to do I had none, as, perhaps, it was not to be expected I should have. For, consider. That which was to happen to this cousin of mine was but the portion which his father had endeavoured to deal out to me, and, as I learnt an hour or so later, was a portion which Roderick knew was intended for me and over which he gloated in his cups. Therefore, I say, I felt no pity for him, and I set about to perform my part of the task with determination to go through with it to the best of my power. My rags were now discarded, and the clothes which I wore, and which Oliver had purchased for me with some of O'Rourke's guineas, were in themselves a disguise. To wit, I wore a fine silk drugget suit lined with silk shagreen, for which he had given six of the pieces; my muslin ruffles were of the best, a pair of long riding-boots covered my stockings to the knees, and a handsome roquelaure enveloped me and kept the cold out. To add to my disguise as well as my appearance, I wore a bag wig, and at my side-Oliver said I might find some use for it ere long-a good sound rapier. Who could have guessed that in the youth thus handsomely apparelled, and looking any age near twenty-two or three-the wig and boots giving me an appearance much above my actual years-they saw the beggar who, a fortnight before, slunk about the streets of Dublin dressed as a scarecrow!

The wind still blew from the same quarter as I passed down the street in which Quin dwelt, while one or two passers-by turned to look at the unaccustomed sight of a well-dressed young man in such a neighbourhood, and as I went along I meditated on all that was before me. Moreover, I could not but muse on how strange it was that such a worldly-wise villain as O'Rourke, to say nothing of

those others, my uncle and Considine, could have fallen so easily into the trap of Oliver and have been willing to believe in his turning against me thus treacherously. Yet, I told myself, 'twas not so very strange after all. They could never have dreamt, no mortal man could possibly have dreamt, that he should have conceived so audacious and bold a scheme of turning the tables on them so completely as to dare to kidnap his very employer's own child in place of the one he wanted to have transported to the colonies. And, when they trusted him, if they did in very truth trust him, they only did so to a small extent, since, if he failed to produce me and to yield me over to the tender clutches of the captain of the *Dove*, they had but lost a handful of guineas and could make a cast for me again. Lastly, as I learned more surely when I grew older, when men are such uncommon rogues as these three were, they are often bound, whether they will or no, to hope that others with whom they have dealings are as great rogues as they themselves, and to make their plans and rely upon that hope accordingly.

Thus meditating and resolving on what I had to do, I drew near to Macarthy's tavern-then one of the most fashionable in the city-and, raising myself on tiptoes, I peeped over the blind and saw my gentleman within regaling himself on a fine turbot, with, to keep him company, another youth and two young women, much bedizened and bedeckt. These I knew, having seen them before, to belong to the company of actors who had been engaged to play at the new theatre in Aungier Street.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIRD DRAW'S NEAR

And now it behoved me to pause and consider as to what course it would be best for me to follow. It was as yet but seven of the clock, and Quin quitted not his stall until eight, so that it would be impossible, or rather useless, to apprise him of my cousin's whereabouts. Moreover, nothing could be done at this early hour of the evening, while, on the other hand, when night came on and it grew late it was almost a certainty that Roderick would be in his cups. Yet it would not do to lose sight of him, for should he wander forth from Macarthy's, as was like enough seeing the company he was in, we might not find him again that night, in which case the *Dove*, if she sailed at dawn, would have to go without my gentleman.

So I determined to enter the tavern. Of recognition from Roderick there was but little likelihood-nay, there was none at all. It was six years since he had seen me (though scarcely many more days since I had seen him without his knowing it); six years since he had drowned my pup, there collection of which made my hatred of him now stir afresh in me; years during which I had been at school in two or three different towns in the country, and also had been in England; and these years had made much difference between the child of ten and the youth of sixteen. And, as I have written, what with my height, which was considerable, and my dress, which was more suited to a young man of twenty than to me, there was no possibility of Roderick knowing me. So I determined to enter the tavern, I say, and to ensconce myself in a box near where my cousin and the actresses sat, and which from the window I could perceive was vacant, and thus glean what news I might of his intended action that night. My entrance caused some little attention, the room not being well filled as yet, and "What a pretty fellow!" said one of the girls to the other in a very audible voice as I took my seat in the place I had selected.

"I' faith!" replied the second, a painted minx, like her friend, with half a score of patches on her face-"pretty enough, but too much like a girl. For my part, I prefer to look upon a man. Now, Roddy, here, hath none too much beauty yet enough, or will have when he is a man."

"When he is a man!" my cousin said, "when he is a man, indeed! Man enough any way to find the wherewithal for giving you a good supper, Mistress Doll, which it strikes me you would not get from your wages nor from any of your 'manly' actors who strut about the booths with you, nor from the half-starved looking playwrights I have seen lurking about the theatre doors."

"There! there! Roddy!" said the one who had spoken last, swallowing his abuse as best she might, "there, there! Take no offence where none is meant, and, for the supper, 'tis most excellent. Yet the claret runs low, my lad, and I am thirsty."

"Thirsty!" the gracious Roderick replied; "that you are always, Doll, like all your crew. But claret is useless to such as thee! Here, drawer, waiter, come here. Bring us some of the brandy punch that Macarthy knows so well how to brew, and quick-dost hear?"

"The score, sir," I heard the man whisper, "is large already. And I have to account to the master-"

"The devil take you, and the score, and your master, too! Is not my father the Honourable Viscount St. Amade, thou rogue, and can he not pay for all the liquor I drink as well as what my friends consume? Go, fetch it, I say."

Meanwhile I sat in my box sipping a small measure of claret-which stuff I wondered some could be found to approve so much of-and regarding sideways the others. The punch being brought, my cousin, with a lordly air, bade the other young man ladle it out, telling him coarsely to keep the glasses of the girls well filled, since they were capable of drinking the Liffey dry if 'twere full of liquor; and the women, taking no notice of these remarks, to which and similar ones they were probably well used, fell to discussing some play in which they were shortly to appear.

"The lines are fair enough," said the elder of the two, whom Roderick had fallen foul of, to the other; "yet there are too many of them, and the action halts. Moreover, as for plot-why, there's none."

"'Tis the failing of our modern playwrights," said her companion, "that there never seems to be any, so that the audiences soon weary of us. Yet, if at Lincoln's Inn or Drury Lane they would try more for the plot, I feel sure that-"

"Plot!" here, however, interrupted my well beloved cousin, who was by this time approaching intoxication, and adding noise to his other modes of entertaining his guests, "who's talking about plots? Plots, forsooth!" And now he smiled feebly, and then hiccupped, "Plots, eh? I know a plot, and a good one, too."

"With submission, sir," said Doll, looking angrily at him-for she had evidently not forgiven his remarks-"we were talking about the difficulty that 'half-starved looking playwrights' found in imagining new plots for the playhouses and our crew, the actors. It follows, therefore, that even though the noble Mr. Roderick St. Amande should know a good plot, as he says, it could avail us nothing. He surely could not sink his nobility so low as to communicate such a thing to the poor mummers."

"Ha, ha!" answered Roderick, "but couldn't he, though. I' faith, I'll tell you a good plot-take some more drink, I say! – and when next some snivel-nosed dramatist wants a-a-what d'ye call it, a-plot, tell him this."

"We are all attention, sir. This is indeed an honour. We have of late had more than one noble lord as patron and poetaster-it seems we have another in store. Nell," to her companion, "listen carefully."

"Doll, thou art a fool and a vixen too, especially when thou hast supped, as the black fellow calls it, not wisely but too well. Yet, listen. Thou hast heard of my uncle's death-"

"Verily we have," interrupted Doll again. "All Dublin has. A noble lord buried by charity, and that not the charity of his relatives; a doubtful succession, an impugned title-ha! ha! – who has not heard of that! Yet, if this is the plot, 'tis useless for us. It may do in absolute real life, but not upon our boards. 'Twould be thought so unnatural and inhuman that, if we endeavoured to represent the thing, we should be hissed or worse."

"In truth, I have a mind to beat you," the now drunken youth roared out, "yet I will not. Gim'-me some drink. A plot, I said. Well, now, hear. There is a beggar's brat whom others are endeavouring to foist on us as my uncle's child-thus commenceth the plot-but they will not succeed. Not succeed? you ask. I will tell you. And there's the continuation of the plot. No, they will not succeed. To-morrow, early, that beggar's brat pays the penalty of his attempted cheat-he passes away, disappears for ever. Where to? No, not to the grave, though I trust he may find it ere long, but to the plantations. What! the bowl is empty? Thy throat's a lime-kiln, Doll. To the plantations, I say, to the plantations. That should kill the dog, if aught will. If the work and the fever and the beatings, to say nothing of the bad food, will not do it, why, perhaps the Indians will, and so we shall have no more disputed successions nor impugned titles. Now, say, is it not a good plot? Let's have more drink!" And he sank back into his chair.

The woman Doll regarded him for a moment with her steely blue eyes, what time he shut his own and seemed about to slumber-the other youth had long since gone off into a drowsy and, I suppose, tipsy nap. And then she whispered to her companion, "I wish I did but know where that beggar's brat he speaks of were to be found. I would mar his plot for him." And the companion nodded and said she too wished they had never consented to come with him to supper.

Meanwhile, I, who had also feigned sleep so that, if they should look at me, they would not think I had overheard them-though in truth I think they had forgotten my presence, since I was shielded from their sight by the box sides-called for my reckoning, and, paying it, rose to depart. For it was time now that I should go and seek Oliver. As I passed down the room the girls looked at me and then at each other, but said nothing; and so I went swiftly out and to the place appointed to meet Quin.

"Come quickly," I said to Oliver, who was on the watch for me and came out directly I put my head in the door, "come quickly. He is drunk now in the company of another youth who is as bad

or worse than he, and of two actresses, neither of whom would, I believe, raise a finger to help him even though we slew him. He has insulted them and they will do nothing."

Therefore we hurried along, but as we went Quin told me we must be careful. First, the streets were full of people as yet, so that, if we endeavoured to carry him off, we should of a certainty arouse attention; and, next, the people at Macarthy's would be sure to keep an eye to him, more especially as he owed them a reckoning. And he told me that the captain of the *Dove* had sent to say he sailed at daybreak; "so that," he said, "if nought mars our scheme-which heaven forbid may not happen-we have the bird in the springe, and then for London to your lady mother by the packet boat which sails, I hear, to-morrow, at noon. And, Gerald, thou look'st every inch a young lord in thy brave apparel-she will scarce believe you have been hiding amongst the beggars of Dublin."

By now we had returned to the outside of Macarthy's and, again peering over the blind of the bow-window, we saw that Roderick and his boon companions were still there. He and the young man with him were, however, by now fast asleep, and the two girls were talking together we could see; while, from the far end of the room, the waiter who had served me and them was seated on a chair yawning lustily, and every now and then regarding the party with his half open eye. Of others present there were none, perhaps because it was a cold, inclement night, though one or two of the boxes seemed to have been recently occupied, as did some of the tables in the middle of the room-near one of which our party sat judging by the disarranged napery and empty dishes left upon them.

But, as we gazed, we observed that the actresses appeared to have grown tired of the company they were in, and, softly rising, they went over to the hangers and took down their camlet cloaks and hoods and prepared to depart. The one called Doll took from her purse a piece of silver which she flung to the waiter, and said some words to him accompanied by a gesture towards my cousin and the other youth and also by a laugh-perhaps she said that 'twas all the vail he would get that night! – and then without more ado she passed with her friend out into the street. But they came forth so swiftly that Oliver and I had no time to do more than withdraw our eyes from the window and appear to be talking, as though we were acquaintances met in the street, before they were both upon us, and, fixing her eye upon me, Doll recognised me again in a moment. "Why," she said to her friend, with her saucy laugh, "'tis the pretty youth who was in the tavern but an hour ago." And then, turning to me, she went on, "Young sir, you should be a-bed by now. The night air is bad for-for young gentlemen. Yet, perhaps, you have a tryst here with some maid, or" – but now she halted in her speech and, bending her brows upon me, said-"or, no, it cannot be that you are concerned in the foul plot Mr. St. Amante spoke of within. No, no! That cannot be. You did not appear to know him, nor he you. Yet, again, that might be part of the plot, too." And once more she looked steadfastly at me.

I would have answered her but Oliver took the word now, and speaking up boldly to her, said:

"Madam, if my young master be concerned at all in the plot of which you speak it is to thwart it, as, by good chance, he most assuredly will do. Therefore, since you say it is 'foul,' by which I gather that you do not approve of it, I pray you pass on and leave us to do our best."

She looked at his great form and at me, her friend standing always close by her side, and then she said to me:

"Who are you? No friend of his, assuredly. And if such be the case, as it seems, then I heartily wish that your attempts to thwart his villainy may be successful. Oh! 'tis a shame-a shame."

"I guessed you thought as much," I answered in reply to her, "from what I overheard you say within. Therefore, I make bold to tell you that he will doubtless be so thwarted. And, if you would hear the ending of the plot which he described to you to-night, and which I assure you was incomplete, you will have to wait a little longer. Then, if I have the honour to encounter you again, it shall be told. Meanwhile, if you wish us well, I beg of you to leave us. He may come out at any moment when your presence would interfere with our plans."

"So be it," she replied, "and so farewell, and fortune go with you. And-stay-I should like to hear the ending of that gallant and courteous young gentleman's plot; a line to Mistress Doll Morris at the New Theatre in Aungier Street will reach me. Farewell."

"Farewell, my pretty page," said the other saucily, and so they passed down the street, I telling them as they went that, doubtless, they would hear something ere long.

And now the evening was gone, the passers-by were getting fewer, the shops were all shut; soon Macarthy's would shut too. The time for action was at hand.

CHAPTER VII

TRAPPED

And still the night drew on and we waited outside, sheltering ourselves in the stoop of an empty house opposite Macarthy's, or walking up and down the street to keep ourselves warm as well as not to attract observation to our loitering. Yet, indeed, there was but little fear that we should be observed, since there were but few people in the streets. A coach or hackney carriage would now and again rumble past; once the watch went by; two of his Majesty's sailors passed down singing a jovial chaunt about the West Indies and the girls and the drinking there-but that was all. The city was fast going to bed.

Knowing that my hopeful cousin was intoxicated by now, we had somewhat altered our plans, and we had determined that, directly we could seize him, we would carry him down to the boat which we had ready for us at Essex Stairs. Once there, we would await the arrival of O'Rourke's "honest gentleman" with the remaining hundred guineas and my uncle's acquittal, the form of which was already arranged; after which we would pull off to the *Dove*, which lay below Dublin in mid stream, and deposit our cargo with the captain, and take his guineas too. Resistance from our prize we had no fear of. I could myself have easily mastered him in the state he now was, while for any noise he might make-why, a gag would stop that and would be perfectly understood and approved of by the captain, should Roderick go aboard thus muzzled. It would, doubtless, not be the first victim he had shipped for Virginia in such a condition.

Yet there was no necessity for even this, as you shall now see, since my cousin's own actions, and his love for the bottle, led him to fall into our hands as easily as the leaf falls from the tree when autumn winds are blowing.

As we stood in the street waiting for him and his friend to come forth-who we hoped would soon part from him and seek his own home-we heard a hubbub and loud noises in Macarthy's, as well as expostulations in the drawer's voice, and then, suddenly, the door was flung open and out into the street there came, as though they had both been thrust forth together by strong hands, my cousin and his guest.

"Now what may this mean?" whispered Oliver, while, as he spoke, he drew me further within the porch, or stoop, so that we were quite invisible behind its thick pillars.

It took not long to learn. My cousin was mightily flustered as 'twas easy to see; his hat was awry as also was his steinkirk, his face was flushed and he breathed forth most dreadful execrations against the tavern first, and then his companion, who, perhaps because of his longer sleep within, seemed more cool and calm.

"I tell thee 'tis a scurvy trick, Garrett," bawled Roderick, after he had finished kicking at the tavern door, which was now fast closed, while the lights within were extinguished; and after he had yelled through the keyhole at them that "they should be indicted on the morrow." "A scurvy trick, and worst of all from a guest as thou art. But it shall not pass, and I will have satisfaction." And he began tugging at the sword by his side, though he lurched a good deal as he did so.

"Mr. St. Amande," replied the other, "satisfaction you shall indeed have, as I will for the blow you dealt me in there, which led to our ignominious expulsion. And you may have it now, or in the park to-morrow morning, or when and where you will. But, previously, let me tell you, sir, that when you say that I am any party to the departure of the young ladies, or that I know where they are, or am about to rejoin them, you lie. Now, sir, shall we draw?"

"Where are they then? I did but doze, yet when I opened my eyes they were gone," but he made no attempt further to unsheath his weapon.

"As I have now told you twice, I know not. But I cannot stay parleying here with you all night. A friend will wait upon you to-morrow. Frank Garrett must wipe out that blow. I trust my friend's

visit will be agreeable. Sir, I wish you a good night," and he took off his richly gold laced hat with great ceremony and, bowing solemnly, withdrew. My cousin gazed with drunken gravity after him and hiccoughed more than once, and muttered, "A nice ending truly to a supper party. The girls gone, insulted by landlord and-and the reckoning to pay and fight to-morrow-Garrett knows every passado to be learnt at the fence school. I must see to it. And there is no more to drink." Here he reeled over to the tavern again from the middle of the road, and, beating on the door, called out to, them to come down and give him another draught and he would forget their treatment of him while the reckoning should be paid in the morning. But his noise produced no other reply than the opening of a window upstairs, from which a man thrust forth his head covered with a nightcap and bade him begone or the watch should be summoned. While for the reckoning, the man said, his honour might be sure that that would have to be paid since he knew his honour's father well. After which the window was closed.

But now, when once more all was still, Oliver and I stepped forth, and the former taking off his hat with great civility and bowing, said, "Sir, we have been witnesses of how ill you have been treated, both by your friend and the tavern-keeper. And 'tis a sin to thrust forth so gallant a gentleman when he wishes another cup."

"I do, plaguily," muttered Roderick.

"Therefore, young sir, if you require another draught I can show you where it may be obtained."

"Can you? Then you are a right good fellow, though who and what you are I know not from Adam. Some city put, I suppose, who wishes to be seen in company with a gentleman!" – 'twas ever my cousin's habit to make such amiable speeches as these, and thereby to encounter the ill will of those whom he addressed. "But, however, I care not whom I am seen in company with. I'll go along with you." Then, suddenly, his eye lighted on me, whereon he exclaimed, "What, my gentleman! Why, 'twas you who were in Macarthy's earlier in the evening. I suppose you left ere I awoke from my doze. Are you, too, stranded for a draught and obliged to be indebted to this good-humph! – person for procuring you one?"

"Even so," I answered, thinking it best to fall in with his supposition, whereon Oliver said:

"Come on then, young sirs, or all the taverns will be closed. Yet, stay, will you have a sup ere we set forth. I have the wherewithal in my pocket," and he thrust his hand in his coat and pulled out a great flask he had provided to keep out the morning air from our lungs when we should be on the river.

"First come, first served," he said, winking at me, which action being under an oil lamp I could well perceive, and he handed me the flask which I put to my mouth and pretended to drink from, though not a drop did I let pass my lips. "And you, sir," he went on, turning to my cousin, "will you try a draught? 'Tis of the right kind-and-hush! a word-the gauger has never taken duty on it."

"So much the better. Hand over," said Roderick, "the night air is raw. Ah!" He placed the bottle to his lips as he uttered this grunt of satisfaction and took a long deep draught, and then returned the flask enviously to Oliver and bade him lead to the tavern he knew of, where he promised he would treat us both to a bowl of punch ere the night was done.

But Oliver (as he told me afterwards) not thinking it advisable to be seen in more public houses than necessary-considering the business we were on-purposely led the way to one near the river of which he knew, by as circuitous a route as possible, so that, ere we had gone half a mile, Roderick called a halt for another refresher. All the way we had come he had been maundering about the treatment he had received at the tavern, about the desertion of him by the actresses, and about his friend's treachery, mixed up with boastings of his father's standing, his speech being very thick and his gait unsteady. So that the same hope was in Oliver's mind as in mine, namely that another attack upon the bottle might do his business for him. Yet, when he had taken it, he was not quite finished-though nearly so, since he would once or twice have fallen had we not held him up between us as we went along, – and we were fain at last to suggest a third pull at the flask. And shortly after he had taken that he could go no farther but, after hiccoughing out some unintelligible words, sank helpless on the stones.

"Caught in their own toils!" exclaimed Oliver, as he bent over him, "caught in their own toils! Gerald, already the spell begins to work that shall undo your uncle. Yet, if this were not the son of a villain, and a villain himself in the future if he be not one now, as by his rejoicing over the plot in the tavern he seems to be, I would never have taken part in such a snare as this. But," he continued, "they would have sent you, poor lad, to where he is going, and he would have gloated over it. Let us, therefore, harden our hearts and continue what we have begun."

He stooped over Roderick as he spoke and gazed at him as he lay there insensible, and said, "We must remove from him his lace and ruffles; they are too fine. His hat with its lacings is easily disposed of," saying which he tossed it on a heap of refuse such as was then to be found in every street in Dublin. "His clothes," he continued, "are, however, none too sumptuous, and they are soiled with mud where he has fallen. His sword he must not have however," with which words he unloosed it as well as the sash and placed the former against a doorway and the latter in his pocket. "Now," he said, "let us carry him to the stairs," and he forthwith hoisted him on his back as easily as he had hundreds of times hoisted a sheep in a similar manner.

We passed scarcely any persons on our road, and, when we did, they seemed to think little enough of such a sight as a man who looked like a porter carrying another who was overcome by drink on his back, while a third, probably, as they supposed, the drunken man's friend, walked by their side. Such sights were common enough in the days when I was young and George II. had just ascended the throne, and not only in Dublin but in England and all over his dominions. Nay, in those days things were even worse than this; men went to taverns to pass their evenings, leaving word with others, to whom they paid a regular wage, to come and fetch them at a certain hour, by which time they would be drunk. Noblemen's servants came for them on the same errand to their wine clubs and the ordinaries, and even many divines thought it no sin to be seen reeling home tipsy through the streets at night, or being led off by their children who had sought them out at their houses of use.

So, I say, we passed unheeded by those few we encountered, and in this manner we came to Essex Stairs, where Oliver deposited his burden upon the shingle under a dry arch and went to fetch the boat.

"I know not," he said, "whether 'tis best to put him in the boat at once and so to row about the river, or whether to let him lie here until O'Rourke's friend comes to see that the scheme is accomplished. He is to wear a red cockade by which we shall know him."

"I imagine 'twould be best to take to the boat," I said. "Any one may come down to the river shore at any moment, but the river is as still as death. And we could lie under yon vessel that is listed over by the tide, and so see those on shore without being seen."

"Thou art right, Gerald; thou art right. No thing could be better. Wilt lend a hand to carry him in? And then we will shove off."

We bent over the prostrate form enveloped now in Oliver's frieze coat, when, as we did so, we heard behind us a voice—a voice that terrified me so that I felt as though paralysed, or as if the marrow were freezing in my bones—a voice that said, "Softly, softly! What! Would'st put off without the other guineas and the acquittance?" And, starting to our feet, we saw behind us O'Rourke regarding us with a dreadful smile.

"So, Mr. Quin," he went on, "thou would'st have tricked me, eh! and hast found some other youth to send to the plantations in place of this young sprig here—who, in spite of his gay apparel and his smart wig, I recognise as the brat who was not long ago in my custody, and shall be again. A pretty trick in faith! a pretty trick to try on me who, in my time, have served the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender, and hoodwinked the whole joyous three. Why, Quin," he went on banteringly, "you are not so clever as I took you for."

"I may outwit you yet, O'Rourke," replied Oliver, "in spite of your cleverness. But," he continued, in a peculiar voice that I could not understand, and, indeed, I felt now so miserable and wretched at the failure of our undertaking that I paid but little heed to what they said, "I suppose

you, too, were tricking me. If we had got down the river we should have found no *Dove* there to take our cargo on board."

"Nay, nay, Quin," continued the other, "for what then think you I have paid you the guineas, which now you must return or I will blow your brains out? The *Dove* is there fast enough, though she is anchor a-peak now and ready to sail. And in my pocket, too, are the remaining pieces-for I am an honest man, Quin, and keep my word-and with a line from my lord absolving thee, which now thou must forego." Here he burst into another laugh such as he had once or twice given before, and went on, "Yet I cannot but smile at your simplicity. What! pay thee twenty-five guineas for nothing, and entrust an honest gentleman with a red cockade in his hat-ha, ha! – to look after my affairs when I can look after them myself. 'Tis not thus that I have prospered and made my way. Now, Quin, give back my guineas to me."

"Nay," said Oliver, "that will never be. We have the guineas and we mean to keep them."

"I am armed," said O'Rourke, "and I will have them; yet, ere I take them from you or shoot you like a dog, let's see what creature, what scaramouch or scarecrow thou hast picked out of the gutter to send to Virginia in place of this boy, Gerald," and, stooping down, he bent on his knee and flung Oliver's cloak off my cousin's form till it lay there as it had fallen, and with a ray from the oil lamp of the archway glistening on his face.

"What!" he exclaimed, "what! nay, 'tis impossible-yet, yet, oh! oh! Quin, thou damnable, thou double-dyed scoundrel; why-why-thou wretch, thou execrable wretch, had this happened, had this wicked plot been put in practice, my lord would have slain me. Oh! thou villain. I should have been ruined for ever."

"As so you shall be yet," said Oliver springing at him as he spoke, "as you shall be if I myself do not slay you first."

In a moment he had seized the ruffian by the throat with his great strong hands while he called to me to secure his pistols, which I did without loss of time; and he so pressed upon his windpipe that O'Rourke's face became almost black. Yet he struggled, too, being, as I think, no coward, and dealt out buffets and blows right and left, some falling on Oliver's face and some on his body. But gradually these blows relaxed in strength and fell harmless on his more brawny antagonist, who never loosed the hold upon his throat, so that 'twas easy to perceive, even in the dark of the archway with its one faint illumination, he must in a few moments be choked to death.

"Do not kill him, Oliver," I whispered, "do not kill him. Spare him now; he is harmless."

Whether it was my words or his own merciful nature I know not, but, at any rate, Oliver did at last relax his hold on the other, who, when he had done so, fell to the earth and, after writhing there for a moment, lay perfectly still.

"We must be speedy," said Oliver, "and lose no time. Look! towards the east the light is coming. Quick. Do you rifle his pockets for the money and the paper-above all, the paper; do not overlook that! while I lift the other into the boat. And gag him with this sash," taking Roderick's sword sash out of his pocket and tossing it to me; "gag him tightly, but leave him room to breathe. I have not killed him, though I came near doing so."

As he spoke, he snatched up my cousin as easily as though he had been a valise, and went down with him to the boat, throwing him lightly into the stern sheets, and then pushed the boat off by the bow so that she should be ready to float the moment we were in.

As for me, I went through O'Rourke's pockets hurriedly, finding in them the bag with the remainder of the guineas (in which we discovered afterwards three more jacks, so that we were led to think that he followed, amongst other pursuits, that of passing bad coin whenever it was possible) and also the paper-a scrawl in my uncle's hand writing saying that "he thanked Mr. Quin for what he had done in ridding Ireland of an atrocious young villain and impostor falsely calling himself a member of a noble family, to wit, his own" – and pledging himself to hold Mr. Quin harmless of any proceedings on that account.

Then, tying Roderick's sash in O'Rourke's mouth, I ran down to the boat, and, jumping into it, rolled up my cloak and coat and took the bow oar.

Half-an-hour later the dawn was come; already there was stealing over the river that faint light which, even on a winter morning, tells that the day is at hand, and our oars were keeping time well together as we drew near to the ship that was to carry my wretched cousin far away to the Virginia plantations-the plantations to which he and his father fondly hoped they would have consigned me.

CHAPTER VIII AND CAGED

As we thus drew near to what Oliver said was the *Dove*-he having been down to reconnoitre her the day before from the shore-our burden gave some signs of coming to, or rather of awakening from his drunken slumbers. First he rolled his head about under the cloak, then he got it free from the folds, and, when he had done this, he opened his bloodshot eyes and stared at us with a look of tipsy amazement. Yet, so strong was the unhappy youth's ruling passion, that he exclaimed:

"If you have a taste of that spirit left in the flask, I pray you give it me."

"Feel in the pocket over by your left shoulder," replied Quin, "and you may yet find a drop or so-'twill warm you." Then, turning to me as the wretched Roderick did as he was bidden, Quin said over his shoulder, in a whisper, "'Tis a charity to give it him. It is the last he will taste for many a day. The skippers do not give their prisoners aught else but water on these cruises, and as for the planters-if all accounts be true! – they treat their white slaves no better." After saying which he bent to his oar again.

For a moment the draught seemed to arouse Roderick and even to put sense into his muddled pate, since, as he gazed on the shore on either side, he muttered, "This is not the way home. Not the way I know of"; but, even as he did so, the fumes of the overnight's liquor, stirred up perhaps by the new accession of drink, got the better of him again and once more he closed his eyes.

"'Tis thy way home at any rate," I heard Oliver mutter; "the way to the only home you will know of for some years. And may it be as happy a one to thee as thou destined it for thy cousin." Then turning swiftly to me, he said, "Pull two strokes, Gerald; we are alongside the *Dove*."

As we slewed round to run alongside the gangway, there stood at the top of it as villainous a looking old man as ever it was my lot to see. An old man clad in a dirty plush suit with, on his head, a hat covered with tarnished, or rather blackened, silver lace; one who squinted hideously down at us.

"Whence come you, friends?" he asked. "From the noble Captain O'Rourke," replied Oliver, "and we bring you his parting gift. The youth is not well, having partaken freely over night, doubting, perhaps, of your hospitality. Now, sir, if you will produce the price named to the Captain and send down a man or so to haul him on board, he is very much at your service."

"Ay, ay," said the captain, "let's see him though, first. I don't want to buy a dead man-as I did up at Glasgow not long ago-or one who has lost his limbs. Here, Jabez, and you, Peter, jump down and haul him up," while, as he spoke, he produced a filthy skin bag from his pocket and began counting out some guineas into his palm.

Those called Jabez and Peter-one of whom was a negro-did as they were bidden, and, shoving our boat a little forward so as to bring the stern, where Roderick lay, up to the platform of the gangway, they quickly threw off the cloak, and, seizing his limbs, began to lift them up and let them fall, to see that they were not broken nor he dead. But such treatment even this poor bemused and sodden creature could not bear without protest, so, as the men seized him and swiftly bore him up the gangway until he stood upon the deck of the *Dove*-a filthy, dirty-looking craft, with, however, a great, high poop much ornamented with brass and gilding-he began to strike out right and left, and to scream and ejaculate.

"Hands off, you ruffians, hands off you wretches, I say! What! do you know who I am; do you know that I am the son of the Viscount St. Amande and his heir? Let me go, you dogs!" and putting his hand to where his sword should have been and not finding it there, he struck at the negro, who, instantly striking back at him, fetched him such a blow on the cheek as sent him reeling against the rough-tree rail, where he glowered and muttered at all around.

"Hark ye, young sir," said the villainous looking skipper, "we have been informed before this by the gallant Captain O'Rourke that it pleases you to style yourself a son of Lord St. Amande." Here

Quin nodded up to the speaker, saying, "'Tis so, I have even at this moment a paper in my pocket saying that he does so claim that position." "But let me tell you," the captain went on, "'twill avail you nothing on board this craft. I am, like the honest man in the boat below, in possession of a paper from his lordship saying you will try this tack with me, and, as I tell you, 'twill profit you nothing. You may call yourself what you will but you must accustom yourself to this ship for some weeks, at least, and take your part with these your companions till you reach your destination. While, if you do not do so, I will have you brained with a marling-spike or flung into the sea, or, since I cannot afford to lose you, have you put in irons in the hold," after which he turned away from Roderick, handed the twenty guineas to Oliver, and bellowed out his orders for getting the ship under weigh at once.

But now, as I glanced at those whom the man spoke of as his companions, my heart went out to my cousin, and, cruelly as he had ever used me, and even remembering that he had chuckled over the doom which now was his having been planned for me, I could not but pity him. Nay, I think, had it been possible, that I would have saved him, would have had him set on shore free again, and would have trusted to Heaven to soften his heart and make him grow into a better man. His companions! The creatures with whom he was to live and herd until he reached Virginia, and even afterwards, maybe. Oh! 'twas dreadful to reflect upon. They stood upon the deck of that horrid-looking craft, surrounding him, jeering at him, mocking at him, but not one with a look of pity in his or her face-as, indeed, 'twas not likely they should have since his fate was theirs. Amongst them there were convicted felons with chains to their legs and arms, who were being sent out so as to ease the jails which were always full to overflowing; there were women who were coin clippers and coiners, and some who-for I learnt their histories afterwards-had been traffickers in their own sex, or ensnarers of drunken men, or even murderesses-though some of them were fair enough in looks and some, also, quite young. And there were youths, nay, lads, younger than I was, who had been sold to the captain (to be again re-sold by him at the end of his voyage) by their own unnatural parents, so that, as they became lost, the parents' shame might become forgotten. There, too, lying about, were drunken lads and girls who had been picked up in the streets and brought on board and kept drunk until the ship should sail; there were some who looked like peasants who had been enticed in from the country, since they wore scarce any clothes, and-horror of horrors! – sitting weeping on a cask was a clergyman, still with his cassock on and with a red blotchy face. He-I afterwards learnt also-had forged to obtain money for drink, and this was his doom. And those who were not drunk, or sleeping off the effects of drink, came near that other drunkard, my cousin, and, approaching as close as possible to him until the mate and sailors kicked them, men and women, indiscriminately away, jeered at and derided him and made him welcome, and asked him if he had any money, or what he thought of the prospects of a sea voyage, and with what feelings he looked forward to a sojourn in Virginia as a slave.

"As a slave! In Virginia!" he screamed, taking in his situation at last. "As a slave in Virginia! Oh, God! spare me, spare me! 'Tis a mistake, I tell you. A mistake. Another one was meant, not I. 'Tis he who should go. 'Tis he! Send for him and set me free!"

And then they all laughed again, while the captain, seizing him roughly by the collar, threw him amidst the others, telling him he would do very well for him; and then they hauled up the gangway and gradually the ship wore round.

She had commenced her voyage.

So he went forth a slave and, as he went, the pity that had welled up into my heart for him became stifled and I felt it no more. For, think! As he screamed in his desperation for mercy he asked for it only for himself, he would at that moment, in spite of the horrors which he saw, have cheerfully sent me in his place. Nay, in his place or not, he had meant that I should go. Why, I asked myself, should I pity him?

The *Dove* had quickly caught the north wind that was blowing now; she had slipped away so easily from us when once her anchor was up and her sails set, that, as she went heeling over down

the river, we saw but little of her but her stern and her poop lantern swinging aft. And so we turned our boat's nose back to the city and prepared to return.

Oliver was himself silent; I think because in his noble heart there was the same conflict going on that there was in mine-the regret for having been concerned in such a deed fighting with the pleasant conviction that he had foiled a most wicked plot against me and thus defeated two utter villains, my uncle and Considine, while, on a third one, the punishment had fallen. And now that years have passed it pleases me to think that it was so with him, and that that brave heart of his could, even at this moment of triumph, feel sorrow for what he had thought it best to do. A brave heart, I have called it; a noble heart-and so it was. A heart ever entended to me from the first when, God He knows, there was none else to show me kindness; a heart that so long as it beat was ever loyal, good, and true.

"Will you put back to the bridge?" I asked him, seeing that he still kept the boat's course headed up river. "Surely it would be best to make straight for the packet and go on board at once. Suppose O'Rourke has recovered by now and informed my uncle. What may he not do to us?"

"Nothing," replied Oliver, as he still set a fast stroke, "nothing. To begin with-which is the most important thing-he cannot catch the *Dove*, no, not even if he could persuade the captain of one of His Majesty's sloops now lying in the river to put out in chase of her, – such vessels as she is can show their heels to anything they have a few hours' start of. And as for what he can do to us-why, what can he attempt? We have been employed on his service, I hold in my pocket a letter from him justifying me in kidnapping the youth who claims to be Lord St. Amande. Well! that is what thy cousin claims to be in succession, and, even if he did not do so, how can thy uncle make any stir, or announce himself, as he needs must do if he blows on me; he, a participator in what I have done? While for O'Rourke-the noble Captain O'Rourke, Hanoverian spy, Jacobite plotter, white or black cockade wearer as the time serves and the wind shifts, crimp and bully, – think you he will come within a hundred leagues of Mr. Robert St. Amande after having failed so damnably? Nay! more likely are we to meet him in the streets of London when we get there than in those of Dublin! So bend thy back to it, Gerald, and pull hard for Essex Bridge. The tide runs out apace."

As we passed up through the shipping lying in the river and on to our destination, Quin did utter one more remark to the effect that, if he had in very fact slain O'Rourke, or injured him so badly that he could not rise from the spot where he fell, it was possible we might still find him there, but that he did not think such a thing was very likely to come about.

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