

BARR AMELIA

E.

THE MAID OF MAIDEN
LANE

Amelia Barr

The Maid of Maiden Lane

«Public Domain»

Barr A.

The Maid of Maiden Lane / A. Barr — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

CHAPTER I	5
CHAPTER II	9
CHAPTER III	16
CHAPTER IV	23
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	34

Amelia E. Barr

The Maid of Maiden Lane

CHAPTER I

THE HOME OF CORNELIA MORAN

Never, in all its history, was the proud and opulent city of New York more glad and gay than in the bright spring days of Seventeen-Hundred-and-Ninety-One. It had put out of sight every trace of British rule and occupancy, all its homes had been restored and re-furnished, and its sacred places re-consecrated and adorned. Like a young giant ready to run a race, it stood on tiptoe, eager for adventure and discovery—sending ships to the ends of the world, and round the world, on messages of commerce and friendship, and encouraging with applause and rewards that wonderful spirit of scientific invention, which was the Epic of the youthful nation. The skies of Italy were not bluer than the skies above it; the sunshine of Arcadia not brighter or more genial. It was a city of beautiful, and even splendid, homes; and all the length and breadth of its streets were shaded by trees, in whose green shadows dwelt and walked some of the greatest men of the century.

These gracious days of Seventeen-Hundred-and-Ninety-One were also the early days of the French Revolution, and fugitives from the French court—princes and nobles, statesmen and generals, sufficient for a new Iliad, loitered about the pleasant places of Broadway and Wall Street, Broad Street, and Maiden Lane. They were received with courtesy, and even with hospitality, although America at that date almost universally sympathized with the French Republicans, whom they believed to be the pioneers of political freedom on the aged side of the Atlantic. The merchants on Exchange, the Legislators in their Council Chambers, the working men on the wharves and streets, the loveliest women in their homes, and walks, and drives, alike wore the red cockade. The Marseillaise was sung with The Star Spangled Banner; and the notorious Carmagnole could be heard every hour of the day—on stated days, officially, at the Belvedere Club. Love for France, hatred for England, was the spirit of the age; it effected the trend of commerce, it dominated politics, it was the keynote of conversation wherever men and women congregated.

Yet the most pronounced public feeling always carries with it a note of dissent, and it was just at this day that dissenting opinion began to make itself heard. The horrors of Avignon, and of Paris, the brutality with which the royal family had been treated, and the abolition of all religious ties and duties, had many and bitter opponents. The clergy generally declared that "men had better be without liberty, than without God," and a prominent judge had ventured to say publicly that "Revolution was a dangerous chief justice."

In these days of wonderful hopes and fears there was, in Maiden Lane, a very handsome residence—an old house even in the days of Washington, for Peter Van Clyffe had built it early in the century as a bridal present to his daughter when she married Philip Moran, a lawyer who grew to eminence among colonial judges. The great linden trees which shaded the garden had been planted by Van Clyffe; so also had the high hedges of cut boxwood, and the wonderful sweet briar, which covered the porch and framed all the windows filling the open rooms in summer time with the airs of Paradise. On all these lovely things the old Dutchman had stamped his memory, so that, even to the third generation, he was remembered with an affection, that every springtime renewed.

One afternoon in April, 1791, two men were standing talking opposite to the entrance gates of this pleasant place. They were Captain Joris Van Heemskirk, a member of the Congress then sitting in Federal Hall, Broad Street, and Jacobus Van Ariens, a wealthy citizen, and a deacon in the Dutch Church. Van Heemskirk had helped to free his own country and was now eager to force the centuries

and abolish all monarchies. Consequently, he believed in France; the tragedies she had been enacting in the holy name of Liberty, though they had saddened, had, hitherto, not discouraged him. He only pitied the more men who were trying to work out their social salvation, without faith in either God or man. But the news received that morning had almost killed his hopes for the spread of republican ideas in Europe.

"Van Ariens," he said warmly, "this treatment of King Louis and his family is hardly to be believed. It is too much, and too far. If King George had been our prisoner we should have behaved towards him with humanity. After this, no one can foresee what may happen in France."

"That is the truth, my friend," answered Van Ariens. "The good Domine thinks that any one who can do so might also understand the Revelations. The French have gone mad. They are tigers, sir, and I care not whether tigers walk on four feet or on two. WE won our freedom without massacres."

"WE had Washington and Franklin, and other good and wise leaders who feared God and loved men."

"So I said to the Count de Moustier but one hour ago. But I did not speak to him of the Almighty, because he is an atheist. Yet if we were prudent and merciful it was because we are religious. When men are irreligious, the Lord forsakes them; and if bloodshed and bankruptcy follow it is not to be wondered at."

"That is true, Van Ariens; and it is also the policy of England to let France destroy herself." "Well, then, if France likes the policy of England, it is her own affair. But I am angry at France; she has stabbed Liberty in Europe for one thousand years. A French Republic! Bah! France is yet fit for nothing but a despotism. I wish the Assembly had more control—"

"The Assembly!" cried Van Heemskirk scornfully. "I wish that Catherine of Russia were now Queen of France in the place of that poor Marie Antoinette. Catherine would make Frenchmen write a different page in history. As to Paris, I think, then, the devil never sowed a million crimes in more fruitful ground."

"Look now, Captain, I am but a tanner and currier, as you know, but I have had experiences; and I do not believe in the future of a people who are without a God and without a religion."

"Well, so it is, Van Ariens. I will now be silent, and wait for the echo; but I fear that God has not yet said 'Let there be peace.' I saw you last night at Mr. Hamilton's with your son and daughter. You made a noble entrance."

"Well, then, the truth is the truth. My Arenta is worth looking at; and as for Rem, he was not made in a day. There are generations of Zealand sailors behind him; and, to be sure, you may see the ocean in his grey eyes and fresh open face. God is good, who gives us boys and girls to sit so near our hearts."

"And such a fair, free city for a home!" said Van Heemskirk as he looked up and down the sunshiny street. "New York is not perfect, but we love her. Right or wrong, we love her; just as we love our mother, and our little children."

"That, also, is what the Domine says," answered Van Ariens; "and yet, he likes not that New York favours the French so much. When Liberty has no God, and no Sabbath day, and no heaven, and no hell, the Domine is not in favour of Liberty. He is uneasy for the country, and for his church; and if he could take his whole flock to heaven at once, that would please him most of all."

"He is a good man. With you, last night, was a little maid—a great beauty I thought her—but I knew her not. Is she then a stranger?"

"A stranger! Come, come! The little one is a very child of New York. She is the daughter of Dr. Moran—Dr. John, as we all call him."

"Well, look now, I thought in her face there was something that went to my heart and memory."

"And, as you know, that is his house across the street from us, and it was his father's house, and his grandfather's house; and before that, the Morans lived in Winckle Street; and before that, in the Lady's Valley; so, then, when Van Clyffe built this house for them, they only came back to their

first home. Yes, it is so. The Morans have seen the birth of this city. Who, then, can be less of a stranger in it than the little beauty, Cornelia?"

"As you say, Van Ariens."

"And yet, in one way, she is a stranger. Such a little one she was, when the coming of the English sent the family apart and away. To the army went the Doctor, and there he stayed, till the war was over. Mrs. Moran took her child, and went to her father's home in Philadelphia. When those redcoats went away forever from New York, the Morans came back here, but the little girl they left in the school at Bethlehem, where those good Moravian Sisters have made her so sweet as themselves; so pure! so honest-hearted! so clever! It was only last month she came back to New York, and few people have seen her; and yet this is the truth—she is the sweetest maid in Maiden Lane; though up this side, and down that side, are some beauties—the daughters of Peter Sylvester; and of Jacob Beckley; and of Claes Vandolsom. Oh, yes! and many others. I speak not of my Arenta. But look now! It is the little maid herself, that is coming down the street."

"And it is my grandson who is at her side. The rascal! He ought now to be reading his law books in Mr. Hamilton's office. But what will you? The race of young men with old heads on their shoulders is not yet born—a God's mercy it is not!"

"We also have been young, Van Heemskirk."

"I forget not, my friend. My Joris sees not me, and I will not see him." Then the two old men were silent, but their eyes were fixed on the youth and maiden, who were slowly advancing towards them; the sun's westerling rays making a kind of glory for them to walk in.

She might have stepped out of the folded leaves of a rosebud, so lovely was her face, framed in its dark curls, and shaded by a gypsy bonnet of straw tied under her chin with primrose-coloured ribbons. Her dress was of some soft, green material; and she carried in her hand a bunch of daffodils. She was small, but exquisitely formed, and she walked with fearlessness and distinction. Yet there was around her an angelic gravity, and that indefinable air of solitude, which she had brought from innocent studies and long seclusion from the tumult and follies of life.

Of all this charming womanhood the young man at her side was profoundly conscious. He was the gallant gentleman of his day, hardly touching the tips of her fingers, but quite ready to fall on his knees before her. A tall, sunbrowned, military-looking young man, as handsome as a Greek god, with eyes of heroic form; lustrous, and richly fringed; and a beautiful mouth, at once sensitive and seductive. He was also very finely dressed, in the best and highest mode; and he wore his sword as if it were a part of himself. It was no more in his way than if it were his right arm. Indeed, all his movements were full of confidence and ease; and yet it was the vivacity, vitality, and ready response of his face that was most attractive.

His wonderful eyes were bent upon the maid at his side; he saw no other earthly thing. With a respectful eagerness, full of admiration, he talked to her; and she answered his words—whatever they were—with a smile that might have moved mountains. They passed the two old men without any consciousness of their presence, and Van Heemskirk smiled, and then sighed, and then said softly—

"So much youth, and beauty, and happiness! It is a benediction to have seen it! I shall not reprove Joris at this time. But now I must go back to Federal Hall; the question of the Capital makes me very anxious. Every man of standing must feel so."

"And I must go to my tan pits, for it is the eye of the master that makes the good servant. You will vote for New York, Van Heemskirk?—that is a question I need not to ask?"

"Where else should the capital of our nation be? I think that Philadelphia has great presumptions to propose herself against New York:—this beautiful city between the two rivers, with the Atlantic Ocean at her feet!"

"You say what is true, Van Heemskirk. God has made New York the capital, and the capital she will be; and no man can prevent it. It was only yesterday that Senator Greyson from Virginia told

me that the Southern States are against Philadelphia. She is very troublesome to the Southern States, day by day dogging them with her schemes for emancipation. It is the way to make us unfriends."

"I think this, Van Ariens: Philadelphia may win the vote at this time; she has the numbers, and she has 'persuasions'; but look you! NEW YORK HAS THE SHIPS AND THE COMMERCE, AND THE SEA WILL CROWN HER! 'The harvest of the rivers is her revenue; and she is the mart of nations.' That is what Domine Kunz said in the House this morning, and you may find the words in the prophecy of Isaiah, the twenty-third chapter."

During this conversation they had forgotten all else, and when their eyes turned to the Moran house the vision of youth and beauty had dissolved. Van Heemskirk's grandson, Lieutenant Hyde, was hastening towards Broadway; and the lovely Cornelia Moran was sauntering up the garden of her home, stooping occasionally to examine the pearl-powdered auriculas or to twine around its support some vine, straggling out of its proper place.

Then Van Ariens hurried down to his tanning pits in the swamp; and Van Heemskirk went thoughtfully to Broad Street; walking slowly, with his left arm laid across his back, and his broad, calm countenance beaming with that triumph which he foresaw for the city he loved. When he reached Federal Hall, he stood a minute in the doorway; and with inspired eyes looked at the splendid, moving picture; then he walked proudly toward the Hall of Representatives, saying to himself, with silent exultation as he went:

"The Seat of Government! Let who will, have it; New York is the Crowning City. Her merchants shall be princes, her traffickers the honourable of the earth; the harvest of her rivers shall be her royal revenue, and the marts of all nations shall be in her streets."

CHAPTER II

THIS IS THE WAY OF LOVE

Cornelia lingered in the garden, because she had suddenly, and as yet unconsciously, entered into that tender mystery, so common and so sovereign, which we call Love. In Hyde's presence she had been suffused with a bewildering, profound emotion, which had fallen on her as the gentle showers fall, to make the flowers of spring. A shy happiness, a trembling delightful feeling never known before, filled her heart. This handsome youth, whom she had only seen twice, and in the most formal manner, affected her as no other mortal had ever done. She was a little afraid; something, she knew not what, of mystery and danger and delight, was between them; and she did not feel that she could speak of it. It seemed, indeed, as if she would need a special language to do so.

"I have met him but twice," she thought; "and it is as if I had a new, strange, exquisite life. Ought I tell my mother? But how can I? I have no words to explain—I do not understand—I thought it would break my heart to leave the good Sisters and my studies, and the days so calm and holy; and now—I do not even wish to go back. Sister Langaard told me it would be so if I let the world come into my soul—Alas! if I should be growing wicked!"

The thought made her start; she hastened her steps towards the large entrance door, and as she approached it a negro in a fine livery of blue and white threw the door wide open for her. Answering his bow with a kind word, she turned quickly out of the hall, into a parlour full of sunshine. A lady sat there hemstitching a damask napkin; a lady of dainty plainness, with a face full of graven experiences and mellowed character. Purity was the first, and the last, impression she gave. And when her eyes were dropped this idea was emphasized by their beautiful lids; for nowhere is the flesh so divine as in the eyelids. And Ava Moran's eyelids were full of holy secrets; they gave the impression of a spiritual background which was not seen, but which could be felt. As Cornelia entered she looked up with a smile, and said, as she slightly raised her work, "it is the last of the dozen, Cornelia."

"You make me ashamed of my idleness, mother. Have I been a long time away?"

"Longer than was unnecessary, I think."

"I went to Embree's for the linen thread, and he had just opened some English gauzes and lute-strings. Mrs. Willets was choosing a piece for a new gown, for she is to dine with the President next week, and she was so polite as to ask my opinion about the goods. Afterwards, I walked to Wall Street with her; and coming back I met, on Broadway, Lieutenant Hyde—and he gave me these flowers—they came from Prince's nursery gardens—and, then, he walked home with me. Was it wrong? I mean was it polite—I mean the proper thing to permit? I knew not how to prevent it."

"How often have you met Lieutenant Hyde?"

"I met him for the first time last night. He was at the Sylvesters', and I danced three times with him."

"That was too often."

"He talked with father, and father did not oppose my dancing."

"Your father thinks of nothing, now, but the Capital question. I dare say, after he had asked Lieutenant Hyde how he felt on that subject he never thought of the young man again. And pray what did Lieutenant Hyde say to you this afternoon?"

"He gave me the flowers, and he told me about a beautiful opera, of which I have never before heard. It is called Figaro. He says, in Europe, nothing is played, or sung, or whistled, but—Figaro; that nobody goes to any opera but—Figaro; and that I do not know the most charming music in the world if I do not know—Figaro. He asked permission to bring me some of the airs to-night, and I said some civilities. I think they meant 'Yes.' Did I do wrong, mother?"

"I will say 'no,' my dear; as you have given the invitation. But to prevent an appearance of too exclusive intimacy, write to Arenta, and ask her and Rem to take tea with us. Balthazar will carry the note at once."

"Mother, Arenta has bought a blue lute string. Shall I not also have a new gown? The gauzes are very sweet and genteel, and I think Mrs. Jay will not forget to ask me to her dance next week. Mr. Jefferson is sure to be there, and I wish to walk a minuet with him."

"Your father does not approve of Mr. Jefferson. He has not spoken to him since his return from France. He goes too far—IN HIS WORDS."

"But all the ladies of distinction are proud to be seen in his company; and pray what is there against him?"

"Only his politics, Cornelia. I think New York has gone mad on that subject. Madame Barens will not speak to her son, because he is a Federalist; and Madame Lefferts will not speak to HER son, because he is NOT a Federalist. Mr. Jefferson, also, is thought to favour Philadelphia for the capital; and your father is as hot on this subject as he was on the Constitution. My dear, you will find that society is torn in two by politics."

"But women have nothing to do with politics."

"They have everything to do with politics. They always have had. You are not now in a Moravian school, Cornelia; and Bethlehem is not New York. The two places look at life from different standpoints."

"Then, as I am to live in New York, why was I sent to Bethlehem?"

"You were sent to Bethlehem to learn how to live in New York,—or in any other place. Where have you seen Mr. Jefferson?"

"I saw him this afternoon, in Cedar Street. He wore his red coat and breeches; and it was then I formed the audacious intention of dancing with him. I told Mrs. Willets of it; and she said, 'Mr. Jefferson carried the Declaration on his shoulders, and would not dare to bow;' and then with such a queer little laugh she asked me 'if his red breeches did not make me think of the guillotine?' I do not think Mrs. Willets likes Mr. Jefferson very much; but, all the same, I wish to dance once with him. I think it will be something to talk about when I am an old woman."

"My dear one, that is so far off. Go now, and write to Arenta. Young Mr. Hyde and Figaro will doubtless bring her here."

"I hope so; for Arenta has an agreeableness that fits every occasion." She had been folding up, with deliberate neatness, the strings of her bonnet, as she talked, and she rose with these words and went out of the parlour; but she went slowly, with a kind of hesitation, as if something had been left unsaid.

About six o'clock Arenta Van Ariens made a personal response to her friend's message. She was all excitement and expectation. "What a delightful surprise!" she cried. "To-day has been a day to be praised. It has ticked itself away to wonders and astonishments. Who do you think called on me this afternoon?"

"Tell me plainly, Arenta. I never could guess for an answer."

"No less a person than Madame Kippon. Gertrude Kippon is going to be married! She is going to marry a French count! And madame is beside herself with the great alliance."

"I heard my father say that Madame Kippon had 'the French disease' in a dangerous form."

"Indeed, that is certain. She has put the Sabbath day out of her calendar; and her daughter's marriage is to be a legal one only. I wonder what good Dr. Kunz will say to that! As for me, I lost all patience with madame's rigmarole of philosophies—for I am not inclined to philosophy—and indeed I had some difficulty to keep my temper; you know that it is occasionally quite unmanageable."

Cornelia smiled understandingly, and answered with a smile, "I hope, however, that you did not put her to death, Arenta."

"I have, at least, buried her, as far as I am concerned. And my father says I am not to go to the marriage; that I am not even to drink a cup of tea with her again. If my father had been at home—or even Rem—she would not have left our house with all her colours flying; but I am good-natured, I have no tongue worth speaking of."

"Come, come, Arenta! I shall be indeed astonished if you did not say one or two provoking words."

"I said only three, Cornelia. When madame finally declared—'she really must go home,' I did answer, as sweetly as possible, 'Thank you, madame!' That was something I could say with becoming politeness."

Cornelia was tying the scarlet ribbon which held back her flowing hair, but she turned and looked at Arenta, and asked, "Did madame boast any afterwards?"

"No; she went away very modestly, and I was not sorry to see the angry surprise on her face. Gertrude Kippon a countess! Only imagine it! Well, then, I have no doubt the Frenchman will make of Gertrude—whatever can be made of her."

"Our drawing-rooms, and even our streets, are full of titles," said Cornelia; "I think it is a distinction to be plain master and mistress."

"That is the truth; even this handsome dandy, Joris Hyde, is a lieutenant."

"He was in the field two years. He told me so this afternoon. I dare say, he has earned his title, even if he is a lieutenant."

"Don't be so highy-tighty, Cornelia. I have no objections to military titles. They mean something; for they at least imply, that a man is willing to fight if his country will find him a quarrel to fight in. In fact, I rather lean to official titles of every kind."

"I have not thought of them at all."

"But I have. They affect me like the feathers in a cock's tail; of course the bird would be as good without them, but fancy him!" and Arenta laughed mirthfully at her supposition. "As for women," she continued, "lady, or countess, or Marquise, what an air it gives! It finishes a woman like a lace ruff round her neck. Every woman ought to have a title—I mean every woman of respectability. I have a fancy to be a marquise, and Aunt Jacobus says I look Frenchy enough. I have heard that there is a title in the Hyde family. I must ask Aunt Jacobus. She knows everything about everybody. Lieutenant Hyde! I do wonder what he is coming for!"

The words dropped slowly, one by one, from her lips; and with a kind of fateful import; but neither of the girls divined the significance of the inquiry. Both were too intent on those last little touches to the toilet, which make its effectiveness, to take into consideration reflections without form; and probably, at that time, without personal intention.

Then Arenta, having arranged her ringlets, tied her sash, and her sandals, began to talk of her own affairs; for she was a young lady who found it impossible to be sufficient for herself. There had been trouble with the slaves in the Van Ariens' household, and she told Cornelia every particular. Also, she had VERY NEAR had an offer of marriage from George Van Berckel; and she went into explanations about her diplomacies in avoiding it.

"Poor George!" she sighed, and then, looking up, was a trifle dismayed at the expression upon Cornelia's face. For Cornelia was as reticent, as Arenta was garrulous; and the girls were incomprehensible to each other in their deepest natures, though, superficially, they were much on the same plane, and really thought themselves to be distinctly sympathetic friends.

"Why do you look so strangely at me, Cornelia?" asked Arenta. "Am I not properly dressed?"

"You are perfectly dressed, Arenta. Women as fair as you are, know instinctively how to dress." And then Arenta stood up before the mirror and put her hand upon Cornelia's shoulder, and they both looked at the reflection in it.

A very pretty reflection it was!—a slender girl with a round, fair face, and a long, white throat, and sloping shoulders. Her pale brown hair fell in ripples and curls around her until they touched

a robe of heavenly blue, and half hid a singular necklace of large pearls:—pearls taken from some Spanish ship and strung in old Zierikzee, and worn for centuries by the maids and dames of the house of Van Ariens.

"It is the necklace!" said Cornelia after a pause, "It is the pearl necklace, which gives you such an air of mystery and romance, and changes you from an everyday maiden into an old-time princess."

"No doubt, it is the necklace," answered Arenta. "It is my Aunt Angelica's, but she permits me to wear it. When she was young, she called every pearl after one of her lovers; and she had a lover for every pearl. She was near to forty years old when she married; and she had many lovers, even then."

"It would have been better if she had married before she was near to forty years old—that is, if she had taken a good husband."

"Perhaps that; but good husbands come not on every day in the week. I have three beads named already—one for George Van Berckel—one for Fred De Lancey—and one for Willie Nichols. What do you think of that?"

"I think, if you copy your Aunt Angelica, you will not marry any of your lovers till you are forty years old. Come, let us go downstairs."

She spoke a little peremptorily—indeed, she was in the habit, quite unconsciously of using this tone with her companion, consequently it was not noticed by her. And it was further remarkable, that the girls did not walk down the broad stairs together, but Cornelia went first, and Arenta followed her. There was no intention or consideration in this procedure; it was the natural expression of underlying qualities, as yet not realized.

Cornelia's self-contained, independent nature was further revealed by the erect dignity of her carriage down the centre of the stairway, one hand slightly lifting her silk robe, the other laid against the daffodils at her breast. Her face was happy and serene, her steps light, and without hesitation or hurry. Arenta was a little behind her friend. She stepped idly and irresolutely, with one hand slipping along the baluster, and the other restlessly busy with her curls, her ribbons, the lace that partially hid her bosom, and the pearls that made a moonlight radiance on her snowy throat. At the foot of the staircase Cornelia had to wait for her, and they went into the parlour together.

Doctor Moran, Rem Van Ariens, and Lieutenant Hyde were present. The girls had a momentary glance at the latter ere he assumed the manner he thought suitable for youth and beauty. He was talking seriously to the Doctor and playing with an ivory paper knife as he did so, but whatever remark he was making he cut it in two, and stood up, pleased and expectant, to receive Beauty so fresh and so conspicuous.

He was handsomely dressed in a dark-blue velvet coat, silver-laced, a long white satin vest and black satin breeches. His hair was thrown backwards and tied with the customary black ribbon, and his linen and laces were of the finest quality. He met Cornelia as he might have met a princess; and he flashed into Arenta's eyes a glance of admiration which turned her senses upside down, and made her feel, for a moment or two, as if she could hardly breathe.

Upon Arenta's brother he had not produced a pleasant impression. Without intention, he had treated young Van Ariens with that negative politeness which dashes a sensitive man and makes him resentfully conscious that he has been rendered incapable of doing himself justice. And Rem could neither define the sense of humiliation he felt, nor yet ruffle the courteous urbanity of Hyde; though he tried in various ways to introduce some conversation which would afford him the pleasure of contradiction. Equally he failed to consider that his barely veiled antagonism compelled from the Doctor, and even from Cornelia and Arenta, attentions he might not otherwise have received. The Doctor was indeed much annoyed that Rem did not better respect the position of guest; while Mrs. Moran was keenly sensitive to the false note in the evening's harmony, and anxious to atone for it by many little extra courtesies. So Hyde easily became the hero of the hour; he was permitted to teach the girls the charming old-world step of the Pas de Quatre, and afterwards to sing with them merry airs from Figaro, and sentimental airs from Lodoiska, and to make Rem's heart burn with anger at

the expression he threw into the famous ballad "My Heart and Lute" which the trio sang twice over with great feeling.

Fortunately, some of Doctor Moran's neighbours called early in the evening. Then whist parties were formed; and while the tables were being arranged Cornelia found an opportunity to reason with Rem. "I never could have believed you would behave so unlike yourself," she said; and Rem answered bluntly—"That Englishman has insulted me ever since he came into the room."

"He is not an Englishman," said Cornelia.

"His father is an Englishman, and the man himself was born in England. The way he looks at me, the way he speaks to me, is insulting."

"I have seen nothing but courtesy to you, Rem."

"You have not the key to his impertinences. To-morrow, I will tell you something about Lieutenant Hyde."

"I shall not permit you to talk evil of him. I have no wish to hear ill reports about my acquaintances, Their behaviour is their own affair; at any rate, it is not mine. Be good-tempered, Rem; you are to be my partner, and we must win in every game."

But though Cornelia was all sweetness and graciousness; though Rem played well, and Lieutenant Hyde played badly; though Rem had the satisfaction of watching Hyde depart in his chair, while he stood with a confident friendship by Cornelia's side, he was not satisfied. There was an air of weariness and constraint in the room, and the little stir of departing visitors did not hide it. Doctor Moran had been at an unusual social tension; he was tired, and not pleased at Rem for keeping him on the watch. Cornelia was silent. Rem then approached his sister and said, "it is time to go home." Arenta looked at her friend; she expected to be asked to remain, and she was offended when Cornelia did not give her the invitation.

On the contrary, Cornelia went with her for her cloak and bonnet, and said not a word as they trod the long stairway but "Oh dear! How warm the evening is!"

"I expected you would ask me to stay with you, Cornelia." Arenta was tying her bonnet strings as she made this remark, and her fingers trembled, and her voice was full of hurt feeling.

"Rem behaved so badly, Arenta."

"I think that is not so. Did I also behave badly?"

"You were charming every moment of the evening; but Rem was on the point of quarrelling with Lieutenant Hyde. You must have seen it. In my father's house, this was not proper."

"I never saw Rem behave badly in my life. Suppose he does quarrel with that dandy Englishman, Rem would not get the worst of it. I have no fear for my brother Rem! No, indeed!"

"Bulk does not stand for much in a sword game."

"Do you mean they might fight a duel?"

"I think it is best for you to go home with Rem. Otherwise, he might, in his present temper, find himself near Becker's; and if a man is quarrelsome he may always get principals and seconds there. You have told me this yourself. In the morning Rem will, I hope, be reasonable."

"I thought you and I would talk things over to-night. I like to talk over a new pleasure."

"Dear Arenta, we shall have so much more time, to-morrow. Come to-morrow."

But Arenta was not pleased. She left her friend with an air of repressed injury, and afterwards made little remarks about Cornelia to her brother, which exactly fitted his sense of wounded pride. Indeed, they stood a few minutes in the Van Ariens' parlour to exchange their opinions still further—

"I think Cornelia was jealous of me, Rem. That, in plain Dutch, is what it all means. Does she imagine that I desire the attentions of a man who is neither an American nor a Dutchman? I do not. I speak the truth always, for I love the truth."

"Cornelia does desire them; I think that—and it makes me wretched."

"Oh, indeed, it is plain to see that she has fallen in love with that black-eyed man of many songs and dances. Well, then, we must admit that he danced to perfection. One may dislike the creature, and yet tell the truth."

"Do you truly believe that Cornelia is in love with him?"

"Rem, there are things a woman observes. Cornelia is changed to-night. She did not wish me to stay and talk about this man Hyde—she preferred thinking about him—such reveries are suspicious. I have felt the symptom. But, however, I may be wrong. Perhaps Cornelia was angry at Hyde, and anxious about you—Do you think that?"

Rem would not admit any such explanation; and, indeed, Arenta only made such suppositions to render more poignant those entirely contrary.

"Ever since she was a little girl, twelve, eleven years old, I have loved her," said Rem; "and she knows it."

"She knows it; that is so. When I was at Bethlehem, I read her all your letters; and many a time you spoke in them of her as your 'little wife.' To be sure, it was a joke; but she understood that you, at least, put your heart in it. Girls do not need to have such things explained. Come, come, we must go to our rooms; for that is our father I hear moving about. In a few minutes he will be angry, and then—"

She did not finish the sentence; there was no necessity; Rem knew what unpleasantness the threat implied, and he slipped off his shoes and stole quietly upstairs. Arenta was not disinclined to a few words if her father wished them; so she did not hurry, though the great Flemish clock on the stair-landing chimed eleven as she entered her room. It was an extraordinarily late hour, but she only smiled, as she struck her pretty fore-fingers together in time with it. She was not disposed to curtail the day; it was her method, always, to take the full flavour of every event that was not disagreeable.

"And, after all," she mused, "the evening was a possibility. It was a door on the latch—I may push it open and go in—who can tell? I saw how amazed he was at my beauty when I first entered the parlour—and he is but a man—and a young man who likes his own way—so much is evident." She was meanwhile unclasping her pearl necklace, and at this point she held it in her hands taking the fourth bead between her fingers, and smiled speculatively.

Then she heard her brother moving about the floor of the room above her, and a shadow darkened her face. She had strong family affections, and she was angry that Rem should be troubled by any man or woman, living:

"I have always thought Cornelia a very saint," she muttered; "but Love is the great revealer. I wonder if she is in love—to tell the truth, she was past finding out. I cannot say that I saw the least sign of it—and between me and myself, Rem was unreasonable; however, I am not pleased that Rem felt himself to be badly used."

It was to this touch of resentment in her drifting thoughts that she performed her last duties. She did not hurry them. "Very soon there will be the noise of chairmen and carriages to disturb me," she thought; "and I may as well think a little, and put my things away."

So she folded each dainty blue morocco slipper in its separate piece of fine paper, and straightened out her ribbons, and wrapped her pale blue robe in its holland covering, and put every comb and pin in its proper place, all the time treading as softly as a mouse. And by and by the street was dark and still, and her room in the most perfect order. These things gave her the comfort of a good conscience; and she said her prayers, and fell calmly asleep, to the flattering thought, "I would not much wonder if, at this moment, Lieutenant Hyde is thinking about me."

In reality, Lieutenant Hyde was at that moment in the Belvedere Club, singing the Marseillaise, and listening to a very inflammatory speech from the French Minister. But a couple of hours later, Arenta's "wonder" would have touched the truth. He was then alone, and very ill satisfied; for, after some restless reflections, he said impatiently—

"I have again made a fool of myself. I have now all kinds of unpleasant feelings; and when I left that good Doctor's house I was well satisfied. His daughter is an angel. I praise myself for finding

that out. She made me believe in all goodness; yes, even in patriotism! I, that have seen it sold a dozen times! Oh, how divinely shy and proud she is! I could not get her one step beyond the first civilities; even my eyes failed me to-night—her calm glances killed their fire—and she barely touched my hand, though I offered it with a respectful ardour, she must have understood:"—then he looked admiringly at the long, white hand and thoroughbred wrist which lay idly on the velvet cushion of his armchair; an exquisite ruffle of lace just touched it, and his eyes wandered from the ruffle to the velvet and silver embroidery of his coat; and the delicate laced lawn of his cravat.

"I have the reputation of beauty," he continued; "and I am perfectly dressed, and yet—yet—this little Beauty seemed unconscious of my advantages. But I cannot accept failure in this case. The girl is unparagoned. I am in love with her; sincerely in love. She fills my thoughts, and has done so, ever since I first saw her. It is a pure delight to think of her."

Then he rose, threw off his velvet and lace, and designedly let his thoughts turn to Arenta. "She is pretty beyond all prettiness," he said softly as he moved about, "She dances well, talks from hand to mouth, and she gave me one sweet glance; and I think if she has gone so far—she might go further." At this reflection he smiled again, and lifting a decanter slowly poured into a goblet some amber-coloured sherry; saying—

"I dare not yet drink to the unapproachable Cornelia; but I may at least pour the wine to the blue-eyed goddess, with the pearl necklace, and the golden hair;" and as he lifted the glass, a memory from some past mirthful hour came into his remembrance; and he began to hum a strain of the song it brought to his mind—

"Let the toast pass,
Drink to the lass
I'll warrant, she'll prove an excuse for the glass."

It was remarkable that he did not take Arenta's brother into his speculations at all, and yet Rem Van Ariens was at that very hour chafing restlessly and sleeplessly under insults he conceived himself to have received, in such fashion and under such circumstances as made reprisal impossible. In reality, however, Van Ariens had not been intentionally wounded by Hyde. The situation was the natural result of incipient jealousy and sensitive pride on Rem's part; and of that calm indifference and complaisance on Hyde's part, which appeared tacitly to assert its own superiority and expect its recognition as a matter of course. Indeed, at their introduction, Rem had affected Hyde rather pleasantly; and when the young Dutch gentleman's opposition became evident, Hyde had simply ignored it. For as yet the thought of Rem as a rival had not entered his mind.

But this is the way of Love; its filmiest threads easily spin themselves further; and a man once entangled is bound by that unseen chain which links the soul to its destiny.

CHAPTER III

HYDE AND ARENTA

Seldom is Love ushered into any life with any pomp of circumstance or ceremony; there is no overture to our opera, no prologue to our play, and the most momentous meetings occur as if by mere accident. A friend delayed Cornelia a while on the street; and turning, she met Hyde face to face; a moment more, or less, and the meeting had not been. Ah, but some Power had set that moment for their meeting, and the delay had been intended, and the consequences foreseen!

In a dim kind of way Hyde realized this fact as he sat the next day with an open book before him. He was not reading it; he was thinking of Cornelia—of her pure, fresh beauty; and of that adorable air of reserve, which enhanced, even while it veiled her charms. "For her love I could resign all adventures and prison myself in a law book," he said, "I could forget all other beauties; in a word, I could marry, and live in the country. Oh how exquisite she is! I lose my speech when I think of her!"

Then he closed his book with impatience, and went to Prince's and bought a little rush basket filled with sweet violets. Into their midst he slipped his visiting card, and saw the boy on his way with the flowers to Cornelia ere he was satisfied they would reach her quickly enough. This finished, he began to consider what he should do with his day. Study was impossible; and he could think of nothing that was possible. "It is the most miserable thing," he muttered, "to be in love, unless you can go to the adored one, every hour, and tell her so,"—then turning aimlessly into Pearl Street, he saw Cornelia.

She was dressed only in a little morning gown of Indian chintz, but in such simple toilet had still more distinctively that air of youthful modesty which he had found so charmingly tantalizing. He hastened to her side. He blessed his good angel for sending him such an enchanting surprise. He said the most extravagant things, in the most truthful manner, as he watched the blushes of pleasure come and go on her lovely face, and saw by glimpses, under the veiling eyelids, that tender light that never was on sea or land, but only on a woman's face when her soul is awakening to Love.

Cornelia was going to the "Universal Store" of Gerardus Duyckinck, and Hyde begged to go with her. He said he was used to shopping; that he always went with his mother, and with Lady Christina Griffin, and Mrs. White, and many others; that he had good taste, and could tell the value of laces, and knew how to choose a piece of silk, or match the crewels for her embroidery; and, indeed, pleaded his case so merrily, that there was no refusing his offer. And how it happened lovers can tell, but after the shopping was finished they found themselves walking towards the Battery with the fresh sea wind, and the bright sunshine and the joy of each other's presence all around them.

"Such a miraculous piece of happiness!" the young fellow ejaculated; and his joy was so evident that Cornelia could not bear to spoil it with any reluctances, or with half-way graciousness. She fell into his joyous mood, and as star to star vibrates light, so his soul touched her soul, through some finer element than ordinary life is conscious of. A delightful gladness was between them, and their words had such heart gaiety, that they seemed to dance as they spoke; while the wind blowing Cornelia's curls, and scarf, and drapery, was like a merry playfellow.

Now Love has always something in it of the sea; and the murmur of the tide against the pier, the hoarse voices of the sailor men, the scent of the salt water, and all the occult unrecognized, but keenly felt life of the ocean, were ministers to their love, and forever and ever blended in the heart and memory of the youth and maid who had set their early dream of each other to its potent witchery. Time went swiftly, and suddenly Cornelia remembered that she was subject to hours and minutes, A little fear came into her heart, and closed it, and she said, with a troubled air, "My mother will be anxious. I had forgotten. I must go home." So they turned northward again, and Cornelia was silent, and the ardour of her lover was a little chilled; but yet never before had Cornelia heard simple

conversation which seemed so eloquent, and so full of meanings—only, now and then, a few brief words; but oh! what long, long thoughts, they carried with them!

At the gates of her home they stood a moment, and there Hyde touched her hand, and said, "I have never, in all my life, been so happy. It has been a walk beyond hope, and beyond expression!" And she lifted her face, and the smile on her lips and the light in her eyes answered him. Then the great white door shut her from his sight, and he walked rapidly away, saying to his impetuous steps—

"An enchanting creature! An adorable girl! I have given her my heart; and lost, is lost; and gone, is gone forever. That I am sure of. But, by St. George! every man has his fate, and I rejoice that mine is so sweet and fair! so sweet! so sweet! so fair!"

Cornelia trembled as she opened the parlour door, she feared to look into her mother's face, but it was as serene as usual, and she met her daughter's glance with one of infinite affection and some little expectancy. This was a critical moment, and Cornelia hesitated slightly. Some little false sprite put a ready excuse into her heart, but she banished it at once, and with the courage of one who fears lest they are not truthful enough, she said with a blunt directness which put all subterfuge out of the question—

"Mother, I have been a long time, but I met Lieutenant Hyde, and we walked down to the Battery; and I think I have stayed beyond the hour I ought to have stayed—but the weather was so delightful."

"The weather is very delightful, and Lieutenant Hyde is very polite. Did he speak of the violets he sent you?"

"I suppose he forgot them. Ah, there they are! How beautiful! How fragrant! I will give them to you, mother."

"They are your own, my dear. I would not give them away."

Then Cornelia lifted them, and shyly buried her face in their beauty and sweetness; and afterwards took the card in her hand and read "Lieutenant George Hyde." "But, mother," she said, "Arenta called him Joris."

"Joris is George, my dear."

"Certainly, I had forgotten. Joris is the Dutch, George is the English form. I think I like George better."

"As you have neither right nor occasion to call him by either name, it is of no consequence. Take away your flowers and put them in water—the young man is very extravagant, I think. Do you know that it is quite noon, and your father will be home in a little while?"

And there was such kind intent, such a divining sympathy in the simple words, that Cornelia's heart grew warm with pleasure; and she felt that her mother understood, and did not much blame her. At the same time she was glad to escape all questioning, and with the violets pressed to her heart, and her shining eyes dropped to them, she went with some haste to her room. There she kissed the flowers, one by one, as she put them in the refreshing water; and then, forgetting all else, sat down and permitted herself to enter the delicious land of Reverie. She let the thought of Hyde repossess her; and present again and again to her imagination his form, his face, his voice, and those long caressing looks she had seen and felt, without seeming to be aware of them.

A short time after Cornelia came home, Doctor Moran returned from his professional visits. As he entered the room, his wife looked at him with a curious interest. In the first place, the tenor of her thoughts led her to this observation. She wished to assure herself again that the man for whom she had given up everything previously dear to her was worthy of such sacrifice. A momentary glance satisfied her. Nature had left the impress of her nobility on his finely-formed forehead; nothing but truth and kindness looked from his candid eyes; and his manner, if a little dogmatic, had also an unmistakable air of that distinction which comes from long and honourable ancestry and a recognized position. He had also this morning an air of unusual solemnity, and on entering the room, he drew

his wife close to his heart and kissed her affectionately, a token of love he was not apt to give without thought, or under every circumstance.

"You are a little earlier to day," she said. "I am glad of it."

"I have had a morning full of feeling. There is no familiarity with Death, however often you meet him."

"And you have met Death this morning, I see that, John?"

"As soon as I went out, I heard of the death of Franklin. We have truly been expecting the news, but who can prepare for the final 'He is gone.' Congress will wear mourning for two months, I hear, and all good citizens who can possibly do so will follow their example. The flags are at half-mast, and there is sorrow everywhere."

"And yet, John, why?" asked Mrs. Moran. "Franklin has quite finished his work; and has also seen the fruit of all his labours. Not many men are so happy. I, for one, shall rejoice with him, and not weep for him."

"You are right, Ava. I must now tell you that Elder Semple died this morning. He has been long sick, but the end came suddenly at last."

"The dear old man! He has been sick and sorrowful, ever since his wife died. Were any of his sons present?"

"None of them. The two eldest have been long away. Neil was obliged to leave New York when the Act forbidding Tory lawyers to practice was passed. But he was not quite alone, his old friend Joris Van Heemskirk was with him to the last moment. The love of these old men for each other was a very beautiful thing."

"He was once rich. Did he lose everything in the war?"

"Very near all. His home was saved by Van Heemskirk, and he had a little money 'enough to die wi' he said one day to me; and then he continued, 'there's compensations, Doctor, in having naething to leave. My lads will find no bone to quarrel over.' I met a messenger coming for me this morning, and when I went to his bedside, he said, with a pleasant smile, 'I'll be awa' in an hour or twa now, Doctor; and then I'll hae no mair worrying anent rebellion and democrats; I'll be under the dominion o' the King o' kings and His throned Powers and Principalities; and after a' this weary voting, and confiscations, and guillotining, it will be Peace—Peace—Peace:'—and with that word on his lips, the 'flitting' as he called it was accomplished."

"There is nothing to mourn in such a death, John."

"Indeed, no. It was just as he said 'a flitting.' And it was strange that, standing watching what he so fitly called the 'flitting,' I thought of some lines I have not consciously remembered for many years. They reflect only the old Greek spirit, with its calm acceptance of death and its untroubled resignation, but they seemed to me very applicable to the elder's departure:

Not otherwise to the hall of Hades dim
He fares, than if some summer eventide
A Message, not unlooked for, came to him;
Bidding him rise up presently, and ride
Some few hours' journey, to a friendly home."

"There is nothing to fear in such a death."

"Nothing at all. Last week when Cornelia and I passed his house, he was leaning on the garden gate, and he spoke pleasantly to her and told her she was a 'bonnie lassie.' Where is Cornelia?"

"In her room. John, she went to Duyckinck's this morning for me, and George Hyde met her again, and they took a walk together on the Battery. It was near the noon hour when she returned."

"She told you about it?"

"Oh yes, and without inquiry."

"Very good. I must look after that young fellow." But he said the words without much care, and Mrs. Moran was not satisfied.

"Then you do not disapprove the meeting, John?" she asked.

"Yes, I do. I disapprove of any young man meeting my daughter every time she goes out. Cornelia is too young for lovers, and it is not desirable that she should have attentions from young men who have no intentions. I do not want her to be what is called a belle. Certainly not."

"But the young men do not think her too young to be loved. I can see that Rem Van Ariens is very fond of her."

"Rem is a very fine young man. If Cornelia was old enough to marry, I should make no objections to Rem. He has some money. He promises to be a good lawyer. I like the family. It is as pure Dutch as any in the country. There is no objection to Rem Van Ariens."

"And George Hyde?"

"Has too many objectionable qualities to be worth considering."

"Such as?"

"Well, Ava, I will only name one, and one for which he is not responsible; but yet it would be insuperable, as far as I am concerned. His father is an Englishman of the most pronounced type, and this young man is quite like him. I want no Englishman in my family."

"My family are of English descent."

"Thoroughly Americanized. They are longer in this country than the Washingtons."

"There have been many Dutch marriages among the Morans."

"That is a different thing. The Dutch, as a race, have every desirable quality. The English are natural despots. Rem was quite right last night. I saw and felt, as much as he did, the quiet but sovereign arrogance of young Hyde. His calm assumption of superiority was in reality insufferable. The young man's faults are racial; they are in the blood. Cornelia shall not have anything to do with him. Why do you speak of such disagreeable things, Ava?"

"It is well to look forward, John."

"No. It is time enough to meet annoyances when they arrive. But this is one not even to be thought of—to tell the last truth, Ava, I dislike his father, General Hyde, very much indeed."

"Why?"

"I cannot tell you 'why.' Yes, I will be honest and acknowledge that he always gives me a sense of hostility. He arrogates himself too much. When I was in the army, a good many were angry at General Washington, for making so close a friend of him—but Washington has much of the same exclusive air. I hope it is no treason to say that much, for a good deal of dignity is permissible, even peremptory, when a man fills great positions. As for the Hydies, father and son, I would prefer to hear no more about them. When the youth was my guest, I was civil to him; but Arenta. You know that I have never seen her."

"That is the truth. I had forgotten. Well, then, I went to her with the news; and she rubbed her chin, and called to her man Govert, to get a bow of crape and put it on the front door. 'It is moral, and proper, and respectable, Arenta,' she said, 'and I advise you to do the same.' But then she laughed and added, 'Shall I tell you, niece, what I think of the great men I have met? They are disagreeable, conceited creatures; and ought, all of them, to have died before they were born; and for my part, I am satisfied not to have had the fate to marry one of them. As for Benjamin Franklin,' she continued, 'he was a particularly great man, and I am particularly grateful that I never saw him but once. I formed my opinion of him then; for I only need to see a person once, to form an opinion—and he is dead! Well, then, every one dies at their own time.'"

"My father says Congress goes into mourning for him."

"Does it?" asked Arenta, with indifference. "Aunt was beginning to tell me something about him when he was in France, but I just put a stop to talk like that, and said, 'Now, aunt, for a little of my own affairs.' So I told her about George Berckel, and asked her if she thought I might marry

George; and she answered, 'If you are tired of easy days, Arenta, go, and take a husband,' After a while I spoke to her about Lieutenant Hyde, and she said, 'she had seen the little cockrel strutting about Pearl Street.'"

"That was not a proper thing to say. Lieutenant Hyde carries himself in the most distinguished manner."

"Well, then, that is exactly so; but Aunt Angelica has her own way of saying things. She intended nothing unkind or disrespectful. She told me that she had frequently danced with his father when she was a girl and a beauty; and she added with a laugh, 'I can assure you, Arenta, that in those days he was no saint; although he is now, I hear, the very pink of propriety.'"

"Is not that as it should be, Arenta? We ought surely to grow better as we grow older."

"That is not to be denied, Cornelia. Now I can tell you something worth hearing about General Hyde."

"If it is anything wrong, or unkind, I will not listen to it, Arenta. Have you forgotten that the good Sisters always forbid us to listen to an evil report?"

"Then one must shut one's ears if one lives in New York. But, indeed, it is nothing wrong—only something romantic and delightful, and quite as good as a story book. Shall I tell you?"

"As you wish."

"As you wish."

"Then I would like to hear it."

"Listen! When Madame Hyde was Katherine Van Heemskirk, and younger than you are, she had two lovers; one, Captain Dick Hyde, and the other a young man called Neil Semple; and they fought a duel about her, and nearly cut each other to pieces."

"Arenta!"

"Oh, it is the truth! It is the very truth, I assure you! And while Hyde still lay between life and death, Miss Van Heemskirk married him; and as soon as he was able, he carried her off at midnight to England; and there they lived in a fine old house until the war. Then they came back to New York, and Hyde went into the Continental army and did great things, I suppose, for as we all knew, he was made a general. You should have heard Aunt Angelica tell the story. She remembered the whole affair. It was a delightful story to listen to, as we drank our chocolate. And will you please only try to imagine it of Mrs. General Hyde! A woman so lofty! So calm! So afar off from every impropriety that you always feel it impossible in her presence to commit the least bit of innocent folly. Will you imagine her as Katherine Van Heemskirk in a short, quilted petticoat, with her hair hanging in two braids down her back, running away at midnight with General Hyde!"

"He was her husband. She committed no fault."

"I was thinking of the quilted petticoat, and the two braids; for who now dresses so extravagantly and so magnificently as Madame Hyde? She has an Indian shawl that cost two hundred pounds. Aunt Angelica says John Embree told her 'THAT much at the very least'—and as for the General! is there any man in New York so proud, and so full of dignity—and morality? He is in St. Paul's Chapel every Sunday, and when you see him there, how could you imagine that he had fought half-a-dozen duels, for half-a-dozen beauties?"

"Half-a-dozen duels! Oh, Arenta!"

"About that number—more or less—before and after the Van Heemskirk incident. Look at him next Sunday, and then try and believe that he was the topmost leader in all the fashionable follies, until he went to the war. People say it is General Washington—"

"General Washington?"

"That has changed him so much. They have been a great deal together, and I do believe the proprieties are catching. If evil is to be taken in bad company, why not good in the presence of all that is moral and respectable? At any rate, who is now more proper than General Hyde? Indeed, as Aunt

Angelica says, we must all pay our respects to the Hydes, if we desire our own caps to set straight. Cornelia, shall I tell you why you are working so close to the window this afternoon?"

"You are going to say something I would rather not hear, Arenta."

"Truth is wholesome, if not agreeable; and the truth is, you expect Lieutenant Hyde to pass. But he will not do so. I saw him booted and spurred, on a swift horse, going up the river road. He was bound for Hyde Manor, I am sure. Now, Cornelia, you need not move your frame; for no one will disturb you, and I wish to tell you some of my affairs."

"About your lovers?"

"Yes. I have met a certain French marquis, who is attached to the Count de Moustier's embassy. I met him at intervals all last winter, and to-day, I have a love letter from him—a real love letter—and he desires to ask my father for my hand. I shall now have something to say to Madame Kippon."

"But you would not marry a Frenchman? That is an impossible thought, Arenta."

"No more so than an Englishman. In fact, Englishmen are not to be thought of at all; while Frenchmen are the fashion. Just consider the drawing-rooms of our great American ladies; they are full of French nobles."

"But they are exiles, for the most part very poor, and devoted to the idea of monarchy."

"Ah, but my Frenchman is different. He is rich, he is in the confidence of the present French government, and he adores republican principles. Indeed he wore at Lady Griffin's, last week, his red cap of Liberty, and looked quite distinguished in it."

"I am astonished that Lady Griffin permitted such a spectacle. I am sure it was a vulgar thing to do. Only the san-culottes, make such exhibition of their private feelings."

"I think it was a very brave thing to do—and Lady Griffin, with her English prejudices and aristocratic notions, had to tolerate it. He is very tall and dark, and he was dressed in scarlet, with a long black satin vest; and you may believe that the scarlet cap on his black curling hair was very imposing."

"Imposing! How could it possibly be that? It is only associated with mobs, and mob law—and guillotining."

"I shall not contradict you—though I could do so easily. I will say, then, that it was very picturesque. He asked me to dance a minuet with him, and when I did not refuse he was beside himself with pleasure and gratitude. And after I had opened the way, several of the best ladies in the town followed. After all, it was a matter of political opinion; and it is against our American ideas to send any man to Jersey for his politics. Mr. Jefferson was in red also."

"I wish to dance with Mr. Jefferson, but I now think of waiting till he gets a new suit."

"I am sure that no one ever made a finer figure in a dance than I, in my white satin and pearls, and the Marquis Athanase de Tounnerre in his scarlet dress and Liberty cap. Every one regarded us. He tells me, to-day, that the emotion I raised in his soul that hour has not been stilled for a moment."

"Have you thought of your father? He would never consent to such a marriage—and what will Rem say?"

"My father will storm, and speak words he should not speak; but I am not afraid of words. Rem is more to be dreaded. He will not talk his anger away. Yes, I should be afraid of Rem."

"But you have not really decided to accept the Marquis Tounnerre?"

"No. I have not quite decided. I like to stand between Yes and No. I like to be entreated to marry, and then again, to be entreated NOT to marry. I like to hesitate between the French and the Dutch. I am not in the least sure on which side I shall finally range myself."

"Then do not decide in a hurry."

"Have I not told you I like to waver, and vacillate, and oscillate, and make scruples? These are things a woman can do, both with privilege and inclination. I think myself to be very clever in such ways."

"I would not care, nor dare, to venture—"

"You are a very baby yet. I am two years older than you. But indeed you are progressing with some rapidity. What about George Hyde?"

"You said he had gone out of town."

"And I am glad of it. He will not now be insinuating himself with violets, and compelling you to take walks with him on the Battery. Oh, Cornelia! you see I am not to be put out of your confidence. Why did you not tell me?"

"You have given me no opportunity; and, as you know all, why should I say any more about it?"

"Cornelia, my dear companion, I fear you are inclined to concealment and to reticence, qualities a young girl should not cultivate—I am now speaking for dear Sister Maria Beroth—and I hope you will carefully consider the advantages you will derive from cultivating a more open disposition."

"You are making a mockery of the good Sisters; and I do not wish to hear you commit such a great fault. Indeed, I would be pleased to return to their peaceful care again."

"And wear the little linen cap and collar, and all the other simplicities? Cornelia! Cornelia! You are as fond as I am of French fashions and fripperies. Let us be honest, if we die for it. And you may as well tell me all your little coquetries with George Hyde; for I shall be sure to find them out. Now I am going home; for I must look after the tea-table. But you will not be sorry, for it will leave you free to think of—"

"Please, Arenta!"

"Very well. I will have 'considerations.' Good-bye!"

Then the door closed, and Cornelia was left alone. But the atmosphere of the room was charged with Arenta's unrest, and a feeling of disappointment was added to it. She suddenly realized that her lover's absence from the city left a great vacancy. What were all the thousands in its streets, if he was not there? She might now indeed remove her frame from the window; if Hyde was an impossibility, there was no one else she wished to see pass. And her heart told her the report was a true one; she did not doubt for a moment Arenta's supposition, that he had gone to Hyde Manor. But the thought made her lonely. Something, she knew not what, had altered her life. She had a new strange happiness, new hopes, new fears and new wishes; but they were not an unmixed delight; for she was also aware of a vague trouble, a want that nothing in her usual duties satisfied:—in a word, she had crossed the threshold of womanhood and was no longer a girl,

"Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life, and May."

CHAPTER IV

THROWING THINGS INTO CONFUSION

Prudence declares that whenever a person is in that disagreeable situation which compels him to ask "what shall I do?" that the wisest answer is, "nothing." But such answer did not satisfy George Hyde. He was too young, too sure of his own good fortune, too restless and impulsive, to accept Prudence as a councillor. He might have considered, that, hitherto, affairs had happened precisely as he wished them; and that it would be good policy to trust to his future opportunities. But he was so much in earnest, so honestly in love, that he felt his doubts and anxieties could only be relieved by action. Sympathy, at least, he must have; and he knew no man, to whom he would willingly talk of Cornelia. The little jests and innuendoes sure to follow his confidence would be intolerable if associated with a creature so pure and so ingenuous.

"I will go to my mother!" he thought. And this resolution satisfied him so well, that he carried it out at once. But it was after dark when he reached the tall stone portals of Hyde Manor House. The ride, however, had given him back his best self. For when we leave society and come into the presence of Nature, we become children again; and the fictions of thought and action assumed among men drop off like a garment. The beauty of the pale green hills, and the flowing river, and the budding trees, and the melody of birds singing as if they never would grow old, were all but charming accessories and horizons to his constant pictures of Cornelia. It was she who gave life and beauty to all he saw; for as a rule, if men notice nature at all, it is ever through some painted window of their own souls. Few indeed are those who hear—

"The Ancient Word,
That walked among the silent trees."

Yet Hyde was keenly conscious of some mystical sympathy between himself and the lovely scenes through which he passed—conscious still more of it when the sun had set and the moon rose—dim and inscrutable—over the lonely way, and filled the narrow glen which was at the entrance to the Manor House full of brooding power.

The great building loomed up dark and silent; there was but one light visible. It was in his mother's usual sitting-room, and as soon as he saw it, he began to whistle. She heard him afar off, and was at the door to give him a welcome.

"Joris, my dear one, we were talking of you!" she cried, as he leaped from the saddle to her arms. "So glad are we! Come in quickly! Such a good surprise! It is our hearts' wish granted! Well, are you? Quite well? Now, then, I am happy. Happy as can be! Look now, Richard!" she called, as she flung the door open, and entered with the handsome, smiling youth at her side.

In his way the father was just as much pleased. He pushed some papers he had been busy with impatiently aside, and stood up with outstretched hand to meet his son.

"Kate, my dear heart," he cried, "let us have something to eat. The boy will be hungry as a hunter after his ride. And George, what brings you home? We were just telling each other—your mother and I—that you were in the height of the city's follies."

"Indeed, sir, there will be few follies for some days. Mr. Franklin is dead, and the city goes into mourning."

"'Tis a fate that all must meet," said the General; "but death and Franklin would look each other in the face as friends—He had a work to do, he did it well, and it is finished. That is all. What other news do you bring?"

"It is said that Mirabeau is arrested somewhere, for something. I did not hear the particulars."

"Probably, for the very least of his crimes. Marat hates him; and Marat represents the fury of the Revolution. The monster wished to erect eight hundred gibbets, and hang Mirabeau first."

"And the deputies are returning to the Provinces, drunk with their own importance. They have abolished titles, and coats of arms, and liveries; and published a list of the names the nobles are to assume—as if people did not know their own names. Mr. Hamilton says 'Revolution in France has gone raving mad, and converted twenty-four millions of people into savages.'"

"I hate the French!" said the General passionately. "It is a natural instinct with me, just as tame animals are born with an antipathy to wild beasts. If I thought I had one drop of French blood in me, I would let it out with a dagger."

George winced a little. He remembered that the Morans were of French extraction; and he answered—

"After all, father, we must judge people individually. Mere race is not much."

"George Hyde! What are you saying? RACE is everything. It is the strongest and deepest of all human feelings. Nothing conquers its prejudices."

"Except love. I have heard, father, that Love never asks 'of what race art thou?' or even 'whose son, or daughter, art thou?'"

"You have heard many foolish things, George; that is one of them. Men and women marry out of their own nationality, AT THEIR PERIL. I took my life in my hand for your mother's love."

"She was worthy of the peril."

"God knows it."

At this moment Mrs. Hyde entered the room, her fair face alight with love. A servant carrying a tray full of good things to eat, followed her; and it was delightful to watch her eager happiness as she arranged meats, and sweetmeats, in tempting order for the hungry young man. He thoroughly enjoyed this provision for his comfort; and as he ate, he talked to his father of those things interesting to him, answering all questions with that complaisant positiveness of youth which decides everything at once, and without reservation. No one understood this better than General Hyde, but it pleased him to draw out his son's opinions; and it also pleased him to watch the pride of the fond mother, who evidently considered her boy a paragon of youthful judgment.

"And pray," he asked, "what can you tell me about the seat of government? Will New York be chosen?"

"I am sure it will be Philadelphia; and, indeed, I care not. It would, however, amuse you to hear some of the opinions on the matter; for every one hangs his judgment on the peg of his own little interests or likings. Young De Witt says New York wants no government departments; that she is far too busy a city, to endure government idlers hanging around her best streets. Doctor Rush says the government is making our city a sink of political vice. Mr. Wolcott says honesty is the fashion in New York. Some of the clergy think Wall Street as wicked as the most fashionable streets in Tyre and Sodom; and the street-singers—thanks to Mr. Freneau—have each, and all, their little audiences on the subject. As I came up Broadway, a man was shouting a rhyme advising the Philadelphians to 'get ready their dishcloths and brooms, and begin scouring their knockers, and scrubbing their rooms.' Perhaps the most sensible thing on the subject came from one of the New England senators. He thought the seat of government ought to be 'in some wilderness, where there would be no social attractions, where members could go and attend strictly to business.' Upon my word, sir, the opinions are endless in number and variety; but, in truth, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Morris are arranging the matter. This is without doubt. There is to be some sort of compromise with the Southern senators, who are promised the capital on the Potomac, finally, if they no longer oppose the assumption of the State debts. I hear that Mr. Jefferson has been brought to agree to this understanding. And Mr. Morris doubtless thinks, if the government offices are once opened in Philadelphia, they will remain there."

"And Joris, the ladies? What say they on the subject?" asked Mrs. Hyde.

"Indeed, mother, some of them are lamenting, and some looking forward to the change. All are talking of the social deposition of the beautiful Mrs. Bingham. 'She will have to abate herself a little before Mrs. Washington,' I heard one lady say; while others declare, that her association with our Republican Court will be harmonious and advantageous; especially, as she is beloved in the home of the President."

"OUR REPUBLICAN COURT! The definition is absurd!" said General Hyde, with both scorn and temper. "A court pre-supposes both royalty and nobility!"

"We have both of them intrinsically, father."

"In faith, George! you will find, that intrinsic qualities have no social value. What people require is their external evidence."

"And their external evidence would be extremely offensive here, sir. For my part, I think, the sneaking hankering after titles and ceremonies, among our wealthy men and women is a very great weakness. Every one knows that nothing would please fussy Mr. Adams better than to be a duke, or even a lord—and he is by no means alone in such desires."

"They may be yet realized."

"They will not, sir—not, at least, while Thomas Jefferson lives. He is the bulldog of Democracy, and he would be at the throat of any such pretences as soon as they were suggested."

"Very well, George! I have no objections."

"I knew, sir, that you were a thorough Democrat."

"Do not go too far, George. I love Democracy; but I hate Democrats! Now I am sleepy, and as Mr. Jefferson is on the watch, I may go to sleep comfortably. I will talk to you more on these subjects in the morning. Good-night!" He put his hand on his son's shoulder, and looked with a proud confidence into the bright face, lifted to the touch.

Then George was alone with his mother; but she was full of little household affairs; and he could not bring into them a subject so close, and so sacred to his heart. He listened a little wearily to her plans, and was glad when she recollected the late hour and hurried him away to his chamber—a large, lofty room in the front of the house, on which she had realized all the ideas that her great love, and her really exquisite taste suggested. He entered it with a sense of delight, and readily surrendered himself to its dreamy air of sleep and rest. "I will speak to my mother in the morning," he thought. "To-night, her mind is full of other things."

But in the morning Mrs. Hyde was still more interested in "other things." She had an architect with her, her servants were to order, her house to look after; and George readily felt that his hour was certainly not in the early morning. He had slept a little late, and his mother did not approve of sleep beyond the normal hour. He saw that he had delayed household matters, and made an environment not quite harmonious. So he ate his breakfast rapidly, and went out to the new stables. He expected to find the General there, and he was not disappointed. He had, however, finished his inspection of the horses, and he proposed a walk to the upper end of the Glen, where a great pond was being dug for Mrs. Hyde's swans, and other aquatic birds.

There was much to interest them as they walked: men were busy draining, and building stone walls; ploughing and sowing, and digging, and planting. Yet, in the midst of all this busy life, George detected in his father's manner an air of melancholy. He looked into his son's face with affection, and pointed out to him with an apparent interest, the improvements in progress, but George knew—though he could not have explained why he knew—that his father's heart was not really in these things. Presently he asked, "How goes it with your law books, George?"

"Faith, sir, I must confess, very indifferently. I have no senses that way; and 'tis only your desire that keeps my books open. I would far rather read my Plutarch, or write with my sword."

"Let me tell you, soberly, that it is a matter of personal interest to you. There is now no question of the law as a profession, for since your cousin's death your prospects have entirely changed. But consider, George, that not only this estate, but also the estate of your Grandfather Van Heemskirk

must eventually come to you. Much of both has been bought from confiscated properties, and it is not improbable that claimants may arise who will cause you trouble. How necessary, then, that you should know something of the laws affecting land and property in this country."

"My grandfather is in trouble. I forgot to tell you last night, that his friend, Elder Semple, is dead."

"Dead!"

"Yes, sir."

For a few minutes General Hyde remained silent; then he said with much feeling, "Peace to the old Tory! He was once very kind to me and to my family. Ah, George, I have again defrauded myself of a satisfaction! For a long time I have intended to go and see him—it is now too late! But I will return to the city with you and pay him the last respect possible. Who told you this news?"

"I was walking on Broadway with young McAllister, and Doctor Moran stopped us and sent word to Elder McAllister of the death of his friend. I think, indeed, they were relatives."

"Was Doctor Moran his physician?"

"Yes, sir. A very good physician, I believe; I know, that he is a very courteous and entertaining gentleman."

"And pray, George, how do you come by such an opinion?"

"I had the honour of spending an evening at Doctor Moran's house this week; and if you will believe me, sir, he has a daughter that shames every other beauty. Such bewildering loveliness! Such entrancing freshness and purity I never saw before!"

"In love again, George. Faith, you make me ashamed of my own youth! But this enchanting creature cannot make of her father—anything but what he is."

"This time I am desperately, and really, in love."

"So you were with Mollie Trefuses, with Sarah Talbot, with Eliza Capel, with Matilda Howard—and a galaxy of minor beauties."

"But it has come to this—I wish to marry Miss Moran; and I never wished to marry any other woman."

"You have forgotten—And by Heaven! you must forget Miss Moran. She is not to be thought of as a wife—for one moment."

"Sir, you are not so unjust as to make such a statement without giving me a reason for it."

"Giving you a reason! My reason ought to have sprung up voluntary in your own heart. It is an incredible thing if you are not already familiar with it."

"Simply, sir, I profess my ignorance."

"Look around you. Look east, and west, and north, and south,—all these rich lands were bought with your Uncle William's money. He made himself poor, to make me rich; because, having brought me up as his heir, he thought his marriage late in life had in a manner defrauded me. You know that the death of his two sons has again made me the heir to the Hyde earldom; and that after me, the succession is yours. Tell me now what child is left to your uncle?"

"Only his daughter Annie, a girl of fourteen or fifteen years."

"What will become of her when her father dies?"

"Sir, how can I divine her future?"

"It is your duty to divine her future. Her father has no gold to leave her—he gave it to me—and the land he cannot leave her; yet she has a natural right, beyond either mine or yours."

"I give her my right, cheerfully."

"You cannot give it to her—unless you outlaw yourself from your native country—strip yourself of your citizenship—declare yourself unworthy to be a son of the land that gave you birth. Even if you perpetrated such a civil crime, you would render no service to Annie. Your right would simply lapse to the son of Herbert Hyde—the young man you met at Oxford—"

"Surely, sir, we need not talk of that fellow. I have already told you what a very sycophant he is. He licks the dust before any man of wealth or authority; his tongue hangs down to his shoe-buckles."

"Well then, sir, what is your duty to Annie Hyde?"

"I do not conceive myself to have any special duty to Annie Hyde."

"Upon my honour, you are then perversely stupid! But it is impossible that you do not realize what justice, honour, gratitude and generosity demand from you! When your uncle wrote me that pitiful letter which informed me of the death of his last son, my first thought was that his daughter must be assured her right in the succession. There is one way to compass this. You know what that way is.—Why do you not speak?"

"Because, sir, if I confess your evident opinion to be just, I bind myself to carry it out, because of its justice."

"Is it not just?"

"It might be just to Annie and very unjust to me."

"No, sir. Justice is a thing absolute; it is not altered by circumstances, especially for a circumstance so trivial as a young man's idle fancy."

"'Tis no idle fancy. I love Cornelia Moran."

"You have already loved a score of beauties—and forgotten them."

"I have admired, and forgot. If I had loved, I should not have forgotten. Now, I love."

"Then, sir, be a man, a noble man, and put your personal gratification below justice, honour, and gratitude. This is the first real trial of your life, George, are you going to play the coward in it?"

"If you could only see Miss Moran!"

"I should find it difficult to be civil to her. George, I put before you a duty that no gentleman can by any possibility evade."

"If this arrangement is so important, why was I not told of it, ere this?"

"It is scarcely a year since your Cousin Harry's death. Annie is not fifteen years old. I did not wish to force matters. I intended you to go to England next year, and I hoped that a marriage might come without my advice or my interference. It seemed to me that Annie's position would itself open your heart to her."

"I have no heart to give her."

"Then you must at least give her your hand. I myself proposed this arrangement, and your uncle's pleasure and gratitude were of the most touching kind. Further, if you will have the very truth, then know, that under no circumstances, will I sanction a marriage with Doctor Moran's daughter."

"You cannot possibly object to her, sir. She is perfection itself."

"I object to her in-toto. I detest Doctor Moran, personally. I know not why, nor care wherefore. I detest him still more sincerely as a man of French extraction. I was brought very much in contact with him for three years, and if we had not been in camp, and under arms, I would have challenged him a score of times. He is the most offensive of men. He brought his race prejudices continually to the front. When Lafayette was wounded, with some of his bragging company, nothing would do but Doctor Moran must go with them to the hospital at Bethlehem; yes, and stay there, until the precious marquis was out of danger. I'll swear that he would not have done this for Washington—he would have blustered about the poor fellows lying sick in camp. Moran talks about being an American, and the Frenchman crops out at every corner. But HE is neither here, nor there, in our affairs; what I wish you to remember is, that rank has its duties as well as its privileges; and you would be a poltroon to accept one and ignore the other. What are you going to do?"

"I know not. I must think—"

"I am ashamed of you! In the name of all that is honourable, what is there to think about? Have you told this Miss Moran that you love her?"

"Not in precise words. I have only seen her three or four times."

"Then, sir, you have only YOURSELF to think about. Have I a son with so little proper feeling that he needs to think a moment when the case is between honour and himself? George, it is high time that you set out to travel. In the neighbourhood of your mother, and your grandparents, and your flatterers in the city, you never get beyond the atmosphere of your own whims and fancies. This conversation has come sooner than I wished; but after it, there is nothing worth talking about."

"Sir, you are more cruel and unreasonable than I could believe possible."

"The railings of a losing lover are not worth answering. Give your anger sway, and when you are reasonable again, tell me. A man mad in love has some title to my pity."

"And, sir, if you were any other man but my father, I would say 'Confound your pity!' I am not sensible of deserving it, except as the result of your own unreasonable demands on me—Our conversation is extremely unpleasant, and I desire to put an end to it. Permit me to return to the house."

"With all my heart. But let me advise you to say nothing to your mother, at present, on this subject:" then with an air of dejection he added—"What is past, must go; and whatever is to come is very sure to happen."

"Sir, nothing past, present, or future, can change me. I shall obey the wishes of my heart, and be true to its love."

"Let me tell you, George, that Love is now grown wise. He follows Fortune."

"Good-morning, sir."

"Let it be so. I will see you to-morrow in town. Ten to one, you will be more reasonable then."

He stood in the centre of the roadway watching his son's angry carriage. The poise of his head, and his rapid, uneven steps, were symptoms the anxious father understood very well. "He is in a naked temper, without even civil disguise," he muttered; "and I hope his own company will satisfy him until the first fever is past. Do I not know that to be in love is to be possessed? It is in the head—the heart—the blood—it is indeed an uncontrollable fever! I hope, first and foremost, that he will keep away from his mother in his present unreason."

His mother was, however, George's first desire. He did not believe she would sanction his sacrifice to Annie Hyde. Justice, honour, gratitude! these were fine names of his father's invention to adorn a ceremony which would celebrate his life-long misery, and he rebelled against such an immolation of his youth and happiness. When he reached the house, he found that his mother had gone to the pond to feed her swans; and he decided to ride a little out of his way in order to see her there. Presently he came to a spot where tall, shadowing pines surrounded a large sheet of water, dipping their lowest branches into it. Mrs. Hyde stood among them, and the white, stately birds were crowding to her very feet. He reined in his horse to watch her, and though accustomed to her beauty, he marvelled again at it. Like a sylvan goddess she stood, divinely tall, and divinely fair; her whole presence suffused with a heavenly serenity and happiness! Upon the soft earth the hoofs of his horse had not been audible, but when he came within her sight, it was wonderful to watch the transformation on her countenance. A great love, a great joy, swept away like a gust of wind, the peace on its surface; and a glowing, loving intelligence made her instantly restless. She called him with sweet imperiousness, "George! Joris! Joris! My dear one!" and he answered her with the one word ever near, and ever dear, to a woman's heart—"MOTHER!"

"I thought you were with your father. Where have you left him?"

"In the wilderness. There is need for me to go to the city. My father will tell you WHY. I come only to see you—to kiss you—"

"Joris, I see that you are angry. Well then, my dear one, what is it? What has your father been saying to you?"

"He will tell you."

"SO! Whatever it is, your part I shall take. Right or wrong, your part I shall take."

"There is nothing wrong, dear mother."

"Money, is it?"

"It is not money. My father is generous to me."

"Then, some woman it is?"

"Kiss me, mother. After all, there is no woman like unto you."

She drew close to him, and he stooped his handsome face to hers, and kissed her many times. Her smile comforted him, for it was full of confidence, as she said—

"Trouble not yourself, Joris. At the last, your father sees through my eyes. Must you go? Well then, the Best of Beings go with you!"

"When are you coming to town, mother?"

"Next week. There is a dinner party at the President's, and your father will not be absent—nor I—nor you?"

"If I am invited, I shall go, just that I may see you enter the room. Let me tell you, that sight always fills my heart with a tumultuous pride and love."

"A great flatterer are you, Joris!" but she lifted her face again, and George kissed it, and then rode rapidly away.

He hardly drew rein until he reached his grandfather's house, a handsome Dutch residence, built of yellow brick, and standing in a garden that was, at this season, a glory of tulips and daffodils, hyacinths and narcissus—the splendid colouring of the beds being wonderfully increased by their borderings of clipped box. An air of sunshiny peace was over the place, and as the upper-half of the side-door stood open he tied his horse and went in. The ticking of the tall house-clock was the only sound he heard at first, but as he stood irresolute, a sweet, thin voice in an adjoining room began to sing a hymn.

"Grandmother! Grandmother!! Grandmother!!!" he called, and before the last appeal was echoed the old lady appeared. She came forward rapidly, her knitting in her hand. She was singularly bright and alert, with rosy cheeks, and snow-white hair under a snow-white cap of clear-starched lace. A snow-white kerchief of lawn was crossed over her breast, and the rest of her dress was so perfectly Dutch that she might have stepped out of one of Tenier's pictures.

"Oh, my Joris!" she cried, "Joris! Joris! I am so happy to see thee. But what, then, is the matter? Thy eyes are full of trouble."

"I will tell you, grandmother." And he sat down by her side and went over the conversation he had had with his father. She never interrupted him, but he knew by the rapid clicking of her knitting needles that she was moved far beyond her usual quietude. When he ceased speaking, she answered—

"To sell thee, Joris, is a great shame, and for nothing to sell thee is still worse. This is what I think: Let half of the income from the earldom go to the poor young lady, but THYSELF into the bargain, is beyond all reason. And if with Cornelia Moran thou art in love, a good thing it is;—so I say."

"Do you know Cornelia, grandmother?"

"Well, then, I have seen her; more than once. A great beauty I think her; and Doctor John has Money—plenty of money—and a very good family are the Morans. I remember his father—a very fine gentleman."

"But my father hates Doctor Moran."

"Very wicked is he to hate any one. Why, then?"

"He gave me only one reason—that his family is French."

"SO! Thy mother was Dutch. Every one cannot be English—a God's mercy they cannot! Now, then, thy grandfather is coming; thy trouble tell to him. Good advice he will give thee."

Senator Van Heemskirk however went first into his garden and gathering great handfuls of white narcissus and golden daffodils, he called a slave woman and bade her carry them to the Semple house, and lay them in, and around, his friend's coffin. One white lily he kept in his hand as he came towards his wife and grandson, with eyes fixed on its beauty.

"Lysbet," he said,—but he clasped George's hand as he spoke—"My Lysbet, if in the Dead Valley of this earth grow such heavenly flowers as this, we will not fear the grave. It is only to sleep on the breast that gives us the lily and the rose, and the wheat, and the corn. Oh, how sweet is this flower! It has the scent of Paradise."

He laid it gently down while he put off his fine broadcloth coat and lace ruffles and assumed the long vest and silk skull cap, which was his home dress; then he put it in a buttonhole of his vest, and seemed to joy himself in its delicate fragrance. With these preliminaries neither Joris nor Lysbet interfered; but when he had lit his long pipe and seated himself comfortably in his chair, Lysbet said—

"Where hast thou been all this afternoon?"

"I have been sealing up my friend's desk and drawers until his sons arrive. Very happy he looks. He is now ONE OF THOSE THAT KNOW."

"Well, then, after the long strife, 'He Rests.'"

"Men have written it. What know they about it? Rest would not be heaven to my friend Alexander Semple. To work, to be up and doing His Will, that would be his delight."

"I wonder, Joris, if in the next life we shall know each other?"

"My Lysbet, in this life do we know each other?"

"I think not. Here has come our dear Joris full of trouble to thee, for his father has said such things as I could not have believed. Joris, tell thy grandfather what they are."

And this time George, being very sure of hearty sympathy, told his tale with great feeling—perhaps even with a little anger. His grandfather listened patiently to the youth's impatience, but he did not answer exactly to his expectations.

"My Joris," he said, "so hard it is to accept what goes against our wishes. If Cornelia Moran you had not met, would your father's desires be so impossible to you? Noble and generous would they not seem—"

"But I have seen Cornelia, and I love her."

"Two or three times you have seen her. How can you be sure that you love her?"

"In the first hour I was sure."

"Of nothing are we quite sure. In too great a hurry are you. Miss Moran may not love you. She may refuse ever to love you. Her mind you have not asked. Beside this, in his family her father may not wish you. A very proud man is Doctor John."

"Grandfather, I may be an earl some day."

"An English earl. Doctor John may not endure to think of his only child living in that far-off country. I, myself, know how this thought can work a father to madness. And, again, your Cousin Annie may not wish to marry you."

"Faith, sir, I had not thought of myself as so very disagreeable."

"No. Vain and self-confident is a young man. See, then, how many things may work this way, that way, and if wise you are you will be quiet and wait for events. One thing, move not in your anger; it is like putting to sea in a tempest. Now I shall just say a word or two on the other side. If your father is so set in his mind about the Hydes, let him do the justice to them he wishes to do; but it is not right that he should make YOU do it for him."

"He says that only I can give Annie justice."

"But that is not good sense. When the present Earl dies, and she is left an orphan, who shall prevent your father from adopting her as his own daughter, and leaving her a daughter's portion of the estate? In such case, she would be in exactly the same position as if her brother had lived and become earl. Is not that so?"

"My dear, dear grandfather, you carry wisdom with you! Now I shall have the pleasure to propose to my father that he do his own justice! O wise, wise grandfather! You have made me happy to a degree!"

"Very well, but say not that *I* gave you such counsel. When your father speaks to me, as he is certain to do, then I will say such and such words to him; but my words in your mouth will be a great offence; and very justly so, for it is hard to carry words, and carry nothing else. Your dear mother—how is she?"

"Well and happy. She builds, and she plants, and the days are too short for her. But my father is not so happy. I can see that he is wearied of everything."

"Not here, is his heart. It is in England. And no longer has he great hopes to keep him young. If of Liberty I now speak to him, he has a smile so hopeless that both sad and angry it makes me. No faith has he left in any man, except Washington; and I think, also, he is disappointed that Washington was not crowned King George the First."

"I can assure you, sir, that others share his disappointment. Mr. Adams would not object to be Duke of New York, and even little Burr would like a lordship."

"I have heard; my ears are not dull, nor my eyes blind. But too much out of the world lives your father; men who do so grow unfit to live in the world. He dreams dreams impossible to us—impossible to France—and then he says 'Liberty is a dream.' Well, well, Life also is a dream—when we awake—"

Then he ceased speaking, and there was silence until Lysbet Van Heemskirk said, softly, "When we awake, WE SHALL BE SATISFIED."

Van Heemskirk smiled at his wife's cheerful assurance, and continued, "It is true, Lysbet, what you say; and even here, in our dreaming, what satisfaction! As for me, I expect not too much. The old order and the new order fight yet for the victory; and what passes now will be worth talking about fifty years hence."

"It is said, grandfather, that the Dutch church is anti-Federal to a man."

"Not true are such sayings. The church will be very like old Van Steenwyck, who boasts of his impartiality, and who votes for the Federals once, and for the anti-Federals once, and the third time does not vote at all. If taken was the vote of the Church, it would be six for the Federals and half-a-dozen for the anti-Federals."

"Mr. Burr—"

"Of Mr. Burr I will not talk. I like not his little dirty politics."

"He is very clever."

"Well, then, you have to praise him for being clever; for being honest you cannot praise him."

"'Tis a monstrous pity that Right can only be on one side; yet sometimes Right and Mr. Burr may happen to be on the same side."

"The right way is too straight for Aaron Burr. If into it he wanders 'tis for a wrong reason."

"My dear grandfather, how your words bite!"

"I wish not to say biting things; but Aaron Burr stands for those politicians who turn patriotism into shopkeeping and their own interest—men who care far more for WHO governs us than for HOW we are governed. And what will be the end of such ways? I will tell you. We shall have a Democracy that will be the reign of those who know the least and talk the loudest."

At this point in the conversation Van Heemskirk was called to the door about some business matter and George was left alone with his grandmother. She was setting the tea-table, and her hands were full of china; but she put the cups quickly down, and going to George's side, said—

"Cornelia Moran spends this evening with her friend Arenta Van Ariens. Well then, would thou like an excuse to call on Arenta?"

"Oh, grandmother! Do you indeed know Arenta? Can you send me there?"

"Since she was one month old I have known Arenta. This morning, she came here to borrow for her Aunt Jacobus my ivory winders. Now then, I did not wish to lend Angelica Jacobus my winders; and I said to Arenta that 'by and by I would look for them.' Not far are they to seek; and for thy pleasure I will get them, and thou canst take them this evening to Arenta."

"O you dear, dear grandmother!" and he stood up, and lifted her rosy face between his hands and kissed her.

"I am so fond of thee," she continued. "I love thee so much; and thy pleasure is my pleasure; and I see no harm—no harm at all—in thy love for the beautiful Cornelia. I think, with thee, she is a girl worth any man's heart; and if thou canst win her, I, for one, will be joyful with thee. Perhaps, though, I am a selfish old woman—it is so easy to be selfish."

"Let me tell you, grandmother, you know not how to be selfish."

"Let me tell thee, Joris, I was thinking of myself, as well as of thee. For while thy grandfather talked of Aaron Burr, this thought came into my mind—if to Annie Hyde my Joris is married, he will live in England, and I shall see him no more in this world. But if to Cornelia Moran he is married, when his father goes to England, then here he will stay; he will live at Hyde Manor, and I shall go to see him, and he will call here to see me;—and then, many good days came into my thoughts. Yes, yes, in every kind thing, in every good thing, somewhere there is hid a little bit of our own will and way. Always, if I look with straight eyes, I can find it." "Get me the winders, grandmother; for now you have given me a reason to hurry."

"But why so quickly must you go?"

"Look at me! It will take me two hours to dress. I have had no dinner—I want to think—you understand, grandmother?"

Then she went into the best parlour, and opening one of the shutters let in sufficient light to find in the drawer of a little Chinese cabinet some ivory winders of very curious design and workmanship. She folded them in soft tissue paper and handed them to her grandson with a pleasant nod; and the young man slipped them into his waistcoat pocket, and then went hurriedly away.

He had spoken of his dinner, but though somewhat hungry, he made but a light meal. His dress seemed to him the most vitally important thing of the hour; and no girl choosing her first ball gown could have felt more anxious and critical on the subject. His call was to be considered an accidental one; and he could not therefore dress as splendidly as if it were a ceremonious or expected visit. After much hesitation, he selected a coat and breeches of black velvet, a pearl-coloured vest, and cravat and ruffles of fine English bone lace. Yet when his toilet was completed, he was dissatisfied. He felt sure more splendid apparel set off his dark beauty to greater advantage; and yet he was equally sure that more splendid apparel would not—on this occasion—be as suitable.

Doubting and hoping, he reached the Van Ariens' house soon after seven o'clock. It was not quite dark, and Jacob Van Ariens stood on the stoop, smoking his pipe and talking to a man who had the appearance of a workman; and who was, in fact, the foreman of his business quarters in the Swamp.

"Good-evening, sir," said George with smiling politeness. "Is Miss Van Ariens within?"

"Within? Yes. But company she has tonight," said the watchful father, as he stood suspicious and immovable in the entrance.

It did not seem to George as if it would be an easy thing to pass such a porter at the door, but he continued, "I have come with a message to Miss Van Ariens."

"A very fine messenger!" answered Van Ariens, slightly smiling.

"A fine lady deserves a fine messenger. But, sir, if you will do my errand for me, I am content. 'Tis from Madame Van Heemskirk—"

"SO then? That is good."

"I am George Hyde, her grandson, you know."

"Well then, I did not know. 'Tis near dark, and I see not as well as once I did."

"I have brought from Madame Van Heemskirk some ivory winders for Madame Jacobus."

"Come in, come in, and tell my Arenta the message thyself. I know nothing of such things. Come in, I did not think of thee as my friend Van Heemskirk's grandson. Welcome art thou!" and

Van Ariens himself opened the parlour door, saying, "Arenta, here is George Hyde. A message he brings for thy Aunt Angelica."

And while these words were being uttered, George delighted his eyes with the vision of Cornelia, who sat at a small table with some needlework in her hand. Arenta's tating was over her foot, and she had to remove it in order to rise and meet Hyde. Rem sat idly fingering a pack of playing cards and talking to Cornelia. This situation George took in at a glance; though his sense of sight was quite satisfied when it rested on the lovely girl who dropped her needle as he entered, for he saw the bright flush which overspread her face and throat, and the light of pleasure which so filled her eyes that they seemed to make her whole face luminous.

In a few moments, Arenta's pretty enthusiasms and welcomes dissipated all constraint, and Hyde placed his chair among the happy group and fell easily into his most charming mood. Even Rem could not resist the atmosphere of gaiety and real enjoyment that soon pervaded the room. They sang, they played, they had a game at whist, and everything that happened was in some subtle, secret way, a vehicle for Hyde's love to express itself. Yet it was to Arenta he appeared to be most attentive; and Rem was good-naturedly inclined to permit his sister to be appropriated, if only he was first in the service of Cornelia.

But though Hyde's attentions were so little obvious, Cornelia was satisfied. It would have been a poor lover who could not have said under such circumstances "I love you" a hundred times over; and George Hyde was not a poor lover. He had naturally the ardent confidence and daring which delight women, and he had not passed several seasons in the highest London society without learning all those sweet, occult ways of making known admiration, which the presence of others renders both necessary and possible.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.