

# The Hour and the Man, An Historical Romance

Harriet Martineau

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Harriet Martineau

# "The Hour and the Man"

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## Chapter One.

### Waiting Supper.

The nights of August are in Saint Domingo the hottest of the year. The winds then cease to befriend the panting inhabitants; and while the thermometer stands at 90 degrees, there is no steady breeze, as during the preceding months of summer. Light puffs of wind now and then fan the brow of the negro, and relieve for an instant the oppression of the European settler; but they are gone as soon as come, and seem only to have left the heat more intolerable than before.

Of these sultry evenings, one of the sultriest was the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, 1791. This was one of five days appointed for rejoicings in the town of Cap Français—festivities among the French and Creole inhabitants, who were as ready to rejoice on appointed occasions as the dulness of colonial life renders natural, but who would have been yet more lively than they were if the date of their festival had been in January or May. There was no choice as to the date, however. They were governed in regard to their celebrations by what happened at Paris; and never had the proceedings of the mother-country been so important to the colony as now.

During the preceding year, the white proprietors of Saint Domingo, who had hailed with loud voices the revolutionary doctrines before which royalty had begun to succumb in France, were astonished to find their cries of Liberty and Equality adopted by some who had no business with such ideas and words. The mulatto proprietors and merchants of the island innocently understood the words according to their commonly received meaning, and expected an equal share with the whites in the representation of the colony, in the distribution of its offices, and in the civil rights of its inhabitants generally. These rights having been denied by the whites to the freeborn mulattoes, with every possible manifestation

of contempt and dislike, an effort had been made to wring from the whites by force what they would not grant to reason; and an ill-principled and ill-managed revolt had taken place, in the preceding October, headed by Vincent Ogé and his brother, sons of the proprietress of a coffee plantation, a few miles from Cap Français. These young men were executed, under circumstances of great barbarity. Their sufferings were as seed sown in the warm bosoms of their companions and adherents, to spring up, in due season, in a harvest of vigorous revenge. The whites suspected this; and were as anxious as their dusky neighbours to obtain the friendship and sanction of the revolutionary government at home. That government was fluctuating in its principles and in its counsels; it favoured now one party, and now the other; and on the arrival of its messengers at the ports of the colony, there ensued sometimes the loud boastings of the whites, and sometimes quiet, knowing smiles and whispered congratulations among the depressed section of the inhabitants.

The cruelties inflicted on Vincent Ogé had interested many influential persons in Paris in the cause of the mulattoes. Great zeal was exerted in attempting to put them in a condition to protect themselves by equal laws, and thus to restrain the tyranny of the whites. The Abbé Gregoire pleaded for them in the National Assembly; and on the 10th of March was passed the celebrated decree which gave the mulattoes the privileges of French citizens, even to the enjoyment of the suffrage, and to the possession of seats in the parochial and colonial assemblies. To Europeans there appears nothing extraordinary in the admission to these civil functions of freeborn persons, many of whom were wealthy, and many educated; but to the whites of Saint Domingo the decree was only less tremendous than the rush of the hurricane.

It arrived at Cap Français on the 30th of June, and the tidings presently spread. At first, no one believed them but the mulattoes. When it was no longer possible to doubt—when the words of Robespierre passed from mouth to mouth, till even the nuns told them to one another in the convent garden—“Perish the colonies, rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles!” the whites trampled the national cockade under their feet in the streets, countermanded their orders for the fête of the 14th of July (as they now declined taking the civic oath), and proposed to one another to offer their colony and their allegiance to England.

They found means, however, to gratify their love of power, and their class-hatred, by means short of treason. They tried disobedience first, as the milder method. The governor of the colony, Blanchelande, promised that when the decree should reach him officially, he would neglect it, and all applications from any quarter to have it enforced. This set all straight. Blanchelande was pronounced a sensible and patriotic man. The gentlemen shook hands warmly with him at every turn; the ladies made deep and significant curtseys wherever they met him; the boys taught their little negroes to huzza at the name of Blanchelande; and the little girls called him a dear creature. In order to lose no time in showing that they meant to make laws for their own colony out of their own heads, and no others, the white gentry hastened on the election of deputies for a new General Colonial Assembly. The deputies were elected, and met, to the number of a hundred and seventy-six, at Leogane, in the southern region of the island, so early as the 9th of August. After exchanging greetings and vows of fidelity to their class-interests, under the name of patriotism, they adjourned their assembly to the 25th, when they were to meet at Cap Français. It was desirable to hold their very important session in the most important place in the colony, the centre of intelligence, the focus of news from Europe, and the spot where they had first sympathised with the ungrateful government at home, by hoisting, with their own white hands, the cap of liberty, and shouting, so that the world might hear, "Liberty and Equality!" "Down with Tyranny!"

By the 20th, the deputies were congregated at Cap Français; and daily till the great 25th were they seen to confer together in coteries in the shady piazzas, or in the Jesuits' Walk, in the morning, and to dine together in parties in the afternoon, admitting friends and well-wishers to these tavern dinners. Each day till the 25th was to be a fête-day in the town and neighbourhood; and of these days the hot 22nd was one.

Among these friends and well-wishers were the whites upon all the plantations in the neighbourhood of the town. There was scarcely an estate in the Plaine du Nord, or on the mountain steeps which overlooked the cape, town, and bay, on all sides but the north, which did not furnish guests to these dinners. The proprietors, their bailiffs, the clergy, the magistrates, might all be seen along the roads, in the cool of the morning; and there was a holiday air about the estates they left behind. The negroes were left for this week to do their work pretty much as they liked,

or to do none at all. There was little time to think of them, and of ordinary business, when there were the mulattoes to be ostentatiously insulted, and the mother-country to be defied. So the negroes slept at noon, and danced at night, during these few August days, and even had leave to visit one another to as great an extent as was ever allowed. Perhaps they also transacted other affairs of which their masters had little suspicion.

All that ever was allowed was permitted to the slaves on the Breda estate, in the plain, a few miles from Cap Français. The attorney, or bailiff of the estate, Monsieur Bayou de Libertas, was a kind-hearted man, who, while insisting very peremptorily on his political and social rights, and vehemently denouncing all abstract enmity to them, liked that people actually about him should have their own way. While ransacking his brain for terms of abuse to vent on Lafayette and Condorcet, he rarely found anything harsh to utter when Caton got drunk, and spoiled his dinner; when Venus sent up his linen darker than it went down to the quarter, or when little Machabée picked his pocket of small coin. Such a man was, of course, particularly busy this week; and of course, the slaves under his charge were particularly idle, and particularly likely to have friends from other plantations to visit them.

Some such visitor seemed to be expected by a family of these Breda negroes, on the Monday evening, the 22nd. This family did not live in the slave-quarter. They had a cottage near the stables, as Toussaint Breda had been Monsieur Bayou's postillion, and, when he was lately promoted to be overseer, it was found convenient to all parties that he should retain his dwelling, which had been enlarged and adorned so as to accord with the dignity of his new office. In the piazza of his dwelling sat Toussaint this evening, evidently waiting for some one to arrive; for he frequently put down his book to listen for footsteps, and more than once walked round the house to look abroad. His wife, who was within, cooking supper, and his daughter and little boy, who were beside him in the piazza, observed his restlessness; for Toussaint was a great reader, and seldom looked off the page for a moment of any spare hour that he might have for reading either the books Monsieur Bayou lent him, or the three or four volumes which he had been permitted to purchase for himself.

"Do you see Jean?" asked the wife from within. "Shall we wait supper for him?"

“Wait a little longer,” said Toussaint. “It will be strange if he does not come.”

“Are any more of Latour’s people coming with Jean, mother?” asked Génifrède, from the piazza.

“No; they have a supper at Latour’s to-night; and we should not have thought of inviting Jean, but that he wants some conversation with your father.”

“Lift me up,” cried the little boy, who was trying in vain to scramble up one of the posts of the piazza, in order to reach a humming-bird’s nest, which hung in the tendrils of a creeper overhead, and which a light puff of wind now set swinging, so as to attract the child’s eye. What child ever saw a humming-bird thus rocking—its bill sticking out like a long needle on one side, and its tail at the other, without longing to clutch it? So Denis cried out imperiously to be lifted up. His father set him on the shelf within the piazza, where the calabashes were kept—a station whence he could see into the nest, and watch the bird, without being able to touch it. This was not altogether satisfactory. The little fellow looked about him for a calabash to throw at the nest; but his mother had carried in all her cups for the service of the supper-table. As no more wind came at his call, he could only blow with all his might, to swing the tendril again; and he was amusing himself thus when his father laid down his book, and stepped out to see once more whether Jean was approaching.

“Lift me down,” said the boy to his sister, when his head was giddy with blowing. Génifrède would fain have let him stay where he was, out of the way of mischief; but she saw that he was really afraid of falling, and she offered her shoulders for him to descend upon. When down, she would not let him touch her work; she took her scissors from his busy hands, and shook him off when he tried to pull the snowberries out of her hair; so that there was nothing left for the child to play with but his father’s book. He was turning it over, when Toussaint re-appeared.

“Ha! boy, a book in your hands already? I hope you may have as much comfort out of that book as I have had, Denis.”

“What is it? what is it about?” said the boy, who had heard many a story



out of books from his father.

“What is it? Let us see. I think you know letters enough to spell it out for yourself. Come and try.”

The child knew the letter E, and, with a good deal of help, made out, at last, Epictetus.

“What is that?” asked the boy.

“Epictetus was a negro,” said Génifrède, complacently.

“Not a negro,” said her father, smiling. “He was a slave; but he was a white.”

“Is that the reason you read that book so much more than any other?”

“Partly; but partly because I like what is in it.”

“What is in it—any stories?” asked Denis.

“It is all about bearing and forbearing. It has taught me many things which you will have to learn by-and-by. I shall teach you some of them out of this book.”

Denis made all haste away from the promised instruction, and his father was presently again absorbed in his book. From respect to him, Génifrède kept Denis quiet by signs of admonition; and for some little time nothing was heard but the sounds that in the plains of Saint Domingo never cease—the humming and buzzing of myriads of insects, the occasional chattering of monkeys in a neighbouring wood, and, with a passing gust, a chorus of frogs from a distant swamp. Unconscious of this din, from being accustomed always to hear more or less of it, the boy amused himself with chasing the fireflies, whose light began to glance around as darkness descended. His sister was poring over her work, which she was just finishing, when a gleam of greenish light made both look up. It came from a large meteor which sailed past towards the mountains, whither were tending also the huge masses of cloud which gather about the high peaks previous to the season of rain and hurricanes. There was nothing surprising in this meteor, for the sky was

full of them in August nights; but it was very beautiful. The globe of green light floated on till it burst above the mountains, illuminating the lower clouds, and revealing along the slopes of the uplands the coffee-groves, waving and bowing their heads in the wandering winds of that high region. Génifrède shivered at the sight, and her brother threw himself upon her lap. Before he had asked half his questions about the lights of the sky, the short twilight was gone, and the evening star cast a faint shadow from the tufted posts of the piazza upon the white wall of the cottage. In a low tone, full of awe, Génifrède told the boy such stories as she had heard from her father of the mysteries of the heavens. He felt that she trembled as she told of the northern lights, which had been actually seen by some travelled persons now in Cap Français. It took some time and argument to give him an idea of cold countries; but his uncle Paul, the fisherman, had seen hail on the coast, only thirty miles from hence; and this was a great step in the evidence. Denis listened with all due belief to his sister's description of those pale lights shooting up over the sky, till he cried out vehemently, "There they are! look!"

Génifrède screamed, and covered her face with her hands; while the boy shouted to his father, and ran to call his mother to see the lights.

What they saw, however, was little like the pale, cold rays of the aurora borealis. It was a fiery red, which, shining to some height in the air, was covered in by a canopy of smoke.

"Look up, Génifrède," said her father, laying his hand upon her head. "It is a fire—a cane-field on fire."

"And houses, too—the sugar-house, no doubt," said Margot, who had come out to look. "It burns too red to be canes only. Can it be at Latour's? That would keep Jean from coming.—It was the best supper I ever got ready for him."

"Latour's is over that way," said Toussaint, pointing some distance further to the south-east. "But see! there is fire there, too! God have mercy!"

He was silent, in mournful fear that he knew now too well the reason why Jean had not come, and the nature of the conversation Jean had desired to have with him. As he stood with folded arms looking from the one

conflagration to the other, Génifrède clung to him trembling with terror. In a quarter of an hour another blaze appeared on the horizon; and soon after, a fourth.

“The sky is on fire,” cried Denis, in more delight than fear. “Look at the clouds!” And the clouds did indeed show, throughout their huge pile, some a mild flame colour, and others a hard crimson edge, as during a stormy sunset.

“Alas! alas! this is rebellion,” said Toussaint; “rebellion against God and man. God have mercy! The whites have risen against their king; and now the blacks rise against them, in turn. It is a great sin. God have mercy!”

Margot wept bitterly. “Oh, what shall we do?” she cried, “What will become of us, if there is a rebellion?”

“Be cheerful, and fear nothing,” replied her husband. “I have not rebelled, and I shall not. Monsieur Bayou has taught me to bear and forbear—yes, my boy, as this book says, and as the book of God says: We will be faithful, and fear nothing.”

“But they may burn this plantation,” cried Margot. “They may come here, and take you away. They may ruin Monsieur Bayou, and then we may be sold away; we may be parted—”

Her grief choked her words.

“Fear nothing,” said her husband, with calm authority. “We are in God’s hand; and it is a sin to fear His will. But see! there is another fire, over towards the town.”

And he called aloud the name of his eldest son, saying he should send the boy with a horse to meet his master. He himself must remain to watch at home.

Placide did not come when called, nor was he at the stables. He was gone some way off, to cut fresh grass for the cattle—a common night-labour on the plantation.

“Call Isaac, then,” said Toussaint.

“Run, Génifrède,” said her mother. “Isaac and Aimée are in the wood. Run, Génifrède.”

Génifrède did not obey. She was too much terrified to leave the piazza alone; though her father gently asked when she, his eldest daughter, and almost a woman, would leave off being scared on all occasions like a child. Margot went herself; so far infected with her daughter’s fears as to be glad to take little Denis in her hand. She was not long gone. As soon as she entered the wood she heard the sound of her children’s laughter above the noise the monkeys made; and she was guided by it to the well. There, in the midst of the opening which let in the starlight, stood the well, surrounded by the only grass on the Breda estate that was always fresh and green; and there were Isaac and his inseparable companion, Aimée, making the grass greener by splashing each other with more than half the water they drew. Their bright eyes and teeth could be seen by the mild light, as they were too busy with their sport to heed their mother as she approached. She soon made them serious with her news. Isaac flew to help his father with the horses, while Aimée, a stout girl of twelve, assisted her mother in earnest to draw water, and carry it home.

They found Génifrède crouching alone in a corner of the piazza. In another minute Toussaint appeared on horseback, leading a saddled horse.

“I am going for Monsieur Bayou myself,” said he; adding, as he glanced round the lurid horizon, “it is not a night for boys to be abroad. I shall be back in an hour. If Monsieur Bayou comes by the new road, tell him that I am gone by Madame Ogé’s. If fire breaks out here, go into the wood. If I meet Placide, I will send him home.”

He disappeared under the limes in the avenue; and his family heard the pace of the horses quicken into a gallop before the sound died away upon the road.

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## **Chapter Two.**

### **The Exclusives.**

The party of deputies with whom Monsieur Bayou was dining were assembled at the great hotel, at the corner of Place Mont Archer, at Cap Français. Languidly, though gladly, did the guests, especially those from the country, enter the hotel, overpowering as was the heat of the roads and the streets. In the roads, the sand lay so deep, that the progress of horsemen was necessarily slow, while the sun seemed to shed down a deluge of flame. In the streets, there was the shelter of the piazzas; but their pillars, if accidentally touched, seemed to burn the hand; and the hum of traffic, and the sound of feet, appeared to increase the oppression caused by the weather. Within the hotel, all was comparatively cool and quiet. The dining and drawing-rooms occupied by the guests adjoined each other, and presented none but the most welcome images. The jalousies were nearly closed; and through the small spaces that were left open, there might be seen in one direction the fountain playing in the middle of the Place, and in the other, diagonally across the Rue Espagnole, the Jesuits' Walk, an oblong square laid down in grass, and shaded in the midst by an avenue of palms. Immediately opposite the hotel was the Convent of Religieuses, over whose garden wall more trees were seen; so that the guests *might* easily have forgotten that they were in the midst of a town.

The rooms were so dark that those who entered from the glare of the streets could at first see nothing. The floor was dark, being of native mahogany, polished like a looking-glass. The walls were green, the furniture green—everything ordered in counter-action of light and heat. In the dining-room more was visible; there was the white cloth spread over the long range of tables, and the plate and glass, glittering in such light as was allowed to enter; and also the gilded balustrade of the gallery, to be used to-day as an orchestra. This gallery was canopied over, as was the seat of the chairman, with palm branches and evergreens, intermixed with fragrant shrubs, and flowers of all hues. A huge bunch of peacocks' feathers was suspended from the lofty ceiling, and it was waved incessantly to and fro, by strings pulled by two little negroes, at opposite corners of the room, causing a continual fanning of the air, and circulation of the perfumes of the flowers. The black band in the orchestra summoned the company to dinner, and entertained them while at it by playing the popular revolutionary airs which were then resounding through the colony like the hum of its insects, or the dash of its waterfalls. As they took their seats to the air of the "Marseillaise Hymn," more than

one of the guests might be heard by his next neighbour singing to himself:

“Allons, enfans de la patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé.”

Before politics, however, there was dinner to be attended to; and the first-fruits of the eloquence of the meeting was bestowed on the delicate turtle, the well-fattened land-crabs, and the rich pasties—on the cold wines, the refreshing jellies, and the piles of oranges, figs, and almonds, pomegranates, melons, and pine-apples. The first vote of compliment was to Henri, the black cook from Saint Christophe, whence he had been brought over by the discerning hotel-keeper, who detected his culinary genius while Henri was yet but a lad. When the table was cleared, a request was sent up to the chairman from various parties at the table, that he would command Henri’s attendance, to receive the testimony of the company respecting the dinner he had sent up, and to take a glass of wine from them.

Dr Proteau, the chairman, smilingly agreed, saying that such a tribute was no more than Henri’s professional excellence and high reputation deserved; and Henri was accordingly summoned by a dozen of the grinning black waiters, who ran over one another in their haste to carry to the kitchen the message of these, the highest gentry of the land. The waiters presently poured into the room again, and stood in two rows from the door, where Henri appeared, not laughing like the rest, but perfectly grave, as he stood, white apron on, and napkin over his arm, his stout and tall figure erect, to receive the commands of his masters.

“Was your father a cook or a gourmand, Henri? Or are you all good cooks at Saint Christophe?” asked a deputy.

“If it is the air of Saint Christophe that makes men such cooks as Henri, the knights of Saint John of Malta had a goodly gift in it,” said another.

“Can one get such another as you for money, Henri?” asked a third.

“How many boys has your wife brought you, Henri? We shall bid high for them, and make your master’s fortune, if he trains them all to your profession,” said a fourth.

“Tell your master he had better not part with you for any sum, Henri. We will make it worth his while to refuse more for you than was ever offered yet.”

“Your health, Henri! May you live out all the turtle now in Saint Domingo, and the next generation after them.”

Amidst all these questions and remarks, Henri escaped answering any. He stood looking on the ground, till a glass of champagne was brought to him, bowed to the company, drank it off, and was gone.

“How demure the fellow looks!” said Monsieur Papalier, a planter, to Bayou, his neighbour in the plain, who now sat opposite to him; “what an air of infinite modesty he put on! At this moment, I daresay he is snapping his fingers, and telling the women that all the money in Saint Domingo won’t buy him.”

“You are mistaken there,” said Bayou. “He is a singular fellow, is Henri, in more ways than his cookery. I believe he never snapped his fingers in his life, nor told anybody what his master gave for him. I happen to know Henri very well, from his being an acquaintance of my overseer, who is something of the same sort, only superior even to Henri.”

“The fellow looked as if he would have given a great deal more than his glass of wine to have stayed out of the room,” observed Monsieur Leroy. “He has nothing of the mulatto in him, has he? Pure African, I suppose.”

“Pure African—all safe,” replied Bayou. “But observe! the music has stopped, and we are going on to the business of the day. Silence, there! Silence, all!”

Everybody said “Silence!” and Dr Proteau rose.

He declared himself to be in a most remarkable situation—one in which he was sure every Frenchman present would sympathise with him. Here he stood, chairman of a meeting of the most loyal, the most spirited, the most patriotic citizens of the empire, chairman of an assemblage of members of a colonial parliament, and of their guests and friends—here he stood, in this capacity, and yet he was unable to propose any one of the loyal toasts by which it had, till now, been customary to sanction their

social festivities. As for the toast, now never more to be heard from their lips—the health of the king and royal family—the less that was said about that the better. The times of oppression were passing away; and he, for one, would not dim the brightness of the present meeting by recalling from the horizon, where it was just disappearing, the tempest cloud of tyranny, to overshadow the young sunshine of freedom. There had been, however, another toast, to which they had been wont to respond with more enthusiasm than was ever won by despotic monarchy from its slaves. There had been a toast to which this lofty roof had rung again, and to hail which every voice had been loud, and every heart had beat high. Neither could he now propose that toast. With grief which consumed his soul, he was compelled to bury in silence—the silence of mortification, the silence of contempt, the silence of detestation—the name of the National Assembly of France. His language might appear strong; but it was mild, it was moderate; it was, he might almost say, cringing, in comparison with what the National Assembly had deserved. He need not occupy the time of his friends, nor harrow their feelings, by a narrative of the injuries their colony had sustained at the hands of the French National Assembly. Those around him knew too well, that in return for their sympathy in the humbling of a despot, for their zeal in behalf of the eternal principles of freedom, the mother-country had, through the instrumentality of its National Council, endeavoured to strip its faithful whites in this colony of the power which they had always possessed, and which was essential to their very existence in their ancient prosperity—the exclusive power of making or enforcing laws for their own community. The attempt was now made, as they too well knew, to wrest this sacred privilege from their hands, by admitting to share it a degraded race, before whose inroads would perish all that was most dear to his fellow-citizens and to himself—the repose of their homes, the security of their property, the honour of their colour, and the prosperity of the colony. He rejoiced to see around him, and from his heart he bade them welcome, some fellow-labourers with himself in the glorious work of resisting oppression, and defending their ancient privileges, endeared to them by as many ages as had passed since distinctions of colour were made by an Almighty hand. He invited them to pledge themselves with him to denounce and resist such profane, such blasphemous innovations, proposed by shallow enthusiasts, seconded by designing knaves, and destined to be wrought out by the agency of demons—demons in human form. He called upon all patriots to join him in his



pledge; and in token of their faith, to drink deep to one now more deserving of their homage than was ever king or National Assembly—he need not say that he alluded to the noblest patriot in the colony—its guardian, its saviour—Governor Blanchelande.

The gentleman who rose, amidst the cheers and jingling of glasses, to say a few words to this toast, was a man of some importance in the colony as a member of its Assembly, though he otherwise held no higher rank than that of attorney to the estate of Monsieur Gallifet, a rich absentee. Odeluc was an old resident, and (though zealous for the privileges of the whites) a favourite with men of all colours, and therefore entitled to be listened to by all with attention, when he spoke on the conflicting interests of races. However his opinions might please or displease, all liked to look upon his bright countenance, and to hear his lively voice. Vincent Ogé had said that Odeluc was a worse foe to the mulattoes than many a worse man—he always so excited their good-will as to make them forget their rights.

As he now rose, the air from the peacock-fan stirring the white hair upon his forehead (for in the heats of Saint Domingo it was permitted to lay wigs aside), and the good wine animating yet further the spirit of his lively countenance, Odeluc was received with a murmur of welcome, before he opened his lips to speak.

“I must acknowledge, my fellow-citizens,” said he, “I never was more satisfied with regard to the state of our colony than now. We have had our troubles, to be sure, like the mother-country, and like all countries where portions of the people struggle for power which they ought not to have. But we have settled that matter for ourselves, by the help of our good Governor, and I firmly believe that we are at the commencement of a long age of peace.”

Here some applauded, while two or three shook their head. Odeluc continued—

“I see some of my friends do not altogether share my hopes. Yet are these hopes not reasonable? The Governor has himself assured me that nothing shall induce him to notice the obnoxious decree, till he has, in the first place, received it under all the official forms—in the next place,

written his remonstrance to the government at home—and, in the third place, received an answer. Now, all this will take some time. In three days, we deputies shall begin our session; and never were the members of any assembly more united in their will and in their views, and therefore more powerful. We meet for the express purpose of neutralising the effects of this ill-judged decree; we have the power—we have the will—and who can doubt the results? The management of this colony has always succeeded well in the hands of the whites; they have made its laws, and enforced them—they have allowed the people of colour liberty to pursue their own business, and acquire property if they could, conscious of strength to restrain their excesses, if occasion should arise: and, as for the negro population, where in the world were affairs ever on a better footing between the masters and their force than in the colony of Saint Domingo? If all has worked so well hitherto, is it to be supposed that an ignorant shout in the National Assembly, and a piece of paper sent over to us thence, can destroy the harmony, and overthrow the prosperity which years have confirmed? I, for one, will never believe it. I see before me in my colleagues men to whom the tranquillity of the colony may be safely confided; and over their heads, and beyond the wise laws they are about to pass for the benefit of both the supreme and subordinate interests of our community. I see, stretching beyond the reach of living eye, a scene of calm and fruitful prosperity in which our children's children may enjoy their lives, without a thought of fear or apprehension of change. Regarding Governor Blanchelande as one of the chief securities of this our long tenure of social prosperity, I beg to propose, not only that we shall now drink his health, but that we shall meet annually in his honour on this day. Yonder is Government-House. If we open our jalousies wide enough, and give the honours loudly enough, perhaps our voices may reach his ears, as the loyal greeting that he deserves.”

“Do not you smell smoke?” asked Bayou of his neighbour, as the blinds were thrown open.

“What a smell of burning!” observed the chairman to Odeluc at the same moment.

“They are burning field-trash outside the town, no doubt,” Odeluc answered. “We choose the nights when there is little wind, you know, for

that work.”

There was a small muster of soldiers round the gates of Government-House, and several people in the streets, when the honours were given to the Governor's name. But the first seemed not to hear, and the others did not turn their heads. The air that came in was so hot, that the blinds were immediately ordered to be closed again. The waiters, however, seemed to have lost their obsequiousness, and many orders and oaths were spent upon them before they did their duty.

While the other gentlemen sat down, a young man remained standing, his eyes flashing, and his countenance heated, either by wine, or by the thoughts with which he seemed big.

“My fellow-citizens,” said Monsieur Brelle, beginning in a very loud voice, “agreeing as I do in my hopes for this colony with Monsieur Odeluc, and, like him, trusting in the protection and blessing of a just Providence, which will preserve our rights, and chastise those who would infringe them—feeling thus, and thus trusting, there is a duty for me to perform. My friends, we must not permit the righteous chastisements of Providence to pass by unheeded, and be forgotten. The finger of Providence has been among us, to mark out and punish the guilty disturber of our peace. But, though dead, that guilty traitor has not ceased to disturb our peace. Do we not know that his groans have moved our enemies in the National Assembly; that his ashes have been stirred up there, to shed their poison over our names? It becomes us, in gratitude to a preserving Providence, in fidelity to that which is dearer to us than life—our fair fame—in regard to the welfare of our posterity, it becomes us to mark our reprobation of treason and rebellion, and to perpetuate in ignominy the name of the rebel and the traitor. Fill your glasses, then, gentlemen, and drink—drink deep with me—Our curse on the memory of Vincent Ogé!”

Several members of the company eagerly filled their glasses; others looked doubtfully towards the chair. Before Dr Protean seemed to have made up his mind what to do, Monsieur Papalier had risen, saying, in a rather low and conversational tone—

“My young friend will allow me to suggest to him the expediency of

withdrawing his toast, as one in which his fellow-citizens cannot all cordially join. We all unite, doubtless, in reprobating treason and rebellion in the person of Ogé; but I, for one, cannot think it good, either in taste or in policy, to curse the memory of the dead in the hearing of those who desire mercy for their fallen enemies (as some here present do), or of others who look upon Ogé as no criminal, but a martyr—which is, I fear, the case with too many outside.” He pointed to the windows as he spoke, where it now appeared that the jalousies had been pushed a little open, so as to allow opportunity for some observation from without. Monsieur Papalier lowered his tone, so as to be heard, during the rest of his speech, only by those who made every effort to catch his words. Not a syllable could be heard in the orchestra outside, or even by the waiters ranged against the wall; and the chairman and others at the extremities of the table were obliged to lean forwards to catch the meaning of the speaker, who proceeded—

“No one more heartily admires the spirit and good-humour of our friend, Monsieur Odeluc, than myself: no one more enjoys being animated by the hilarity of his temper, and carried away by the hopeful enthusiasm which makes him the dispenser of happiness that he is. But I cannot always sympathise in his bright anticipations. I own I cannot to-day. He may be right. God grant he be so! But I cannot take Monsieur Odeluc’s word for it, when words so different are spoken elsewhere. There are observers at a distance—impartial lookers-on, who predict (and I fear there are signs at home which indicate) that our position is far from secure—our prospects far other than serene. There are those who believe that we are in danger from other foes than the race of Ogé; and facts have arisen—but enough. This is not the time and place for discussion of that point. Suffice it now that, as we all know, observers at a distance can often see deeper and farther than those involved in affairs; and that Mirabeau has said—and what Mirabeau says is, at least, worth attention—Mirabeau has said of us, in connection with the events of last October, ‘They are sleeping on the margin of Vesuvius, and the first jets of the volcano are not sufficient to awaken them.’ In compliment to Mirabeau,” he concluded, smiling, and bowing to Monsieur Brelle, “if not in sympathy with what he may think my needless caution, I hope my young friend will reserve his wine for the next toast.”

Monsieur Brelle bowed, rather sulkily. No one seemed ready at the

moment to start a new subject. Some attacked Monsieur Papalier in whispers for what he had said; and he to defend himself, told, also in whispers, facts of the murder of a bailiff on an estate near his own, and of suspicious circumstances attending it, which made him and others apprehend that all was not right among the negroes. His facts and surmises went round. As, in the eagerness of conversation, a few words were occasionally spoken aloud, some of the party glanced about to see if the waiters were within earshot. They were not. There was not a negro in the apartment. The band had gone out unnoticed; to refresh themselves, no doubt.

Odeluc took the brief opportunity to state his confidence that all doubts of the fidelity of the negroes were groundless. He agreed with Monsieur Papalier that the present was not the time and place for entering at large into the subject. He would only just say that he was now an old man, that he had spent his life among the people alluded to, and knew them well, if any man did. They were revengeful, certainly, upon occasion, if harshly treated; but, otherwise, and if not corrupted by ignorant demagogues and designing agents, they were the most tractable and attached people on earth. He was confident that the masters in Saint Domingo had nothing to fear.

He was proceeding; but he perceived that the band was re-entering the orchestra, and he sat down abruptly.

The chairman now discovered that it had grown very dark, and called out for lights. His orders were echoed by several of the party, who hoped that the lights would revive some of the spirit of the evening, which had become very flat.

While waiting for lights, the jalousies were once more opened, by orders from the chair. The apartment was instantly pervaded by a dull, changeful, red light, derived from the sky, which glowed above the trees of the Jesuits' Walk with the reflection of extensive fires. The guests were rather startled, too, by perceiving that the piazza was crowded with heads; and that dusky faces, in countless number, were looking in upon them, and had probably been watching them for some time past. With the occasional puffs of wind, which brought the smell of burning, came a confused murmur, from a distance, as of voices, the tramp of many

horses in the sand, and a multitude of feet in the streets. This was immediately lost in louder sounds. The band struck up, unbidden, with all its power, the Marseillaise Hymn; and every voice in the piazza, and, by degrees, along the neighbouring streets and square, seemed to join in singing the familiar words—

“Allons enfants de la patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé.”

The consternation of the deputies and their guests was extreme. Every man showed his terror in his own way; but one act was universal. Each one produced arms of one sort or another. Even Odeluc, it appeared, had not come unarmed. While they were yet standing in groups about the table, the door burst open, and a negro, covered with dust and panting with haste, ran in and made for the head of the table, thrusting himself freely through the parties of gentlemen. The chairman, at sight of the man, turned pale, recoiled for a moment, and then, swearing a deep oath, drew the short sword he wore, and ran the negro through the body.

“Oh, master!” cried the poor creature, as his life ebbed out in the blood which inundated the floor.

The act was not seen by those outside, as there was a screen of persons standing between the tables and the windows. To this accident it was probably owing that the party survived that hour, and that any order was preserved in the town.

“Shame, Proteau! shame!” said Odeluc, as he bent down, and saw that the negro was dying. Papalier, Bayou, and a few more, cried “Shame!” also; while others applauded.

“I will defend my deed,” said Proteau, struggling with the hoarseness of his voice, and pouring out a glass of wine to clear his throat. His hand was none of the steadiest as he did so. “Hush that band! There is no hearing oneself speak. Hush! I say; stop!” and swearing, he passionately shook his fist at the musicians, who were still making the air of the Marseillaise peal through the room. They instantly stopped, and departed.

“There! you have sent them out to tell what you have done,” observed a

deputy.

“I will defend my deed,” Proteau repeated, when he had swallowed the wine, “I am confident the negroes have risen. I am confident the fellow came with bad intent.”

“No fear but the negroes will rise, anywhere in the world, where they have such as you for masters,” said Odeluc.

“What do you mean, sir?” cried Proteau, laying his hand on the hilt of his dripping sword.

“I mean what I say. And I will tell you, too, what I do not mean. I do not mean to fight to-night with any white: and least of all with one who is standing in a pool of innocent blood, of his own shedding.” And he pointed to Proteau’s feet, which were indeed soaked with the blood of his slave.

“Hush! hush! gentlemen!” cried several voices. “Here is more news!”

“Hide the body!” said Bayou, and as he spoke he stooped to lift it. Monsieur Brelle made shorter work. He rolled it over with his foot, and kicked it under the table. It was out of sight before the master of the hotel entered, followed by several negroes from the plain, to say that the “force” had risen on several plantations, had dismantled the mills, burned the sugar-houses, set fire to the crops, murdered the overseers, and, he feared, in some cases, the proprietors.

“Where?” “Whose estates?” “What proprietors?” asked every voice present.

“Where did it begin?” was the question the landlord applied himself first to answer.

“It broke out on the Noé estate, sir. They murdered the refiner and his apprentice, and carried off the surgeon. They left another young man for dead; but he got away, and told the people on the next plantation; but it was too late then. They had reached Monsieur Clement’s by that time, and raised his people. They say Monsieur Clement is killed; but some of his family escaped. They are here in the town, I believe.”

Some of the deputies now snatched their hats, and went out to learn where the fugitives were, and thus to get information, if possible, at first hand.

“All is safe in our quarter, at present, I trust,” said Papalier to Bayou; “but shall we be gone? Your horse is here, I suppose. We can ride together.”

“In a moment. Let us hear all we can first,” replied Bayou.

“Do you stay for that purpose, then, and look to our horses. I will learn what the Governor’s orders are, and come here for you presently.” And Papalier was gone.

When Bayou turned to listen again, Odeluc was saying—

“Impossible! incredible! Gallifet’s force risen! Not they? They would be firm if the world were crushed flat. Why, they love me as if I were their father!”

“Nevertheless, sir, you owe your safety to being my guest,” said the landlord, with a bow as polite as on the most festive occasion. “I am happy that my roof should—”

“Who brought this report?” cried Odeluc. “Who can give news of Gallifet’s negroes?” And he looked among the black faces which were clustered behind the landlord. No one spoke thence; but a voice from the piazza said—

“Gallifet’s force has risen. The canes are all on fire.”

“I will bring them to their senses,” said Odeluc, with sudden quietness. “I have power over them. The Governor will give me a handful of men from the town guard, and we shall set things straight before morning. The poor fellows have been carried away, while I was not there to stand by them— but making speeches here, like a holiday fool! I will bring them to their senses presently. Make way, friends—make way.”

And Odeluc stepped out among the blacks on the piazza, that being the shortest way to Government-House.



“I hope he is not too confident,” whispered a town deputy to a friend from the south. “But this is bad news. Gallifet’s plantation is the largest in the plain, and only eight miles off.”

A sort of scream, a cry of horror, from one who stood close by, stopped the deputy.

“Boirien! what is the matter?” cried a deputy, as Boirien hid his face with his arms upon the table, and a strong shudder shook his whole frame.

“Do not speak to him! I will tell you,” said another. “Oh, this is horrible! They have murdered his brother-in-law on Flaville’s estate, and carried off his sister and her three daughters into the woods. Something must be done directly. Boirien, my poor fellow, I am going to the Governor. Soldiers shall be sent to bring your sister into the town. We shall have her here before morning; and you must bring her and her family to my house.”

No one could endure to stay and hear more. Some went to learn elsewhere the fate of those in whom they were interested. Some went to offer their services to the Governor; some to barricade their own houses in the town; some to see whether it was yet possible to entrench their plantations. Some declared their intention of conveying the ladies of their families to the convent; the place always hitherto esteemed safe, amidst all commotions. It soon appeared, however, that this was not the opinion of the sisters themselves, on the present occasion, nor of the authorities of the town; for the muffled nuns were seen hurrying down to the quay, under the protection of soldiers, in order to take refuge on board the vessels in the bay. All night long, boats were plying in the harbour, conveying women, children, plate, and money, on board the ships which happened to be in the roads.

The landlord would have been glad of the help of any of his guests, in clearing his house; but they had no sympathy to spare—no time to think of his plate and wines. As the whites disappeared from the room, the blacks poured in. They allowed the landlord to sweep away his plate, but they laid hands on the wines; and many a smart speech, and many a light laugh, resounded within those walls till morning, while consternation reigned without. When these thoughtless creatures sauntered to their

several homes in the sunrise, they found that such of their fellow-servants as they had been accustomed to look up to, as abler and more trusted than themselves, had disappeared, and no one would tell whither they were gone—only that they were quite safe.

When Monsieur Papalier returned to the hotel, from his cruise for information, he found his neighbour Bayou impatiently waiting on horseback, while Henri, still in his white apron, was holding the other horse.

“Here, sir—mount, and let us be off,” cried Bayou. “We owe it to my friend Henri, here, that we have our horses. The gentlemen from the country very naturally took the first that came to hand to get home upon. They say Leroy is gone home on a dray-mule. I rather expect to meet Toussaint on the road. If he sees the fires, he will be coming to look after me.”

“He cannot well help seeing the fires,” replied Papalier. “They are climbing up the mountain-side, all the way along the Haut du Cap. We shall be singed like two porkers, if we do not ride like two devils; and then we shall be lucky if we do not meet two thousand devils by the way.”

“Do you suppose the road is safe, Henri?” asked Bayou. “I know you will tell me truth.”

“Indeed, master, I know nothing,” replied Henri. “You say you shall meet Toussaint. I will ride with you till you meet him, if you will. Our people all know him and me.”

“Do so, Henri. Do not wait to look for another horse. Jump up behind me. Mine is a strong beast, and will make no difficulty, even of your weight. Never mind your apron. Keep it for a flag of truce, in case we meet the enemy.”

They were off, and presently emerged from the comparative darkness of the streets into the light of the fires. None of the three spoke, except to urge on the horses up the steep, sandy road, which first presented an ascent from the town, and then a descent to the plain, before it assumed the level which it then preserved to the foot of the opposite mountains, nearly fifty miles off. No one appeared on the road; and the horsemen

had, therefore, leisure to cast glances behind them, as they were slowly carried up the ascent. The alarm-bell was now sending its sullen sounds of dismay far and wide in the air, whose stillness was becoming more and more disturbed by the draughts of the spreading fires, as the canes caught, like torches, up the slopes to the right. Pale twinkling lights, sprinkled over the cape and the harbour-lights which looked like glow-worm tapers amidst the fiery atmosphere, showed that every one was awake and stirring in the town, and on board the ships; while an occasional rocket, mounting in the smoky air, from either the Barracks or Government-House, showed that it was the intention of the authorities to intimate to the inhabitants of the remoter districts of the plain that the Government was on the alert, and providing for the public safety.

On surmounting the ridge, Henri stretched out his hand, and pulled the bridle of Monsieur Bayou's horse to the left, so as to turn it into a narrow, green track which here parted from the road.

"What now, sir?" cried Papalier, in a tone of suspicion, checking his horse, instead of following.

"You may, perhaps, meet two thousand devils, if you keep the high road to the plain," answered Henri, quietly. To Monsieur Bayou he explained that Toussaint would probably choose this road, through Madame Ogé's plantation.

"Come on, Papalier; do not lose time. All is right enough," said Bayou. "The grass-tracks are the safest to-night, depend upon it."

Papalier followed, in discontented silence. In a few moments, Henri again pulled the bridle—a decided check this time—stopping the horse.

"Voices," he whispered. Bayou could hear none. In a moment, Henri continued.

"It is Toussaint, I thought we should meet him hereabouts."

The next turn of the path brought them upon Toussaint, who was advancing with the led horse from Breda. Not far behind him was Madame Ogé's house, the door standing wide, and, seen by the light within, a woman in the doorway. Toussaint pulled up, Henri leaped down,

and ran to shake hands with his friend. Papalier took the opportunity to say, in a low voice, to Bayou—

“You must send your fellow there on board ship. You must, there is no doubt of it. The Governor, and all the householders in Cap, are doing so with their cleverest negroes; and if there is a clever one in the colony, it is Toussaint.”

“I shall do no such thing,” said Bayou. “I have trusted Toussaint for these thirty years; and I shall not distrust him now—now when we most need those we can best confide in.”

“That is exactly what Monsieur Clement said of his postillion; and it was his postillion that struck him to the heart. You must send Toussaint on board ship; and I will tell you how—”

Papalier stopped, perceiving that the two negroes were not talking, but had their eyes fixed on him.

“What is that?” said Henri. “Is Toussaint to go on board ship?”

“No, no; nonsense,” said Bayou; “I am not going to send anybody on board ship. All quiet at Breda, I suppose, Toussaint?”

“All quiet, sir, at present. Monsieur Papalier—on board ship I will not go.”

“As your master pleases. It is no concern of mine, Toussaint,” said Papalier.

“So I think,” replied Toussaint.

“You see your faithful hands, your very obedient friends, have got a will of their own already,” whispered Papalier to Bayou, as they set their horses forward again: Henri turning homewards on the tired horse which had carried double, and Bayou mounting that which Toussaint had brought.

“Will you go round, or pass the house?” Toussaint asked of his master. “Madame Ogé is standing in the doorway.”

Bayou was about to turn his horse’s head, but the person in the doorway

came out into the darkness, and called him by his name. He was obliged to go forward.

“Madame,” said he, “I hope you have no trouble with your people. I hope your people are all steady.”

“Never mind me and my people,” replied a tremulous voice. “What I want to know is, what has happened at Cap. Who have risen? Whose are these fires?”

“The negroes have risen on a few plantations: that is all. We shall soon —”

“The negroes!” echoed the voice. “You are sure it is only the negroes?”

“Only the negroes, madame. Can I be of service to you? If you have any reason to fear that your force—”

“I have no reason to fear anything. I will not detain you. No doubt you are wanted at home, Monsieur Bayou.”

And she re-entered her house, and closed the doors.

“How you have disappointed her!” said Papalier. “She hoped to hear that her race had risen, and were avenging her sons on us. I am thankful to-night,” he continued, after a pause, “that my little girls are at Paris. How glad might that poor woman have been, if her sons had stayed there! Strange enough, Paris is called the very centre of disorder, and yet it seems the only place for our sons and daughters in these days.”

“And strangely enough,” said Bayou, “I am glad that I have neither wife, son, nor daughter. I felt that, even while Odeluc, was holding forth about the age of security which we were now entering upon—I felt at the moment that there must be something wrong; that all could not be right, when a man feels glad that he has only himself to take care of. Our negroes are better off than we, so far. Hey, Toussaint?”

“I think so, sir.”

“How many wives and children have you, Toussaint?” asked Papalier.

“I have five children, sir.”

“And how many wives in your time?”

Toussaint made no answer. Bayou said for him—

“He has such a good wife that he never wanted more. He married her when he was five-and-twenty—did not you, Toussaint?”

Toussaint had dropped into the rear. His master observed that Toussaint was rather romantic, and did not like jesting on domestic affairs. He was more prudish about such matters than whites fresh from the mother-country. Whether he had got it out of his books, or whether it really was a romantic attachment to his wife, there was no knowing; but he was quite unlike his race generally in family matters.

“Does he take upon himself to be scandalised at us?” asked Papalier.

“I do not ask him. But if you like to consult him about your Thérèse, I do not doubt he will tell you his mind.”

“Come, cannot we go on faster? This is a horrid road, to be sure; but poor Thérèse will think it is all over with me, if she looks at the red sky towards Cap.”

There were reasons enough for alarm about Monsieur Papalier’s safety, without looking over towards Cap. When the gentlemen arrived at Arabie, his plantation, they found the iron gates down, and lying on the grass— young trees hewn down, as if for bludgeons—the cattle couched in the cane-fields, lapped in the luxury of the sweet tops and sprouts—the doors of the sugar-house and mansion removed, the windows standing wide, and no one to answer call. The slave-quarter also was evidently deserted.

Papalier clapped spurs to his horse, and rode round, faster than his companions could follow him. At length Bayou intercepted his path at a sharp turn, caught his bridle, and said—

“My dear fellow, come with me. There is nothing to be done here. Your people are all gone; and if they come back, they will only cut your throat.

You must come with me; and under the circumstances, I cannot stay longer. I ought to be at home.”

“True, true. Go, and I will follow. I must find out whether they have carried off Thérèse. I must, and I will.”

Toussaint pricked his horse into the courtyard, and after a searching look around dragged out from behind the well a young negress who had been crouching there, with an infant in her arms. She shrieked and struggled till she saw Papalier, when she rushed towards him.

“Poor Thérèse!” cried he, patting her shoulder. “How we have frightened you! There is nobody here but friends. At least, so it seems. Where are all the people? And who did this mischief?”

The young creature trembled excessively; and her terror marred for the time a beauty which was celebrated all over the district—a beauty which was admitted as fully by the whites as by people of her own race. Her features were now convulsed by fear, as she told what had happened—that a body of negroes had come, three hours since, and had summoned Papalier’s people to meet at Latour’s estate, where all the force of the plain was to unite before morning—that Papalier’s people made no difficulty about going, only stopping to search the house for what arms and ammunition might be there, and to do the mischief which now appeared—that she believed the whites at the sugar-house must have escaped, as she had seen and heard nothing of bloodshed—and that this was all she knew, as she had hidden herself and her infant, first in one place, and then in another, as she fancied safest, hoping that nobody would remember her, which seemed to have been the case, as no one molested her till Toussaint saw her, and terrified her as they perceived. She had not looked in his face, but supposed that some of Latour’s people had come back for her.

“Now you will come with me,” said Bayou to Papalier, impatiently.

“I will, thank you. Toussaint, help her up behind me, and carry the child, will you? Hold fast, Thérèse, and leave off trembling as soon as you can.”

Thérèse would let no one carry the infant but herself. She kept her seat well behind her master, though still trembling when she alighted at the

stables at Breda.

Placide and Denis were on the watch at the stables.

“Run, Denis!” said his brother. And Denis was off to tell his mother that Toussaint and Monsieur Bayou were safe home.

“Anything happened, Placide?” asked Bayou.

“Yes, sir. The people were sent for to Latour’s, and most of them are gone. Not all, sir. Saxe would not go till he saw father; nor Cassius, nor Antoine, nor—”

“Is there any mischief done? Anybody hurt?”

“No, sir. They went off very quietly.”

“Quietly, indeed! They take quietly enough all the kindness I have shown them these thirty years. They quietly take the opportunity of leaving me alone to-night, of all nights, when the devils from hell are abroad, scattering their fire as they go.”

“If you will enter, Monsieur Bayou,” said Toussaint, “my wife will get you supper; and the boys and I will collect the people that are left, and bring them up to the house. They have not touched your arms, sir. If you will have them ready for us—”

“Good, good! Papalier, we cannot do better. Come in. Toussaint, take home this young woman. Your girls will take care of her. Eh! what’s the matter? Well, put her where you will—only let her be taken care of—that is all.”

“I will speak to Jeannette, sir.”

“Ay, do. Jeannette will let Thérèse come to no harm, Papalier. Come in, till Toussaint brings a report of how matters stand with us poor masters.”





## Chapter Three.

### What to do!

The report brought by Toussaint was astounding to his hearers, even after the preparation afforded by the events of the evening. It was clear that the negroes had everything in their own hand, and that the spirit roused in them was so fierce, so revengeful, as to leave no hope that they would use their power with moderation. The Breda estate, and every one near it, was to be ravaged when those on the north side of the plain were completely destroyed. The force assembled at Latour's already amounted to four thousand; and no assistance could be looked for from the towns at all adequate to meet such numbers, since the persons and property of the whites, hourly accumulating in the towns as the insurrection spread, required more than all the means of protection that the colony afforded. The two gentlemen agreed, as they sat at the table covered with supper, wine, and glittering arms, that to remain was to risk their lives with no good object. It was clear that they must fly.

Toussaint suggested that a quantity of sugar from the Breda estate was now at Port Paix, lying ready for shipment. There was certainly one vessel, if not more, in that port, belonging to the United States. If the gentlemen would risk the ride to the coast with him, he thought he could put them on board, and they might take with them this sugar, intended for France, but now wanted for their subsistence in their exile. Bayou saw at once that this was the best plan he could adopt. Papalier was unwilling to turn his back so soon, and so completely, on his property. Bayou was only attorney to the Breda estate, and had no one but himself to care for. Papalier was a proprietor, and he could not give up at once, and for ever, the lands which his daughters should inherit after him. He could not instantly decide upon this. He would wait some hours at least. He thought he could contrive to get into some town, or into the Spanish territory, though he might be compelled to leave the plain. He slept for this night with his arms at hand, and under the watch of Placide, who might be trusted to keep awake and listen, as his father vouched for him. Bayou was gone presently; with such little money as he happened to have in the house; and in his pockets, the gold ornaments which Toussaint's wife

insisted on his accepting, and which were not to be despised in this day of his adversity. He was sorry to take her necklace and ear-rings, which were really valuable; but she said, truly, that he had been a kind master for many years, and ought to command what they had, now that they were all in trouble together.

Before the next noon, Monsieur Bayou was on board the American vessel in the harbour of Port Paix, weary and sad, but safe, with his sugar, and pocketsful of cash and gold trinkets. Before evening, Toussaint, who rode like the wind, and seemed incapable of fatigue, was cooling himself under a tamarind-tree, in a nook of the Breda estate.

He was not there to rest himself, while the world seemed to be falling into chaos around him. He was there for the duty of the hour—to meet by appointment the leader of the insurgents, Jean Français, whom, till now, he had always supposed to be his friend, as far as their intercourse went, though Jean had never been so dear to him as Henri. He had not sat long, listening for sounds of approach amidst the clatter of the neighbouring palm-tree tops, whose stiff leaves struck one another as they waved in the wind, when Jean appeared from behind the mill.

“You have stopped our wheel,” said Toussaint, pointing to the reeking water-mill. “It will be cracked in the sun before you can set it going again.”

“Yes, we have stopped all the mills,” replied Jean. “Every stream in the colony has a holiday to-day, and may frolic as it likes. I am afraid I made you wait supper last night?”

“You gave me poison, Jean. You have poisoned my trust in my friends. I watched for you as for a friend; and what were you doing the while? You were rebelling, ravaging, and murdering!”

“Go on,” said Jean. “Tell me how it appears to you; and then I will tell you how it appears to me.”

“It appears to me, then, that if the whites are to blame towards those who are in their power—if they have been cruel to the Ogés, and their party—if they have oppressed their negroes, as they too often have, our duty is clear—to bear and forbear, to do them good in return for their evil. To rise against them cunningly, to burn their plantations, and murder them—to

do this is to throw back the gospel in the face of Him who gave it!"

"But you do not understand this rising. It is not for revenge."

"Why do I not understand it. Because you knew that I should disapprove it, and kept me at home by a false appointment, that I might be out of the way. Do you say all this is not for revenge? I look at the hell you have made of this colony between night and morning, and I say that if this be not from revenge, there must be something viler than revenge in the hearts of devils and of men."

"And now, hear me," said Jean, "for I am wanted at Latour's, and my time is short. It was no false appointment last night. I was on my way to you, when I was stopped by some news which altered our plans in a moment, and made us rise sooner, by three days, than we expected. I was coming to tell you all, and engage you to be one of our chiefs. Have you heard that the *Calypso* has put into port at the other end of the island?"

"No."

"Then you do not know the news she brought. She has a royalist master, who is in no hurry to tell his news to the revolutionary whites. The king and all his family tried to escape from France in June. They were overtaken on the road, and brought back prisoners to Paris."

Toussaint, who always uncovered his head at the name of the king, now bent it low in genuine grief.

"Is it not true," said Jean, "that our masters are traitors? Do they not insult and defy the king? Would there not have been one shout of joy through all Cap last night, if this news had been brought to the deputies after dinner with their wine?"

"It is true. But they would still have been less guilty than those who add ravage and murder to rebellion."

"There was no stopping the people when the messengers from the *Calypso* crossed the frontier, and sent the cry, 'Vive le Roi! et l'ancien régime,' through the negro quarters of every estate they reached. The people were up on the Noé plantation at the word. Upon my honour, the

glare of the fire was the first I knew about it. Then the spirit spread among our people, like the flames among our masters' canes. I like murder no better than you, Toussaint; but when once slaves are up, with knife and firebrand, those may keep revenge from kindling who can—I cannot.”

“At least, you need not join—you can oppose yourself to it.”

“I have not joined. I have saved three or four whites this day by giving them warning. I have hidden a family in the woods, and I will die before I will tell where they are. I did what I could to persuade Gallifet's people to let Odeluc and his soldiers turn back to Cap: and I believe they would, but for Odeluc's obstinacy in coming among us. If he would have kept his distance, he might have been alive now. As it is—”

“And is he dead?—the good Odeluc?”

“There he lies; and half-a-dozen of the soldiers with him. I am sorry, for he always thought well of us; but he thrust himself into the danger. One reason of my coming here now is to say that this plantation and Arabie will be attacked to-night, and Bayou had better roost in a tree till morning.”

“My master is safe.”

“Safe? Where?”

“On the sea.”

“You have saved him. Have you—I know your love of obedience is strong—have you pledged yourself to our masters, to oppose the rising—to fight on their side?”

“I give no pledges but to my conscience. And I have no party where both are wrong. The whites are revengeful, and rebel against their king; and the blacks are revengeful, and rebel against their masters.”

“Did you hear anything on the coast of the arrival of the *Blonde* frigate from Jamaica?”

“Yes; there again is more treason. The whites at Cap have implored the English to take possession of the colony. First traitors to the king, they would now join the enemies of their country. Fear not, Jean, that I would defend the treason of such; but I would not murder them.”

“What do you mean to do? this very night your estate will be attacked. Your family is almost the only one remaining on it. Have you thought what you will do?”

“I have; and your news only confirms my thought.”

“You will not attempt to defend the plantation?”

“What would my single arm do? It would provoke revenge which might otherwise sleep.”

“True. Let the estate be deserted, and the gates and doors left wide, and no mischief may be done. Will you join us then?”

“Join you! no! Not till your loyalty is free from stain. Not while you fight for your king with a cruelty from which your king would recoil.”

“You will wait,” said Jean, sarcastically, “till we have conquered the colony for the king. That done you will avow your loyalty.”

“Such is not my purpose, Jean,” replied Toussaint, quietly. “You have called me your friend; but you understand me no more than if I were your enemy. I will help to conquer the colony for the king; but it shall be to restore to him its lands as the King of kings gave them to him—not ravaged and soaked in blood, but redeemed with care, to be made fair and fruitful, as held in trust for him. I shall join the Spaniards, and fight for my king with my king’s allies.”

Jean was silent, evidently struck with the thought. If he had been troubled with speculations as to what he should do with his undisciplined, half-savage forces, after the whites should have been driven to entrench themselves in the towns, it is possible that this idea of crossing the Spanish line, and putting himself and his people under the command of these allies, might be a welcome relief to his perplexity.

“And your family,” said he: “will the Spaniards receive our women and children into their camp?”

“I shall not ask them. I have a refuge in view for my family.”

“When will you go?”

“When you leave me. You will find the estate deserted this night, as you wish. The few negroes who are here will doubtless go with me; and we shall have crossed the river before morning.”

“You would not object,” said Jean, “to be joined on the road by some of our negro force; on my pledge, you understand, that they will not ravage the country.”

“Some too good for your present command?” said Toussaint, smiling. “I will command them on one other condition—that they will treat well any white who may happen to be with me.”

“I said nothing about your commanding them,” said Jean. “If I send men I shall send officers. But whites! what whites? Did you not say Bayou was on the sea?”

“I did; but there may be other whites whom I choose to protect, as you say you are doing. If, instead of hiding whites in the woods, I carry them across the frontier, what treatment may I expect for my party on the road?”

“I will go with you myself, and that is promising everything,” said Jean, making a virtue of what was before a strong inclination. “Set out in two hours from this time. I will put the command of the plain into Biasson’s hands, and make a camp near the Spanish lines. The posts in that direction are weak, and the whites panic-struck, if indeed they have not all fled to the fort. Well, well,” he continued, “keep to your time, and I will join you at the cross of the four roads, three miles south of Fort Dauphin. All will be safe that far, at least.”

“If not, we have some strong arms among us,” replied Toussaint. “I believe my girls (or one of them at least) would bear arms where my honour is at stake. So our king is a prisoner! and we are free! Such are

the changes which Heaven sends!”

“Ay, how do you feel, now you are free?” said Jean. “Did you not put your horse to a gallop when you turned your back on your old master?”

“Not a word of that, Jean. Let us not think of ourselves. There is work to do for our king. He is our task-master now.”

“You are in a hurry for another master,” said Jean. “I am not tired of being my own master yet.”

“I wish you would make your people masters of themselves, Jean. They are not fit for power. Heaven take it from us, by putting all power into the hand of the king!”

“We meet by starlight,” said Jean. “I have the business of five thousand men to arrange first; so, more of the king another time.”

He leaped the nearest fence and was gone. Toussaint rose and walked away, with a countenance so serious, that Margot asked if there was bad news of Monsieur Bayou.

When the family understood that the Breda estate was to be attacked this night, there was no need to hasten their preparations for departure. In the midst of the hurry, Aimée consulted Isaac about an enterprise which had occurred to her, on her father’s behalf; and the result was, that they ventured up to the house, and as far as Monsieur Bayou’s book-shelves, to bring away the volumes they had been accustomed to see their father read. This thought entered Aimée’s mind when she saw him, busy as he was, carefully pocket the Epictetus he had been reading the night before. Monsieur Papalier was reading, while Thérèse was making packages of comforts for him. He observed the boy and girl, and when he found that the books they took were for their father, he muttered over the volume he held—

“Bayou was a fool to allow it. I always told him so. When our negroes get to read like so many gentlemen, no wonder the world is turned upside down.”

“Do your negroes read, Monsieur Papalier?” asked Isaac.

“No, indeed! not one of them.”

“Where are they all, then?”

Aimée put in her word.

“Why do they not take care of you, as father did of Monsieur Bayou?”

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## Chapter Four.

### Whither Away?

Monsieur Papalier did not much relish the idea of roosting in a tree for the night; especially as, on coming down in the morning, there would be no friend or helper near, to care for or minister to him. Habitually and thoroughly as he despised the negroes, he preferred travelling in their company to hiding among the monkeys; and he therefore decided at once to do as Toussaint concluded he would—accompany him to the Spanish frontier.

The river Massacre, the boundary at the north between the French and Spanish portions of the island, was about thirty miles distant from Breda. These thirty miles must be traversed between sunset and sunrise. Three or four horses, and two mules which were left on the plantation, were sufficient for the conveyance of the women, boys, and girls; and Placide ran, of his own accord, to Monsieur Papalier's deserted stables, and brought thence a saddled horse for the gentleman, who was less able than the women to walk thirty miles in the course of a tropical summer's night.

“What will your Spanish friends think of our bringing so many women and children to their post?” said Papalier to Toussaint, as soon as they were on their way. “They will not think you worth having, with all the incumbrances you carry.”

“I shall carry none,” said Toussaint.

“What do you mean to do with your wife and children?”



“I shall put them in a safe place by the way. For your own sake, Monsieur Papalier, I must ask you what you mean to do in the Spanish post—republican as you are. You know the Spaniards are allies of the king of France.”

“They are allies of France, and will doubtless receive any honourable French gentleman,” said Papalier confidently, though Toussaint’s question only echoed a doubt which he had already spoken to himself. “You are acting so like a friend to me here, Toussaint, that I cannot suppose you will do me mischief there, by any idle tales about the past.”

“I will not; but I hear that the Marquis d’Hermona knows the politics of every gentleman in the colony. If there have been any tales abroad of speeches of yours against the king, or threats, or acts of rebellion, the Marquis d’Hermona knows them all.”

“I have taken less part in politics than most of my neighbours; and Hermona knows that, if he knows the rest. But what shall I do with Thérèse, if your women stop short on the way? Could you make room for her with them?”

“Not with them, but—”

“My good fellow, this is no time for fancies. I am sorry to see you set your girls above their condition and their neighbours. There is no harm about poor Thérèse. Indeed, she is very well educated; I have had her well taught; and they might learn many things from her, if you really wish them to be superior. She is not a bit the worse for being a favourite of mine; and it will be their turn soon to be somebody’s favourites, you know. And that before long, depend upon it,” he continued, turning on his saddle to look for Génifrède and Aimée. “They are fine girls,—very fine girls for their age.”

When he turned again, Toussaint was no longer beside his horse. He was at the head of the march.

“What a sulky fellow he is!” muttered the planter, with a smile. “The airs of these people are curious enough. They take upon them to despise Thérèse, who has more beauty than all his tribe, and almost as much education as the learned Toussaint himself.”

He called to the sulky fellow, however, and the sulky fellow came. What Papalier wanted to say was—

“You seem to know more of these Spaniards than I. What will become of Thérèse, if I take her among them; which, you see, you oblige me to do?”

“I proposed to her,” said Toussaint, “to leave her with some of our people near Fort Dauphin.”

“Fort Égalité, you mean. That is its present name, you know. So you asked her! Why did you not speak to me about it? It is my affair, not hers.”

“I thought it her affair. She will not remain behind, however. She begged me to say nothing to you about her leaving you.”

“Indeed! I will soon settle that.” And the planter immediately overtook the horse on which sat Thérèse, with her infant on her arm. Thérèse smiled as she saw him coming; but the first few words he said to her covered her face with tears. Blinded by these tears, she guided her horse among the tough aloes which grew along the border of the bridle-path, and the animal stumbled, nearly jerking the infant from her arms. Her master let her get over the difficulty as she might, while he rode on in the midst of the green track.

Placide disdained to ride. He strode along, singing in a low voice, with a package on his shoulders, and his path marked by the fireflies, which new round his head, or settled on his woollen cap. Isaac had made Aimée happy by getting on her mule. Génifrède heard from the direction in which they were, sometimes smothered laughter, but, for the most part, a never-ending, low murmur of voices, as if they were telling one another interminable stories. Génifrède never could make out what Isaac and Aimée could be for ever talking about. She wondered that they could talk now, when every monkey-voice from the wood, every click of a frog from the ponds, every buzz of insects from the citron-hedge, struck fear into her. She did not ask Placide to walk beside her horse; but she kept near that on which her mother rode, behind Denis, who held a cart-whip, which he was forbidden to crack—an accomplishment which he had learned from the driver of the plantation.

It soon became clear that Jean had made active use of the hours since he parted from Toussaint. He must have sent messengers in many directions; for, from beneath the shadow of every cacao grove, from under the branches of many a clump of bamboos, from the recess of a ravine here—from the mouth of a green road there, beside the brawling brook, or from their couch among the canes, appeared negroes, singly or in groups, ready to join the travelling party. Among all these, there were no women and children. They had been safely bestowed somewhere; and these men now regarded themselves as soldiers, going to the camp of the allies, to serve against their old masters on behalf of the king. “Vive le Roi, et l’ancien régime!” was the word as each detachment joined—a word most irritating to Papalier, who thought to himself many times during this night, that he would have put all to hazard on his own estate, rather than have undertaken this march, if he had known that he was to be one of a company of negroes, gathering like the tempest in its progress, and uttering at every turning, as if in mockery of himself, “Vive le Roi, et l’ancien régime!” He grew *very* cross, while quite sensible of the necessity of appearing in a good mood to every one—except, indeed, poor Thérèse.

“We are free—this is freedom!” said Toussaint more than once as he laid his hand on the bridle of his wife’s horse, and seemed incapable, of uttering any other words. He looked up at the towering trees, as if measuring with his eye the columnar palms, which appeared to those in their shade as if crowned with stars. He glanced into the forest with an eye which, to Margot, appeared as if it could pierce through darkness itself. He raised his face in the direction of the central mountain-peaks, round which the white lightning was exploding from moment to moment; and Margot saw that tears were streaming on his face—the first tears she had known him shed for years. “We are free—this is freedom!” he repeated, as he took off his cap; “but, thank God! we have the king for our master now.”

“You will come and see us,” said she. “We shall see you sometimes while you are serving the king.”

“Yes.” He was called away by another accession of numbers, a party of four who ran down among them from a mountain path. Toussaint brushed away his unwonted tears, and went forward, hearing a well-known voice

inquire for Toussaint Breda.

“Here I am, Jacques!” he exclaimed in some surprise, as he addressed himself to a short, stout-built young negro. “You are the first townsman among us, Jacques. Where is old Dessalines?”

“Here is my master,” said Jacques.

“Not the better for being a master,” said the old tiler, who was himself a negro. “I found myself no safer than Jacques in the town; so I came away with him, and we have been among the rocks all day, tired enough.”

“Have not you a horse for him?” asked Jacques. Toussaint stepped back, to desire Aimée and Isaac to give up their mule to Dessalines; but before it was done, Dessalines was mounted on Papalier’s horse. Jacques had told Papalier, on finding that he had not been walking at all, that his horse was wanted, and Papalier had felt all the danger of refusing to yield it up. He was walking moodily by the side of Thérèse, when Toussaint offered him the mule, which he haughtily declined.

When Dessalines was mounted, Jacques came running forward to Toussaint, to ask and to tell much concerning their singular circumstances.

“Your party is too noisy,” said he. “The whole country is up; and I saw, not far-off, two hours ago, a party that were bringing ammunition from Cap. There may be more; and, if we fall in their way, with a white in company —”

“True, true.” And Toussaint turned back to command silence. He told every one that the safety of all might depend on the utmost possible degree of quietness being observed. He separated Isaac from Aimée, as the only way of obtaining silence from them, and warned the merry blacks in the rear that they must be still as death. He and Jacques, however, exchanged a few more words in a low whisper, as they kept in advance of the party.

“How do they get ammunition from Cap?” asked Toussaint. “Have they a party in the town? I thought the town negroes had been sent on board ship.”

“The suspected ones are. They are the silly and the harmless who have still wit and mischief enough to give out powder and ball slyly for the plantation negroes. Once over the river, what will you do with your party?”

“My wife and children will be safe with my brother Paul—you know he fishes on the coast, opposite the Seven Brothers. I shall enter the Spanish ranks; and every one else here will do as he thinks proper.”

“Do not you call yourself a commander, then! Why do you not call us your regiment, and take the command as a matter of course, as Jean has done?”

“If it is desired, I am ready. Hark!”

There was evidently a party at some distance, numerous and somewhat noisy, and on the approach from behind. Toussaint halted his party, quickly whispered his directions, and withdrew them with all speed and quietness within the black shade of a cacao-plantation, on the left of the road. They had to climb an ascent; but there they found a green recess, so canopied with interwoven branches that no light could enter from the stars, and so hedged in by the cacao plants, growing twelve feet high among the trees, that the party could hardly have been seen from the road in broad daylight. There they stood crowded together in utter darkness and stillness, unless, as Génifrède feared, the beating of her heart might be heard above the hum of the mosquito, or the occasional rustle of the foliage.

The approaching troop came on, tramping, and sometimes singing and shouting. Those in the covert knew not whether most to dread a shouting which should agitate their horses, or a silence which might betray a movement on their part. This last seemed the most probable. The noise subsided; and when the troop was close at hand, only a stray voice or two was singing. They had with them two or three trucks, drawn by men, on which were piled barrels of ammunition. They were now very near. Whether it was that Thérèse, in fear of her infant crying, pressed it so close to her bosom as to awaken it, or whether the rumbling and tramping along the road roused its sleeping ear—the child stirred, and began what promised to be a long shrill wawl, if it had not been stopped. How it was stopped, the trembling, sickening mother herself did not know.

She only knew that a strong hand wrenched the child from her grasp in the black darkness, and that all was still, unless, as she then and ever after had a shuddering apprehension, there was something of a slight gurgle which reached her strained ear. Her own involuntary moan was stopped almost before it became a sound—stopped by a tap on the shoulder, whose authoritative touch she well knew.

No one else stirred for long after the troop had passed. Then Toussaint led his wife's horse down into the road again, and the party resumed their march as if nothing had happened.

"My child!" said Thérèse, fearfully. "Give me my child!" She looked about, and saw that no one seemed to have the infant.

"I will not let it cry," she said. "Give me back my child!"

"What is it?" asked Papalier, coming beside her horse. She told her grief, as she prepared to spring down.

"No, keep your seat! Don't get down," said he, in a tone she dared not disobey. "I will inquire for the child."

He went away, and returned—without it. "This is a sad thing," said he, leading her horse forward with the rest. "No one knows anything about the poor thing. Why did you let it go?"

"Have you asked them all? Who snatched it from me? Oh, ask who took it! Let me look for it. I will—I will—"

"It is too late now. We cannot stop or turn back. These sad accidents will happen at such times."

"Leave me behind—oh, leave me in the wood! I can follow when I have found it. Leave me behind!"

"I cannot spare you, my dear. I should never see you again; and I cannot spare you. It is sad enough to have lost the child."

"It was your child," said she, pleadingly.

“And you are mine too, my dear. I cannot spare you both.”

Thérèse had never felt before. All that had moved her during her yet short life—all emotions in one were nothing to the passion of this moment—the conditional hatred that swelled her soul; conditional—for, from moment to moment, she believed and disbelieved that Papalier had destroyed her child. The thought sometimes occurred that he was not the only cruel one. No one seemed to pity or care for her—not even Margot or the girls came near her. She more than once was about to seek and appeal to them; but her master held her bridle, and would not permit her to stop or turn, saying occasionally that the lives of all depended on perfect quiet and order in the march. When they arrived at the cross, at the junction of the four roads, they halted, and there she told her story, and was convinced that the grieved women knew nothing of her loss till that moment. It was too late now for anything but compassion.

Jean Français soon appeared with a troop so numerous, that all necessity for caution and quiet was over. They could hardly meet an equal force during the remainder of the march, and might safely make the forests and ravines echo to their progress. Jean took off his cocked hat in saluting Toussaint, and commended his punctuality and his arrangements.

“Jean always admires what my husband does,” observed Margot to her acquaintance Jacques. “You hear how he is praising him for what he has done to-night.”

“To be sure. Everybody praises Toussaint Breda,” replied Jacques.

The wife laughed with delight.

“Everybody praises him but me,” pursued Jacques. “I find fault with him sometimes; and to-night particularly.”

“Then you are wrong, Jacques. You know you have everybody against you.”

“Time will show that I am right. Time will show the mischief of sending away any whites to do us harm in far countries.”

“Oh, you do not blame him for helping away Monsieur Bayou!”

“Yes, I do.”

“Why, we have been under him ever since we were children—and a kind youth he was then. And he taught my husband to read, and made him his coachman; and then he made him overseer; and he has always indulged the children, and always bought my young guinea-fowl, and—”

“I know that. All that will not prevent the mischief of helping him away. Toussaint ought to have seen that if we send our masters to all the four sides of the world, they will bring the world down upon us.”

“Perhaps Toussaint did see it,” said the man himself, from the other side of his wife’s horse. “But he saw another thing, too—that any whites who stayed would be murdered.”

“That is true enough; and murdered they ought to be. They are a race of tyrants and rebels that our warm island hates.”

“Nobody hated Monsieur Bayou,” said Margot.

“Yes, I did. Every one who loves the blacks hates the whites.”

“I think not,” said Toussaint. “At least, it is not so with Him who made them both. He is pleased with mercy, Jacques, and not with murder.”

Jacques laughed, and muttered something about the priests having been brought in by the whites for a convenience; to which Toussaint merely replied that it was not a priest, nor an ally of white masters, who forgave His enemies on the cross.

“Father,” said Placide, joining the group, “why is Jean commanding your march? He speaks to you as if you were under him.”

“Because he considers it his march.”

“He praised your father—very much, Placide,” said his mother.

“Yes—just as if my father were under him—as if the march were not ours.



We began it.”

“I command those who began it—that is, my own family, Placide. I command you to obey Jean, while you are with him. On the other side the river, you shall be commander, all the way to your uncle’s house. You will follow his lead, Margot?”

“Oh, yes, if he leads straight. Jean is a commander, Placide. Look at his cocked hat.”

“And he calls himself commander-in-chief of the armies of France.”

“In Saint Domingo. Well, so he is,” said Toussaint, smiling, and pointing to the troop. “Here are the armies of the King of France in Saint Domingo; and here Jean commands.”

At this moment, Jean made proclamation for Toussaint Breda; and Toussaint joined him, leaving his wife saying, “You see he wants my husband at every turn. I am sure he thinks a great deal of my husband.”

“Toussaint,” said Jean, “I shall introduce you to the Marquis d’Hermona; and I have no doubt he will give you a command.”

“I shall introduce myself to him, Jean.”

“But he will be expecting you. He will receive you according to my report—as a man of ability, and a most valuable officer. I sent messengers forward to tell him of my approach with reinforcements; and I gave a prodigious report of you.”

“Still I shall speak for myself, Jean.”

“What I now have to ask of you is, that you will dress like an officer—like me. The uniform is, on the whole, of no great consequence at this season, when the whites wear all the linen, and as little cloth as they can. But the hat. Toussaint—the hat! You will not show yourself to the Marquis d’Hermona in a cap! For my sake, do not show yourself till you have procured a cocked hat.”

“Where did you get yours, Jean?”

Jean could only say that it was from one who would never want it again.

“We will go as we are,” said Toussaint. “You look like a commander, as you are—and I look what I am, Toussaint Breda.”

“But he will not believe what I shall say of you, if he sees a mere common negro.”

“Then let him disbelieve, till I have shown what I am. We shall find daylight on the other side this ridge.”

They had been for some time ascending the ridge which lies north and south between Fort Dauphin and the river Massacre, the Spanish boundary. In the covert of the woods which clothed the slope all was yet darkness; but when the travellers could catch a glimpse upwards through the interwoven branches, they saw that the stars were growing pale, and that the heavens were filling with a yellower light. On emerging from the woods on the summit of the ridge, they found that morning was indeed come, though the sun was not yet visible. There was a halt, as if the troops now facing the east would wait for his appearance. To the left, where the ridge sank down into the sea, lay Mancenillo Bay, whose dark grey waters, smooth as glass, as they rolled in upon the shore, began to show lines of light along their swell. A dim sail or two, small and motionless, told that the fishermen were abroad. From this bay, the river Massacre led the eye along the plain which lay under the feet of the troops, and between this ridge and another, darkly wooded, which bounded the valley to the east; while to the south-east, the view was closed in by the mass of peaks of the Cibao group of mountains. At the first moment, these peaks, rising eight thousand feet from the plain, appeared hard, cold, and grey, between the white clouds that encumbered their middle height and the kindling sky. But from moment to moment their aspect softened. The grey melted into lilac, yellow, and a faint blushing red, till the start, barren crags appeared bathed in the hues of the soft yielding clouds which opened to let forth the sun. The mists were then seen to be stirring,—rising, curling, sailing, rolling, as if the breezes were imprisoned among them, and struggling to come forth. The breezes came, and, as it seemed, from those peaks. The woods bent before them at one sweep. The banyan-tree, a grove in itself, trembled through all its leafy columns, and shook off its dews in a wide circle, like

the return shower of a playing fountain. Myriads of palms which covered the uplands, till now still as a sleeping host beneath the stars, bowed their plumed heads as the winds went forth, and shook off dews and slumber from the gorgeous parasitic beauties which they sustained. With the first ray that the sun levelled among the woods, these matted creepers shook their flowery festoons, their twined, green ropes, studded with opening blossoms and bells, more gay than the burnished insects and gorgeous birds which flitted among their tangles. In the plain, the river no longer glimmered grey through the mists, but glittered golden among the meadows, upon which the wild cattle were descending from the clefts of the hills. Back to the north the river led the eye, past the cluster of hunters' huts on the margin,—past the post where the Spanish flag was flying, and whence the early drum was sounding—past a slope of arrowy ferns here, a grove of lofty cocoa-nut trees there, once more to the bay, now diamond-strewn, and rocking on its bosom the boats, whose sails were now specks of light in contrast with the black islets of the Seven Brothers, which caught the eye as if just risen from the sea.

“No windmills here! No cattle-mills!” the negroes were heard saying to one another. “No canes, no sugar-houses, no teams, no overseers' houses, no overseers! By God, it is a fine place, this! So we are going down there to be soldiers to the king! those cattle are wild, and yonder are the hunters going out! By God, it is a fine place!”

In somewhat different ways, every one present, but Papalier and Thérèse, was indulging the same mood of thought. There was a wildness in the scene which made the heart beat high with the sense of freedom. For some the emotion seemed too strong. Toussaint pointed out to his boys the path on the other side of the river which would lead them to the point of the shore nearest to Paul's hut, instructed them how to find or make a habitation for their mother and sisters till he could visit them, gave his wife a letter to his brother, and, except to bid his family a brief farewell for a brief time, spoke no more till he reached the Spanish post, and inquired for the General.

Jean stepped before him into the general's presence, taking possession of the centre of the green space before the tent, where the Marquis d'Hermona was enjoying the coolness of the morning. After having duly declared his own importance, and announced the accession of numbers

he was likely to bring, Jean proceeded to extol Toussaint as one of the valuables he had brought. After apologising for his friend's want of a cocked hat, he proceeded to exhibit his learning, declaring that he had studied "Plutarch," "Caesar's Commentaries," "Epictetus," "Marshal Saxe's Military Reveries—"

Here he was stopped by the grasp of Toussaint's hand upon his arm. Toussaint told the General that he came alone, without chief and without followers: the few men who had left Breda with him having ranged themselves with the force of Jean Français. He came alone to offer the strength of his arm, on behalf of his king, to the allies of royalist France.

The Spanish soldiers, who glittered all around in their arms and bright uniform, looked upon the somewhat gaunt negro in his plantation dress, dusty with travel, and his woollen cap in hand, and thought, probably, that the king of France would not be much aided by such an ally. It is probable; for a smile went round, in which Jean joined. It is probable that the Marquis d'Hermona thought differently, for he said—

"The strength of your arm! Good! And the strength of your head, too, I hope. We get more arms than heads from your side of the frontier. Is it true that you have studied the art of war?"

"I have studied it in books."

"Very well. We want officers for our black troops—all we can raise in the present crisis. You will have the rank of colonel in a regiment to be immediately organised. Are you content?"

Toussaint signified his assent, and orders were given for a tent to be prepared for his present repose. He looked around, as if for some one whom he did not see. On being asked, he said that if there was at the post a priest who spoke French, he could wish to converse with him.

"Laxabon understands French, I think," said the marquis to a gentleman of his staff. The aide assented.

"Your excellent desire shall be gratified," said the General. "I doubt not Father Laxabon will presently visit you in your tent."

Father Laxabon had heard rumours of the horrors perpetrated in the French colony within the last two nights. On being told that his attendance was equally desired by a fugitive negro, he recoiled for a moment from what he might have to hear.

When he entered the tent, he found Toussaint alone, on the ground, his bosom bursting with deep and thick-coming sobs, "How is this, my son?" said the priest. "Is this grief, or is it penitence?"

"I am free," said Toussaint, "and I am an oppression to myself. I did not seek freedom. I was at ease, and did not desire it, seeing how men abuse their freedom."

"You must not, then, abuse your freedom, my son," said the priest, wholly relieved.

"How shall I appear before God—I who have ever been guided, and who know not whether I can guide myself—my master gone—my employment gone—and I, by his will, a free man, but unprepared, unfit?—Receive my confession, father, and guide me from this time."

"Willingly, my son. He who has appointed a new lot to you will enable me to guide you in it."

The tent was closed; and Toussaint kneeled to relieve his full heart from its new sense of freedom, by subjecting himself to a task-master of the soul.

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## **Chapter Five.**

### **Griefs of the Loyal.**

Margot doubted much, at the end of the first week, and at the end of every following week, whether she liked freedom. Margot had had few cares during the many years that she had lived under the mild rule of Monsieur Bayou—her husband faithful and kind, and her children provided for without present anxiety on her part. Thoughts of the future would, it is true, occasionally trouble her, as she knew they weighed

heavily on her husband's mind. When she saw Génifrède growing up, handsome in her parents' eyes, and so timid and reserved that her father sometimes said he wondered whether any one would ever know her mind better than her own family did—when Margot looked upon Génifrède, and considered that her lot in life depended on the will of Monsieur Bayou, she shuddered to think what it might be. When Monsieur Bayou told Génifrède that she was well coiffée, or that he wished she would show the other girls among the house-negroes how to make their Sunday gowns sit like hers, Génifrède invariably appeared not to hear, and often walked away in the midst of the speech; and then her mother could not but wonder how she would conduct herself, whenever the day should come that must come, when (as there was no one on the Breda estate whom Génifrède liked, or would associate with) Monsieur Bayou should bring some one to their cottage, and desire Génifrède to marry him. When Margot looked upon her sons, and upon Aimée, now so inseparable from Isaac, and considered that their remaining together depended not only on Monsieur Bayou's will, but on his life, she trembled lest the day should be at hand when Placide might be carried away northward, and Isaac eastward, and poor Aimée left desolate. Such had been the mother's passing cares in the situation in which nothing had been wanting to her immediate comfort. Now, amidst the perplexities of her new settlement, she was apt to forget that she had formerly had any cares.

Where to house the party had been the first difficulty. But for old Dessalines, who, being no soldier, had chosen to hide himself in the same retreat with them, they would hardly have had good shelter before the rains. Paul had received them kindly; but Paul's kindness was of a somewhat indolent sort; and it was doubtful whether he would have proceeded beyond looking round his hut, and lamenting that it was no bigger, if his spirited son Moyse, a fine lad of sixteen, had not been there to do something more effectual, in finding the place and the materials for the old tiler to begin his work. It was Moyse who convinced the whole party from the plain that a hut of bamboo and palm-leaves would fall in an hour before one of the hail-storms of this rocky coast; and that it would not do to build on the sands, lest some high tide should wash them all away in the night. It was Moyse who led his cousins to the part of the beach where portions of wrecks were most likely to be found, and who lent the strongest hand to remove such beams and planks as Dessalines

wanted for his work. A house large enough to hold the family was soon covered in. It looked well, perched on a platform of rock, and seeming to nestle in a recess of the huge precipices which rose behind it. It looked well, as Dessalines could obtain neither of his favourite paints to smear it with. It stood, neither red nor blue, but nearly the colour of the rocks, against which it leaned, and thatched with palm-leaves, which projected so far as to throw off the rains, even to a depth below.

Paul provided fish—as much as his relations chose to have; but the young people chose to have many other things, under the guidance of Moyse; and here lay their mother's daily care. She believed that both boys and girls ran into a thousand dangers, and no one would help her to restrain them. Paul had always let Moyse have his own way; and Dessalines, when he had brought in drift-wood for her fires, which he daily chose to do, lay down in the sun when the sun shone, and before the fire when the clouds gathered, and slept away the hours. Paul wanted help in his fishing; and it was commonly Isaac who went with him; for Isaac was more fond of boating than rambling. Where Isaac was, there was Aimée. She gave no contemptible help in drawing in the nets; and when the fish was landed, she and Isaac sat for hours among the mangroves which bordered the neighbouring cove, under pretence of cleaning the fish, or of mending the nets, or of watching the cranes which stalked about the sands. Sometimes, in order to be yet more secure from disturbance, the brother and sister would put off again, when they had landed Paul with his prize, and get upon the coral reef, half a mile off—in calm weather collecting the shell-fish which were strewn there in multitudes, and watching the while the freaks and sports of the dolphins in the clear depths around; and in windy weather sitting in the midst of the spray, which was dashed over them from the heavy seas outside. Many times in a morning or evening did Margot look out from her doorway, and see their dusky forms upon the reef, now sitting motionless in talk, now stooping for mussels and crabs, and never till the last moment in the boat, on their way home. Sometimes Denis was with them—sometimes with her—but oftenest with the party led by Moyse.

Moyse had first enticed Génifrède up the rocks behind their dwelling, to get grass for hammocks, and to make matting for the floors. Almost from the first day, it appeared as if Génifrède's fears all melted away in the presence of Moyse; and her mother became sure of this when, after

grass enough had been procured, Génifrède continued to accompany Placide and Moyse in their almost daily expeditions for sporting and pleasure. They brought guanas, tender young monkeys, and cocoa-nuts from the wood, wild kids from the rock, delicate ducks from the mountain-ponds, and sometimes a hog or a calf from the droves and herds which flourished in the rich savannahs on the southern side, on which they looked down from their ridge. In the joy of seeing her children home again, gladsome as they were, and feeling that they brought plenty and luxury into her cottage, Margot kept her cares to herself, from day-to-day, and did not interfere with their proceedings. She sometimes thought she was foolish, and always was glad to see them enjoying their freedom; but still, she felt doubtful whether she herself had not been happier at Breda. The only time when her heart was completely at ease and exulting was when Toussaint came to see his family, to open his heart to his wife, and to smile away her troubles. Her heart exulted when she saw him cross the ridge, with a mounted private behind him, urge his horse down the ascent, gallop along the sands to the foot of the rocks, throw the bridle to his attendant, and mount to the platform, looking up as he approached, to see whether she was on the watch. She was always on the watch. She liked to admire his uniform, and to hear his sword clatter as he walked. She liked to see him looking more important, more dignified, than Bayou or Papalier had ever appeared in her eyes. Then, her heart was always full of thoughts about their children, which he was as anxious to hear as she to tell; and he was the only one from whom she could learn anything of what was going on in the world, or of what prospects lay before themselves. He brought news from France, from Cap and the plain, and, after a while, from America—that Monsieur Bayou was settled at Baltimore, where he intended to remain till, as he said, the pacification of the colony should enable him to return to Breda. There was no fear, as Toussaint always found, but that Margot would be looking out for him.

The tidings he brought were never very joyous, and often sad enough. He said little of his personal cares; but Margot gathered that he found it difficult to keep on good terms with Jean. Once he had resigned his rank of colonel, and had assumed an office of which Jean could not be jealous—that of physician to the forces—an office for which he was qualified by an early and extensive acquaintance with the common diseases of the country, and the natural remedies provided by its soil. When the Marquis d'Hermona had insisted upon his resuming his command, as the best



officer the negro forces could boast, Jean had purposed to arrest him on some frivolous charge, and the foolish act had only been prevented by a frank and strong remonstrance from his old friend. All this time, Toussaint's military successes had been great; and his name now struck such awe into the lawless forces of the insurgent blacks, that it was unnecessary for him to shed their blood. He held the post of Marmalade, and from thence was present with such unheard-of rapidity of march, wherever violence was expected, that the spirit of outrage throughout the colony was, at length, kept in check. This peaceful mode of standing by the rights of the king was more acceptable to the gentle Toussaint than the warfare by which he had gained his power over his own race; but he knew well that things could not go on as they were—that order of some kind must be established—order which could be reached only through a fierce final struggle; and of what nature this order was to be, depended wholly upon the turn which affairs took in Europe.

He rarely brought good news from abroad. His countenance always grew sad when Margot asked what ships had arrived from France since his last visit. First he had to tell her that the people of Paris had met in the Champ de Mars, and demanded the dethronement of the king; then, that Danton had audaciously informed the representatives of France that their refusal to declare the throne vacant would be the signal for a general insurrection. After this, no national calamity could surprise the loyal colonists, Toussaint said; for the fate of Louis as a king, if not as a man, was decided. Accordingly, there followed humiliations, deposition, imprisonment, during which little could be known of the mind, and even of the condition of the king: and those who would have served him remained in anxious suspense. It happened, one warm day in the spring, when every trace of the winter hail-storms had passed away, that the whole party were amusing themselves in trying to collect enough of the ripening sea-side grape for a feast. The bright round leaves were broad and abundant; but the clusters of the fruit were yet only of a pale yellow, and a berry here and there was all that was fit for gathering. The grape-gathering was little more than a pretence for basking in the sun, or for lounging in the shade of the abundant verdure, which seemed to have been sown by the hurricane, and watered by the wintry surf, so luxuriantly did it spring from the sands and the salt waves. The stately manchineel overhung the tide; the mangroves sprang out of the waters; the sea-side grape overspread the sands with a thick green carpet, and

kept them cool, so that as the human foot sought the spot, the glittering lizards forsook it, and darted away to seek the hot face of the rock. For full half a mile this patch of verdure spread; and over this space were dispersed Margot and her household, when Toussaint crossed the ridge, on one of his frequent visits. As he descended, he heard laughter and singing; and among the singing voices, the cracked pipe of old Dessalines. Toussaint grieved to interrupt this mirth, and to think that he must leave dull and sad those whom he found so gay. But he came with bad news, and on a mournful errand, and there was no help for it. As he pricked on his horse towards the party, the young people set up a shout and began to run towards him, but stopped short on seeing how unusually large a train he brought. Five or six mounted soldiers, instead of one, followed him this time, and they led several horses.

“Oh, you are come to take us home!” cried Margot, joyfully, as she met him.

He shook his head as he replied—“No, Margot, not yet. But the time may come.”

“I wish you could tell us when it would come,” said Dessalines. “It is all very well gathering these things, and calling them grapes, for want of better; but give me the grapes that yield one wine. I wonder who has been gathering the grapes from my trellis all this time, while, the whole rainy season through, not a drop did I taste? I wish you had left your revolutions and nonsense till after my time, that I might have sat under my own vine and my own fig-tree, as the priest says, till the end of my days.”

“Indeed I wish so too, Dessalines. But you shall have some wine.”

“Ay, send us some. Jacques will tell you what I like. Don’t forget, Toussaint Breda. They talk of palm wine in the season; but I do not believe we shall get any worth drinking from the palms hereabouts.”

“What is the matter with our palms?” cried Moyse, firing up for the honour of the northern coast. “I will get you a cabbage for dinner every day for a month to come,” he added, moderating his tone under his uncle’s eye —“every day, till you say that our palms, too, are as good as any you

have in the plain; and as for palm wine, when the season comes—”

“No, let me—let me cut the cabbage!” cried Denis. “I can climb as quick as a monkey now—a hundred feet in two minutes. Let me climb the palmetto, Moyse.”

“First take back my horse to those soldiers, my boy,” said his father, setting Denis upon his horse, “and then let us all sit down here in the shade.”

“All those horses,” said Margot, anxiously: “what is to be done with them to-day? There are so many!”

“They will return presently,” replied her husband. “I am not going to stay with you to-day. And, Margot, I shall take the lads with me, if they are disposed to go.”

“The lads! my boys!”

“Yes,” said Toussaint, throwing himself down in the shade. “Our country and its people are orphaned; and the youngest of us must now make himself a soldier, that he may be ready for any turn of affairs which Providences may appoint. Do you hear, my boys?”

“Yes, father,” answered Placide in an earnest tone.

“They have then murdered the king?” asked Margot; “or did he die of his imprisonment?”

“They brought him to trial, and executed him. The apes plucked down the evening star, and quenched it. We have no king. We and our country are orphaned.”

After a pause, Paul said—

“It is enough to make one leave one’s fishing, and take up a gun.”

“I rejoice to hear you say so, brother,” said Toussaint.

“Then, father, you will let me go,” cried Moyse. “You will give me your

gun, and let me go to the camp.”

“Yes, Moyse: rather you than I. You are a stout lad now, and I know nothing of camps. You shall take the gun, and I will stay and fish.”

“Leave your father his gun, if he chooses to remain, Moyse. We will find arms for you. Placide! Isaac!” he continued, looking from one to the other of his sons.

“And Denis,” cried the boy, placing himself directly in his father’s eye, as he returned breathless from the discharge of his errand.

“Yes, my boy, by-and-bye, when you are as strong as Placide. You shall come to the camp when we want you.”

“I will go to-day, father,” said Placide.

“What to do?” said Isaac. “I do not understand.”

Other eyes besides Aimée’s were fixed on Toussaint’s face, in anxiety for his reply.

“I do not know, my son, what we are to do next. When the parent of a nation dies, it may take some time to decide what is the duty of those who feel themselves bereaved. All I now am sure of is, that it cannot but be right for my children to be fitted to serve their country in any way that they may find to be appointed. I wish to train you to arms, and the time has come. Do not you think so?”

Isaac made no direct reply, and Aimée had strong hopes that he was prepared with some wise, unanswerable reason for remaining where he was. Meanwhile, his father proceeded—

“In all that I have done, in all that I now say, I have the sanction of Father Laxabon.”

“Then all is right, we may be sure,” said Margot. “I have no doubt you would be right, if you had not Father Laxabon to consult; but if he thinks you right, everything must be done as you wish. My boys,” pursued the tearful mother, “you must go with your father: you hear Father Laxabon

thinks so.”

“Do you think so?” whispered Aimée to Isaac.

He pressed her arm, which was within his, in token of silence, while his father went on:

“You heard the proclamation I sent out among our people a few weeks ago.”

“Yes,” said Placide; “that in which you tell them that you prefer serving with Spaniards who own a king, than with French who own none.”

“Yes. I have had to make the same declaration to the two commissaries who have arrived at Cap under orders from the regicides at Paris. These commissaries have to-day invited me to their standard by promises of favour and consideration.”

“What do they promise us?” asked Margot eagerly.

“Nothing that we can accept. I have written a letter in reply, saying that I cannot yield myself to the will of any member of the nation, seeing that, since nations began, obedience has been due only to kings. We have lost the king of France; but we are beloved by the monarch of Spain, who faithfully rewards our services, and never intermits his protection and indulgence. Thus, I cannot acknowledge the authority of these commissaries till they shall have enthroned a king. Such is the letter which, guided by Father Laxabon, I have written.”

“It is a beautiful letter, I am sure,” said Margot. “Is it not, Paul.”

“I don’t doubt Father Laxabon is right,” said Dessalines; “only I do not see the use of having a king, if people are turned out of house and home for being loyal—as we all are. If we had not cared anything about the king’s quarrel, we might have been under our vines at home, as I have often said before.”

“And how would it have been with us here?” said Toussaint, laying his hand on his breast.

“Put your hand a little lower, and I say it would have been all the better for us,” said the old negro, laughing, “for we should not have gone without wine all this time.”

“What do you think?” Aimée, as usual, asked Isaac.

“I think it was good for my father to be loyal to the king, as long as the king lived. I think it was good for us to be living here free, with time to consider what we should do next. And I think it has happened very well that my father has shown what a soldier he is, which he could not so well have done if we had stayed at Breda. As for Dessalines, he is best where the vines grow thickest, or where the cellars are deepest. It is a pity he should have taken upon him to be loyal.”

“And what do you think of going to the camp with my father? Look at Moyse—how delighted he is!”

Moyse certainly did look possessed with joy. He was rapidly telling all his warlike intentions to Génifrède, who was looking in his face with a countenance of fear and grief.

“You think nothing of us,” she cried at length, giving way to a passion of tears. “We have been so happy here, all together; and now you are glad to go, and leave us behind! You will go and fight, without caring for us—you will be killed in this horrid war, and we shall never see you again—we shall never know what has become of you.”

Moyse’s military fire was instantly quenched. It immediately appeared to him the greatest of miseries to have to leave his cousins. He assured Génifrède he could not really intend to go. He had only been fancying what a war with the white masters would be. He hated the whites heartily; but he loved this place much more. Placide and Isaac might go, but he should stay. Nothing should part him from those he loved best.

Toussaint was not unmindful of what was passing. Génifrède’s tones of distress, and Moyse’s protestations, all reached his ear. He turned, and gently drew his daughter towards him.

“My child,” said he, “we are no longer what we have been—slaves, whose strength is in the will of their masters. We are free; and to be free

requires a strong heart, in women as well as in men. When Monsieur Bayou was our master, we rose and slept every day alike, and went out to our work, and came in to our food, without having to think of anything beyond. Now we are free, and God has raised us to the difficult duties which we have always revered in the whites. We men must leave our homes to live in camps, and, if necessary, to fight; and you, women and girls, must make it easy for us to do our duty. You must be willing to see us go—glad to spare us—and you must pray to God that we may not return till our duty is done.”

“I cannot—I shall not,” Génifrède muttered to herself, as she cast down her eyes under her father’s compassionate gaze. He looked towards Aimée, who answered, with tearful eyes—

“Yes, father. They must go; and we will not hinder them; but they will soon be back, will not they?”

“That depends on how soon we can make good soldiers of them,” said he, cheerfully. “Come, Moyse, have you changed your mind again? Or will you stay and plait hammocks, while my boys are trained to arms?”

“I shall not stay behind, if the others go. But why should not we all go together? I am sure there is room enough in yonder valley for all the people on this coast.”

“Room enough, but my family are better beside your father than among soldiers and the hunters of the mountains. Stay with them, or go with me. Shoot ducks, and pick up shell-fish here; or go with me, and prepare to be General Moyse some day.”

Moyse looked as if he would have knocked his uncle down at the supposition that he would stay to pick up shell-fish. He could not but laugh, however, at hearing himself greeted as General Moyse by all the boys; and even Génifrède smiled.

Margot moved, sighing, towards the rocks, to put up for her boys such comforts as she could muster, and to prepare the meal which they must have before they went. Her girls went with her; and Denis shouted after them, that he was to get the cabbage from the palmetto, adding, that if they gave him a good knife, he would take it off as neatly as the Paris

people took off the king. His father grasped his arm, and said—

“Never name the king, my boy, till you feel grieved that you have lost him. You do not know what you say. Remember—never mention the king unless we ask you.”

Denis was glad to run after his cabbage. His father remembered to praise it at dinner. No one else praised or liked anything. Margot and Aimée were tearful; Génifrède was gloomy. The lads could think of nothing but the new life before them, which yet they did not like to question their father about, till they should have left the tears behind. No sooner were they past the first turn up the ridge, than they poured out their inquiries as to life in the camp, and the prospects of the war. Their eager gestures were watched by those they left behind; and there was a feeling of mortification in each woman’s heart, on seeing this evidence that home was already forgotten for busier scenes. They persuaded themselves, and believed of each other, that their grief was for the fearful death of the king; and they spoke as if this had been really the case.

“We have no one to look up to, now,” said Margot, sobbing; “no one to protect us. Who would have thought, when I married, how desolate we should be one day on the sea-shore—with our master at Baltimore, and the king dead, and no king likely to come after him! What will become of us?”

“But Margot,” interposed Dessalines, “how should we be better off at this moment, if the king were alive and flourishing at Paris?”

“How?” repeated Margot, indignantly. “Why, he would have been our protector, to be sure. He would have done some fine thing for my husband, considering what my husband has done for him. If our beloved king (on his throne) knew of my husband’s victory at Plaisance, and of his expedition to Saint Marc, and of his keeping quiet all these plantations near Marmalade, and of the thousands that he had brought over from the rebels, do you think a good master like the king would have left us to pine here among the rocks, while Jean Français is boasting all day long, as if he had done everything with his own hand? No, our good king would never have let Jean Français’ wife dress herself in the best jewels the white ladies left behind, while the wife and daughters of his very best



officer are living here in a hut, on a rock, with no other clothes to wear than they brought away from Breda. No, no; as my husband says, in losing the king we are orphans.”

“I can get you as good clothes as ever Jean’s wife wore, Margot,” said Paul, whose soft heart was touched by her grief. “I can run my boat along to a place I know of, where there are silks and trinkets to be had, as well as brandy. I will bring you and the girls some pretty dresses, Margot.”

“No, Paul, not here. We cannot wear them here. And we shall have no pleasure in anything, now we have lost the only one who could take care of us. And who knows whether we shall ever see our boys again?”

“Curse the war!” muttered Paul, wiping his brows.

“Mother,” said Aimée in a low voice, “have we not God to protect us still? One master may desert us, and another may die; but there is still God above all. Will not he protect us?”

“Yes, my dear. God takes care of the world; but then He takes care of our enemies as well as of us.”

“Does he?” exclaimed Denis, in a tone of surprise.

“Yes; ask your father if Father Laxabon does not say so. The name of God is for ever in the mouths of the whites at Cap; but they reviled the king; and, true enough, the king was altogether on our side,—we had all his protection.”

“All that is a good deal changed now, I hear,” said Paul. “The whites at Cap are following the example of the rebels at Paris, and do not rely upon God, as on their side, as they used to do.”

“Will God leave off taking care of them, then?” asked Denis, “and take care only of us?”

“No,” said Aimée. “God is willing, Isaac says, to take care of all men, whether they serve him or not.”

Denis shook his head, as if he did not quite approve this.

“Our priest told Isaac,” continued Aimée, “that God sends his rain on the just and on the unjust. And do not you know that he does? When the rains come next month, will they not fall on all the plantations of the plain, as well as in the valley where the camp is? Our waterfalls will be all the fresher and brighter for the rains, and so will the springs in Cap.”

“But if he is everybody’s master, and takes care of everybody,” said Denis, “what is all this fighting about? We are not fighting for Him, are we?”

“Your father is,” said Margot; “for God is always on the side of kings. Father Laxabon says so.”

The boy looked puzzled, till Aimée said—

“I think there would be none of this fighting if everybody tried to please God and serve Him, as is due to a master—as father did for the king. God does not wish that men should fight. So our priest at Breda told Isaac.”

“Unless wicked rebels force them to it, as your father is forced,” said Margot.

“I suppose so,” said Aimée, “by Isaac’s choosing to go.”



## Chapter Six.

### The Hour.

The lads found some of the details of military training less heroic and less agreeable than they had imagined—scarcely to be compared, indeed, under either aspect, to the chase of the wild goats, and search for young turtle, to which they had been of late accustomed. They had their pleasures, however, amidst the heats, toils, and laborious offices of the camp. They felt themselves men, living among men: they were young enough to throw off, and almost to forget, the habits of thought which belong to slavery; and they became conscious of a spirit growing up within them, by which they could look before and after, perceive that the future of their lives was in their own hands, and therefore understand the importance of the present time. Their father looked upon them with mixed feelings of tender pride in them, and regret for his own lost youth. The strong and busy years on which they were entering had been all spent by him in acquiring one habit of mind, to which his temperament and his training alike conduced—a habit of endurance. It was at this time that he had acquired the power of reading enough to seek for books; and the books that he had got hold of were Epictetus, and some fragments of Fénelon. With all the force of youth, he had been by turns the stoic and the quietist; and, while busied in submitting himself to the pressure of the present, he had turned from the past, and scarcely dreamed of the future. If his imagination glanced back to the court of his royal grandfather, held under the palm shades, or pursuing the lion-hunt amidst the jungles of Africa, he had hastily withdrawn his mind's eye from scenes which might create impatience of his lot; and if he ever wondered whether a long succession of ignorant and sensual blacks were to be driven into the field by the whip every day in Saint Domingo, for evermore, he had cut short the speculation as inconsistent with his stoical habit of endurance, and his Christian principle of trust. It was not till his youth was past that he had learned anything of the revolutions of the world—too late to bring them into his speculations and his hopes. He had read, from year to year, of the conquests of Alexander and of Caesar; he had studied the wars of France, and drawn the plans of campaigns in the sand before his door till he knew them by heart; but it had not occurred to him, that while empires

were overthrown in Asia, and Europe was traversed by powers which gave and took its territories, as he saw the negroes barter their coconuts and plantains on Saturday nights—while such things had happened in another hemisphere, it had not occurred to him that change would ever happen in Saint Domingo. He had heard of earthquakes taking place at intervals of hundreds of years, and he knew that the times of the hurricane were not calculable; but, patient and still as was his own existence, he had never thought whether there might not be a convulsion of human affections, a whirlwind of human passion, preparing under the grim order of society in the colony. If a master died, his heir succeeded him; if the “force” of any plantation was by any conjuncture of circumstances dispersed or removed, another negro company was on the shore, ready to re-people the slave-quarter. The mutabilities of human life had seemed to him to be appointed to whites—to be their privilege and their discipline; while he doubted not that the eternal command to blacks was to bear and forbear. When he now looked upon his boys, and remembered that for them this order was broken up, and in time for them to grasp a future, and prepare for it—that theirs was the lot of whites, in being involved in social changes, he regarded them with a far deeper solicitude and tenderness than in the darkest midnight hours of their childish illnesses, or during the sweetest prattle of their Sabbath afternoons, and with a far stronger hopefulness than can ever enter the heart or home of a slave. They had not his habitual patience; and he saw that they were little likely to attain it; but they daily manifested qualities and powers—enterprise, forecast, and aspiration of various kinds, adorning their youth with a promise which made their father sigh at the retrospect of his own. He was amused, at the same time, to see in them symptoms of a boyish vanity, to which he had either not been prone, or which he had early extinguished. He detected in each the secret eagerness with which they looked forward to displaying their military accomplishments to those with whom they were always exchanging thoughts over the ridge. He foresaw that when they should have improved a little in certain exercises, he should be receiving hints about a visit to the shore, and that there would then be such a display upon the sands as should excite prodigious admiration, and make Denis break his heart that he must not go to the camp.

Meantime, he amused them in the evenings, with as many of his officers as chose to look on, by giving them the history of the wars of Asia and

Europe, as he had learned it from books, and thoroughly mastered it by reflection. Night after night was the map of Greece traced with his sword's point on the sand behind his tent, while he related the succession of the conflicts with Persia, with a spirit derived from old Herodotus himself. Night after night did the interest of his hearers arouse more and more spirit in himself, till he became aware that his sympathies with the Greeks in their struggles for liberty had hitherto been like those of the poet born blind, who delights in describing natural scenery—thus unconsciously enjoying the stir within him of powers whose appropriate exercise is forbidden. Amidst this survey of the regions of history, he felt, with humble wonder, that while his boys were like bright-eyed children sporting fearlessly in the fields, he was like one lately couched, by whom the order of things was gradually becoming recognised, but who was oppressed by the unwonted light, and inwardly ashamed of the hesitation and uncertainty of his tread. While sons, nephew, and a throng of his officers, were listening to him as to an oracle, and following the tracings of his sword, as he showed how this advance and that retreat had been made above two thousand years ago, he was full of consciousness that the spirit of the history of freedom was received more truly by the youngest of his audience than by himself—that he was learning from their natural ardour something of higher value than all that he had to impart.

As he was thus engaged, late one spring evening—late, because the rains would soon come on, and suspend all out-door meetings—he was stopped in the midst of explaining a diagram by an authoritative tap on the shoulder. Roused by an appeal to his attention now so unusual, he turned quickly, and saw a black, who beckoned him away.

“Why cannot you speak!—Or do you take me for some one else? Speak your business.”

“I cannot,” said the man, in a voice which, though too low to be heard by anyone else, Toussaint knew to be Papalier's. “I cannot speak here—I must not make myself known. Come this way.”

Great was the surprise of the group at seeing Toussaint instantly follow this black, who appeared in the dusk to be meanly clothed. They entered the tent, and let down the curtain at the entrance. Some saw that a woman stood within the folds of the tent.

“Close the tent,” said Papalier, in the same tone in which he had been wont to order his plate to be changed at home. “And *now*, give me some water to wash off this horrid daubing. Some water—quick! Pah! I have felt as if I were really a negro all this day.”

Toussaint said nothing; nor did he summon any one. He saw it was a case of danger, led the way into the inner part of the tent, poured out water, pointed to it, and returned to the table, where he sat down, to await further explanation.

Papalier at length re-appeared, looking like himself, even as to his clothes, which Thérèse must have brought in the bundle which she carried. She now stood leaning against one of the tent-poles, looking grievously altered—worn and wearied.

“Will you not sit down, Thérèse?” said Toussaint, pointing to a chair near his own, Papalier having seated himself on the other side of the table.

Thérèse threw herself on a couch at some distance, and hid her face.

“I must owe my safety to you again, Toussaint,” said Papalier. “I understand General Hermona is here at present.”

“He is.”

“You have influence with him, and you must use it for me.”

“I am sorry you need it. I hoped you would have taken advantage of the reception he gave you to learn the best time and manner of going to Europe. I hoped you had been at Paris long ago.”

“I ought to have been there. If I had properly valued my life, I should have been there. But it seemed so inconceivable that things should have reached a worse pass than when I crossed the frontier! It seemed so incredible that I should not be able to preserve any wreck of my property for my children, that I have lingered on, staying month after month, till now I cannot get away. I have had a dreadful life of it. I had better have been anywhere else. Why, even Thérèse,” he continued, pointing over his shoulder towards the couch, “Thérèse, who would not be left behind at Fort Égalité, the night we came from Breda—even Thérèse has not

been using me as she should do. I believe she hates me.”

“You are in trouble, and therefore I will not speak with you to-night about Thérèse,” said Toussaint. “You are in danger, from the determination of the Spaniards to deliver up the enemies of the late king to—”

“Rather say to deliver up the masters to their revolted slaves. They make politics the pretence; but they would not be sorry to see us all cut to pieces, like poor Odeluc and Clement, and fifty more.”

“However that may be, your immediate danger is from the Spaniards—is it?”

“Yes, I discovered that I was to be sent over the line to-morrow; so I was obliged to get here to-day in any way I could; and there was no other way than—pah! it was horrid!”

“No other way than by looking like a negro,” said Toussaint, calmly. “Well, now you are here, what do you mean to do next?”

“I mean, by your influence with General Hermona, to obtain protection to a port, that I may proceed to Europe. I do not care whether I go from Saint Domingo, or by Saint Iago, so as to sail from Port Plate. I could find a vessel from either port. You would have no difficulty in persuading General Hermona to this?”

“I hope not, as he voluntarily gave you permission to enter his territory. I will ask for his safe-conduct in the morning. To-night you are safe, if you remain here. I request that you will take possession of the inner apartment, and rely upon my protection.”

“Thankyou. I knew my best way was to come here,” said Papalier, rising. “Thérèse will bring me some refreshment; and then I shall be glad of rest, for we travelled half last night.”

“For how many shall the safe-conduct be?” asked Toussaint, who had also risen. “For yourself alone, or more?”

“No one knows better than you,” said Papalier, hastily, “that I have only one servant left,” pointing again to the couch. “And,” lowering his voice,

so that Thérèse could not hear, “she, poor thing, is dreadfully altered, you see—has never got over the loss of her child, that night.” Then, raising his voice again, he pursued: “My daughters at Paris will be glad to see Thérèse, I know; and she will like Paris, as everybody does. All my other people are irrecoverable, I fear; but Thérèse goes with me.”

“No,” said Thérèse, from the conch, “I will go nowhere with you.”

“Hey-day! what is that?” said Papalier, turning in the direction of the voice. “Yes, you will go, my dear. You are tired to-night, as you well may be. You feel as I do—as if you could not go anywhere, to-morrow or the next day. But we shall be rested and ready enough, when the time comes.”

“I am ready at this moment to go anywhere else—anywhere away from you,” replied Thérèse.

“What do you mean, Thérèse?” asked her master, sharply.

“I mean what you said just now—that I hate you.”

“Oh! silence!” exclaimed Toussaint. He then added in a mild tone to Thérèse, “This is my house, in which God is worshipped and Christ adored, and where therefore no words of hatred may be spoken.” He then addressed himself to Papalier, saying, “You have then fully resolved that it is less dangerous to commit yourself to the Spaniards than to attempt to reach Cap?”

“To reach Cap! What! after the decree? Upon my soul, Toussaint, I never doubted you yet; but if—”

He looked Toussaint full in the face.

“I betray no one,” said Toussaint. “What decree do you speak of?”

“That of the Convention of the 4th of February last.”

“I have not heard of it.”

“Then it is as I hoped—that decree is not considered here as of any



importance. I trusted it would be so. It is merely a decree of the Convention, confirming and proclaiming the liberty of the negroes, and declaring the colony henceforth an integrant part of France. It is a piece of folly and nonsense, as you will see at once; for it can never be enforced. No one of any sense will regard it; but just at present it has the effect, you see, of making it out of the question for me to cross the frontier.”

“True,” said Toussaint, in a voice which made Papalier look in his face, which was working with some strong emotion. He turned away from the light, and desired Thérèse to follow him. He would commit her to the charge of one of the suttlers’ wives for the night.

Having put on the table such fruit, bread, and wine as remained from his own meal (Papalier forbidding further preparation, for fear of exciting observation without), Toussaint went out with Thérèse, committed her to safe hands, and then entered the tent next his own, inhabited by his sons, and gave them his accustomed blessing. On his return, he found that Papalier had retired.

Toussaint was glad to be alone. Never had he more needed solitude; for rarely, if ever, in the course of his life, had his calm soul been so disturbed. During the last words spoken by Papalier, a conviction had flashed across him, more vivid and more tremendous than any lightning which the skies of December had sent forth to startle the bodily eye; and amidst the storm which those words had roused within him, that conviction continued to glare forth at intervals, refusing to be quenched. It was this—that if it were indeed true that the revolutionary government of France had decreed to the negroes the freedom and rights of citizenship, to fight against the revolutionary government would be henceforth to fight against the freedom and rights of his race. The consequences of such a conviction were overpowering to his imagination. As one inference after another presented itself before him—as a long array of humiliations and perplexities showed themselves in the future—he felt as if his heart were bursting. For hour after hour of that night he paced the floor of his tent; and if he rested his limbs, so unused to tremble with fear or toil, it was while covering his face with his hands, as if even the light of the lamp disturbed the intensity of his meditation. A few hours may, at certain crises of the human mind and lot, do the work of years; and this night

carried on the education of the noble soul, long repressed by slavery, to a point of insight which multitudes do not reach in a lifetime. No doubt, the preparation had been making through years of forbearance and meditation, and through the latter months of enterprise and activity; but yet, the change of views and purposes was so great as to make him feel, between night and morning, as if he were another man.

The lamp burned out, and there was no light but from the brilliant flies, a few of which had found their way into the tent. Toussaint made his repeater strike: it was three o'clock. As his mind grew calm under the settlement of his purposes, he became aware of the thirst which his agitation had excited. By the light of the flitting tapers, he poured out water, refreshed himself with a deep draught, and then addressed himself to his duty. He could rarely endure delay in acting on his convictions. The present was a case in which delay was treachery; and he would not lose an hour. He would call up Father Laxabon, and open his mind to him, that he might be ready for action when the camp should awake.

As he drew aside the curtain of the tent, the air felt fresh to his heated brow, and, with the calm starlight, seemed to breathe strength and quietness into his soul. He stood for a moment listening to the dash and gurgle of the river, as it ran past the camp—the voice of waters, so loud to the listening ear, but so little heeded amidst the hum of the busy hours of day. It now rose above the chirpings and buzzings of reptiles and insects, and carried music to the ear and spirit of him who had so often listened at Breda to the fall of water in the night hours, with a mind unburdened and unperplexed with duties and with cares. The sentinel stopped before the tent with a start which made his arms ring at seeing the entrance open, and some one standing there.

“Watch that no one enters?” said Toussaint to him. “Send for me to Father Laxabon’s, if I am wanted.”

As he entered the tent of the priest—a tent so small as to contain only one apartment—all seemed dark. Laxabon slept so soundly as not to awake till Toussaint had found the tinder-box, and was striking a light.

“In the name of Christ, who is there?” cried Laxabon.

“I, Toussaint Breda; entreating your pardon, father.”

“Why are you here, my son? There is some misfortune, by your face. You look wearied and anxious. What is it?”

“No misfortune, father, and no crime. But my mind is anxious, and I have ventured to break your rest. You will pardon me?”

“You do right, my son. We are ready for service, in season and out of season.”

While saying this, the priest had risen, and thrown on his morning-gown. He now seated himself at the table, saying—

“Let us hear. What is this affair of haste?”

“The cause of my haste is this—that I may probably not again have conversation with you, father; and I desire to confess, and be absolved by you once more.”

“Good. Some dangerous expedition—is it not so?”

“No. The affair is personal altogether. Have you heard of any decree of the French Convention by which the negroes—the slaves—of the colony of Saint Domingo are freely accepted as fellow-citizens, and the colony declared an integrant part of France?”

“Surely I have. The General was speaking of it last night; and I brought away a copy of the proclamation consequent upon it. Let me see,” said he, rising, and taking up the lamp, “where did I put that proclamation?”

“With your sacred books, perhaps, father; for it is a gospel to me and my race.”

“Do you think it of so much importance?” asked Laxabon, returning to the table with the newspaper containing the proclamation, officially given. “The General does not seem to think much of it, nor does Jean Français.”

“To a commander of our allies the affair may appear a trifle, father; and such white planters as cannot refuse to hear the tidings may scoff at

them; but Jean Français, a negro and a slave—is it possible that he makes light of this?”

“He does; but he has read it, and you have not. Read it, my son, and without prejudice.”

Toussaint read it again and again.

“Well!” said the priest, as Toussaint put down the paper, no longer attempting to hide with it the streaming tears which covered his face.

“Father,” said he, commanding his voice completely, “is there not hope, that if men, weakened and blinded by degradation, mistake their duty when the time for duty comes, they will be forgiven?”

“In what case, my son? Explain yourself.”

“If I, hitherto a slave, and wanting, therefore, the wisdom of a free man, find myself engaged on the wrong side—fighting against the providence of God—is there not hope that I may be forgiven on turning to the right?”

“How the wrong side, my son? Are you not fighting for your king, and for the allies of France?”

“I have been so pledged and so engaged; and I do not say that I was wrong when I so engaged and so pledged myself. But if I had been wise as a free man should be, I should have foreseen of late what has now happened, and not have been found, when last night’s sun went down (and as to-morrow night’s sun shall not find me), holding a command against the highest interests of my race—now, at length, about to be redeemed.”

“You—Toussaint Breda—the loyal! If Heaven has put any of its grace within you, it has shown itself in your loyalty; and do you speak of deserting the forces raised in the name of your king, and acting upon the decrees of his enemies? Explain to me, my son, how this can be. It seems to me that I can scarcely be yet awake.”

“And to me, it seems, father, that never till now have I been awake. Yet it was in no vain dream that I served my king. If he is now where he can

read the hearts of his servants, he knows that it was not for my command, or for any other dignity and reward, that I came hither, and have fought under the royal flag of France. It was from reverence and duty to him, under God. He is now in heaven; we have no king; and my loyalty is due elsewhere. I know not how it might have been if he had still lived; for it seems to me now that God has established a higher royalty among men than even that of an anointed sovereign over the fortunes of many millions of men. I think now that the rule which the free man has over his own soul, over time and eternity—subject only to God's will—is a nobler authority than that of kings; but, however I might have thought, our king no longer lives; and, by God's mercy, as it seems to me now, while the hearts of the blacks feel orphaned and desolate, an object is held forth to us for the adoration of our loyalty—an object higher than throne and crown, and offered us by the hand of the King of kings.”

“Do you mean freedom, my son? Remember that it is in the name of freedom that the French rebels have committed the crimes which—which it would consume the night to tell of, and which no one knows better, or abhors more, than yourself.”

“It is true; but they struggled for this and that, and the other right and privilege existing in societies of those who are fully admitted to be men. In the struggle, crime has been victorious, and they have killed their king. The object of my devotion will now be nothing that has to be wrenched from an anointed ruler, nothing which can be gained by violence—nothing but that which, being already granted, requires only to be cherished, and may best be cherished in peace—the manhood of my race. To this must I henceforth be loyal.”

“How can men be less slaves than the negroes of Saint Domingo of late? No real change has taken place; and yet you, who wept that freedom as rebellion, are now proposing to add your force to it.”

“And was it not rebellion? Some rose for the plunder of their masters—some from ambition—some from revenge—many to escape from a condition they had not patience to endure. All this was corrupt; and the corruption, though bred out of slavery, as the fever from the marshes, grieved my soul as if I had not known the cause. But now, knowing the cause, and others (knowing it also) having decreed that slavery is at an

end, and given the sanction of law and national sympathy to our freedom—is not the case changed? Is it now a folly or a sin to desire to realise and purify and elevate this freedom, that those who were first slaves and then savages may at length become men—not in decrees and proclamations only, but in their own souls? You do not answer, father. Is it not so?”

“Open yourself further, my son. Declare what you propose. I fear you are perplexing yourself.”

“If I am deceived, father, I look for light from heaven through you.”

“I fear—I fear, my son! I do not find in you to-night the tone of humility and reliance upon religion in which you found comfort the first time you opened the conflicts of your heart to me. You remember that night, my son?”

“The first night of my freedom? Never shall I forget its agonies.”

“I rejoice to hear it. Those agonies were safer, more acceptable to God, than the comforts of self-will.”

“My father, if my will ensnares me, lay open the snare—I say not for the sake of my soul only—but for far, far more—for the sake of my children, for the sake of my race, for the sake of the glory of God in His dealings with men, bring me back if I stray.”

“Well. Explain—explain what you propose.”

“I cannot remain in an army opposed to what are now the legal rights of the blacks.”

“You will give up your command?”

“I shall.”

“And your boys—what will you do with them?”

“Send them whence they came for the present. I shall dismiss them by one road, while the resignation of my rank goes by another.”

“And you yourself by a third.”

“When I have declared myself to General Hermona.”

“Have you thoughts of taking your soldiers with you?”

“No.”

“But what is right for you is right for them.”

“If they so decide for themselves. My power over them is great. They would follow me with a word. I shall therefore avoid speaking that word, as it would be a false first step in a career of freedom, to make them enter upon it as slaves to my opinion and my will.”

“But you will at least address them, that they may understand the course you pursue. The festival of this morning will afford an opportunity—after mass. Have you thought of this?—I do not say that I am advising it, or sanctioning any part of your plan, but have you thought of this?”

“I have, and dismissed the thought. The proclamation will speak for itself. I act from no information which is not open to them all. They can act, thank God, for themselves; and I will not seduce them into subservience, or haste, or passion.”

“But you will be giving up everything. What can make you think that the French at Cap, all in the interest of the planters, will receive you?”

“I do not think it; and I shall not offer myself.”

“Then you will sink into nothing. You will no longer be an officer, nor even a soldier. You will be a mere negro, where negroes are wholly despised. After all that you have been, you will be nothing.”

“I shall be a true man.”

“You will sink to less than nothing. You will be worse than useless before God and man. You will be held a traitor.”

“I shall; but it will be for the sake of a higher fidelity.”

There was a long pause, after which Laxabon said, in a tone half severe, and half doubting—

“So, here ends your career! You will dig a piece of ground to grow maize and plantains for your family; you will read history in your piazza, and see your daughters dance in the shade, while your name will never be mentioned but as that of a traitor. So here ends your career!”

“From no one so often as you, father, have I heard that man’s career never ends.”

The priest made no reply.

“How lately was it,” pursued Toussaint, “that you encouraged my children, when they, who fear neither the wild bull nor the tornado, looked somewhat fearfully up to the eclipsed moon? Who was it but you who told them, that though that blessed light seemed blotted out from the sky, it was not so; but that behind the black shadow, God’s hand was still leading her on, through the heaven, still pouring radiance into her lamp, not the less bright because it was hidden from men? A thick shadow is about to pass upon my name; but is it not possible, father, that God may still be feeding my soul with light—still guiding me towards Himself? Will you not once more tell me, that man’s career never ends?”

“In a certain sense—in a certain sense, that is true, my son. But our career here is what God has put into our own hands: and it seems to me that you are throwing away His gift and His favour. How will you answer when He asks you, ‘What hast thou done with the rank and the power I put into thy hand? How hast thou used them?’ What can you then answer, but ‘I flung them away, and made myself useless and a reproach.’ You know what a station you hold in this camp—how you are prized by the General for the excellence of the military discipline you have introduced; and by me, and all the wise and religious, for the sobriety of manners and purity of morals of which you are an example in yourself, and which you have cherished among your troops, so that your soldiers are the boast of the whole alliance. You know this—that you unite the influence of the priest with the power of the commander; and yet you are going to cast off both, with all the duties which belong to them, and sink yourself in infamy—and with yourself, the virtues you have



advocated. How will you answer this to God?"

"Father, was there not One in whose path lay all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and who yet chose ignominy—to be despised by the world, instead of to lead it? And was God severe with Him? Forgive me, father; but have you not desired me to follow Him, though far-off as the eastern moon from the setting sun?"

"That was a case, my son, unique in the world. The Saviour had a lot of His own. Common men have rulers appointed them whom they are to serve; and, if in rank and honour, so much the greater the favour of God. You entered this service with an upright mind and pure intent; and here, therefore, can you most safely remain, instead of casting yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple, which, you know, the Son of God refused to do. Remember His words, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Be not tempted yourself, by pride of heart, to compare your lot with that of Christ, which was unique."

"He devoted Himself for the whole race of man: He, and He alone. But it seems to me that there may be periods of time when changes are appointed to take place among men—among nations, and even among races; and that a common man may then be called to devote himself for that nation, or for that race. Father, I feel that the hour may be come for the negro race to be redeemed; and that I, a common man, may so far devote myself as not to stand in the way of their redemption. I feel that I must step out from among those who have never admitted the negroes' claims to manhood. If God should open to me a way to serve the blacks better, I shall be found ready. Meantime, not for another day will I stand in the light of their liberties. Father," he continued, with an eagerness which grew as he spoke, "you know something of the souls of slaves. You know how they are smothered in the lusts of the body, how they are debased by the fear of man, how blind they are to the providence of God! You know how oppression has put out the eyes of their souls, and withered its sinews. If now, at length, a Saviour has once more for them stretched out His healing hand, and bidden them see, and arise and be strong, shall I resist the work? And you, father, will you not aid it? I would not presume; but if I might say all—"

"Say on, my son."

“Having reproved and raised the souls of slaves, would it not henceforth be a noble work for you to guide their souls as men? If you would come among us as a soldier of Christ, who is bound to no side in earthly quarrels—if you would come as to those who need you most, the lowest, the poorest, the most endangered, what a work may lie between this hour and your last! What may your last hour be, if, day by day, you have trained our souls in the glorious liberty of the children of God! The beginning must be lowly; but the kind heart of the Christian priest is lowly: and you would humble yourself first to teach men thus,—‘you were wrong to steal’—‘you were wrong to drink’—‘you were wrong to take more wives than one, and to strike your children in passion.’ Thus humbly must you begin; but among free men, how high may you not rise? Before you die, you may have led them to rule their own spirits, and, from the throne of that sovereignty, to look far into the depths of the heavens, and over the history of the world; so that they may live in the light of God’s countenance, and praise Him almost like the angels—for, you know, He has made us, even us, but a little lower than they.”

“This would be a noble work,” said Laxabon, much moved: “and if God is really about to free your race, He will appoint a worthy servant for the office. My duty, however, lies here. I have here souls in charge, without being troubled with doubts as to the intentions of God and of men. As I told you, the General does not think so much as you do of this event; nor even does Jean Français. If you act rashly, you will repent for ever having quitted the path of loyalty and duty. I warn you to pause, and see what course events will take. I admonish you not hastily to desert the path of loyalty and duty.”

“If it had pleased God,” said Toussaint, humbly, “to release me from the ignorance of slavery when He gave me freedom, I might now be able to lay open my heart as I desire to do; I might declare the reasons which persuade me so strongly as I feel persuaded. But I am ignorant, and unskilful in reasoning with one like you, father.”

“It is therefor that we are appointed to guide and help you, my son. You now know my mind, and have received my admonition. Let us proceed to confession; for the morning draws on towards the hour for mass.”

“Father, I cannot yield to your admonition. Reprove me as you will, I

cannot. There is a voice within me stronger than yours.”

“I fear so, my son; nor can I doubt what that voice is, nor whence it comes. I will pray for you, that you may have strength to struggle with the tempter.”

“Not so, father; rather pray that I may have strength to obey this new voice of duty, alone as I am, discountenanced as I shall be.”

“Impossible, my son. I dare not so pray for one self-willed and precipitate; nor, till you bring a humble and obedient mind, can I receive your confession. There can be no absolution where there is reservation. Consider, my dear son! I only desire you to pause.”

“Delay is treachery,” said Toussaint. “This day the decree and proclamation will be made known through the forces; and if I remain, this night’s sun sets on my condemnation. I shall not dare to pray, clothed in my rank, this night.”

“Go now, my son. You see it is dawning. You have lost the present opportunity; and you must now leave me to my duties. When you can return hither to yours, you will be welcome.”

Toussaint paid him his wonted reverence, and left the tent.

Arrived in his own, he threw himself on the couch like a heart-broken man.

“No help! no guidance!” thought he. “I am desolate and alone. I never thought to have been left without a guide from God. He leaves me with my sins upon my soul, unconfessed, unabsolved; and, thus burdened and rebuked, I must enter upon the course which I dare not refuse. But this voice within me which bids me go—whence and what is it? Whence is it but from God? And how can I therefore say that I am alone? There is no man that I can rely on—not even one of Christ’s anointed priests; but is there not He who redeemed men? and will He reject me if, in my obedience, I come to Him? I will try—I will dare. I am alone; and He will hear and help me.”

Without priest, without voice, without form of words, he confessed and

prayed, and no longer felt that he was alone. He arose, clear in mind and strong in heart: wrote and sealed up his resignation of his commission, stepped into the next tent to rouse the three boys, desiring them to dress for early mass, and prepare for their return to their homes immediately afterwards. He then entered his own inner apartment, where Papalier was sleeping so soundly that it was probable the early movements of saint's-day festivities in the camp would not awaken him. As he could not show himself abroad till the General's protection was secured, his host let him sleep on; opening and shutting his clothes' chest, and going through the whole preparation for appearance on the parade in full uniform, without disturbing his wearied guest, who hardly moved even at the roll of the drum, and the stir of morning in the camp.

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## **Chapter Seven.**

### **The Act.**

Papalier was probably the only person in the valley who did not attend mass on this saint's-day morning. The Spanish general was early seen, surrounded by his staff, moving towards the rising ground, outside the camp, on which stood the church, erected for the use of the troops when the encampment was formed. The soldiers, both Spanish and negro, had some time before filed out of their tents, and been formed for their short march; and they now came up in order, the whites approaching on the right, and the blacks on the left, till their forces joined before the church. The sun had not yet shone down into the valley, and the dew lay on the grass, and dropped like rain from the broad eaves of the church-roof—from the points of the palm-leaves with which it was thatched.

This church was little more than a covered enclosure. It was well shaded from the heat of the sun by its broad and low roof; but, between the corner posts, the sides could hardly be said to be filled in by the bamboos which stood like slender columns at intervals of several inches, so that all that passed within could be seen from without, except that the vestry and the part behind the altar had their walls interwoven with withes, so as to be impervious to the eye. The ground was strewn thick with moss,—cushioned throughout for the knees of the worshippers. The seats were

rude wooden benches, except the chair, covered with damask, which was reserved for the Marquis d'Hermona.

Here the General took his place, his staff ranging themselves on the benches behind. Jean Français entered after him, and seated himself on the opposite range of benches. Next followed Toussaint Breda, alone, having left his sons outside with the soldiers. Some few more advanced towards the altar; it being understood that those who did so wished to communicate. An interval of a few empty benches was then left, and the lower end of the church was thronged by such of the soldiery as could find room; the rest closing in round the building, so as to hear the voice of the priest, and join in the service.

There was a gay air about the assemblage, scarcely subdued by the place, and the occasion which brought them to it. Almost every man carried a stem of the white amaryllis, plucked from among the high grass, with which it grew thickly intermixed all over the valley; and beautiful to the eye were the snowy, drooping blossoms, contrasted with the rich dark green of their leaves. Some few brought twigs of the orange and the lime; and the sweet odour of the blossoms pervaded the place like a holy incense, as the first stirring airs of morning breathed around and through the building. There were smiles on almost every face; and a hum of low but joyous greetings was heard without, till the loud voice of the priest, reciting the Creed, hushed every other. The only countenance of great seriousness present was that of Toussaint, and his bore an expression of solemnity, if not of melancholy, which struck every one who looked upon him—and he always was looked upon by every one. His personal qualities had strongly attracted the attention of the Spanish general. Jean Français watched his every movement with the mingled triumph and jealousy of a superior in rank, but a rival in fame; and by the negro troops he was so beloved, that nothing but the strict discipline which he enforced could have prevented their following him in crowds wherever he went. Whenever he smiled, as he passed along, in conversation, they laughed without inquiring why; and now, this morning, on observing the gravity of his countenance, they glanced from one to another, as if to inquire the cause.

The priest, having communicated, at length descended from before the altar, to administer the water to such as desired to receive it. Among

these, Toussaint bent his head lowest—so low, that the first slanting sunbeam that entered beneath the thatch seemed to rest upon his head, while every other head remained in the shadow of the roof. In after days, the negroes then present recalled this appearance. Jean Français, observing that General Hermona was making some remark about Toussaint to the officers about him, endeavoured to assume an expression of deep devotion also; but in vain. No one thought of saying of him what the General was at that moment saying of his brother in arms—“God could not visit a soul more pure.”

When the blessing had been given, and the few concluding verses of Scripture read, the General was the first to leave his place. It seemed as if he and Toussaint moved towards one another by the same impulse, for they met in the aisle between the benches.

“I have a few words of business to speak with you, General—a work of justice to ask you to perform without delay,” said Toussaint.

“Good!” said the General. “In justice there should be no delay. I will therefore breakfast with you in your tent. Shall we proceed?”

He put his arm within that of Toussaint, who, however, gently withdrew his, and stepped back with a profound bow of respect. General Hermona looked as if he scarcely knew whether to take this as an act of humility, or to be offended; but he smiled on Toussaint’s saying—

“It is not without reasons that I decline honour in this place this morning—reasons which I will explain. Shall I conduct you to my tent? And these gentlemen of your staff?”

“As we have business, my friend, I will come alone. I shall be sorry if there is any quarrel between us, Toussaint. If you have to ask justice of me, I declare to you I know not the cause.”

“It is not for myself, General, that I ask justice. I have ever received from you more than justice.”

“You have attached your men to yourself with singular skill,” said the General, on their way down the slope from the church, as he closely observed the countenances of the black soldiers, which brightened, as if

touched by the sunlight, on the approach of their commander. "Their attachment to you is singular. I no longer wonder at your achievements in the field."

"It is by no skill of mine," replied Toussaint; "it is by the power of past tyranny. The hearts of negroes are made to love. Hitherto, all love in which the mind could share has been bestowed upon those who degraded and despised them. In me they see one whom, while obeying, they may love as a brother."

"The same might be said of Jean Français, as far as your reasons go; but Jean Français is not beloved like you. He looks gayer than you, my friend, notwithstanding. He is happy in his new rank, probably. You have heard that he is ennobled by the court of Spain?"

"I had not heard it. It will please him."

"It evidently does. He is made a noble; and his military rank is now that of lieutenant-General. Your turn will come next, my friend; and if promotion went strictly according to personal merit, no one would have been advanced sooner than you."

"I do not desire promotion, and—"

"Ah! there your stoical philosophy comes in. But I will show you another way of applying it. Rank brings cares; so that one who is not a stoic may have an excuse for shrinking from it; but a stoic despises cares. Ha! we have some young soldiers here," he said, as Moyse and his cousins stood beside the way, to make their obeisance; "and very perfect soldiers they look, young as they are. They seem born for military service."

"They were born slaves, my lord; but they have now the loyal hearts of freemen within them, amidst the ignorance and follies of their youth."

"They are—"

"My nephew and my two sons, my lord."

"And why mounted at this hour?"

“They are going to their homes, by my direction.”

“If it were not that you have business with me, which I suppose you desire them not to overhear—”

“It is as you say, General.”

“If it had not been so, I would have requested that they might be at our table this morning. As it is, I will not delay their journey.”

And the General touched his hat to the lads, with a graciousness which made them bend low their uncovered heads, and report marvels at home of the deportment of the Marquis d’Hermona. Seeing how their father was occupied, they were satisfied with a grasp of his hand as he passed, received from him a letter for their mother, and waited only till he and his guest had disappeared within the tent, to gallop off. They wondered at being made the bearers of a letter, as they knew that his horse was ordered to be ready beside his tent immediately after breakfast, and had not a doubt of his arriving at the shore almost as soon as themselves.

Papalier was lounging on the couch beside the table where breakfast was spread, when General Hermona and his host offered. He started up, casting a look of doubt upon Toussaint.

“Fear nothing, Monsieur Papalier,” said Toussaint; “General Hermona has engaged to listen to my plea for justice. My lord, Monsieur Papalier was amicably received by your lordship on crossing the frontier, and, on the strength of your welcome, has remained on the island till too late to escape, without your especial protection, a fate he dreads.”

“You mean being delivered up as a republican?”

“Into the hands of my own negroes, my lord,” said Papalier, bitterly. “That is the fate secretly designed for any unfortunate planter who may yet have survived the recent troubles over the frontier.”

“But how can I protect you? The arrangement is none of mine: I cannot interfere with it.”

“Only by forgetting in this single instance the point of time at which we



have arrived, and furnishing me with a pass which shall enable me to sail for Europe, as I acknowledge I ought to have done long ago.”

“So this is the act of justice you asked from me, Toussaint. Why did you not say favour? I shall do it with much more pleasure as a slight favour to one whom I strongly regard. You shall have your safe-conduct, Monsieur Papalier. In the meantime—”

And he looked towards the steaming chocolate and the piles of fruit on the table, as if his appetite were growing urgent.

“One word more, my lord, before offering you my welcome to my table,” said Toussaint. “I beseech you to consider the granting this pass as an act of justice, or of anything rather than favour to me. Yesterday, I would have accepted a hundred favours from you: to-day, with equal respect, I must refuse even one. I pledge myself to tell you why before you rise from table, to which I now invite you.”

“I do not understand all this, Toussaint.”

“I have pledged myself to explain.”

“And you say there is no personal feeling—no offence between us?”

“If any, my lord, I alone am the offender. Will you be pleased to—”

“Oh, yes, I will breakfast; and was never more ready. Monsieur Papalier, our morning mass has kept you waiting, I fear.”

Papalier seated himself, but was near starting up again when he saw his negro host preparing to take his place between his two guests, Papalier had never yet sat at table with a negro, and his impulse was to resent the necessity; but a stern look from the General warned him to submit quietly to the usages of the new state of society which he had remained to witness; and he sat through the meal, joining occasionally in the conversation, which, for his sake, was kept clear of subjects which might annoy him.

As soon as the servants, after producing pen, ink, and paper, had withdrawn, the General wrote a safe-conduct, and delivered it to

Monsieur Papalier, with an intimation that an attendant should be ready to guide him to the nearest port, at his earliest convenience. Papalier understood this as it was meant—as a hint that there must be no delay. He declared, therefore, his wish to depart, as soon as the heat of the day should decline.

“And now, my lord—,” said Toussaint, “Yes, now for the explanation of this fancy of not receiving kindness from your best friends. Let us hear.”

“I have this morning, my lord, despatched letters to Don Joachim Garcia, at Saint Domingo—”

“You are in communication with the Colonial Government; and not through me! What can this mean?”

“And here, my lord, are exact copies of my letters, which I request the favour of you to read, and, if I may be permitted to say so, without haste or prejudice—though, in this case, it is much to ask.”

Toussaint disappeared in the inner apartment; but not before he saw a smile on Papalier’s face—a smile which told of amusement at the idea of a negro sending dispatches of any importance to the head of the government of the Spanish colony.

The General did not seem to feel any of the same amusement. His countenance was perplexed and anxious. He certainly obeyed Toussaint’s wishes as to not being in haste: for he read the papers (which were few and short) again and again. He had not laid them down when Toussaint re-appeared from within—no longer glittering in his uniform and polished arms, but dressed in his old plantation clothes, and with his woollen cap in his hand. Both his guests first gazed at him, and then started from their seats.

Toussaint merely passed through the tent, bowing low to the General, and bidding him farewell. A confused noise outside, followed by a shout, roused Hermona from his astonishment.

“He is addressing the troops!” he cried, drawing his sword, and rushing forth.

Toussaint was not addressing the troops. He was merely informing Jacques, whom he had requested to lie in waiting there, beside his horse, that he was no longer a commander—no longer in the forces; and that the recent proclamation, by showing him that the cause of negro freedom was now one with that of the present government of France, was the reason of his retirement from the Spanish territory. He explained himself thus far, in order that he might not be considered a traitor to the lost cause of royalty in France; but, rather, loyal to that of his colour, from the first day of its becoming a cause.

Numbers became aware that something unusual was going forward, and were thronging to the spot, when the General rushed forth, sword in hand, shouting aloud—

“The traitor! Seize the traitor! Soldiers! seize the traitor!”

Toussaint turned in an instant, and sprang upon his horse. Not a negro would lay hands on him; but they cast upon him, in token of honour, the blossoms of the amaryllis and the orange that they carried. The Spanish soldiers, however, endeavoured to close round him and hem him in, as the General’s voice was still heard—

“Seize him! Bring him in, dead or alive!”

Toussaint, however, was a perfect horseman; and his favourite horse served him well in this crisis. It burst through, or bounded over, all opposition, and, amidst a shower of white blossoms which strewed the way, instantly carried him beyond the camp. Well-mounted soldiers, and many of them, were behind, however; and it was a hard race between the fugitive and his pursuers, as it was witnessed from the camp. Along the river bank, and over the bridge, the danger of Toussaint appeared extreme; and the negroes, watching the countenance of Jacques, preserved a dead silence when all the horsemen had disappeared in the woods which clothed the steep. Then all eyes were turned towards the summit of that ridge, where the road crossed a space clear of trees; and there, in an incredibly short time, appeared the solitary horseman, who, unencumbered with heavy arms, and lightly clothed, had greatly the advantage of the soldiers in mounting the ascent. He was still followed; but he was just disappearing over the ridge, when the foremost soldier

issued from the wood behind him.

“He is safe! he is safe!” was murmured through the throng; and the words reached the ears of the General in a tone which convinced him that the attachment of the black troops to Toussaint Breda was as strong as he himself had that morning declared it to be.

“Now you see, General,” said Papalier, turning into the tent, from which he too had come forth in the excitement of the scene—“you see what you have to expect from these negroes.”

“I see what I have to expect from you,” replied the General, with severity. “It is enough to witness how you speak of a man to whom you owe your life this very day—and not for the first time.”

“Nay, General, I have called him no names—not even ‘traitor.’”

“I have not owed him my life, Monsieur Papalier; and you are not the commander of these forces. It is my duty to prevent the defection of the negro troops; and I therefore used the language of the government I serve in proclaiming him a traitor. Had it been in mere speculation between him and myself that those papers had come in question, God knows I should have called him something very different.”

“There is something in the man that infatuates—that blinds one’s judgment, certainly,” said Papalier. “His master, Bayou, spoiled him with letting him educate himself to an absurd extent. I always told Bayou so; and there is no saying now what the consequences may be. It is my opinion that we have not heard the last of him yet.”

“Probably,” said the General, gathering up his papers as his aide entered, and leaving the tent in conversation with him, almost without a farewell notice of Papalier.

The negro troops were busy to a man, in learning from Jacques, and repeating to one another, the particulars of what was in the proclamation, and the reasons of Toussaint’s departure. General Hermona found that the two remaining black leaders, Jean François and Biasson, were not infected by Toussaint’s convictions; that, on the contrary, they were far from sorry that he was thus gone, leaving them to the full enjoyment of

Spanish grace. They addressed their soldiers in favour of loyalty, and in denunciation of treason, and treated the proclamation as slightly as Don Joachim Garcia could possibly have wished. They met with little response, however; and every one felt, amidst the show and parade and festivity of the day, a restlessness and uncertainty which he perceived existed no less in his neighbour than in himself. No one's mind was in the business or enjoyment of the festival; and no one could be greatly surprised at anything that might take place, though the men were sufficiently orderly in the discharge of their duty to render any interference with them unwarrantable, and any precautions against their defection impossible. The great hope lay in the influence of the two leaders who remained, as the great fear was of that of the one who was gone.

The Spanish force was small, constituting only about one-fourth of the whole; and of these, the best mounted had not returned from the pursuit of Toussaint;—not because they could follow him far in the enemy's country, but because it required some skill and caution to get back in broad day, after having roused expectation all along the road.

While the leaders were anxiously calculating probabilities, and reckoning forces, Jacques was satisfying himself that the preponderance of numbers was greatly on the side of his absent friend. His hatred of the whites, which had never intermitted, was wrought up to strong passion this day by the treatment the proclamation and his friend had received. He exulted in the thought of being able to humble the Spaniards by withdrawing the force which enabled them to hold their posts, and by making him whom they called a traitor more powerful in the cause of the blacks than they could henceforth be in that of royalist France. Fired with these thoughts, he was hastily passing the tent of Toussaint, which he had supposed deserted, when he heard from within, speaking in anger and fear, a voice which he well knew, and which had power over him. He had strong reasons for remembering the first time he had seen Thérèse—on the night of the escape across the frontier. She was strongly associated with his feelings towards the class to which her owner belonged; and he knew that she, beautiful, lonely, and wretched, shared those feelings. If he had not known this from words dropped by her during the events of this morning, he would have learned it now; for she was declaring her thoughts to her master, loudly enough for any one who

passed by to overhear.

Jacques entered the tent, and there stood Thérèse, declaring that she would leave her master, and never see him more, but prevented from escaping by Papalier having intercepted her passage to the entrance. Her eyes glowed with delight on the appearance of Jacques, to whom she immediately addressed herself.

“I will not go with him—I will not go with him to Paris, to see his young ladies. He shall not take care of me. I will take care of myself. I will drown myself sooner than go with him. I do not care what becomes of me, but I will not go.”

“Yes, you will care what becomes of you, Thérèse, because your own people care,” said Jacques. “I will protect you. If you will be my wife, no white shall molest you again.”

“Be your wife!”

“Yes. I love the blacks; and none so much as those whom the whites have oppressed—no one so much as you. If you will be my wife, we will —”

Here, remembering the presence of a white, Jacques explained to Thérèse in the negro language (which she understood, though she always spoke French), the new hopes which had arisen for the blacks, and his own intention of following Toussaint, to make him a chief. He concluded in good French, smiling maliciously at Papalier as he spoke—

“You will come with me now to the priest, and be my wife.”

“I will,” replied Thérèse, calmly.

“Go,” said Papalier. “You have my leave. I am thus honourably released from the care of you till times shall change. I am glad that you will not remain unprotected, at least.”

“Unprotected!” exclaimed Thérèse, as she threw on the Spanish mantle which she was now accustomed to wear abroad. “Unprotected! And what has your protection been?”

“Very kind, my dear, I am sure. I have spent on your education money which I should be very glad of now. When people flatter you, Thérèse (as they will do; for there is not a negress in all the island to compare with you),—remember who made you a lady. You will promise me that much, Thérèse, at parting?”

“Remember who made me a lady!—I have forgotten too long who made me a woman,” said Thérèse, devoutly upraising her eyes. “In serving Him and loving my husband, I will strive to forget you.”

“All alike!” muttered Papalier, as the pair went out. “This is what one may expect from negroes, as the General will leant when he has had enough to do with them. They are all alike.”

This great event in the life of Jacques Dessalines did not delay his proceedings for more than half-an-hour. Noon was but just past, when he led forth his wife from the presence of the priest, mounted her on his own horse before his tent, and sent her forward under the escort of his personal servant, promising to overtake her almost as soon as she should have crossed the river. When she was gone, he sent the word through the negro soldiery, who gathered round him almost to a man, and with the quietness which became their superior force. Jean Français and Biasson were left with scarcely twenty followers each; and those few would do nothing. The whites felt themselves powerless amidst the noonday heats, and opposed to threefold numbers: and their officers found that nothing was to be done but to allow them to look on quietly, while Jacques led away his little army, with loud music and a streaming white flag. A few horsemen led the van, and closed in the rear. The rest marched, as if on a holiday trip, now singing to the music of the band, and now making the hills ring again with the name of Toussaint Breda.

As General Hermona, entirely indisposed for his siesta, watched the march through his glass from the entrance of his tent, while the notes of the wind-instruments swelled and died away in the still air, one of his aides was overheard by him to say to another—

“The General has probably changed his opinion since he said to you this morning, of Toussaint Breda, that God could not visit a soul more pure. We have all had to change our minds rather more rapidly than suits such

a warm climate.”

“You may have changed your opinions since the sun rose, gentlemen,” said Hermona; “but I am not sure that I have.”

“How! Is it possible? We do not understand you, my lord.”

“Do you suppose that you understand him? Have we been of a degraded race, slaves, and suddenly offered restoration to full manhood and citizenship? How otherwise can we understand this man? I do not profess to do so.”

“You think well of him, my lord?”

“I am so disposed. Time, however, will show. He has gone away magnanimously enough, alone, and believing, I am confident, from what Father Laxabon tells me, that his career is closed; but I rather think we shall hear more of him.”

“How these people revel in music!” observed one of the staff. “How they are pouring it forth now!”

“And not without reason, surely,” said Hermona. “It is their exodus that we are watching.”





## Chapter Eight.

### Breda again.

The French proclamation was efficiently published along the line of march of the blacks. They shouted and sang the tidings of their freedom, joining with them the name of Toussaint Breda. These tidings of freedom rang through the ravines, and echoed up the sides of the hills, and through the depths of the forests, startling the wild birds on the mountain-ponds and the deer among the high ferns; and bringing down from their fastnesses a multitude of men who had fled thither from the vengeance of the whites and mulattoes, and to escape sharing in the violence of the negro force which Jean Français had left behind him, to pursue uncontrolled their course of plunder and butchery. Glad, to such, were the tidings of freedom, with order, and under the command of one whose name was never mentioned without respect, if not enthusiasm. The negro who did not know that there was any more world on the other side the Cibao peaks, had yet learned to be proud of the learning of Toussaint. The slave who conceived of God as dwelling in the innermost of the Mornes, and coming forth to govern His subjects with the fire of the lightning and the scythe of the hurricane, was yet able to revere the piety of Toussaint. The black bandit who had dipped his hands in the blood of his master, and feasted his ear with the groans of the innocent babes who had sat upon his knee, yet felt that there was something impressive in the simple habit of forgiveness, the vigilant spirit of mercy which distinguished Toussaint Breda from all his brethren in arms—from all the leading men of his colour, except his friend Henri Christophe. At the name of Toussaint Breda, then, these flocked down into the road by hundreds, till they swelled the numbers of the march to thousands. The Spanish soldiers, returning to their camp by such by-ways as they could find, heard again and again from a distance the cries of welcome and of triumph; and one or two of them chanced to witness from a high point of rock, or through a thick screen of foliage, the joyous progress of the little army, hastening on to find their chief. These involuntary spies gathered at every point of observation news which would gall the very soul of Jean Français, if they should get back to the camp to tell it.

Jacques knew where to seek his friend, and led the way, on descending from the hills, straight across the plain to the Breda estate, where Toussaint meant to await his family. How unlike was this plantation to what it was when these negroes had seen it last! The cane-fields, heretofore so trim and orderly, with the tall canes springing from the clean black soil, were now a jungle. The old plants had run up till they had leaned over with their own weight, and fallen upon one another. Their suckers had sprung up in myriads, so that the racoon which burrowed among them could scarcely make its way in and out. The grass on the little enclosed lawns grew so rank, that the cattle, now wild, were almost hidden as they lay down in it; and so uneven and unsightly were the patches of growth, that the blossoming shrubs with which it had been sprinkled for ornament, now looked forlorn and out of place, flowering amidst the desolation. The slave-quarter was scarcely distinguishable from the wood behind it, so nearly was it overgrown with weeds. A young foal was browsing on the thatch, and a crowd of glittering lizards darted out and away on the approach of human feet.

Jacques did not stay at the slave-quarter; but he desired his company to remain there and in the neighbouring field, while he went with Thérèse to bring out their chief to them. They went up to the house; but in no one of its deserted chambers did they find Toussaint.

“Perhaps he is in his own cottage,” said Thérèse.

“Is it possible,” replied Jacques, “that, with this fine house all to himself, he should take up with that old hut?”

“Let us see,” said Thérèse; “for he is certainly not here.”

When they reached Toussaint’s cottage, it was no easy matter to know how to effect an entrance. Enormous gourds had spread their network over the ground, like traps for the feet of trespassers. The front of the piazza was completely overgrown with the creepers which had been brought there only to cover the posts, and hang their blossoms from the eaves. They had now spread and tangled themselves, till they made the house look like a thicket. In one place, however, between two of the posts, they had been torn down, and the evening wind was tossing the loose coils about. Jacques entered the gap, and immediately looked out

again, smiling, and beckoning Thérèse to come and see. There, in the piazza, they found Toussaint, stretched asleep upon the bench—so soundly asleep, for once, that the whispers of his friends did not alter, for a moment, his heavy breathing.

“How tired he must be!” said Jacques. “At other times I have known his sleep so light, that he was broad awake as quick as a lizard, if a beetle did but sail over his head.”

“He may well be tired,” said Thérèse. “You know how weary he looked at mass this morning. I believe he had no rest last night; and now this march to-day—”

“Well! He must rouse up now, however; for his business will not wait.” And he called him by his name.

“Henri!” cried Toussaint, starting up.

“No, not Henri. I am Jacques. You are not awake yet, and the place is dark. I am your friend Jacques, five inches shorter than Henri. You see?”

“You here, Jacques! and Thérèse! Surely I am not awake yet.”

“Yes, you are, now you know Thérèse—whom you will henceforth look upon as my wife. We are both free of the whites now, for ever.”

“Is it possible?”

“It is true; and we will tell you all presently. But first explain why you called me Henri as you woke. If we could see Henri—Why did you name Henri—”

“Because he was the next person I expected to see. I met one on the way who knew where he was, and took a message to him.”

“If we could learn from Henri—” said Jacques.

“Here is Henri,” said the calm, kindly, well-known voice of the powerful Christophe, who now showed himself outside. The other went out to him, and greeted him heartily.

“What news, Henri?” asked Toussaint. “How are affairs at Cap? What is doing about the proclamation there?”

“Affairs are going badly at Cap. The mulattoes will no more bear our proclamation than the whites would bear theirs. They have shut up General Laveaux in prison; and the French, without their military leader, do not know what to do next. The commissary has no authority, and talks of embarking for France; and the troops are cursing the negroes, for whose sake, they say, their General is imprisoned, and will soon die of the heats.”

“We must deliver General Laveaux,” said Toussaint. “Our work already lies straight before us. We must raise a force. Henri, can you bring soldiers?”

“Ay, Henri,” said Jacques, “what force can you bring to join ours? General Toussaint Breda has six thousand here at hand, half of whom are disciplined soldiers, well armed. The rest are partially armed, and have strong hearts and ready hands.”

Toussaint turned round, as if to know what Jacques could mean.

“General,” said Jacques, “the army I speak of is there, among those fields, burning to greet you their commander; but in the meantime, I believe, supping heartily on whatever they can find in your wilderness here, in the shape of maize, pumpkins, and plantains—and what else, you know better than? That is right, Thérèse; rest yourself in the piazza, and I will bring you some supper, too.”

“Six thousand, did you say, Jacques?” said Henri. “I can rally two thousand this night, and more will join on the way.”

“We must free Laveaux before sunrise,” said Toussaint. “Will our troops be fit for a march after this supper of theirs, Jacques—after supper and three hours’ rest?”

“They are fit at this moment to march over the island—to swim from Saint Domingo to France, if you will only lead them,” replied Jacques. “Go to them, and they will do what you will.”

“So be it!” said Toussaint, his bosom for a moment heaving with the thought that his career, even as viewed by Father Laxabon, was not ended. “Henri, what is the state of the plain? Is the road open?”

“Far from it. The mulattoes are suspicious, and on the watch against some danger—I believe they are not clear what. I avoided some of their scouts; and the long way they made me go round was the reason of my being late.”

Observing that Toussaint looked thoughtful, he proceeded: “I imagine there is no force in the plain that could resist your numbers, if you are sure of your troops. The road is open, if they choose that it be so.”

“I am sure of only half of them; and then there is the town. It seems to me, Jacques, that I may more depend upon my troops, in their present mood, for a merry night march, though it be a long one, than for a skirmish through the plain, though it be a short one.”

Jacques assented. It was agreed that the little army should proceed by the mountain tracts, round by Plaisance and Gros Morne, so as to arrive by the Haut-du-Cap, in which direction it was not likely that a foe should be looked for. Thus they could pour into the town from the western heights before sunrise, while the scouts of the mulatto rebels were looking for them across the eastern plain.

This settled, Jacques went down among his forces, to tell them that their general was engaged in a council of war—Henri Christophe having joined from Cap, with a promise of troops, and with intelligence which would open the way to victory and freedom. The general allowed them ten minutes more for refreshment, and to form themselves into order; and he would then present himself to them. Shouting was forbidden, lest any foe should be within hearing; but a murmur of delight and mutual congratulation ran through the ranks, which were beginning to form while the leader of their march was yet speaking. He retreated, carrying with him the best arms he could select for the use of his general.

While he was gone, Toussaint stepped back into the piazza, where Thérèse sat quietly watching the birds flitting in and out among the foliage and flowers.

“Thérèse,” said he, “what will you do this night and to-morrow? Who will take care of you?”

“I know not—I care not,” said she. “There are no whites here; and I am well where they are not. Will you not let me stay here?”

“Did Jacques say, and say truly, that you are his wife?”

“He said so, and truly. I have been wretched, for long—”

“And sinful. Wretchedness and sin go together.”

“And I was sinful; but no one told me so. I was ignorant, and weak, and a slave. Now I am a woman and a wife. No more whites, no more sin, no more misery! Will you not let me stay here?”

“I will: and here you will presently be safe, and well cared for, I hope. My wife and my children are coming home—coming, probably in a few hours. They will make this a home to you till Jacques can give you one of your own. You shall be guarded here till my Margot arrives. Shall it be so?”

“Shall it? Oh, thank God! Jacques,” she cried, as she heard her husband’s step approaching. “Oh, Jacques! I am happy. Toussaint Breda is kind—he has forgiven me—he welcomes me—his wife will—”

Tears drowned her voice. Toussaint said gently—

“It is not for me to forgive, Thérèse, whom you have never offended. God has forgiven, I trust, your young years of sin. You will atone (will you not?) by the purity of your life—by watching over others, lest they suffer as you have done. You will guard the minds of my young daughters: will you not? You will thank God through my Génifrède, my Aimée?”

“I will, I will,” she eagerly cried, lifting up her face, bright through her tears. “Indeed my heart will be pure—longs to be pure.”

“I know it, Thérèse,” said Toussaint. “I have always believed it, and I now know it.”

He turned to Jacques and said—

“You declare yourself to be under my command?”

“Yes, Toussaint; you are my general.”

“Well, then, I appoint you to the duty of remaining here, with a troop, to guard my family (who are coming in a few hours), and this estate. I have some hopes of doing what I want at Cap without striking a blow; and you will be better here. You hate the whites too much to like my warfare. Farewell, Thérèse! Jacques, follow me, to receive your troop.”

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## Chapter Nine.

### The Man.

The town of Cap Français was next morning in a hurry, which attracted the attention of General Laveaux in his prison, and the French commissary, Polverel, on board the vessel in the roads, in which he had taken refuge from the mulattoes, and where he held himself in readiness to set sail for France, in case of any grave disaster befalling the General or the troops. From his cell, Laveaux heard in the streets the tramp of horses and of human feet; and from the deck of the *Orphée*, Polverel watched through his glass the bustle on the wharves, and the putting off of more than one boat, which prepared him to receive news.

The news came. The report was universal in the town that Toussaint Breda had gone over from the allies to the side of republican France; and that this step had been followed by a large defection from the allied forces. Messengers had arrived, one after another, with dispatches which had been intercepted by the mulattoes. These who brought them, however, had given out that some posts had been surrendered, without a summons, into the hands of the French. This was certainly the case with Marmalade and Plaisance; and others were confidently spoken of.

“Offered to our hands just when our hands are tied, and we cannot take them!” said Polverel. “If our fresh regiments would only arrive to-day, and help us to wrench the prison keys from the hands of those devils of mulattoes, and let out Laveaux, the colony would be ours before night.”

As he spoke, he swept the horizon to the north and east with his glass; but no welcome sail was visible.

“Now look the other way,” said the commander of the vessel; “if there is no help at sea, try if there be none on land. I have been watching that mountain-side for some time; and, if I am not much mistaken, there is an army of dusky fellows there.”

“Dusky! mulattoes! then we are lost!” cried Polverel. “If the mulattoes from the south have come up in any numbers—”

“They are black as the night that is just gone,” said the commander, still keeping his eye fixed on the western heights above the town. “See, the sun strikes them now. They are blacks. The negroes under Toussaint himself, very probably. I shall not have the pleasure of carrying you to France just yet, Monsieur Polverel.”

Notwithstanding the display of black forces on the Haut-du-Cap, the bustle of the town seemed to be in the opposite direction. A few shots were fired in the south-east quarter, and some smoke arose from thence. This was soon explained by the news that Henri Christophe had approached the town from the plain, with four or five thousand men, and was forcing an entrance that way. There was little conflict. Toussaint poured down his force through the barracks, where the French soldiers gave him a hearty welcome, and along the avenues of Government-House, and the neighbouring public offices, in which quarter the mulattoes had little interest. Within an hour, the mulattoes had all slunk back into their homes, telling their families that they could have dealt with the French alone, but that they could not withstand an army of twenty thousand men (only doubling the real number), which had dropped from the clouds, for aught they knew. The few dead bodies were removed, the sand sucked up their blood, and the morning wind blew dust over its traces. A boat was sent off, in due form, to bring Commissary Polverel home to Government-House. Toussaint himself went to the prison to bring out General Laveaux, with every demonstration of respect; and all presently wore the aspect of a jour-de-fête.

Hour by hour tidings were spread which increased the joy of the French, and the humiliation of their foes. The intercepted dispatches were given



up, and more arrived with the news of the successive defection from the allies of all the important posts in the colony, held by negro forces. In the name of Toussaint Breda, the garrisons of Marmalade and Plaisance first declared for republican France; and after them, Gros Morne, Henneri, and Le Dondon.

The news of the acquisition of these last arrived in the evening, when the French officials were entertaining the negro chief in the salon of Government-House. It was late: the house was brilliantly lighted; and its illuminations were reflected from a multitude of faces without. Late as it was, and great as had been the fatigues of the negro troops, they were not yet weary of hearing the praises of their own Toussaint. Adding their numbers to those of the white inhabitants of Cap, they thronged the court of Government-House and the Jesuits' Walk; and even in the Place d'Archer and the Rue Espagnole, passengers found it difficult to make their way. The assemblage could scarcely have told what detained them there, unless it were the vague expectation of more news, the repetition of the praises they loved to hear, and, perhaps, some hope of getting one more glimpse of Toussaint on this night of his triumph. From mouth to mouth circulated the words which General Laveaux had spoken in the morning, when released from his prison—"This man is the saviour of the whites—the avenger of the authorities. He is surely the black, the Spartacus predicted by Raynal, whose destiny it should be to avenge the wrongs of his race." From mouth to mouth went these words; and from heart to heart spread the glow they kindled.

Toussaint himself had heard these words; and in his heart also were they glowing. As he sat at table, refreshing himself with fruits, but (according to his invariable custom) refusing wine, he was reminded by all that passed that his career was not ended. He wore the uniform of brigadier-general—a token that he had not lost rank. Monsieur Polverel had declared his intention of soon returning to France; and General Laveaux had said that when he was thus left in charge of the colony, he should entreat General Toussaint, who best understood its affairs, to fill the office of lieutenant-governor, and should also be guided in military affairs implicitly by his counsels. Toussaint heard, and felt that, in truth, his career was not ended. He was requested to name a day when he would take the oaths publicly, and receive the homage of the grateful colony; and in his reply he took occasion to declare with earnestness that his

present course of action originated altogether in the decree of the Convention in favour of the negroes; and that the resources of his power and influence should all be directed towards raising his race to that intellectual and moral equality with the whites, without which they could neither enjoy nor retain the political equality which the Convention had decreed. In the midst of the strongly expressed sympathy of his hosts, who were this day disposed to approve and admire all he said and did—while they were uttering hopes for his own people which touched his soul, the final news of this great day was brought in, contained in dispatches which told of the acquisition of the posts of Limbé and l’Aeul—the two bars to the north-western peninsula of the colony. The commanders declared their adhesion to the cause of the blacks and Toussaint Breda.

“Bravo!” cried the French general: “that obstinate region is ours! We will march through those posts to hold our festival, and the oaths shall be taken at Port Paix. Was not that district considered the most obstinate, general?”

Toussaint did not answer. He did not hear. The mention of Port Paix carried back his thoughts to the night when he was last there, heavy at heart, assisting his master to escape.

“All is ours, now, through him,” said Monsieur Polverel, gazing at his guest, “Yes,” rejoined Laveaux; “he is the Napoleon Bonaparte of Saint Domingo.”

“Who is he?—who is Napoleon Bonaparte?” asked Toussaint, roused to listen. “I have heard his name. What has he done?”

“He is a young French artillery officer—”

“A Corsican by birth,” interposed Polverel.

“Is he really? I was not aware of that,” said Laveaux. “That circumstance somewhat increases the resemblance of the cases. He was ill-used (or thought he was) by his officers, and was on the point of joining the Turkish service, when he was employed in the defence of the Convention, the other day. He saved the Convention—he saved Paris—and he is about to put off his uniform of brigadier-general” (and Laveaux smiled and bowed as he spoke)—“like yourself, he is about to put off his

uniform of brigadier-general for that of a higher rank. His name was known before in connection with the siege of Toulon. But this last achievement is the grand one. He has cleaved the path of the Convention. Polverel, did I not say rightly that General Toussaint is the Napoleon Bonaparte of Saint Domingo?"

"Yes. General Toussaint also is making for us an opening everywhere."

Toussaint heard the words, but they made a faint impression at the moment of his imagination being fixed on the young artillery officer. There were those present, however, who lost nothing of what was spoken, and who conveyed it all to the eager ears outside. The black attendants, the gazers and listeners who went in and out, intoxicated with the glory of the negro general, reported all that was said of him. These last few words of Polverel wrought wonderfully, and were instantly spread through the excited multitude. A shout was presently heard, which must have sounded far up the mountains and over the bay; and Polverel started with surprise when his word came back to him in a response like that of an assembled nation. "L'ouverture!" "L'ouverture!" cried the multitude, fully comprehending what the word contained in its application to their chief, "Toussaint L'Ouverture!" Henceforth, the city, the colony, the island, and, after a time, all Europe, rang with the name of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

When Toussaint heard the cry from without, he started to his feet; and his hosts rose also, on seeing the fire in his eye—brighter than during the deeds of the morning.

"The general would address them," said Polverel. "You wish to speak to the people, General Toussaint."

"No," said Toussaint.

"What then?" inquired Laveaux.

"I would be alone," said Toussaint, stepping backwards from the table.

"Your fatigues have doubtless been great," observed Laveaux. "Lights shall be ordered in your apartment."

"I cannot sleep yet," said Toussaint. "I cannot sleep till I have news from

Breda. But I have need of thought, gentlemen; there is moonlight and quiet in these gardens. Permit me to leave you now.”

He paced the shrubberies, cool with moonlight and with dews; and his agitation subsided when all eyes but those of Heaven were withdrawn. Here no flatteries met his ear—no gestures of admiration made him drop his eyes, abashed. Constrained as he yet felt himself in equal intercourse with whites, new to his recognised freedom, unassured in his acts, uncertain of the future, and (as he believed) unprepared for such a future as was now unfolding, there was something inexpressibly irksome and humbling in the homage of the whites—of men who understood nothing of him, and little of his race, and who could have none but political purposes in their intercourse with him. He needed this evening the sincerities as well as the soothings of nature; and it was with a sense of relief that he cast himself once again upon her bosom, to be instructed, with infantine belief, how small an atom he was in the universe of God—how low a rank he held in the hierarchy of the ministers of the Highest.

“Yet I *am* one,” thought he, as the shout of his name and now title reached his ear, distinct, though softened by distance. “I am an appointed minister. It seems as if I were the one of whom I myself have spoken as likely to arise—not, as Laveaux says, after Raynal, to avenge, but to repair the wrongs of my colour. Low, indeed, are we sunk, deep is our ignorance, abject are our wills, if such a one as I am to be the leader of thousands—I, whose will is yet unexercised—I, who shrink ashamed before the knowledge of the meanest white—I, so lately a slave—so long dependent that I am an oppression to myself—am at this hour the ruler over ten thousand wills! The ways of God are dark, or it might seem that He despised His negro children in committing so many of them to so poor a guide. But He despises nothing that He has made. It may be that we are too weak and ignorant to be fit for better guidance in our new state of rights and duties. It may be that a series of teachers is appointed to my colour, of whom I am to be the first, only because I am the lowest; destined to give way to wiser guides when I have taught all that I know, and done all that I can. May it be so! I will devote myself wholly; and when I have done may I be more willing to hide myself in my cottage, or lie down in my grave, than I have been this day to accept the new lot which I dare not refuse!—Deal gently with me, O God! and, however I fail, let me not see my children’s hearts hardened, as hearts are

hardened, by power! Let me not see in their faces the look of authority, nor hear in their voices the tones of pride! Be with my people, O Christ! The weaker I am, the more be Thou with them, that Thy gospel may be at last received! The hearts of my people are soft—they are gentle, they are weak:—let Thy gospel make them pure—let it make them free. Thy gospel—who has not heard of it, and who has seen it? May it be found in the hearts of my people, the despised! and who shall then despise them again? The past is all guilt and groans. Into the future open a better way —”

“Toussaint L’Ouverture!” he heard again from afar, and bowed his head, overpowered with hope.

“Toussaint L’Ouverture!” repeated some light gay voices close at hand. His boys were come, choosing to bring themselves the news from Breda—that Margot and her daughters, and old Dessalines and Moyse were all there, safe and happy, except for their dismay at finding the cottage and field in such a state of desolation.

“They will not mind when they hear that they are to live in a mansion henceforward,” said Placide. “Jean Français had better have stood by his colour, as we do.”

“And how have you stood by your colour, my young hero?”

“I told Jean in the camp to-day—”

“Jean! In the camp! How came you there?”

“We were so near, that I galloped in to see what they thought of your leaving, and who had followed you.”

“Then I thank God that you are here.”

“Jean caught me; but the General bade him let me go, and asked whether the blacks made war upon children. I told him that I was not a child; and I told Jean that you had rather live in a cave for the sake of the blacks, than go off to the court of Spain—”

“What made you fancy I should go there?”

“Not you, but Jean. Jean is going, he says, because he is a noble. There will soon be peace between France and Spain, he says; and then he shall be a noble at the court of Spain. I am glad he is going.”

“So am I, if he thinks he shall be happy there.”

“We shall be better without him,” said Isaac. “He would never be quiet while you were made Lieutenant-Governor of Saint Domingo. Now you will be alone and unmolested in your power. Where did you learn all this?”

“Every one knows it—every one in Cap. Every one knows that Jean has done with us, and that the Commissary is going home, and that General Laveaux means to be guided in everything by you; and that the posts have all surrendered in your name; and that at Port Paix—”

“Enough, enough! my boys. Too much, for I see that your hearts are proud.”

“The Commissary and the General said that you are supreme—the idol of your colour. Those were their words.”

“And in this there is yet no glory. I have yet done nothing, but by what is called accident. Our own people were ready—by no preparation of mine; the mulattoes were weak and taken by surprise, through circumstances not of my ordering. Glory there may hereafter be belonging to our name, my boys; but as yet there is none. I have power: but power is less often glory than disgrace.”

“Oh, father! do but listen. Hark again! ‘Toussaint L’Ouverture!’”

“I will strive to make that shout a prophecy, my sons. Till then, no pride! Are you not weary? Come in to rest. Can you sleep in my fine chamber here as well as at Breda?”

“Anywhere,” said Isaac, sleepily.

Toussaint gave up his apartment to his sons, and went forth once more to survey the town, and see that his troops were in their quarters. This done, he repaired to his friend Henri, willing for one more night to forego

his greatness; and there, in his friend's small barrack-room, the supreme in the colony—the idol of his colour—slept, as he had hoped for his boys, as tranquilly as if he had been at Breda.



## Chapter Ten.

### A Morning of Office.

If the devastation attending the revolutionary wars of Saint Domingo was great, it was repaired with singular rapidity. Thanks to the vigorous agencies of nature in a tropical region, the desolated plains were presently covered with fresh harvests, and the burnt woods were buried deep under the shadow of young forests, more beautiful than the old. Thanks also to the government of the wisest mind in the island, the moral evils of the struggle were made subordinate to its good results. It was not in the power of man to bury past injuries in oblivion, while there were continually present minds which had been debased by tyranny, and hearts which had been outraged by cruelty; but all that could be done was done. Vigorous employment was made the great law of society—the one condition of the favour of its chief; and, amidst the labours of the hoe and the mill, the workshop and the wharf—amidst the toils of the march and the bustle of the court, the bereaved and insulted forgot their woes and their revenge. A new growth of veneration and of hope overspread the ruins of old delights and attachments, as the verdure of the plain spread its mantle over the wrecks of mansion and of hut. In seven years from the kindling of the first incendiary torch on the Plaine du Nord, it would have been hard for a stranger, landing in Saint Domingo, to believe what had been the horrors of the war.

Of these seven years, however, the first three or four had been entirely spent in war, and the rest disturbed by it. Double that number of years must pass before there could be any security that the crop planted would ever be reaped, or that the peasants who laid out their family burying-grounds would be carried there in full age, instead of perishing in the field or in the woods. The cultivators went out to their daily work with the gun slung across their shoulders and the cutlass in their belt: the hills were crested with forts, and the mountain-passes were watched by scouts. The troops were frequently reviewed in the squares of the towns, and news was perpetually arriving of a skirmish here or there. The mulatto general, Rigaud, had never acknowledged the authority of Toussaint L'Ouverture; and he was still in the field, with a mulatto force sufficient to



interrupt the prosperity of the colony, and endanger the authority of its Lieutenant-Governor. It was some time, however, since Rigaud had approached any of the large towns. The sufferers by his incursions were the planters and field-labourers. The inhabitants of the towns carried on their daily affairs as if peace had been fully established in the island, and feeling the effects of such warfare as there was only in their occasional contributions of time and money.

The Commander-in-chief, as Toussaint L'Ouverture was called, by the appointment of the French commissaries, though his dignity had not yet been confirmed from Paris—the Commander-in-chief of Saint Domingo held his head-quarters at Port-au-Prince. Among other considerations which rendered this convenient, the chief was that he thus avoided much collision with the French officials, which must otherwise have taken place. All the commissaries, who rapidly succeeded one another from Paris, resided at Government-House, in Cap Français. Thence, they issued orders and regulations in the name of the government at home; orders and regulations which were sometimes practicable, sometimes unwise, and often absurd. If Toussaint had resided at Cap, a constant witness of their ignorance of the minds, manners, and interests of the blacks—if he had been there to listen to the complaints and appeals which would have been daily made, he could scarcely have kept terms for a single week with the French authorities. By establishing himself in the south, while they remained in the north, he was able quietly to neutralise or repair much of the mischief which they did, and to execute many of his own plans without consulting them; while many a grievance was silently borne, many an order simply neglected, which would have been a cause of quarrel, if any power of redress had been at hand. Jealous as he was for the infant freedom of his race, Toussaint knew that it would be best preserved by weaning their minds from thoughts of anger, and their eyes from the sight of blood. Trust in the better part of negro nature guided him in his choice between two evils. He preferred that they should be misgoverned in some affairs of secondary importance, and keep the peace, rather than that they should be governed to their hearts' content by himself, at the risk of quarrel with the mother-country. He trusted to the singular power of forbearance and forgiveness which is found in the negro race for the preservation of friendship with the whites and of the blessings of peace; and he therefore reserved his own powerful influence over both parties for great occasions—interfering only when he perceived

that, through carelessness or ignorance, the French authorities were endangering some essential liberty of those to whom they were the medium of the pleasure of the government at home. The blacks were aware that the vigilance of their Commander-in-chief over their civil rights never slept, and that his interference always availed; and these convictions ensured their submission, or at least their not going beyond passive resistance on ordinary occasions, and thus strengthened their habits of peace.

The Commander-in-chief held his levées at Port-au-Prince on certain days of the month, all the year round. No matter how far-off he might be, or how engaged, the night before, he rarely failed to be at home on the appointed day, at the fixed hour. On one particular occasion, he was known to have been out against Rigaud, day and night, for a fortnight, and to be closely engaged as far south as Aux Cayes, the very evening preceding the review and levée which had been announced for the 20th of January. Not the less for this did he appear in front of the troops in the Place Républicaine, when the daylight gushed in from the east, putting out the stars, whose reflection trembled in the still waters of the bay. The last evolutions were finished, and the smoke from the last volley had incited away in the serene sky of January, before the coolness of the northern breeze had yielded to the blaze of the mounting sun. The troops then lined the long streets of the town, and the avenue to the palace, while the Commander-in-chief and his staff passed on, and entered the palace-gates.

The palace, like every other building in Port-au-Prince, consisted of one storey only. The town had been destroyed by an earthquake in 1770; and, though earthquakes are extremely rare in Saint Domingo, the place had been rebuilt in view of the danger of another. The palace therefore covered a large piece of ground, and its principal rooms were each nearly surrounded by garden and grass-plot. The largest apartment, in which the levées were always held, was the best room in the island—if not for the richness of its furniture, for its space and proportions, and the views which it commanded. Not even the abode of the Commander-in-chief could exhibit such silken sofas, marble tables, gilded balustrades, and japanned or ivory screens, as had been common in the mansions of the planters; and Toussaint had found other uses for such money as he had than those of pure luxury. The essential and natural advantages of his

palace were enough for him and his. The door of this, his favourite apartment, was covered with a fine India matting; the windows were hung with white muslin curtains; and the sofas, which stood round three sides of the room, between the numerous windows, were covered with green damask, of no very rich quality. In these many windows lay the charm, commanding, as they did, extensive prospects to the east, north, and west. The broad verandah cast a shadow which rendered it unnecessary to keep the jalousies closed, except during the hottest hours of the year. This morning every blind was swung wide open, and the room was cool and shady, while, without, all was bathed in the mild, golden sunshine of January—bright enough for the strongest eye, but without glare.

To the east and north spread the Cul-de-Sac—a plain of unequalled richness, extending to the foot of the mountains, fifteen miles into the interior. The sun had not yet risen so high but that these mountains cast a deep shadow for some distance into the plain, while their skirts were dark with coffee-groves, and their summits were strongly marked against the glowing sky. Amidst the wide, verdant level of the plain, arose many a white mansion, each marked by a cluster of trees, close at hand. Some of these plantation houses looked bluish and cool in the mountain shadows; others were like bright specks in the sunshine, each surmounted by a star, if its gilded weathercock chanced to turn in the breeze. To the north, also, this plain, still backed by mountains, extended till it joined the sands of the bight.

Upon these sands, on the margin of the deep blue waters, might be seen flashing in the sun a troop of flamingoes, now moving forward in a line into the waves, and diligently fishing; and then, on the alarm of a scout, all taking wing successively, and keeping their order, as they flew homewards, to the salt marshes in the interior—their scarlet bodies vividly contrasted with the dark green of the forests that clothed the mountain-sides. To the west lay the broad azure sheet of the bay, locked by the island of Gonave, and sprinkled with fishing-boats, while under the forest-tufted rocks of the island two vessels rode at anchor—a schooner belonging to Saint Domingo, and an English frigate.

In the shady western piazza sat a party who seemed much occupied in looking out upon the bay, and watching the vessels that lay under the island; from which vessels boats might be seen putting off for the town

just at the time of the commencement of the levée. The party in the piazza consisted chiefly of women. Madame L'Ouverture was there—like, and yet unlike, the Margot of former years—employed, as usual—busy with her needle, and motherly, complacent, tenderly vigilant as of old; but with a matronly grace and dignity which evidently arose from a gratified mind, and not from external state. Her daughters were beside her, both wonderfully improved in beauty, though Génifrède still preserved the superiority there. She sat a little apart from her mother and sister netting. Moyse was at her feet, in order to obtain the benefit of an occasional gleam from the eyes which were cast down upon her work. His idolatry of her was no surprise to any who looked upon her in her beauty, now animated and exalted by the love which she had avowed, and which was sanctioned by her father and her family. The sisters were dressed nearly alike, though Aimée knew well that it would have been politic to have avoided thus bringing herself into immediate comparison with her sister. But Aimée cared not what was thought of her face, form, or dress. Isaac had always been satisfied with them. She had confided in Génifrède's taste when they first assumed their rank; and it was least troublesome to do so still. If Isaac should wish it otherwise when he should return from France, she would do as he desired. Meantime, they were dressed in all essentials exactly alike, from the pattern of the Madras handkerchief they wore (according to universal custom) on their heads, to the cut of the French-kid shoe. The dress was far from resembling the European fashion of the time. No tight lacing; no casing in whalebone—nothing like a hoop. A chemisette of the finest cambric appeared within the bodice, and covered the bosom. The short full sleeves were also of white cambric. The bodice, and short full skirt, were of deep yellow India silk; and the waist was confined with a broad band of violet-coloured velvet, gaily embroidered. The only difference in the dress of the sisters was in their ornaments. Aimée wore heavy ear-drops, and a large necklace and bracelets of amethyst; while Génifrède wore, suspended from a throat-band of velvet, embroidered like that which bound her waist, a massive plain gold crucifix, lately given her by Moyse. Her ear-rings were hoops of plain gold, and her bracelets again of embroidered velvet, clasped with plain gold. In her might be seen, and in her was seen by the Europeans who attended the levée of that day, what the negro face and form may be when seen in their native climate, unhardened by degradation, undebased by ignorance, unspoiled by oppression—all peculiarities of feature softened under the refining influence of mind, and all peculiarities

of expression called out in their beauty by the free exercise of natural affections. The animated sweetness of the negro countenance is known only to those who have seen it thus.

Paul was of the party, looking very well in the French uniform, which he wore in honour of his brother on great occasions, though he was far from having grown warlike on his change of fortune. His heart was still in his cottage, or on the sea; and now, as he stood leaning against a pillar of the piazza, his eye was more busy in watching the fishing-boats in the bay than in observing what went on within the house. The only thing he liked about state-days was the hours of idleness they afforded—such hours as this, when, lounging in the shade, he could see Moyse happy at the feet of his beloved, and enjoy the soft wind as it breathed past, laden with spicy scents. During such an hour, he almost forgot the restraints of his uniform and of his rank.

There was yet another person in the piazza. Seated on its step, but sheltered by its broad eaves, sat Thérèse—more beautiful by far than Génifrède—more beautiful by far than in her days of girlhood—celebrated as she had then been throughout the colony. Her girlishness was gone, except its grace; her sensitiveness was gone, and (as those might think who did not watch the changes of her eye) much of her animation. Her carriage was majestic, her countenance, calm, and its beauty, now refined by a life of leisure and the consciousness of rank—leisure and rank both well employed—more imposing than ever. Her husband was now a general in Toussaint's army. When he was in the field, Madame Dessalines remained at home, on their estate near Saint Marc. When he was in attendance on the Commander-in-chief, she was ever a welcome guest in Toussaint's family. Madame L'Ouverture loved her as a daughter; and she had endeared herself to the girls. At this time, from an accidental circumstance, she was at the palace without her husband. It was evident that she felt quite at home there; for, though she had arrived only a few hours before, she did not appear disposed to converse. As she sat alone, leaning against the base of the pillar, she now and then cast her eyes on the book she held open in her hand, but for the most part looked abroad upon the terraced town, the bay, or the shadowy clefts of the rocky island which closed it in.

The sound of feet and of voices from within increased from moment to

moment. The Commander-in-chief had assumed his place, with his aides on either hand; and presently the room was so nearly filled as to leave no more space than was required for the deputations to pass in at one entrance on the south of the apartment, appear before the General, and pass out at the other door. Toussaint stood at the centre of the north end, beside a table partly covered with papers, and at which sat his secretary. On this table lay his cocked hat. His uniform was blue, with scarlet cap and cuffs, richly embroidered. He had white trousers, long Hessian boots, and, as usual, the Madras handkerchief on his head. While walking up the apartment, he had been conversing on business with his officers, and continued to do so, without the loss of a moment, till, on his taking his place, two ushers came up with an account of the parties waiting for admittance, desiring to know his pleasure as to who should have precedence.

“The clergy,” said Toussaint; “the first in duty must be first in honour.”

In a few moments there was a loud announcement of the clergy from the districts of Saint Marc, Leogane, Mirbalais, and so on, through a long enumeration of districts. The priests entered, two and two, a long procession of black gowns. As they collected into a group before him, every one anxiously making way for them, Toussaint crossed his arms upon his breast, and bowed his head low for many moments. When he looked up again, an expression of true reverence was upon his countenance; and, in a tone of earnestness, he asked for what service they desired to command him.

Father Antioche, an old priest, assisted by a brother at least thirty years younger, offered sealed papers, which, he said, contained reports from the several districts concerning the religious and moral condition of the inhabitants. Toussaint received them, and laid them, with his own hand, upon the table beside him, saying, with much solicitude—

“Do I see rightly in your countenances that you bring good news of your flocks, my fathers!”

“It is so,” replied the old priest. “Our wishes are fast fulfilling.”

“Eight thousand marriages have been celebrated, as will appear in our

reports,” added the young priest.

“And in the difficult cases of a plurality of wives,” resumed Father Antioche, “there is generally a willingness in the cultivators to maintain liberally those who are put away.”

“And the children?”

“The children may be found in the schools, sitting side by side in peace. The quarrels of the children of different mothers (quarrels often fatal in the fields) disappear in the schools. The reports well exhibit the history of our expanding system.”

“God be thanked!” Toussaint uttered in a low voice.

“Under the religions rule of your excellency,” said the young priest, “enforced by so pure an example of piety, the morals of this colony will be established, and the salvation of its people secured.”

“You,” said Toussaint, “the servants of Christ, are the true rulers of this island and its inhabitants. I am your servant in guarding external order, during a period which you will employ in establishing your flocks in the everlasting wisdom and peace of religion. I hold the inferior office of keeping our enemies in awe, and enabling our people to find subsistence and comfort. My charge is the soil on which, and the bodies in which, men live. You have in charge their souls, in which lies the future of this world and of the next. You are the true rulers of Saint Domingo; and we bow to you as such.”

Every head was immediately bowed, and the priests went out, amidst the obeisances of the whole assemblage—some of the order wondering, perhaps, whether every mind there was as sincere in its homage as that of the Commander-in-chief.

The superintendents of the cultivators came next—negroes dressed in check shirts, white linen jackets and trousers, and with the usual Madras handkerchief on the head. They, too, handed in reports; and to them also did Toussaint address his questions, with an air of respect almost equal to that with which he had spoken to the priests.

“I grieve,” said he, “that you cannot yet fulfil your function altogether in peace. My generals and I have done what we can to preserve our fields from devastation, and our cultivators from the dangers and the fears of ambushed foes; but Rigaud’s forces are not yet subdued; and for a while we must impose upon our cultivators the toil of working armed in the field. We are soldiers here,” he added, looking round upon his officers, “but I hope there is not one of us who does not honour the hoe more than the gun. How far have you been able to repair in the south-eastern districts the interruption in the September planting?”

The superintendent of those districts came forward, and said that some planting had been effected in November, the sprouts of which now looked well. More planting had been done during the early part of the present month; and time would show the result.

“Good!” said Toussaint. “Some of the finest crops I have seen have risen from January plants, though it were best it were done in September. How do you report about the rats?”

“The nuisance is still great,” replied the head superintendent; “their uninterrupted possession of the fields during the troubles has made them very powerful. Would that your excellency were as powerful to conquer the rats as the mulattoes!”

“We have allies,” said Toussaint, gravely—“an army more powerful than that which I command. Where are the ants!”

“They have closed their campaign. They cleared the fields for us in the autumn; but they have disappeared.”

“For a time only. While there are rats, they will reappear.”

“And when there are no more rats, we must call in some force, if your excellency knows of such, to make war upon the ants; for they are only a less evil than that which they cure.”

“If they were absent, you would find some worse evil in their stead—pestilence, perhaps. Teach your children this, if you hear them complain of anything to which Providence has given life and an errand among us. The cocoa walks at Plaisance—are they fenced to the north?”



“Completely. The new wood has sprung up from the ashes of the fires, like a mist from the lake.”

“Are the cottages enlarged and divided, as I recommended?”

“Universally. Every cottage inhabited by a family has now two rooms, at least. As your excellency also desired, the cultivators have spent their leisure hours in preparing furniture—from bedsteads to baskets. As the reports will explain, there are some inventions which it is hoped will be inspected by your excellency—particularly a ventilator, to be fixed in the roofs of cottages; a broad shoe for walking over the salt marshes; and—”

“The cooler,” prompted a voice from behind.

“And a new kind of cooler, which preserves liquids, and even meats, for a longer time than any previously known to the richest planter in the island. This discovery does great credit to the sagacity of the labourer who has completed it.”

“I will come and view it. I hope to visit all our cultivators—to verify your reports with my own eyes. At present, we are compelled, like the Romans, to go from arms to the plough, and from the plough to arms; but, when possible, I wish to show that I am not a negro of the coast, with my eye ever abroad upon the sea, or on foreign lands. I desire that we should make use of our own means for our own welfare. Everything that is good shall be welcomed from abroad as it arrives; but the liberty of the blacks can be secured only by the prosperity of their agriculture.”

“I do not see why not by fisheries,” observed Paul, to the party in the piazza, as he caught his brother’s words. “If Toussaint is not fond of fish, he should remember that other people are.”

“He means,” said Thérèse, “that toil, peaceful toil, with its hope, and its due fruit, is best for the blacks. Now, you know, Paul L’Ouverture, that if the fields of the ocean had required as much labour as those of the plain, you would never have been a fisherman.”

“It is pleasanter on a hot day to dive than to dig; and easier to draw the net for an hour than to cut canes for a day—is it not, uncle?” asked Aimée.

“If the Commander-in-chief thinks toil good for us,” said Moyse, “why does he disparage war? Who knows better than he what are the fatigues of a march? and the wearisomeness of an ambush is greater still. Why does he, of all men, disparage war?”

“Because,” said Madame, “he thinks there has been enough hatred and fighting. I have to put him in mind of his own glory in war, or he would be always forgetting it—except, indeed, when any one comes from Europe. When he hears of Bonaparte, he smiles; and I know he is then glad that he is a soldier too.”

“Besides his thinking that there has been too much fighting,” said Aimée, “he wishes that the people should labour joyfully in the very places where they used to toil in wretchedness for the whites.”

Thérèse turned to listen, with fire in her eyes.

“In order,” continued Aimée, “that they may lose the sense of that misery, and become friendly towards the whites.”

Thérèse turned away again, languidly.

“There are whites now entering,” said Paul; “not foreigners, are they?”

“No,” said Madame. “Surely they are Creoles; yes, there is Monsieur Caze, and Monsieur Hugonin, and Monsieur Charrier. I think these gentlemen have all been reinstated in their properties since the last levée. Hear what they say.”

“We come,” exclaimed aloud Monsieur Caze, the spokesman of the party of white planters; “we come, overwhelmed with amazement, penetrated with gratitude, to lay our thanks at your feet. All was lost. The estates on which we were born, the lands bequeathed to us by our fathers, were wrenched from our hands, ravaged, destroyed. We and our families fled—some to the mountains—some to the woods—and many to foreign lands. Your voice reached us, inviting us to our homes. We trusted that voice; we find our lands restored to us, our homes secure, and the passions of war stilled, like this atmosphere after the storms of December. And to you do we owe all—to you, possessed by a magnanimity of which we had not dared to dream!”

“These passions of war, of which you speak,” said Toussaint, “need never have raged, if God had permitted the whites to dream what was in the souls of the blacks. Let the past now be forgotten. I have restored your estates because they were yours; but I also perceive advantages in your restoration. By circumstances—not by nature, but by circumstances—the whites have been able to acquire a wide intelligence, a depth of knowledge, from which the blacks have been debarred. I desire for the blacks a perpetual and friendly intercourse with those who are their superiors in education. As residents, therefore, you are welcome; and your security and welfare shall be my care. You find your estates peopled with cultivators?”

“We do.”

“And you understand the terms on which the labour of your fellow-citizens may be hired? You have only to secure to them one-fourth of the produce, and you will, I believe, be well served. If you experience cause of complaint, your remedy will be found in an appeal to the superintendent of cultivators of the district, or to myself. Over the cultivators no one else, I now intimate to you, has authority.”

The gentlemen bowed, having nothing to say on this head.

“It may be in your power,” continued Toussaint, after applying to his secretary for a paper from the mass on the table—“it may be in your power to do a service to the colony, and to individuals mentioned in this paper, by affording information as to where they are to be found, if alive; which of them are dead; and which of the dead have left heirs. Many estates remain unclaimed. The list is about to be circulated in the colony, in France, and in the United States. If you should chance to be in correspondence with any of the owners or their heirs, make it known to them from me that they will be welcome here, as you are. In the mean time we are taking the best care in empower of their estates. They must rebuild such of their houses as have been destroyed; but their lands are cultivated under a commission, a part of the produce being assigned to the cultivators, the rest to the public treasury.”

Toussaint read the list, watching, as did every one present, the countenances of the Creoles as each name was pronounced. They had

information to offer respecting one or two only; to the rest they gave sighs or mournful shakes of the head.

“It is afflicting to us all,” said Toussaint, “to think of the slaughter and exile of those who drank wine together in the white mansions of yonder plain. But a wiser cheerfulness is henceforth to spread its sunshine over our land, with no tempest brewing in its heats.”

“Have we heard the whole list?” asked Monsieur Charrier, anxiously.

“All except three, whose owners or agents have been already summoned. These three are, the Athens estate, Monsieur Dank; the Breda estate, the attorney of which, Monsieur Bayou—”

“Is here!” cried a voice from the lower part of the room. “I landed just now,” exclaimed Bayou, hastening with extended arms to embrace Toussaint; “and I lose not a moment—”

“Gently, sir,” said the Commander-in-chief, drawing back two steps. “There is now a greater distance between me and you than there, once was between you and me. There can be no familiarity with the chief of a newly-redeemed race.”

Monsieur Bayou fell back, looking in every face around him, to see what was thought of this. Every face was grave.

“I sent for you,” resumed Toussaint, in a mild voice, “to put you at the head of the interests of the good old masters;—for the good alone have been able to return. Show us what can be done with the Breda estate, with free labourers. Make the blacks work well. Be not only just, but firm. You were formerly too mild a master. Make the blacks work well, that, by the welfare of your small interests, you may add to the general prosperity of the administration of the Commander-in-chief of Saint Domingo.”

Monsieur Bayou had no words ready. He stared round him upon the black officers in their splendid uniforms, upon the trains of liveried servants, handing coffee and fruits and sangaree on trays and salvers of massive silver, and on the throng of visitors who crowded upon one another’s heels, all anxious, not merely to pay their respects, but to offer their enthusiastic homage at the feet of his former slave. His eye at

length fixed upon the windows, through which he saw something of the outline of the group of ladies.

“You desire to greet Madame L’Ouverture?” said Toussaint, kindly. “You shall be conducted to her.” And one of the aides stepped forward to perform the office of introducer.

Monsieur Bayou pulled from his pocket, on his way to the window, a shagreen jewel-case; and, by the time he was in front of Madame he had taken from it a rich gold chain, which he hung on her neck, saying, with a voice and air strangely made up of jocoseness, awkwardness, and deference—

“I have not forgotten, you see, though I suppose you have, what you gave me, one day long ago. I tried to bring back something prettier than I carried away—something for each of you—but—I don’t know—I find everything here so different from what I had any idea of—so very strange—that I am afraid you will despise my little presents.”

While speaking, he shyly held out little parcels to Génifrède and Aimée, who received them graciously, while their mother replied—

“In those old days, Monsieur Bayou, we had nothing really our own to give; and you deserved from us any aid that was in our power. My daughters and I now accept with pleasure the tokens of friendship that you bring. I hope no changes have taken place which need prevent our being friends, Monsieur Bayou.”

He scarcely heard her.

“Is it possible,” cried he, “that these can be your girls? Aimée I might have known—but can this lady be Génifrède?”

Génifrède looked up with a smile, which perplexed him still further.

“I do not know that I ever saw a smile from her before; and she would not so much as lift up her head at one of my jokes. One could never gain her attention with anything but a ghost story. But I see how it is,” he added, stooping, and speaking low to her mother, while he glanced at Moyse —“she has learned at last the old song that she would not listen to when I

wanted to tell her fortune:—

“Your heart’s your own this summer day;  
To-morrow ’twill be changed away.’

“And Aimée—is she married?”

“Aimée is a widow—at least, so we call her,” said her mother, smiling. “Isaac (you remember Placide and Isaac)—her brother Isaac is all the world to her; and he is far away.”

Aimée’s eyes were full of tears in a moment; but she looked happy, as she always did when Isaac was spoken of as her own peculiar friend.

“I was going to ask about your boys,” said Bayou. “The little fellow who used to ride the horses to water, almost before he could walk alone—he and his brothers, where are they?”

“Denis is with his tutor, in the palace here. Placide and Isaac are at Paris.”

“At Paris! For education?”

“Partly so.”

“And partly,” interposed Paul, “for an object in which you, sir, have an interest, and respecting which you ought, therefore, to be informed. There are those who represent my brother’s actions as the result of personal ambition. Such persons have perpetually accused him to the French Government as desiring to sever the connection between the two races, and therefore between this colony and France. At the moment when these charges were most strongly urged, and most nearly believed, my brother sent his two elder sons to Paris, to be educated for their future duties under the care of the Directory. I hope, sir, you see in this act a guarantee for the safety and honour of the whites in Saint Domingo.”

“Certainly, certainly. All very right—very satisfactory.”

“Everybody who understands, thinks all that the Commander-in-chief

does quite right," said Madame, with so much of her old tone and manner as made Bayou ready to laugh. He turned to Paul, saying—

"May I ask if you are the brother who used to reside on the northern coast—if I remember right?"

"I am. I am Paul—Paul L'Ouverture." He sighed as he added, "I do not live on the northern coast now. I am going to live on the southern coast—in a palace, instead of my old hut."

"Monsieur Bayou will see—Monsieur Bayou will hear," interrupted Madame, "if he will stay out the levée. You will not leave us to-day, Monsieur Bayou?"

Monsieur Bayou bowed. He then asked if he had the pleasure of any acquaintance with the other lady, who had not once turned round since he arrived. Thérèse had indeed sat with her face concealed for some time past.

"Do not ask her," said Aimée, eagerly, in a low voice. "We do not speak to her of old times. She is Madame Dessalines."

"The lady of General Dessalines," said Madame. "Shall I introduce you?"

She called to Thérèse. Thérèse just turned round to notice the introduction, when her attention was called another way by two officers, who brought her some message from Toussaint. That one glance perplexed Monsieur Bayou as much as anything he had seen. That beautiful face and form were not new to him; but he had only a confused impression as to where and when he had seen them. He perceived, however, that he was not to ask. He followed her with his eyes as she rose from her low seat, and placed herself close by one of the open jalousies, so as to hear what passed within.

"It is the English deputation," said Paul. "Hear what my brother will say."

"What will become of them?" said Madame. "I do not know what would become of me if my husband were ever as angry with me as I know he is with them."

There were indeed signs of wrath in the countenance which was commonly gentle as the twilight. The rigid uprightness of his figure, the fiery eye, the distended nostril, all showed that Toussaint was struggling with anger. Before him stood a group of Englishmen—a sailor holding a wand, on which was fixed a small white banner, two gentlemen in plain clothes, the captain of the frigate which rode in the bay, and a colonel of the English troops in Jamaica.

“It is all very well, gentlemen,” Toussaint was saying—“it is all very well as regards the treaty. Twenty-four hours ago we should have had no difficulty in concluding it. But what have you to say to this treatment of women on board the schooner you captured? What have you to say to your act of taking all the gentlemen out of your prize (except one who would not quit his sister), leaving the ladies in charge of a brutal prize-master, who was drunk—was it not so?” he added, turning to one of his officers.

“It was: he was drunk, and refused the ladies access to their trunks of clothes, denied them the wine left for their use, and alarmed them extremely by his language. These ladies were wives of our most distinguished officers.”

“It matters not whose wives they were,” said Toussaint: “they were women; and I will treat with none who thus show themselves not to be men.”

“We do not ask you to treat with my prize-master,” said Captain Reynolds. “If it be true—”

“It is true,” said a voice from the window, to which all listened in a moment. “My maid and I were on board that schooner; from which we landed four hours ago. It is true that we were confined to the cabin, denied the refreshments that were before our eyes, and the use of our own clothes; and it is true that the oaths and threats of a drunken man were in our ears all night. When morning came, we looked out to see if we were really in the seas of Saint Domingo. It seemed as if we had been conveyed where the whites are still paramount.” And Thérèse indignantly walked away.



“You hear!” said Toussaint. “And you ask me to trade with Jamaica! While permitted to obtain provisions from our coast, you have captured a French schooner and a sloop in our seas; you have insulted our women; and now you propose a treaty! If it were not for that banner, you would have to treat for mercy.”

“When shall I be permitted to speak?” asked Captain Reynolds.

“Now.”

“The blame is mine. I appointed a prize-master, who, it now appears, was not trustworthy. I was not aware of this; and I left in the cabin, for the use of the ladies, all their own property, two cases of wine, and such fruits as I could obtain for them. I lament to find that my confidence was misplaced; and I pledge myself that the prize-master shall be punished. After offering my apologies to the offended ladies, I will retire to my ship, leaving this business of the treaty to appear as unconnected as it really is with this mischance. Allow me to be conducted to the presence of the ladies.”

“I will charge myself with your apologies,” said Toussaint, who knew that any white stood a small chance of a good reception from Thérèse. “I accept your acknowledgment of error, Captain Reynolds, and shall be ready to proceed with the treaty, on proof of the punishment of the prize-master. Gentlemen, I regard this treaty with satisfaction, and am willing to enclose this small tract of peace in the midst of the dreary wilderness of war. I am willing to see trade established between Jamaica and Saint Domingo. There are days when your blue mountains are seen from our shores. Let to-morrow be a bright day when no cloud shall hide us from one another’s friendship.”

“To-morrow,” the deputation from Jamaica agreed, as they bowed themselves out of the presence of the Commander-in-chief.

“More English! more English!” was whispered round, when the name of Gauthier was announced.

“No; not English,” observed some, on seeing that the five who now entered, though in the English uniform, were mulattoes.

“Not English,” said Toussaint, aloud. “English soldiers are honourable, whether as friends or foes. When we meet with the spying eye, and the bribing hand, we do not believe them to be English. Such are the eyes and hands of these men. They have the audacity to present themselves as guests, when their own hearts should tell them they are prisoners.”

“Prisoners!” exclaimed Gauthier and his companions.

“Yes, surely—prisoners. Your conduct has already been judged by a military commission, and you are sentenced. If you have more to say than you had to plead to me, say it when I have read.”

Toussaint took from among the papers on the table a letter brought, as Gauthier alleged, from the English commander, Sir Thomas Brisbane, declaring Gauthier empowered to treat for the delivery to the British of the posts of Gonaïves, Les Verrettes, and some others, in order to secure to the British the freedom of the windward passage. Toussaint declared that the messengers had brought with them bags of money, with which they had endeavoured to bribe him to this treachery. He asked of them if this were not true.

“It is,” said Gauthier; “but we and our authorities acted upon the precedent of your former conduct.”

“What former conduct? Did those hands ever receive gold from the coffers of an enemy? Speak freely. You shall not suffer from anything you may say here.”

“You have been the means by which posts have been delivered to an enemy. We remember hearing of the surrender of Marmalade, Gros Morne, and some others.”

“I was the means, as you say; but it was done by a wiser will and a stronger hand than mine. In that transaction my heart was pure. My design was to lose rank, and to return to poverty by the step I took. You ought to have inquired into facts, clearly understood by all who know me, before you proceeded to insult me. Have you more to say?”

“It was natural that we should believe that he through whom posts had been delivered would deliver posts again; and this was confirmed by

rumours, and I believe, even by letters which seemed to come from yourself, in relation to the posts now in question.”

Gauthier appealed to his companions, who all assented.

“There are other rumours concerning me,” said Toussaint, “which could not be perverted; and to these you should have listened. My actions are messages addressed to the whole world—letters which cannot be forged; and these alone you should have trusted. Such misunderstanding as yours could hardly have been foreseen; but it will be my fault, if it be repeated. The name of the First of the Blacks must never again be associated with bribery. You are sentenced by a military commission, before which your documents have been examined, to run the gauntlet. The sentence will immediately be executed in the Place d’Armes.”

“Are you aware,” cried Gauthier, “that I was second in command at Saint Marc when it was in the possession of the British?”

“I am aware of it.”

“This is enmity to our colour,” said another. “To our being mulattoes we owe our disgrace.”

“I have beloved friends of your colour,” said Toussaint. “Believe me, however, the complexion of your souls is so disgusting that I have no attention to spare for your faces. You must now depart.”

“Change our punishment!” said Gauthier. “Consider that I am an emigrant officer. Some other punishment!”

“No other,” said Toussaint. “This is the fit punishment—mean as your design—ridiculous as your attempt. Are the French Commissaries in waiting, Laroche? Let them be announced.”

The prisoners were removed by one door, while the imposing party from France entered by the other.

Commissary Hédouville, who had been for some time resident at Cap Français, entered, followed by a party of his countrymen, just arrived from Paris. There was among them one, at sight of whom Toussaint’s

countenance changed, while an exclamation was heard from the piazza, which showed that his family were moved like himself. The person who excited this emotion was a young black officer, who entered smiling, and as if scarcely able to keep his place behind the Commissary, and General Michel, the head of the new deputation.

The Commander-in-chief quitted his station, and advanced some steps, seizing the officer's hand, and asking eagerly—

“Vincent! Why here? My boys—how, where are they?”

“They are well: both well and happy in our beloved Paris. I am here with General Michel; sent by the government, with gifts and compliments, which—”

“Which we will speak of when I have offered my welcome to these representatives of the government we all obey,” said Toussaint, turning to the Commissary and the General, and remembering that his emotions as a father had caused him, for the moment, to lose sight of the business of the hour. He made himself the usher of the French Commissaries to the sofa, in front of which he had himself been standing. There he would have seated Hédouville and General Michel. Hédouville threw himself down willingly enough; but the newly arrived messenger chose to stand.

“I come,” said he, “the bearer to you of honours from the Republic, which I delight to present as the humblest of your servants.—Not a word of apology for your graceful action of welcome to Brigadier-General Vincent! What so graceful as the emotions of a parent's heart? I understand—I am aware—he went out as the guardian of your sons; and your first welcome was, therefore, due to him. The office of guardian of your sons is, ought to be, in your eyes, more important, more sacred, than that of Commissary, or any other. If our national Deliverer—if the conqueror of Italy—if our First Consul himself were here, he ought to step back while you embrace the guardian of your sons.”

The party in the piazza saw and heard all.

“If,” said Madame, in a whisper to Génifrède, “if these honours that they speak of come from Bonaparte—if he has answered your father's letter, your father will think his happiness complete—now we know that the

boys are well.”

“The First Consul has written, or will write, no doubt,” said Aimée. “It must be pleasant to him as to my father, to greet a brother in destiny and in glory. Surely General Vincent will come and speak to us; will tell us of my brothers! He looked this way just now.”

“The First Consul will not write,” said Moyse. “He is a white; and therefore, though a brother in destiny and in glory, he will not notice the Commander-in-chief of Saint Domingo.”

“You are right, Moyse,” said Madame Dessalines. “And it is best so.”

“But that will disappoint my husband very much,” said Madame. “He likes the whites better than you do.”

“He does,” said Thérèse. “But let us listen.”

Hédouville was at the moment exerting himself to introduce his secretary, Monsieur Pascal.

“An honoured name,” observed Toussaint.

“And not only in name, but by blood connected with the great man you refer to,” said Hédouville.

“None are more welcome here,” said Toussaint, “than those who bring with them the honours of piety, of reason, and of science.” And he looked with deep interest upon the countenance of the secretary, which did in truth show signs of that thoughtfulness and sagacity, though not of the morbid suffering, which is associated in all minds with the image of the author of the Provinciales. Monsieur Pascal returned the gaze which was fixed upon him with one in which intense curiosity was mingled with doubt, if not fear. His countenance immediately, however, relaxed into an expression of pleased surprise. During this brief moment, these two men, so unlike—the elderly, toil-worn negro, and the young, studious Frenchman—felt that they were friends.

Monsieur Pascal stepped aside to make way for Monsieur Molière.

“Are we to welcome in you,” asked Toussaint, “a messenger of mirth to our society?”

The group of Frenchmen could scarcely restrain their laughter at this question. Monsieur Molière had a most lugubrious countenance—a thing not always inconsistent with a merry humour: but Monsieur Molière’s heart was believed never to have laughed, any more than his face. He answered, as if announcing a misfortune, that he claimed no connection with the dramatist, though he believed some of his family had attempted to do so.

“Monsieur Molière discharges the duty of a pious descendant, however,” said Vincent. “He laughs himself into such a state of exhaustion every night over those immortal comedies, that he has to be carried to bed. That is the reason we see him so grave in the morning.”

“Think of Monsieur Molière as a trusted secretary of the messenger from the republic to yourself,” said General Michel.

“I come,” said Michel, assuming a pompous tone, “I come associated with an officer of the republican army, Monsieur Pétion—a native of this colony, but a stranger to yourself.”

Monsieur Pétion paid his respects. He was a mulatto, with shy and reserved manners, and an exceedingly intellectual countenance.

“We lost you early,” said Toussaint; “but only to offer you the warmer welcome back. It was, as I remember, to attend the military schools of France that you left your home. Such scholars are welcome here.”

“And particularly,” observed Michel, “when they have also had the fortune to serve in the army of Italy, and immediately under the eye of the First Consul himself.”

“Is it so? Is it really so?” exclaimed Toussaint. “I can never hear enough of the ruler of France. Tell us—but that must be hereafter. Do you come to me from him?”

“From the government generally,” replied Pétion.

An expression of disappointment, very evident to his watchful wife, passed over the face of Toussaint.

“There is no letter,” she whispered to Génifrède.

“We bring you from the government,” said Michel, “a confirmation of the dignity of Commander-in-chief of this colony, conferred by Commissary Santhonax.”

Toussaint bowed, but smiled not.

“See, he sighs!” said Madame, sighing in echo.

“These are empty words,” said Thérèse. “They give him only what they cannot withhold; and at the very moment they surround him with spies.”

“He says,” replied Madame, “that Hédouville is sent here ‘to restrain his ambition.’ Those were the words spoken of him at Paris, where they will not believe that he has no selfish ambition.”

“They will not believe, because they cannot understand. Their Commander-in-chief has a selfish ambition; and they cannot imagine that ours may be a man of a higher sold. But we cannot help it: they are whites.”

“What a dress—what a beautiful dress!” exclaimed Madame, who almost condescended to stand fairly in the window, to see the presents now displayed before her husband by the commissary’s servants.

“These presents,” pursued General Michel, while Pétion stood aloof, as if he had no concern in the business—“this dress of embroidered velvet, and this set of arms, I am to present to you, in the name of the late Directory of France, in token of their admiration of your services to the colony.”

Toussaint stretched out his hand for the sword, which he immediately assumed instead of the one he wore, observing that this sword, like that which he had now laid aside, should be employed in loyal service to the republic. As he took no notice of the embroidered dress, it was conveyed away.

“Not only in the hall of government,” resumed Michel—“but throughout all Europe, is your name ringing to the skies. A eulogium has been delivered at the Council of Ancients—”

“And an oration before the governors of the Military Schools,” added Hédouville.

“And from Paris,” said Pascal, “your reputation has spread along the shores of the Rhine, and as far north as Saint Petersburg; and in the south, even to Rome.”

Toussaint’s ear caught a low laugh of delight from the piazza, which he thought fit alone for a husband’s ear, and therefore hoped that no one else had heard.

“Enough, gentlemen,” he said. “Measuring together my deeds and this applause, I understand the truth. This applause is in fact given to the powers of the negro race; and not to myself as a soldier or a man. It belongs not, therefore, to me. For my personal support, one line of a letter, one word of message, from the chief of our common country, would be worth the applause of Europe, of which you speak.”

Monsieur Petion produced a sealed packet, which he delivered; and this seemed to remind General Vincent that he had one too. Toussaint was unable to refrain from tearing open first one, and then the other, in the intense hope of receiving some acknowledgment, some greeting from the “brother in destiny and in glory,” who was the idol of his loyal heart. There was no word from Bonaparte among the first papers; and it was scarcely possible that there should be in the other packet; yet he could not keep his eye from it. Other eyes were watching from behind the jalousies. He cast a glance, a half smile that way; the consequence of which was that Aimée, forgetting the time, the deputation, the officers, the whole crowd, sprang into the room, and received the letter from Isaac, which was the only thing in all that room that she saw. She disappeared in another moment, followed, however, by General Vincent.

The father’s smile died away from the face of Toussaint, and his brow darkened, as he caught at a glance the contents of the proclamations contained in Pétion’s packet. A glance was enough. Before the eyes of



the company had returned from the window, whither they had followed the apparition of Aimée, he had folded up the papers. His secretary's hand was ready to receive them: but Toussaint put them into his bosom.

"Those proclamations," said Hédouville, rising from the sofa, and standing by Toussaint's side, "you will immediately publish. You will immediately exhibit on your colours the words imposed, 'Brave blacks, remember that the French people alone recognise your freedom, and the legality of your rights!'"

As the commissary spoke these, words aloud, he looked round upon the assembled blacks, who, in their turn, all fixed their eyes upon their chief. Toussaint merely replied that he would give his best attention to all communications from the government of France.

"In order," said Hédouville, as if in explanation of a friend's purposes, "in order to yield implicit obedience to its commands." Then resuming his seat, he observed to Toussaint, "I believe General Michel desires some little explanation of certain circumstances attending his landing at Cap."

"I do," said General Michel, resuming his solemn air. "You are aware that General Vincent and I were arrested on landing?"

"I am aware of it. It was by my instant command that you were set free."

"By whose command, or by what error, then, were we arrested?"

"I hoped that full satisfaction had been afforded you by Monsieur Raymond, the Governor of Cap Français. Did he not explain to you that it was by an impulse of the irritated blacks—an impulse of which they repent, and to which they will not again yield, proceeding from anger for which there is but too much cause? As you, however, are not to be made responsible for the faults of your government towards us, the offending parties have been amply punished."

"I," said Hédouville, from the sofa behind, "I am held responsible for the faults of our government towards you. What are they?"

"We will discuss them at Cap," replied Toussaint. "There you will be surrounded by troops of your own colour; and you will feel more at liberty

to open your whole mind to me than, it grieves me to perceive, you are when surrounded by blacks. When you know the blacks better, you will become aware that the highest security is found in fully trusting them.”

“What is it that you suppose we fear from the blacks?”

“When we are at Cap, I will ask you what it was that you feared, Monsieur Hédouville, when you chose to land at Saint Domingo, instead of at Cap—when you showed your mistrust of your fellow-citizens by selecting the Spanish city for your point of entrance upon our island. I will then ask you what it is that your government fears, that it commits the interests of the blacks to a new legislature, which understands neither their temper nor their affairs.”

“This was, perhaps, the cause of the difficulty we met with at Cap,” observed General Michel.

“It is the chief cause. Some jealousy on this account is not to be wondered at; but it has not the less been punished. I would further ask,” he continued, turning again to Hédouville, “what the First Consul fears, that—”

“Who ever heard of the First Consul fearing anything?” cried Hédouville, with a smile.

“Hear it now, then.”

“In this place?” said Hédouville, looking round. “In public?”

“In this place—among the most loyal of the citizens of France,” replied Toussaint, casting a proud look round upon his officers and assembled friends. “If I were about to make complaints of the First Consul, I would close my doors upon you and myself, and speak in whispers. But it is known that I honour him, and hold him to my heart, as a brother in destiny and in glory: though his glory is now at its height, while mine will not be so till my race is redeemed from the consequences of slavery, as well as from slavery itself. Still, we are brothers; and I therefore mourn his fears, shown in the documents that he sends to my soldiers, and shown no less in his sending none to me.”

“I bring you from him the confirmation of your dignity,” observed General Michel.

“You do so by message. The honour is received through the ear. But that which should plant it down into my heart—the greeting from a brother—is wanting. It cannot be that the First of the Whites has not time, has not attention, for the First of the Blacks. It is that he fears—not for himself, but for our country: he fears our ambition, our revenge. He shall experience, however, that we are loyal—from myself, his brother, to the mountain child who startles the vulture from the rocks with his shouts of Bonaparte the Great. To engage our loyalty before many witnesses,” he continued, once more looking round upon the assemblage, “I send this message through you, in return for that which I have received. Tell the First Consul that, in the absence of interference with the existing laws of the colony, I guarantee, under my personal responsibility, the submission to order, and the devotion to France, of my black brethren. Mark the condition, gentlemen, which you will pronounce reasonable. Mark the condition, and you will find happy results. You will soon see whether I pledge in vain my own responsibility and your hopes.”

Even while he spoke, in all the fervour of unquestionable sincerity, of his devotion to France, his French hearers felt that he was virtually a monarch. The First of the Blacks was not only supreme in this palace, and throughout the colony; he had entered upon an immortal reign over all lands trodden by the children of Africa. To the contracted gaze of the diplomatists present, all might not be visible—the coming ages when the now prophetic name of L’Ouverture should have become a bright fact in the history of man, and should be breathed in thanksgiving under the palm-tree, sung in exultation in the cities of Africa, and embalmed in the liberties of the Isles of the West:—such a sovereignty as this was too vast and too distant for the conceptions of Michel and Hédouville to embrace; but they were impressed with a sense of his power, with a feeling of the majesty of his influence; and the reverential emotions which they would fain have shaken off, and which they were afterwards ashamed of, were at the present moment enhanced by sounds which reached them from the avenue. There was military music, the firing of salutes, the murmur of a multitude of voices, and the tramp of horses and of men.

Toussaint courteously invited the commissaries to witness the

presentation to him, for the interests of France, of the keys of the cities of the island, late in the possession of Spain, and now ceded to France by the treaty of Bâle. The commissaries could not refuse, and took their stand on one side of the First of the Blacks, while Paul L'Ouverture assumed the place of honour on the other hand.

The apartment was completely filled by the heads of the procession—the late Governor of the city of Saint Domingo, his officers, the magistracy of the city, and the heads of the clergy.

Among these last was a face which Toussaint recognised with strong emotion. The look which he cast upon Laxabon, the gesture of greeting which he offered, caused Don Alonzo Dovaro to turn round to discover whose presence there could be more imposing to the Commander-in-chief than his own. The flushed countenance of the priest marked him out as the man.

Don Alonzo Dovaro ordered the keys to be brought, and addressed himself in Spanish to Toussaint. Toussaint did not understand Spanish, and knew that the Spaniard, could speak French. The Spaniard, however, chose to deliver up a Spanish city in no other language than that of his nation. Father Laxabon stepped forward eagerly, with an offer to be interpreter. It was an opportunity he was too thankful to embrace—a most favourable means of surmounting the awkwardness of renewed intercourse with one, by whom their last conversation could not be supposed to be forgotten.

“This is well—this fulfilment of the treaty of Bâle,” said Toussaint. “But it would have been better if the fulfilment had been more prompt. The time for excuses and apologies is past. I merely say, as sincerity requires, that the most speedy fulfilment of treaties is ever the most honourable; and that I am guiltless of such injury as may have arisen from calling off ten thousand blacks from the peaceful pursuits of agriculture and commerce, to march them to the gates of Saint Domingo. You, the authorities of the city, compelled me to lead them there, in enforcement of the claims of France. If warlike thoughts have sprung up in those ten thousand minds, the responsibility is not mine. I wish that nothing but peace should be in the hearts of men of all races. Have you wishes to express, in the name of the citizens? Show me how I can gratify them.”

“Don Alonzo Dovaro explains,” said the interpreter, “that it will be acceptable to the Spanish inhabitants that you take the customary oath, in the name of the Holy Trinity, respecting the government of their whole region.”

“It is indeed a holy duty. What is the purport of the oath?”

“In the name of the Holy Trinity, to govern wisely and well.”

“Has there lived a Christian man who would take that oath?”

“Every governor of the Spanish colony in this island, from Diego, the brother of Columbus, to this day.”

“What is human wisdom,” said Toussaint, “that a man should swear that he will be always wise? What is human virtue, that he should pledge his salvation on governing well? I dare not take the oath.”

The Spaniards showed that they understood French by the looks they cast upon each other, before Laxabon could complete his version.

“This, however, will I do,” said Toussaint. “I will meet you to-morrow, at the great church in Port-au-Prince, and there bind myself before the altar, before the God who hears me now, on behalf of your people, to be silent on the past, and to employ my vigilance and my toils in rendering happy the Spanish people, now become my fellow-citizens of France.”

A profusion of obeisances proved that this was satisfactory. The late governor of the city took from one of his officers the velvet cushion on which were deposited the keys of Saint Domingo, and transferred it to the hands of the Commander-in-chief. At the moment, there was an explosion of cannon from the terrace on which stood the town; the bells rang in all the churches; and bursts of military music spread over the calm bay, with the wreaths of white smoke from the guns. The flamingoes took flight again from the strand; the ships moved in their anchorage; the shouts of the people arose from the town, and those of the soldiery from the square of the great avenue. Their idol, their Ouverture, was now in command of the whole of the most beautiful of the isles of the west.

As soon as he could be heard, Toussaint introduced his brother to the

Spaniards. Placing the cushion containing the keys upon the table, and laying his hand upon the keys, he declared his intention of giving to the inhabitants of the city of Saint Domingo a pledge of the merciful and gentle character of the government under which they were henceforth to live, in the person of the new governor, Paul L'Ouverture, who had never been known to remember unkindness from day-to-day. The new governor would depart for the east of the island on the morrow, from the door of the church, at the close of the celebration.

The levée was now over. Spanish, French, and the family and guests of the Commander-in-chief, were to meet at a banquet in the evening. Meantime, Toussaint and his brother stepped out together upon the northern piazza, and the room was cleared.

"I wish," said Paul, "that you had appointed any one but me to be governor of that city. How should a poor negro fisherman like me govern a city?"

"You speak like a white, Paul. The whites say of me, 'How should a poor negro postillion govern a colony?' You must do as I do—show that a negro can govern."

"But Heaven made you for a ruler."

"Who thought so while I was yet a slave? As for you—I know not what you can do till you have tried; nor do you. I own that you are not the man I should have appointed, if I had had a choice among all kinds of men."

"Then look around for some other."

"There is no other, on the whole, so little unfit as you. Henri must remain in the field while Rigaud is in arms. Jacques—"

"Ay, Dessalines—and he might have a court—such a wife as he would carry."

"Dessalines must not govern a city of whites. He hates the whites. His passion of hatred would grow with power; and the Spaniards would be wretched. They are now under my protection. I must give them a governor who cannot hate; and therefore I send you. Your love of our

people and of me, my brother, will rouse you to exertion and self-denial. For the rest you shall have able counsellors on the spot. For your private guidance, I shall be ever at your call. Confide wholly in me, and your appeal shall never be unanswered.”

“You shall be governor, then. I will wear the robes, and your head shall do the work. I will amuse the inhabitants with water-parties, and you—”

“No more of this!” said Toussaint, somewhat sternly. “It seems that you are unwilling to do your part of the great duty of our age and our race. Heaven has appointed you the opportunity of showing that blacks are men—fit to govern as to serve;—and you would rather sleep in the sunshine than listen to the message from the sky. My own brother does what he can to deepen the brand on the forehead of the negro!”

“I am ashamed, brother,” said Paul, “I am not like you; but yet I will do what I can. I will go to-morrow, and try whether I can toil as you do. There is one thing I can do which Henri, and Jacques, and even you, cannot;—I can speak Spanish.”

“You have discovered one of your qualifications, dear Paul. You will find more. Will you take Moyse with you?”

“Let it be a proof that I can deny myself, that I leave my son with you. Moyse is passionate.”

“I know it,” said Toussaint.

“He governs both his love and his hatred before you, while with me he indulges them. He must remain with you, in order to command his passions. He inherited them from me; and I must thus far help him to master them. You are all-powerful with him. I have no power.”

“You mean that Génifrède and I together are all-powerful with him. I believe it is so.”

“To you, then, I commit him. Moyse is henceforth your son.”

“As Génifrède is your daughter, Paul. If I die before the peace of the island is secured, there are two duties which I assign to you—to support

the spirit of the blacks, and to take my Génifrède for your daughter. The rest of my family love each other, and the world we live in. She loves only Moyse.”

“She is henceforth my child. But when will you marry them?”

“When Moyse shall have done some act to distinguish himself—for which he shall not want opportunity. I have a higher duty than that to my family—it is my duty to call out all the powers of every black. Moyse must therefore prove what he can do, before he can marry his love. For him, however, this is an easy condition.”

“I doubt not you are right, brother; but it is well for me that the days of my love are past.”

“Not so, Paul. The honour of your race must now be your love. For this you must show what you can do.”

They had paced the northern piazza while conversing. They now turned into the eastern, where they came upon the lovers, who were standing half shrouded by creeping plants—Moyse’s arm round Génifrède’s waist, and Génifrède’s head resting on her lover’s shoulder. The poor girl was sobbing violently, while Moyse was declaring that he would marry her, with or without consent, and carry her with him, if he was henceforth to live in the east of the island.

“Patience, foolish boy!” cried his father. “You go not with me. I commit you to my brother. You will stay with him, and yield him the duty of a son—a better duty than we heard you planning just now.”

“As soon as you prove yourself worthy, you shall be my son indeed,” said Toussaint. “I have heard your plans of marriage. You shall hear mine. I will give you opportunities of distinguishing yourself, in the services of the city and of the field. After the first act which proves you worthy of responsibility, I will give you Génifrède. As a free man, can you desire more?”

“I am satisfied—I am grateful,” said Moyse. “I believe I spoke some hasty words just now; but we supposed I was to be sent among the whites—and I had so lately returned from the south—and Génifrède was so



wretched!”

Génifrède threw herself on her father’s bosom, with broken words of love and gratitude. It was the first time she had ever voluntarily approached so near him; and she presently drew back, and glanced in his face with timid awe.

“My Génifrède! My child!” cried Toussaint, in a rapture of pleasure at this loosening of the heart. He drew her towards him, folded his arms about her, kissed the tears from her cheek, and hushed her sobs, saying, in a low voice which touched her very soul—

“He can do great deeds, Génifrède. He is yours, my child; but we shall all be proud of him.”

She looked up once more, with a countenance so radiant, that Toussaint carried into all the toils and observance of the day the light heart of a happy father.

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Note 1. I have to acknowledge that injustice is done in this work to the character of General Vincent. The writer of historical fiction is under that serious liability, in seizing on a few actual incidents, concerning a subordinate personage, that he makes himself responsible for justice to the whole character of the individual whose name he introduces into his story. Under this liability I have been unjust to Vincent, as Scott was to Edward Christian, in “Peveril of the Peak,” and Campbell to Brandt, in “Gertrude of Wyoming.” Like them, I am anxious to make reparation on the first opportunity. It is true that in my Appendix I avowed that Vincent was among those of my personages whose name alone I adopted, without knowing his character; but such an explanation in an appendix does not counteract the impression already made by the work. Finding this, I had thoughts of changing the name in the present edition; but I feared the character being still identified with Vincent, from its being fact that it was Vincent who accompanied Toussaint’s sons to Paris, and returned with the deputation, as I have represented; I think it best, therefore, to say here that, from all I can learn, General Vincent was an honourable and useful man, and that the delineation of character under that name in my book is purely fictitious. The following extract from

Clarkson's pamphlet on Negro Improvement will show in what estimation General Vincent is held by one whose testimony is of the highest value:

—

“The next witness to whom I shall appeal is the estimable General Vincent, who now lives at Paris, though at an advanced age. He was a Colonel, and afterwards a General of Brigade of Artillery in Saint Domingo. He was detained there during the time both of Santhonax and Toussaint. He was also a proprietor of estates in the island. He was the man who planned the renovation of its agriculture after the abolition of slavery, and one of the great instruments in bringing it to the perfection mentioned by La Croix. In the year 1801 he was called upon by Toussaint to repair to Paris, to lay before the Directory the new Constitution, which had been agreed on in Saint Domingo. He obeyed the summons. It happened that he arrived in France just at the moment of the Peace of Amiens. Here he found, to his inexpressible surprise and grief, that Bonaparte was preparing an immense armament, under Leclerc, to restore slavery in Saint Domingo. He remonstrated against the expedition: he told him to his face that though the army destined for this purpose was composed of the brilliant conquerors of Europe, they could do nothing in the Antilles. He stated, as another argument against the expedition, that it was totally unnecessary, and, therefore, criminal; for that everything was going on well in Saint Domingo; the proprietors in peaceable possession of their estates, cultivation making rapid progress, the Blacks industrious, and beyond example happy.”



## Chapter Eleven.

### L'Étoile and its people.

One radiant day of the succeeding spring, a party was seen in the plain of Cul-de-Sac, moving with such a train as showed that one of the principal families of the island was travelling. Rigaud and his forces were so safely engaged in the south, that the plain was considered secure from their incursions. Port-au-Prince, surrounded on three sides by hills, was now becoming so hot, that such of its inhabitants as had estates in the country were glad to retire to them, as soon as the roads were declared safe; and among these were the family of the Commander-in-Chief, who, with tutors, visitors, and attendants, formed the group seen in the Cul-de-Sac this day. They were removing to their estate of Pongaudin, on the shores of the bay of Gonaves, a little to the north of the junction of the Artibonite with the sea; but instead of travelling straight and fast, they intended to make a three days' journey of what might have been accomplished in less than two—partly for the sake of the pleasure of the excursion, and partly to introduce their friends from Europe to some of the beauties of the most beautiful island in the world.

Madame L'Ouverture had had presents of European carriages, in which she did not object to take airings in the towns and their neighbourhood; but nowhere else were the roads in a state to bear such heavy vehicles. In the sandy bridle-paths they would have sunk half their depth; in the green tracks they would have been caught in thickets of brambles and low boughs; while many swamps occurred which could be crossed only by single horses, accustomed to pick their way in uncertain ground. The ladies of the colony, therefore, continued, as in all time past, to take their journeys on horseback, each attended by some one—a servant, if there were neither father, brother, nor lover—to hold the umbrella over her during rain, or the more oppressive hours of sunshine.

The family of L'Ouverture had left the palace early, and were bound, for an estate in the middle of the plain, where they intended to rest, either till evening, or till the next morning, as inclination might determine. As their train, first of horses, and then of mules, passed along, now under

avenues of lofty palms, which constituted a deep, moist shade in the midst of the glare of the morning—now across fields of sward, kept green by the wells which were made to overflow them; and now through swamps where the fragrant flowering reeds reached up to the flanks of the horses, and courted the hands of the riders, the inhabitants of the region watched their progress, and gave them every variety of kindly greeting. The mother who was sitting at work under the tamarind-tree called her children down from its topmost branches to do honour to the travellers. Many a half-naked negro in the rice-grounds slipped from the wet plank on which, while gazing, he forgot his footing, and laughed his welcome from out of the mud and slime. The white planters who were taking their morning ride over their estates, bent to the saddle-bow, the large straw hat in hand, and would not cover their heads from the hot sun till the ladies had passed. These planters' wives and daughters, seated at the shaded windows, or in the piazzas of their houses, rose and curtsied deep to the ladies L'Ouverture. Many a little black head rose dripping from the clear waters, gleaming among the reeds, where negro children love to watch the gigantic dragon-flies of the tropics creeping from their sheaths, and to catch them as soon as they spread their gauzy wings, and exhibit their gem-like bodies to the sunlight. Many a group of cultivators in the cane-grounds grasped their arms, on hearing the approach of numbers—taught thus by habitual danger—but swung back the gun across the shoulder, or tucked the pistol again into the belt, at sight of the ladies; and then ran to the road-side to remove any fancied obstruction in the path; or, if they could do no more, to smile a welcome. It was observable that, in every case, there was an eager glance, in the first place, of search for L'Ouverture himself; but when it was seen that he was not there, there was still all the joy that could be shown where he was not.

The whole country was full of song. As Monsieur Loisir, the architect from Paris, said to Génifrède, it appeared as if vegetation itself went on to music. The servants of their own party sang in the rear; Moyse and Denis, and sometimes Denis' sisters, sang as they rode; and if there was not song already on the track, it came from behind every flowering hedge—from the crown of the cocoa-nut tree—from the window of the cottage. The sweet wild note of the mocking-bird was awakened in its turn; and from the depths of the tangled woods, where it might defy the human eye and hand, it sent forth its strain, shrill as the thrush, more various than

the nightingale, and sweeter than the canary. But for the bird, the Spanish painter, Azua, would have supposed that all this music was the method of reception of the family by the peasantry; but, on expressing his surprise to Aimée, she answered that song was as natural to Saint Domingo, when freed, as the light of sun or stars, when there were no clouds in the sky. The heart of the negro was, she said, as naturally charged with music as his native air with fragrance. If you dam up his mountain-streams, you have, instead of fragrance, poison and pestilence; and if you chain up the negro's life in slavery, you have, for music, wailing and curses. Give both free course, and you have an atmosphere of spicy odours, and a universal spirit of song.

"This last," said Azua, "is as one long, but varied, ode in honour of your father. Men of some countries would watch him as a magician, after seeing the wonders he has wrought. Who, looking over this wide level, on which plenty seems to have emptied her horn, would believe how lately and how thoroughly it was ravaged by war?"

"There seems to be magic in all that is made," said Aimée; "so that all are magicians who have learned to draw it forth. Monsieur Loisir was showing us yesterday how the lightning may now be brought down from the thunder-cloud, and carried into the earth at some given spot. Our servants, who have yearly seen the thunderbolt fire the cottage or the mill, tremble, and call the lightning-rods magic. My father is a magician of the same sort, except that he deals with a deeper and higher magic."

"That which lies in men's hearts—in human passions."

"In human affections; by which he thinks more in the end is done than by their passions."

"Did you learn this from himself?" asked Azua, who listened with much surprise and curiosity to this explanation from the girl by whose side he rode. "Does your father explain to you his views of men, and his purposes with regard to them?"

"There is no need," she replied. "From the books he has always read, we know what he thinks of men's minds and ways: and from what happens, we learn his purposes; for my father always fulfils his purposes."

“And who led you to study his books, and observe his purposes?”

“My brother Isaac.”

“One of those who is studying at Paris? Does he make you study here, while he is being educated there?”

“No; he does not make me study. But I know what he is doing—I have books—Isaac and I were always companions— He learns from me what my father does— But I was going to tell you, when you began asking about my father, that this plain will not appear to you throughout so, flourishing as it does now, from the road. When we reach the Étoile estate, you will see enough of the ravages of war.”

“I have perceived some signs of desertion in a house or two that we have passed,” said Azua. “But these brothers of yours—when will they return?”

“Indeed I wish I knew,” sighed Aimée. “I believe that depends on the First Consul.”

“The First Consul has so much to do, it is a pity their return should depend upon his memory. If he should forgot, you will go and see Paris, and bring your brothers home.”

“The First Consul forgets nothing,” replied Aimée. “He knows and heeds all that we do here, at the distance of almost half the world. He never forgets my brothers: he is very kind to them.”

“All that you say is true,” said Vincent, who was now on the other side of Aimée. “Everything that you can say in praise of the First Consul is true. But yet you should go and see Paris. You do not know what Paris is—you do not know what your brothers are like in Paris—especially Isaac. He tells you, no doubt, how happy he is there?”

“He does; but I had rather see him here.”

“You have fine scenery here, no doubt, and a climate which you enjoy: but there! what streets and palaces—what theatres—what libraries and picture-galleries—and what society!”

“Is it not true, however,” said Azua, “that all the world is alike to her where her brother is?”

“This is L'Étoile,” said Aimée. “Of all the country houses in the island, this was, not perhaps the grandest, but the most beautiful. It is now ruined; but we hear that enough remains for Monsieur Loisir to make out the design.”

She turned to Vincent, and told him that General Christophe was about to build a house; and that he wished it to be on the model of L'Étoile, as it was before the war. Monsieur Loisir was to furnish the design.

The Europeans of the party were glad to be told that they had nearly arrived at their resting place; for they could scarcely sit their horses, while toiling in the heat through the deep sand of the road. They had left far behind them both wood and swamp; and, though the mansion seemed to be embowered in the green shade, they had to cross open ground to reach it. At length Azua, who had sunk into a despairing silence, cried out with animation—

“Ha! the opuntia! what a fence! what a wall!”

“You may know every deserted house in the plain,” said Aimée, “by the cactus hedge round it.”

“What ornament can the inhabited mansion have more graceful, more beautiful?” said Azua, forgetting the heat in his admiration of the blossoms, some red, some snow-white, some blush-coloured, which were scattered in profusion over the thick and high cactus hedge which barred the path.

“Nothing can be more beautiful,” said Aimée, “but nothing more inconvenient. See, you are setting your horse's feet into a trap.” And she pointed to the stiff, prickly green shoots which matted all the ground. “We must approach by some other way. Let us wait till the servants have gone round.”

With the servants appeared a tall and very handsome negro, well-known throughout the island for his defence of the Étoile estate against Rigaud. Charles Bellair was a Congo chief, kidnapped in his youth, and brought

into Saint Domingo slavery; in which state he had remained long enough to keep all his detestation for slavery, without losing his fitness for freedom. He might have returned, ere this, to Africa, or he might have held some military office under Toussaint; but he preferred remaining on the estate which he had partly saved from devastation, bringing up his little children to revere and enthusiastically obey the Commander-in-chief—the idol of their colour. The heir of the Étoile estate did not appear, nor transmit his claim. Bellair, therefore, and two of his former fellow bondsmen, cultivated the estate, paying over the fixed proportion of the produce to the public funds.

Bellair hastened to lead Madame L'Ouverture's horse round to the other side of the house, where no prickly vegetation was allowed to encroach. His wife was at work and singing to her child under the shadow of the colonnade—once an erection of great beauty, but now blackened by fire, and at one end crumbling into ruins.

“Minerve!” cried Madame, on seeing her.

“Deesha is her name,” said Bellair, smiling.

“Oh, you call her by her native name! Would we all knew our African names, as you know hers! Deesha!”

Deesha hastened forward, all joy and pride at being the hostess of the Ouverture family. Eagerly she led the way into the inhabited part of the abode—a corner of the palace-like mansion—a corner well covered in from the weather, and presenting a strange contrast of simplicity and luxury.

The courtyard through which they passed was strewn with ruins, which, however, were almost entirely concealed by the brushwood, through which only a lane was kept cleared for going in and out. The whole was shaded, almost as with an awning, by the shrubs which grew from the cornices, and among the rafters which had remained where the roof once was. Ropes of creepers hung down the wall, so twisted, and of so long a growth, that Denis had climbed half-way up the building by means of this natural ladder, when he was called back again. The jalousies were decayed—starting away from their hinges, or hanging in fragments; while



the window-sills were gay with flowering weeds, whose seeds even took root in the joints of the flooring within, open as it was to the air and the dew. The marble steps and entrance-hall were kept clear of weeds and dirt, and had a strange air of splendour in the midst of the desolation. The gilding of the balustrades of the hall was tarnished; and it had no furniture but the tatters of some portraits, whose frame and substance had been nearly devoured by ants; but it was weather-tight and clean. The saloon to the right constituted the family dwelling. Part of its roof had been repaired with a thatch of palm-leaves, which formed a singular junction with the portion of the ceiling which remained, and which exhibited a blue sky-ground, with gilt stars. An alcove had been turned into the fireplace, necessary for cooking. The kitchen corner was partitioned off from the sitting-room by a splendid folding screen of Oriental workmanship, exhibiting birds-of-paradise, and the blue rivers and gilt pagodas of China. The other partitions were the work of Bellair's own hands, woven of bamboo and long grass, dyed with the vegetable dyes, with whose mysteries he was, like a true African, acquainted. The dinner-table was a marble slab, which still remained cramped to the wall, as when it had been covered with plate, or with ladies' work-boxes. The seats were benches, hewn by Bellair's axe. On the shelves and dresser of unpainted wood were ranged together porcelain dishes from Dresden, and calabashes from the garden; wooden spoons, and knives with enamelled handles. A harp, with its strings broken, and its gilding tarnished, stood in one corner; and musical instruments of Congo origin hung against the wall. It was altogether a curious medley of European and African civilisation, brought together amidst the ruins of a West Indian revolution.

The young people did not remain long in the house, however tempting its coolness might have appeared. At one side of the mansion was the colonnade, which engrossed the architect's attention; on the other bloomed the garden, offering temptations which none could resist—least of all those who were lovers. Moyse and his Génifrède stepped first to the door which looked out upon the wilderness of flowers, and were soon lost sight of among the shrubs.

Génifrède had her sketch-book in her hand. She and her sister were here partly for the sake of a drawing lesson from Azua; and perhaps she had some idea of taking a sketch during this walk with Moyse. He snatched the book from her, however, and flung it through the window of a garden-

house which they passed, saying—

“You can draw while I am away. For this hour you are all my own.”

“And when will you be away? Wherever you go, I will follow you. If we once part, we shall not meet again.”

“We think so, and we say so, each time that we part; and yet we meet again. Once more, only the one time when I am to distinguish myself, to gain you—only that once will we be parted; and then we will be happy for over.”

“Then you will be killed—or you will be sent to France, or you will love some one else and forget me—”

“Forgot you!—love some one else! Oh! Heaven and earth!” cried Moïse, clasping her in his arms, and putting his whole soul into the kisses he impressed on her forehead. “And what,” he continued, in a voice which thrilled her heart, “what would you do if I were killed?”

“I would die. Oh, Moïse! if it should be so, wait for me! Let your spirit wait for mine! It shall not be long.”

“Shall my spirit come—shall I come as a ghost, to tell you that I am dead? Shall I come when you are alone, and call you away?”

“Oh! no, no!” she cried, shuddering. “I will follow—you need not fear. But a ghost—oh! no, no!” And she looked up at him, and clasped him closer.

“And why?” said Moïse. “You do not fear me now—you cling to me. And why fear me then? I shall be yours still. I shall be Moïse. I shall be about you, haunting you, whether you see and hear me or not. Why not see and hear me?”

“Why not?” said Génifrède, in a tone of assent. “But I dare not—I will not. You shall not die. Do not speak of it.”

“It was not I, but you, love, that spoke of it. Well, I will not die. But tell me—if I forget you—if I love another—what then?” And he looked upon her with eyes so full of love, that she laughed, and withdrew herself from his

arms, saying, as she sauntered on along the blossom-strewn path—

“Then I will forget you too.”

Moyse lingered for a moment, to watch her stately form, as she made a pathway for herself amidst the tangled shrubs. The walk, once a smooth-shaven turf, kept green by trenches of water, was now overgrown with the vegetation which encroached on either hand. As the dark beauty forced her way, the maypole-aloe shook its yellow crown of flowers, many feet above her head; the lilac jessamine danced before her face; and the white datura, the pink flower-fence, and the scarlet cordia, closed round her form, or spread themselves beneath her feet. Her lover was soon again by her side, warding off every branch and spray, and saying—

“The very flowers worship you: but they and all—all must yield you to me. You are mine; and yet not mine till I have won you from your father. Génifrède, how shall I distinguish myself? Show me the way, and I shall succeed.”

“Do not ask me,” she replied, sighing.

“Nay, whom should I ask?”

“I never desired you to distinguish yourself.”

“You do not wish it?”

“No.”

“Not for your sake?”

“No.”

And she looked around her with wistful eyes, in which her lover read a wish that things would ever remain as they were now—that this moment would never pass away.

“You would remain here—you would hide yourself here with me for ever!” cried the happy Moyse.

“Here, or anywhere;—in the cottage at Breda;—in your father’s hut on the shore;—anywhere, Moyse, where there is nothing to dread. I live in fear; and I am wretched.”

“What is it that you fear, love? Why do you not trust, me to protect you?”

“Then I fear for you, which is worse. Why cannot we live in the woods or the mountains, where there would be no dangerous duties, and no cares?”

“And if we lived in the woods, you would be more terrified still. There would never be a falling star, but your heart would sink. You would take the voices of the winds for the spirits of the woods, and the mountain mists for ghosts. Then, there are the tornado and the thunderbolt. When you saw the trees crashing, you would be for making haste back to the plain. Whenever you heard the rock rolling and bounding down the steep, or the cataract rising and roaring in the midst of the tempest, you would entreat me to fly to the city. It is in this little beating heart that the fear lies.”

“What then is to be done?”

“This little heart must beat yet a while longer; and then, when I have once come back, it shall rest upon mine for ever.”

“Beside my father? He never rests. Your father would leave us in peace; but he has committed you to one who knows not what rest is.”

“Nor ever will,” said Moyse. “If he closed his eyes, if he relaxed his hand, we should all be sunk in ruin.”

“We? Who? What ruin?”

“The whole negro race. Do you suppose the whites are less cruel than they were? Do you believe that their thirst for our humiliation, our slavery, is quenched? Do you believe that the white man’s heart is softened by the generosity and forgiveness of the blacks?”

“My father believes so,” replied Génifrède; “and do they not adore him—the whites whom he has reinstated? Do they not know that they owe to

him their lives, their homes, the prosperity of the island? Does he not trust the whites? Does he not order all things for their good, from reverence and affection for them?"

"Yes, he does," replied Moyses, in a tone which made Génifrède anxiously explore his countenance.

"You think him deceived?" she said.

"No, I do not. It is not easy to deceive L'Ouverture."

"You do not think—no, you cannot think, that he deceives the whites, or any one."

"No. L'Ouverture deceives no one. As you say, he reveres the whites. He reveres them for their knowledge. He says they are masters of an intellectual kingdom from which we have been shut out, and they alone can let us in. And then again.—Génifrède, it seems to me that he loves best those who have most injured him."

"Not best," she replied. "He delights to forgive: but what white has he ever loved as he loves Henri? Did he ever look upon any white as he looked upon me, when—when he consented? Moyses, you remember?"

"I do. But still he loves the whites as if they were born, and had lived and died, our friends, as he desires they should be. Yet more—he expects and requires that all his race should love them too."

"And you do not?" said Génifrède, timidly.

"I abhor them."

"Oh! hush! hush! Speak lower. Does my father know this?"

"Why should he? If he once knew it—"

"Nay, if he knew it, he would give up his purposes of distinction for you; and we might live here, or on the shore."

"My Génifrède, though I hate the whites, I love the blacks. I love your

father. The whites will rise upon us at home, as they are always scheming against us in France, if we are not strong and as watchful as we are strong. If I and others leave L'Ouverture alone to govern, and betake ourselves to the woods and the mountains, the whites will again be masters, and you and I, my Génifrède, shall be slaves. But you shall not be a slave, Génifrède," he continued, soothing her tremblings at the idea. "The bones of the whites shall be scattered over the island, like the shells on the sea-shore, before my Génifrède shall be a slave. I will cut the throat of every infant at every white mother's breast, before any one of that race shall lay his grasp upon you. The whites never will, never shall again, be masters: but then, it must be by L'Ouverture having an army always at his command; and of that army I must be one of the officers. We cannot live here, or on the sea-shore, love, while there are whites who may be our masters. So, while I am away, you must pray Christ to humble the whites. Will you? This is all you can do. Will you not?"

"How can I, when my father is always exalting them?"

"You must choose between him and me. Love the whites with him, or hate them with me."

"But you love my father. Moyses?"

"I do. I adore him as the saviour of the blacks. You adore him, Génifrède. Every one of our race worships him. Génifrède, you love him—your father."

"I know not—Yes, I loved him the other day. I know not, Moyses. I know nothing but that—I will hate the whites as you do. I never loved them: now I hate them."

"You shall. I will tell you things of them that will make you curse them. I know every white man's heart."

"Then tell my father."

"Does he not know enough already? Is not his cheek furrowed with the marks of the years during which the whites were masters; and is there any cruelty, any subtlety, in them that he does not understand? Knowing

all this, he curses, not them, but the flower which, he says, corrupted them. He keeps from them this power, and believes that all will be well. I shall tell him nothing.”

“Yes, tell him all—all except—”

“Yes, and tell me first,” cried a voice near at hand. There was a great rustling among the bushes, and Denis appeared, begging particularly to know what they were talking about. They, in return, begged to be told what brought him this way, to interrupt their conversation.

“Deesha says Juste is out after wild-fowl, and, most likely, among some of the ponds hereabouts.”

“One would think you had lived in Cap all your days,” said Moyse. “Do you look for wild-fowl in a garden?”

“We will see presently,” said the boy, thrusting himself into the thicket in the direction of the ponds, and guiding himself by the scent of the blossoming reeds—so peculiar as to be known among the many with which the air was filled. He presently beckoned to his sister; and she followed with Moyse, till they found themselves in the field where there had once been several fish-ponds, preserved in order with great care. All were now dried up but two; and the whole of the water being diverted to the service of these two, they were considerable in extent and in depth. What the extent really was, it was difficult to ascertain at the first glance, so hidden was the margin with reeds, populous with wild-fowl.

Denis was earnestly watching these fowl, as he lay among the high grass at some little distance from the water, and prevented his companions from approaching any nearer. The sun was hot, and Génifrède was not long in desiring to return to the garden.

“Let us go back,” said she. “Juste is not here.”

“Yes he is,” said Denis. “However, go back if you like. I shall go fowling with Juste.” And he began to strip off his clothes.

His companions were of opinion, however, that a son of the Commander-in-chief must not sport with a farmer’s boy, without leave of parents or

tutor; and they begged him to put on his clothes again, at least till leave was asked. Denis had never cared for his rank, except when riding by his father's side on review-days; and now he liked it less than ever, as the pond lay gleaming before him, the fowl sailing and fluttering on the surface, and his dignity prevented his going among them.

"What makes you say that Juste is here?" said Génifrède.

"I have seen him take five fowl in the last five minutes."

As he spoke, he plucked the top of a bulrush, and threw it with such good aim, that it struck a calabash which appeared to be floating among others on the surface of the pond. That particular calabash immediately rose, and the face of a negro child appeared, to the consternation of the fowl, whose splashing and screaming might be heard far and wide. Juste came out of the water, displaying at his belt the result of his sport. He had, as Denis had said, taken five ducks in five minutes by pulling them under the water by the feet, while lying near them with his head covered by the calabash. The little fellow was not satisfied with the admiration of the beholders; he ran homewards, with his clothes in his hand, Denis at his heels, and his game dangling from his waist, and dripping as he ran.

"Many a white would shudder to see that child," said Moyse, as Juste disappeared. "That is the way Jean's blacks wore their trophies during the first days of the insurrection."

"Trophies!" said Génifrède. "You mean heads: heads with their trailing hair;" and her face worked with horror as she spoke. "But it is not for the whites to shudder, after what they did to Ogé, and have done to many a negro since."

"But they think we do not feel as they do."

"Not feel! O Christ! If any one of them had my heart before I knew you—in those days at Breda, when Monsieur Bayou used to come down to us!"

"Here comes that boy again," cried Moyse. "Let us go into the thicket, among the citrons."

Denis found them, however—found Moyse gathering the white and



purple blossoms for Génifrède, while she was selecting the fruit of most fragrant rind from the same tree, to carry into the house.

“You must come in—you must come to dinner,” cried Denis. “Aimée has had a drawing lesson, while you have been doing nothing all this while. They said you were sketching; but I told them how idle you were.”

“I will go back with Denis,” said Génifrède. “You threw away my sketch-book, Moyse. You may find it, and follow us.”

Their path lay together as far as the garden-house. When there, Moyse seized Denis unawares, shot him through the window into the house, and left him to get out as he might, and bring the book. The boy was so long in returning, that his sister became uneasy, lest some snake or other creature should have detained him in combat. She was going to leave the table in search of him, because Moyse would not, when he appeared, singing, and with the book upon his head.

“Who calls Génifrède idle?” cried he, flourishing the book. “Look here!” And he exhibited a capital sketch of herself and Moyse, as he had found them, gathering fruits and flowers.

“Can it be his own?” whispered Génifrède to her lover.

Denis nodded and laughed, while Azua gravely criticised and approved, without suspicion that the sketch was by no pupil of his own.

In the cool evening, Génifrède was really no longer idle. While Denis and Juste were at play, they both at once stumbled and fell over something in the long grass, which proved to be a marble statue of a Naiad, lying at length. Moyse seized it, and raised it where it was relieved by a dark green back-ground. The artist declared it an opportunity for a lesson which was not to be lost: and the girls began to draw, as well as they could for the attempts of the boys to restore the broken urn to the arm from which it had fallen. When Denis and Juste found that they could not succeed, and were only chidden for being in the way, they left the drawing party seated under their clump of cocoa-nut trees, and went to hear what Madame was relating to Bellair and Deesha, in the hearing of Monsieur Molière, Laxabon, and Vincent. Her narration was one which Denis had often heard, but was never tired of listening to. She was telling

of the royal descent of her husband—how he was grandson of Gaou Guinou, the king of the African tribe of Arrudos: how this king's second son was taken in battle, and sold, with other prisoners of war, into slavery: how he married an African girl on the Breda estate, and used to talk of home and its wars, and its haunts, and its sunshine idleness—how he used thus to talk in the evenings, and on Sundays, to the boy upon his knee; so that Toussaint felt, from his infancy, like an African, and the descendant of chiefs. This was a theme which Madame L'Ouverture loved to dwell on, and especially when listened to as now. The Congo chief and his wife hung upon her words, and told in their turn how their youth had been spent at home—how they had been kidnapped, and delivered over to the whites. In the eagerness of their talk, they were perpetually falling unconsciously into the use of their negro language, and as often recalled by their hearers to that which all could understand. Molière and Laxabon listened earnestly; and even Loisir, occupied as he was still with the architecture of the mansion, found himself impatient if he lost a word of the story. Vincent alone, negro as he was, was careless and unmoved. He presently sauntered away, and nobody missed him.

He looked over the shoulder of the architect.

“What pains you are taking!” he said. “You have only to follow your own fancy and convenience about Christophe's house. Christophe has never been to France. Tell him, or any others of my countrymen, that any building you choose to put up is European, and in good taste, and they will be quite pleased enough.”

“You are a sinner,” said Loisir; “but be quiet now.”

“Nay—do not you find the blacks one and all ready to devour your travellers' tales—your prodigious reports of European cities? You have only to tell like stories in stone and brick, and they will believe you just as thankfully.”

“No, no, Vincent. I have told no tales so wicked as you tell of your own race. My travellers' tales are all very well to pass an hour, and be forgotten; but Christophe's mansion is to stand for an age—to stand as the first evidence, in the department of the arts, of the elevation of your race. Christophe knows, as well as you do without having been to Paris,

what is beautiful in architecture; and, if he did not, I would not treacherously mislead him.”

“Christophe knows! Christophe has taste!”

“Yes. While you have been walking streets and squares, he has been studying the aisles of palms, and the crypts of the banyan, which, to an open eye, may teach as much as a prejudiced mind can learn in all Rome.”

“So Loisir is of those who flatter men in power?” said Vincent, laughing.

“I look further,” said Loisir; “I am working for men unborn. I am ambitious; but my ambition is to connect my name honourably with the first great house built for a negro general. My ambition is to build here a rival to the palaces of Europe.”

“Do what you will, you will not rival your own tales of them—unless you find Aladdin’s lamp among these ruins.”

“If you find it, you may bring it me. Azna has found something half as good—a really fine statue in the grass.”

Vincent was off to see it. He found the drawing party more eager in conversation than about their work. Aimée was saying as he approached —

“General Vincent declares that he is as affectionate to us as if we were the nearest to him of all the children of the empire.—Did you not say so?” she asked, eagerly. “Is not the First Consul’s friendship for us real and earnest? Does he not feel a warm regard for my father? Is he not like a father to my brothers?”

“Certainly,” said Vincent. “Do not your brothers confirm this in their letters?”

“Do they not, Génifrède?” repeated Aimée.

“They do; but we see that they speak as they think: not as things really are.”

“How can you so despise the testimony of those who see what we only hear of?”

“I do not despise them or their testimony. I honour their hearts, which forget injuries, and open to kindness. But they are young; they went from keeping cattle, and from witnessing the desolations of war here, to the first city of the world, where the first men lavish upon them instructions, and pleasures, and flatteries; and they are pleased. The greatest of all—the First of the Whites, smiles upon the sons of the First of the Blacks; and their hearts beat with enthusiasm for him. It is natural. But, while they are in Paris, we are in Saint Domingo; and we may easily view affairs, and judge men differently.”

“And so,” said Aimée, “distrust our best friends, and despise our best instructors; and all from a jealousy of race!”

“We think the jealousy of race is with them,” said Moyse, bitterly. “There is not a measure of L’Ouverture’s which they do not neutralise—not a fragment of authority which they will yield. As to friends, if the Consul Bonaparte is our best friend among the Whites, may we be left thus far friendless!”

“You mean that he has not answered my father’s letters. Monsieur Vincent doubts not that an answer is on the way. Remember, my brothers have been invited to his table.”

“There are blacks in Paris, who look on,” replied Moyse, drily.

“And are there not whites too, from this island, who watch every movement?”

“Yes: and those whites are in the private closet, at the very ear of Bonaparte, whispering to him of L’Ouverture’s ambition; while your brothers penetrate no further than the saloon.”

“My brothers would lay down their lives for Bonaparte and France,” said Aimée; “and you speak treason. I am with them.”

“And with me,” said Vincent, in a whisper at her ear. “Where I find the loyal heart in woman, mine is ever loyal too.”

Aimée was too much excited to understand in this what was meant. She went on—

“Here is Monsieur Vincent, of our own race, who has lived here and at Paris—who has loved my father.—You love my father and his government?” she said, with questioning eyes, interrupting herself.

“Certainly. No man is more devoted to L’Ouverture.”

“Devoted to my father,” pursued Aimée, “and yet devoted to Bonaparte. He is above the rivalry of races—as the First Consul is, and as Isaac is.”

“Isaac and the First Consul—these are the idols of Aimée’s worship,” said Génifrède. “Worship Isaac still; for that is a harmless idolatry; but give up your new religion, Aimée; for it is not sound.”

“Why not sound? How do you know that it is not sound?”

“When have the blacks ever trusted the whites without finding themselves bound victims in the end?”

“I have,” said Vincent. “I have lived among them a life of charms, and I am free,” he continued, stretching his arms to the air—“free to embrace the knees of both Bonaparte and L’Ouverture—free to embrace the world.”

“The end has not come yet,” said Moyse.

“What end?” asked Aimée.

“Nay, God knows what end, if we trust the French.”

“You speak from prejudice,” said Aimée. “Monsieur Vincent and my brothers judge from facts.”

“We speak from facts,” said Génifrède; “from, let us see—from seven—no, eight, very ugly facts.”

“The eight Commissaries that the colony has been blessed with,” said Moyse. “If they had taken that monkey which is looking down at your

drawing, Aimée, and seven of its brethren, and installed them at Cap, they would have done us all the good the Commissaries have done, and far less mischief. The monkeys would have broken the mirrors, and made a hubbub within the walls of Government-house. These Commissaries, one after another, from Mirbeck to Hédouville, have insulted the colony, and sown quarrels in it, from end to end.”

“Mirbeck! Here is Mirbeck,” said Denis, who had come up to listen. And the boy rolled himself about like a drunken man—like Mirbeck, as he had seen him in the streets of Cap.

“Then they sent Saint Leger, the Irishman,” continued Moyse, “who kept his hand in every man’s pocket, whether black or white.”

Denis forthwith had his hands, one in Vincent’s pocket, the other in Azua’s. Azua, however, was drawing so fast that he did not find it out.

“Then there was Roume.”

“Roume. My father speaks well of Roume,” said Aimée.

“He was amiable enough, but so weak that he soon had to go home, where he was presently joined by his successor, Santhonax, whom, you know, L’Ouverture had to get rid of, for the safety of the colony. Then came Polverel. What the tranquillity of Saint Domingo was in his day we all remember.”

Denis took off Polverel, spying from his ship at the island, on which he dared not land.

“For shame, Denis?” said Aimée. “You are ridiculing him who first called my father L’Ouverture.”

“And do you suppose he knew the use that would be made of the word?” asked Génifrède. “If he had foreseen its being a tide, he would have contented himself with the obsequious bows I remember so well, and never have spoken the word.”

Denis was forthwith bowing, with might and main.

“Now, Denis, be quiet! Raymond, dear Raymond, came next;” and she looked up at Vincent as she praised his friend.

“Raymond is excellent as a man, whatever he may be as governor of Cap,” said Moyse. “But we have been speaking of whites, not of mulattoes—which is another long chapter.”

“Raymond was sent to us by France, however,” said Aimée.

“So was our friend Vincent there; but that is nothing to the purpose.”

“Well; who next?” cried Denis.

“Do not encourage him,” said Aimée. “My father would be vexed with you for training him to ridicule the French—particularly the authorities.”

“Now we are blessed with Hédouville,” pursued Moyse. “There you have him, Denis—only scarcely sly, scarcely smooth enough. Yet, that is Hédouville, who has his eye and his smiles at play in one place, while his heart and hands are busy in another.”

“Busy,” said Génifrède, “in undermining L’Ouverture’s influence, and counteracting his plans; but no one mentioned Ailbaud. Ailbaud—”

“Stay a moment,” said Azua, whose voice had not been heard till then.

All looked at him in surprise, nobody supposing that, while so engrossed with his pencil, he could have cared for their conversation. Aimée saw at a glance that his paper was covered with caricatures of the commissaries who had been enumerated.

“You must have known them,” was Aimée’s involuntary testimony, as the paper went from hand to hand, amidst shouts of laughter, while Azua sat, with folded arms, perfectly grave.

“I have seen some of the gentlemen,” said he, “and Monsieur Denis helped me to the rest.”

The laughter went on till Aimée was somewhat nettled. When the paper came back to her, she looked up into the tree under which she sat. The

staring monkey was still there. She made a vigorous spring to hand up the caricature, which the creature caught. As it sat demurely on a branch, holding the paper as if reading it, while one of its companions as gravely looked over its shoulder, there was more laughter than ever.

“I beg your pardon, Monsieur Azua,” said Aimée; “but this is the only worthy fate of a piece of mockery of people wiser than ourselves, and no less kind. The negroes have hitherto been thought, at least, grateful. It seems that this is a mistake. For my part, however, I leave it to the monkeys to ridicule the French.”

Vincent seized her hand, and covered it with kisses. She was abashed, and turned away, when she saw her father behind her, in the shade of the wood. Monsieur Pascal, his secretary, was with him.

“My father!”

“L’Ouverture!” exclaimed one after another of the party; for they all supposed he had been far away. Even Denis at once gave over pelting the monkeys, and left them to their study of the arts in peace.

“Your drawings, my daughters!” said L’Ouverture, with a smile, as if he had been perfectly at leisure. And he examined the Naiad, and then Génifrède’s drawing, with the attention of an artist. Génifrède had made great progress, under the eye of Moyse. Not so Aimée; her pencil had been busy all the while, but there was no Naiad on her page.

“They are for Isaac,” she said, timidly. “Among all the pictures he sees, there are no—”

“No sketches of Denis and his little companions,” said her father; “no cocoa-nut clumps—no broken fountains among the aloes—no groups that will remind him of home. Isaac shall presently have these, Aimée. I am on my way to Cap, and will send them.”

“On your way to Cap!” cried every one—some in a tone of fear.

“To Cap,” said he, “where Father Laxabon will follow me immediately, with Monsieur Pascal. By them, Aimée, you will send your packet for Isaac. My own horse is waiting.”



“Do not go alone—do not go without good escort,” said Moyse. “I can give you reason.”

“I know your thoughts, Moyse. I go for the very reason that there are, or will be, troubles at Cap.—The French authorities may sometimes decree and do that which we feel to be unwise—unsuitable to the blacks,” he continued, with an emphasis which gave some idea of his having overheard more or less of the late conversation; “but we islanders maybe more ignorant still of the thoughts and ways of their practised race.”

“But you are personally unsafe,” persisted Moyse. “If you knew what is said by the officers of Hédouville’s staff—”

“They say,” proceeded Toussaint, smiling, “that they only want three or four brigands to seize the ape with the Madras head dress; and then all would go well. These gentlemen are mistaken; and I am going to prove this to them. An armed escort proves nothing. I carry something stronger still in my mind and on my tongue. General Vincent, a word with you.”

While he and Vincent spoke apart, Aimée exclaimed, “Oh, Moyse! Go with my father!”

“Do not—Oh, do not!” cried Génifrède. “You will never return!” she muttered to him, in a voice of terror. “Aimée, you would send him away: and my mother—all of us, are far from home. Who knows but that Rigaud —”

“Leave Rigaud to me,” cried Vincent, gaily, as he rejoined the party. “I undertake Rigaud. He shall never alarm you more. Farewell, Mademoiselle Aimée! I am going to the south. Rigaud is recruiting in the name of France; and I know France too well to allow of that. I shall stop his recruiting, and choke his blasphemy with a good French sword. Farewell, till I bring you news at Pongaudin that you may ride along the southern coast as securely as in your own cane-pieces.”

“You are going?” said Aimée.

“This very hour. I south—L’Ouverture north—”

“And the rest to Pongaudin with the dawn,” said Toussaint.

“What is your pleasure concerning me?” asked Moyse. “I wait your orders.”

“I remember my promise,” said Toussaint; “but I must not leave my family unprotected. You will attend them to Pongaudin: and then let me see you at Cap, with the speed of the wind.”

“With a speed like your own, if that be possible,” said Moyse.

“Is there danger, father?” asked Génifrède, trembling.

“My child, there is danger in the air we breathe, and the ground we tread on: but there is protection also, everywhere.”

“You will see Afra, father,” said Aimée. “If there is danger, what will become of Afra? Her father will be in the front, in any disturbance: and Government-house is far from being the safest place.”

“I will not forget Afra. Farewell, my children! Go now to your mother; and, before this hour to-morrow, I shall think of you resting at Pongaudin.”

They saw him mount before the courtyard, and set off, followed by one of his two trompettes—the only horsemen in the island who could keep up with him, and therefore his constant attendants in his most important journeys. The other was gone forward, to order horses from post to post.

Vincent, having received written instructions from the secretary, set off in an opposite direction, more gay than those he left behind.

The loftiest trees of the rich plain were still touched with golden light; and the distant bay glittered so as to make the gazers turn away their eyes, to rest on the purple mountains to the north: but their hearts were anxious; and they saw neither the glory nor the beauty of which they heard talk between the painter, the architect, and their host.

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## **Chapter Twelve.**

### **A Night of Office.**

As soon as Toussaint was out of hearing of his family and suite, he put his horse to its utmost speed. There was not a moment to be lost, if the peace of the island was to be preserved. Faster than ever fugitive escaped from trouble and danger, did the negro commander rush towards them. The union between the black and white races probably depended on his reaching Cap by the early morning—in time to prevent certain proclamations of Hédouville, framed in ignorance of the state of the colony and the people, from being published. Forty leagues lay between L'Étoile and Cap, and two mountain ridges crossed his road: but he had ridden forty leagues in a night before, and fifty in a long day; and he thought little of the journey. As he rode, he meditated the work of the next day, while he kept his eye awake, and his heart open, to the beauty of the night.

He had cleared the plain, with his trompette at his heels, before the woods and fields had melted together into the purple haze of evening; and the labourers returning from the cane-pieces, with their tools on their shoulders, offered their homage to him as he swept by. Some shouted, some ran beside him, some kneeled in the road and blessed him, or asked his blessing. He came to the river, and found the ford lined by a party of negroes, who, having heard and known his horse's tread, above the music of pipe and drum, had thrown themselves into the water to point out the ford, and save his precious moments. He dashed through uncovered, and was lost in the twilight before their greeting was done. The evening star was just bright enough to show its image in the still salt-lake, when he met the expected relay, on the verge of the mountain woods. Thence the ascent was so steep, that he was obliged to relax his speed. He had observed the birds winging home to these woods; they had reached it before him, and the chirp of their welcome to their nests was sinking into silence; but the whirring beetles were abroad. The frogs were scarcely heard from the marshes below; but the lizards and crickets vied with the young monkeys in noise, while the wood was all alight with luminous insects. Wherever a twisted fantastic cotton-tree, or a drooping wild fig, stood out from the thicket and apart, it appeared to send forth streams of green flame from every branch; so incessantly did the fireflies radiate from every projecting twig.

As he ascended, the change was great. At length there was no more sound; there were no more flitting fires. Still as sleep rose the mountain-

peaks to the night. Still as sleep lay the woods below. Still as sleep was the outspread western sea, silvered by the steady stars which shone, still as sleep, in the purple depths of heaven. Such was the starlight on that pinnacle, so large and round the silver globes, so bright in the transparent atmosphere were their arrowy rays, that the whole, vault was as one constellation of little moons, and the horse and his rider saw their own shadows in the white sands of their path. The ridge passed, down plunged the horseman, hurrying to the valley and the plain; like rocks loosened by the thunder from the mountain-top. The hunter, resting on the heights from his day's chase of the wild goats, started from his sleep, to listen to what he took for a threatening of storm. In a little while, the child in the cottage in the valley nestled close to its mother, scared at the flying tramp; while the trembling mother herself prayed for the shield of the Virgin's grace against the night-fiends that were abroad. Here, there was a solitary light in the plain; there, beside the river; and yonder, behind the village; and at each of these stations were fresh horses, the best in the region, and smiling faces to tender their use. The panting animals that were left behind were caressed for the sake of the burden they had carried, and of the few kind words dropped by their rider during his momentary pause.

Thus was the plain beyond Mirbalais passed soon after midnight. In the dark the horsemen swam the Artibonite, and leaped the sources of the Petite Rivière. The eastern sky was beginning to brighten as they mounted the highest steeps above Atalaye; and from the loftiest point, the features of the wide landscape became distinct in the cool grey dawn. Toussaint looked no longer at the fading stars. He looked eastwards, where the green savannahs spread beyond the reach of human eye. He looked northwards, where towns and villages lay in the skirts of the mountains, and upon the verge of the rivers, and in the green recesses where the springs burst from the hill-sides. He looked westwards, where the broad and full Artibonite gushed into the sea, and where the yellow bays were thronged with shipping, and every green promontory was occupied by its plantation or fishing hamlet. He paused, for one instant, while he surveyed what he well knew to be virtually his dominions. He said to himself that with him it rested to keep out strife from this paradise—to detect whatever devilish cunning might lurk in its by-corners, and rebuke whatever malice and revenge might linger within its bounds. With the thought he again sprang forward, again plunged down the steeps,

scudded over the wilds, and splashed through the streams; not losing another moment till his horse stood trembling and foaming under the hot sun, now touching the Haut-du-Cap, where the riders had at length pulled up. Here they had overtaken the first trompette, who, having had no leader at whose heels he must follow, had been unable, with all his zeal, quite to equal the speed of his companion. He had used his best efforts, and showed signs of fatigue; but yet they had come upon his traces on the grass road from the Gros Morne, and had overtaken him as he was toiling up the Haut-du-Cap.

Both waited for orders, their eyes fixed on their master's face, as they saw him stand listening, and glancing his eye over the city, the harbour, and the road from the Plain du Nord. He saw afar signs of trouble: but he saw also that he was not too late. He looked down into the gardens of Government-house. Was it possible that he would show himself there, heated, breathless, covered with dust as he was? No. He dismounted, and gave his horse to the trompettes, ordering them to go by the most public way to the hotel, in Place Mont Archer, to give notice of the approach of his secretary and staff; and thence to the barracks, where he would appear when he had bathed.

The trompettes would have gone round five weary miles for the honour of carrying messages from the Commander-in-chief through the principal streets of Cap. They departed with great zeal, while Toussaint ascended to the mountain-pool, to take the plunge in which he found his best refreshment after a long ride. He was presently walking leisurely down the sloping field, through which he could drop into the grounds of Government-house by a back gate, and have his interview with Hédouville before interruption came from the side of the town. As he entered the gardens, he looked, to the wondering eyes he met there, as if he had just risen from rest, to enjoy a morning walk in the shrubberies. They were almost ready to understand, in its literal sense, the expression of his worshippers, that he rode at ease upon the clouds.

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## Chapter Thirteen.

### An Old Man in New Days.

Before the sun had touched the roofs of the town of Cap—while the streets lay cool and grey under the heights, which glowed in the flames of sunrise—most of the inhabitants were up and stirring. Euphrosyne Revel was at her grandfather's chamber-door; first listening for his call, and then softly looking in, to see whether he could still be sleeping. The door opened and shut by a spring, so that the old man did not hear the little girl as she entered, though his sleep was not sound. As Euphrosyne saw how restless he was, and heard him mutter, she thought she would rouse him: but she stayed her hand, as she remembered that he might have slept ill, and might still settle for another quiet doze, if left undisturbed. With a gentle hand she opened one of the jalousies, to let in more air; and she chose one which was shaded by a tree outside, that no glare of light might enter with the breeze.

What she saw from this window drew her irresistibly into the balcony. It was a tree belonging to the convent which waved before the window; and below lay the convent garden, fresh with the dews of the night. There stretched the green walks, so glittering with diamond-drops and with the gossamer as to show that no step had passed over them since dawn. There lay the parterres—one crowded with geraniums of all hues; another with proud lilies, white, orange, and purple; and another with a flowering pomegranate in the centre, while the gigantic white and blue convolvulus coveted the soil all around, mixing with the bright green leaves and crimson blossoms of the hibiscus. No one seemed to be abroad, to enjoy the garden during this the freshest hour of the day; no one but the old black gardener, Raphael, whose cracked voice might be heard at intervals from the depths of the shrubbery in the opposite corner, singing snatches of the hymns which the sisters sung in the chapel. When his hoarse music ceased, the occasional snap of a bough, and movements among the bushes, told that the old man was still there, busy at his work.

Euphrosyne wished that he would come out, within sight of the beckon of

her hand. She dared not call, for fear of waking her grandfather: but she very much wanted a flowering orange branch. A gay little humming-bird was sitting and hovering near her; and she thought that a bunch of fragrant blossoms would entice it in a moment. The little creature came and went, flew round the balcony and retired: and still old Raphael kept out of sight behind the leafy screen.

“It will be gone, pretty creature!” said Euphrosyne to herself; “and all for want of a single bough from all those thickets!”

A thought struck her. Her morning frock was tied round the waist with a cord, having tassels which hung down nearly to her feet. She took off the cord, made a noose in it, and let it down among the shrubs below, swinging the end this way and that, as she thought best for catching some stray twig. She pursued her aim for a time, sending showers of dew-drops paltering down, and knocking off a good many blossoms, but catching nothing. She was so busy, that she did not see that a grey-suited nun had come out, with a wicker cage in her hand, and was watching her proceedings.

“What are you doing, my child?” asked the nun, approaching, as a new shower of dew-drops and blossoms was shaken abroad. “If you desire to fish, I doubt not our reverend mother will make you welcome to our pond yonder.”

“Oh, sister Christine! I am glad you are come out,” said Euphrosyne, bending over the balcony, and speaking in a low, though eager voice. “Do give me a branch of something sweet,—orange, or citron, or something. This humming-bird, will be gone if we do not make haste—Hush! Do not call. Grandpapa is not awake yet. Please, make haste.”

Sister Christine was not wont to make haste; but she did her best to gratify Euphrosyne. She went straight to the corner of the shrubbery where the abbess’s mocking-bird spent all its summer days, hung up the cage, and brought back what Euphrosyne had asked. The branch was drawn up in the noose of the cord, and the nun could not but stand and watch the event.

The bough was stuck between two of the bars of the jalousie, and the girl

withdrew to the end of the balcony. The humming-bird appeared, hovered round, and at last inserted its long beak in a blossom, sustaining itself the while on its quivering wings. Before proceeding to another blossom it flew away. Euphrosyne cast a smile down to the nun, and placed herself against the jalousie, holding the branch upon her head. As she had hoped, two humming-birds returned. After some hesitation, they came for more of their sweet food, and Euphrosyne felt that her hair was blown about on her forehead by the motion of their busy wings. She desired, above everything, to keep still; but this strong desire, and the sight of sister Christine's grave face turned so eagerly upwards, made her laugh so as to shake the twigs very fearfully. Keeping her hand with the branch steady, she withdrew her head from beneath, and then stole slowly and cautiously backward within the window—the birds following. She now heard her grandfather's voice, calling feebly and fretfully. She half turned to make a signal for silence, which the old man so far observed as to sink his complaints to a mutter. The girl put the branch into a water-jar near the window, and then stepped lightly to the bed.

“What is all this nonsense?” said Monsieur Revel. “Why did not you come the moment I called?”

“Here I am, grandpapa—and do look—look at my humming-birds!”

“Humming-birds—nonsense! I called you twice.”

Yet the old gentleman rubbed his eyes, which did not seem yet quite awake. He rubbed his eyes and looked through the shaded room, as if to see Euphrosyne's new plaything. She brought him his spectacles from the toilette, helped to raise him up, threw a shawl over his shoulders, and placed his pillows at his back. Perceiving that he still could not see very distinctly, she opened another blind, so as to let one level ray of sunshine fall upon the water-jar, and the little radiant creatures that were hovering about it.

“There! there!” cried Monsieur Revel, in a pleased tone.

“Now I will go and bring you your coffee,” said Euphrosyne.

“Stop, stop, child! Why are you in such a hurry? I want to know what is the matter. Such a night as I have had!”



“A bad night, grandpapa? I am sorry.”

“Bad enough! How came my light to go out? And what is all this commotion in the streets?”

Euphrosyne went to the night-lamp, and found that a very large flying beetle had disabled itself by breaking the glass, and putting out the light. There it lay dead—a proof at least that there were no ants in the room.

“Silly thing!” said Euphrosyne. “I do wish these beetles would learn to fly properly. He must have startled you, grandpapa. Did not you think it was a thief, when you were left in the dark?”

“It is very odd that nobody about me can find me a lamp that will serve me. And then, what is all this bustle in the town? Tell me at once what is the matter.”

“I know of nothing the matter. The trompettes have been by this morning; and they say that the Commander-in-chief is here: so there will be nothing the matter. There was some talk last night, Pierre said—some fright about to-day. But L’Ouverture is come; and it will be all right now, you know.”

“You know nothing about it, child—teazing one with your buzzing, worrying humming-birds! Go and get my coffee, and send Pierre to me.”

“The birds will come with me, I dare say, if I go by the balcony. I will take them away.”

“No, no. Don’t lose time with them. Let them be. Go and send Pierre.”

When Euphrosyne returned with the coffee, she found, as Pierre had found before her, Monsieur Revel so engrossed in looking through his spectacles at the water-jar, as to have forgotten what he had to ask and to say.

“You will find the bath ready whenever you want it, grandpapa,” said Euphrosyne, as she placed the little tray before him: “and it is a sweet airy morning.”

“Ay; I must make haste up, and see what is to be done. It is not safe to lie and rest in one’s bed, in this part of the world.” And he made haste to stir his coffee with his trembling hands.

“Oh, you have often said that—almost ever since I can remember—and here we are, quite safe still.”

“Tell the truth, child. How dare you say that we have been safe ever since you remember?”

“I said ‘almost,’ grandpapa. I do not forget about our being in the woods—about—but we will not talk of that now. That was all over a long time ago; and we have been very safe since. The great thing of all is, that there was no L’Overture then, to take care of us. Now, you know, the Commander-in-chief is always thinking how he can take the best care of us.”

“No L’Overture then!’ One would think you did not know what and where Toussaint was then. Why, child, your poor father was master over a hundred such as he.”

“Do you think they were like him? Surely, if they had been like him, they would not have treated us as they did. Afra says she does not believe, anybody like him ever lived.”

“Afra is a pestilent little fool.”

“Oh, grandpapa!”

“Well, well! She is a very good girl in her way; but she talks about what she does not understand. She pretends to judge of governors of the colony, when her own father cannot govern this town, and she never knew Blanchelande! Ah! if she had known Blanchelande, she would have seen a man who understood his business, and had spirit to keep up the dignity and honour of the colony. If that sort of rule had gone on till now, we should not have had the best houses in the island full of these black upstarts; nor a mulatto governor in this very town.”

“And then I should not have had Afra for a friend, grandpapa.”

“You would have been better without, child. I do not like to see you for ever with a girl of her complexion, though she is the governor’s daughter. There must be an end of it—there shall be an end of it. It is a good time now. There is a reason for it to-day. It is time you made friends of your own complexion, child; and into the convent you go—this very day.”

“Oh, grandpapa, you don’t mean that those nuns are of my complexion! Poor pale creatures! I would not for the world look like them: and I certainly shall, if you put me there. I had much rather look like Afra than like sister Benoite, or sister Cecile. Grandpapa! you would not like me to look like sister Benoite?”

“How do I know, child? I don’t know one from another of them.”

“No, indeed! and you would not know me by the time I had been there three months. How sorry you would be, grandpapa, when you asked for me next winter, to see all those yellow-faced women pass before you, and when the yellowest of all came, to have to say, ‘Can this be my poor Euphrosyne!’”

Monsieur Revel could not help laughing as he looked up at the girl through his spectacles. He pinched her cheek, and said that there was certainly more colour there than was common in the West Indies; but that it must fade, in or out of the convent, by the time she was twenty; and she had better be in a place where she was safe. The convent was the only safe place.

“You have often said that before,” replied she, “and the time has never come yet. And no more it will now. I shall go with Afra to the cacao-gathering at Le Zéphyr, as I did last year. Oh, that sweet cool place in the Mornes du Chaos! How different from this great ugly square white convent, with nothing that looks cheerful, and nothing to be heard but teaching, teaching, and religion, religion, for ever.”

“I advise you to make friends among the sisters, however, Euphrosyne; for there you will spend the next few years.”

“I will not make friends with anything but the poor mocking-bird. I have promised Afra not to love anybody instead of her; but she will not be jealous of the poor bird. It and I will spend the whole day in the thicket,

mocking and pining—pining and mocking. The sisters shall not get a word out of me—not one of them. I may speak to old Raphael now and then, that I may not forget how to use my tongue; but I vow that poor bird shall be my only friend.”

“We shall see that. We shall see how long a giddy child like you can keep her mocking-bird tone in the uproar that is coming upon us! What will you do, child, without me, when the people of this colony are cutting one another’s throats over my grave? What will become of you when I am gone?”

“Dear grandpapa, before that comes the question, What will you do without me? What will become of you when I am gone into that dull place? You know very well, grandpapa, that you cannot spare me.”

The old man’s frame was shaken with sobs. He put his thin hands before his face, and the tears trickled between his fingers. Euphrosyne caressed him, saying, “There! I knew how it would be. I knew I should never leave you. I never will leave you. I will bring up your coffee every morning, and light your lamp every night, as long as you live.”

As she happened to be looking towards the door, she saw it opening a little upon its noiseless hinges, and a hand which she knew to be Pierre’s beckoning to her. Her grandfather did not see it. She withdrew herself from him with a sportive kiss, ordered him to rest for a while, and think of nothing but her humming-birds, and carried the tray out of the room.

Pierre was there, waiting impatiently with a note from Afra.

“I did not bring it in, Mademoiselle,” said he, “because I am sure there is something amiss. A soldier brought the note; and he says he has orders to stay for my master’s commands.”

Afra’s note told what this meant. It was as follows:—

“Dearest Euphrosyne,

“Do not be frightened. There is time, if you come directly. There is no danger, if you come to us. The cultivators are marching hither over the plain. It is with the whites that they are angry; so you had better make

yourselves secure with us. The soldier who brings this will escort Monsieur Revel and you this little way through the streets: but you must lose no time. We are sorry to hurry your grandfather; but it cannot be helped. Come, my dearest, to your

“Afra Raymond.”

Pierre saw his young lady’s face turn as pale as any nun’s, as she glanced over this note.

“The carriage, Pierre! Have it to the door instantly.”

“With your leave. Mademoiselle, the soldier says no French carriages will be safe in the streets this morning.”

“Oh, mercy! A chair, then. Send for a chair this moment. The soldier will go for it—ask him as a favour. They will not dare to refuse one to a governor’s guard. Then come, and dress your master, and do not look so grave, Pierre, before him.”

Pierre went, and was met at the door by a servant with another note. It was—

“Do not come by the street, dearest Euphrosyne. The nuns will let you through their garden, into our garden alley, if you can only get your grandfather over the balcony. My two messengers will help you; but they are much wanted:—so make haste.

“A.E.”

“Make the soldiers sling an arm-chair from the balcony, Pierre; and send one of them round into the convent garden, to be ready to receive us there. The abbess will have the gate open to the Government-house alley. Then come, and dress your master; and leave it to me to tell him everything.”

“Likely enough,” muttered Pierre; “for I know nothing of what is in those notes myself.”

“And I do not understand what it is all about,” said Euphrosyne, as she

returned to her grandfather.

He had fallen into a light doze, lulled by the motion and sound of the humming-birds. Euphrosyne kissed his forehead, to rouse him, and then told him gaily that it was terribly late—he had no idea how late it was—he must get up directly. The bath! no; there must be no bath to-day. There was not time for it; or, at least, he must go a little ride first. A new sort of carriage was getting ready—

She now looked graver, as Pierre entered. She said, that while Pierre dressed him, she would put up some clothes for a short visit to Government-house.

Monsieur Revel, being now alarmed, Euphrosyne admitted that some confusion in the streets was expected, and that the Governor and Afra thought that their friends would be most quiet at the back of Government-house.

To her consternation, Monsieur Revel suddenly refused to stir a step from his own dwelling. He would not be deceived into putting himself and his child into the hands of any mulattoes upon earth, governors or other. Not one of his old friends, in Blanchelande's time, would have countenanced such an act; and he would not so betray his colour and his child. He had rather die on his own threshold.

"You must do as you please about that, sir," said Pierre; "but, for Mademoiselle Euphrosyne, I must say, that I think it is full early for her to die—and when she might be safe too!"

"Oh, grandpapa! I cannot let you talk of our dying," cried Euphrosyne, her cheeks bathed in tears. "Indeed I will not die—nor shall you either. Besides, if that were all—"

The old man knew what was in her mind—that she was thinking of the woods. He sank down on his knees by the bedside, and prayed that the earth might gape and swallow them up—that the sea might rush in, and overflow the hollow where the city had been, before he and his should fall into the hands of the cursed blacks.

"Grandpapa," said Euphrosyne, gravely, "if you pray such a prayer as

that, do not pray aloud. I cannot hear such a prayer as that." Struggling with her tears, she continued: "I know you are very much frightened—and I do not wonder that you are: but I do wish you would remember that we have very kind friends who will protect us, if we will only make haste and go to them. And as for their being of a different colour—I do wonder that you can ask God to cause the earth to swallow us up, when you know (at least, you have taught me so) we must meet people of all races before the throne of God. He has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, you know."

Monsieur Revel shook his head impatiently, as if to show that she did not understand his feelings. She went on, however:—

"If we so hate and distrust them at this moment, here, how can we pray for death, so as to meet them at the next moment there? Oh, grandpapa! let us know them a little better first. Let us go to them now."

"Don't waste time so, child; you hinder my dressing."

He allowed himself to be dressed, and made no further opposition till he found himself at the balcony of the next room.

"Here is your new coach," said Euphrosyne, "and plenty of servants:" showing him how one of the soldiers and old Raphael stood below to receive the chair, and the abbess herself was in waiting in a distant walk, beside the wicket they were to pass through.

Of course, the old gentleman said he could never get down that way; and he said something about dying on his own threshold—this time, however, in a very low voice. But, in the midst of his opposition, Euphrosyne seated herself in the chair, and was let down. When she could no longer hear his complaints, but was standing beckoning to him from the grass-plat below, he gave up all resistance, was let down with perfect ease, and carried in the chair, followed by all the white members of his household, through the gardens, and up the alley where Afra was awaiting them. There was a grey sister peeping from behind every blind as they crossed the garden, and trembling with the revived fears of that terrible night of ninety-one, when they had fled to the ships. It was some comfort to them to see old Raphael busy with rake and knife, repairing the damage done

to the bed under the balcony—all trampled as it was. Each nun said to herself that Raphael seemed to have no fears but that the garden would go on as usual, whatever disturbance was abroad.

“Have you seen him?” asked Euphrosyne eagerly of her friend, the moment they met.

“Oh yes. You shall see him too, from my window, if they will but talk on till we get there. He and the Commissary, and some of the Commissary’s officers, are in the rose-garden under my window. Make haste, or they may be gone.”

“We must see grandpapa settled first.”

“Oh yes; but I am so afraid they may be gone! They have been pacing the alley between the rose-trees this hour nearly—talking and arguing all the time. I am sure they were arguing; for they stopped every now and then, and the Commissary made such gestures! He looked so impatient and so vexed!”

“And did *he* look vexed, too?”

“Not in the least angry, but severe. So quiet, so majestic he looked, as he listened to all they said! and when he answered them—Oh, I would not, for all the island, have his eyes so set upon me!”

“Oh dear, let us make haste, or they will be gone!” cried Euphrosyne.

While Euphrosyne was endeavouring to make her grandfather feel himself at home and comfortable in the apartment appointed for him by the Governor, Afra ran to her window, to see if the potentates of the island were still at their conference. The rose-garden was empty; and she came back sorrowfully to say so. As she entered the apartment of her guests, she heard Monsieur Revel sending a message of compliments to the Commissary, with a request of an audience of a few minutes. The servants gave as much intimation as they dared of the Commissary being so particularly engaged, that they had rather be excused carrying this message. The girls looked at one another, nodded agreement, and Euphrosyne spoke.



“Suppose, grandpapa, you ask to see the Commander-in-chief. He never refuses anything that is asked of him: and he can do everything he wishes. I dare say he will come at once, if you desire it, and if we do not detain him too long. If he had been in this room once with us, how safe we should feel!”

“Oh, if we could see him once in this room!” cried Afra.

“Do you suppose I will beg a favour of that ambitious black?” cried Monsieur Revel. “Do you think I will crave an audience of a fellow who, for aught I know, may have driven his master’s carriage to my door in the old days?—no, if I cannot see Hédouville, I will take my chance. Go, fellow! and carry my message,” he cried to Pierre.

Pierre returned with the answer which might have been anticipated. The Commissary was so engaged, there was so much bustle and confusion throughout his establishment, that no one of his people would deliver the message.

“That would not have been the answer if—” whispered Euphrosyne to her friend.

“Shall I venture?—yes, I will—shall I? At least, I will keep upon the watch,” said Afra, as she withdrew.

She presently sent in, with the tray of fruit, a basket of flowers, which Euphrosyne occupied herself in dressing, exactly as she did at home, humming the while the airs her grandfather heard her sing every day. Her devices answered very well. He presently occupied himself in pointing out, exactly as he always did, that there was too much green in this bouquet, and not enough in that.

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## **Chapter Fourteen.**

### **Spoiling Sport.**

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the Commissary on seeing Toussaint this morning. Hédouville was amusing himself, before the sun

was high, alternately with three or four of his officers, in duetting with a parrot, which had shown its gaudy plumage among the dark foliage of a tamarind-tree in the garden. At every pause in the bird's chatter, one of the gentlemen chattered in reply; and thus kept up the discord, to the great amusement of the party. Hédouville was just declaring that he had obtained the best answer—the loudest and most hideous—when he heard the swing of a gate, and, turning round, saw Toussaint entering from the barrack-yard.

“The ape!” exclaimed one of the officers, in a whisper.

“Who—who is it?” eagerly asked a naval captain, lately arrived.

“Who should it be but the black chief? No other of his race is fond enough of us to be for ever thrusting himself upon us. He is confoundedly fond of the whites.”

“We only ask him,” said Delon, another officer, “to like us no better than we like him, and leave us to manage our business our own way.”

“Say the word, Commissary,” whispered the first, “and he shall not go hence so easily as he came.”

“I should beg pardon, Commissary,” said Toussaint, as he approached, “for presenting myself thus—for entering by a back-way—if it were not necessary. The crisis requires that we should agree upon our plan of operations, before we are seen in the streets. It is most important that we should appear to act in concert. It is the last chance for the public safety.”

“Crisis!—public safety!—seen in the streets!” exclaimed Hédouville. “I assure you, General, I have no thoughts of going abroad till evening. It will be a scorching day. Is the crisis you speak of that of the heats?”

“No trifling, Commissary! Gentlemen,” said he, turning to the officers, who happened to be laughing, “no levity! The occasion is too serious for mirth or for loss of time. Shall we speak alone, Commissary?”

“By no means,” said Hédouville. “These gentlemen would not for the world miss hearing your news. Has a fresh insurrection been contrived already? or has any Frenchman forgotten himself, and kissed Psyche, or

cuffed Agamemnon?”

“A new insurrection has been contrived; and by you. The cultivators are marching over the plain; and in four hours the town will be sacked, if you, Monsieur Hédouville, who have given the provocation, do not withdraw it. You must sign this proclamation. It is the opposite of your own now waiting for jubilation. But you must sign and issue it—and that within this hour. I hear what you say, gentlemen. You say that I have raised the cultivators. I have not. There is not a negro in the plain who does not at this moment believe that I am in the south. I come to put them down; but I will not go out with the sword in one hand, if I do not carry justice in the other.”

“What do you mean about justice, General? What injustice has been done?”

“Here is the draft of your proclamation—”

“How came you by that paper—by the particulars of my intention?” asked Hédouville. “My proclamation is yet locked up in my own desk.”

“Its contents are nevertheless known throughout the colony. When a Commissary, lightly and incidentally (and therefore the more offensively) settles, without understanding them, the most important points of difference between two unreconciled races, the very winds stoop in their flight, to snatch up the tidings, and drop them as they fly. See here! See how you pronounce on the terms of field-service—and here, on the partition of unclaimed estates—and here, on the claims of the emigrants! The blacks must be indeed as stupid as you hold them to be, if they did not spread the alarm that you are about to enslave them again.”

“I protest I never dreamed of such a thing.”

“I believe you. And that you did not so dream, shows that you are blind to the effects of your own measures—that the cultivators of the plain understand your proceedings better than you do yourself. Here is the proclamation which must be issued.”

And he offered a paper, which Hédouville took, but tore in pieces, trampling them under foot, and saying, that he had never before been so

insulted in his function.

“That is a childish act,” observed Toussaint, as he looked down upon the fragments of the document. “And a useless one,” he continued; “for my secretary is getting it printed off by this time.”

“Are you going to dare to put my name to a proclamation I have not seen?”

“Certainly not. My name will suffice, if you compel me to dispense with yours. This proclamation grants—”

Hédouville here gave whispered directions to Delon, who hastened towards the house; and to another, who made for the barrack-yard.

“From every quarter,” said Toussaint, “you will have confirmation of the news I brought. I will speak presently of what must be done. This proclamation,” pointing to the torn paper, “grants an amnesty to all engaged in former conflicts of race, and declares that there are no ‘returned emigrants’ in the island—that they are all considered native proprietors—that all now absent shall be welcome again, and shall be protected—that the blacks are free citizens, and will so remain; but that they shall continue for five years to till the estates on which they live, for one-fourth of the produce.”

“I do not see the grounds of your disgust with my proclamation,” said Hédouville. “I think your anger absurd.”

“I have no doubt you do. This proves, with a multitude of other circumstances, that you must go.”

“Admirable! And leave the colony to your government!”

“Just so. If you ask the whites of the island, they will tell you, almost to a man, that I can govern the whites; while events daily show that you cannot rule the blacks. While you have held the title of Commissary, you know that you have ruled only by my permission—sometimes strengthened by my approbation—oftener spared by my forbearance. I am aware that these gentlemen are not of that opinion,” he continued, his voice assuming the mildness which always distinguished it when he

spoke of his personal injuries. "They believe that if two or three brigands could be got to seize in his camp the ape with the Madras on his head, all would be well. But they are mistaken. They may play the brigand, and seize me now; but then the town will be burning before night."

"You should not believe all the saucy things that are told you—you should not care for the impertinence of young soldiers," said Hédouville, who suspected that his affairs were reality in a critical state, and had now resumed his usual smoothness of manner. He led the way up the alley between the rose-trees, that the torn proclamation might be no longer in sight.

"No doubt," observed an officer, gravely, "the Commissary will report to the First Consul (if you really persist in sending the Commissary away)—he will doubtless report to the First Consul the prodigious power you hold here, and how great a rival Bonaparte has on this side the water."

"And how willing a servant," added Toussaint—"how willing to bear the burden of government for the good of France."

"Burden!" exclaimed all.

"Yes," replied Toussaint: "where is there a heavier burden? Do you suppose that men choose their own office in life? If so, should I have chosen such a one as mine? Was the pleasure of Heaven ever more clearly revealed than in my case? Ask the First Consul whether it was possible for me to be other than I am. The revolution of Saint Domingo proceeded without any interference from me—a negro slave. I saw that the dominion of the whites could not last, divided as they were among themselves, and lost in the numbers of their foes. I was glad that I was a black. The time came when I was compelled to act. I associated myself with the Spaniards, who were the allies of my king, and who had extended protection to the loyal troops of my colour. But this protection served no end. The republic proclaimed the general liberty of the blacks. An unerring voice told me that my allegiance was thenceforward due to the republic. The blacks in their new condition wanted a leader. They chose me to lead them—to be the chief predicted by Raynal, as General Laveaux declared. Inspired by this call, I entered into the service of France. The services that I have rendered prove that it was indeed the

voice of God that called me. Why do I tell you this?—Because I owe an account of my life to you? No, indeed!—I tell you all this that you may render my account to the First Consul, whom, it appears, I cannot reach by letter. I charge you, by your fidelity to the mother-country, to repeat to Bonaparte what I have said.”

“You could do it more accurately and forcibly yourself,” observed Hédouville. “Let me advise that you go instead of me.”

“You know,” replied Toussaint, “who it was that said that I am the Bonaparte of Saint Domingo, and that the colony could not exist without me. It was your brother functionaries who said it; and never did they say anything more true.”

The naval captain, Meronet, observed that his ship, now in the roads, happened to be that which had conveyed the Commissary; and that it would greatly flatter him, after having brought out Commissary Hédouville, to carry back General Toussaint L’Ouverture.

“Your ship, sir,” replied Toussaint, “will not contain a man like me—a man laden with the destinies of a race.”

“But you speak of the burden of your office,” observed one of the aides. “It must be great; and all men need occasional repose. Suppose you retire to France for an interval of repose?”

“Perhaps I may,” replied Toussaint, “when this shrub,” pointing to the sucker of a logwood tree, “shall be large enough to make a ship to take me there.”

“You could devolve your cares upon your friend Raymond, General, if you do not wish fully to trust the whites. Be persuaded to visit your brother in destiny and glory, as you call Bonaparte.”

“Raymond is my friend, as you say, and a good man; but he is not called to be arbiter of the fate of the colony. See! Here are your messengers, Commissary.”

The officers entered from the barracks, with news that the plain was really in a state of commotion, and that no adequate defences appeared

to be provided by the authorities of the town.

“I charge myself with the defence of the town,” said Toussaint. “Your part, Commissary, is to sign the new proclamation instantly; and to prepare to sail for France, with as many persons as desire to accompany you. On your promise to do this, I will guarantee the public peace. In this case, you incur no further dishonour than that of not understanding the temper and the affairs of the blacks. If you refuse to go, I shall arrest you here, and denounce you to the government of France, as the cause of the insurrection which will undoubtedly ensue. You will not choose to incur this infamy. Therefore,” he continued, turning to Captain Meronet, “you will have the goodness to return to your ship, and prepare it for the reception of the Commissary. He will probably join you in the course of this day.”

Again addressing the astonished functionary, he continued, “You shall be protected to the latest possible moment, for the convenience of making your arrangements. When I can protect you no longer, I will cause the alarm gun on the height behind the barracks to be fired. At that signal, you will hasten to the boats, and be gone. Assure yourself of my justice, and render me an equal measure at the court of France. Farewell!”

As he entered Government-house, the officers looked at each other in consternation.

“What is to be done?” asked more than one.

“It is true enough,” said Hédouville, “that neither I nor any one else understand these people. The danger is really pressing Delon.”

“Most pressing, there is no doubt.”

“Then I have done with this mongrel colony; and I am not sorry. At home I shall find means to vindicate my honour.”

“You mean to depart, then, Commissary?”

“When we hear the alarm gun. Not sooner. It is possible that it may be a mere threat.”

“If so, it will be the first mere threat in which this black has been detected.”

“That is true. He usually acts first, and speaks afterwards. Gentlemen, we shall have to go. I must first see about this proclamation, and discover whether anything else can be done. If not, Captain, au revoir!”

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## Chapter Fifteen.

### Go or Stay?

The Commander-in-chief was not long closeted with Governor Raymond: for this was a day when minutes were precious. It was observed that there was a sudden activity among the messengers of the Governor, among the soldiers, and among the citizens; and every one felt that the voice of Toussaint was giving orders in every corner of the town, before he had yet come forth. The report spread that Moyse L'Ouverture was come; and he was soon seen, superintending the placing of cannon in the streets, and the mustering of soldiers in the squares. The presence of the young man inspired an enthusiasm inferior only to that which waited on the steps of his uncle. Its influence on Moyse was seen in the fire of his eye, the quickness of his movements, and the hilarity of his air. He appeared to notice every one who cheered, or waved hat or handkerchief to him, and to overhear all that was said as he passed along. In one instance he stopped to reply.

“I little thought,” he heard an old negro merchant say to a neighbour—“I little thought ever to see an Ouverture planting cannon against his own colour.”

“Nor do you see it now, friend,” said Moyse. “The insurgents in the plain are of all colours—almost as many whites as blacks are discontented with the Commissary, and—”

“Turn your guns upon the Commissary, then, young soldier!”

“There is no need, friend. We shall be rid of the Commissary by an easier method; and these guns will be wheeled home, as harmless as they



came. My belief is that not a drop of negro blood will be shed; and to that end do we plant our cannon. If we tranquillise the whites of the town, and empty Government-house of the French, the negroes of the plain will find none but friends when they arrive.”

“Oh, ay! That is your policy, is it?”

“That is L’Ouverture’s policy. Tell it everywhere. He is the best friend of the blacks who best makes it known.”

The explanation passed from mouth to mouth; and the new proclamation, signed by Toussaint and Hédouville, from hand to hand. The proclamation was posted in the corners of the streets; it was read aloud in the squares; it was sent, by messengers of every colour, among the insurgents in the plain. The effect of this, connected with the report, which every moment gained strength, that the Commissary was about to quit the colony was so evident, that Toussaint’s wishes seemed likely to be accomplished. The insurgents did not, indeed, disband: they had been too often deceived by the Commissary’s bland promises to do that before they had gained their point: but there was every reason to believe that they would march upon the town, only to secure the departure of Hédouville and his adherents, and the fidelity of the government to the terms of the proclamation.

When Toussaint came forth from his conference with Raymond, Afra and Euphrosyne were awaiting him in the corridor. He would have passed them with a smile; but he saw that Afra was urging Euphrosyne to speak, and that the blushing Euphrosyne dared not do so. He therefore stopped to tell Afra that his daughters had sent their love to her; that she was going to Pongaudin in a day or two; and that her friends there would be very glad to see her.

“Am I really going? Does my father say that I may?”

“He is going too: he will be there before you.”

“My poor Euphrosyne, what will you do?” exclaimed Afra. “This is Euphrosyne Revel,” she continued to Toussaint; “and—”

“Revel!” he said. “Have not you an aged relative in this town, my dear?”

“In that room,” hastily answered Afra. “He is very old, and much alarmed to-day; and he cannot believe that he and Euphrosyne are safe, even here. If you will only assure Euphrosyne that there is no danger—if she could tell him that you say so—”

“I will tell him myself,” said Toussaint. “He is in that apartment, you say?”

“Oh! but please your Excellency,” exclaimed Afra, “he may not like—he may not wish—Euphrosyne is as much devoted to you as we are, but—”

Toussaint was well aware that Monsieur Revel might not like, would not wish, to see him, or any black. Among all the hatreds which had deformed the colony, none more fierce had existed than that between Monsieur Revel and the negro race. He had been a cruel master; hence his incessant terrors now. He had been marked out for vengeance at the time of the revolution, and his family had perished for his crimes; and hence the detestation in which, as the survivor of these victims, he was regarded by most who knew the story. Euphrosyne knew nothing of it; nor did her young companion. There was no one to tell them uselessly so painful a tale; and there was nothing in Monsieur Revel’s present conduct to awaken a suspicion of the truth. He rarely saw a black: and the tenderness which lies in some corner of the hardest hearts was by him lavished upon his only remaining descendant. Little did she suppose now, how much better her grandfather was known by Toussaint than by herself.

“Trust me!” said Toussaint, smiling. “I will not annoy Monsieur Revel. I will merely reassure him, and tell him a little good news; and then leave him to his repose.”

“Yes, Afra,” interposed Euphrosyne. “Oh yes, please your Excellency, do go! I will tell him you are coming.”

She flew along the corridor, and, with joyous smiles, prepared Monsieur Revel for some great honour and pleasure, when Toussaint entered, and bowed low, as it had ever been his custom to do before grey hairs.

“I come,” said he to the old man, who seemed at a loss whether to rise or not, but who would not ask his visitor to sit down, “I come to encourage you to dismiss all fears. By the resolution of the Commissary to sail for

France this day all further disputes are obviated. We have strong hopes that peace will not be disturbed.”

“The Commissary going home. Who, then, is to govern us? What is to become of the whites in the colony?”

“I will take care of them. Those who are unwilling to remain, in the absence of the Commissary, can depart with him. There is shipping enough for more than will wish to go.”

Euphrosyne glanced apprehensively at her grandfather, and then said, “Grandpapa is too old to go upon the sea any more; and I am not afraid of anything here. I do not believe there is anything to be afraid of here; is there?”

“Indeed, I believe not.”

“Besides,” said Afra, “my father will not allow any harm to happen to his best friends. My father—”

“Your father, my dear, will not be here,” said Toussaint. “He is appointed to the legislature, in the interior. I protect this town till a new governor is appointed. I told you we hoped to see you at Pongaudin. You will pass your time there, with my family, while Monsieur Raymond attends his duties in the legislature. I go, sir, to provide for the peace of the town. If I can be of service to you, you have only to send to me. I entreat you to rely upon my protection.”

And he went out.

“Oh, grandpapa!” exclaimed Euphrosyne, sighing.

“My dears, I hope I was not rude to him. I know that he meant kindly by coming: and I would not be otherwise than civil. I hope I was not rude to the Commander-in-chief.”

Neither of his companions spoke, to give him comfort on this head. He grew angry. He declared that he did not understand all these changes and troubles, and he would go out of the way of them. He would sail with Hédouville; and so should Euphrosyne, and so should Pierre. He knew

he should die before they had been a week at sea; but he would not stay to see everything turned topsy-turvy by the blacks.

Afra gently said that she understood it was Hédouville who had endeavoured to turn everything topsy-turvy, and those who understood the affairs of the colony better, who hoped to keep them straight. Euphrosyne protested that it was impossible to get home, to pack up their goods: and even if they were at home, there was no time to do it properly. When she found all her objections of this class unavailing, she gravely said that she fully believed what her grandfather had just declared—that he would die before they had been a week at sea; and nothing, therefore, should make her consent to go. A compromise was at length agreed upon. Euphrosyne promised to enter the convent, if her grandfather should desire it: and on this promise, he consented to say no more about going to sea.

As Toussaint went forth from Monsieur Revel's apartment, he met Monsieur Pascal, with his portfolio in his hand.

"Monsieur Pascal here already! I am gratified—I am grateful!" said Toussaint, grasping his hand. "You are weary—you must be very weary; but can you work a little before going to rest?"

"Willingly. No doubt. Most willingly."

Toussaint desired that fruit and wine should be sent to the governor's private room, and that the reports of messengers from the city should be brought instantly to him there. Monsieur Pascal and he then sat down beside a table, with pen, ink, and paper before them.

"Monsieur Pascal," Toussaint began, "the Commissary sails for France this day, with as many as desire to accompany him. You know the reasons which compel me to advise his departure. You came out as his secretary. Do you desire to return with him?"

"I do not. With your permission, I will remain with you."

"With what view?"

"My own satisfaction, and the wish to serve the colony. My attachment to

yourself is strong. I also perceive that you govern wisely and well; and I desire to aid in so important a work.”

“Good. But you are not aware of the danger of attaching yourself thus exclusively to me. Till to-day, if I fell, your way to France, your way in France, was open. After to-day, it will no longer be so. I am so surrounded with dangers, that I can scarcely escape ruin or death. The mulattoes conspire against my power and my life. The blacks, for whom I have made myself responsible, are yet full of passion, and not to be relied on in the present infancy of their education. The French officials are so many malignant spies—excepting yourself, indeed,” he added, with a smile. “Bonaparte, who rules everywhere, is surrounded by our emigrants, who attribute their sufferings to the blacks; and he is jealous of me. I would rather say he distrusts me. Now you see my position. I ask no white to share its perils. If you go with Hédouville, you shall carry with you my friendly farewell.”

“I will stay with you.”

“Thank God! Then we are friends indeed! Now to business. In the pressing affairs of to-day, we must not overlook the future security of the colony. The story which Hédouville will tell at home must be met and illustrated by our statement. Write so fully to the First Consul as that he may clearly see that it is to Hédouville’s ignorance and presumption that the present disturbances are owing.”

“It is a clear case.”

“It is to us. Make it so to him. One word first. Will you undertake the office of governor of this town?”

“Instead of Raymond?”

“Instead of Raymond. He is a good man; but I erred in appointing him. He is fit for deliberation, but not for action. But for my early arrival, this town would have been burned to-day, for want of even a show of defence. He is setting out now for the legislature, to which I have appointed him, and where he will be valuable. Will you assume his office?”

“By no means. I desire to remain beside you, and study your mode of

government, before I attempt myself to govern.”

“I have no fixed mode of governing. I merely act as seems to me good at the time.”

“Inspired by a generous love, ever,” said Pascal.

“Enough of this. It would be an advantage to me, and to the colony, that you should undertake this office. There is no other white, there is no mulatto fit for it! and the mulattoes need conciliation. If they see the office bestowed on a black, or occupied by me, in the interim they will feel themselves injured by Raymond’s removal. You see the advantages of your filling the office.”

“I see yet more plainly the disadvantages, unfit as I am. I cannot accept it.”

“Very well. While you are writing, I will ascertain how the provisioning of the ships goes on, and will give you as much time as possible. But there is not a moment to lose. I will return presently to sign.”

Toussaint walked up and down the corridor, receiving reports, and issuing orders every moment. He found that the harbour was covered with boats carrying out hogs, fowls, vegetables, and water, according to his orders: but no baggage had been sent down from the quarters of the French officials, though porters had been waiting for two hours past. Scouts had come in, with news of the approach of the insurgents. This information was communicated to Hédouville, with a hint that the ships were nearly provisioned; but no answer was returned. Moyse sent word that the preparations in the town were nearly complete, and the spirit of the inhabitants improving every hour, if only the Commissary would make haste and be gone. Toussaint found the moment was coming for him to give the word to fire the alarm gun.

“Are the despatches nearly ready?” he asked of Pascal, entering the secretary’s apartment.

“Quite ready for signature,” replied Pascal, drying the ink of the last sheet.

“Excellent!” cried Toussaint, when he had read them. “True and clear!”

He signed and sealed them, and introduced the officer who was to be responsible for their delivery, assuring him that he would be welcome back to the honours which would follow the faithful discharge of his trust. He did not forget to request Monsieur Pascal to go to rest. There might be no rest for either of them this night.

As Euphrosyne sat beside Monsieur Revel, who was sleeping on a couch, after the fatigues of the morning, old Pierre beckoned her softly out, sending in Euphrosyne’s maid, and saying, as he shut the door, “She will stay with my master till he wakes. Mademoiselle Afra has sent for you, mademoiselle, to see from the upper gallery what is going on. The harbour is so crowded with boats, that they can hardly move; and it is time they were moving pretty fast; for the battle is beginning at the other end of the town; and the Commissary is not off yet, though the gun was fired half-an-hour since. You heard the gun, mademoiselle?”

“Yes. I am glad it was only a signal. You are sure it was only a signal?”

“So they say everywhere. This is the way, mademoiselle. Monsieur Pascal is up here—the secretary, you know—and Mademoiselle Raymond, and her gouvernante, and several more, who have nothing to do with the fighting.”

“But I do not want to see any fighting,” said Euphrosyne, turning upon the stairs to descend. “Tell Mademoiselle Raymond that I cannot bear to see fighting.”

“There is no fighting yet, mademoiselle, indeed: and many say there will not be any. Indeed you must see such a fine sight as this. You can see the Commander-in-chief galloping about the square, with his two trompettes at his heels.”

Euphrosyne turned again, and ran up to the top, without once stopping. There she was hastily introduced to Monsieur Pascal, and placed by the gouvernante where she could see everything.

By this time it had become a question whether the Commissary and his suite could get away. They were making every effort to do so; but it was

clear that their road would have been blockaded if the Commander-in-chief and his trompettes had not ridden round and round the party of soldiers which escorted them, clearing a passage by the power of a voice and a presence which always prevailed. Meantime, a huge body of people, which filled all the streets in the northern quarter, was gaining ground, pressing forwards against the peaceable opposition of the town's-people, and the soldiers, commanded by Moyses. The clamour of voices from that quarter was prodigious, but there were no shots. The wharves were covered with gentlemen, ladies, children, servants, and baggage, all being precipitated by degrees into boats, and rowed away, while more were perpetually arriving.

"Is not this admirable?" said Monsieur Pascal. "The secret has actually been kept that the Commissary is on his way to the water side. See! the cultivators are pressing on in this direction. They think he is here. If they knew where he was, they might catch him. As it is, I believe he will escape."

"Oh! are they coming here? Oh, my poor grandfather!" cried Euphrosyne, turning very pale.

"Fear nothing," said Afra. "They will presently learn that there is nothing to come here for. Will they not, Monsieur Pascal?"

"No doubt: and if not, there is nothing to fear, I believe. Not a shot has been fired yet, but from the alarm gun."

"Oh, how it echoed from the Haut-du-Cap!" cried Afra. "I wonder what the cultivators understood by it. See! my father's barge! There is fighting there, surely."

As Hédouville and his suite approached the wharf, the Governor's barge, which had lain at a little distance from the shore, began to press in, among the crowd of other boats, at a signal from one of the trompettes. The other boats, which were taking in terrified women and children, resisted this movement, and refused, at such a moment, its usual precedence to the Governor's barge. There was a hustling, a struggling, a shrieking, an uproar, so loud as to reach the ears and understandings of the insurgents. The word spread that the Commissary was escaping



them. They broke through their opponents, and began a rush to the wharves. Not a few shots were now fired; but the young ladies scarcely heeded them in the excitement of this decisive moment.

“Oh, they will seize him! They will tear him in pieces!” cried Afra.

“He cannot—no, he never can get away!” exclaimed Euphrosyne.

“And he gave me the sweetest smile as he was going out!” said the weeping gouvernante.

“There! Bravo! Bravo!” cried Monsieur Pascal; and Pierre echoed “Bravo!”

“What is it? What is it?” cried the girls.

“He is safe! He and his party—they are all safe! Not in the barge—that is upset. You see those two green boats, now pulling off. They are there. They leaped into those boats just in time.”

“Oh, look, look! what dreadful confusion!” cried Euphrosyne, covering her eyes with her hands.

“It is not so sure that they are safe yet,” observed Pierre. “See how the blacks are pouring into the water!”

“And carrying the ladies and children with them, I fear,” said Monsieur Pascal, gazing anxiously through his glass.

In fact, the negroes had no idea of giving up the pursuit because they had reached the water. Hundreds plunged in; and their heads were seen bobbing about all the surface of the bay. The rowers, however, pulled well, and presently left the greater number behind, to find satisfaction in the coolness of the element.

“There is no great harm done,” said Monsieur Pascal, still gazing through his glass. “They have picked up two ladies and three children; and none seem to be missing.”

“It is well that you and Monsieur were not there, Euphrosyne,” observed

Afra.

Euphrosyne shuddered, and Pierre looked all amazement at the absurdity of such an idea.

“No fear for us, Mademoiselle,” said he. “See how empty the streets are, down below. None but the guard left, within half a mile.”

It did indeed appear as if the whole population of the town and plain was collected on the shores of the bay. Those who had thrown themselves into the sea had to wait for a footing on land, unless they chose to swim round the point—which some of them did. When at length the crowd began to move up into the town, it was because the Commander-in-chief was riding away, after having addressed the people.

“What have you been about, child?” exclaimed Monsieur Revel, an hour after. “You are never beside me when I wake.”

Euphrosyne did not point out that this was the first time she had failed to watch his siesta. She said that she had been seeing the Commissary set sail.

“What, already! He is in a great hurry, I think.”

“The wind is quite fair, grandpapa. I suppose that is the reason why he made all the ships in the harbour sail the same way. He has carried off three frigates, and all the shipping in the roads. The sea is quite clear, grandpapa. There is not a single sail in sight, all along, as far as you can see. They are all off for France.”

“What in the world made him do that?”

“Perhaps we shall hear, some day. To be sure, he had to carry a good many people away with him.”

“Did many whites go with him?”

“I do not know how many whites. They say fifteen hundred went altogether; but many of these were mulattoes; and some few blacks, who went for a frolic, and will come back again when they have seen France.”

“Strange doings! Strange doings!” sighed the old man.

“And we shall have some glorious doings to-morrow, grandpapa. There was a little bustle and struggle when the Commissary went away—I am glad you were asleep, and did not hear it. There will be no more—there will be no riot now, everybody says—the Commander-in-chief has behaved so finely, and the people are so fond of him. The danger is all over; and the town’s-people have begged him—the Deliverer, as they call him—to attend the great church to-morrow, in state. Te Deum will be sung in all the churches, and it is to be a great fête-day. Are you not pleased?”

“Not at all pleased that Hédouville is gone, and fifteen hundred of his friends, and all the shipping.”

“Well, but we are all at peace now, and everybody satisfied.”

“Why are we here, then? Why am I not at home?”

“We will go home in a day or two. The streets will be noisy to-night; and besides, one removal is enough for one day. Afra will follow her father after to-morrow—he is gone, you know, this morning—”

“Whose guest am I, then? If I am the guest of the negro Toussaint—”

“You are the guest of Monsieur Raymond while Afra is here. When she sets out, we will go home.”

“And shall I have to be swung up to the balcony, and have my brains dashed out, while all the nuns are staring at me?”

“Oh, no,” replied Euphrosyne, laughing. “There will be nothing then to prevent your going in your own carriage to your own door. I am afraid we shall not find my pretty little humming-birds there. They will think I have forgotten them.”

“Ay, those humming-birds,” said Monsieur Revel, appearing to forget all his troubles.



## **Chapter Sixteen.**

### **Dreaming Awake.**

Though the peace of the town was now considered secure, there was little less bustle throughout the day and night than there had been in the morning. The cultivators were all gone home. They poured out of the town almost as fast as they had poured into it, happy to have attained their object, in the defeat of the French authorities, and to be returning without the loss or punishment of a man. As they attained the height behind which they would lose sight of the sea, they turned for one more view of the empty bay, and of the fleet, now disappearing on the horizon. They gave three cheers; and this was the last that was heard of them, except by such as met them in the plain, where they sang, as they walked, the words of their chief's proclamation. In negro fashion, they had set it to music; and very well it sounded, when sung from the heart.

In the town, the soldiers were busy removing the guns, and all signs of warfare, and the inhabitants in preparing for the fête of to-morrow. During the night, the hurry of footsteps never ceased—so many of the citizens were going out into the country, and returning with blossoming shrubs to adorn the churches, and flowers with which to strew the path of the Deliverer. Under cover of these zealous preparations did discontent, like a serpent under the blossoms of the meadow, prepare to fix its poisonous tooth. There were men abroad in the streets who looked upon these preparations for rejoicing with a determination that the rejoicings should never take place.

The business of this arduous day being finished, Toussaint had retired early to rest, in a chamber in the south wing of Government-house—the part which had been inhabited by the French functionaries. He would allow no one to occupy any apartments of the north wing (that which was appropriated to the governor of the town), while the daughter of the late governor and her guests remained there. His secretary, who had taken some hours' rest before, was busy writing, after midnight, in an apartment in the same wing. He was preparing dispatches for the Central Assembly, now sitting in the interior.

Monsieur Pascal was far from being on good terms with himself this night. If, in the morning, he had doubted his capacity for being governor of the town, he this night doubted his qualifications for the office of secretary, which he had thus far filled to his own satisfaction. To-night he could not command his ideas—he could not fix his attention. He wrote a paragraph, and then he dreamed; he planned a proposition, and then he forgot it again; and, in despair, started up to pace the floor, and disperse intrusive thoughts by exercise. These thoughts would intrude again, however; and he found himself listlessly watching through the window a waving treetop, or a sinking star, while his pen dried in his hand.

These intrusive ideas were of Afra. He had never thought of love, in regard to himself, even enough to despise it, or to resolve against it: and the time was apparently come when love was to revenge himself for this neglect. Perhaps it was this idea, as much as the attractions of Afra herself, that haunted him to-night. He felt that his hour was come; that he was henceforth, like other men, to be divided between two pursuits, to be dependent upon another for his tranquillity. He felt already that he could never again see Mademoiselle Raymond, or hear of her, without emotion. He had never understood love at first sight, and had hardly believed in it:—he now did not understand it; but he could not but believe in it. He felt actually haunted. Every breath of air that whispered in the window brought her voice. Everything that moved in the night breeze made him start as if it was herself. At last, in despair about his task, which must be finished before dawn, he covered his eyes with his hands, as he leaned back in his chair, resolving not to move till he had ascertained what it was that he wanted to write next.

A slight noise in the direction of the door, however, made him look up; and he saw, advancing towards the light, no other than Afra herself. It was no wonder that he sat upright in his chair, his pale face paler than usual. In another moment, however, he blushed to the temples on hearing a suppressed laugh from some one who stood behind Afra, and who said, after some vain attempts to speak for laughing—

“M. Pascal takes us for ghosts.”

“By no means, Mademoiselle Revel. Ghosts do not wrap themselves in shawls from the night air, I believe; nor come in at the door when the

shorter way is through the wall; or take a seat when asked, as I hope you will do." And he placed chairs as he spoke.

"We might have frightened you delightfully if we could have looked half as ghost-like as you did, the first moment you saw us. Perhaps it was the lamp—"

"Hush! Euphrosyne," said Afra. "You speak too loud, and waste time. Remember what we came for. Monsieur Pascal," she said, in a low voice, leaning towards him over the table, and refusing to sit down, "how is L'Ouverture guarded?"

"Not at all, I believe. Why?"

The girls made a gesture of terror. Both said eagerly—

"He is in great danger; indeed, indeed he is."

"Where are the soldiers?" asked Euphrosyne. "Do send for them directly: and ask him to lock himself up in the safest place till they come."

"Tell me what you mean, and then—"

"I think he is in danger, now the white rulers are gone, from the people of my colour," said Afra: "and I fear, this very night."

"Do you mean that they intend to murder him?"

"Perhaps so. Perhaps to seize him, and send him to Rigaud;—and that will be only a slower murder."

"But how—"

"I will tell you. Euphrosyne and I sat rather late behind the jalousies, in the dark, to see the people bring in flowers and fruit from the country for the morning. I saw many mulattoes in the walk; but none of them had fruit or flowers. I watched them. I know their ways, their countenances, and their gestures. I saw they were gloomy and angry; and I found out that it is with L'Ouverture. They were plotting mischief, I am certain."

“But why so suddenly?—why to-night?”

“So we thought at first; and we went to rest, intending to tell L’Overture to-morrow. But the more we thought and talked about it, the more uneasy we grew. We were afraid to go to sleep without telling some one in this wing; so we stole along the corridors in the dark, and saw that there was a light in this library, and ventured to look in, hoping it might be L’Overture himself.”

“He is asleep in a room near. I will waken him. You are not afraid to stay here a few moments, while I am gone?”

“Oh, no.”

“He may wish to question you himself.”

“Tell him,” said Afra, speaking rapidly, “that the mulattoes are jealous of him, because they think he wants to have all the power in his own hands. They say—‘There go the ships! There are no whites in power now. So much the better! But here is Raymond displaced, and L’Overture is all in all. We shall have every office filled with blacks; and the only chance for our degraded colour is in the fields or in the removal of this black.’ Tell him this: but oh! be sure you tell him my father and I do not agree in one word of it.”

“She would do anything in the world to save him,” said Euphrosyne.

“You are dear as a daughter to him,” said Monsieur Pascal, with eyes of love, as he left them.

“I wish I was sure of that,” said Afra. “But what can be done, Euphrosyne? He has no guard! And my father is not here, nor any one to help us! I fancy every moment I hear them coming.”

“I am not much afraid,” said Euphrosyne, her teeth chattering all the while. “He is so powerful! He never seems to want anybody to protect—scarcely to help him.”

“But asleep! After midnight! Think of it! If they should seize him and bind him before he is awake!”

This fear was removed by his appearance, dressed, and like himself. He smiled at the girls, offered them each an arm, and said he had a sight to show them, if they would look at it without speaking. He led them in the dark to a window, whence they looked down upon a courtyard, which was full of soldiers, awake and armed. In another moment, Toussaint was conducting them along the corridors, towards their own apartments, "You knew!" whispered Afra. "We need not have come. I believe you always know everything."

"I suspected a plan to prevent the publishing of the amnesty to-morrow, and the filling up the offices of the colony with blacks. I suspected, but was not certain. Your intelligence has confirmed me."

"What will happen?" asked Euphrosyne, trembling. "Will anybody be killed?"

"Not to-night, I trust. You may go to rest secure that no blood will be spilled to-night; and to-morrow, you know, is a holy-day. If you hear a step in the corridor of this your wing, do not be alarmed. I am going to send one of my own guard."

He left them at their door, after standing to hear them fasten it inside.

The girls kept awake as long as they could, calling each other's attention to every fancied noise. They could be sure of nothing, however, but of the march of the sentinel along the corridor. They both slept at last, and were wakened in broad daylight by the gouvernante, who entered in great trepidation, to say that there had been a plot against the Commander-in-chief;—that the window of his chamber had been entered at two o'clock by a party of mulattoes, who had all been seized by L'Ouverture's soldiers. How it came to end so—how soldiers enough happened to be at hand at the right moment—how it was all done without fighting, without noise enough even to break her rest (and she always know if anybody stirred)—the gouvernante could not tell. All she knew was, that L'Ouverture was the most considerate creature in the world. As soon as the eleven mulattoes who had been taken were put into confinement, L'Ouverture had sent one of his own guards into her corridor to prevent her being alarmed for herself and her young charge.





## Chapter Seventeen.

### The Gift at the Altar.

Poor Euphrosyne! She was not allowed by her grandfather to go to church this day. Monsieur Revel insisted upon it that it would be an act of treason for one of the French race to attend a thanksgiving for having got rid of the French authorities. In vain did Euphrosyne represent that the thanksgiving was for something very different—for the deliverance of the town and district from war—for the security of white and black inhabitants alike.—Neither Monsieur Revel nor Pierre would hear a word of this. They were quite sure that the faster the dark people thronged to the churches to rejoice, the more fervently should the whites mourn and pray for mercy at home. Her grandfather said Pierre should escort her to the chapel of the convent, where she might go without being seen. That service was a fitting one for her to attend; and he would spare her for a couple of hours, to be so spent, under the eye of the abbess. This, however, Euphrosyne declined. She preferred remaining to see from behind the blind what went on in the Jesuits' Walk—to see Afra and her *gouvernante* dressed for church—to see *L'Ouverture* set forth—to see the soldiers follow, marching in a compact body, each man carrying a green bough, in token of rejoicing. She did not know, any more than the crowd that lined the way, that in the centre of this body of military, and concealed by the green boughs, were the eleven mulatto prisoners.

Afra entered quickly to say farewell; and, lifting her veil hastily, she said, "Kiss me, and let me go. *L'Ouverture* says he shall take us into church himself, as my father is not here. *Mademoiselle* and I are going with *Madame Ducie* and her daughters; and *L'Ouverture* will wait for us at the church, and lead us in. Poor Euphrosyne! I wish you were going!"

"I never cared for anything half so much. Will you really walk all through the church to your seat on his arm? And I should have been on the other side, if grandpapa would have let me go! Do not stay, dear. Tell me all about it when you come back."

"I must be gone. There will not be standing-room for one person to spare. You know every one of my colour in Cap is ordered to be in the church as

the hour strikes. Farewell.”

Euphrosyne had thought she had heard the crier publish this order; and presently Pierre brought her the handbill to the same effect, which was passing from hand to hand. If Euphrosyne and Pierre speculated curiously on what this order might mean, what must have been the anxiety of the mulattoes! Most of them had known of the conspiracy of the day before: all had now heard of its failure. All were anxious to attend the church, as staying away would amount to a confession of disloyalty; but there was not one of them who did not go with fear and trembling, wishing that the day was over, though dreading what it might bring forth.

As Afra, and the ladies who attended her, drew near the great church, they found the streets absolutely empty. Loyalty, and the desire to appear loyal, had carried the entire population to the churches; and the houses appeared deserted by all but an aged or sick person, here and there, who looked forth upon the activity he could not share. In the centre of the area before the church were piled the arms of the garrison and of Toussaint's troops; and on the top of the pile of arms lay the fetters which had just been removed from the mulatto conspirators. L'Ouverture, in giving his orders to this effect, had said that arms should be laid aside in the act of thanksgiving for peace; and bonds, while giving thanks for liberty. When, at length, he gave the signal for the military to enter the church after him, some of the officers looked earnestly to him for orders that a guard might be left with the arms. He understood their thoughts, and replied, with a smile:—

“Let every one enter to worship: the arms are safe. There is no one near who would employ them against us.”

Afra's heart beat, and she did not forget Euphrosyne, as she was led to her seat by L'Ouverture, at whose entrance there was a half-suppressed murmur throughout the vast congregation—a murmur which sank into silence at the first breathing of solemn music from the choir. The signs of gratulation for the escape of the Deliverer, first heard in the streets, and now witnessed amidst the worshipping crowd, were too much for the self-command of the conspirators. Their attitude became every moment more downcast—their countenances more sullen and wretched. They had a strong impression that their execution was to seal the thanksgivings of

this day; and in every allusion to deliverance from danger, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, they believed that they read their own doom. A tempting idea of escape now and then crossed the imagination of one or other of them. As they sat with their heads upon their breasts, the thought that they were unfettered, and their guards unarmed, made them eager to glance around, and see if there was hope; but whenever they raised their eyes, and whichever way they looked, they encountered eyes seemingly as numerous as the stars of heaven—as many, as penetrating, but not so calm. Eyes which shone with love of L'Ouverture could not look benignly on those who would have kidnapped or murdered him. Nor did the eleven meet with any visible sympathy from the multitude of their own colour who were present. The greater number looked studiously another way, in order to appear to have no connection with them; and the countenances which were turned towards them wore a strong expression of displeasure, as towards men who had ruined the last hopes of a cause. The wretched men gave themselves up, at length, to counting the minutes till the service should be over, and they should be once more retired from this myriad of eyes, when they were roused by a singular suspension of the service.

After the prayer for divine pardon, ensuing upon mutual forgiveness, L'Ouverture arose from his knees, stepped from his place, and stood before the altar. He spoke, while all rose to hear.

“In this place,” said he, “brethren should be reconciled, or their offering of thanksgiving will not be pure. Will all who feel enmity towards me come to this holy spot, and exchange forgiveness?”

He looked towards the conspirators, who gazed upon him with eager eyes, but did not move. They could not believe that till's appeal was intended for them, till he beckoned to them. They advanced with hesitating steps—first one or two—then several—then all; and as they drew nearer they rushed upon him, some kissing his hand, others kneeling and embracing his knees. Bidding these arise, he said gently, but in a voice so penetrating that it was heard in the farthest recess of the building, “I must have offended you, since you have conspired against me; and you are very guilty towards me and your country. May He who looks down with pity on the shameful strifes of men, bear witness to our hearty forgiveness of each other! Can you with truth say Amen?—If not

yet with truth, say it not till you have heard me.”

“Amen!” they cried, with a cry which was echoed first from the roof of the church, and then by every voice beneath it which was not choked with sobs.

“If you had had patience with me,” said Toussaint, “you would have found that I am above partiality in regard to race. When I find men of your colour fit for office, they shall be promoted to office as my friend Raymond was. I entreat you henceforth to give me time; to watch me, though closely, generously; and if I fail to satisfy you, to make your complaints to myself. As for the past, let it be forgotten by all. Go to your homes, and I trust no one will ever speak to you of this day. As for myself, I must go where I am wanted. It may be that I shall have to punish the leader of your colour, if he persists in disturbing the peace of the colony. But fear not that, if you do not share in his offences, I shall impute them to you. It is true that, however far-off, my eye will be upon you, and my arm stretched out over you; but as long as you are faithful, this my presence will be, your protection. After the blessing, the amnesty I have promised will be read. This, my act of forgiveness, is sincere. Show that yours is so, I entreat, by cherishing the peace of the colony. By the sanctity of the place on which we stand, let there be peace among us all, and mutual forgiveness for all time to come!”

“Amen!” again resounded, louder than the most joyous strain of the choir that ever rang through the building.

L'Ouverture went back to his place, surrounded by the eleven released men, for whom room was made round his person by those who could best read his eye. After the priest had given the blessing, the amnesty was read which declared pardon for all political offences, and all personal offences against the Commander-in-chief, up to that hour. The moment it was concluded, those who had arrived at the church in custody, left it in freedom, though in shame, and sped away to their several homes, as if the death they had anticipated were at their heels. There they told their wonderful tale to their families, turning the desolation of wives and children into joy almost too great to be believed.

Afra found, to her satisfaction, that no one had entered to tell Euphrosyne

of this act of L'Ouverture. Euphrosyne had been full of perplexity about the mulattoes—almost disposed to think that the whole race must have suddenly gone mad. She had seen them two hours before, flocking to church with faces whose gloom contrasted strangely with their numbers, their holiday dresses, and their eagerness to be in time to secure admittance. She now saw them return, as if intoxicated with joy, cheering, the whole length of the walk, and crying with an enthusiasm, if possible, surpassing that of the blacks, “Long live the Deliverer!”

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## **Chapter Eighteen.**

### **The Council of Five.**

A council was held one morning, soon after the events just related, whose aspect would have perplexed an old colonist, if he could have looked forward in vision to that day. In a shady apartment of Toussaint's house at Pongaudin sat five men, in whose hands lay the fortunes of the colony; and only one of these men was a white.

The five came to report well to one another of the fortunes of the colony. Never, in the old days, could any set of counsellors have been gathered together, who could have brought with them such proofs of the welfare and comfort of every class of inhabitants. In former times the colonial legislators were wont to congratulate the Assembly on the good working of their system; which meant that the negroes were quiet, the mulattoes kept under, and the crops promising; but under this “good working” there were the heart-burnings of the men of colour, the woes and the depravity of the slaves, and the domestic fears and discomforts of the masters, arising from this depravity. Now, when there was no oppression and no slavery, the simple system of justice was truly “working well”; not only in the prospect of the crops, and the external quiet of the proprietors, but in the hearts and heads of every class of men—of perhaps every family in the island.

Jacques Dessalines had arrived from Saint Marc, near which his estate lay. He had to tell how the handsome crescent of freestone houses behind the quay was extending—how busy were the wharves—how the

store-houses were overflowing—how the sea was covered with merchant-ships—and how the cheerful hum of prosperous industry was heard the long day through.

Henri Christophe had come from the city of Saint Domingo, quite through the interior of the island. He had to tell how the reinstated whites paid him honour as he passed, on account of his friendship with L'Ouverture; how the voice of song went up from the green valleys, and from the cottage door; how the glorious Artibonite rolled its full tide round the base of mountains which no longer harboured the runaway or the thief, and through, plains adorned with plenty, and smiling with peace.

Monsieur Raymond arrived from the sittings of the Central Assembly. What good things he had to report will presently be seen.

Toussaint, with Monsieur Pascal, had arrived from Cap, where all was at present quiet, and where he had done the best he could, as he believed, by making Moyse a general, and leaving him in charge of the town and district, till a person could be found fit for the difficult and most anxious office of Governor of Cap. The two most doubtful points of the colony were Port-au-Prince and Cap Français. They had been the great battle-grounds of races; they were the refuge of the discontented whites; and they were open to the operations of factious people from France. L'Ouverture was never sure of the peace and quiet of Cap, as long as French ships came and went; but there was peace in the town at the present moment; and he had left that peace in the temporary charge of one who had done much, under his eye, to establish it—who had shown no small energy and talent, and who had every inducement that could be conceived to go through his brief task well. Great had been Toussaint's satisfaction in offering to Moyse this honourable opportunity of distinguishing himself; and much had he enjoyed the anticipation of telling Génifrède of this fulfilment of her lover's ambition, and of the near approach of their union, in consequence. It is true, he had been disappointed by Génifrède's receiving this news with a shudder, and by none but forced smiles having been seen from her since; but he trusted that this was only a fit of apprehension, natural to one who loved so passionately, and that it would but enhance the bliss that was to succeed.

If, as usual, L'Ouverture had to report the situation of Cap Français as

precarious, he brought good tidings of the South. An express had met him on his journey homewards, with news of the total defeat of the insurgent mulattoes by Vincent. Rigaud had surrendered his designs, and had actually sailed, with his principal officers, for France. Thus was the last torch of war extinguished in the colony, and matters of peaceful policy alone lay before this Council of Five.

The announcement of the entire pacification of the island was the first made by L'Ouverture, when his friends and counsellors looked eagerly to him for what he should say.

"Vincent is a fine fellow," said Dessalines, "and a credit to his colour."

"He has been in the most pressing danger," observed Toussaint. "God willed that he should escape, when escape appeared impossible."

"What is to be done now with these cowardly devils of mulattoes?" asked Dessalines.

Monsieur Pascal glanced at Raymond, to see how he bore this. Raymond chanced to meet his eye, and replied to the glance.

"You will not take me for a cowardly mulatto, Monsieur Pascal, if I do not resent Dessalines's words. He is speaking of the rebels, not of the many mulattoes who, like myself, disapprove and despise all such jealousy of race as leads to the barbarism of aggressive war."

"Yet," said Christophe, "I wish that we should all avoid such language as provokes jealousy of race."

"In council one must speak plainly," replied Dessalines. "I hope Monsieur Pascal agrees with me; for doubtless certain affairs of the whites will be in question, with regard to which they may be uncivilly spoken of. I was going to say, for instance (what L'Ouverture's secretary ought to be able to bear), that if we wish this state of peace to last, we must studiously keep the whites down—exclude them from all situations of power and trust. You all know that, in my opinion, they ought every one to have been done with some time ago. As that was not effected, the next best, policy is to let them die out. One may compute pretty well the time that this will take. If nothing better remains for them here than to live upon their

estates, without a chance of distinction, or of employment in public affairs, they will grow tired of the colony; the next generation, at farthest, will be glad to sell their property, and go home; and we shall be rid of them.”

“By that time, Jacques,” said Toussaint, “you and I may find ourselves again in the midst of them, in a place whence we cannot drive them out.”

Dessalines’ countenance told, as well as words could have done, that heaven would be no heaven to him if the spirits of white men were there. Toussaint well understood it, and resumed, “Better begin here what may be our work there—draw closer, and learn from them the wisdom by which they have been the masters of the world: while they may learn from us, if they will, forgiveness of injuries.”

“I am sick of hearing all that, Toussaint. It is for ever in your mouth.”

“Because it is for ever in my heart. You will hear it from me, Jacques, till I see that there is no occasion to say it more. As to Vincent, I propose to keep him, in token of honour, near my person; and to request the Central Assembly to decree to him an estate of such value as they shall think proper, to be purchased from the public treasury.”

“That is, supposing he should desire to remain among us,” observed Christophe; “but Vincent is fond of France.”

“Then his estate shall be in France, Henri. Our friend Raymond will charge himself with this business in the Assembly.”

“If I bring it forward in the form of a message from yourself,” replied Raymond, “there is no doubt of its being carried by acclamation. The finances of the colony are flourishing, and the attachment of the Assembly to your person most enthusiastic.”

“What of the finances?” asked Toussaint.

Raymond gave from his notes a statement which showed that both the customs’ duties and internal taxes had been productive beyond all expectation; that the merchant-ships of almost every nation had visited the ports; and that, after defraying the expenses of the war now closed,



there would be a surplus sufficient for the extension of the schools and the formation of some new roads.

“What of the attachment of the Assembly to L’Ouverture’s person?” asked Christophe.

“Every member of it sees that the prosperity of the island is the consequence of the vigorous prosecution of his system; and that there is no security but in its unquestioned continuance. The Commander-in-chief having been thus proved as eminently fitted for civil as for military government, the Assembly proposes to constitute him president of the colony for life, with power to choose his successor, and to appoint to all offices.”

All eyes were now fixed upon Toussaint. He observed that a dark cloud must have hidden France from the eyes of the Assembly, when they framed this proposition of independent sovereignty.

Raymond had no doubt that France would agree to have her colony governed in the best possible manner. If there should be a difficulty about the title of president, that of governor might be substituted. The power being the same, there need not be a quarrel about the title. The Assembly would yield that point—probably the only one that France would dispute.

Monsieur Pascal believed that France would never yield the power of appointing to offices of importance for life; still less that of choosing a successor.

“France ought not to yield such powers,” said Toussaint; “and the Assembly ought not to bring upon me (representative as I am of my race) the imputation of a personal ambition which I abjure and despise. I could tell the Assembly that, if I had chosen to stoop under the yoke of personal ambition, I might have been sovereign of this island without waiting for their call. Yes,” he continued, in answer to the inquiring looks of his friends, “I have in my possession a treaty proposed to me by the British Government, in which the English offer to make me king of this island—in such case to be called by its ancient name of Hayti—on condition of exclusive commerce.”

“Is it even so?” exclaimed Christophe.

“Even so, Henri. The English believed that I had acted on my own account; and that we, the children of France, should turn against our mother in the day of her perplexity, and join hands with her foes.”

“Any other man would have done it,” said Monsieur Pascal.

“No, Pascal; no man who was appointed, like me, to redeem his race.”

“How do you consider that you will injure your race by accepting the proposal of the Assembly?” asked Monsieur Pascal. “I understand why you would accept nothing from the hands of the English; and also why you would hesitate to assume a power which the government at home would doubtless disallow. But how would your race be injured by honours paid to you?”

“You are my friend,” replied Toussaint. “Is it possible that you can fail to understand?”

“I call myself your friend too,” said Dessalines, “and I declare I can comprehend nothing of it.”

“Your prejudices on one point are strong, Jacques; and prejudice is blind. Monsieur Pascal is singularly unprejudiced: and therefore I believed that he would understand me.”

“Perhaps I do: but I wish to hear your reasons from yourself.”

“Particularly,” interposed Raymond, “as to whether you believe the blacks (who are, we know, your first object) would be more benefited by continued connection with France or by independence. I believe Monsieur Pascal is unprejudiced enough to bear the discussion of even this point.”

“It is that which I wish to understand clearly,” observed Monsieur Pascal.

“Whether, if I believed my race would be benefited by the independence of this island, I could answer it to my conscience to separate from France,” said Toussaint, “we need not decide, as I am convinced that,

amidst all the errors committed under the orders of government, it is best for us to remain in connection with France. The civilisation of the whites is the greatest educational advantage we could enjoy. Yes, Jacques; and the more we despise it, the more we prove that we need it. The next great reason for remaining faithful is that we owe it to the white inhabitants of the colony not to deprive them of their connection with Paris, on the one hand, nor of their liberty to live and prosper here, on the other. As regards my own peculiar position, I feel that my first duty is to present an example of reverence and affection for my country, and not of a selfish ambition. I may have other personal reasons also, tending to the same conclusion.”

“Some favourite passages in Epictetus, perhaps, or in the Bible,” said Jacques: “some reasons confirmed by the whispers of the priests. Nothing short of priestly influence could blind you to such an opportunity as we now have of disembarassing ourselves of the whites for ever.”

“Patience, Jacques!” said Toussaint, smiling.

“I believe,” said Christophe, “that there is neither book nor priest in the case. I believe that it is your peculiar feeling towards Bonaparte, Toussaint, which strengthens your affection for France.”

Christophe saw, by a glance at his friend’s countenance, that he was right.

“I should act as you do,” Henri continued, “if I were certain of a full and generous reciprocity of feeling on the part of the government and of Bonaparte. But I have no such confidence.”

“Hear him!” cried Dessalines and Raymond.

“You were not wont to doubt Bonaparte, Henri,” observed Toussaint.

“Because, till of late, there was no reason to doubt him. I still believe that he was in earnest at the outset, in his professed desire to serve France for the sake of France, and not for his own. But I believe that he has a head less strong than yours; that we shall see him transformed from the pacificator into the aggressor—that, instead of waiting upon his pleasure, we may have to guard against injury from him.”

“These words from the generous Henri,” said Toussaint, “are portentous.”

“I may be wrong, Toussaint. God grant, for the sake of the liberties of the world, that I may be proved mistaken! But, in the hour of choice between your sovereignty and continued dependence, you must not suppose the sympathy between the First of the Whites and the First of the Blacks to be greater than it is.”

Toussaint could have told how Henri’s words only confirmed misgivings as to the public virtues of Bonaparte, which had long troubled his secret soul.

“Are you willing,” he asked of Monsieur Pascal, “to tell us your anticipations as to the career of the First Consul? Do not speak, if you prefer to be silent.”

“I cannot predict confidently,” replied Pascal; “but I should not be surprised if we see Bonaparte unable to resist the offer of sovereignty. Once crowned, and feeling himself still compelled to speak incessantly of the good of his country, his views of good will become debased. He will invest France with military glory, and sink into ruin by becoming a conqueror;—a vulgar destiny, in this age—a destiny which Alexander himself would probably scorn, if now born again into the world.”

“Alas! my poor blacks, if this be indeed Bonaparte!” exclaimed Toussaint. “Their supreme need is of peace; and they may become the subjects of a conqueror.”

“And happy if they be no worse than subjects,” said Christophe.

“If,” said Toussaint, “Bonaparte respects the liberties of the French no more than to reduce them from being a nation to being an army, he will not respect the liberties of the blacks, and will endeavour to make them once more slaves.”

“Ah! you see!” exclaimed Dessalines.

“I neither see nor believe, Jacques. We are only speculating. I will be thoroughly faithful to my allegiance, till Bonaparte is unquestionably unfaithful to the principles by which he rose. At the moment, however,

when he lifts his finger in menace of the liberties of the blacks, I will declare myself the Champion of Saint Domingo;—not, however, through the offices of the English, but by the desire of those whom I govern.”

“Say King of Hayti,” exclaimed Christophe. “This island was Hayti, when it lay blooming in the midst of the ocean, fresh from the will of God, thronged with gentle beings who had never lifted up a hand against each other. It was Hayti when it received, as into a paradise, the first whites who came into our hemisphere, and who saw in our valleys and plains the Eden of the Scripture. It became Saint Domingo when vice crept into it, and oppression turned its music into sighs, and violence laid it waste with famine and the sword. While the blacks and whites yet hate each other, let it be still Saint Domingo: but when you withdraw us from jealousy and bloodshed, let it again be Hayti. While it holds its conquered name there will be heart-burnings. If it became our own Hayti, we might not only forgive, but forget. It would be a noble lot to be King of Hayti!”

“If so ordained, Henri. We must wait till it be so. My present clear duty is to cultivate peace, and the friendship of the whites. They must have their due from us, from Bonaparte himself, to the youngest infant in Cap. You may trust me, however, that from the hour that there is a whisper about slavery in the lightest of Bonaparte’s dreams, I will consent to be called by whatever name can best defend our race.”

“It will be too late then,” said Dessalines. “Why wait till Bonaparte tells you his dreams? We know, without being told, that all the dreams of all whites are of our slavery.”

“You are wrong, Jacques. That is no more true of all whites, than it is true of all blacks that they hate the whites as you do.”

“You will find too late that I am not wrong,” said Jacques. “Remember, in the day of our ruin, that my timely advice to you was to send for your sons from Paris, and then avow yourself King of Saint Domingo—or of Hayti, if you like that name better. To me that name tells of another coloured race, whom the whites wantonly oppressed and destroyed. One cannot traverse the island without hearing the ghosts of those poor Indians, from every wood and every hill, calling to us for vengeance on their conquerors.”

“Take care how you heed those voices, Dessalines,” said Christophe. “They are not the voices of the gentle Indians that you hear; for the whites who injured them are long ago gone to judgment.”

“And if they were still in the midst of us,” said Toussaint, “vengeance is not ours. Jacques knows that my maxim in the field—my order, which may not be transgressed—is, No retaliation! I will have the same rule obeyed in my council-chamber, as we all, I trust, observe it in our prayers. Jacques, you have not now to learn my principle and my command—no retaliation. Have you ever known it infringed, since the hour when you found me at Breda, and made me your chief?”

“Never.”

“Nor shall you while I am obeyed. If the hour for defence comes we shall be ready. Till then we owe allegiance.”

“You will find it too late,” Dessalines said, once more.

“The Assembly,” said Toussaint to Raymond, “will withdraw their proposition regarding my being President of this island. I have all needful power as Commander-in-chief of the colony.”

“They have already published their request,” said Raymond; “which I do not regret, because—”

“I regret it much,” said Toussaint. “It will incense France.”

“I do not regret it,” pursued Raymond, “because it renders necessary the publication of your refusal, which cannot but satisfy France.”

“On the point of Toussaint’s supposed ambition it may satisfy France,” observed Christophe. “But if Bonaparte be jealous of the influence of the First of the Blacks, this homage of the Assembly will not abate his jealousy.”

“Have you more messages for us, Raymond?—No. Then Monsieur Pascal and I will examine these reports, and prepare my replies. This our little council is memorable, friends, for being the first in which we could report of the entire pacification of the colony. May it be only the first of

many! My friends, our council is ended.”

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## **Chapter Nineteen.**

### **Leisure for once.**

Precious to the statesman are the moments he can snatch for the common pleasures which are strewn over the earth—meant, apparently, for the perpetual enjoyment of all its inhabitants. The child gathers flowers in the meadow, or runs up and down a green bank, or looks for birds' nests every spring day. The boy and girl hear the lark in the field and the linnet in the wood, as a matter of course: they walk beside the growing corn, and pass beneath the rookery, and feel nothing of its being a privilege. The sailor beholds the stars every bright night of the year, and is familiar with the thousand hues of the changing sea. The soldier on his march sees the sun rise and set on mountain and valley, plain and forest. The citizen, pent up in the centre of a wide-built town, has his hour for play with his little ones, his evenings for his wife and his friends. But for the statesman, none of these are the pleasures of every day. Week after week, month after month, he can have no eyes for the freshness of nature, no leisure for small affairs, or for talk about things which cannot be called affairs at all. He may gaze at pictures on his walls, and hear music from the drawing-room, in the brief intervals of his labours; and he may now and then be taken by surprise by a glimpse of the cool bright stars, or by the waving of the boughs of some neighbouring tree. He may be beguiled by the grace or the freak of some little child, or struck: by some wandering flower scent in the streets, or some effect of sunlight on the evening cloud. But with these few and rare exceptions, he loses sight of the natural earth, and of its free intercourses, for weeks and months together; and precious in proportion—precious beyond its utmost anticipation—are his hours of holiday when at length they come. He gazes at the crescent moon hanging above the woods, and at the long morning shadows on the dewy grass, as if they would vanish before his eyes. He is intoxicated with the gurgle of the brook upon the stones, when he seeks the trout stream with his line and basket. The whirring of the wild bird's wing upon the moor, the bursting of the chase from cover, the creaking of the harvest wain—the song of the vine-dressers—the

laugh of the olive-gatherers—in every land where these sounds are heard, they make a child once more of the statesman who may for once have come forth to hear them. Sweeter still is the leisure hour with children in the garden or the meadow, and the quiet stroll with wife or sister in the evening, or the gay excursion during a whole day of liberty. If Sunday evenings are sweet to the labourer whose toils involve but little action of mind, how precious are his rarer holidays to the state labourer, after the wear and tear of toil like his—after his daily experience of intense thought, of anxiety, and fear! In the path of such should spring the freshest grass, and on their heads should fall the softest of the moonlight, and the balmiest of the airs of heaven, if natural rewards are in any proportion to their purchase money of toil.

The choicest holiday moments of the great negro statesman were those which he could spend with his wife and children, away from observing eyes and listening ears. He was never long pent up in the city, or detained by affairs within the walls of his palace. His business lay abroad, for the most part; and he came and went continually, on horseback, throughout every part of the island. Admirable as were his laws and regulations, and zealously as he was served by his agents of every description, there was no security for the working of his system so good as his own frequent presence among the adoring people. The same love which made him so powerful abroad interfered with his comfort at home. There were persons ever on the watch for a glimpse of him, eager to catch every word and every look: and the very rarest of his pleasures was unwitnessed intercourse with his family.

At length, when Hédouville was gone away from one port, and Rigaud from another—when neither spy nor foe appeared to remain—it seemed to be time for him, who had given peace and leisure to everybody else, to enjoy a little of it himself. He allowed his children, therefore, to fix a day when he should go with them on a fishing excursion round the little island of Gonaïves, which was a beautiful object from the windows of the house at Pongaudin, as it lay in the midst of the bay.

The excursion had answered completely. General Vincent, leaving the south of the island in a state of perfect tranquillity, had arrived to enjoy his honours in the presence of L'Ouverture and his family. Madame Dessalines had come over from Saint Marc. As Afra was of the party,



Monsieur Pascal had found it possible to leave his papers for a few hours. Toussaint had caught as many fish as if he had been Paul himself. He had wandered away with his girls into the wood, till he was sent to the boats again by the country people who gathered about him; and he lay hidden with Denis under the awning of the barge, playing duck and drake on the smooth water, till the islanders found out where he was, and came swimming out, to spoil their sport. It was a day too soon gone: but yet he did not consider it ended when they landed at Pongaudin, at ten o'clock. The moon was high, the gardens looked lovely; and he led his wife away from the party, among the green alloys of the shrubbery.

“I want to know what you think,” exclaimed Madame L’Overture, as they emerged from a shaded walk upon a grass plot, on which the light lay, clear and strong—“I want to ask you”—and as she spoke, she looked round to see that no one was at hand—“whether you do not think that General Vincent loves Aimée.”

“I think he does. I suspected it before, and to-day I am sure of it.”

“And are not you glad?”

“That partly depends on whether Aimée loves him. I doubt whether Vincent, who is usually a confident fellow enough, is so happy about the matter as you are.”

“Aimée is not one who will ever show herself too ready— Aimée is very quiet—”

“Well, but, is she ready in her heart? Does she care about Vincent?”

“I do not know that she does quite, yet—though I think she likes him very much, too. But surely she will love him—she must love him—so much as he loves her—and so delightful, so desirable a match as it is, in every way!”

“You think it so.”

“Why, do not you? Consider how many years we have known him, and what confidence you had in him when you sent him with our dear boys to Paris! And now he has done great things in the south. He comes,

covered with glory, to ask us for our Aimée. What could be more flattering?”

“It was our child’s future happiness that I was thinking of, when I seemed to doubt. Vincent is full of good qualities; but he is so wholly French that —”

“Not so French as Monsieur Pascal, who was born, brought up, and employed at Paris; and you are pleased that he should marry Afra.”

“Vincent is more French than Pascal, though he is a black. He is devoted to Bonaparte—”

“What of that?” said Madame L’Ouverture, after a pause. “He is devoted to you also. And are you not yourself devoted to France and to Bonaparte? Do we not pray together for him every day of our lives?”

“Remember, Margot, to pray for him every day, as long as you live, if I am separated from you by death or otherwise. Pray that such a blessing may rest upon him as that he may be wise to see his duty, and strong to do it. If he injures us, pray that he may be forgiven.”

“I will,” replied Margot, in a low voice; “but—”

She was lost in considering what this might mean.

“As for Vincent,” resumed Toussaint, “my doubt is whether, with his views and tastes, he ought to ally himself with a doomed man.”

“Vincent is ambitious, my dear husband; and, even if he did not love our child as he does, he might be anxious to ally himself with one so powerful —so full of honours—with so very great a man as you. I would not speak exactly so if we were not alone: but it is very true, now that the Central Assembly has declared you supreme in the colony. Consider what Vincent must think of that! And he has travelled so much in the island, that he must have seen how you deserve all that is said of you. He has seen how all the runaways have come down from the mountains, and the pirates in from the reefs and the coves; and how they are all honestly cultivating the fields, and fishing in the bays. He has seen how rich the whole island is growing; and how contented, and industrious, and honest,

the people are, in this short time. He has seen that all this is your work: and he may well be ambitious to be your son-in-law.”

“Unless he has the foresight to perceive, with all this, that I am a doomed man.”

“I thought you said so—I thought I heard that word before,” said Margot, in a trembling voice; “but I could not believe it.”

Toussaint knew by her tone that some vague idea of evil agency—some almost forgotten superstition was crossing her imagination: and he hastened to explain.

“Do not imagine,” said he, solemnly, “do not for a moment suppose that God is not on our side—that He will for a moment forsake us. But it is not always His pleasure that His servants should prosper, though their good work prospers in the end. I firmly trust and believe that our Father will not permit us to be made slaves again; but it may be His will that I and others should fall in defending our freedom.”

“But the wars are at an end. Your battles are all over, my love.”

“How can we be sure of that, when Bonaparte has yet to learn what the Assembly has done? Hédouville is on the way home, eager to report of the blacks, while he is ignorant of their minds, and prejudiced about their conduct. Monsieur Papalier and other planters are at Paris, at the ear of Bonaparte, while his ear is already so quickened by jealousy, that it takes in the lightest whisper against me and my race. How can we say that my battles are over, love, when every new success and honour makes this man, who ought to be my brother, yet more my foe?”

“Oh, write to him! Write to him, and tell him how you would have him be a brother to you!”

“Have I not written twice, and had no reply but neglect? I wrote to him to announce the earliest prospect of entire peace. I wrote again, to explain my intercourse with his agent Roume, and requested his sanction of what I had done. There has been no reply.”

“Then write again. Write this very night!”

“I wrote yesterday, to inform him fully concerning the new constitution framed by the Assembly. I told him that it should be put in force provisionally, till the pleasure of his government is made known.”

“Oh, then, that must bring an answer.”

Toussaint was silent.

“He must send some sort of answer to that,” pursued Margot. “What answer do you think it will be?”

“You remember the great eagle that I shot, when we lived under the mountains, Margot? Do you remember how the kids played in the pasture, with the shadow of that huge eagle floating above them?”

Margot, trembling, pressed closer to her husband’s side.

“You saw to-day,” he continued, “that troop of gay dolphins, in the smooth sea beyond the island. You saw the shark, with its glaring eyes, opening its monstrous jaws, as it rose near the pretty creatures, and hovered about them.”

“But you shot the eagle,” cried Margot; “and Denis wounded the shark.”

“Heaven only knows how it may end with us,” said Toussaint; “but we have the shadow of Bonaparte’s jealousy over us, and danger all about us. The greater our prosperity, the more certain is it to bring all France down upon us.”

“Oh, can Bonaparte be so cruel?”

“I do not blame him for this our danger; and any future woe must all go to the account of our former slavery. We negroes are ignorant, and have been made loose, deceitful, and idle, by slavery. The whites have been made tyrannical and unjust, by being masters. They believe us now ambitious, rebellious, and revengeful, because it would be no wonder if we were so. All this injustice comes of our former slavery. God forbid that I should be unjust too, and lay the blame where it is not due! For nothing done or feared in Saint Domingo do I blame Bonaparte.”

“Then you think—Oh! say you think there is no danger for Placide and Isaac. Bonaparte is so kind to them! Surely Placide and Isaac can be in no danger!”

“There is no fear for their present safety, my love.”

Toussaint would not for the world have told of his frequent daily thought and nightly dream, as to what might be the fate of these hostages, deliberately sent to France, and deliberately left there now. He would not subject himself to entreaties respecting their return which he dared not listen to, now that their recall would most certainly excite suspicions of the fidelity of the blacks. Not to save his children would L’Ouverture do an act to excite or confirm any distrust of his people.

“Bonaparte is kind to them, as you say, Margot. And if Vincent should win our Aimée, that will be another security for the lads; for no one doubts his attachment to France.”

“I hope Vincent will win her. But when will you send for the boys? They have been gone very long. When will you send?”

“As soon as affairs will allow. Do not urge me, Margot. I think of it day and night.”

“Then there is some danger. You would not speak so if there were not. Oh! my husband! marry Vincent to Aimée! You say that will be a security.”

“We must not forget Aimée herself, my love. If she should hereafter find her heart torn between her lover and her parents—if the hour should come for every one here to choose between Bonaparte and me, and Vincent should still adore the First of the Whites, what will become of the child of the First of the Blacks? Ought not her parents to have foreseen such a struggle?”

“Alas! what is to become of us all, Toussaint?”

“Perhaps Génifrède is the happiest of our children, Margot. She looks anxious to-day; but in a few more days, I hope even her trembling heart will be at rest.”

“It never will,” said Margot, mournfully. “I think there is some evil influence upon our poor child, to afflict her with perpetual fear. She still fears ghosts, rather than fear nothing. She enjoys nothing, except when Moyses is by her side.”

“Well, Moyses will presently be by her side; and for life.—I was proud of him, Margot, last week, at Cap. I know his military talents, from the day when we used to call the boy General Moyses. I saw by his eye, when I announced him as General Moyses in Cap, that he remembered those old days on the north shore. Oh, yes, I was aware of his talents in that direction, from his boyhood; but I found in him power of another kind. You know what a passionate lover he is.”

“Yes, indeed. Never did I see such a lover!”

“Well, he puts this same power and devotedness into his occupation of the hour, whatever it may be.”

“Do you mean that he forgets Génifrède, when he is away from her?”

“I rather hope that it is the remembrance of her that animates him in his work. I’m sure that it is so; for I said a few words to him about home, which made him very happy. If I were to see him failing, as we once feared he would—if I saw him yielding to his passions—to the prejudices and passions of the negro and the slave, my reproof would be, ‘You forget Génifrède.’ Moyses has yet much to learn—and much to overcome; yet I look upon Génifrède as perhaps the most favoured of our children. It is so great a thing to be so beloved!”

“It is indeed the greatest thing.” Margot stopped, as a turn in the walk brought them in view of the house. The long ranges of verandah stood in the moonlight, checkered with the still shadows of the neighbouring trees. Every window of the large white mansion gave out a stream of yellow light, to contrast with the silvery shining of the moon. “This is very unlike the hut we went to when we were married, Toussaint. Yet I was quite happy and contented. It is indeed the greatest thing to be loved.”

“And have you not that greatest thing here too? Do I not love you, my Margot?”

“Oh, yes! Yes, indeed, we love each other as much as we did then—in that single room, with its earthen floor, and its cribs against the wall, and the iron pot in the fireplace, and the hen pecking before the door. But, Toussaint, look at the difference now! Look at this beautiful house, and all the gardens and cane-pieces—and think of our palace at Port-au-Prince—and think of the girls as they look at church, or in the boat to-day—and how the country is up, rejoicing, wherever you go—and how the Assembly consider you—think of all that has happened since, the wedding-day of ours at Breda! It is so fine—so wonderful, that you shall not frighten me about anything that can happen. I am sure the blessing of God is upon you, my husband; and you shall not make me afraid.”

“I would have none be afraid while God reigns, Margot. May you ever say that you will not fear! The blessing of God may be on us now, love; but it was never more so than when we went home to our hut at Breda. When I lay under the trees at noon, taking care of the cattle, how many things I used to think of to say to you when I came home!”

“And so did I, as I kneeled at my washing by the brook-side, and you were driving Monsieur Bayou, twenty miles off, and were expected home in the evening. How much there was to say at the end of those days!”

“It was not for ourselves then, Margot, that we have been raised to what we are. We were as happy drawing water in the wood, and gathering plantains in the negro-grounds, as we have ever been in these shrubberies. We were as merry in that single room at Breda as in this mansion, or in our palace. It is not for our own sakes that we have been so raised.”

“It is pleasant for our children.”

“It is. And it is good for our race. It is to make us their servants. Oh! Margot, if ever you find a thought of pride stirring at your heart, remember that if the blacks were less ignorant and more wise, it would not matter whether we lived as we used to do, or as we live now. It is because we negroes are vain and corrupted, that show and state are necessary: and the sight of our show and state should, therefore, humble us.”

“I am sure you are not fond of show and state. You eat and drink, and

wait upon yourself, as you did at Breda; and your uniform is the only fine dress you like to wear. I am sure you had rather have no court."

"Very true. I submit to such state as we have about us, for the sake of the negroes who need it. To me it is a sacrifice; but, Margot, we must make sacrifices—perhaps some which you may little dream of, while looking round upon our possessions, and our rank, and our children, worshipped as they are. We must carry the same spirit of sacrifice into all our acts; and be ready to suffer, and perhaps to fall, for the sake of the blacks. The less pride now, Margot, the less shame and sorrow then!"

"I wish not to be proud," said Margot, trembling—"I pray that I may not be proud; but it is difficult—Hark! there is a footstep! Let us turn into this alley."

"Nay," said Toussaint; "it is Monsieur Pascal. No doubt I am wanted."

"For ever wanted!" exclaimed Margot. "No peace!"

"It was not so at Breda," said Toussaint, smiling. "I was just speaking of sacrifice, you know: and this is not the last night that the moon will shine. —News, Monsieur Pascal?"

"News from Cap," replied Monsieur Pascal, in a depressed tone. "Bad news! Here are dispatches. Not a moment is to be lost."

"There is light enough," said Toussaint, turning so that the moonlight fell upon the page.

While he read, Monsieur Pascal told Madame L'Ouverture that messengers had brought news of a quarrel at Cap—a quarrel between the races, unhappily, about Hédouville's proclamation again;—a quarrel in which several whites had been killed. All was presently quiet; but the whites were crying out for vengeance.

"No peace, as you say, Margot," observed Toussaint, when he had run over the letters. "See what a strong hand and watchful eye our poor people require! The curse of slavery is still upon us."

"How is Moyse? Tell me only that. What is Moyse doing?"



“I do not understand Moyse, nor what he is doing,” said Toussaint gloomily. “Monsieur Pascal—”

“Your horses are coming round,” said Pascal, “and I shall be there almost as soon as you.”

“Right: and Laxabon. From me, ask the favour of Father Laxabon to follow without delay. Margot, take care of poor Génifrède. Farewell!”

As he passed through the piazza, to mount his horse, Toussaint saw Génifrède standing there, like a statue. He embraced her, and found her cold as marble. He returned to his family for an instant, to beg that she might not be immediately disturbed. In an hour or two she might be able to speak to her mother or sister; and she could not now. Once more he whispered to her that he would send her early news, and was gone.

Again and again Aimée looked timidly forth, to see if she might venture to approach her sister. Once Madame L'Ouverture went to her, and once Thérèse; but she would say nothing but “Leave me!” From her they went to Afra, who wept incessantly, though she did not reject their consolations. The night wore on wearily and drearily. When the moon set, and the damps were felt wherever the air penetrated, Madame L'Ouverture went once more to Génifrède, determined to take her to her own chamber, and win her to open her heart. But Génifrède was not there, nor in her chamber. The mother's terror was great, till a cultivator came to say that Mademoiselle L'Ouverture had gone a journey, on horseback, with her brother Denis to take care of her. Denis's bed was indeed found empty: and two horses were gone from the stables. They had fled to Moyse, no doubt. The hope was that they might fall in with Father Laxabon on the road, who would surely bring the poor girl back. There was another road, however: and by this road Thérèse declared that she would follow.

“Yes, yes—go!” exclaimed Madame L'Ouverture. “She will heed you, if any one. She thinks you understand her. She says—”

“She loves me,” said Thérèse, sighing, “because—I hardly know—but Heaven forgive me, if it be as she says!”

“She says you hate the whites,” declared Aimée. “If it be so, may indeed

Heaven forgive you! Moÿse hates the whites: and you see how wretched we are!”

“Aimée, do not be hard. We are made to love—my heart inclines to all who are about me:—but if there are some—if one cannot—Oh, Aimée, do not be hard!”

“It is those who hate who are hard,” said Aimée, whose tears fell fast, in sympathy with Afra’s. “Is it not so, Afra?”

“Well, I will go,” said Thérèse, gently. “One kiss, Aimée, for Génifrède’s sake!”

“For your own,” said Aimée, tenderly embracing her. “Bring back poor Génifrède! Tell her we will devote ourselves to her.”

“Bring back my child,” said Margot. “Be sure you tell her that there may be good news yet. Moÿse may have explanations to give;—he may do great things yet.”

These words renewed Afra’s weeping, in the midst of which Thérèse hastened away: when the remnant of the anxious family retired to their chambers, not to sleep, but to pray and wait.



## Chapter Twenty.

### Perplexity.

As it might be supposed, Monsieur Revel and his grandchild had no desire to remain in Government-house a moment longer than was necessary, as Afra was obliged to leave it. Afra's last care, before quitting Cap, was to see that her friends were properly escorted to their home.

Euphrosyne was still struggling with the grief of saying farewell to Afra, when she entered the pleasant sitting-room at home; but she smiled through her tears when she saw how cheerful it looked. There was a mild, cool light in the room, proceeding from the reflection of the evening sunshine from the trees of the convent garden. The blinds were open; and the perspective of one of the alleys was seen in the large mirror on the wall—the shrubs noiselessly waving, and the gay flowers nodding, in a sunlight and breeze which were not felt within. Euphrosyne's work lay upon the table; the needle sticking in the very stitch of embroidery at which she had laid it down, when she went to see if her grandfather was awake, on the morning of their alarm. Some loose music had been blown down from the stand upon the floor; and the bouquet of flowers was dead, the water dried up, and the leaves fallen to dust; but when these were removed, there were no further signs of neglect and desertion.

"How bright, how natural everything looks!" cried Euphrosyne. "I do love this room. This is the place that we thought was to be sacked and burnt! I won't believe such nonsense another time. I never will be frightened again. Grandpapa, do not you love this room?"

"It is a pretty room, my dear; and it looks very bright when you are in it."

"Oh, thank you!" she cried, dropping a sportive curtsey.

"And now, will you look; at my work—(sit down here)—and tell me—(where are your glasses?)—tell me whether you ever saw a prettier pattern. It is a handkerchief fit for a princess."

"It is very prettily worked, my dear. And whom is it for? Some very

elegant lady. Is it for the First Consul's lady? They say she is the most elegant lady in the world—though she is a Creole, like you, my darling. Is your pretty handkerchief for her?"

"No, grandpapa. I dare say she has all the ladies in France to work for her. I should like, if you have no objection, to send this to Madame L'Ouverture!"

"To Madame L'Ouverture. Why? Has not she daughters to work handkerchiefs for her, and plenty of money to buy them? Why should you prick your fingers in her service?"

"I should like that L'Ouverture himself should observe, some day, that she has a beautiful handkerchief; and then, if he should ask, he would find out that there is a little Creole girl who is very grateful to him for his generosity to her colour."

"Do not speak of colour, child. What expressions you pick up from Afra, and such people! It is our distinction that we have no colour—that we are white."

"That is the distinction of the nuns, I know; but I hoped it was not mine yet. I do not forget how you pinch my cheek sometimes, and talk about roses."

"What is there? What do I see?" cried the old man, whose mind seemed open to everything agreeable that met his observation, on his return home. "Are those the same little birds that you were wooing the other morning? No creature that has ever seen you, my dear, ever forgets you. Nothing that you have spoken to ever deserts you. Shy creatures, that are afraid of everybody else, haunt you."

"Oh! you are thinking of the little spotted fawn."

"Spotted fawn or squirrel—baby or humming-bird—it is always the same, child. They all come to you. I dare say these little creatures have been flitting about the balcony and these rooms, ever since we went away. Now they have found you."

"They do not seem to care much about me, now we have met," said

Euphrosyne. She followed them softly to the balcony, and along it, as far as the window of Monsieur Revel's room. There she found, stuck in the bars of the balcony, a rather fresh branch of orange-blossoms. While she was examining this, in some surprise, old Raphael spoke to her from below. He said he had made bold to climb up by his ladder, twice a day, with something to entice the birds to that window; as he supposed that, was what she wished, if she had been at home. The abbess had given him leave to take this liberty.

"There!" said Monsieur Revel, when she, flew to tell him, "there is another follower to add to your fawns and kittens. Old Raphael is considered a crusty fellow everywhere; and you see how different he is with you!"

"I am very glad," declared Euphrosyne. "It is a pretty sight to amuse you with, every morning when you wake. It is kind of Raphael; and of the abbess too."

"I am pleased that the abbess and you should be good friends, Euphrosyne, because— Ah! that is the way," he said, in a mortified tone, and throwing himself back in his chair, as he followed with his eyes the flittings of the girl about the room, after her birds. "You have got your own way with everybody, and we have spoiled you; and there is no speaking to you upon a subject that you do not like. You will not hear, though it is a thing that lies heavy at the heart of a dying old man."

"I will hear you, if you talk to me all my life," said Euphrosyne, with brimming eyes, seating herself on a low stool at the old man's knees.

"And if you hear me, you will not give me a grave, steady answer."

"Try me," said she, brushing away the gathering tears. "I am not crying about anything you are going to say; but only because—Oh, grandpapa! how could you think I would not listen to you?"

"Well, well, my love! I see that you are willing now. You remember your promise to enter the convent, if I desired it."

"Yes."

"You talk of nothing being changed by our alarm, two days ago, because

this table stands in the middle of the room, and the ants and beetles have not carried off your pretty work. Hey!”

“May I speak, grandpapa?”

“Speak.”

“I said so because nobody’s house is burnt, or even robbed; and nobody has been killed, or even hurt.”

“But, nevertheless, there is a great change. Our friends, my old friends, all whom I feel I could rely upon in case of need, are gone to France with Hédouville.”

“Oh, grandpapa! very few whites are gone—they were chiefly mulattoes who went with Hédouville; and so many whites remain! And though they are not, except, perhaps, Monsieur Critois, exactly our friends, yet we can easily make acquaintance with them.”

“No, no, child. If they were not upstarts, as some of them are, and others returned emigrants, of whom I know nothing, it is too late now for me to make now friends. My old companions are gone, and the place is a desert to me.”

His hands hung listlessly, as he rested on the arms of his chair. Euphrosyne looked up in his face, while she said, as well as she could for tears, “If you feel it so now, what will it be when I am shut up in the convent, and you will hardly ever see me?”

“That is no affair of yours, child. I choose that you should go.”

“Whose affair is it, if it is not mine? I am your grandchild—your only one; and it is my business, and the greatest pleasure I have in the world, to be with you, and wait upon you. If I leave you, I shall hear my poor mother reproaching me all day long. Every morning at my lessons, every night at my prayers, I shall hear her saying, ‘Where is your grandfather? How dare you desert him when he has only you left?’ Grandpapa, I shall be afraid to sleep alone. I shall learn to be afraid of my blessed mother.”

“It is time you were sent somewhere to learn your duty, I think. We are at

a bad pass enough; but there must be some one in the colony who can tell you that it is your duty to obey your grandfather—that it is your duty to perform what you promised him.”

“I can preach that myself, grandpapa, when there is nobody else who can do it better. It is just what I have been teaching little Babet, this month past. I have no more to learn about that; but I will tell you what I do want to learn—whether you are most afraid of my growing up ignorant, or—(do just let me finish, and then we shall agree charmingly, I dare say)—whether you are most afraid of my growing up ignorant, or unsteady, or ill-mannered, or wicked, or what? As for being unsafe, I do not believe a word of that.”

“Everything—all these things, child. I am afraid of them all.”

“What, all! What a dreadfully unpromising creature I must be!”

“You know you must be very ignorant. You have had no one to teach you anything.”

“Then I will go to the convent to study for four, six, eight, twelve hours a day. I shall soon have learned everything in the world at that rate: and yet I can go on singing to you in the evenings, and bringing your coffee in the mornings. Twelve hours’ study a day may perhaps make me steady, too. That was the next thing, was it not?”

“Now have done. Say only one thing more—that you will perform your promise.”

“That is a thing of course; so I may just ask one other thing. Who is to wait upon you in my place? Ah! I see you have not fixed upon any one yet; and, let me tell you, it will be no easy matter to find one who makes coffee as I do. Then, you have been waited upon by a slave all your life. Yes, you have; and you have a slave now sitting at your knee. People do not like being slaves now-a-days—nobody but me. Now I like it of all things. So, what a pity to change!”

“I know,” said the old man, sighing, “that I am apt to be peremptory. I know it is difficult to please me sometimes. It is very late in life—I am very old to set about improving: but I will try not to hurt any one who will wait

upon me, as I am afraid I have often hurt you, my dear. I will make any effort, if I can only feel that you are safe. Some one has been telling you stories of old times, I see. Perhaps you can ask any servant that we may engage—you may make it your request that she will bear with me.”

“Oh, grandpapa! Stop, grandpapa! I cannot bear it,” cried the sobbing girl. “I never will joke again, if you do not see that it is because I love you so, that I will venture anything rather than leave you. We all love you dearly. Pierre would not for the world live with anybody else. You know he would not. And that is just what I feel. But I will do everything you wish. I will never refuse again—I will never jest, or try, even for your own sake, to prevent your having all your own way. Only be so kind, grandpapa, as never to say anything against yourself again. Nobody else would dare to do such a thing to me, and I cannot bear it.”

“Well, well, love! I see now that no one has been babbling to you. We will never quarrel any more. You will do as I wish, and we will have no more disputing. Are they bringing our coffee?”

When Euphrosyne came out from placing her grandfather’s pillows, and bidding him good-night, she found Pierre lingering about, as if wanting to speak to her.

“Have you anything to say to me. Pierre?”

“Only just to take the liberty of asking, Mademoiselle, whether you could not possibly gratify my master in the thing he has set his heart upon. If you could, Mademoiselle, you may rely on it, I would take every care of him in your absence.”

“I have no doubt, Pierre, of your doing your part.”

“Your part and mine are not the same, I know, Mademoiselle. But he is so persuaded of there being danger for you here, that everything you do for him goes to his heart.”

“Have *you* that idea, Pierre?”

“Indeed, Mademoiselle, I know nothing about it—more than that it takes a long time for people in a town, or an island, to live comfortably together,



on equal terms, after having all their lives looked upon one another as tyrants and low revengeful servants.”

“I do not think any one looks on me as a tyrant, or would think of hurting poor grandpapa or me. How you shake your head, Pierre! We have lived seven years in peace and quiet—sometimes being afraid, but never having found cause for fear. However, if grandpapa really is uneasy—”

“That is the point, Mademoiselle. He is so.”

“Do you suppose I could see the abbess, if I were to go to the convent to consult her? It is not late.”

“If the Dumonts were but here still!” said Pierre—“only next door but one! It was a comfort to have them at hand on any difficulty.”

“If they were here, I should not consult them. They were so prejudiced against all the mulattoes, and put so little trust in L’Ouverture himself—as indeed their going off in such a hurry with Hédouville proves—that I should not have cared for their opinion to-night. Suppose you step to the convent, Pierre, and ask whether the lady abbess could see me for half-an-hour on business. If I am to leave grandpapa, I should like to tell him in the morning that it is all settled.”

Pierre went with alacrity, and was back in three minutes, when he found Euphrosyne shawled and veiled for the visit. The lady awaited her.

“What can I do for you, my child?” said the abbess, kindly seating Euphrosyne beside her, in her parlour.

“You will tell me what you think it is my duty to do, when I have told you my story. I know I have laughed and joked too much about this very matter; and that partly because I had a will of my own about it. But it is all serious enough now; and I really do wish to find out my duty upon it.”

“In order to do your duty, whatever it may cost you?”

“Certainly.”

She then told her story. The lady at length smiled, and observed—

“You have no very strong inclination to join us, I perceive.”

“Not any,” frankly replied Euphrosyne. “I have no doubt the sisters are very happy. They choose their way of life for themselves. I only feel it is one that I should never choose. Nor would grandpapa for me, for more than a short time. I hope, madam, you understand that we neither of us think of my ever becoming a nun.”

“I see that there is no present sign of its being your vocation.”

“And there never will be,” cried Euphrosyne, very earnestly. “I assure you, I cannot bear the idea of it.”

“So I perceive, my dear. I am quite convinced, I assure you. Have you as great a dislike to being educated?”

“Almost, I am afraid. But I could get over that. I like reading very well, and learning things at my own time, and in my own way; but I feel rather old to begin to be under orders as to what I shall learn, and when and how; and yet rather young to be so grave and regular as the sisters are. I am fifteen, you know.”

“You are not aware, I see, how much we laugh when we are by ourselves, nor how we like to see girls of fifteen happy and gay. I think, too, that I may answer for the sisters not quarrelling with you about what you ought to learn. You will comply with the rules of the house as to hours; and your preceptresses will allow you, as far as possible, to follow your bent.”

“You are very kind, as you always are. But I think far less of all this than of what grandpapa is to do without me. Consider what long, weary days he will have! He has scarcely any acquaintance left in Cap; and he has been accustomed to do nothing without me. He will sit and cry all day—I know he will.”

And Euphrosyne’s tears began to overflow at the thought.

“It is a great honour, my child, to have been made such a blessing to an old man.”

“It was almost the only one he had left. Up to that terrible ninety-one—”

The abbess shuddered.

“You knew my mother and sisters?”

“Very little. I was then a humble sister, and had little, intercourse with any ladies who might occasionally visit us. But I remember her coming, one day, with her children—three! girls—one who ran about the garden, and two modest, blushing girls, who accepted some of our flowers.”

“I must have been the little one who ran about, and the others were my poor sisters. Well, all these, besides my papa, were always about grandpapa; and he never wanted amusement or waiting on. Since that dreadful time, he has had only me; and now, in his old age, when he has no strength, and nothing to do, he is going to be all alone! Oh, madam, I think it is wicked to leave him! Had anybody ever a clearer duty than I have—to stay with him?”

“You would be quite right if it was anybody but himself that desired you to leave him. Your first duty, my dear, is to obey his wishes.”

“I shall never be able to learn my lessons, for thinking of him, sitting alone there—or perhaps lying in bed, because there is nothing to get up for.”

“Now you are presumptuous. You are counting upon what may never happen, and fearing to leave your parent in the hand of Him who gave you to him. Suppose you were to die to-night, I fear you could not trust him in the hands of Him who wraps us round with old age, before taking us home to Himself.”

“Oh, yes, I could so trust him to-night, if I myself had watched him to sleep. But a month hence, if I were to die, I should dread to meet my parents. They would ask me, ‘How is our father?’ and I should have to answer, ‘I do not know—I have left him—I have done nothing for him of late.’ The whole time that I am here, madam, I shall be afraid to die and meet my mother.”

“We must lead you to doubt your own notions, and to trust more in God,” said the lady, gently. “We know not what a day may bring forth; and as

you grow older, you will find how, in cases of hard and doubtful duty, our way becomes suddenly clear, so as to make us ashamed of our late anguish. Father Gabriel will tell you that one night he lost his way among the marshes in the plain. The clouds hung thick and low overhead, and there was not a ray of light. He plunged on the one hand into the marsh; and on the other, the reeds grew higher than his head. Behind him was a wood that he had hardly managed to struggle through; and he knew not what might be before him. He groped about for a firm place to stand on, and had no idea which way to move. At last, without his having felt a breath of wind, he found that the clouds had parted to the right, making a chink through which he saw the Cibao peaks standing up against a starlight sky; and, to the left, there was, on the horizon, a dim white line which he could not understand, till the crescent moon dropped down from behind the cloudy canopy, across a bar of clear sky, and into the sea. This made him look whether the church of Saint Hilaire was not close by. He made out its dim mass through the darkness, and in a few minutes stood in the porch. So, my child, is our way (even yours, young as you are) sometimes made too dark for our feeble eyes; and thus, from one quarter or another, is a ray permitted to fall that we may not be lost."

"Thank you," said Euphrosyne, softly. "May I come to-morrow?"

"At any hour you shall be welcome, my dear."

"If you will appoint me something to do every morning in the garden, madam, grandpapa might sit in the balcony, to see me, and talk to me. That will be a reason for his getting up. That, will prevent his lying too long, for want of something to do."

"A very good plan. If you love your grandfather so, Euphrosyne, how would you have loved your mother, if she had lived?"

"Had you a mother, when you were my age?"

"Yes, my dear. But do not let us speak of that. Do you remember your mamma, my dear?"

"Yes—a little. I remember her sitting in a wood—on the ground—with her head bent down upon her knees, and a great many black people about."

“Well—tell me no more. I ought not to have asked you. I was not thinking of that horrid time.”

“But I do not mind telling you. I like to speak of it; and I never can to grandpapa—it makes him so ill. Mamma shook so, that I remember putting my arms about her to keep her warm, till I found how burning hot her hands were. My sisters were crying; and they told me not to ask any more why papa did not come to us; for he was dead. I remember being wakened by a noise when I was very sleepy, and seeing some soldiers. One of them lifted me up, and I was frightened, till I saw that, they were carrying mamma too. They put us both into a cart. I did not see my sisters; and I believe they were both dead then, of grief and hardship. And mamma never spoke again. She looked as pale as her gown, as she lay in the cart, with her eyes shut. She was breathing, however, and I thought she was asleep. I felt very sleepy and odd. The soldiers said I was half-starved, and they gave me a plantain that they pulled by the road-side. I wanted them to give some to mamma too; but they made me no answer. I put mine into her hand, but she let it fall; and I cried because she would not take any notice. Then one of the soldiers bade me eat my plantain; and I thought I must do as I was bid. I forget where we went next.”

“You remember more than I had supposed. Your mother was brought on board the ship where we were; and there she presently died.”

“You were on board ship, madam?”

“Yes—all the sisters—for the town was not considered safe, even for us.”

“And where was—” Euphrosyne stopped abruptly.

“You were going to ask where my mother was,” said the lady. “I feel that I was wrong in stopping you as I did just, now—for you might fancy that my mother was in some way to blame. She was a good mother to me—full of kindness; but I did not make her happy.”

“You did not?”

“Indeed I did not. I crossed her in the thing she desired most of all—that we should live together. I believed it my duty to become a nun, and I left

her. She returned to France, being a widow, and having no other child; and there she died, among distant relations.”

“Was she angry with you?”

“She never said or showed that she was. But I know that she was grieved to the very soul, and for life. This, my dear, has been the greatest affliction I have ever known. I did not feel it so at the time, having no doubt of my vocation; but what I have suffered since from the thought that an only child and only parent, who ought to have made each other happy, were both miserable, God only knows.”

“Yet you did what you thought was your duty to God. I wonder whether you were right?”

“If you knew how many times—but,” said the lady, interrupting herself, “we shall know all when our hearts are laid open; and may minister to my mother yet. If I erred, and there be further punishment yet for my error, I am ready to bear it. You see, my child, how much you have to be thankful for, that your difficulty is not from having failed in duty to your parent. For the future, fear not but that your duty will be made clear to you. I am sure this is all you desire.”

“Shall we have any more such conversations as this when I come to live here? If we can—”

“We shall see,” replied the lady, smiling. “Father Gabriel says there may easily be too much talk, even about our duties; but occasions may arise.”

“I hope so,” said Euphrosyne, rising, as she perceived that the lady thought it was time for her to go. “I dare say Pierre is here.”

Pierre had been waiting some time.

The abbess sat alone after Euphrosyne was gone, contemplating, not the lamp, though her eyes were fixed upon it, but the force of the filial principle in this lonely girl—a force which had constrained her to open the aching wound in her own heart to a mere child. She sat, till called by the hour to prayer, pondering the question how it is that relations designed for duty and peace become the occasions of the bitterest sin and

suffering. The mystery was in no degree cleared up when she was called to prayer—which, however, has the blessed power of solving all painful mysteries for the hour.

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## Chapter Twenty One.

### Perplexity Solved.

“What is the matter, child? What makes you look so merry?” asked Monsieur Revel, when his eyes opened upon Euphrosyne the next morning.

“Nothing has happened, grandpapa. The only thing is, that I like to do what you wish; and I always will, as long as you live. I will go to the convent to-day. You can send for me at any time when you want me, you know. I am sure the abbess will let me come whenever you send Pierre for me.”

“Well, well—do not be in such a hurry. I do not want you to go to-day. Why should you be in such a hurry?”

When the breeze had come to refresh him, and he had had his coffee, Monsieur Revel felt more complaisant, and explained what he meant by there being no hurry. Euphrosyne should not leave him till to-morrow; and this day should be spent as she pleased. Whatever she liked to ask to-day should be granted. This indulgence was promised under a tolerable certainty that she would ask nothing unreasonable: that she would not propose a dinner-party of dark-complexioned guests, for instance. There might also be an expectation of what it would be that she would choose. M. Revel was conscious that he did not visit his estate of Le Bosquet, in the plain of Limbé, so often as Euphrosyne would have liked, or as he himself knew to be good for his agent, the cultivators, and his heiress. He was aware that if he could have shown any satisfaction in the present order of affairs, any good-will towards the working of the new system, there might have been a chance of old stories dying away—of old grievances being forgotten by the cultivators, in his present acquiescence in their freedom. He could not order the carriage, and say he was going

to Le Bosquet; but he had just courage enough to set Euphrosyne free to ask to go. It turned out exactly as he expected.

“We will do what you will, my child, to-day. I feel strong enough to be your humble servant.”

“It is a splendid day, grandpapa. It must be charming at Le Bosquet. If I order the carriage now, we can get there before the heat; and we need not come home till the cool of the evening. We will fill the carriage with fruit and flowers for the abbess. May I order the carriage?”

Le Bosquet was only twelve miles off. They arrived when the cultivators were settling to their work after breakfast. It was now, as on every former occasion, a perplexity, an embarrassment to Euphrosyne, that the negroes lost all their gaiety, and most of their civility, in the presence of her grandfather. She could hardly wonder, when she witnessed this, at his intolerance of the very mention of the blacks, at his ridicule of all that she ever told him about them, from her own observation. When she was in any other company, she saw them merry, active, and lavish of their kindness and politeness; and whenever this occurred, she persuaded herself that she must have been mistaken the last time she and Monsieur Revel were at Le Bosquet, and that they ought to go again soon. The next time they went, there was the same gloom, listlessness, and avoidance on the part of the negroes; the same care on her grandfather's that she should not stir a step without the escort of Pierre or the agent. He would not even let her go with Portia, the dairy-woman, to gather eggs; nor with little Sully, to see his baby-brother. She made up her mind that this was all wrong—that all parties would have been more amiable and happy, if there had been the same freedom and confidence that she saw on other estates. Poor girl! she little knew what was in all minds but her own—what recollections of the lash and the stocks, and hunger and imprisonment on the one hand, and of the horrors of that August night on the other. She little knew how generally it was supposed that she owed it to the grandfather whom she loved so much that she was the solitary orphan whom every one pitied.

It was, as Euphrosyne had said, a splendid day; and all went well. Monsieur Revel would not go out much; but as he sat in the shaded room, looking forth upon the lawn, the agent satisfied him with accounts



of the prosperity of the estate, the fine promise of the cacao walks, and the health and regular conduct of the negroes. Euphrosyne showed herself from time to time, now in the midst of a crowd of children, now with a lapful of eggs, and then with a basket of fruit. In honour of the master and young mistress, the dinner was very superb, and far too long; so that the day had slipped away before Euphrosyne felt at all disposed to return. She was glad that the agent was engaged in a deep discussion with his employer when the carriage came round; so that she was able to make one more short circuit in the twilight while they were settling their point.

The gentlemen were talking over the two late proclamations—L'Ouverture's and Hédouville's. The agent wished that Hédouville had never come, rather than that he should have set afloat the elements of mischief contained in his proclamation. Monsieur Revel could not believe that a Commissary, sent out for the very purpose of regulating such matters, could have got very far wrong upon them; and besides, the proclamation had never been issued. Never formally issued, the agent said; but it had been circulated from hand to hand of those who were interested in its provisions. Some were, at that moment, preparing to act upon it; and he feared that mischief might come of it yet. It was certain that L'Ouverture knew more about claims to deserted estates, and about the proper regulations as to tillage, than any novice from France could know; and it was no less certain that he was ever more eager to gratify the whites than the blacks. It would have been by far the wisest plan to leave that class of affairs in the hands of the person who understood them best; and, if he was not much mistaken, the Government at home would yet rue Hédouville's rashness in acting without so much as consulting L'Ouverture. Monsieur Revel was so amazed at finding that L'Ouverture was not only worshipped by romantic young ladies and freed negroes, but approved and confided in by such practical and interested whites as his own agent, that he could only say again what he said every day—that the world was turned upside down, and that he expected to be stripped, before he died, of Le Bosquet, and of everything else that he had; so that his poor child would be left dependent on the charity of France. To this the agent replied, as usual, that the property had never before been so secure, nor the estate so prosperous; and that all would go well, if only the Government at home would employ competent people to write its proclamations.

“Where is this child?” cried Monsieur Revel at last. “I am always kept waiting by everybody. It is dark already, and the carriage has been standing this hour. Where is she?”

“Mademoiselle is in the carriage,” said Pierre, from the hall. “I made Prince light the lamps, though he thinks we shall not want them.”

“Come, come! let us lose no more time,” said Monsieur Revel, as if every one had not been waiting for him.

Euphrosyne jumped from the carriage, where she had been packing her basket of eggs, her fruit, and her flowers, so that they might be out of her grandfather’s way. He could not admire any of them, and found them all in his way. While the road lay under the dark shadow of the groves on the estate, he cast anxious glances among the tall stems on which the carriage lamps cast a passing gleam. He muttered a surly good-night to the negroes who held open the gates; but, when the last of these swung to, when the carriage issued upon the high road, and the plain lay, though dim in the starlight, yet free and lovely to the eye, while the line of grey sea was visible to the left, the old man’s spirits seemed to rise. It was seldom that he quitted the town; and when he did, and could throw off his cares, he was surprised to find how reviving were the influences of the country.

“It is a lovely night, really,” said he. “If you ever go to Paris, my dear, you will miss this starlight. There the stars seem to have shrunk away from you, a myriad of miles. Let those flowers be, child. Why may not I have the pleasure of smelling them? There! Let them lie. Who would believe that that sea, which looks so quiet now, will be rolling and dashing upon the beach in November, as if it meant to swallow up the plain? How it seems to sleep in the starlight! You found little Sully grown, my dear, I dare say.”

“Oh, yes! but more glad to see us than ever. He had to show me how he could read, and how he had been allowed to put a new leg to the master’s desk at the school. Sully will make a good carpenter, I think. He is going to make a box for me; and he declares the ants shall never get through it, at the hinge, or lid, or anywhere. How the people are singing all about! I love to hear them. Prince drives so fast, that we shall be home

too soon. I shall be quite sorry to be in the streets again.”

It seemed as if Prince had heard her, for, in another moment, he was certainly checking his horses, and their speed gradually relaxed.

“He must have driven us fast, indeed,” said Monsieur Revel. “Look at the lights of the town—how near they are! Are those the lights of the town?”

“I should have looked for them more to the left.” Euphrosyne replied. “Let us ask Pierre. We cannot possibly have lost our way.”

Pierre rode up to the carriage window, at the moment that Prince came to a full stop.

“We do not know,” said Louis, the black footman, who was beside Prince —“We do not know what those lights can mean. They seem to be moving, and towards this way.”

“I think it is a body of people,” said Pierre. “I fear so, sir.”

“We had better go back,” said Euphrosyne. “Let us go back to Le Bosquet.”

“Forward! Forward!” cried Monsieur Revel, like one frantic. “Why do you stand still, you rascal? I will drive myself if you do not push on. Drive on—drive like the devil—like what you all are,” he added, in a lower tone.

“Surely we had better go back to Le Bosquet.”

“No, no, you little fool,” cried the agonised old man, grasping hold of her, and dragging her towards himself.

Louis shouted from the box, as Prince lashed his horses onwards, “We shall be in the midst of them, sir, this way.”

“Drive on,” was still the command. “Drive through everything to get home!” As he clasped his arms round Euphrosyne, and pressed her so closely that she could scarcely breathe, heaping his cloak upon her head, she heard and felt him murmuring to himself—

“To Le Bosquet! No, indeed! anywhere but there! Once at home—she once safe—and then—”

Euphrosyne would have been glad to see a little of what appeared—to know something of what to expect. Once or twice she struggled to raise her head; but this only made the convulsive clasp closer than before. All she knew was, that Pierre or the men on the box seemed to speak, from time to time; for the passionate “Drive on!”

“Forward!” was repeated. She also fancied that they must at last be in the midst of a crowd; for the motion of the carriage seemed to be interrupted by a sort of hustling on either side. Her heart beat so tumultuously, however, and the sense of suffocation was so strong, that she was sure of nothing but that she felt as if dying. Once more she struggled for air. At the same moment, her grandfather started—almost bounded from his seat, and relaxed his hold of her. She thought she had heard firearms. She raised her head; but all was confusion. There was smoke—there was the glare of torches—there was a multitude of shining black faces, and her grandfather lying back, as if asleep, in the corner of the carriage.

“Drive on!” she heard Pierre cry. The whip cracked, the horses plunged and scrambled, and in another moment broke through the crowd. The yelling, the lights, the smoke, were left behind; the air blew fresh; and there was only calm starlight without, as before.

The old man’s hand fell when lifted. He did not move when she stroked his cheek. He did not answer when she spoke. She put her hand to his forehead, and it was wet.

“Pierre! Pierre!” she cried, “he is shot! he is dead!”

“I feared so, Mademoiselle. Drive on, Prince!”

In an inconceivably short time, they were at their own door. Pierre looked into the carriage, felt his master’s wrist and heart, spoke softly to Prince, and they drove on again—only past the corner—only to the gate of the convent.

When it was opened, Pierre appeared at the carriage door. “Now, Mademoiselle,” he said. He half pulled, half lifted her over the crushed

fruit and flowers that were in her way—glanced in her face, to see whether she had observed that the body fell behind her—carried her in, and gave her, passive and stupified, into the arms of two nuns. Seeing the abbess standing behind, he took off his hat, and would have said something; but his lips quivered, and he could not.

“I will,” said the lady’s gentle voice, answering to his thought. “My young daughter shall be cherished here.”

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## **Chapter Twenty Two.**

### **A Lover’s Love.**

This new violence had for its object the few whites who were rash and weak enough to insist on the terms of Hédouville’s intended proclamation, instead of abiding by that of L’Ouverture. The cultivators on the estates of these whites left work, rather than be reduced to a condition of virtual slavery. Wandering from plantation to plantation, idle and discontented, they drew to themselves others who, from any cause, were also idle and discontented. They exasperated each other with tales, old and new, of the tyranny of the whites. Still, further mischief might have been prevented by due vigilance and firmness on the part of him in whose charge the town and district of Cap Français now lay. Stories, however, passed from mouth to mouth respecting General Moyse— anecdotes of the words he had dropped in dislike of the whites—of the prophecies he had uttered of more violence before the old masters would be taught their new place—rumours like these spread, till the gathering mob at length turned their faces towards the town, as if to try how far they might go. They went as far as the gates, having murdered some few of the obnoxious masters, either in their own houses, or, as in the case of Monsieur Revel, where they happened to meet them.

On the Haut-du-Cap they encountered General Moyse coming out against them with soldiery. At first he looked fierce; and the insurgents began to think each of getting away as he best might. But in a few moments, no one seemed to know how or why, the aspect of affairs changed. There was an air of irresolution about the Commander. It was

plain that he was not really disposed to be severe—that he had no deadly intentions towards those he came to meet. His black troops caught his mood. Some of the inhabitants of the town, who wore on the watch with glasses from the gates, from the churches, and from the roofs of houses, afterwards testified to there having been a shaking of hands, and other amicable gestures. They testified that the insurgents crowded round General Moyse, and gave, at one time cheers, at another time groans, evidently on a signal from him. No prisoners were made—there was not a shot fired. The General and his soldiers returned into the town, and even into their quarters, protesting that no further mischief would happen, but the insurgents remained on the heights till daylight; and the inhabitants, feeling themselves wholly unprotected, sent off expresses to the Commander-in-Chief, and watched, with arms loaded, till he, or one of his more trustworthy Generals, should arrive. These expresses were stopped and turned back, by order of General Moyse, who ridiculed the idea of further danger, and required the inhabitants to be satisfied with his assurances of protection. Fortunately, however, one or two messengers who had been sent off a few hours before, on the first alarm, had reached their destination, while General Moyse was yet on the Haut-du-Cap.

The first relief to the anxious watchers was on seeing the heights gradually cleared at sunrise. The next was the news that L'Ouverture was entering the town, followed by the ringleaders from Limbé, whom he was bringing in as prisoners. He had proceeded directly to the scene of insurrection, where the leaders of the mob were delivered up to him at his first bidding. It now remained to be seen what he would do with those, within the town, high or low in office, who were regarded by the inhabitants as accessories.

This kind of speculation was not abated by the sight of L'Ouverture, as he passed through the streets. Grave as his countenance usually was, and at times melancholy, never had it been seen so mournful as to-day. Years seemed to have sunk down upon him since he was last seen—so lately that the youngest prattler in the Cap had not ceased to talk of the day. As he walked his horse through the streets, many citizens approached, some humbly to ask, others eagerly to offer information. With all these last he made appointments, and rode on. His way lay past Monsieur Revel's door; and it happened to be at the very time that the funeral (an affair of hurry in that climate) was about to take place. At the sight,

L'Ouverture stopped, opposite the door. When the coffin was brought out, he took off his hat, and remained uncovered till it moved on, when he turned his horse, and followed the train to the corner of the street. There were many present who saw his face, and by whom its expression of deep sorrow was never afterwards forgotten. When he again turned in the direction of Government-house, he proceeded at a rapid pace, as if his purposes had been quickened by the sight.

His aides, who had been dispersed on different errands, entered the town by its various avenues; and some of them joined him in the Jesuits' Walk. At the gate of Government-house he was received by General Moyses, who had been almost the last person in Cap to hear of his arrival. L'Ouverture acknowledged his military greeting; and then, turning to his aides, said in a calm tone, which yet was heard half-way down the Walk, and thence propagated through the town, as if by echoes—

“General Moyses is under arrest.”

As Moyses was moving off towards the apartment in which he was to be guarded, he requested an interview with the Commander-in-Chief.

“After your business with the court-martial is concluded,” was the reply. “On no account before.”

General Moyses bowed, and proceeded to his apartment.

For some hours after, there was every indication of the rapid transaction of business in Government-house. Messengers were sent to Fort Dauphin, to the commanding officer at Limbé, and to every military station within thirty miles. Orders were issued for the garrison of Cap to be kept close within their quarters. Not a man was to be allowed, on any pretence whatever, to pass the barrack-gates, which were well-guarded by the Commander-in-Chief's own guards, till troops for the service of the town could arrive from Fort Dauphin. As L'Ouverture was closeted with his secretary, message after message was reported; letter upon letter was delivered by his usher. Among these messages came, at length, one which made him start.

“Mademoiselle L'Ouverture begs to be permitted to see General Moyses.”

Before he could reply, a note by another messenger was put into his hands.

“I implore you to let me see Moyse. I do not ask to see you. I do not wish it. I will disturb no one. Only give me an order to see Moyse—for his sake, and that of your unhappy

“Génifrède.”

Toussaint left the room, and was but too well directed by the countenances of his servants to the room where Génifrède was lying, with her face hidden, upon a sofa. Denis was standing silent at a window which overlooked the Walk. Both were covered with dust from their journey.

Génifrède looked up, on hearing some one enter. When she saw that it was her father, she again buried her face in the cushions, saving only—

“Oh, why did you come?”

“Stay, my child, why did you come? How—why—”

“I always know,” said she, “when misery is near; and where misery is, there am I. Do not be angry with Denis, father. I made him come.”

“I am angry with no one, Génifrède. I am too much grieved to be angry. I am come to take you to Moyse. I cannot see him myself, at present; but I will take you to the door of the salon where he is.”

“The salon!” said Génifrède, as if relieved. She had probably imagined him chained in a cell. This one word appeared to alter the course of her ideas. She glanced at her travel-soiled dress, and hesitated. Her father said—

“I will send a servant to you. Refresh yourself; and in half-an-hour I will come again.”

When he rejoined her, she was still haggard and agitated, but appeared far less wretched than before.



“Génifrède!” cried Moyse, as she entered and leaned against the wall, unable to go farther. “Génifrède! And was not that your father who admitted you? Oh, call him, Génifrède! Call him back! I must see him. If you ask him, he will come. Call him back, Génifrède!”

“If you are engaged, Moyse,” said she in a sickening voice, “if I am in your way, I will go.”

“No, no, my love. But I must see your father. Everything may depend upon it.”

“I will go—as soon as I can,” said the poor girl, beginning to sink to the floor.

“You shall not go, my love—my Génifrède,” cried Moyse, supporting her to a sofa. “I did not know—I little thought— Are you all here?”

“No; I came to see you, Moyse. I told you how it would be if we parted.”

“And how will it be, love?”

“Oh, how can you make me say it? How can you make me think it?”

“Why, Génifrède, you cannot suppose anything very serious will happen. What frightens you so? Once more I ask you the old question that we must both be weary of—what frightens you so?”

“What frightens me!” she repeated, with a bewildered look in her face. “Were we not to have been married as soon as you were relieved from your command here? And are you not a prisoner, waiting for trial—and that trial for—for—for your life?”

“Never believe so, Génifrède! Have they not told you that the poor blacks behaved perfectly well from the moment they met me? They did not do a single act of violence after I went to them. Not a hand was raised when they had once seen me; and after I had put them into good-humour, they all went to their homes.”

“Oh, is it so? Is it really so? But you said just now that everything depended on your seeing my father.”

“To a soldier, his honour, his professional standing, are everything—”

Seeing a painful expression in Génifrède’s face, he explained that even his private happiness—the prosperity of his love, depended on his professional honour and standing. She must be as well aware as himself that he was now wholly at her father’s mercy, as regarded all his prospects in life; and that this would justify any eagerness to see him.

“At his mercy,” repeated Génifrède; “and he is merciful. He does acts of mercy every day.”

“True—true. You see now you were too much alarmed.”

“But, Moïse, how came you to need his mercy? But two days ago how proud he was of you! and now—Oh! Moïse, when you knew what depended on these few days, how could you fail?”

“How was it that, he put me into an office that I was not fit for? He should have seen—”

“Then let us leave him, and all these affairs which make us so miserable. Let us go to your father. He will let us live at Saint Domingo in peace.”

Moïse shook his head, saying that there were more whites at Saint Domingo than in any other part of the island; and the plain truth was, he could not live where there were whites.

“How was it then that you pleased my father so much when Hédouville went away? He whispered to me, in the piazza at Pongaudin, that, next to himself, you saved the town—that many whites owed their lives and their fortunes to you.”

“I repent,” cried Moïse, bitterly, “I repent of my deeds of that day. I repent that any white ever owed me gratitude. I thank God, I have shaken them off, like the dust from my feet! Thank God, the whites are all cursing me now!”

“What do you mean? How was it all?” cried Génifrède, fearfully.

“When Hédouville went away, my first desire was to distinguish myself,

that I might gain you, as your father promised. This prospect, so near and so bright, dazzled me so that I could not see black faces from white. For the hour, one passion put the other out.”

“And when—how soon did you begin to forget me?” asked Génifrède, sorrowfully.

“I have never forgotten you, love—not for an hour, in the church among the priests—in the square among the soldiers, any more than here as a prisoner. But I thought my point was gained when your father stooped from his horse, as he rode away, and told me there would be joy at home on hearing of my charge. I doubted no more that all was safe. Then I heard of the insufferable insolence of some of the whites out at Limbé—acting as if Hédouville was still here to countenance them. I saw exultation on account of this in all the white faces I met in Cap. The poor old wretch Revel, when my officers and I met his carriage, stared at me through his spectacles, and laughed in my face as if—”

“Was his grandchild with him? She was? Then he was laughing at some of her prattle. Nothing else made him even smile.”

“It looked as if he was ridiculing me and my function. I was growing more angry every hour, when tidings came of the rising out at Limbé. I knew it was forced on by the whites. I knew the mischief was begun by Hédouville, and kept up by his countrymen; and was it to be expected that I should draw the sword for them against our own people? Could I have done so, Génifrède?”

“Would not my father have restored peace without drawing the sword at all?”

“That was what I did. I went out to meet the insurgents; and the moment they saw that the whites were not to have their own way, they returned to quietness, and to their homes. Not another blow was struck.”

“And the murderers—what did you do with them?”

Moise was silent for a moment, and then replied—

“Those may deal with them who desire to live side-by-side with whites.

As for me, I quarrel with none who avenge our centuries of wrong.”

“Would to God my father had known that this was in your heart! You would not then have been a wretched prisoner here. Moyse, the moment you are free, let us fly to the mornes. I told you how it would be, if we parted. You will do as I wish henceforward; you will take me to the Mornes?”

“My love, where and how should we live there? In a cave of the rocks, or roosting in trees?”

“People do live there—not now, perhaps, under my father’s government: but in the old days, runaways did live there.”

“So you would institute a new race of banditti, under your father’s reign. How well it will sound in the First Consul’s council-chamber, that the eldest daughter of the ambitious Commander-in-Chief is the first bandit’s wife in the mornes!”

“Let them say what they will: we must have peace, Moyse. We have been wretched too long. Oh, if we could once be up there, hidden among the rocks, or sitting among the ferns in the highest of those valleys, with the very clouds between us and this weary world below—never to see a white face more! Then, at last, we could be at peace. Everywhere else we are beset with this enemy. They are in the streets, in the churches, on the plain. We meet them in the shade of the woods, and have to pass them basking on the sea-shore. There is no peace but high up in the mornes—too high for the wild beast, and the reptile, and the white man.”

“The white man mounts as high as the eagle’s nest, Génifrède. You will not be safe, even there, from the traveller or the philosopher, climbing to measure the mountain or observe the stars.—But while we are talking of the free and breezy heights—”

“You are a prisoner,” said Génifrède, mournfully. “But soon, very soon, we can go. Why do you look so? You said there was no fear—that nothing serious could happen—nothing more than disgrace; and, for each other’s sake, we can defy disgrace. Can we not, Moyse? Why do not you speak?”

“Disgrace, or death, or anything. Even death, Génifrède. Yes—I said what was not true. They will not let me out but to my death. Do not shudder so, my love: they shall not part us. They shall not rob me of everything. You did well to come, love. If they had detained you, and I had had to die with such a last thought as that you remained to be comforted, sooner or later, by another—to be made to forget me by a more prosperous lover—O God! I should have been mad!”

“You are mad, Moyse,” cried Génifrède, shrinking from him in terror. “I do not believe a word you say. I love another!—they kill you! It is all false! I will not hear another word—I will go.”

To go was, however, beyond her power. As she sank down again, trembling, Moyse said in the imperious tone which she both loved and feared—

“I am speaking the truth now. I shall be tried to-night before a court-martial, which will embody your father’s opinion and will. They will find me a traitor, and doom me to death upon the Place. I must die—but not on the Place—and you shall die with me. In one moment, we shall be beyond their power. You hear me, Génifrède? I know you hear me, though you do not speak. I can direct you to one, near at hand, who prepares the red water, and knows me well. I will give you an order for red water enough for us both. You will come—your father will not refuse our joint request—you will come to me as soon as the trial is over; and then, love, we will never be parted more.”

Génifrède sat long with her face hidden on her lover’s shoulder, speechless. After repeated entreaties that she would say one word, Moyse raised her up, and, looking in her face, said authoritatively—

“You will do as I say, Génifrède?”

“Moyse, I dare not. No, no, I dare not! If, when we are dead, you should be dead to me too! And how do we know? If, the very next moment, I should see only your dead body with my own—if you should be snatched away somewhere, and I should be alone in some wide place—if I should be doomed to wander in some dreadful region, calling upon you for ever, and no answer! Oh, Moyse! we do not know what fearful things are

beyond. I dare not; no, no, I dare not! Do not be angry with me, Moyses!"

"I thought you had been ready to live and die with me."

"And so I am—ready to live anywhere, anyhow—ready to die, if only we could be sure— Oh! if you could only tell me there is nothing beyond—"

"I have little doubt," said Moyses, "that death is really what it is to our eyes—an end of everything."

"Do you think so? If you could only assure me of that— But, if you were really quite certain of that, would you wish me to die too?"

"Wish it! You must—you shall," cried he, passionately. "You are mine—mine for ever; and I will not let you go. Do not you see—do not you feel," he said, moderating his tone, "that you will die a slow death of anguish, pining away, from the moment that cursed firing in the Place strikes upon your ear? You cannot live without love—you know you cannot—and you shall not live by any other love than mine. This little sign," said he, producing a small carved ivory ring from his pocket-book, "This little sign will save you from the anguish of a thousand sleepless nights, from the wretchedness of a thousand days of despair. Take it. If shown at Number 9, in the Rue Espagnole, in my name, you will receive what will suffice for us both. Take it, Génifrède."

She took the ring, but it presently dropped from her powerless hands.

"You do not care for me," said Moyses, bitterly. "You are like all women. You love in fair weather, and would have us give up everything for you; and when the hurricane comes, you will fly to shelter, and shut out your lover into the storm."

Génifrède was too wretched to remind her lover what was the character of his love. It did not, indeed, occur to her. She spoke, however:—

"If you had remembered, Moyses, what a coward I am, you would have done differently, and not have made me so wretched as I now am. Why did you not bid me bring the red water, without saying what it was, and what for? If you had put it to my lips—if you had not given me a moment to fancy what is to come afterwards, I would have drunk it—oh, so

thankfully! But now—I dare not.”

“You are not afraid to live without me.”

“Yes, I am. I am afraid of living, of dying—of everything.”

“You once asked me about—”

“I remember—about your spirit coming.”

“Suppose it should come, angry at your failing me in my last desire?”

“Why did you not kill me? You know I should have been thankful. I wish the roof would fall and bury us now.”

She started and shrieked when she heard some one at the door. It was her father’s servant, who told her that Madame Dessalines had arrived, and that L’Ouverture wished her to come and receive her friend. The servant held the door open, so that there was opportunity only for another word.

“Remember,” said Moyse, “they are not to seduce or force you back to Pongaudin to-day. Remember, you are not fit to travel. Remember,” he again said, holding up the ivory ring, and then thrusting it into her bosom, “you come to me as soon as the trial is over. I depend upon you.”

He led her, passive and silent, to the door, where he kissed her hand, saying, for the ear of any one who might be without, “For once, I cannot accompany you further. Tell Madame Dessalines that I hope to pay my respects to her soon.” He added, to the servant—

“See that Julien is at Mademoiselle L’Ouverture’s orders, till I need his services myself.”

The man bowed, pleased, as most persons are, to have a commission to discharge for a prisoner. Before he had closed the door, Génifrède was in the arms of Thérèse.



## Chapter Twenty Three.

### Pangs of Office.

That night. Madame Dessalines was alone in a dimly-lighted apartment of Government-house—dimly-lighted except by the moon, shining in full at the range of windows which overlooked the gardens, so as to make the one lamp upon the table appear like a yellow taper. For most of the long hours that she had sat there, Thérèse had been alone. Denis had entered, before his departure homewards, to ask what tidings he was to carry to Pongaudin from her. Father Laxabon had twice appeared, to know if he could not yet see Génifrède, to offer her consolation; and had withdrawn, when he found that Génifrède was not yet awake. Madame Dessalines' maid had put her head in so often as to give her mistress the idea that she was afraid to remain anywhere else; though it did not quite suit her to be where she must speak as little as possible, and that little only in whispers. So Thérèse had been, for the most part, alone since sunset. Her work was on the table, and she occasionally took up her needle for a few minutes; but it was laid down at the slightest noise without; and again and again she rose, either to listen at the chamber-door which opened into the apartment, or softly to pace the floor, or to step out upon the balcony, to refresh herself with looking down upon the calm lights and still shadows of the gardens.

In the centre of one division of these gardens was a fountain, whose waters, after springing in the air, fell into a wide and deep reservoir, from whence were supplied the trenches which kept the alleys green and fresh in all but the very hottest weeks of the year. Four straight walks met at this fountain—walks hedged in with fences of citron, geraniums, and lilac jessamine. These walks were now deserted. Every one in the house and in the town was occupied with something far different from moonlight strolls, for pleasure or for meditation. The chequered lights and shadows lay undisturbed by the foot of any intruder. The waters gleamed as they rose, and sparkled as they fell; and no human voice, in discourse or in laughter, mingled with the murmur and the splash. Here Thérèse permitted herself the indulgence of the tears which she had made an effort to conceal within.



“These young creatures!” thought she. “What a lot! They are to be parted—wrenched asunder by death—by the same cause, for indulgence of the same passion, which brought Jacques and me together. If the same priest were to receive their confession and ours, how would he reconcile the ways of God to them and to us? The thought of my child burns at my heart, and its last struggle—my bosom is quivering with it still. For this Jacques took me to his heart, and I have ever since had—alas! not forgetfulness of my child—but a home, and the good fame that a woman cannot live without, and the love of a brave and tender heart—tender to me, however hard to those we hate. Jacques lives in honour, and in a station of command, though he hates the whites with a passion which would startle Moyses himself—hates them so that he does not even strive, as I do, to remember that they are human—to be ready to give them the cup of cold water when they thirst, and the word of sympathy when they grieve. He would rather dash the cup from their parched lips, and laugh at their woes. Yet Jacques lives in peace and honour at his palace at Saint Marc, or is, in war, at the head of troops that would die for him: while this poor young man, a mere novice in the passion, is too likely to be cast out, as unworthy to live among us—among us who, God knows, are in this regard more guilty than he! The time may come, when Génifrède’s first passion is over, when I may tell her this. Hark! that trumpet! The court-martial has broken up. Oh, I wish I could silence that trumpet! It will waken her. It is further off—and further. God grant she may not have heard it!”

She stepped in, and to the chamber-door, and listened. There was no stir, and she said to herself that her medicine had wrought well. From the window, which opened on one of the courtyards, she heard the shuffling of feet, and the passing by of many persons. She dared not look out; but she felt certain that the trial was over, that the officers were proceeding to their quarters, and the prisoner to his solitude. Her heart beat so that she was glad to return to her seat, and cover her eyes from the light. She was startled by the opening of the door from the corridor. It was L’Ouverture; and she rose, as every one habitually did, at his approach.

“Génifrède?” he said, anxiously, as he approached.

Thérèse pointed to the chamber, saying softly—

“She is there. I do not know what you will think of the means I have taken to procure her sleep. But she was so shaken—she so dreaded this night!”

“You have given her medicine. Is she asleep?”

“I gave her henbane, and she is asleep.”

“Is there a chance of her sleeping till noon?”

“If she be not disturbed. I have carefully darkened the room. What has been done?” she inquired, looking in his face. Struck with its expression, she exclaimed, “How you have suffered!”

“Yes. Life is bitter to those whom God has chosen. If Moyses did but know it, I almost envy him his rest.”

“Is it over, then? is he dead?”

“He dies at sunrise. You think Génifrède may sleep till noon?”

Thérèse could not reply, and he proceeded—

“He is found guilty, and sentenced. There was no escape. His guilt is clear as noonday.”

“No escape from the sentence,” said Thérèse, eagerly. “But there is room for mercy yet. You hold the power of life and death over all the colony—a power like that of God, and put into your hand by Him.”

“A power put into my hand by Him, and therefore to be justly used. Moyses’s crime is great, and mercy to him would be a crime in me. I have fault enough already to answer for in this business, and I dare not sin yet further.”

“You yourself have sinned?” said Thérèse, with a gleam of hope in her countenance and tone.

“Yes. I ought to have discerned the weakness of this young man. I ought to have detected the passions that were working in him. I was misled by one great and prolonged effort of self-control in him. I appointed an

unworthy officer to the care of the lives and safety of the whites. Many of them have gone to lay their deaths to my charge in heaven. All I can now do is, by one more death (would to God it were my own!) to save and to reassure those who are left. It is my retribution that Moyse must die. As for Paul, as for Génifrède—the sin of the brother is visited upon the brother—the sin of the father upon the child.”

“But,” said Thérèse, “you speak as if you had caused the innocent to be destroyed. Some few harmless ones may have died; but the greater number—those who were sought by the sword’s point—were factious tyrants—enemies of your Government, and of your race—men who rashly brought their deaths upon themselves. They were passionate—they were stubborn—they were cruel.”

“True—and therefore were they peculiarly under my charge. I have guaranteed the safety of the whites; and none need my protection so much as those who do not, by justice, obedience, and gentleness, by gaining the good-will of their neighbours, protect themselves.”

“But Moyse did not murder any. He was not even present at any death.”

“It has just been proved that, while he knew that slaughter was going on, he took no measures to stop it. The ground of his guilt is plain and clear. The law of the revolution of Saint Domingo, as conducted by me, is No retaliation. Every breach of this law by an officer of mine is treason; and every traitor to the whites must die.”

“Alas! why so harsh now—only now? You have spared the guilty before, by tons, by hundreds. Why, now, cause all this misery for this one young life?”

“Those whom I have spared were my personal foes; and I spared them not so much for the sake of their separate lives, as for the sake of the great principles for which I live and govern—reconciliation and peace. For this end I pardoned them. For this end I condemn Moyse.”

“You make one tremble,” said Thérèse, shuddering, “for one’s very self. What if I were to tell you that it is not Moyse and Génifrède alone that—” She stopped.

“That hate the whites? I know it,” replied Toussaint. “I know that if God were to smite all among us who hate His children of another race, there would be mourning in some of the brightest dwellings of our land. I thank God that no commission to smite such is given to me.”

Thérèse was silent.

“My office is,” said Toussaint, “to honour those (and they are to be found in cottages all through the island) who forgive their former oppressors, and forget their own wrongs. Here, as elsewhere, we may take our highest lesson from the lowliest men. My office is to honour such. As for the powerful, and those who think themselves wise—their secret feelings towards all men are between themselves and God.”

“But if I could prove to you, at this moment, that Moyse’s enmity towards the whites is mild and harmless—his passions moderation, compared with the tempest in the breasts of some whom you employ and cherish—would not this soften you—would it not hold your hand from inflicting that which no priest can deny is injustice in God?”

“I leave it to no priest, Thérèse, but to God Himself, to vindicate His own justice, by working as He will in the secret hearts, or before the eyes of men. He may have, for those who hate their enemies, punishments too great for me, or any ruler, to wield; punishments to which the prison and the bullet are nothing. You speak of the tempest within the breast: I know at this moment, if you do not, that years of imprisonment, or a hundred death-strokes, are mercy compared to it. But no more of this! I only say, Thérèse, that while Jacques—”

“Say me too!”

“While Jacques and you secretly hate, I have no concern with it, except in my secret heart. But if that hatred, be it more or less than that of this young man, should interfere with my duty to friend or foe, you see, from his fate, that I have no mercy to grant. Jacques is my friend: Moyse was to have been my son.”

Neither could immediately speak. At length, Toussaint signed once more to the chamber-door, and once more said—

“Génifrède?”

“I have something to tell you—something to show you,” replied Thérèse. “Her sleep or stupor came upon her suddenly: but she kept a strong grasp upon the bosom of her dress. When I laid her on the bed, she kept her hands clasped one upon the other there. As she slept more heavily, the fingers relaxed; her hands fell, and I saw one end of this.”

She produced a phial.

“Ha! the red water!” exclaimed Toussaint.

“I thought it was,” said Thérèse.

“Who taught her this? Who has been tampering with her, and with her life?”

“Perhaps this may tell,” said Thérèse, showing the ivory ring.

Toussaint closely examined the ring, and then drew his hand across his brows.

“How strange,” said he, “are old thoughts, long forgotten! This bit of ivory makes me again a young man, and a slave. Do you remember that I once had the care of the sick at Breda, and administered medicines?”

Thérèse shuddered. She remembered that when her infant was taken ill, Papalier had sent for Toussaint, because, though Toussaint was no longer surgeon to the quarter at Breda, he was thought to have great knowledge and skill. Toussaint remembered nothing of this particular incident, and was not aware how he had touched her feelings. He went on:

“I began that study as all of my race have begun it, till of late, in superstition. With what awe did I handle charms like this! Can it be possible that my poor child has been wrought upon by such jugglery? What do you know about it?”

“No more than that the charm and the poison were hidden in her bosom.”

“It is hard to trouble a dying man,” said Toussaint, “but the survivor must be cared for. If Moyse has poisoned her mind, as I much fear, he would have poisoned her body—But no—it is an atrocious thought. If I wrong him—if his love for her is faithful, he will be glad to tell me what he knows, that her sick mind may be well tended. Father Laxabon is coming presently, to go to Moyse, and leave him no more. I will go with him.”

“How you suffer! How you must suffer!” said Thérèse, again speaking her thoughts, as she looked in his face.

“It is worse than going to my death,” replied he; “but for my child’s sake—for my poor brother’s sake, too—it must be done.”

He could say no more. Till Father Laxabon came, he paced the room—he listened at the chamber-door—he went out upon the balcony, to hide, as Thérèse well understood, his tears of agony. He again entered, listened again at the chamber-door, and, hastily approaching the table, took up the phial, saying—

“Are you certain that this is all? Are you certain that she only sleeps, and is not dying—or dead?”

“Indeed, I am not certain,” exclaimed Thérèse, starting up, and softly entering the chamber. Toussaint followed with the lamp, shading it carefully with his hand.

“Here is no pain,” whispered Thérèse. “She breathes quietly. There is no pain. Satisfy yourself.”

She took the light from his hand, and saw him stoop above his sleeping child, extending his hands over her, as if in the act of prayer or blessing.

“No pain, thank God!” he repeated, as they returned to the salon, where they found Father Laxabon.

“Are you prepared, father, to deal with a spirit as perturbed as that of the dead who cannot rest?”

“Christ will strengthen me for my office, my son.”

“And the other sufferers?”

“My brethren are engaged with them. Every man of the black troops will be shriven this night.”

“Are there more doomed?” asked Thérèse, faintly.

“There are. There are many guilty; and of some I must make an example. They know that they are guilty; but they know not yet which and how many are to be spared. The discipline of this night will, I trust, impress upon them that principle of our revolution which they have hitherto failed to learn, or have been tempted to forget. This night, father, will establish your precept and mine, and that of our Master—no retaliation. If not, may God direct us, by whatever suffering, to some other method of teaching it; for, at whatever cost, it must be learned! Let us begone.”

“One moment,” exclaimed Thérèse, in agitation. “You have not told me when—where—”

“He dies on the Place, at sunrise—a military, not an ignominious death. Father Laxabon and I shall both be near at hand when Génifrède wakes. Your task shall be shared, though we must leave you now.”

Moyses had been permitted to remain in the same apartment which had been assigned to him after his arrest. When he heard the key turn in the lock, he sprang from his seat to the door, exclaiming—

“You have come at last! Oh, Génifrède! to have kept me waiting this last night—”

He turned, and walked back to his seat, when he saw his uncle and the priest.

“You expected Génifrède?” asked Toussaint.

“I did—naturally.”

“She is asleep, and she must not be awakened. You would be the last to wish it, Moyses.”

“Must not be awakened,” repeated Moyse to himself, with something of doubt in his tone—something of triumph in his countenance.

“Perhaps you think,” said Toussaint, fixing his eyes on the young man’s face, “that she cannot be awakened. Perhaps you think that she may have drunk the red water?”

“She has told, then. A curse upon woman’s cowardice and woman’s treachery! Who would not have sworn that if ever a woman loved, Génifrède loved me? And now, when put to the test—”

“Now, when put to the test,” interrupted Toussaint, “my poor child was prepared to die with you, though you had perplexed her mind with superstition—terrified her with spells and charms—”

“You do not know her, uncle. She herself told me that she dared not die with me, though it was the only—”

“And you wished it—you required it! You have striven to destroy her, body and soul, because you yourself were lost—and now you curse a woman’s cowardice and treachery! I leave you with Father Laxabon. Hasten to confess and cleanse your soul, Moyse; for never soul needed it more. I leave you my pity and my forgiveness, and I engage for Génifrède’s.”

“Stop!” cried Moyse, “I have something to ask. Who has dared to keep Génifrède from me? She is mine.”

“Think of her no more, except to implore Heaven’s pardon for your intent towards her.” And Toussaint produced the ivory ring and phial.

“Yes,” exclaimed Moyse, “with that ring we obtained that water, which we were to have drunk together.”

“Here, then, I break the bond by which she was yours.” And Toussaint crushed the ring to dust with the heel of his boot, and dashed the phial against the ceiling, from whence the poisonous water sprinkled the floor.

“You spoke of treachery just now,” said Moyse. “How do you propose to answer to my father for the charge he left you in me?”



“Be silent, my poor son,” said Father Laxabon. “Do not spend your remaining moments in aggravating your crimes.”

“A few minutes’ patience, father. I never before ventured to speak freely to my uncle. Not on account of any severity of his—he never was severe to me—but on account of a certain awe I felt of him—an awe which the events of this day have had a wonderful power to dispel.”

“It is well,” said Toussaint. “There should be no awe of the creature when but a moment’s darkness separates one from the Creator. Speak freely and fearlessly, Moyse.”

“I ask,” said Moyse, in a somewhat softened tone, “how you will answer to my father for the charge he left you in me?”

“Not by revealing to him the vices of the spirit he gave me to guide. If your father’s heart must be broken for you, it shall be for having thus lost a noble and gallant son, and not for— But it is no time for reproach from me. Let me go now, my poor boy.”

“Not yet, uncle. It is far from sunrise yet. How do you mean to report of me to Génifrède? Will you make her detest me? Will you work upon her fears—her fears of my ghost—to make her seek refuge with another? Will you trample on the memory of the dead, to drive her into the arms of some living lover, that you may no longer be reminded of the poor wretch that you first fostered, and then murdered?”

“Leave us!” said Laxabon to Toussaint. “He is desperate. Leave him to me, that he may not plunge deeper into sin with every word he speaks.”

“Presently, father.—Moyse, what Génifrède hears of you will be according to what Father Laxabon has to report of your last hours. Be assured that I shall not interpose between you and her. It rests with yourself to justify her love, and engage her affections to your memory. She has been laid to sleep this night, not out of enmity to you, but to save her brain. As Providence has decreed, it has also saved her life. When she awakes, she will regard you as a martyr to a professional necessity. A woman’s love is sanctified and made immortal when baptised in the blood of martyrdom. Hers may be so, if your last moments are full of holy contrition, and purged from passion. Of Father Laxabon, and not of me,

will Génifrède inquire concerning you.”

“This is kind—this is generous,” said Moyse, looking wistfully in his uncle’s face.

“And now,” said Toussaint, “I have to ask you to be generous to me. I need and implore your pardon, Moyse. While you were yet weak and wayward, I neglected the necessary watch over you. Too prone to ease and satisfaction, for my child’s sake and my own, I too soon concluded you a man, and imposed upon you the duties of a man. Your failure is my condemnation. I have cut short your discipline, and enabled you to throw away your life. All this, and much more, am I answerable for. Whether or not God may have mercy, can you yield me your pardon? I implore it, Moyse.”

Moyse gazed at him in astonishment, and then cast himself at his uncle’s feet, clinging to his knees, and crying—

“Save me! uncle, save me! You can—you will—”

“No, Moyse, I will not—I cannot,” declared Toussaint, in a voice which silenced even that most piercing of all sounds—the cry for life.

“Not one word!” continued L’Ouverture. “Keep your entreaties for Him who alone can help you. Kneel to Him alone. Rise, Moyse, and only say, if you can say it, that your last prayer for me shall be for pardon.”

The awe of man was not destroyed in Moyse. He looked humbly upon the ground, as he again stood before his uncle, and said—

“My destruction is my own work; and I have felt this throughout. But if you have ever done me wrong, may it be forgotten before God, as it is by me! I know of no such wrong.”

“Thank God!” cried Toussaint, pressing him to his breast. “This is the temper which will win mercy.”

“Leave us now,” said Father Laxabon, once more; and this time he was obeyed.



## Chapter Twenty Four.

### All Ear.

Thérèse was struck with awe as she stood, from time to time, beside the bed on which lay Génifrède. The room was so darkened that nothing was to be seen; but there she lay, breathing calmly, motionless, unconscious, while the blessings and hopes of her young life were falling fast into ruins around her. It seemed treacherous, cruel, thus to beguile her of that tremendous night—to let those last hours of the only life she prized pass away unused—to deprive her of the last glances of those eyes which were presently to be dim in death—of the latest tones of that voice which soon would never speak more. It seemed an irreparable injury to rob her of these hours of intense life, and to substitute for them a blank and barren sleep. But it was done. It was done to save her intellect; it had probably saved her life; and she could not now be wakened to any purpose. With sickening heart, Thérèse saw the moonlight disturbed by grey light from the east. In a few minutes, the sun would leap up from the sea, to quench not only the gleams of moon and star, but the more sacred lamp of human life. Brief as was always the twilight there, never had the gushing in of light appeared so hasty, so peremptory as now. By the rousing up of the birds, by the stir of the breezes, by the quick unfolding of the flowers, it seemed as if Nature herself had turned against her wretched children, and was impatient till their doom was fulfilled. Thérèse resolved to return no more to the chamber till all should be over, lest light and sound should enter with her, and the sufferer be roused too soon.

As the yellow rays shone in fuller and fuller, the watcher's nerves were so stretched, that though she wrapped her head in her shawl as she sat, she felt as if the rustle of every leaf, the buzz of every insect-wing in the gardens, reached her ear. She heard at intervals the tap of a distant drum, and, she was certain, a discharge of firearms—not in a volley from the Place d'Armes, as she had expected, but further off, and mere dropping shot. This occurred so often, that she was satisfied it was not the execution; and, while she drew a deep breath, hardly knew whether to feel relieved or not. The door from the corridor presently opened and closed again, before she could throw back the shawl from her face. She

flew to the door, to see if any one was there who could give her news. Monsieur Pascal was walking away toward the further end. When she issued forth, he turned and apologised for having interrupted her, believing that the salon would be unoccupied at this early hour.

“Tell me—only tell me,” said she, “whether it is over.”

“Not the principal execution—it is about going forward now. I came away—I saw what melted my soul; and I could endure no more.”

“You saw L’Ouverture?” said Madame Dessalines, anxiously.

Monsieur Pascal went back with her into the salon, as glad to relieve his mind as she was eager to hear.

“I saw,” said he, “what I never could have conceived of, and would never have believed upon report. I have seen man as a god among his fellow-men.”

A gleam of satisfaction lighted up Madame Dessalines’ face, through its agony.

“It was too touching, too mournful to be endured,” resumed Monsieur Pascal. “The countenances of those poor creatures will haunt me to my dying hour. Never was man idolised like L’Ouverture. For him, men go willingly to their deaths—not in the excitement of a common danger; not for glory or for a bright future—but solitary, in ignominy, in the light of a calm sunrise, with the eyes of a condemning multitude upon them. Without protest, without supplication—as it appears, without objection—they stoop to death at his word.”

“I do not know—I do not understand what has been done,” said Thérèse. “But does not every black know that L’Ouverture has no private interests—nothing at heart but the good of us all?”

“That is the spell,” replied Pascal. “This sacrifice of his nephew will confirm it with my countrymen, as well as with yours, for ever. These thirteen others—for he has sacrificed thirteen of the soldiers, for dereliction of duty in the late rising—these thirteen are from the garrison of Cap, chiefly, though it is said two or three are from Limbé. All the

soldiery from these two places, and from Port Dauphin, are upon the Place. L'Ouverture stood in the midst and addressed them. He told them that it was needless to explain to them what they had been learning from his whole course of conduct, since he was chosen by the blacks to lead and govern them. It was needless to insist on the protection due to every inhabitant of the colony, and especially the whites; and on the primary duty of a liberated race—that of keeping the peace. They knew their duty as well as he did; and those who had violated it should suffer the long-declared and inevitable punishment of death. All knew that everything was prepared on the rampart, near at hand. L'Ouverture walked slowly along each line of the soldiery; and I declare to you, Madame, that though all knew that he was selecting victims for instant death, there was passionate love in every face.”

“I believe it,” said Thérèse. “And he?”

“He was calm; but a face of deeper sorrow never did I see. He is ten years older since last night. He spoke aloud the names of the most guilty, according to their own previous account of themselves to him, and the committee, of investigation.”

“And no one of the thirteen resisted?”

“Not one. One by one they joined their hands, bowed their heads humbly before him, and repaired where he pointed—to be shot. There was a spell upon me. I could not come away, though feeling at every moment as if I could endure no more. I did not, however, stay to see General Moyse brought out—”

As he was speaking, there was heard the heavy roll of drums at a distance, followed by a volley of musketry.

“That is it,” cried Monsieur Pascal; and he was gone. Thérèse sank back upon a sofa, and again drew her shawl over her head. She desired, in the sickness of her heart, never to see the daylight more.

She knew not how long it was before the door was again gently opened. She did not move; but she presently heard Father Laxabon's soft voice, saying—

“Pardon, Madame, but I am compelled to ask where is Mademoiselle L’Ouverture?”

“She is asleep,” said Thérèse, rousing herself—“asleep, if indeed she be not dead. If this last sound did not rouse her, I think the trumpet of doom will scarcely reach her soul.”

This last sound had roused Génifrède. She did not recognise it; she was not aware what had wakened her; but she had started up, supposed it night, but felt so oppressed that she sprang from the bed, with a confused wonder at finding herself dressed, and threw open the door to the salon. There she now stood, bewildered with the sudden light, and looking doubtful whether to advance or go back.

“My daughter—” said Father Laxabon. She came forward with a docile and wistful look. “My daughter,” he continued, “I bring you some comfort.”

“Comfort?” she repeated, doubtingly.

“Not now, Father,” interposed Thérèse. “Spare her.”

“Spare me?” repeated Génifrède in the same tone.

“I bring her comfort,” said the father, turning reprovingly to Madame Dessalines. “His conflict is over, my daughter,” he continued, advancing to Génifrède. “His last moments were composed; and as for his state of mind in confession—”

He was stopped by a shriek so appalling, that he recoiled as if shot, and supported himself against the wall. Génifrède rushed back to the chamber, and drove something heavy against the door. Thérèse was there in an instant, listening, and then imploring, in a voice which, it might be thought, no one could resist—

“Let me in, love! It is Thérèse. No one else shall come. If you love me, let me in.”

There was no answer.

“You have killed her, I believe,” she said to the priest, who was walking

up and down in great disturbance—not with himself, but with the faithless creature of passion he had to deal with.

“The windows!” exclaimed Thérèse, vexed not to have thought of this before. She stepped out upon the balcony. One of the chamber-windows was open, and she entered. No one was there. Génifrède must have fled down the steps from the balcony into the gardens; and there Thérèse hastened after her. In one of the fenced walks leading to the fountain, she saw the fluttering of her clothes.

“The reservoir!” thought Thérèse, in despair.

She was not mistaken. Génifrède stood on the brink of the deep and brimming reservoir—her hands were clasped above her head for the plunge, when a strong hand seized her arm, and drew her irresistibly back. In ungovernable rage she turned, and saw her father.

“They say,” she screamed, “that every one worships you. Not true now! Never true more! I hate—I curse—”

He held up his right hand with the action of authority which had awed her childhood. It awed her now. Her voice sank into a low shuddering and muttering.

“That any one should have dared to tell you—that any one should have interfered between me and my poor child!” he said, as if involuntarily, while seating her on the fresh grass. He threw himself down beside her, holding her hands, and covering them with kisses.

“This sod is fresh and green,” said he; “but would we were all lying under it!”

“Do *you* say so?” murmured Génifrède.

“God forgive me!” he replied. “But we are all wretched.”

“You repent, then?” said Génifrède. “Well you may! There are no more such, now you have killed him. You should have repented sooner: it is too late now.”

“I do not repent, Génifrède; but I mourn, my child.”

“There are no more such,” pursued she. “He was gallant.”

“He was.”

“He was all life: there was no deadness, no coldness—he was all life.”

“He was, my child.”

“And such a lover!” she continued, with something of a strange proud smile.

“He was a lover, Génifrède, who made your parents proud.”

“Such a soldier!” she dreamed on. “War was his sport, while I trembled at home. He had a soldier’s heart.”

Her father was silent; and she seemed to miss his voice, though she had not appeared conscious of his replies. She started, and sprang to her feet.

“You will go home now, Génifrède,” said her father. “With Madame Dessalines you will go. You will go to your mother and sister.”

“Home!” she exclaimed with loathing. “Yes, I must go home,” she said, hurriedly. “You love Pongaudin—you call it paradise. I wish you joy of it now! You have put an evil spirit into it. I wish you joy of your paradise!”

She disengaged herself from him as she spoke, and walked away. Thérèse, who had drawn back on seeing that she was in her father’s care, now intercepted her path, met her, and drew her arm within hers. Toussaint, who was following, retreated for a moment, to ease his agony by a brief prayer for his child, and for guidance and strength. Having acknowledged with humiliation that he found his mission well-nigh too hard for him, and imploring for the wounded in spirit the consolation which he would willingly purchase for his brother and his child by a life of woe for himself, he repaired to his chamber of audience; where, for the rest of the morning, he appeared wholly engrossed by the affairs of the citizens of Cap. The steadiness of his attention to business was felt by



his still agitated secretary as a rebuke to his own wandering thoughts.

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## Chapter Twenty Five.

### Perch of the Raven.

Euphrosyne's life in the convent was dull and weary. It would probably have been so anywhere, for some time after the old man's death: but elsewhere there would have been more to do and to amuse herself with. Every one was kind to her—too kind. She had been accustomed to the voice of chiding during all the years that she had lived with her grandfather; and she did not mind it. It would now have been something of a relief, something welcome and familiar, to have been called "child" and "little fool" at times, instead of being told at every turn that she was an angel and a love, and finding that she was every one's pet, from the abbess to old Raphael.

The kindness of the household had begun from the moment the poor girl appeared, after having been consoled by Father Gabriel, and visited by Pierre, and the guardian to whose care her grandfather had confided her person and her property. Pierre had engaged to see her daily till the furniture should have been sold, and the house shut up, and he himself about to embark for France, with the savings of his long service. Her guardian, Monsieur Critois, knew but little of young people, and how to talk to them. He had assured her that he mourned extremely the loss of his old acquaintance—the acquaintance of so many years—and so lost. He declared his desire of discharging his office of guardian so as to prove himself worthy of the trust, and his hope that he and his ward should be very good friends. At present, it was his wish that she should remain where she was; and he asked whether she did not find every one very kind to her. Euphrosyne could just say, "Yes;" but she was crying too much to be able to add, that she hoped she should not have to remain in the convent very long. Monsieur Critois saw that she was struggling to say something: but, after waiting a minute, he stroked her hair, promised to come again some day soon, hoped she would cheer up, had no doubt she would be very happy—and was gone, glad to have done with sobbing girls for this day.

When the gates had closed upon him, the petting began. The abbess decreed that Euphrosyne should have the sole charge of her mocking-bird. Sister Angélique, who made the prettiest artificial flowers in the world, invited her to her apartment at all reasonable hours, when she might have a curiosity to see to learn the process. Sister Célestine had invented a new kind of comfit which she begged Euphrosyne to try, leaving a paper of sweetmeats on her table for that purpose. Old Raphael had gained leave to clear a parterre in the garden which was to be wholly hers, and where he would rear such flowers as she particularly admired. Father Gabriel himself, after pointing out to her the uncertainty of life, the sudden surprises of death, and the care with which it becomes social beings to discharge their duties to each other, since they know not how soon they may be parted—the serious Father Gabriel himself recommended her to amuse herself, and to remember how her grandfather had liked to see her gay. She had, no doubt, been a good girl on the whole; and she could not now do better than continue the conduct which had pleased the departed in the days that were gone.

Petted people generally prove perverse; and so, in the opinion of the universal household, did Euphrosyne. There could be no doubt of her love for her grandfather. One need but see the sudden tears that sprang, twenty times in a day, when any remembrance of him was awakened. One need but watch her wistful looks cast up towards his balcony, whenever she was in the garden. Yet, when any one expressed indignation against his murderers, she was silent, or she ran away, or she protested against it. Such was the representation which sister Claire made to her reverend mother, on the first opportunity.

“I was not aware that it was exactly so,” replied the abbess. “It appears to me that she dislikes to hear any parties made answerable for the murder but those by whose hands it was actually done. She—”

The abbess stopped, and sister Claire started, at the sound of musketry.

“Another shot!” said the abbess. “It is a fearful execution. I should have been glad to have removed this poor child out of hearing of these shots; but I had no notice of what was to happen, till the streets were too full for her to appear in them.”

“A piece of L’Ouverture’s haste!” said sister Claire.

“A fresh instance, perhaps, of his wise speed,” observed the abbess. “Events seem to show that he understands the conduct of affairs better than you and I, my daughter.”

“Again! Hark! Oh, mercy!” cried sister Claire, as the sound of a prolonged volley reached them.

“Let us hope it is the last,” said the abbess, with changing colour. “Christ save their sinful souls!”

The door opened, and Euphrosyne entered, in excessive agitation.

“Madame,” she cried, gasping for breath, “do you hear that? Do you know what it is? They have shot General Moyse! Father Gabriel says so.—Oh no, no! L’Ouverture never would do anything so cruel.”

Sister Claire looked at the abbess.

“My daughter,” said the abbess, “L’Ouverture’s duty is to execute justice.”

“Oh, Génifrède! Poor, poor Génifrède! She will die too. I hope she is dead.”

“Hush, my child! Her life is in God’s hands.”

“Oh, how cruel! how cruel!” the girl went on, sobbing.

“What would L’Ouverture say,” interposed sister Claire, “if he knew that you, of all people, called him cruel? Have you to-day put on this?” she continued, calling Euphrosyne’s attention to her new mourning; “and do you call it cruel to execute justice on the rebels and their officers?”

“It is a natural and amiable grief in Euphrosyne,” said the abbess; “and if it is not quite reasonable, we can give her time to reflect. She is among friends, who will not report the words of her hours of sorrow.”

“You may—you may,” cried Euphrosyne. “You may tell the whole world that it is cruel to—to— They were to have been married so very soon!—

Afra wrote me all about it.”

The abbess repeated what she had said about L'Ouverture's office, and the requirements of justice.

“Justice! justice!” exclaimed Euphrosyne. “There has been no justice till now; and so the first act is nothing but cruelty.”

The abbess with a look dismissed sister Claire, who, by her report of Euphrosyne's rebellion against justice, sent in Father Gabriel.

“Euphrosyne thinks, father,” reported the abbess, “that these negroes, in consideration of their ignorance, and of their anger at having once been slaves, should be excused for whatever they may do now, in revenge.”

“I am surprised,” said Father Gabriel.

So was Euphrosyne when she heard her argument thus stated.

“I only mean,” said she, striving to subdue her sobs; “I only mean that I wish sister Claire, and sister Benoitte, and all of them, would not want me to be glad and revengeful.”

“Glad and revengeful!” repeated Father Gabriel. “That would be difficult.”

“It makes me very miserable—it can do no good now—it could not bring grandpapa to life again, if every negro in Limbé were shot,” she continued, as tears rained down her cheeks. “Dear grandpapa never wished any ill to anybody—he never did anybody any harm—”

The priest and the abbess exchanged glances.

“Why do you suppose these wretched blacks killed him, my dear?”

“I do not know why they rose, this one particular time. But I believe they have always risen because the whites have been proud and cruel; because the whites used to put them in chains, and whip them, and part mothers and children. After doing all this, and after bringing them up ignorant and without religion, we expect them to forgive everything that has passed, while we will not forgive them ourselves. But I will—I will

forgive them my share. For all that you religious people may say, I will forgive them: and I am not afraid of what grandpapa would think. I hope he is in a place now where there is no question about forgiving those who have injured us. The worst thing is, the thing that I cannot understand is, how L'Ouverture could do anything so cruel."

"I have a word to say to you, my dear," said the priest, with a sign to the abbess.

"Oh, father!" replied the abbess, in an imploring tone.

"We must bring her to a right view, reverend sister. Euphrosyne, if your grandfather had not been the kind master you suppose him—if he had been one of the cruel whites you spoke of just now, if his own slaves had always hated him, and—"

"Do stop!" said Euphrosyne, colouring crimson. "I cannot bear to hear you speak so, father."

"You must bear, my child, to listen to what it is good for you to hear. If he had been disliked by every black in the colony, and they had sought his life out of revenge, would you still be angry that justice was done, and ungrateful that he is avenged?"

"You talk of avenging—you, a Christian priest!" said Euphrosyne. "You talk of justice—you, who slander the dead!"

"Peace, my daughter," said the abbess, very gently. "Remember where you are, and whom you speak to."

"Remember where my grandfather is," cried Euphrosyne. "Remember that he is in his grave, and that I am left to speak for him. However," she said—and, in these few moments, a thousand confirmations of the priest's words had rushed upon her memory—a thousand tokens of the mutual fear and hatred of her grandfather and the black race, a thousand signs of his repugnance to visit Le Bosquet—"however," she resumed, in a milder tone, and with an anxious glance at Father Gabriel's face, "Father Gabriel only said 'if'—*if* all that he described had been so."

"True, my child," replied the abbess: "Father Gabriel only said 'if it had

been so.”

“And if it had,” exclaimed Euphrosyne, who did not wish to hear the father speak again at the moment—“if it had been so, it would have been wicked in the negroes to do that act in revenge; but it could never, never excuse us from forgiving them—from pitying them because they had been made cruel and revengeful. I am sure I wish they had all lived—that they might live many, many years, till they could forget those cruel old times, and, being old men themselves, might feel what it is to touch an old man’s life. This is the kind of punishment I wish them; and I am sure it would be enough.”

“It is indeed said,” observed the abbess, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

“And oh! poor Génifrède!” pursued Euphrosyne. “She no more wished ill to my parent than I do to hers; and her lover—it was not he that did it: and yet—Oh, Father Gabriel, are you sure that that firing—that last volley —”

“It was certainly the death stroke of Moyse. I perceive how it is, my child. I perceive that your friendships among this new race have blinded your eyes, so that you cannot see that these executions are, indeed, God’s avenging of the murder by which you are made a second time an orphan.”

“Do you think L’Overture right, then? I should be glad to believe that he was not cruel—dreadfully cruel.”

“There is no doubt of L’Overture’s being wise and right—of his having finally assured the most unwilling of the inhabitants of their security, and his stern justice. There is no doubt that L’Overture is right.”

“I could not have believed,” said the abbess, “that my daughter would have required a justification of anything done by L’Overture.”

“Nor I,” said Euphrosyne, sighing.

“Under him,” said Father Gabriel, “there is less crime in the colony than, I verily believe, in any other part of the empire. Under him have homes

become sacred, children are instructed, and brethren are taught to dwell together in unity.”

“As,” said the abbess, “when he stopped in his journey to greet an old negro of ninety-nine, and reconcile to him two who had offended out of his many children. L’Ouverture is never in so much haste but that he can pause to honour old ago: never too busy for works of mercy. If the peace-makers are blessed, so is he.”

“And where,” continued the father, “where are the poor? We can observe his continual admonition to works of mercy, by nursing the sick, and consoling the afflicted; but we have no longer any poor. By his wisdom, he has won over all to labour. The fields are thronged with labourers: the bays are crowded with ships: the store-houses are overflowing with food and merchandise: and there is a portion for all.”

“And it was the French,” said Euphrosyne, “who made this last commotion. If they had let L’Ouverture alone, how happy we might all have been! Now, Génifrède will never be happy again. If L’Ouverture could only have forgiven this once! But, father, I have no comfort—and never shall have comfort, as long as I think that men have been murdered for injuring us.”

“Pray for comfort, my child. In prayer you will find consolation.”

“I dare not pray, now this has happened. If they were but alive, how I would pray for them!”

“They are alive, my daughter, and where they much need your prayers. Pray for them, and your intercession may be heard.”

Euphrosyne saw that her feelings were not understood; and she said no more. She listened to all the teachings that were offered her, and reserved her doubts and troubles for Afra’s ear. Afra would tell her whether it could be right in such a Christian as L’Ouverture to render violence for violence. As for what the father and the abbess said about the effect of example, and the necessity and the benefit of assuring and conciliating the whites, by sacrificing negro offenders for their sakes, she dissented from it altogether. She had witnessed Toussaint’s power—the power with which his spirit of gentleness and forbearance endowed him;

and she believed that, if he would but try, he would find he could govern better by declaring always for the right and against the wrong, and leaving vengeance to God, than by the violent death of all the ignorant and violent men in the island. She would ask Afra. She was pretty sure Afra would think as she did: and, if so, the time might come—it made her breathless to think of it, but she could not help thinking of it every day—the time might come when she might ask Toussaint himself what he thought was exactly meant, in all cases, by forgiving our enemies; and particularly whether this did not extend to forgiving other people's enemies, and using no vengeance and no violence at all.

This idea of seeing Afra gained strength under all the circumstances of her present life. If Father Gabriel offered her comfort which was no comfort, or reproved her when she did not feel herself wrong; if the abbess praised her for anything she had not designed to be particularly right; if the sisters applauded sayings which she was conscious were not wise; if her heart ached for her grandfather's voice or countenance; if Monsieur Critois visited her, or Pierre did not; if her lesson in history was hard, or her piece of needle-work dull; if her flowers faded, or her bird sang so finely that she would have been proud for the world to hear it—the passion for seeing Afra was renewed. Afra would explain all she could not understand, would teach her what she wanted to know. Afra would blame her where she was aware she was wrong, instead of bidding her be quit of it with a few prayers, while laying much heavier stress upon something that she could cure much more easily. Afra wrote her a few letters, which were read by the abbess before they were delivered to her; and many more which Pierre slipped into her hand during their occasional interviews. She herself wrote such prodigiously long letters to Afra, that to read them through would have been too great an addition to the reverend mother's business. She glanced over the first page and the last; and, seeing that they contained criticisms on Alexander the Great, and pity for Socrates, and questions about flower-painting and embroidery, she skipped all that lay between.

It was not that Euphrosyne did not love and trust the abbess. She loved her so as to open to her all but the inner chambers of her heart; and she trusted her with all but other persons' concerns. The middle pages of her letters contained speculation chiefly: speculation, in the first place, on Afra's future destiny, names and events being shrouded under



mysterious expressions; and, in the second place, on points of morals, which might be referred to Monsieur Pascal, whose opinion was of great value. Euphrosyne had a strong persuasion, all the while, that she should one day tell her reverend mother the whole. She knew that she should not object to her seeing every line that Afra held of hers. Whatever was clandestine in the correspondence was for the sake of avoiding restraint, and not because she was ashamed of any of her thoughts.

One morning the abbess found her in the garden, listlessly watching the hues of a bright lizard, as it lay panting in the sun. The abbess put her arm round her waist, while stooping to look.

“How it glitters!” said she. “It is a pretty piece of God’s handiwork: but we must leave it now, my dear. This sun is too hot for you. Your chamber, or sister Claire’s room, is the fittest place for you at this hour. You find your chamber cool?”

“Yes, madam.”

“The new ventilator works well?”

“Yes, madam.”

“You find—this way, my dear—this alley is the most shady—you find your little bed comfortable?”

“Yes, madam.”

“And your toilet-cover—sister Marie’s work—is, I think, extremely pretty: and the book-shelf that Father Gabriel gave you very convenient. Your friends here, my dear, are fond of you. They are anxious to make you happy.”

“They are all very kind to me, madam.”

“I am glad you are sensible of it. You are not of an ungrateful nature, we all know.”

“I hope not: but, madam, I cannot stay here always.”

“I was going to say, my dear, that we have not done everything in our power for you yet. We must not forget that we grave women must be dull companions for a girl like you.”

“It is not that, reverend mother. But I cannot stay here always.”

“You will find it a very different thing when you have a companion of your own age, which I hope will be the case very soon. There is a negotiation on foot respecting a sweet girl, every way worthy of being your companion—”

“But, madam, I do not want that—I do not wish for any companion while I am here. I had much rather be alone; but—”

“But you would like to leave us—eh? You would like to be on a plantation, where you could amuse yourself with playing with the little negroes, and driving about the country, and visiting your neighbours two or three times a week?”

Euphrosyne smiled, and plucked a twig to play with.

“You would like,” continued the abbess, “to live with accomplished people—to have a fine library, to lie on a couch and read during the hot hours; and to sing gay songs in the piazza in the evening.”

Euphrosyne smiled again.

“You would like,” the abbess went on, “to dance, night after night, and to make pic-nic parties to the cacao walks, and to the shore. You would like to win over your guardian to let you have your own way in everything: and, to be sure, in comparison with his house, our convent—”

“My guardian!” exclaimed Euphrosyne. “Live at Monsieur Critois’! Oh no!” And she laughed as she went on—

“He would be telling me every day that we should be very good friends. He would be saying all day long that it was his desire fully to discharge his duty to me. I can hardly help shaking off his hand now, when he strokes my hair: and, if it came to his doing it every morning, we should certainly quarrel. They say Madame Critois never speaks; so I suppose

she admires his conversation too much to interrupt it. There she and I should never agree.—Live at my guardian's! Oh no!"

"You were thinking of some other house while I was describing your guardian's, my dear. What were you thinking of? Where would you live?"

Euphrosyne plucked another twig, having pulled the first to pieces. She smiled again, blushed, and said she would tell her reverend mother very soon what home she was thinking of: she could not tell to-day; but in a little while—

"In the meantime," said the abbess, with a scrutinising gaze,—“in the meantime, I conclude Father Gabriel knows all that is in your mind.”

"You will know in good time what I am thinking of, madam: everybody will know."

The abbess was troubled.

"This is beginning early," she said, as if thinking aloud; "this is beginning early with the mysteries and entanglements of life and the world! How wonderful it is to look on, to be a witness of these things for two or three successive generations! How every young creature thinks her case something wholly new—the emotions of her awakened heart something that God never before witnessed, and that man never conceived of! After all that has been written about love, upon the cavern walls of Hindoo temples, and in the hieroglyphics of old Egypt, and printed over all the mountains and valleys of the world by that deluge which was sent to quench unhallowed love, every young girl believes in her day that something unheard-of has happened when the dream has fallen upon her. My dear child, listen to one who knows more of life than you do—to one who would have you happy, not only in the next world, but in this."

"Thank you, reverend mother."

"Love is holy and blessed, my dear, when it comes in its due season—when it enters into a mind disciplined for new duties, and a heart waiting for new affections. In one who has no mother to help and comfort—"

"No mother, it is true," said Euphrosyne.

“The mother is the parent naturally most missed,” said the abbess, supposing she was reading her pupil’s mind. “Where there is no mother by a young girl’s side, and no brothers and sisters to serve, the fancy and the heart are apt to fix prematurely on some object—too likely, in that case, to be one which will deceive and fail. But, my dear, such a young girl owes duty to herself, if God has seen fit to make her solitary in the world.”

“One cannot say solitary,” interposed Euphrosyne, “or without duties.”

“You are right, my love. No one is, indeed, solitary in life, (blessed be God!) nor without duties. As I was going to say, such a young girl’s business is to apply herself diligently to her education, during the years usually devoted to instruction. This is the work appointed to her youth. If, while her mind is yet ignorant, her judgment inexperienced, and her tastes actually unformed, she indulges any affection or fancy which makes her studies tedious, her companions dull, and her mind and spirits listless, she has fallen into a fearful snare.”

“How long then would you have a girl’s education go on? And if her lover be very particularly wise and learned, do not you think she may learn more from him than in any other way? And if she be not dull and listless, but very happy—”

“Every girl,” interrupted the abbess, with a grave smile, “thinks her lover the wisest man in the world: and no girl in love would exchange her dreams for the gayest activity of the fancy-free.”

“Well, but, as to the age,” persisted Euphrosyne; “how soon—”

“That depends upon circumstances, my dear. But in all cases, I consider sixteen too early.”

“Sixteen! Yes. But nineteen—or, one may say, twenty. Twenty, next month but one.”

“My dear,” said the abbess, stopping short, “you do not mean to say—”

“Indeed, madam,” said Euphrosyne, very earnestly, “Afra will be twenty in two months. I know her ago to a day, and—”

“And you have been speaking of Mademoiselle Raymond all this time! Well, well—”

“And you were thinking of me, I do believe. Oh, madam, how could you! Why, I never saw anybody.”

“I was wondering how it could be,” said the abbess, striving to conceal her amusement and satisfaction. “I was surprised that you should have seen any one yet; and I was going to give you a lecture about half-confidences with Father Gabriel.”

“And I could not conceive what Father Gabriel had to do with Afra’s affairs, or how you came to know anything about it. I have let it out now, however; and I do not know what Afra will say.”

“You have not told me who the gentleman is, you know; so there is not much harm done. No, do not tell me, my dear, till Mademoiselle Raymond desires it.”

“Oh, I may as well, now you know so much. I dare say Afra would have no objection; particularly as you will then understand what I meant about living somewhere else. When you talked of a fine library,” she continued, laughing, “how could I suppose you were thinking of any in the colony but Monsieur Pascal’s?”

“So he is the gentleman,” said the abbess. “How times are changed! A lady of colour may be Madame Pascal now, without reproach.”

“I am glad it is out,” said Euphrosyne, gaily. “I can speak now to somebody about Afra. Oh, madam, you do not know, you cannot imagine, how they love one another.”

“Cannot I?”—and the abbess sighed.

“And I may look forward to living with them. They say I may, madam. They say I must. And surely my guardian will have no objection. Do you think he can, madam?”

“Indeed I do not know. I am acquainted with the parties only by hearsay. Report speaks highly of Monsieur Pascal. Some persons at Paris, and

some formerly in office here, are surprised at his unqualified adherence to the Overture system; but I never heard anything worse of him than that.”

“And that is nothing but good, as any one would say who really knew all those dear people. L’Overture and Monsieur Pascal are almost like father and son. Afra says—”

“My dear,” interposed the abbess, “you wondered how I knew of this affair. You must allow me to wonder how you have gained all this intelligence. Mademoiselle Raymond must have crossed her letters with sympathetic inks, which the warmth of your friendship brought out; for not a syllable of what you have told me have her letters conveyed to me.”

The abbess did not mean to press for an answer; so indulgent was she made by the complacency of discovering that her charge was not entangled in a love affair. While Euphrosyne was blushing, and hunting for a reply which should be true and yet guarded, she was relieved by the rapid approach of sister Benoitte.

“Something is amiss,” said the abbess, assuming the look of calmness with which she was wont to await bad news. “What has happened to alarm you, my daughter?”

“There is a message, reverend mother,” said the breathless nun, “from Madame Ogé. She invites herself to our evening repast. If you cannot receive her to-day, she will come to-morrow.”

“She shall be welcome,” said the abbess; without, however, much of the spirit of welcome in her tone.

“So this is our calamity!” said Euphrosyne, laughing.

“There is calamity at hand, assuredly,” sighed sister Benoitte. “Nay, nay, my daughter. This is superstition,” said the abbess.

“Whatever it be, reverend mother, do we not all, does not every one quake when Madame Ogé comes abroad?”

“It is but seldom that she does,” said the abbess, “and it is our part to

make her welcome.”

“But seldom, indeed, reverend mother. When all goes well—when the crops are fine, and the island all at peace, no one hears of Madame Ogé. She keeps within her coffee-groves—”

“Mourning her sons,” interposed the abbess. “But,” continued the nun, “when any disaster is about to happen, we have notice of it by Madame Ogé coming abroad. She came to this very house the first day of the meeting of the deputies, in that terrible August of ninety-one. She came a day or two before the rising against Hédouville. She came the night before the great hurricane of ninety-seven—”

“That was an accident,” said the abbess, smiling. “Then you think it is not by accident that she always comes out before misfortunes happen?” asked Euphrosyne, trembling as she spoke.

“By no means, my dear. It is easily explained. Madame Ogé looks upon her sons as martyrs in the cause of the mulattoes. When all goes well, as all has done, under L’Ouverture’s rule, with only a few occasional troubles—fewer and slighter than might have been expected during such a change in society as we have witnessed—when all goes well, Madame Ogé feels that her sons are forgotten; and, as my daughter Benoitte says, she mourns them alone in the shades of her coffee-groves. She seems, however, to have means of information which persons less interested have not: and when she has reason to believe that troubles will ensue, she hopes that the names of her sons will once more be a watchword, for the humiliation of both blacks and whites; and she comes forth with her hungry maternal heart, and her quick maternal ear, to catch the first echo of the names which are for ever mingled with her prayers.”

“Can she mingle those names with her prayers, and yet not forgive?”

“My child, is it not so with us all? Do we not pray for our enemies, and ask to be forgiven as we forgive, and come out from our closets with ears open to the fresh slanders of the day, and hearts ready to burn at the thought of old injuries? It might be well for us, if we had the excuse of this wretched woman, whose woes have been such as might naturally have shaken her reason, and prostrated her will. If there be any above others

with whom God will be long suffering, it is with the mother whose children have been torn from her arms to be tortured and destroyed, and their very names made a term of reproach.”

“You think something is going to happen?”

“As my daughter Benoite says, on one occasion there was a hurricane. To-morrow the sun may rise, or there may be a cloud in the sky.”

“Nay, but—” said sister Benoite.

“Nay, but,” said the abbess, smiling, “I will have nothing said which shall make Euphrosyne look upon my guest as a sorceress, or as the instrument of any evil one. I wish all my daughters to meet Madame Ogé with cheerfulness. It is the best I have to offer her,—the cheerfulness of my family; and that of which she has least at home. You hear, Euphrosyne?”

“Madam, you do not mean that I am to see her. Indeed I cannot,—indeed I dare not. It is no disrespect—quite the contrary. But I could not hold up my head before one who—”

“Poor Madame Ogé, if all said so!” exclaimed the abbess.

“That is true,” said Euphrosyne. “I will be there: but, dear mother, do not speak particularly to me. Do not draw her attention upon me.”

“I will not, my dear.”

“Do you think she will speak angrily of the Ouvertures? I hope she will say nothing about poor General Moyse.”

“You must hear what she says, be it what it may.”

“True. And it is only for one evening. But I wish it was over. I shall be glad when to-morrow morning is come, and I shall be in this alley again.”

“Meantime, my dear, you have been long enough here for this morning. Let us go in.”



The prospect of any guest was in itself acceptable to the sisterhood. It gave them something to do, and afforded one day of variety. The abbess's parlour and the refectory had to be adorned with fresh flowers. Napkins, of the workmanship of one sister, were laid beside the plates; and on the table were fruits gathered by another, sweetmeats made by a third, and chocolate prepared by the careful hands of a fourth. Even the abbess's veil looked whiter, and more exactly put on than usual. Everything within the walls was in its nicest order some time before Madame Ogé's carriage drew up before the gate.

Two or three of the sisters and Euphrosyne were with the abbess in her parlour, when Madame Ogé entered. Euphrosyne had permission to bring in her work; so that she could sit plying her needle, and listening to what went on, without many nervous feelings about being observed by a person whom she could become acquainted with only by stealing glances at her face.

That face, she thought, must in its youth have had much of the beauty common among mulattoes, if not natural to them, in a favourable climate, it was now deeply impressed with sorrow. Every line, every feature, told of sorrow. There was no other painful expression in it. There was great solemnity, but stillness rather than passion;—nothing which warranted, in itself, the superstitious fears which the sisters had of the unhappy lady. She was handsomely dressed, and her manner was quiet.

The conversation turned first upon the state of the coffee and sugar crops, about which little could be said, because the prospect of every kind of produce was excellent. So much regard was everywhere paid to the processes of cultivation; and the practice of ten years, under the vigilant eye of Toussaint and his agents, had so improved the methods of tillage and the habits of the cultivators, that the bounties of the soil and climate were improved instead of being intercepted. Every year, since the revolution, the harvests had been richer; and this was the crowning year.

“Yes,” said Madame Ogé: “we have heard a great deal of all that; and I fancy we have nearly heard the last of it.”

“There must, indeed,” replied the abbess, “be some limit to the fruitfulness of the soil, and to the industry of those who till it: and it does

seem as if the earth could yield no more than it is bringing forth this year.”

“Father Gabriel says,” observed sister Claire, “that in his journeys he could almost believe that the fields sing, and the hills rejoice with music, as the Scripture says—the cultivators are so hidden among the corn and the canes, and the groves and the vines, that their songs really seem to come out of the ground.”

“It is in the woods,” added sister Benoitte, “as if the very trees shouted—”

She stopped abruptly before the name L’Ouverture, remembering that it would not be acceptable to all the present company.

“I have no doubt,” said Madame Ogé, “that all the monkeys and parrots are taught to shout L’Ouverture. Like his people, they are quick at learning that much. But I imagine there will be something else for Toussaint to do presently, than teaching the birds of the woods to praise him.”

As no one asked what was likely to happen, she reserved for the present the news they trembled to hear; and went on—

“It is grievous to see so good a negro as Toussaint lost and spoiled. I knew him of old, when he was at Breda: and many a time has Monsieur Bayou told me that he was the most faithful, decent, clever, well-mannered negro on the estate.”

“I believe he preserves those qualities still,” observed the abbess, reproving with a glance the laugh which was rising at this description of the Commander-in-chief.

“If those had been masters who ought to have been masters,” pursued Madame Ogé, “Toussaint would, no doubt, have been placed at the head of the negroes: for we knew him well—I and they whom I have lost. Then, without insubordination,—without any being lifted out of their proper places, to put down others—we should have had a vast improvement in the negroes. Toussaint would have been made their model, and perhaps would have been rewarded with his freedom, some day or other, for an example. This would have satisfied all the ambition he had by nature. He would have died a free man, and perhaps have emancipated his family.

As it is, they will all die slaves: and they will feel it all the harder for the farce of greatness they have been playing these ten years. I am very sorry for them: and I always was; for I foresaw from the beginning how it would end.”

“Do you really imagine that any one thinks of enslaving this wonderful man again? And what should make him submit to it?”

“He would sooner lay a train to the root of Cibao, and blow up the island,” exclaimed Euphrosyne.

“Are you one of his party, young lady? You look too much as if you were but just landed from France for me to suppose that I was speaking before a friend of L’Ouverture’s. If you really are lately from France, you may know that there is a greater than our poor Toussaint, to whom he must yield at command.”

“I have never been at Paris, madame; and I do not believe that there is a greater than L’Ouverture, there, or anywhere else.”

“You have been a happy child, I see: you have lived so retired from our miserable world as not to have heard of Bonaparte. It was by Bonaparte, my dear, for Bonaparte’s convenience, and (it is my idea) for his amusement, that Toussaint was made what he is, and allowed to gallop about with his trumpeters behind him, for so long. You look as if you did not believe me, my dear. Well: time will show.”

“I thought,” said Euphrosyne, “that Toussaint was the First of the Blacks before Bonaparte was the First of the Whites. I have no doubt, however, that it has been very convenient to Bonaparte, and very surprising to him and everybody, that the colony has been so perfectly well governed by one from whom they could have expected nothing. I hope Bonaparte will be too wise and too grateful to injure him, or even to hurt his feelings; and I feel very sure that Bonaparte is not strong enough, with all the world to help him, to make L’Ouverture and his family slaves again.”

“We shall see. Even I may live to see it; and I have no doubt you will. Bonaparte is going to try; and, if he cannot, as you say, do it by himself, he may now persuade all the world to help him: for he is making peace on all hands.”

“You have that news from France?” inquired the abbess.

“I have it from a sure quarter—never mind how. It will soon be generally known that the preliminaries of peace between France and England are signed: and I happen to know two things more: that Bonaparte has agreed to maintain negro slavery in Martinique, Guadaloupe, and Cayenne: and that—(pray listen, young lady)—he declares to the English that he can do what he pleases in Saint Domingo. I wish he could see that angry blush. Pray look at her, Madame! I see she thinks Bonaparte a very impertinent fellow.”

“I do,” replied Euphrosyne; “and I hope he will know better, and feel better, before he is L’Ouverture’s ago.”

“Ha! he ought to know what disloyal little hearts there are beating against him in this Saint Domingo that he thinks all his own.”

“Perhaps,” observed the abbess, “he used these words when he was not speaking of slavery; but rather from being aware of the loyalty of the Ouverture family; which is, I believe, exemplary.”

“It is,” declared Euphrosyne, looking up with glowing eyes. “He has not only served, but worshipped Bonaparte, all the years that they have both ruled. In his own family, Monsieur Pascal says—”

“What is Monsieur Pascal to do under the changes that are coming?” interrupted Madame Ogé. “He has placed himself in a difficulty, it seems to me. Will he go under the yoke with his father-in-law? (for I suppose, in his devotion, he will be marrying one of Toussaint’s daughters). Will he take the hoe, and go into the field—? You are smiling, my dear young lady.”

Euphrosyne was indeed smiling. She could not but hope that, as Madame Ogé was so ill-informed about the affairs of Monsieur Pascal, and of the Raymonds, who were of her own colour, she might be mistaken about the whole of her news.

“You are smiling,” repeated Madame Ogé. “Though you stoop your head over your work, I see that you have some droll thought.”

“It would be strange, certainly,” replied Euphrosyne, “to see the philosophical Monsieur Pascal hoeing canes, or working at the mill. Yet I believe we may be certain that he will be a slave as soon as Toussaint, or any negro in Saint Domingo.”

“Young people like to be positive,” said Madame Ogé to the abbess. “But it does not much matter, as they have life before them; time enough to see what is true, and what is not. Is it your doctrine, my dear young lady, that God has given over His wrath towards this island; and that it is to be happy henceforth, with the negroes for masters?”

“With the negroes for equals, I think it may be happy. But I never thought of God being wrathful towards us. I thought our miseries had arisen out of men’s wrath with each other.”

“If ever,” said Madame Ogé, in a low tone, but yet so that every word was heard—“if ever there was a place set apart by cursing—if ever there was a hell upon this earth, it is this island. Men can tell us where paradise was—it was not here, whatever Columbus might say. The real paradise where the angels of God kept watch, and let no evil thing enter, was on the other side of the globe: and I say that this place was meant for a hell, as that was for a heaven, upon earth. It looked like heaven to those who first came: but that was the devil’s snare. It was to make lust sweeter, and cruelty safer, that he adorned the place as he did. In a little while, it appeared like what it was. The innocent natives were corrupted; the defenceless were killed; the strong were made slaves. The plains were laid waste, and the valleys and woods were rifled. The very bees ceased to store their honey: and among the wild game there was found no young. Then came the sea-robbers, and haunted the shores: and many a dying wretch screamed at night among the caverns—many a murdered corpse lies buried in our sands. Then the negroes were brought in from over the sea; and from among their chains, from under the lash, grew up the hatred of races. The whites hated the mulattoes, and despised the blacks. The mulattoes hated both the whites and the blacks; and—”

“And,” interposed Euphrosyne, courageously, “the blacks hated neither. They loved where they could; and where they could not love, they forgave; and there lies the proof that this island is not hell.”

“You have proved nothing, my dear, but that you do not know what has happened, even since you were born. Any white will tell you what the negroes did, so late as the year ninety-one—how they killed their masters by inches—how they murdered infants—how they carried off ladies into the woods—”

A sign from the abbess availed to stop Madame Ogé, even in the midst of a subject on which none usually dared to interrupt her. Euphrosyne, in some agitation, replied, “I am aware of all that you say: but every one allows that the most ignorant and cruel of the negroes did over again exactly what they had seen the whites do to their race. But these revengeful blacks were few, very few, in comparison with the numbers who spared their masters, helped and comforted them, and are now working on their estates—friends with all who will be friends with them. The place is not hell where thousands of men forgot the insults of a lifetime, and bind up the wounds of their oppressors.”

“I cannot doubt,” said the abbess, “that ever since there was a Christian in the island, there have been angels of God at hand, to sanctify the evil which they were not commissioned to prevent. Violence is open to the day. Patience is hidden in the heart. Revenge has shouted his battle-cry at noon, while Forgiveness breathes her lowly prayer at midnight. Spirits from hell may have raged along our high roads; but I trust that in the fiercest times, the very temper of Christ may have dwelt in a thousand homes, in a thousand nooks of our valleys and our woods.”

“Besides,” sister Benoitte ventured to say, “our worst troubles were so long ago! For ten years now we have been under the holy rule of a devout man; and, for the most part, at peace.”

“Peace!” exclaimed Madame Ogé, contemptuously.

“There have been disputes among the rulers, as Father Gabriel says there are among all the rulers in the world; but he says (and no one knows better than Father Gabriel) that the body of the people have not been troubled by these disputes, and are not even aware of them.”

“Does not Father Gabriel tell you that ten years are but a day in heaven and hell? Yes, in hell—they may be long for suffering; but they are short

for revenge. The cruel master, who saw one slave faint under the lash, and let another die in the stocks, and tore the husband from the wife, and the child from the mother, might escape for the time with the destruction of his family, punished for his sake:—he might live safely in the midst of the city, for the ten years you speak of; but, let him venture out for a single day—let him but drive to his own estate and back again, and grey as his head is, he is shot in his own carriage, as soon as it is dark.”

Before the abbess could anticipate what was coming, the words were out. Before she could make a sign, Euphrosyne had rushed from the room.

It was not long before the abbess entered the chamber of her charge. She found her stretched on the bed, not weeping, but shuddering with horror.

“My daughter,” said she, “I grieve that this trial should have come upon you already. If one could have foreseen—”

“But, madam, is it true? She meant *him*, I know. Tell me faithfully, is it true?”

“It is, my daughter.”

“What, all? Every one of those things?”

“All true. Perhaps it is well that you should know it, that the departed may have the benefit of your prayers. But how differently would I have had you told!”

“Never mind that! Whatever is true, I can and will bear. I will pray for him, madam, day and night—as long as I live will I pray for him: for he was to me—Oh, madam, how he loved me! I will make reparation for him; the reparation that he would make if he could. I will find out who were the poor creatures—I will make them happy for as long as they live, for his sake. You will help me, madam?”

“I will. It is a pious intention.”

“I owe him all that I can do. I ask one favour of you, madam. Let no one

“speak to me about him—never again. No one can understand what he was to me—what care he took of me—how he used to love me. Oh, madam, is it quite certain—are you quite sure that those things are true?”

“My child, do not give me the pain of explaining more. As you say, let this never again be spoken of.—I propose to you, Euphrosyne, to make a virtuous effort.”

“Not to come down this evening, madam?”

“Yes, my child, to come down this evening. I think it of importance that Madame Ogé should not discover how she has wounded you, and that nothing should occur to fix her attention on the descendant of one who was active in procuring the death of her sons. Trust me, my dear, it is worth an effort to prevent Madame Ogé leaving this house your enemy.”

“I do not care for it, madam. Let her hate me. She is quite welcome.”

“You are thinking only of yourself, Euphrosyne. I am thinking also of her. Consider how sore a heart she carries within her. Consider how wretched her life has been made by the enmities in which she has lived. Will you not save her one more? You have professed to pity her. Now you can show if your pity is real, by saving her from a new enmity.”

“I am willing to do that: but how can I speak to her? How can we know what things she may say?”

“You shall not converse with her again. The table is spread. Go down now, and take your place at the foot, beside sister Claire. When we rise from table, I will dismiss you to your room as in course.”

“I wish that time was come,” sighed Euphrosyne, as she languidly arranged her hair.

The abbess stroked her pale cheek, as she said that in an hour she would be glad the effort was made.

“You can spend the evening in writing to your friend,” said she; “and if you think proper to tell her that I know her secret, you may assure her of my blessing and my prayers. They are due to one who loves my dear



charge as she does.”

Euphrosyne’s cheeks were now no longer pale.

“And may I tell her, madam, what Madame Ogé has been declaring about Bonaparte and his threats?”

“It will be needless, my dear. If there be any truth in the matter, Monsieur Pascal, doubtless, knows more than Madame Ogé.”

“In that case there can be no harm in mentioning it.”

Still the abbess thought it would be safer to say nothing about it; and Euphrosyne gave up the point for to-night, remembering that she could perhaps send a private despatch afterwards by the hands of Pierre.

During the meal, while the length of the table was between them, Euphrosyne nearly escaped the notice of Madame Ogé. When it was over, and the sisters rose, while the guest and the abbess passed out to the parlour, the abbess stopped at Euphrosyne, kissed her forehead, and commended her to her studies. Madame Ogé stopped too, and put in an intercession that the young lady might be excused studying this evening, and permitted to return to her pretty fancy-work in the parlour. The colour rushed to Euphrosyne’s temples—a sign of ardent hope of a holiday in Madame Ogé’s eyes. She therefore thought the abbess grievously strict when she replied that her charge would prefer spending the evening in her own chamber.

“As you please,” said Madame Ogé. “It was my wish to do the child a kindness; and perhaps to have the pleasure myself of seeing a young face for an hour or two—the rarest of all sights to me. I seldom go out; and when I do, all the young and cheerful faces seem to have hidden themselves.”

The abbess regulated her invitations for the evening by this speech. Sisters Debora and Marie, one the youngest, and the other the merriest of the family, were requested to bring their work-bags, and join the party in the parlour.

“Good evening, young lady,” said Madame Ogé to Euphrosyne, holding

out her hand. "I hoped to have procured you a little freedom, and to have had *more* conversation about your hero; but—"

"If there are to be great changes in the colony," observed the abbess—"it may yet be in your power, madam, to show kindness to my charge."

"If so, command me, my dear. But it is more likely that the changes to come will have the opposite effect. Then pretty young white ladies may have all their own way; while the storm will burst again on the heads of the dark people."

"If so, command me, madam," Euphrosyne exerted herself to say. The abbess's smile made her eyes fill with tears, almost before she had spoken.

"Are your eyes wet for me, my dear?" said Madame Ogé, with surprise. "Let the storm burst upon me; for I am shattered and stricken already, and nothing can hurt me. But I shall remember your offer. Meantime, you may depend upon it, the news I told you is true—the times I warned you of are coming."

"What news? what warning?" eagerly asked the sisters of Euphrosyne, as soon as the guest was out of hearing.

"That there were hurricanes last November, and there will be more the next," replied she, escaping to her chamber. Before she slept, she had written all her news and all her thoughts to Afra, leaving it for decision in the morning, whether she should send entire what she had written.



## Chapter Twenty Six.

### The Herald Abroad.

Madame Ogé's news was too true. Monsieur Pascal had held many an anxious conversation with L'Ouverture on the subject, before Afra showed him her little friend's letter. In a short time an additional fact became known—that Bonaparte had re-established the slave-trade. His enmity to the race of blacks was now open and declared.

The first intimation which the colony at large had of what had happened, was through the altered demeanour of their chief. From the first bright day of the prolific, gorgeous summer, to that in which the season merged in a fierce autumnal storm, L'Ouverture had been seen to be not less calm and quiet than usual, but depressed and sad. Some ascribed his gloom to the transaction at Cap, and the misery it must needs have introduced into his home. Others, who saw how much the colony had gained in confidence, and Toussaint's government in strength by that act, looked for a different cause. Some reminded each other that, while no man was more energetic in the hour of proof than their chief, his spirits were wont to droop when others were elated. It seemed as if some boding ghost whispered evil to him most peremptorily when the harvests were ripest before his eyes, when the laugh and the song were loudest in his ear, and when no one dreamed that the bright days of the colony would ever more be overclouded.

It was even so. When Toussaint saw that his race was in peace, it filled him with grief that this peace was not likely to last. When he saw what the true African soul was, when cleansed from blood and anger, and permitted to grow in freedom and in harmony, it was torture to know (as he did too well) that new injuries were preparing for it—that it was certain to be again steeped in passion and slaughter, and all that was savage in it excited afresh. This, even more than the death of Moyse, cast gloom round his soul, during the last of the series of bright and prosperous summers that were to pass under his eye. When autumn came, it might have made him wonder, if he had had leisure to consider himself, to find how his spirits rose, and his heart grew light, exactly when dismay and

dread began to overcloud every face about him, but when he saw that suspense and struggle were coming to an end. He perceived perplexity in the countenance of his friend Pascal, even in the presence of his bride. He met sorrow in the mild eyes of Henri; he heard that exultation in the voice of Jacques which always struck like discord upon his ear. He observed that in the bearing of Madame Dessalines which carried back his memory ten years into her past history. He saw Aimée tremble at the approach of any one who might bring news from France; and he heard Margot weeping at her prayers, as she implored of Heaven the safe return of her sons. Yet all this caused to his sympathising heart scarcely a pang; so clear was his path now, so distinct was the issue to which his duty, and the fate of his race was brought.

“Here it ends then,” said he, one day at the council-table, rising as bespoke. “Here ends all possibility of compromise. For the blacks, it is slavery or self-defence. It is so, Monsieur Pascal.”

“It is. The terms of the new peace are proclaimed.”

“And the fact substantiated that Bonaparte has declared that he will do what he pleases with Saint Domingo.”

“Such were certainly his words.”

“Who is surprised?” inquired Dessalines. “I forewarned you of this, long ago: and I said, at the same time, that, if we waited for aggression, we might find it too late for defence.”

“Not a word of fear, Jacques. Our victory is as sure as the justice of Heaven.”

“Perhaps so; but it would have been easier if you had not been training your people, all these years, to love and cherish those whom they are now going to resist.”

“I see and admit our difficulty, Jacques. But if I had governed as you would have had me, we should have been in a worse. I should then have been the chief of a race of savages, instead of soldiers and citizens. If we had been extirpating the whites all this time, we should now have been destroying each other, instead of preparing to go forth to a righteous war.”

“True. Most true,” declared Henri. “We may suffer for a time, and fight with the more difficulty, from our habits of observance towards those whom we must now oppose; but God will not allow the spirit of forgiveness and love to be finally a snare.”

“Never,” said Toussaint. “He has appointed fierce passions for a yoke, and mild affections for freedom. Though Bonaparte betrays and oppresses, the Gospel stands.—It is now time for proclaiming the war throughout the colony.”

“I will prepare the proclamation this night,” said Monsieur Pascal.

“If you will, my friend,” said Toussaint. “But I intend to be my own proclamation. To-morrow morning I set forth for Saint Domingo, to visit my brother in his city. I shall examine every fort, and call together the militia, as I go. The trip would be more effective if I could have my council about me.”

“I will go with you,” said Henri.

“And I,” exclaimed Jacques.

“And I?” said Raymond, inquiringly.

“No, Raymond; stay at Port-au-Prince, to report my proceedings to the legislature. And you, Monsieur Pascal, remain here to receive the despatches which may arrive from France. My brethren-in-arms of the council will be with me. When we have satisfied ourselves, we will let you know whether or not those who would have loved and served France for ever as a guardian angel, can cast her off when she becomes an incubus.”

It was a time of high excitement—that in which L’Ouverture, attended by four of his generals, and a train of inferior officers, traversed the island, to communicate or confirm the intelligence that an expedition was believed to be setting sail from France, for the purpose of wresting from the blacks the freedom which was theirs by the law of the land. Toussaint found, not only that all hearts were ready for the assertion of freedom, but that all eyes were so fixed upon him, all ears so open to his lightest word, that there was every probability of his purposes being fully understood and

completely executed. At a word from him, the inhabitants of Cap Français and Port-au-Prince began to remove their property into the fastnesses of the interior, and to prepare to burn those towns at the moment of the French attempting to land. It was useless to think of preventing a landing, so exposed was the greater part of the coast. The more rational hope was so to distress the foe on shore as to make them glad to go on board their ships again. Equally satisfactory was the disposition of the interior. The municipal bodies throughout the colony, previously brought under one system, now acted in concert. Their means of communication had been improved, so that each settlement was no longer like an encampment in the wilderness: on the contrary, every order given by L'Ouverture seemed to have been echoed by the mountain-tops around, so promptly was it transmitted, and so continually did he find his commands anticipated. As he went, his four generals parted off, to examine the forts on either hand, and to inspect and animate the militia. Everywhere the same story was told, and everywhere was it received with the same eagerness and docility. "The French are coming to make slaves of us again; but there shall never more be a slave in Saint Domingo. They are coming; but they are our countrymen till they have struck the first blow. We will demand of them an account of our brethren in Cayenne, in Guadaloupe, and in Martinique. We will ask of them concerning our brethren on the coasts of Africa. If, in return, they throw us chains and the whip, we shall know how to answer. But not a blow must be struck till they have shown whether they are brethren or foes. Our dark skin is no disgrace; but the first drop of a brother's blood dyes us all in infamy. Let the infamy be theirs who assault us. At this moment our first duty is to our white brethren of this island; in this time of our high excitement, they are full of grief; they are guiltless of this attack upon our liberty; they are as willing as we to live and die under the rule of L'Ouverture: and under the special protection of L'Ouverture, they shall, if they please, live and die. Beware of imputing to them the sins of their colour; protect them from your hearts—defend them with your lives. In the hour of danger, as you invoke the blessing of Heaven, save first the Creole whites, and next your wives and your children."

Such were the exhortations spoken everywhere by Christophe, La Plume, and Clerveaux. It could not be expected of Dessalines that he should deliver the last clauses with perfect fidelity. The solemnity of the hour had, however its tranquillising effect, even upon his ruling passion.

Even his heart, which usually turned to stone at the sight of a white, was moved by the visible distress of the proprietors of that race, who were, with scarcely an exception, in despair. In private, they execrated the spirit and conduct of their former neighbours, now in Paris, whose representations were the chief cause of the expedition now projected. Instead of remaining or returning, to ascertain the real state of things in Saint Domingo—instead of respecting the interests and wishes of those who were entirely satisfied under the government of L'Ouverture, they had prejudiced the mind of the First Consul, and induced him to bring back the ruin and woe which had passed away. The ladies wept and trembled within their houses; their fathers, husbands, and brothers flocked to every point where L'Ouverture halted, to assure him of their good-will to his government, and to remind him of the difficulty and danger of the position in which they were placed. These last carried some comfort home with them. All who had seen Toussaint's face had met there the gaze of a brother. If there were two or three who went with doubtful minds, prepared to exult at the depression of the blacks, but thinking it well to bespeak protection, in case of the struggle ending the wrong way—if there was a sprinkling of such among the throng of whites who joined the cavalcade from the cross-roads, they shrunk away abashed before the open countenance of the Deliverer, and stole homewards to wait the guidance of events.

If it had not been that the city of Saint Domingo was at the end of this march, Toussaint would have traversed the colony with a higher spirit and a lighter heart than during any of his serener days of power; but the city of his brother's government was before him, and, at its gate, Paul, whom he had not met since the death of Moyse. He had not been forgetful of his sorrowing brother; he had immediately sent to him Father Laxabon—the best consoler, as the last confidant of the departed. Letter upon letter had Toussaint sent—deed upon deed of kindness had he attempted towards his brother; but still Father Laxabon had written, "Come not yet;" "He must have time;" "Give him time if there is to be peace between you." Now it had become necessary that they should meet; and far readier was Toussaint to encounter the armies of France than the countenance of his brother. For ever, in the midst of the excitements of the journey, he found himself asking in his own mind where and how Paul would meet him; and whether he had cut off from himself his brother, as well as his brother's son.

Meantime, the party rode proudly on, through the interior of the island, signs of welcome spreading around them at every step. From the grass-farms, in the wide savannahs, the herdsmen hastened, with promises to drive their flocks up into the mornes, where no enemy should penetrate while a man remained to guard the passes. At each salute from the forts that rose at intervals along the way, the wild cattle rushed towards the steeps; while the parties of hunters turned back from their sports, to offer themselves as scouts and messengers on behalf of the colony. From some glade of the woods appeared the monk, charged with the blessing of his convent; or the grazier, with a string of horses—his gift, for the service of the army. Around the crosses which, half concealed by the long grass of the plains, yet served to mark the road, were gathered groups of women, bearing bags of money, or ornaments of gold and silver, which they would have thrust upon him, to whom they declared that they owed their all; while every settlement displayed its company of armed men, standing in military order, and rending the air with shouts, on the approach of their chief. La Plume and Clerveaux, to whom such demonstrations were less familiar than to the other generals, no longer doubted that all would be well. They pronounced that the colony already showed itself invincible. Toussaint thought that he might have been of the same opinion, if the expected foe had been any other than French. The event must show whether the pains he had taken to unite his race with their fellow-citizens as brethren would now weaken or strengthen his cause—whether it would enhance or mitigate the bitterness of the impending quarrel.

On the morning of the last day of their survey of the interior, the party emerged from the shade of the woods, and, crossing the grassy levels of the Llanos, reached the ferry by which the Ozama was to be crossed near its mouth. On the opposite bank were horsemen, who, on observing the party approaching the ferry, put spurs to their horses, and galloped southwards, in the direction of the city. They need not so have hastened; for the Deliverer was stopped at every fishing hamlet—almost at every hut along the shores of the bay, to receive the loyal homage of the inhabitants—Spanish as well as French. In the midst of these greetings the eye and the soul of the chief were absent—looking to what lay before him. There, at some distance, springing from the level of the plain, rose the cathedral of Saint Domingo, and other lofty buildings, whose outline was distinctly marked against the glittering sea which spread immediately



behind. An ungovernable impatience seized him at length, and he broke away, bursting through the throngs upon the road, and resolving not to stop till he should have seen his fate, as a brother, in his brother's eyes.

A procession of priests was issuing from the city gates as he approached. They were robed, and they bore the Host under a canopy. At the first sound of their chant, the generals and their suite threw themselves from their horses, and prostrated themselves upon the grass. On rising, they perceived that the whole city had come out to meet them. "The whole city," Toussaint heard his companions say: and his heart throbbed when he strained his sight to see if the Governor of the city was the only one left at home. The procession of priests had now turned, and was preceding him—slowly—so slowly, that he would fain have dispensed with the solemnity. The people crowded round his horse and impeded his way. He strove to be present to the occasion; but all was like a troubled dream—the chanting, the acclamation, the bursts of military music from a distance—all that at other times had fired his soul was now disturbance and perplexity. A few faithless persons in the crowd, on the watch for information with which they might make interest with the French on their arrival, noted the wandering of the eye and the knitting of the brow, and drew thence a portent of the fall of the Deliverer.

At length the gate was reached; and there, in the shadow of the portal, surrounded by his attendants, stood Paul. On the arrival of his brother at the threshold, he took from an officer the velvet cushion on which the keys of the city were deposited, and advancing to the stirrup of the Commander-in-chief, offered them, according to custom. For an instant, Toussaint gazed on the aged, worn, melancholy countenance beside him, and then stooped from his horse, to fling his arms round the neck of his brother, breathing into his ear, "If *you* are in your duty at such a time as this, who else dare fail me? I thank God! I thank God! We cannot fail."

Paul withdrew himself, without speaking. His action was sullen. He led the way, however, towards the Governor's house, evidently expecting to be followed. Not another word passed between them on the way. Through one wide street after another L'Ouverture was led; and from the balconies of whole ranges of fine houses, from the roof of many a church, and the porch of many a convent, was he hailed, before he could catch another glimpse of the countenance of the brother who preceded him. At

the gate of the Governor's house there was a pause; and way was made for the chief to pass in first. He did so; and the next moment turned round in the vestibule, to speak to Paul; but Paul had disappeared. Glancing round, Toussaint saw Father Laxabon awaiting him at the foot of the staircase. Each advanced to the other.

"Father, he is wretched," whispered Toussaint. "Bring me to him."

"Follow me," said the priest; and, instead of mounting the marble staircase, L'Ouverture and the father were seen to enter a passage, into which every one else was forbidden to follow. Father Laxabon tapped softly at a door, and was desired to enter. He opened it, and closed it behind Toussaint, keeping watch outside, that the brothers might not be disturbed.

Paul started to his feet from the conch on which he had thrown himself. He stood waiting. Now was the decisive moment; and Toussaint knew it was. Yet he stood speechless.

"I left my son in your charge," said Paul, at length.

"You did: and I—"

"And you murdered him."

"No, Paul! I executed justice upon him. Hear me, brother, once for all. I am heart-broken for you as a brother: but as a magistrate, I will admit no censure. As his father in your stead, I was, as the event has proved, too ambitious for him: but, as a ruler, I did but my duty."

"Yes! You have been ambitious! You have chosen your duty!"

"My ambition was for him, Paul. As for my duty—remember that I have too a child whom, by that act, I doomed to worse than death."

"You see what liberty has brought to us. Look at the family of Ouverture—consider what has befallen since your struggle for liberty began; and then, perhaps, you will give over struggling. Welcome the French—go back to Breda—send me home to my hut on the shore, that I may die in such peace as is left to a childless man. Why do you not answer me,

Toussaint? Why will you not give us a last chance of peace? I must obey you at the city gate; but I will importune you here. Why will you not do as I say?"

"Because I know that some—and the Overtures among them—were not born to live at ease—to pass their days in peace. I feel that some—and the Overtures among them—are born to suffer—to struggle and to die for their race. If you would know why, ask their Creator. I myself would fain know why. Meantime, the will of God is so clear, that I have devoted, not myself only, but my children. My sons, you know—"

"And not your children only, but your brother and his child."

"No. Moïse cast himself away. And, as for you, your hut still stands, as you say. Go to it, if you will; or make friends with the French, if you desire to be a slave again. You have suffered too much by me for me to ask you ever to serve me more. I shall never desire you to dedicate yourself anew to pain, in this crisis. Go and seek for ease. I shall incessantly pray that you may find it."

"I shall not seek what is not to be found, Toussaint. I have never dared wretchedness as you have: but since I am and must be wretched, I will be an Overture. Your eye and your voice make me an Overture again, even yet. Give me your commands."

"Read this proclamation, with the eye of an Overture. Well! Do you like it? How do you understand it?"

"You declare your allegiance to France, declaring, at the same time, its limits, and appealing to your soldiers, in the event of aggression. It is plain from this that you mean to defend yourself, and anticipate war."

"It is well. That is what I intend to convey. You will publish this proclamation, in your city and district, under the date of this 18th of December, 1801. You will then concert with General Clerveaux the measures for the defence of this city, and report your decisions to me, on my return from Cap Samana. Shall it be so, brother?"

"Be it so."

“And we are friends?”

“We are fellow-citizens—we are Overtures—and therefore faithful. I shall not betray you.”

“That is all I can ask, I know. We are old men, Paul. Fidelity for a while! Beyond the grave, perhaps more.”

“You are going already?”

“To Cap Samana; and alone. Farewell!”

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## Chapter Twenty Seven.

### All Eye.

Day by day, in the internals of his occupation about the defence of the colony, did Toussaint repair to Cap Samana, to look eastwards over the sea. Day by day was he more sure, from the information that reached him, that the French could not be far-off. At length, he desired that his generals should be within call from Cotuy, a small town which stood on the banks of the Cotuy, near the western base of the mountainous promontory of Samana—promontory at low water, island at high tide.

All was yet dark on the eastern point of this mountain, on the morning of the 28th of December, when two watchmen, who had passed the night under the ferns in a cleft of the steep, came out to look abroad. On their mountain all was yet dark, for the stars overhead, though still rolling clear and golden—visible orbs in the empty depths of the sky—were so far dimmed by the dawn in the east as no longer to send down their shafts of light upon the earth. The point on which these watchmen stood was so high, that between them and the horizon the sea lay like half a world—an immeasurable expanse, spreading as if from a vast depth below up into the very sky. Dim and soundless lay the mass of waters—breaking, no doubt, as for ages past, against the rocky precipice below; but not so as to be heard upon the steep. If might have appeared dead, but that a ray from some quarter of the heaven, capriciously touching its surface, showed that it was heaving as was its wont. Eastwards, at the point of

junction of sea and sky, a dusky yellow light shone through the haze of morning, as behind a curtain, and told that the sun was on his way. As their eyes became accustomed to the dim light (which was darkness compared to that which had visited their dreams among the ferns), the watchmen alternately swept the expanse with their glass, and pronounced that there was not a sail in sight.

“I believe, however, that this will be our day; the wind is fair for the fleet,” said Toussaint to Henri. “Go and bathe while I watch.”

“We have said for a week past that each would be the day,” replied Henri. “If it be to-day, however, they can hardly have a fairer for the first sight of the paradise which poets and ladies praise at the French court. It promises to be the loveliest day of the year. I shall be here again before the sun has risen.”

And Christophe retired to bathe in the waterfall which made itself heard from behind the ferns, and was hidden by them; springing, as they did, to a height of twenty feet and upwards. To the murmur and gush of this waterfall the friends had slept. An inhabitant of the tropics is so accustomed to sound, that he cannot sleep in the midst of silence: and on these heights there would have been everlasting silence but for the voice of waters, and the thunders and their echoes in the season of storms.

When both had refreshed themselves, they took their seat on some broken ground on the verge of the precipice, sometimes indulging their full minds with silence, but continually looking abroad over the now brightening sea. It was becoming of a deeper blue as the sky grew lighter, except at that point of the east where earth and heaven seemed to be kindling with a mighty fire. There the haze was glowing with purple and crimson; and there was Henri intently watching for the first golden spark of the sun, when Toussaint touched his shoulder, and pointed to the northwards. Shading his eyes with his hand, Christophe strove to penetrate the grey mists which had gathered there.

“What is it?” said he—“a sail? Yes: there is one—three—four!”

“There are seven,” said Toussaint.

Long did he gaze through the glass at these seven sail; and then he reported an eighth. At this moment his arm was grasped.

“See! see!” cried Christophe, who was looking southwards.

From behind the distant south-eastern promontory Del Euganno, now appeared, sail after sail, to the number of twenty.

“All French,” observed Christophe. “Lend me the glass.”

“All French,” replied his friend. “They are, no doubt, coming to rendezvous at this point.”

While Henri explored those which were nearest, Toussaint leaned on his folded arms against the bank of broken ground before him, straining his eyes over the now-peopled sea.

“More! More!” he exclaimed, as the sun appeared, and the new gush of light showed sail upon sail, as small specks upon the horizon line. He snatched the glass; and neither he nor Henri spoke for long.

The east wind served the purposes of the vast fleet, whose three detachments, once within each other’s view, rapidly converged, showing that it was indeed their object to rendezvous at Cap Samana. Silent, swift, and most fair (as is the wont of evil) was this form of destruction in its approach.

Not a word was spoken as the great ships-of-the-line bore majestically up towards their point, while the lighter vessels skimmed the sea, as in sport, and made haste in, as if racing with one another, or anxious to be in waiting, to welcome their superiors. Nearer and nearer they closed in, till the waters seemed to be covered with the foe. When Toussaint was assured that he had seen them all—when he had again and again silently counted over the fifty-four ships-of-war—he turned to his friend with a countenance of anguish, such as even that friend of many years had never seen.

“Henri,” said he, “we must all perish. All France has come to Saint Domingo!”

“Then we will perish,” replied Henri.

“Undoubtedly: it is not much to perish, if that were all. But the world will be the worse for ever. Trance is deceived. She comes, in an error, to avenge herself, and to enslave the blacks. Trance has been deceived.”

“If we were but all together,” said Henri, “so that there were no moments of weakness to fear.—If your sons were but with us—”

“Fear no moments of weakness from me,” said Toussaint, his wonted fire now glowing in his eye. “My colour imposes on me duties above nature; and while my boys are hostages, they shall be to me as if they no longer existed.”

“They may possibly be on board the fleet,” said Christophe. “If by caution we could obtain possession of them—”

“Speak no more of them now,” said Toussaint.—Presently, as if thinking aloud, and with his eyes still bent on the moving ships, he went on:

“No, those on board those ships are not boys, with life before them, and eager alike for arts and arms. I see who they are that are there. There are the troops of the Rhine—troops that have conquered a fairer river than our Artibonite, storming the castles on her steeps, and crowning themselves from her vineyards. There are the troops of the Alps—troops that have soared above the eagle, and stormed the clouds, and plucked the ice-king by the beard upon his throne. There are the troops of Italy—troops that have trodden the old Roman ways, and fought over again the old Roman wars—that have drunk of the Tiber, and once more conquered the armies of the Danube. There are the troops of Egypt—troops that have heard the war-cry of the desert tribes, and encamped in the shadow of the pyramids.”

“Yet he is not afraid,” said Henri to himself, as he watched the countenance of his friend.

“All these,” continued Toussaint, “all these are brought hither against a poor, depressed, insulted, ignorant race—brought as conquerors, eager for the spoil before a blow is struck. They come to disembarass our paradise of us, as they would clear a fragrant and fruitful wood of apes

and reptiles. And if they find that it takes longer than they suppose to crush and disperse us, France has more thousands ready to come and help. The labourer will leave his plough at a word, and the vine-dresser his harvest, and the artisan his shop—France will pour out the youth of all her villages, to seize upon the delights of the tropics, and the wealth of the savages, as they are represented by the emigrants who will not take me for a friend, but eat their own hearts far away, with hatred and jealousy. All France is coming to Saint Domingo!”

“But—” interposed Christophe.

“But, Henri,” interrupted his friend, laying his hand on his shoulder, “not all France, with her troops of the Rhine, of the Alps, of the Nile, nor with all Europe to help her, can extinguish the soul of Africa. That soul, when once the soul of a man, and no longer that of a slave, can overthrow the pyramids and the Alps themselves, sooner than be again crushed down into slavery.”

“With God’s help,” said Christophe, crossing himself.

“With God’s help,” repeated Toussaint. “See here,” he continued, taking up a handful of earth from the broken ground on which they stood, “see here what God has done! See, here are shells from the depth of yonder ocean, lying on the mountain-top. Cannot He who thus uprears the dust of His ocean floor, and lifts it above the clouds, create the societies of men anew, and set their lowest order but a little below the stars?”

“He can,” said Christophe, again crossing himself.

“Then let all France come to Saint Domingo! She may yet be undeceived — What now?” he resumed, after a pause of observation. “What manoeuvre is this?”

The ships, almost before they had drawn together, parted off again; nearly two-thirds retiring to the north, and the rest southwards.

“They are doing as we supposed they would,” said Christophe; “preparing to attack Cap Français and our southern or western towns at once; perhaps both Saint Domingo and Port-au-Prince.”



“Be it so; we are ready for them,” replied Toussaint. “But now there is no time to lose. To Cotuy, to give our orders, and then all to our posts!”

Once more he took a survey of the vast fleet, in its two divisions, and then spread his arms in the direction of his chief cities, promising the foe to be ready to meet them there. In another moment he was striding down the mountain.

His generals were awaiting him at Cotuy, and the horses of the whole party were saddled.

“The French are come?” they asked.

“The French are come in great force. Fifty-four ships-of-war, carrying probably ten or twelve thousand men.”

“We have twenty thousand regular troops,” cried Dessalines. “The day of the proud French has arrived!”

L'Ouverture's calm eye checked his exultation.

“Ten or twelve thousand of the élite of the armies of France,” said Toussaint, “are sailing along our shores; and large reinforcements may be following. Our twenty thousand troops are untried in the field against a European foe; but our cause is good. Let us be bold, my friends; but the leaders of armies must not be presumptuous.”

All uncovered their heads, and waited only his dismissal.

“General Christophe, Cap Français and its district are waiting for you. Let the flames of the city give us notice when the French land.”

Christophe embraced his friend, and was gone.

“General Dessalines, to your command in the west! Preserve your line of messengers from Leogane to my gate at Pongaudin, and let me not want for tidings.”

The tramp of Dessalines' horse next died away.

“General La Plume, it is probable that your eye will have to be busier than your hands. You will be ever ready for battle, of course; but remember that I rely on you for every point of the south-west coast being watched, from Leogane round to Aux Cayes. Send your communications through Dessalines’ line of scouts.”

La Plume withdrew, and Toussaint gazed after him in reverie, till he was out of sight.

“And I?” said Clerveaux, the only general officer now left in attendance.

“Your pardon, General Clerveaux. This your department in the east is likely at present to remain tranquil, as I forewarned you. I now forewarn you that it may hereafter become the seat of war, when you will have your day. Meantime, I may at any time call upon your reserve; and you will take care that the enemy shall find no solace in your department, if they should visit it. Let it be bare as the desert before them. Farewell; I leave you in command of the east.”

Clerveaux made his obeisance with an alacrity which caused Toussaint to say to himself, as he mounted—

“Is he glad that the hour is come, or that his post is in the rear of the battle?”

Toussaint’s own road lay homewards, where he had assembled the choicest troops, to be ready for action on any point where they might first be wanted, and where the great body of the cultivators, by whom his personal influence was most needed, were collected under his eye. As he now sped like the lightning through the shortest tracks, his trompettes proclaiming the invasion through all the valleys, and over all the plains as they went, he felt strong and buoyant in heart, like the eagle overhead, which was scared from its eyrie in Cibao by the proclamation of war. For ever, as he rode, the thought recurred to fire his soul, “He is my rival now, and no longer my chief. I am free. It is his own act, but Bonaparte has me for a rival now.”

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## Chapter Twenty Eight.

## Many Guests.

For some weeks after the appearance of the fleet upon the coast, nothing took place which could be called war. Toussaint was resolved not to be the aggressor. Prepared at all points, he waited till those whom he still regarded as his fellow-citizens should strike the first blow. He was the more willing to leave an opening for peace till the last, that he heard that ladies were on board—ladies from the court of France, come to enjoy the delights of this tropical paradise. The sister of Bonaparte, Madame Leclerc, the wife of the commander of the expedition, was there. It seemed scarcely conceivable that she and her train of ladies could have come with any expectation of witnessing such a warfare as, ten years before, had shown how much more savage than the beasts of the forest men may be. It was as little conceivable that they could expect the negroes to enter into slavery again at a word, after having enjoyed freedom, and held rule for ten years. There must still be hope of peace; and Toussaint spared no effort to preserve it, till the strangers should declare their intentions by some unequivocal act.

For this object, L'Ouverture appeared gifted with ubiquity. No flying Arab was ever in so many places so nearly at once. Pongaudin, like every other estate which was in friendly hands, was a sort of camp. Here the Commander-in-chief and his officers had their head-quarters; and here he was to be found, at intervals of a few hours. During those intervals, he was inspecting the fortifications of Saint Marc, one of the strongest places of the island, and under the charge of Dessalines; or he was overlooking the bight of Leogane, from behind Port-au-Prince; or he was visiting L'Étoile, made a strong post, and held by Charles Bellair and his wife (for Deesha would not leave her husband);—or he was riding through the mornes to the north, re-animating, with the sight of his beloved countenance, the companies there held in reserve. He was on the heights of the Gros Morne, an admiring spectator, on occasion of that act of Christophe which was the real cause of the delay and indecision of Leclerc and his troops.

The main body of the French army was preparing to land, immediately on its arrival at Cap Français, when Christophe sent his friend and brother officer, Sangos, on board the fleet, to acquaint Leclerc with the absence of the Commander-in-chief of the colony, without whose permission the

landing of troops could not be allowed. If a landing by force were attempted, the city would immediately be fired, and the inhabitants withdrawn. General Leclerc could not believe this to be more than an empty threat; but thought it as well to avoid risk, by landing in the night at points where he was not looked for. Accordingly, he sent some of his force on shore at Fort Dauphin, to the east; while he himself, with a body of troops, set foot on the fatal coast which he was never to leave, at Le Limbé, on the western side of the ridge which commanded the town, hoping to drop into the military quarter from the heights, before he was looked for. From these heights, however, he beheld the town one mass of fire. Christophe had withdrawn the inhabitants, including two thousand whites, who were to be held as hostages in the interior; and so orderly and well-planned had been his proceedings, that not the slightest personal injury was sustained by any individual. Of this conflagration, Toussaint had been a witness from the heights of Gros Morne. The horror which it occasioned was for the strangers alone. All the movable property of the citizens was safe in the interior: and they were all safe in person. The dismay was for the French, when they found only a burning soil, tumbling roofs, and tottering walls, where they had expected repose and feasting after the ennui of a voyage across the Atlantic. For the court ladies, there existed at present only the alternative of remaining on board the ships, of which they were heartily weary, and establishing themselves on the barren island of Tortuga, the home of the buccaneers of former days. They shortly after took possession of Tortuga, which they found to be a tropical region indeed, but no paradise. It was not the best season for turtle; and there was no other of the luxuries whose savour had reached the nostrils of the court of France.

Among the two thousand whites removed from Cap were, of course, the ladies of the convent. They were safely established under shelter of the fortifications of Saint Marc, with all their little comforts about them, and their mocking-bird as tuneful as when hanging in its own orange-tree. Euphrosyne was not with them—nor yet with her guardian. Monsieur Critois had enough to do to protect himself and his lady; and he earnestly desired his ward to be thankful that she had friends among the ruling powers. Euphrosyne needed no commands on this head. She joined Madame Pascal, and was now with her and the secretary in the half-camp, half-household of Pongaudin.

Besides the family and establishment of the Commander-in-chief, as many of the white gentry of Cap were accommodated as the country palace of Pongaudin would contain. It seemed doubtful how long they would have to find amusement for themselves there; for the invaders seemed to have fallen asleep. A month had passed since the burning of Cap, and not another step had been taken. Expectation had begun to be weary. The feverish watching for news had begun to relax; the ladies no longer shuddered at the bare idea of walking in the shrubberies; and some of the younger damsels had begun to heed warnings from L'Ouverture himself not to go out of bounds—by no means to pass the line of sentinels in any direction. Instead of everything French being spoken of with a faltering voice, any one was now welcome who might be able to tell, even at second or third hand, that Madame Leclerc had been seen, and what she wore, and how she looked, and what she had said, either about the colony or anything else. The officers, both civil and military, found themselves able to devote their powers of entertainment more and more to the ladies; and the liability to be called off in the midst of the game of chess, the poem, the song, or the dance, seemed only to make their attentions more precious, because more precarious, than those of the guests who knew themselves to be hostages, and who had abundance of time for gallantry, if only they had had spirits and inclination. Most of the party certainly found the present position of affairs very dull. The exceptions were few. They were poor Génifrède, whose mind was wholly in the past, and before whose eyes the present went forward as a dim dream; her mother and sister, whose faculties were continually on the stretch to keep up, under such circumstances, the hospitalities for which they were pledged to so large a household; the secretary and his bride, who were engrossed at once with the crisis in public affairs and in their own; and Euphrosyne, who could find nothing dull after the convent, and who unconsciously wished that, if this were invasion and war, they might last a good while yet.

One evening, the 8th of February, was somewhat remarkable for L'Ouverture being not only at home, but at leisure. He was playing billiards with his officers and guests. It followed of course that General Vincent was also present. It followed of course; for whether it was that Toussaint felt the peculiar interest in him which report made observers look for towards an intended son-in-law, or whether the chief distrusted him on account of his fondness for Paris and the First Consul, Vincent

was for ever kept under the eye, and by the side of his General. Aimée was wont to sigh when she heard her father's horse ordered; for she knew that Vincent was going too; and she now rejoiced to see her father at the billiard-table; for it told her that Vincent was her own for the evening.

Vincent was not slow in putting in his claim. At the first moment, when they were unobserved, he drew her to the window, where the evening breeze blew in, fragrant and cool; then into the piazza; then across the lawn; then down to the gate which opened upon the beach. He would have gone further; but there Aimée stopped, reminding him of the general order against breaking bounds.

"That is all very well for the whites; and for us, when the whites have their eyes upon us," said Vincent. "But we are not prisoners; and there is not a prisoner abroad to-night. Come—only as far as the mangroves! We shall not be missed: and if we should be, we can be within the gate in two minutes."

"I dare not," said Aimée, with a longing look, however, at the pearly sands, and the creaming waves that now overspread them, now lapsed in the gleam of the moon. The dark shadow of the mangroves lay but a little way on. It was true that two minutes would reach them; but she still said, "I dare not."

"Who is there?" cried the sentinel, in his march past the gate.

"No strangers, Claude. Any news on your watch?"

"None, Mademoiselle."

"All quiet over towards Saint Marc?" inquired Vincent.

"All quiet there, General; and everywhere else when the last reports came round, ten minutes ago."

"Very well: pass on, good Claude. Come, come!" he said to Aimée; "who knows when we may have a moonlight hour again!"

He would not bide another refusal, but, by gentle violence, drew her out

upon the beach, telling the sentinel, as they passed between him and the water, that if they were inquired for, he might call: they should be within hearing. Claude touched his cap, showed his white teeth in a broad smile, and did not object.

Once among the mangroves, Aimée could not repent. Their arched branches, descending into the water, trembled with every wave that gushed in among them, and stirred the mild air. The moonlight quivered on their dark green leaves, and on the transparent pool which lay among their roots.

“Now, would you not have been sorry if I had not made you come?” said Vincent.

“If we could only stay—stay here for ever!” she exclaimed, leaning back against the bush under which they sat. “Here, amidst the whispering of the winds and the dash of the waters, you would listen no more for the roll of the drum, or the booming of cannon at Saint Marc. I am weary of our life at Pongaudin.”

“Weary of rumour of wars, before we have the wars themselves, love.”

“We can never hear anything of my brothers while we are on these terms with France. Day after day comes on—day after day, and we have to toil, and plan, and be anxious; and our guests grow tired, and nothing is done; and we know that we can hear nothing of what we most want to learn. I am certain that my mother spends her nights in tears for her boys; and nothing is so likely to rouse poor Génifrède as the prospect of their coming back to us.”

“And you yourself, Aimée, cannot be happy without Isaac.”

“I never tried,” said she. “I have daily felt his loss, because I wished never to cease to feel it.”

“He is happier than you, dearest Aimée.”

“Do not tell me that men feel such separations less than women; for I know it well already. I can never have been so necessary to him as he is to me; I know that well.”

“Say ‘was,’ my Aimée. The time comes when sisters find their brothers less necessary to them than they have been.”

“Such a time has never come to me, and I believe it never will. No one can ever be to me what Isaac has been.”

“‘Has been;’—true. But see how times have changed! Isaac has left off writing to you so frequently as he did—”

“No, no. He never did write frequently; it was never his habit to write as I wrote to him.”

“Well, well. Whatever expectation may lie at the bottom of this little heart, whatever secret remonstrance for his silence, whatever dissatisfaction with his apologies, whatever mortification that such apologies were necessary—”

“How dare you— What right have you to pry into my heart?” exclaimed Aimée, withdrawing herself from her companion’s side.

“The right of love,” he replied, following till both were seated on the very verge of the water. “Can you suppose that I do not see your disappointment when L’Ouverture opens his dispatches, and there is not one of that particular size and fold which makes your countenance change when you see it? Can you suppose that I do not mark your happiness, for hours and days, after one of those closely-written sheets has come?—happiness which makes me feel of no account to you—happiness which makes me jealous of my very brother—for my brother he is, as he is yours.”

“It should not do that,” replied Aimée, as she sat looking into the water. “You should not be *angry* at my being happy. If you have learned so much of my thoughts—”

“Say on! Oh, say on!”

“There is no need,” said she, “if you can read the soul without speech, as you seem to profess.”

“I read no thoughts but yours; and none of yours that relate to myself. I



see at a glance every stir of your love to all besides. If you care for me, I need to hear it from yourself.”

“If this quarrel comes to bloodshed, what will become of my brothers? If you love me, tell me that.”

“Still these brothers!” cried Vincent, impatiently.

“And who should be inquired of concerning them, if not you? You took them to France; you left them there—”

“I was sent here by Bonaparte—put on the deputation by his express command. If not, I should not now have been here—I should have remembered you only as a child, and—”

“But Placide and Isaac! Suppose Leclerc and Rochambeau both killed—suppose Madame Leclerc entering once more into her brother’s presence, a mourning widow—what would Bonaparte do with Placide and Isaac? I am sure you have no comfort to give me, or you would not so evade what I ask.”

“I declare, I protest you are mistaken. Bonaparte is everything that is noble, and gracious, and gentle.”

“You are sure of that?”

“Nay, why not? Have I not always said so? and you have delighted to hear me say so.”

“I should delight to believe it now. I will believe it; but yet, if he were really noble, how should this quarrel have arisen? For, if ever man was noble, and gracious, and gentle, my father is. If two such men come to open defiance, whose is the crime, and wherein does it lie?”

“If the world fall to pieces, Aimée, there can be no doubt of Bonaparte’s greatness. What majesty he carries with him, through all his conquests! How whole nations quail under his magnificent proclamations!”

“Are they really fine? I have seen but few; and they—”

“Are they not all grand? That proclamation in Egypt, for instance, in which he said he was the Man of Fate who had been foretold in the Koran, and that all resistance was impious and vain! If it had not happened four years before Bonaparte went to Egypt, I should have thought your father —”

“I was just thinking of that. But there is a great difference. It was not my father, but Laveaux, who said that the black chief, predicted by Raynal, had appeared. And it was originally said, not as a divine prophecy, but because, in the natural course of things, the redeemer of an oppressed race must arise. Besides, my father says nothing but what he believes; and I suppose Bonaparte did not believe what he was saying.”

“Do you think not? For my part, I believe his very words—that to oppose him is impious and vain.”

“Heaven pity us, if that be true! Was it not in that proclamation that Bonaparte said that men must account to him for their secret thoughts, as nothing was concealed from him?”

“Yes; just as L'Ouverture told the mulattoes in the church at Cap that, from the other side of the island, his eye would be upon them, and his arm stretched out, to restrain or punish. He almost reached Bonaparte's strain there.”

“I like my father's words the best, because all understood and believed what he said. Bonaparte may claim to read secret thoughts; but before my father, men have no secret thoughts—they love him so that their minds stand open.”

“Then those Italian proclamations, and letters to the Directory,” said Vincent; “how they grew grander, as city after city, and state after state, fell before him! When he summoned Pavia to open her gates to him, after her insurrection, how imperious he was! If he had found that a drop of French blood had been shed, he declared not a stone of the city should have remained; but a column should arise in its place, bearing the inscription, ‘Here once stood Pavia!’ There spoke the man who held the ages in his hand, ready to roll them over the civilised world—to crumble cities, and overthrow nations, in case of resistance to his will! How Paris

rang with acclamations when these words passed from mouth to mouth! He was worshipped as a god.”

“It is said,” sighed Aimée, “that Leclerc has proclamations from him for our people. I wonder what they are, and how they will be received.”

“With enthusiasm, no doubt. When and where has it been otherwise? You shudder, my Aimée; but, trust me, there is inconceivable folly in the idea of opposing Bonaparte. As he said in Egypt, it is impious and vain. Trust me, love, and decide accordingly.”

“Desert my father and my family in their hour of peril! I will not do that.”

“There is no peril in the case, love; it is glory and happiness to live under Bonaparte. My life upon it, he will do your father no injury, but continue him in his command, under certain arrangements; and, as for the blacks, they and the whites will join in one common enthusiasm for the conqueror of Europe. Let us be among the first, my Aimée! Be mine; and we will go to the French forces—among my friends there. It is as if we were called to be mediators; it is as if the welfare of your family and the colony were, in a measure, consigned to our hands. Once married, and with Leclerc, how easily may we explain away causes of quarrel! How completely shall we make him understand L’Ouverture! And how, through us, Leclerc can put your father in possession of the views of Bonaparte: Oh, Aimée, be mine, and let us go!”

“And if it were otherwise—if it came to bloodshed—to deadly warfare?”

“Then, love, you would least of all repent. Alone and desolate—parted from your brothers—parted from me.”

“From you, Vincent?”

“Assuredly. I can never unsheath my sword against those to whom my attachment is strong. I can never fight against an army from Paris—troops that have been led by Bonaparte.”

“Does my father know that?”

“He cannot know me if he anticipates anything else. I execute his orders

at present, because I admire his system of government, and am anxious that it should appear to the best advantage to the brother-in-law of the First Consul. Thus, I am confident that there will be no war. But, love, if there should be, you will be parted for ever from your brothers and from me, by remaining here—you will never again see Isaac. Nay, nay! No tears! no terrors, my Aimée! By being mine, and going with me to that place where all are happy—to Paris—you will, through my interest, best aid your father; and Isaac and I will watch over you for ever.”

“Not a word more, Vincent! You make me wretched. Not a word more, till I have spoken to my father. He must, he will tell me what he thinks, what he expects—whether he fears. Hark! There are horsemen!”

“Can it be? Horsemen approaching on this side? I will look out.”

“No, no! Vincent, you shall not go—”

Her terror was so great that Vincent could not indeed leave her. As the tramp of a company of horsemen became almost lost on quitting the hard road for the deep sand, he dropped his voice, whispering in her ear that she was quite safe, completely hidden under the mangroves, and that he would not leave her. She clasped his hand with both hers, to compel him to keep his word, and implored him not to speak—not to shake a leaf of their covert.

The company passed very near; so near as that the sand thrown up by the horses' feet pattered among the foliage of the mangroves. No one of the strangers was then speaking; but in another moment the sentry challenged them. They laughed, and were certainly stopping at the little gate.

“We know your master, fellow,” said one. “We have had more talk with him in one day than you in all your service.”

“I am sure I ought to know that voice,” whispered Aimée, drawing a long breath.

The strangers were certainly intending to pass through the gate into the grounds; and the sentry was remonstrating. In another moment he fired, as a signal. There was some clamour and laughter, and Aimée started,

as at a voice from the grave.

“That is Isaac’s voice!” she exclaimed, springing from her seat. It was now Vincent’s turn to hold her hands, or she would have been out in the broad moonlight in an instant.

“Stay, love! Stay one moment,” he entreated. “I believe you are right; but let me look out.”

She sank down on the sand, while he reconnoitred. At the moment of his looking forth, a young man who, he was certain, was Placide, was good-humouredly taking the sentry by the shoulders, and pushing him from his place, while saying something in his ear, which made the poor soldier toss his hat in the air, and run forward to meet his comrades, whom the sound of his gun was bringing from every direction, over the sands.

“It is they, indeed,” said Vincent. “Your brothers are both there.”

While he was speaking, Aimée burst from the covert, made her way miraculously through the gathering horses and men, pushed through the gate, leaving her lover some way behind, flew like a lapwing through the shrubbery, and across the lawn, was hanging on her brother’s neck before the news of the arrival was understood within the house.

There was no waiting till father and mother could choose where to meet their children. The lads followed the messenger into the salon, crowded as it was with strangers. L’Ouverture’s voice was the first heard, after the sudden hush.

“Now, Heaven bless Bonaparte for this!” he cried, “and make him a happy father!”

“Hear him, O God! and bless Bonaparte!” sobbed Margot.

A check was given to their words and their emotions, by seeing by whom the young men were accompanied. Thérèse was leading forward Génifrède, when she stopped short, with a sort of groan, and returned to her seat, forgetful at the moment even of Génifrède; for Monsieur Papalier was there. Other gentlemen were of the company. The one whom the young men most punctiliously introduced to their father was

Monsieur Coasson, the tutor, guardian, or envoy, under whose charge General Leclerc had sent them home.

Toussaint offered him a warm welcome, as the guardian of his sons; but Monsieur Coasson himself seemed most impressed with his office of envoy: as did the gentlemen who accompanied him. Assuming the air of an ambassador, and looking round him, as if to require the attention of all present, Monsieur Coasson discharged himself of his commission, as follows:—

“General Toussaint—”

“They will not acknowledge him as L’Ouverture,” observed Thérèse to Madame Pascal and Génifrède. Afra’s eyes filled with tears. Génifrède was absorbed in contemplating her brothers—both grown manly, and the one looking the soldier, the other the student.

“General Toussaint,” said Coasson, “I come, the bearer of a letter to you from the First Consul.”

In his hand was now seen a gold box, which he did not, however, deliver at the moment.

“With it, I am commissioned to offer the greetings of General Leclerc, who awaits with anxiety your arrival at his quarters as his Lieutenant-General.”

“Upon what does General Leclerc ground his expectation of seeing *me* there?”

“Upon the ground of the commands of the First Consul, declared in his proclamation to the inhabitants of Saint Domingo, and, no doubt, more fully in this letter to yourself.”

Here he delivered the box, desiring that the presence of himself and his companions might be no impediment to General Toussaint’s reading his dispatches.

Toussaint had no intention that they should be any hindrance. He read and re-read the letter, while all eyes but those of Aimée were fixed upon

his countenance. With an expression of the quietest satisfaction, she was gazing upon her brothers, unvexed by the presence of numbers, and the transaction of state business. They were there, and she was happy.

Those many eyes failed to discover anything from the countenance of Toussaint. It was immovable; and Monsieur Coasson was so far disappointed. It had been his object to prevent the dispatches which he brought from being read in private, that he might be enabled to report how they were received. He had still another resource. He announced that he had brought with him the proclamation of the First Consul to the inhabitants at large of Saint Domingo. As it was a public document, he would, with permission, read it aloud. Toussaint now looked round, to command attention to the words of the ruler of France. Vincent sought to exchange glances with Aimée; but Aimée had none to spare. Monsieur Papalier had unceremoniously entered into conversation with some of the guests of his own complexion, and did not cease upon any hint, declaring to those about him, that none of this was new to him, as he was in the counsels of Bonaparte in all Saint Domingo affairs. The tone of their conversation was, however, reduced to a low murmur, while Monsieur Coasson read aloud the following proclamation:—

*“Paris, November 8, 1801.*

“Inhabitants of Saint Domingo,

“Whatever your origin or your colour, you are all French: you are all equal, and all free, before God, and before the Republic.

“France, like Saint Domingo, has been a prey to factions, torn by intestine commotions and foreign wars. But all has changed: all nations have embraced the French, and have sworn to them peace and amity: the French people have embraced each other, and have sworn to be all friends and brothers. Come also, embrace the French, and rejoice to see again your European friends and brothers!

“The government sends you the Captain-General Leclerc. He has brought—”

Here Monsieur Coasson’s voice and manner became extremely emphatic.

“He has brought sufficient force for protecting you against your enemies, and against the enemies of the Republic. If you are told that these forces are destined to violate your liberties, reply, ‘The Republic will not suffer them to be taken from us.’

“Rally round the Captain-General. He brings you abundance and peace. Rally all of you around him. Whoever shall dare to separate himself from the Captain-General will be a traitor to his country; and the indignation of the country will devour him, as the fire devours your dried canes.

“Done at Paris,” etcetera.

“This document is signed, you will perceive,” said Monsieur Coasson, “by the First Consul, and by the Secretary of State, Monsieur H.B. Maret.”

Once more it was in vain to explore the countenance of L’Ouverture. It was still immovable. He extended his hand for the document, saying that he would retire with his secretary, for the purpose of preparing his replies for the First Consul, in order that no such delays might take place on his part, as the date of the letter and proclamation showed to have intervened on the other side. Meantime, he requested that Monsieur Coasson, and all whom he had brought in his company, would make themselves at home in his house; and, turning to his wife and family, he commended his newly arrived guests to their hospitality. With a passing smile and greeting to his sons, he was about to leave the room with Monsieur Pascal, when Monsieur Coasson intimated that he had one thing more to say.

“I am directed, General Toussaint,” said he, “in case of your refusal to join the French forces immediately, to convey your sons back to the guardianship of the Captain-General Leclerc: and it will be my duty to set out with them at dawn.”

A cry of anguish broke forth from Margot, and Placide was instantly by her side.

“Fear nothing,” said Toussaint to her, in a tone which once more fixed all eyes upon him. His countenance was no longer unmoved. It was convulsed, for a moment, with passion. He was calm in his manner, however, as he turned to Monsieur Coasson, and said, “Sir, my sons are



at home. It rests with myself and with them, what excursions they make henceforth.”

He bowed, and left the room with Monsieur Pascal.



## Chapter Twenty Nine.

### The Hour of Proof.

“So the long-expected letter is come at last,” observed Monsieur Pascal, as the study-door closed upon himself and his friend.

“Read it,” said Toussaint, putting the letter into the secretary’s hand, and walking up and down the room, till his friend spoke again.

“We hear,” said Monsieur Pascal, “that the First Consul understands men. He may understand some men—the soldiery of France, perhaps—but of others he knows no more than if he were not himself a man.”

“He no more understands my people than myself. Can it be possible that he believes that proclamation will be acceptable to them—that mixture of cajolery and bombast. He has heard that we are ignorant, and he concludes that we are without understanding. What think you of his promise of abundance by the hands of Leclerc? As if it were not their cupidity, excited by our abundance, which has brought these thousands of soldiers to our shores! They are welcome to it all—to our harvests, our money, and our merchandise—if they would not touch our freedom.”

“Bonaparte has a word to say to that in his letter to you,” observed the secretary. “What can you desire? The freedom of the blacks? You know that in all the countries we have been in, we have given it to the people who had it not? What say the Venetians to that? What says the Pope!”

“Does he suppose us deaf,” replied Toussaint, “that we have not heard of the fate of our race in Guadaloupe, and Martinique, and Cayenne? Does he suppose us blind, that we do not see the pirates he has commissioned hovering about the shores of Africa, as the vulture preparing to strike his prey? Ignorant as we are, does he suppose us stupid enough to be delighted when, free already, we find ourselves surrounded by fifty-four war-ships, which come to promise us liberty?”

“He does not know, apparently, how our commerce with the world brings us tidings of all the world.”

“And if it were not so—if his were the first ships that our eyes had ever seen—does he not know that the richest tidings of liberty come, not through the eye and ear, but from the heart? Does he not know that the liberties of Saint Domingo, large as they are, everlasting as they will prove to be—all sprang from here and here?”—pointing to his head and heart. “This is he,” he continued, “who has been king in my thoughts, from the hour when I heard of the artillery officer who had saved the Convention! This is he to whom I have felt myself bound as a brother in destiny and in glory! This is he with whom I hoped to share the lot of reconciling the quarrel of races and of ages! In the eye of the world he may be great, and I the bandit captain of a despised race. On the page of history he may be magnified, and I derided. But I spurn him for a hero—I reject him for a brother. My rival he may make himself. His soul is narrow, and his aims are low. He might have been a god to the world, and he is a tyrant. We have followed him with wistful eyes, to see him loosen bonds with a divine touch; and we find him busy forging new chains. He has sullied his divine commission; and while my own remains pure, he is no brother of my soul. You, my friend, knew him better than I, or you would not have left his service for mine.”

“Yet I gave him credit for a better appreciation of you, a clearer foresight of the destiny of this colony, than he has shown.”

“While we live, my friend, we must accept disappointment. In my youth, I learned to give up hope after hope; and one of the brightest I must now relinquish in my old age.”

“Two brilliant ones have, however, entered your dwelling this evening, my friend,” said the secretary.

“My boys? Are they not?—But these are times to show what they are. In the joy of having them back, I might have forgiven and forgotten everything, but for the claim— You heard, Pascal?”

“About their leaving you at dawn. Yes; that was amusing.”

“If they will not consider a negro a man, they might have remembered that beasts are desperate to recover the young that they have lost. Leclerc will find, however, that this night will make men of my sons. I will

call them my boys no more; and never more shall this envoy call them his pupils, or his charge. These French will find that there is that in this Saint Domingo of ours which quickly ripens young wits, and makes the harvest ready in a day. Let them beware the reaping; for it is another sort of harvest than they look for.—But come,” said he: “it is late; and we have to answer the letter of this foreigner—this stranger to my race and nature.”

He took some papers from his pocket, sat down beside the friend, and said, with the countenance of one who has heard good news, “See here how little they comprehend how negroes may be friends! See here the proofs that they understand my Henri no better than myself.”

And he put into the hands of his secretary those fine letters of Christophe, which do everlasting honour to his head and heart, and show that he bore a kingly soul before he adorned the kingly office. As Monsieur Pascal read the narrative of Leclerc’s attempts to alarm, to cajole, and to bribe Christophe to betray his friend’s cause, and deliver up his person, the pale countenance of the secretary became now paler with anger and disgust, now flushed with pleasure and admiration.

“Here is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother,” said he.

“Alas! poor Paul! he will be faithful, Pascal; but he can never again love me.”

“Pardon me, I entreat you. I meant no allusion.”

“You did not. But everything serves as an allusion there; for Paul is never out of my mind. Now for our letters;—that to Leclerc modified, as you perceive, by our knowledge of what has passed between him and Henri.”

“Modified, indeed!” exclaimed Pascal.

Their proceedings were destined to be further modified by the events of this night. Tidings as black as the darkest night that ever brooded over the island in the season of storms poured in to overshadow the prospects of the negroes, and the hopes of their chief.

It was after midnight when, in the midst of their quiet consultation, Toussaint and his secretary thought they heard voices at the gate.

Toussaint was going to ascertain, when he was met in the hall by news that a messenger from the south-west had arrived. The messenger entered, halting and slow.

“It is—no,” said Pascal; “surely it cannot be—”

“Is it possible that you are Jacques?” exclaimed Toussaint, his eyes shaded by his hand.

“I am Dessalines,” said the wounded man, who had already sunk upon a seat.

“Why come yourself, in this state!” cried Toussaint, hastening to support him.

“I could more easily come than write my news,” replied Dessalines; “and it is news that I would commit to no man’s ear but your own.”

“Shall I go?” asked Monsieur Pascal of Toussaint.

“No. Stay and hear. Tell us your tidings, Jacques.”

“I am as well here as down in the south-west, or you would not have seen me.”

“You mean that all is lost there?”

“All is lost there.”

“While the enemy is beguiling us with letters, and talk of truce!” observed Toussaint to Pascal. “Where was your battle, Jacques? How can all the west be lost?”

“The French have bought La Plume. They told him your cause was desperate, and promised him honours and office in France. Get me cured, and let me win a battle for you, and I have no doubt I can buy him back again. Meantime—”

“Meantime, what has Damage done? Is he with me or La Plume? And is Chaney safe?”

“Damage never received your instructions. La Plume carried them, and no doubt, your aide-de-camp also, straight to the French. Chaney has not been seen: he is traitor or prisoner.”

“Then Cayes is not burned, nor Jeremie defended?”

“Neither the one nor the other. Both are lost; and so is Port-au-Prince. My troops and I did our best at the Croix de Bosquets: but what could we do in such a case? I am here, wounded within an inch of my life; and they are in the fastnesses. You were a doctor once, L’Ouverture. Set me up again; and I will gather my men from the mountains, and prick these whites all across the peninsula into the sea.”

“I will be doctor, or nurse, or anything, to save you, Jacques.”

“What if I have more bad news? Will you not hate me?”

“Lose no time, my friend. This is no hour for trifling.”

“There is no room for trifling, my friend. I fear—I am not certain—but I fear the east is lost.”

“Is Clerveaux bought too?”

“Not bought. He is more of your sort than La Plume’s. He is incorruptible by money; but he likes the French, and he loves peace. He would be a very brother to you, if he only loved liberty better than either. As it is, he is thought to have delivered over the whole east, from the Isabella to Cap Samana, without a blow.”

“And my brother!”

“He has disappeared from the city. He did not yield; but he could do nothing by himself, or with only his guard. He disappeared in the night, and is thought to have put off! by water. You will soon hear from him, I doubt not. Now I have told my news, and I am faint. Where is Thérèse?”

“She is here. Look more like yourself, and she shall be called. You have told all your news?”

“All; and I am glad it is out.”

“Keep up your heart, Dessalines! I have you and Henri; and God is with the faithful.—Now to your bed, my friend.”

Instead of the attendants who were summoned, Thérèse entered. She spoke no word, but aided by her servant, had her husband carried to his chamber. When the door was closed, sad and serious as were the tidings which had now to be acted upon, the secretary could not help asking L'Ouverture if he had ever seen Madame Dessalines look as she did just now.

“Yes,” he replied, “on certain occasions, some years since.—But here she is again.”

Thérèse came to say that her husband had yet something to relate into Toussaint's own ear before he could sleep; but, on her own part, she entreated that she might first be permitted to dress his wounds.

“Send for me when you think fit, and I will come, madame. But, Thérèse, one word. I am aware that Monsieur Papalier is here. Do not forget that you are a Christian, and pledged to forgive injuries.”

“You think you read my thoughts, L'Ouverture; but you do not. Listen, and I am gone. His voice once had power over me through love, and then through hatred. I never miss the lightest word he speaks. I heard him tell his old friends from Cap that I was his slave, and that the time was coming when masters would claim their own again. Now you know my thoughts.”

And she was gone.

When Toussaint returned from his visit to Dessalines' chamber, he found Monsieur Pascal sitting with his face hid in his hands.

“Meditation is good,” said Toussaint, laying his hand on his friend's shoulder. “Lamentation is unworthy.”

“It is so; and we have much to do,” replied the secretary, rousing himself.

“Fear not,” resumed Toussaint, “but that your bride will bloom in the air of the mountains. We may have to entrench ourselves in the mornes—or, at least, to place there our ladies, and the civil officers of the government; but we ought to thank God for providing those natural homes, so full of health and beauty, for the free in spirit. I have still three brigades, and the great body of the cultivators, in reserve; but we shall all act with stronger hearts if our heart’s treasure is safe in the mornes.”

“Are we to lose Dessalines?” asked Monsieur Pascal.

“I believe not. He is severely wounded, and, at this moment, exasperated. He vows the death of Monsieur Papalier; and I vow his safety while he is my guest.”

“Papalier and Madame Dessalines cannot exist in one house.”

“And therefore must this deputation be dismissed early in the morning, if there were no other reasons. Notice must be carried to them with their coffee, that I am awaiting them with my replies. Those delivered, negotiation is at an end, and we must act. My foes have struck the blow which unties my hands.”

“What has Monsieur Papalier to do with the deputation?”

“Nothing, but that he uses its protection to attempt to resume his estates. They are in commission; and he may have them; though not, as he thinks, with men and women as part of his chattels. No more of him.”

“Of whom next, then? Except Christophe, who is there worthy to be named by you?” asked Monsieur Pascal, with emotion.

“Every one who has deserted us, except, perhaps, La Plume. He is sordid; and I dismiss him. As for Clerveaux and his thousands, they have been weak, but not, perhaps, wicked. They may be recovered. I take the blame of their weakness upon myself. Would that I alone could bear the consequences!”

“You take the blame of their weakness? Is not their former slavery the cause of it? Is there anything in their act but the servility in which they were reared?”



“There is much of that. But I have deepened the taint, in striving to avoid the opposite corruption of revenge. I have the taint myself. The stain of slavery exists in the First of the Blacks himself. Let all others, then, be forgiven. They may thus be recovered. I gave them the lesson of loving and trusting the whites. They have done so, to the point of being treacherous to me. I must now give them another lesson, and time to learn it; and they may possibly be redeemed.”

“You will hold out in the mornes—conduct your resistance on a pinnacle, where the eyes of the blacks may be raised to you—fixed upon you.”

“Just so;—and where they may flock to me, when time shall have taught them my principle and my policy, and revealed the temper and purpose of our invaders. Now, then, to prepare!”

Before dawn, the despatches for the French, on the coast and at home, were prepared; and messengers were dismissed, in every direction, with orders by which the troops which remained faithful would be concentrated, the cultivators raised and collected, stores provided in the fastnesses, and the new acquisitions of the enemy rendered useless to them. Never had the heads of these two able men, working in perfect concert, achieved such a mass of work in a single night.

A little after sunrise, the French party appeared in the salon, where already almost every member of the household was collected; all being under the impression that a crisis had arrived, and that memorable words were about to be spoken.

Toussaint acknowledged the apparent discourtesy of appointing the hour for the departure of his guests; but declared that he had no apology to offer:—that the time for courteous observance was past, when his guests were discovered to be sent merely to amuse and disarm him for the hour, while blows were struck at a distance against the liberties of his race. In delivering his despatches, he said, he was delivering his farewell. Within an hour, the deputation and himself must be travelling in different directions.

Monsieur Coasson, on receiving the packets, said that he had no other desire than to be on his way. There could be no satisfaction, and little

safety, in remaining in a house where, under a hypocritical pretence of magnanimity and good-will, there lurked a spirit of hideous malice, of diabolical revenge, towards a race to whom nature, and the universal consent of men, had given a superiority which they could never lose.

In unaffected surprise, Toussaint looked in the face of the envoy, observing that, for himself, he disclaimed all such passion and such dissimulation as his household was charged with.

“Of course you do,” replied Coasson: “but I require not your testimony. The men of a family may, where there is occasion, conceal its ruling passion: but, where there is occasion, it will be revealed by the women.”

Toussaint’s eyes, like every one’s else, turned to the ladies of his family. It was not Madame L’Ouverture that was intended, for her countenance asked of her husband what this could mean. It could not be Aimée, who now stood drowned in tears, where she could best conceal her grief. Génifrède explained. She told calmly, and without the slightest confusion, that Monsieur Coasson had sought a conversation with her, for the purpose of winning over her feelings, and her influence with her father, to the side of the French. He had endeavoured to make her acknowledge that the whole family, with the exception of its head, were in favour of peace, admirers of Bonaparte, and aware that they were likely to be victims to the ambition of their father. Her reply, in which she declared that she gloried, was that the deepest passion of her soul was hatred of the whites; and that she prayed for their annihilation.

“And did you also declare, my daughter,” said Toussaint, “that in this you differ from us all? Did you avow that your parents look upon this passion in you as a disease, for which you have their daily and nightly prayers?”

“I did declare, my father, that I alone of the Ouvertures know how to feel for the wrongs of my race. But Monsieur Coasson did not believe me, and vowed that we should all suffer for the opinions held by me alone.”

“It is true, I did not believe, nor do I now believe,” said Coasson, “that the devil would single out one of a family, to corrupt her heart with such atrocious hatred as that whose avowal chilled the marrow of my bones. It was her countenance of wretchedness that attracted me. I saw that she

was less capable of dissimulation than the rest of you; and so I have found.”

“A wise man truly has the Captain-General chosen for an envoy!” observed Toussaint: “a wise and an honourable man! He sees woe in the face of a woman, and makes it his instrument for discovering the secret souls of her family. Blindly bent upon this object, and having laid open, as he thinks, one heart, he reads the rest by it. But he may, with all his wisdom, and all this honour, be no less ignorant than before he saw us. So far from reading all our souls, he has not even read the suffering one that he has tempted. You have opened the sluices of the waters of bitterness in my child’s soul, Monsieur Coasson, but you have not found the source.”

“Time will show that,” observed the envoy.

“It will,” replied Toussaint; “and also the worth of your threat of revenge for the words of my suffering child. I have no more to say to you.—My sons!”

Placide sprang to his side, and Isaac followed.

“I no longer call you boys; for the choice of this hour makes you men. The Captain-General insists that you go from me. He has no right to do so. Neither have I a right to bid you stay. Hear, and decide for yourselves.—The cause of the blacks is not so promising as it appeared last night. News has arrived, from various quarters, of defeat and defection. Our struggle for our liberties will be fierce and long. It will never be relinquished; and my own conviction is, that the cause of the blacks will finally prevail; that Saint Domingo will never more belong to France. The ruler of France has been a guardian to you—an indulgent guardian. I do not ask you to fight against him.”

The faces of both the young men showed strong and joyful emotion; but it was not the same emotion in them both.

“Decide according to your reason and your hearts, my children, whether to go or stay; remembering the importance of your choice.” Putting a hand on the shoulder of each, he said impressively, “Go to the Captain-General, or remain with me. Whichever you do, I shall always equally

love and cherish you.”

Margot looked upon her sons, as if awaiting from them life or death. Aimée’s face was still hidden in her handkerchief. She had nothing to learn of her brother’s inclinations.

Isaac spoke before Placide could open his lips.

“We knew, father,” he said, “that your love and your rare liberality—that liberality which gave us our French education—would not fail now. And this it is that persuades me that this quarrel cannot proceed to extremities—that it will not be necessary for your sons to take any part, as you propose. When Placide and I think of you—your love of peace, your loyalty, and your admiration of Bonaparte; and then, when we think of Bonaparte—his astonishment at what you have done in the colony, and the terms in which he always spoke of you to us—when we consider how you two are fitted to appreciate each other, we cannot believe but that the Captain-General and you will soon be acting in harmony, for the good of both races. But for this assurance, we could hardly have courage to return.”

“Speak for yourself alone, Isaac,” said his brother.

“Well, then: I say for myself, that, but for this certainly, it would almost break my heart to leave you so soon again, though to go at present no further off than Tortuga. But I am quite confident that there will soon be perfect freedom of intercourse among all who are on the island.”

“You return with me?” asked Monsieur Coasson.

“Certainly, as my father gives me my choice. I feel myself bound, in honour and gratitude, to return, instead of appearing to escape, at the very first opportunity, from those with whom I can never quarrel. Returning to Leclerc, under his conditional orders, can never be considered a declaration against my father: while remaining here, against Leclerc’s orders, is an undeniable declaration against Bonaparte and France—a declaration which I never will make.”

“I stay with my father,” said Placide.

“Your reasons?” asked Monsieur Coasson; “that I may report them to the Captain-General.”

“I have no reasons,” replied Placide; “or, if I have, I cannot recollect them now. I shall stay with my father.”

“Welcome home, my boy!” said Toussaint; “and Isaac, my son, may God bless you, wherever you go.”

And he opened his arms to them both.

“I am not afraid,” said Madame L’Overture, timidly, as if scarcely venturing to say so much—“I am not afraid but that, happen what may, we can always make a comfortable home for Placide.”

“Never mind comfort, mother: and least of all for me. We have something better than comfort to try for now.”

“Give me your blessing, too, father,” said Aimée, faintly, as Isaac led her forward, and Vincent closely followed. “You said you would bless those that went, and those that stayed; and I am going with Isaac.”

The parents were speechless; so that Isaac could explain that the Captain-General offered a welcome to as many of the Overtures as were disposed to join him; and that Madame Leclerc had said that his sisters would find a home and protection with her.

“And I cannot separate from Isaac yet,” pleaded Aimée. “And with Madame Leclerc—”

“General Vincent,” said Toussaint, addressing his aide before noticing his daughter, “have the goodness to prepare for an immediate journey. I will give you your commission when you are ready to ride.”

After one moment’s hesitation, Vincent bowed, and withdrew. He was not prepared to desert his General while actually busy in his affairs. He reflected that the great object (in order to the peace and reconciliation he hoped for) was to serve, and keep on a good understanding with, both parties. He would discharge this commission, and then follow Aimée and her brother, as he had promised. Thus he settled with himself, while he

ordered his horses, and prepared for departure.

Toussaint was sufficiently aware that he should prosper better without his shallow-minded and unstable aide; but he meant to retain him about his person, on business in his service, till Aimée should have opportunity, in his absence, to explore her own mind, and determine her course, while far from the voice of the tempter.

“Go with your brother, Aimée,” he said, “rather than remain unwillingly with us. Whenever you wish it, return. You will find our arms ever open to you.”

And he blessed her, as did her weeping mother—the last, however, not without a word of reproach.

“Oh, Aimée, why did not you tell me?”

“Mother, I did not know myself—I was uncertain—I was—Oh, mother! it will not be for long. It is but a little way: and Isaac and I shall soon write. I will tell you everything about Madame Leclerc. Kiss me once more, mother; and take care of Génifrède.”

As Toussaint abruptly turned away, with a parting bow to the envoy, and entered the piazza, on his way to the urgent business of the day, and as the shortest escape from the many eyes that were upon him, he encountered Monsieur Pascal, who stood awaiting him there.

“My friend!” said Monsieur Pascal, with emotion, as he looked in the face of Toussaint.

“Ay, Pascal: it is bitter. Bonaparte rose up as my rival; and cheerfully did I accept him for such, in the council and in the field. But now he is my rival in my family. He looks defiance at me through my children’s eyes. It is too much. God give me patience!”

Monsieur Pascal did not speak; for what could he say?

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## Chapter Thirty.

## Speculation in the Plateaux.

Pongaudin was no longer safe, as head-quarters for the Commander-in-chief, his family, and guests. The defeats which had been sustained were bad enough; but the defection was worse. Amidst the contagion of defection there was no saying who, out of the circle of immediate friends, might next join the French for the sake of peace; and for the sake of peace, perhaps, deliver up the persons of the Ouvertures, with their wounded friend, Dessalines, and the brave young officers who formed the guard of the household. Christophe's letters had already proved to Toussaint and his secretary, that no reliance was to be placed on the honour of the French, in their dealings with negroes. Cajolery in speech, covering plots against their persons, appeared to be considered the conduct appropriate to business with blacks, who had no concern, it seemed, with the usages of war, as established among whites. La Plume had fallen by bribery; Clerveaux by cajolery; and both means had been attempted with Christophe. The troops were assailed on the side of their best affections. They were told that Leclerc came to do honour to L'Ouverture—to thank him for his government of the island during the troubles of France, and to convoy to him the approbation of the First Consul, in papers enclosed in a golden box. It is probable that, if they had not heard from Toussaint's own lips of the establishment of slavery in the other French colonies, the authorisation of the slave-trade, and the threat to do what was convenient with Saint Domingo—all the negroes would have made the French welcome, as Clerveaux had done. As it was, large numbers unquestionably remained faithful to their liberties and their chief—enough, as Toussaint never doubted, to secure their liberties at last: but how many, and after how long and arduous a struggle, it remained for time to show.

Many houses had been offered as a retreat for the household of the Commander-in-chief. The one chosen this day was his friend Raymond's cacao-plantation, Le Zéphyr, in the Mornes du Chaos—among the mountains which retired above the light bank of the Artibonite. It was a spacious mansion, sheltered from storms, but enjoying a pleasant mountain air—the most wholesome that could be found, if the retreat should continue through the hot season. It was surrounded with never-failing springs of pure water. There were kids on all the hills, and cattle in every valley round. Grain and fruits were in the fields and gardens; and it

was thought that one well-guarded post, at a pass below the Plateaux de la Ravine, would render the place inaccessible to the enemy. To the satisfaction of Raymond and his daughter, and the delight of Euphrosyne, this, their beloved summer mansion, was fixed on for the abode of the whole party, provided Toussaint should find, on examination, that it would answer his purposes as well as was now supposed.

Such was the plan settled presently after the deputation had left the gates—settled among the few confidential friends, whose tastes, as well as interests, Toussaint chose to consult. Madame Dessalines was among those; and one of the most eager to be gone. She engaged to remove her husband safely to a place where his recovery must proceed better than among the agitations of Pongaudin. By one of these agitations her desire to go had been much quickened. Before the departure of the deputation, she had chanced to meet Monsieur Papalier in one of the corridors, equipped for his journey. She could not avoid passing him; and he had greeted her with a significant “Au revoir, Thérèse.” Fervently she prayed that she might never meet him again; and anxious was she to be gone to a place where he could not come.

Before noon, L’Ouverture, with Placide riding by his side, and followed by some officers, who were themselves followed by a few soldiers, was among the heights which commanded the plain of the Artibonite on one side, and on the other the valleys which lay between their party and the Gros Morne. They had visited Le Zéphyr, and were now about to examine the pass where their post was to be established.

“This heat, Placide,” said his father, as the sun beat down upon their heads, “is it not too much for you? Perhaps you had better—But I beg your pardon,” he added, smiling; “I had forgotten that you are no longer my growing boy, Placide, whom I must take care of. I beg your pardon, Placide; but it is so new to me to have a manly son beside me—!”

And he looked at him with eyes of pride.

Placide told how often at Paris he had longed to bask in such a sunshine as this, tempered by the fragrant breezes from the mountain-side. He was transported now to hear the blows of the axe in the woods, and the shock of the falling trunks, as the hewers of the logwood and the



mahogany trees were at their hidden work. He was charmed with the songs of the cultivators which rose from the hot plain below, where they were preparing the furrows for the indigo-sowing. He greeted every housewife who, with her children about her, was on her knees by the mountain-stream, washing linen, and splashing her little ones in sport. All these native sights and sounds, so unlike Paris, exhilarated Placide in the highest degree. He was willing to brave either heats or hurricanes on the mountains, for the sake of thus feeling himself once more in his tropical home.

“One would think it a time of peace,” said he, “with the wood-cutters and cultivators all about us. Where will be the first cropping from those indigo-fields? And, if that is saved, where will be the second!”

“Of that last question, ask me again when we are alone,” replied his father. “As for the rest, it is by no will of mine that our people are to be called off from their wood-cutting and their tillage. To the last moment, you see, I encourage the pursuits of peace. But, if you could see closely these men in the forest and the fields, you would find that, as formerly, they have the cutlass at their belt, and the rifle slung across their shoulders. They are my most trusty soldiery.”

“Because they love you best, and owe most to you. What has Vincent discovered below there—far-off? Have you your glass, father?”

“The deputation, perhaps,” said Toussaint.

“Yes: there they are! They have crossed the Trois Rivières, and they are creeping up towards Plaisance. What a mere handful the party looks at this distance! What mere insects to be about to pull the thunder down upon so many heads! What an atom of space they cover! Yet Vincent’s heart is on that little spot, I believe. Is it not so, father?”

“Yes! unless some of it is, as I fear, with the fleet beyond the ridge.”

“He will be missing, some day soon, then.”

“For his own sake and Aimée’s, I trust not. This step of hers has disconcerted me: but no harm can be done by detaining Vincent in honour near me, till the turn of events may decide his inclinations in

favour of Aimée's father, and of his own race. Detained he must be, for the present, in dishonour, if not in honour: for he knows too much of my affairs to be allowed to see Leclerc. If Aimée returns to us, or if we gain a battle, Vincent will be ours without compulsion. Meantime, I keep him always employed beside me."

"This is the place for our post, surely," said Placide. "See how the rocks are rising on either hand above this level! No one could pass here whom we choose to obstruct."

"Yes: this is the spot; these are the Plateaux," replied his father, awaiting the officers and soldiers—the latter being prepared with tools, to mark out and begin their work.

While the consultations and measurements were going on, Placide's eye was caught by the motion of a young fawn in the high grass of a lawny slope, on one side of the valley. He snatched the loaded rifle which one of the soldiers had exchanged for a spade and fired. The passion for sport was instantly roused by the act. Kids were seen here and there on the rocks. Marks were not wanting: and first Vincent, and then one and another, followed Placide's example; and there were several shots at the same instant, whose echoes reverberated to the delighted ear of Placide, who was sorry when the last had died away among the mountain-tops.

"Your first and last sport for to-day," observed Toussaint. "You have given the game a sufficient alarm for the present."

"We must find our game, as we have shot it," exclaimed Vincent. "My kid is not far-off."

"After it, then! You will find me under the large cotton-tree yonder. The heat is too great here, Placide, between these walls of rock."

Every man of the party was off in pursuit of his game, except Placide, who remained to ask his father, now they were alone, what was to happen at the season of the second indigo-cutting. They threw themselves down beneath the cotton-tree, which with its own broad shades, deepened by the masses of creepers which twined and clustered about it, and weighed it down on every side, afforded as complete a shelter from the shower of sun-rays as any artificial roof could have done.

“The second indigo-cutting is in August, you know,” said Toussaint. “August will decide our freedom, if it is not decided before. August is the season when Nature comes in as our ally—comes in with her army of horrors, which we should not have the heart to invoke, but which will arrive, with or without our will; and which it will be the fault of the French themselves if they brave.”

“Foul airs and pestilence, you mean!” said Placide.

“I mean foul airs and pestilence. All our plans, my son—(it is a comfort to make a counsellor of my own son!)—all the plans of my generals and myself are directed to provide for our defence till August, certain that then the French will be occupied in grappling with a deadlier foe than even men fighting for their liberties.”

“Till August!” repeated Placide. “Nearly six months! I scarcely think the French could hold their footing so long, if—but that—”

“If what? Except for what?”

“If it were not for the tremendous reinforcements which I fear will be sent.”

“I thought so,” said his father.

“All France is eager to come,” continued Placide. “The thousands who are here (about twelve thousand, I fancy; but they did what they could to prevent our knowing the numbers exactly)—the thousands who are here are looked upon with envy by those who are left behind. The jealousy was incredible—the clamour to gain appointments to the Saint Domingo expedition.”

“To be appointed to pestilence in the hospitals, and a grave in the sands!” exclaimed Toussaint. “It is strange! Frenchmen enough have died here, in seasons of trouble, to convince all France that only in times of peace, leisure, stillness, and choice of residence, have Europeans a fair chance of life here, for a single year. It is strange that they do not foresee their own death-angels clustering on our shores.”

“The delusion is so strong,” said Placide, “that I verily believe that if these

twelve thousand were all dead to-day, twenty thousand more would be ready to come to-morrow. If every officer was buried here, the choicest commanders there would press forward over their graves. If even the Leclercs should perish, I believe that other relatives of the First Consul, and perhaps some other of his sisters, would kneel to him, as these have done, to implore him to appoint them to the new expedition to Saint Domingo."

"The madness of numbers is never without an open cause," said Toussaint. "What is the cause here?"

"Clear and plain enough. The representations of the emigrants coming in aid of the secret wishes of Bonaparte, have, under his encouragement, turned the heads of his family, his court, and after them, of his people."

"The emigrants sigh for their country (and it is a country to sigh after), and they look back on their estates and their power, I suppose; while the interval of ten years dims in their memories all inconveniences from the climate, and from the degradation of their order."

"They appear to forget that any form of evil but Ogé and you, father, ever entered their paradise. They say that, but for you, they might have been all this while in paradise. They have boasted of its wealth and its pleasures, till there is not a lady in the court of France who does not long to come and dwell in palaces of perfumed woods, marbles, and gold and silver. They dream of passing the day in breezy shades, and of sipping the nectar of tropical fruits, from hour to hour. They think a good deal, too, of the plate and wines, and equipages, and trains of attendants, of which they have heard so much; and at the same time, of martial glory and laurel crowns."

"So these are the ideas with which they have come to languish on Tortuga, and be buried in its sands! These emigrants have much to answer for."

"So Isaac and I perpetually told them; but they would not listen to anything said by an Overture. Nor could we wonder at this, when persons of every colour were given to the same boastings; so that Isaac and I found ourselves tempted into a like strain upon occasion."

“It appears as if the old days had returned,” said Toussaint; “the days of Columbus and his crows. We are as the unhappy Indians to the rapacity of Europe. No wonder, if mulattoes and blacks speak of the colony as if it were the old Hayti.”

“They do, from Lanville, the coffee-planter, to our Mars Plaisir. Mars Plaisir has brought orders for I do not know how many parrots; and for pearls, and perfumes, and spices, and variegated woods.”

“Is it possible?” said Toussaint, smiling. “Does he really believe his own stories? If so, that accounts for his staying with you, instead of going with Isaac; which I wondered at. I thought he could not have condescended to us, after having lived in France.”

“He condescends to be wherever he finds most scope for boasting. On Tortuga, or among the ashes of Cap, he can boast no more. With us he can extol France, as there he extolled Saint Domingo. If August brings the destruction we look for, the poor fellow ought to die of remorse; but he has not head enough to suffer for the past. You can hold out till August, father?”

“If Maurepas joins us here with his force, I have no doubt of holding out till August. In these mornes, as many as will not yield might resist for life; but my own forces, aided by those of Maurepas, may effectually keep off the grasp of the French from all places but those in which they are actually quartered. A few actions may be needful,—morally needful,—to show them that the blacks can fight. If this lesson will not suffice, August, alas! will exterminate the foe. What do I see stirring among the ferns there? Is it more game?”

Placide started up.

“Too near us for game,” he whispered; and then added aloud, “Shall we carry home another deer? Shall I fire?”

At these words, some good French was heard out of the tall, tree-like ferns,—voices of men intreating that no one would fire; and two Frenchman presently appeared, an army and a navy officer.

“How came you here, gentlemen? Are you residents in the colony?”

“If we had been, we should not have lost ourselves, as you perceive we have done. We are sent by the Captain-General to parley, as a last hope of avoiding the collision which the Captain-General deprecates. Here are our credentials, by which you will discover our names,—Lieutenant Martin,” pointing to his companion, “and Captain Sabès,” bowing for himself.

“It is too late for negotiation, gentlemen,” said L’Ouverture, “as the news from the south will already have informed the Captain-General. I regret the accident of your having lost your way, as it will deprive you for a time of your liberty. You must be aware that, voluntarily or involuntarily, you have fulfilled the office of spies; and for the present, therefore, I cannot part with you. Placide, summon our attendants, and, with them, escort these gentlemen to Le Zéphyr. I shall soon join you there, and hear anything that your charge may have to say.”

The officers protested, but in vain.

“It is too late, gentlemen. You may thank your own commanders for compelling me to run no more risks—for having made trust in a French officer’s honour a crime to my own people. You may have heard and seen so much that I am compelled to hold you prisoners. As I have no proof, however, that you are spies, your lives are safe.”

In answer to Placide’s shout—the well-known mountain-cry which he was delighted to revive—their followers appeared on all sides, some bringing in their game, some empty-handed. The French officers saw that escape was impossible. Neither had they any thought, but for a passing moment, of fighting for their liberty. The Ouvertures were completely armed; and there never was an occasion when a man would lightly engage, hand-to-hand, with Toussaint or his son.

Half the collected party, including Vincent, accompanied Toussaint to Pongaudin. The other half escorted Placide and his prisoners up the morne to Le Zéphyr; these carried all the game for a present provision.

Placide observed an interchange of glances between his prisoners as they passed the spades, pick-axes, and fresh-dug earth in the plateaus. He had little idea how that glance was connected with the romancing he

had just been describing; nor how much of insult and weary suffering it boded to his father.

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## Chapter Thirty One.

### Retreat.

Pongaudin was indeed no longer safe. Immediately on the return of Coasson to the fleet, under the date of the 17th of February, the Captain-General issued a proclamation of outlawry against L'Ouverture and Christophe, pronouncing it the imperative duty of every one who had the power to seize and deliver up the traitors. As Toussaint said to his family, Pongaudin was a residence for a citizen; outlaws must go to the mountains.

To the mountain they went—not weeping and trembling, but in a temper of high courage and hope. The rocks rang with the military music which accompanied them. Their very horses seemed to feel the spirit of their cause; much more were the humblest of the soldiery animated with the hope of success in the struggle, which was now to be carried on in a mode which they much preferred to keeping watch in the plains. They found the pass well fortified; they found the morne above it still and undisturbed; untrod, as it seemed now likely to remain, by the foot of an invader. They found the mansion at Le Zéphyr, spacious as it was, much enlarged by temporary erections, and prepared for the abode of more than the number that had come. Madame Pascal looked at her husband with a sigh, when the alterations met her eye; and Raymond himself did not much relish seeing sentinels posted at all his gates. Euphrosyne, however, was still quite happy. Here was her beloved Le Zéphyr, with its blossoming cacao-groves. Here were space, freedom, and friends; and neither convent rules nor nuns.

A perpetual line of communication was established between the pass and this mansion. Vincent, with a troop, was appointed to guard the estate and the persons on it—including the two French prisoners. Placide was to join his father below, to receive the forces which flocked to the rendezvous. Before he went, he pointed out to Vincent, and his own

family, a station, on a steep at some distance in the rear of the house, whence they might discern, with a good glass, the road which wound through the plain of the Artibonite, within two miles of the Plateaux, and up towards Plaisance to the north. Many and wonderful were the objects seen from this lofty station; but not one of them—not even the green knolls and hollows of the morne, stretched out from Le Zéphyr to the pass—not the brimming river of the plain—not the distant azure sea, with its tufted isles—was so interesting, under present circumstances, as this yellow winding road—the way of approach of either friend or foe.

But for the apprehensions belonging to a state of warfare—apprehensions which embitter life in all its hours to women—and, possibly, more than is generally acknowledged, to men—but for the speculations as to who was destined to die, who to fall into the most cruel hands that ever abused their power over a helpless foe (for the French of former wars were not forgotten), and what was to be the lot of those who escaped death and capture—but for these speculations, which were stirring in every woman's heart in all that household, the way of life at Le Zéphyr was pleasant enough.

Even poor Génifrède appeared to revive here. She showed more interest in nursing Dessalines than in any previous occupation since the death of her lover. Thérèse was delighted to afford her the opportunity of feeling herself useful, and permitted herself many a walk in the groves, many an hour of relaxation in the salon, which she would have despised, but for their affording an interest to Génifrède. The three were more than ever drawn together by their new experience of the conduct of the French. Never was sick man more impatient to be strong than Dessalines. Génifrède regarded him as the pillar of the cause, on account of his uncompromising passion for vengeance; and his wife herself counted the days till he could be again abroad at the head of his forces.

When not in attendance upon him, Génifrède spent the hours of daylight at the station on the height. She cared neither for heat nor chill while there, and forgot food and rest; and there was sometimes that in her countenance when she returned, and in the tone of her prophesying about the destruction of the enemy, which caused the whisper to go round that she met her lover there, just under the clouds. Monsieur Pascal—the rational, sagacious Monsieur Pascal—was of opinion that



she believed this herself.

On this station, and other heights which surrounded the mansion, there were other objects of interest than the visitations of the clouds, and the whisperings of the breezes from the depths of the woods. For many days, a constant excitement was caused by the accession of troops. Not only Toussaint's own bands followed him to the post, but three thousand more, on whom he could rely, were spared from his other strong posts in the mountains. Soon after these three thousand, Christophe appeared with such force as could be spared from the garrisons in the north. The officers under Dessalines also, aware that the main struggle, whenever the French would come to an engagement, must be in the Plateaux de la Ravine, drew thither, with the remnants of the force which had suffered defeat in the south-west. Hither, too, came Bellair, with his family, and the little garrison which had fortified and held L'Étoile, till it became necessary to burn and leave it.

Messenger arrived after messenger, to announce these accessions of force; and the whole household poured out upon the heights to see and hear. If it was at noon, the clear music of the wind-instruments floated faintly in the still air; if the morning or evening breezes were abroad the harmony came in gushes; and the shouts of greeting and reception were plainly distinguishable, and were responded to involuntarily by all at Le Zéphyr but the two prisoners. Under the impulse of the moment, no voice was louder or more joyous than Vincent's. It now only remained for Maurepas to bring his numerous troops up to the point of junction. He must presently arrive; and then, as Placide and other sanguine young soldiers thought, and as Sabès and his companion began seriously to fear, the negro force under L'Ouverture might defy all Europe.

News, stirring news, came from all corners of the colony with every fresh arrival. Deesha, especially, could tell all that had been done, not only at L'Étoile, and in all the plain of Cul-de-Sac, but within the districts of the unfaithful generals, Clerveaux and La Plume. Her boy Juste, though too young to take a practical part in the war, carried the passion and energy of a man into the cause, and was versed in all the details of the events which had taken place since the landing of the French. It was a sore mortification to Juste that he was not permitted to remain by his father's side at the Plateaux; but he consoled himself with teaching his little

brother Tobie the military exercise, and with sport. Juste was as fond of sport as on the day when he floated under calabashes, to catch wild ducks; and this was well; for at Le Zéphyr, under present circumstances, the sportsman was one of the most useful members of the establishment. The air of the mornes was celebrated for its power of creating an appetite; and there were many mouths to feed: so that Juste was assured, on all hands, that he had as important a function to fulfil as if he had been a soldier. As it was believed impossible for human foot to stray beyond the morne by any other passage than that of the Plateaux, the boys were permitted to be out early and late, in the woods and upon the hill-sides; and often did Génifrède and the sentries hear the far-off shouts of the little sportsmen, or see the puff of smoke from Juste's rifle in the valley, or under the verge of the groves. Many a nest of young orioles did Tobie abstract from the last fork of a branch, when the peculiar note of the parent-bird led him on into the midst of the thicket where these delicate creatures hide themselves. The ring-tail dove, one of the most exquisite of table luxuries, he was very successful in liming; and he would bring home a dozen in a morning. He could catch turkeys with a noose, and young pigs to barbecue. He filled baskets with plover's eggs from the high lands; and of the wild-fowl he brought in, there was no end. In the midst of these feats, he engaged for far greater things in a little while—when the soldier-crabs should make their annual march down the mountains, on their way to the sea. In those days, Tobie promised the tables at Le Zéphyr should groan under the profusion of savoury soups, which should banish for the season the salt beef and salt-fish which, meantime, formed part of the daily diet of the household.

While his little brother was thus busy with smaller game, Juste was indulging a higher ambition. When nothing better was to be had, he could condescend to plovers and pigeons; but he liked better to bring down a dainty young heifer among the herds of wild cattle, or several head of deer in a day. It was his triumph to return heavily laden, and to go forth again with three or four soldiers, or half-a-dozen servants (whichever could best be spared), to gather up from the hill-sides the fallen game, which he had covered with branches of trees, to keep off hawk and vulture. It was triumph to point out to his aides spot after spot where the bird of prey hovered, seeking in vain for a space on which to pounce. Amidst these triumphs, Juste was almost satisfied not to be at the Plateau.

Perhaps the heaviest heart among all that household, scarcely excepting Génifrède's, was Madame L'Ouverture's; and yet her chief companionship, strangely enough, was with the one who carried the lightest—Euphrosyne. It was not exactly settled whether Madame L'Ouverture or Madame Pascal was hostess; and they therefore divided the onerous duties of the office; and Euphrosyne was their handmaid, charmed to be with those she loved best—charmed to be busy in new ways—charmed to hear, from time to time, that she was useful. She useful to the Ouvertures! It was an honour—it was an exquisite pleasure. She was perhaps the first white lady in the island, out of the convent, who had gathered fruits, prepared vegetables, and made sweet dishes with her own hands. Morning after morning the three ladies spent together in domestic occupations, finding that the servants, numerous as they were, could not get through the whole work of hospitality to such a household. Morning after morning they spent in the shaded store-room, amidst the fragrance of fruits and spices. Here the unhappy mother, the anxious wife, opened her heart to the young people; and they consoled and ministered to her as daughters.

“If you are not my daughters,” said she, on one of these mornings, “I have none.”

“But you will have: they will return to you,” said Afra. “Think of them as you did of your sons, when they were at Paris—as absent for a while to gain experience, and sure to return. You will find one of them, perhaps both, as happy on your bosom hereafter as we see your Placide by his father's side.”

“How can you say so, Afra? Which of my girls will ever come to me again, as they did at Breda?”

“Génifrède is better,” said Euphrosyne; “better since we came here—better every day: and I should wonder if she were not. No one can long be sullen here.”

“Do not be hard, Euphrosyne, my love—‘Sullen’ is a hard word for my poor, unhappy child.”

“Nay, madam; no one can be more sorry for her than I am; as you will

find, if you ask Father Gabriel. He will tell you how angry I was with L'Ouverture, how cruel I thought him on that dreadful day. But now, in these stirring times, when our whole world, our little world in the middle of the sea, is to be destroyed, or made free and glorious for ever, I do think it is being sullen to mope on the mountain as she does, and speak to nobody, care for nobody, but the Dessalines. However, I would not say a word about it, if I were not sure that she is getting better. And if she were growing worse, instead of better, there is nothing that I would not do to help or console her, though I must still think her sullen—not only towards her father here, but—”

And Euphrosyne crossed herself.

“It is hard,” sighed Madame L'Ouverture; “it is hard to do all one ought, even in the serious hours of one's prayers. I do try, with my husband's help, when he is here, and from the thought of him when he is absent, to pray, as he desires, for our enemies. But it generally ends (God forgive me!) in my praying that Bonaparte may be held back from the work of estranging our children from us.”

“It can only be for a time,” said Afra, again. She could think of no other consolation.

“Those who know best say that everything is for good,” continued Margot. “If so, I wonder whether anyone can foretell what can be the good of a stranger, a man that we have never seen, and who has everything about him to make him great, thrusting himself between us and our children, to take their hearts from us. I asked L'Ouverture to foretell to me how this would be explained; and he put his hand upon my mouth, and asked me to kneel down, and pray with him that we might have patience to wait God's own time.”

“And could you do so?” asked Euphrosyne, with brimming eyes.

“I did: but I added a prayer that Bonaparte might be moved to leave us the glory and dominion which we value—the duty and the hearts of our children—and that he might be contented with gaining the homage of the French nation, and grasping the kingdoms of Europe.”

“I think God will hear that prayer,” said Afra, cheerfully.

“And I am sure Bonaparte will thank you for it,” said Euphrosyne, “in that day when hearts will be known, and things seen as they are.”

“One might expect,” sighed Madame L’Overture, “as one’s children grow up, that they should go mad for love; but I never thought of such a thing as their going mad for loyalty.”

“Do you think it is for loyalty?” asked Euphrosyne. “I should call Placide the most loyal of your children; and, next to him, Denis.”

“They think they are loyal and patriotic, my dear. I am sure I hope they will go on to think so; for it is the best excuse for them.”

“I wish I had a magic glass,” said Euphrosyne—

“My dear, do not wish any such thing. It is very dangerous and wicked to have anything to do with that kind of people. I could tell you such a story of poor Moyse (and of many other unhappy persons, too) as would show you the mischief of meddling with charms, Euphrosyne.”

“Do not be afraid, dear madam. I was not thinking of any witchcraft; but only wishing your children the bright mirror of a clear and settled mind. I think such a mirror would show them that what they take for loyalty and patriotism in their own feelings and conduct, is no more loyalty and patriotism than the dancing lights in our rice-grounds are stars.”

“What is it, my dear, do you think?”

“I think it is weakness, remaining from their former condition. When people are reared in humiliation, there will be weakness left behind. Loyal minds must call Bonaparte’s conduct to L’Overture vulgar. Those who admire it, it seems to me, either have been, or are ready to be, slaves.”

“One may pity rather than blame the first,” said Afra; “but I do not pretend to have any patience with the last. I pity our poor faithless generals here, and dear Aimée, with her mind so perplexed, and her struggling heart; but I have no toleration for Leclerc and Rochambeau, and the whole train of Bonaparte’s worshippers in France.”

“They are not like your husband, indeed, Afra.”

“And they might all have been as right as he. They might all have known as well as he, what L’Overture is, and what he has done. Why do they not know that he might long ago have been a king? Why do they not tell one another that his throne might, at this day, have been visited by ambassadors from all the nations, but for his loyalty to France? Why do they not see, as my husband does, that it is for want of personal ambition that L’Overture is now an outlaw in the mornes, instead of being hand-in-hand, as a brother king, with George of England? They might have known whom to honour and whom to restrain, as my husband does, if they had had his clearness of soul, and his love of freedom.”

“And because they have not,” said Euphrosyne, “they are lost in amazement at his devotion to a negro outlaw. Do not shrink, dear madam, from those words. If they were meant in anything but honour they would not be spoken before you. Afra and I feel that to be the First of the Blacks is now to be the greatest man in the world; and that to be an outlaw in the mornes, in the cause of a redeemed race, is a higher glory than to be the conqueror of Europe. Do we not, Afra?”

“Assuredly we do.”

“They will soon learn whom they have to deal with in this outlaw,” said Madame. “I can tell you, my dears, that Rochambeau is drawing near us, and that there is likely soon to be a battle. Heigho!”

“Is that bad news or good?” asked Euphrosyne.

“My husband means it for good news, my dear—at least, if Maurepas arrives from the south as soon as Rochambeau from the north.”

“I wish Maurepas would come!” sighed Afra. Madame L’Overture went on—

“It has been a great mortification to my husband that there has been no fair battle yet. His people—those who are faithful—have had no opportunity of showing how they feel, and what they can do. The French have been busy spying, and bribing, and cajoling, and pretending to negotiate; and the one thing they will not do is fighting. But I tell you, my dears, the battle-day is coming on now. Heigho!”

There was a pause; after which Euphrosyne said—

“I suppose we shall hear the battle.”

There was another pause, during which Madame’s tears were dropping into her lap. Afra wondered how General Dessalines would bear to hear the firing from his chamber, so near, and be unable to help.

“That puts me in mind,” said Madame, rising hurriedly—“how could I forget? It was the very reason why my husband told me that Rochambeau was so near. We must prepare for the wounded, my dears. They will be sent up here—as many as the house will hold, and the tents which my husband is sending up. We must be making lint, my dears, and preparing bandages. My husband has provided simples, and Madame Dessalines will tell us—Oh dear! what was I about to forget all this!”

“Do not hurry yourself, dear madam,” said Afra. “We will take care that everything is done. With Madame Dessalines to direct us, we shall be quite prepared. Do not hurry yourself so, I dare say Rochambeau is not at hand at this moment.”

At the very next moment, however, Euphrosyne’s countenance showed that she was by no means certain of this. Madame L’Ouverture stood still to listen, in her agitated walk about the room. There were distant shouts heard, and a bustle and buzz of voices, within and about the house, which made Euphrosyne empty her lap of the shaddocks she was peeling, and run out for news.

“Joy! Joy!” she cried, returning. “Maurepas is coming. We can see his march from the station. His army has crossed the river. Make haste, Afra. Dear madam, will you go with me to the station?”

“No, my love,” said Madame, sitting down, trembling.

“We can go as slowly as you like. There is plenty of time. You need not hurry; and it will be a glorious sight.”

“No, my dear. Do you young people go. But, Euphrosyne, are you quite sure it is not Rochambeau?”

“Oh, dear, yes! quite certain. They come from the south, and have crossed the Artibonite; they come from the very point they ought to come from. It is good news, you may rely upon it; the best possible news.”

“I am thankful,” said Madame, in a low, sad voice. “Go, my dears. Go, and see what you can.”

All who could leave the house, or the post of duty—that is, all but the two prisoners, the sentries, and Madame—were at the station, or on their way to it. The first notice had been given, it appeared, by some huntsmen who had brought in game.

“My boys!” said Madame Bellair, “what a pity they should miss this sight! only that, I suppose, we could not keep Juste within bounds. He would be off to the camp before we could stop him. It may be a fortunate chance that he is on the northern hills instead of the southern, to-day; but I am sorry for my little Tobie. Whereabouts are they, I wonder. Has any one seen them within these two hours?”

The hunters had parted with the boys in the valley, at sunrise, when they said they should seek fish and fowl to-day, in the logwood grove and the pond above it, as there were hunters enough out upon the hills.

“If they are really no farther off than that,” said their mother, “they may hear us, and come for their share of the sight. You walk well, General Dessalines.”

Dessalines declared himself well. The rumour of war was the tonic he needed. Even at this distance, it had done more for him than all Thérèse’s medicines in a month. Thérèse saw that it was indeed so; and that he would lie at the Plateaux now before the enemy.

“Look at General Vincent,” whispered Madame Pascal to her husband, on whose arm she was leaning, as all stood on the height, anxiously gazing at the road, which wound like a yellow thread across the plain, and round the base of the hills. The troops were now hidden by a hanging wood; so that Afra rested her strained eyes for a moment, and happened to notice Vincent’s countenance. “Look, do look, at General Vincent!”



Her husband shook his head, and said that was what he was then thinking of. Dessalines and his wife were similarly occupied; and they and the Pascals communicated with each other by glances.

“What is the matter, Vincent,” asked Dessalines, outright. “Here are the long-expected come at last; and you look as gloomily upon them as if they were all France.”

“I am not such a man of blood as you, Dessalines. I have never given up the hope of accommodation and peace. It is strange, when the great men on both sides profess such a desire for peace, that we must see this breach made, nobody can tell why.”

“Why, my good fellow!” exclaimed Dessalines, staring into his face, “surely you are talking in your sleep! The heats put you to sleep last summer, and you are not awake yet. You know nothing that has been done since December, I do believe. Come! let me tell you, as little Tobie is not here to do it.”

“Don’t, love,” said Thérèse, pressing her husband’s arm. “No disputes to-day, Jacques! The times are too serious.”

“At another time, General,” said Vincent, “I will instruct you a little in my opinions, formed when my eyes were wide open in France; which yours have never been.”

“There they are! There they come from behind the wood, if we could but see them for the dust!” exclaimed some.

“Oh, this dust! we can see nothing!” cried others. “Who can give a guess how many they are?”

“It is impossible,” said Bellair. “Without previous knowledge, one could not tell them from droves of bullocks and goats going to market at Saint Marc.”

“Except for their caps,” said Euphrosyne. “I see a dozen or two of feathers through the crowd. Do not you, Afra?”

“Yes, but where is their music? We should hear something of it here,

surely.”

“Yes, it is a dumb march,” said Dessalines, “at present. They will strike up when they have turned the shoulder of that hill, no doubt. There! now listen!”

All listened, so that the brook, half a mile behind, made its babbling heard, but there was not a breath of music.

“Is it possible that Rochambeau should be in the way,” asked Thérèse.

“He cannot be in the way,” said her husband, “for where I stand, I command every foot of the road, up to our posts; but he may be nearer than we thought. I conclude that he is.”

“Look! See!” cried several. “They are taking another road. Where are they going! General Dessalines, what does it mean?”

“I would thank anyone to tell me that it is not as I fear,” replied Dessalines. “I fear Maurepas is effecting a junction, not with us, but with some one else.”

“With Rochambeau!”

“Traitor!”

“The traitor Maurepas!”

“His head!”

“Our all for his head!” cried the enraged gazers, as they saw Maurepas indeed diverging from the road to the post, and a large body of French troops turning a reach of the same road, from behind a hill. The two clouds of dust met. And now there was no more silence, but sound enough from below and afar. There was evidently clamour and rage among the troops in the Plateaux; and bursts of music from the army of their foes, triumphant and insulting, swelled the breeze.

“Our all for the head of Maurepas!” cried the group again.

“Nay,” said Vincent, “leave Maurepas his head. Who knows but that peace may come out of it? If all had done as he has now done, there could be no war.”

“In the same way,” exclaimed Pascal, “as if all of your colour thought as you do, there would then be no war, because there would be no men to fight; but only slaves to walk quietly under the yoke.”

“Be as angry as you will,” said Vincent, in a low voice to Pascal. “No one’s anger can alter the truth. It is impious and vain, here as elsewhere, to oppose Bonaparte. L’Ouverture will have to yield; you know that as well as I do, Monsieur Pascal; and those are the best friends of the blacks who help to render war impossible, and who bring the affair to a close while the First Consul may yet be placable.”

“Has that opinion of yours been offered to your Commander, Vincent?”

“It would have been, if he had asked for it. He probably knows that I had rather have seen him high in honour and function under Leclerc, than an outlaw, entrenched in the mornes.”

“Then why are you here?”

“I am here to protect those who cannot protect themselves, in these rough times. I am here to guard these ladies against all foes, come they whence they may,—from France, or out of our own savannahs,—from earth, air, or sea.—But hark! Silence, ladies! Silence all, for a moment!”

They listened, ready to take alarm from him, they knew not why. Nothing was heard but the distant baying of hounds,—the hunters coming home as it was supposed.

“Those are not Saint Domingo hounds,” said Vincent, in a low voice to Dessalines.

“No, indeed!—Home, all of you! Run for your lives! No questions, but run! Thérèse, leave me! I command you.—If this is your doing, Vincent—”

“Upon my soul, it is not. I know nothing about it.—Home, ladies, as fast as possible!”

“My children!” exclaimed Madame Bellair. “I can find them, if you will only tell me the danger,—what is the danger?”

“You hear those hounds. They are Cuba bloodhounds,” said Dessalines. “The fear is that they are leading an enemy over the hills.”

Not a word more was necessary. Every one fled who could, except Thérèse, who would not go faster than her husband’s strength permitted him to proceed. The voice of the hounds, and the tramp of horses’ feet were apparently so near, before they could reach the first sentry, that both were glad to see Pascal hurrying towards them, with two soldiers, who carried Dessalines to the house, while Pascal and Thérèse ran for their lives,—she striving to thank her companion for remembering to bring this aid.

“No thanks!” said Pascal. “General Dessalines is our great man now. We cannot do without him. Here is to be a siege,—a French troop has come over by some unsuspected pass;—I do not understand it.”

“Have you sent to the Plateaux?”

“Of course, instantly; but our messengers will probably be intercepted, though we have spared three men, to try three different paths. If L’Ouverture learns our condition, it will be by the firing.”

Some of the sportsmen had brought in from the hills the news of the presence of an enemy in the morne—not, apparently, on their way to the plantation, but engaged in some search among the hills. Others spoke tidings which would not have been told for hours but for the determination of Madame Bellair to set out in search of her children, whatever foe might be in the path. It became necessary to relate that it was too late to save her children. They had been seen lying in a track of the wood, torn in pieces by the bloodhounds, whose cry was heard now close at hand. Though there was no one who would at first undertake to tell the mother this, there were none who, in the end, could conceal it from her. They need not have feared that their work of defence would be impeded by her waitings and tears. There was not a cry; there was not a tear. Those who dared to look in her face saw that the fires of vengeance were consuming all that was womanish in Deesha’s nature. She was the soldier to whom,

under Dessalines, the successful defence of Le Zéphyr was mainly owing. Dessalines gave the orders, and superintended the arrangements, which she, with a frantic courage, executed. From that hour to the day when she and her husband expired in tortures, the forces of the First Consul had no more vindictive and mischievous enemy than the wife of Charles Bellair. Never propitiated, and long unsubdued, Charles Bellair and his wife lived henceforth in the fastnesses of the interior; and never for a day desisted from harassing the foe, and laying low every Frenchman on whom a sleepless, and apparently ubiquitous vengeance, could fix its grasp.

Deesha was not the only woman who seemed to bear a foeman's soul. Thérèse looked as few had seen her look before; and, busy as was her husband with his arrangements for the defence of the house, he could not but smile in the face which expressed so much. To her, and any companions she could find among the women, was confided the charge of Sabès and Martin, who, locked into a room whence they must hear the firing of their comrades outside, could not be supposed likely to make a desperate attempt to escape. Thérèse answered for their detention, if she had arms for herself and two companions. Whoever these heroines might be, the prisoners were found safe, after the French had decamped.

There were doubts which, at any other time, would have needed deliberation. It was a doubt, for a moment, whether to imprison Vincent, whose good faith was now extremely questionable: but there was no one to guard him; and his surprise and concern were evidently so real, and his activity was so great in preparing for defence, that there seemed nothing for it but trusting him to protect the women who were under his charge. Dessalines, however, kept his eye upon him, and his piece in readiness to shoot him down, on the first evidence of treachery.

Another doubt was as to the foe they had to contend against. How they got into the morne, and why such an approach was made to an object so important as securing a party of hostages like these; whether, if Vincent had nothing to do with it, the spies had; and whether, therefore, more attacks might not be looked for, were questions which passed through many minds, but to which no consideration could now be given. Here were the foe; and they must be kept off.

The struggle was short and sharp. Small as was the force without, it far outnumbered that of the fighting men in what had been supposed the secure retreat of Le Zéphyr; and there is no saying but that the ladies might have found themselves at length on Tortuga, and in the presence of Bonaparte's sister, if the firing had not reached the watchful ear of L'Ouverture at the Plateaux, on the way to which all the three messengers had been captured. Toussaint arrived with a troop, in time to deliver his household. After his first onset, the enemy retreated; at first carrying away some prisoners, but dropping them on their road, one after another, as they were more and more hardly pressed by L'Ouverture, till the few survivors were glad to escape as they could, by the way they came.

Toussaint returned, his soldiers bringing in the mangled bodies of the two boys. When he inquired what loss had been sustained, he found that three, besides the children, were killed; and that Vincent was the only prisoner, besides the three messengers turned back in the morne.

"Never was there a more willing prisoner, in my opinion," observed Pascal.

"He carries away a mark from us, thank Heaven!" said Dessalines. "Madame Bellair shot him."

It was so. Deesha saw Vincent join the French, and go off with them, on the arrival of L'Ouverture; and, partly through revenge, but not without a thought of the disclosures it was in his power to make, she strove to silence him for ever. She only reached a limb, however, and sent him away, as Dessalines said, bearing a mark from Le Zéphyr.

One of the French troop, made prisoner, was as communicative as could have been desired—as much so as Vincent would probably be on the other side. He declared that the attack on Le Zéphyr was a mere accident: that his company had entered the morne, led by the bloodhounds in pursuit of some negroes, from whom they wanted certain information for Rochambeau, respecting the localities; that they had thus become acquainted with the almost impracticable pass by which they had entered; that, when the hounds had destroyed the children, and proved that there were inhabitants in the morne, the situation of Le Zéphyr had

been discovered, and afterwards the rank of its inhabitants; that the temptation of carrying off these hostages to Rochambeau had been too strong to be resisted; and hence the attack.

“We shall have to remove,” the ladies said to each other, “now that our retreat is known.”

“Shall we have to remove?” asked Euphrosyne, whose love of the place could not be quenched, even by the blood upon its threshold. “I am not afraid to stay, if any one else will.”

“How can you be so rash, Euphrosyne?” asked Afra.

“I would not be rash, Euphrosyne replied; but we know now how these people came into the morne, and L’Overture will guard the pass. And remember, Afra, we have beaten them; and they will take care how they attack us another time. Remember, we have beaten them.”

“We have beaten them,” said Dessalines, laughing. “And what did you do to beat off the French, my little lady?”

“I watched the prisoners through the keyhole; and if they had made the least attempt to set the house on fire—”

“You would have put it out with your tears—hey, Mademoiselle Euphrosyne?”

“Ask Madame, your lady, what she would have done in such a case: she stood beside me. But does L’Overture say we must remove?”

“L’Overture thinks,” said Toussaint, who heard her question, “that this is still the safest place for the brave women who keep up his heart by their cheerful faces. He is ashamed that they have been negligently guarded. It shall not happen again.”

He was just departing for the Plateaux. As he went out he said to his wife, while he cast a look of tender compassion upon Madame Bellair—

“I shall tell Charles that you will cherish Deesha. It is well that we can let her remain here, beside the graves of her children. Bury them with

honour, Margot.”





## Chapter Thirty Two.

### August far-off.

In time of peace, and if her children had perished by any other mode, it might have been a consolation to Deesha to dwell for a time beside their graves. As it was, the deep bark of the murderous dogs filled her ear perpetually, and their fangs seemed to tear her heart. Her misery in the quiet mansion of the mornes was unendurable; and the very day after the funeral she departed, with her husband, to a place where no woman's eye could mark her maternal anguish—where no semblance of a home kept alive the sense of desolation. She retired, with her husband and his troop, to a fastness higher up in the Morne-du-Chaos, whence they kept watch over the regular entrenchments below, cut off supplies of provisions from the French, harassed all their marches, and waged a special war against the bloodhounds—the negro's most dreaded foe. More, however, were perpetually brought over from Cuba, and regularly trained, by means too barbarous for detail, to make negroes their prey. From the hour when Deesha first heard the cry of a bloodhound, more than the barbarism of her native Congo took possession of her. Never more was she seen sowing under the shade of the tamarind-tree. Never more did she spread the table, for husband or guests, within a house. Never more was her voice heard singing, gaily or plaintively, the songs that she had gathered from the palm groves of Africa, or the vineyards of France, or from the flowery fields of a mother's hopes. Henceforth she carried the rifle, and ate her meal in stern silence, in the cave of the rock. When she laughed, it was as her shot went straight to her victim's heart. When she spoke, it was of the manoeuvres of her mountain war; and the only time that she was ever seen to shed tears was when a rumour of a truce reached the pinnacle on which she dwelt. Though assured that any truce could be only, as every negro knew, a truce till August, the mere semblance of accommodation with the foe forced tears of vexation from eyes which were for ever after dry. If she felt a gleam of satisfaction before leaving Le Zéphyr, it was at the singular accident by which Juste, always so bent upon being a soldier, shared the honours of a military funeral. Juste and Tobie were buried with the soldiers who had fallen in the defence of the house; and to the father, who followed the coffins, and

the mother, who hid herself in the thicket, there was something like pleasure in the roll of the drum, and the measure of the dead march, and the warlike tone of the shrill dirge which was sung round the open graves, and the discharge of firearms over them—a satisfaction like that of fulfilling the last wish of their boy. This done, and the graves fenced and planted, the childless pair departed, wishing, perhaps, in their own hearts, that they could weep their misfortune like those whom they left behind.

For some time forward from that day there was no more cause for weeping at Le Zéphyr. The season had come for the blacks to show what they could do. In the hope, as he said, of hastening on the peace, Vincent told all that he knew of the plans and resources of the outlawed chiefs; and, in consequence, the French at length proceeded to vigorous action, believing that if they could force the post at the Plateaux, they could so impoverish and disable the negro leaders as to compel them to become mere banditti, who might be kept in check by guarding the mountain-passes. The French force was, therefore, brought up again and again to the attack, and always in vain. The ill success of the invaders was, no doubt, partly owing to the distress which overtook their soldiery whenever they had been a few days absent from their camp and their ships. Whichever way they turned, and however sudden the changes of their march, they found the country laid waste—the houses unroofed, the cattle driven away, the fields burned or inundated, and nothing but a desert under their feet, and flames on the horizon, while the sun of the tropic grew daily hotter overhead. These were disadvantages; but the French had greatly the superiority in numbers, in experience, and in supplies of ammunition. Yet, for many weeks, they failed in all their attempts. They left their dead before the entrance of the Plateaux, or heaped up in the neighbouring fields, or strewed along the mountain-paths, now to the number of seven hundred, now twelve, and now fifteen hundred; while the negroes numbered their losses by tens or scores. The first combined attack, when Maurepas, with his army, joined Rochambeau, and two other divisions met them from different points, was decisively disastrous; and even Vincent began to doubt whether the day of peace, the day of chastisement of L'Ouverture's romance, was so near as he had supposed.

The last time that the French dared the blacks to come forth from their

entrenchments, and fight on the plain afforded the most triumphant result to the negroes. So tremendous was the havoc among the French—while the blacks charged without intermission, rolling on their force from their entrenchments, each advancing line throwing itself upon the ground immediately after the charge, while those behind passed over their bodies, enabling them to rise and retreat in order to rush forward again in their turn—that the troops of the Rhine and the Alps were seized with a panic, and spread a rumour that there was sorcery among the blacks, by which they were made invulnerable. It was scarcely possible, too, to believe in the inferiority of their numbers, so interminable seemed the succession of foes that presented a fresh front. Rochambeau saw that, if not ordered to retreat, his troops would fly; and whether it was a retreat or a flight at last, nobody could afterwards determine. They left fifteen hundred dead on the field, and made no pause till they reached Plaisance.

From this time, the French generals resolved against more fighting, till reinforcements arrived from France. New hopes inspired the blacks—all of them, at least, who did not, like L'Ouverture and Christophe, anticipate another inundation of the foe from the sea. Placide, who was foremost in every fight, was confident that the struggle was nearly over, and rode up to Le Zéphyr occasionally with tidings which spread hope and joy among the household, and not only made his mother proud, but lightened her heart.

He told, at length, that the French, not relishing the offensive war begun by Christophe, had blockaded his father in the Plateaux. He treated this blockade as a mere farce—as a mode of warfare which would damage the French irreparably as the heats came on, while it could not injure the blacks, acquainted as they were with the passes of the country.

Placide would have been right, if only one single circumstance had been otherwise than as it was. L'Ouverture had nothing to fear from a blockade in regard to provisions. He had adherents above, among the heights, who could supply his forces with food for themselves and fodder for their horses inexhaustibly. Every ravine in their rear yielded water. They had arms enough; and in their climate, and with the summer coming on, the clothing of the troops was a matter of small concern. But their ammunition was running short. Everything was endeavoured, and timely,

to remedy this; but there was no effectual remedy. Many a perilous march over the heights, and descent upon the shore, did one and another troop attempt—many a seizure of French supplies did they actually effect—many a trip did Paul, and others who had boats, make to one and another place, where it was hoped that powder and ball might be obtained; but no sufficient supply could be got. The foe were not slow in discovering this, and in deriving courage from their discovery. From the moment that they found themselves assailed with flights of arrows from the heights, and that their men were wounded, not always with ball, or even shot, but with buttons, nails, and other bits of old metal—with anything rather than lead—they kept a closer watch along the coast and the roads, that no little boat, no cart or pack-horse, might escape capture. Towards the end of April the difficulty became so pressing, that L'Ouverture found himself compelled to give up his plan of defensive war, with all its advantages, and risk much to obtain the indispensable means of carrying on the struggle.

It was with this view that he mustered his force, gave out nearly the last remains of his ammunition, burst victoriously through the blockading troops, routed them, and advanced to attack the French lines posted at Plaisance. Behind him he left few but his wounded, commanded by Dessalines, who was yet hardly sufficiently recovered to undertake a more arduous service. Before him were the troops under Maurepas, whom he had always believed he could recall with a word, if he could but meet them face to face. Others probably believed so too; for those troops had, on every occasion, been kept back, and so surrounded, as that no one from their old haunts and their old companions could reach them. Now, however, the French force was so reduced by the many defeats they had undergone, that it was probable they would be obliged to put faith in the renegado division, if attacked; and L'Ouverture was not without hopes of striking a decisive blow by recalling the negroes in the French lines to their allegiance to himself.

Everything answered to his anticipations. When he advanced to the attack, he found the troops of Maurepas posted in the front, to weaken the resolution of their former comrades, or receive their first fire. His heart bounded at the sight; and all his resentment against them as renegades melted into compassion for the weakness of those who had been reared in terror and servility. He rushed forward, placing himself, without a

thought of fear, between the two armies, and extended his arms towards the black lines of the enemy, shouting to them—

“My soldiers, will you kill your general? Will you kill your father, your comrades, your brothers?”

In an instant every black was on his knees. It was a critical moment for the French. They rushed on, drowning the single voice on which their destruction seemed to hang, threw the kneeling soldiers on their faces, strode over their prostrate bodies, and nearly effected their object of closing round L'Ouverture, and capturing him. His danger was imminent. The struggle was desperate;—but his soldiers saved him. The battle was fierce and long, but again and again turning in his favour, till all seemed secure. He was forcing the enemy from their lines, and giving out the inspiring negro cry of victory, when a new force marched up against him, stopped the retreat of the French, and finally repulsed the blacks—exhausted as they were, and unable to cope with a fresh foe. In the most critical moment, four thousand troops, fresh from the ships had arrived to convert the defeat of the French into a victory; and they brought into the battle more than their own strength in the news that reinforcements from France were pouring in upon every point of the coast.

The news reached L'Ouverture, and completed the discouragement of his little army. It decided him at once in what direction to retreat. It was useless to return to the Plateaux, as the force there was more than proportioned to the supply of ammunition. This fresh descent of the French upon the coast would have the effect of dispersing the small bodies of black troops in the north. A rendezvous was necessary, in order to make the most both of the men and stores. He proceeded to post his troops at Le Dondon, and Marmalade, sending orders to Christophe to meet him there. There they might possibly be usefully employed in cutting off access to the French army at Plaisance, and at the same time supplying their own wants, while deliberating on what plan to carry on the struggle, under the new circumstances, till August; for, whatever treachery and defection might have to be encountered elsewhere, there was never a moment's doubt that Nature would prove a faithful ally, when her appointed season came.

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## Chapter Thirty Three.

### Conflicting.

“What to do!” said L’Ouverture to Christophe, as they entered his apartment at Le Dondon. “What to do? Everything, this year and for the future, may depend on what we decide on for our next step. And we must decide before we leave this room, say your thoughts, Henri.”

“I am for a truce.”

“I am for a retreat in the mountains. Now for our reasons! Why do you desire a truce?”

“Because I see that Leclerc so earnestly wishes it, that I am confident we may make good terms, for the interval of waiting till we recover altogether our power, our territory, and our people. Leclerc will revoke our outlawry. That done, you will be the virtual ruler of our people till August; after which no foes will be left upon our soil. What have you to say against this?”

“That it is yielding, unnecessarily and fatally, to the invaders. Where are our censures of Clerveaux and Maurepas, if we, too, yield to Leclerc, and make terms with him?”

“Every one of our people will understand the difference in the cases. Every one of them sees the difference between falling at the feet of Leclerc, like Clerveaux; or joining him on the very field on which you were about to oppose him, like Maurepas; and making a truce, for a short interval, when you are almost destitute of ammunition, and the enemy so exhausted with the heats as to decline coming into the field; while, at the same time, fresh troops are pouring in upon the coast, in such numbers as to prevent your regaining your independence by remaining in arms. If every man of the negroes has not wit enough to understand this for himself, who is better able than you to inform them of whatsoever you desire them to know? Be assured, Toussaint, powerful as your influence is this day among our people, it will be more so when you are no longer an outlaw. It is worth a large sacrifice of our feelings to have our outlawry revoked.”

“Have you more reasons to give for accepting a truce; or, as the French understand it, a peace?”

“Let me first hear your reasons for a retreat in the mountains.”

“A retreat in the mountains is the more honest proceeding of the two, Henri. If we make terms with the French, it will be knowing that that which goes by the name of peace is no more than a truce till August.”

“And will not they know that as well as we? Is it necessary to tell the whites, at this day, that they are liable to the fever in the heats, and that any army, however glorious in its strength previously, becomes a skeleton at that season? This is a matter that is perfectly understood by all the parties.”

“We must look forward, Henri, to the days to come, when August itself is past. The influence of myself or my successor will be injured by my having, even apparently, yielded to the invaders. My power over our people’s minds will be immeasurably greater, if I shall have consistently refused to tolerate the foe, from the moment of their first hostile act to the end of the struggle. Am I not right?”

“That character of consistency will be purchased at a price too dear;—at the cost of your characteristic of mercy, Toussaint—of reverence for human life. You will be ranked with Dessalines, if you keep up, for four months, the disturbance and devastation of war, when every one knows that your end will be as certainly gained after these four months have been spent in peace. What a grief it would be to see you changed in all eyes from the adored L’Ouverture to Toussaint the bandit! Pardon my freedom.”

“I required it of you, my friend; so do not speak of pardon. We are agreed that the moral influence of my conduct is the main consideration, as the destruction of the French army is certain, sooner or later—our independence secure, if we so will it. If we remain in the mountains, cutting off in detail the grasp which France shall attempt to lay on any part of our territory or our system; training our people, meantime, for another campaign, if France should attempt another; replenishing gradually our stores with perpetual small captures from the enemy,

allowing them no asylum, discountenancing their presence, in every possible way—we shall be taking the shortest, and therefore the most merciful method of convincing the French and the blacks at once that their empire here is at an end, and slavery henceforth impossible for the negroes of Saint Domingo. But, if I make a peace or truce, how dim and perplexed will be the impression of my conduct! I cannot hold office, civil or military, under the French. Henri, you would not have me do so!”

“Certainly not. Till August, retire to your estate, that every office in the colony may thereafter be in your hand.”

“If I co-operate with the French, even in the faintest appearance, my moral influence will be all on their side, and a second year of warfare will find us farther from peace or independence than the first. If I act, more or less, for the blacks, Leclerc will send me to France as a traitor. If I do nothing, neither party will believe in my doing nothing: each will suspect me of secret dealings with the other. It is also true that I cannot, if I would, be inoperative. Every glance of my eye, every word of my lips, in my own piazza at Pongaudin, would be made to bear its interpretation, and go to disturb the single and distinct image which I now stand before every eye and in every mind.”

“I do not agree with you,” said Henri. “While the image of August is distinct in the minds of the Saint Domingo people, it will keep your influence single and intelligible to them. As for what the French think, that is their own affair. They have the means of knowledge. Let them use them. There is one fact which no one can misunderstand, the while—that after the defections under which you have suffered, and under your known want of military stores, an incursive war from the mountains appears ferocious—both revengeful and cruel—when every one knows that time will render it unnecessary.”

“These defections do not discourage me as they do you, Henri. Full one third of my forces are faithful—are proved so by trial. These, with the goodness of our cause, are enough for my hopes—almost for my desires. There is no ferocity, but rather mercy, in hastening on the day of our independence and peace, by using a force so respectable—so honoured, as this tried remnant of my army.”



“You reckon fallaciously, Toussaint. You include my troops in the force you speak of.”

“Henri!” exclaimed L’Ouverture, stopping in his walk up the apartment; “it cannot be that you will desert me. No, no! forgive me that the words passed my lips!”

“Never will I desert you or our cause, Toussaint. Never will I intermit my enmity to our invaders; never will I live for any other object than the liberties of our people. But the time may be come for us to pursue our common object by different paths. I cannot go and play the bandit in the mountains.”

“Why did you not call me a bandit when I was at the Plateaux?”

“Because you were then waging an honourable war. War, not peace, was then beckoning you on to freedom. A state of voluntary outlawry, a practice of needless ravage, will make a different man of you. Say no more of it, Toussaint: I cannot be lieutenant to— Do not make me utter the word.”

“You have always hitherto obeyed me, Henri.”

“I have; and when we are in a state of war, I will obey you again. Do not class me with La Plume and Clerveaux—or, rather, do, if you will, and when August is past I will prove to you the difference.”

“Do not you see, Henri, that you not only cease to aid me at a great crisis but that you put a force upon me?”

“I cannot help it; I must do so, rather than go and be a butcher in the mornes with Dessalines.”

“Say with me, too: call me a butcher, too! After the long years that you have known my heart, call me a butcher too.”

“Let us talk sense, Toussaint: this is no time for trifling. After August, I shall join you again—to fight, if it be necessary: but I hope it will not.”

“Not if heaven strengthens me to do my work without you, Christophe.”

After the fever, it is much for the sick to walk: we do not expect the dead to rise.”

“When I join you, after August,” resumed Christophe, “whether for the labours of war or peace, you, and perhaps even Jacques, will wish that your hands were as clean from blood as mine. Your thought, Toussaint!—tell me your thought. If—”

“I was thinking that you *will* join us, Henri. You *will* labour till our great work is done. You may err; and you may injure our cause by your error; but you will never be seduced from the rectitude of your own intentions. That is what I was thinking. I would fain keep my judgment of you undisturbed by a grieving heart.”

“You are more than generous, Toussaint: you are just. I was neither. Pardon me. But I am unhappy—I am wretched that you are about to forfeit your greatness, when—Oh, Toussaint! nothing should ever grieve me again, if we could but agree to-day—if I could but see you retire, with your wonted magnanimity, to Pongaudin, there, with your wonted piety, to await the leadings from above. Where is your wonted faith, that you do not see them now, through the clouds that are about us?”

“I cannot but see them now,” said Toussaint, sighing; “and to see is to follow. If you are wholly resolved to make a truce for yourself and your division—”

“I am wholly resolved to do so.”

“Then you compel me to do the same. Without you, I have not force sufficient to maintain an effectual resistance.”

“Thank God! then we shall see you again L’Ouverture, and no longer Toussaint, the outlaw. You will—”

“Hear me, Henri! You put this constraint upon me. What are you prepared to do, if the French prove treacherous, after our peace is made?”

“To drive them into the sea, to be sure. You do not suppose I shall regard them as friends the more for making a truce with them! We will keep our eyes upon them. We will preserve an understanding with the whole

island, as to the vigilance which the blacks must exercise, day and night, over their invaders. The first treacherous thought in Leclerc's mind is a breach of the truce; and dearly shall he rue it."

"This is all well-planned, Henri. If the cunning of Leclerc proves deeper than yours—"

"Say ours, Toussaint."

"No. I have no part in this arrangement. I act under your compulsion, and under my own protest; as I require of you, Henri, to remember. If we are not deep enough, vigilant enough, active enough, for Leclerc and his council—if he injures us before August, and Bonaparte ordains a second campaign after it, are you ready to endure the responsibility of whatever may befall?"

"I am."

"Have you looked well forward into the future, and detected every mischief that may arise from our present temporising, and resolved that it was a less evil than losing the rest of this season, putting a compulsion upon your best friend, and fettering the deliverer of your people?"

"I have so looked forward—repudiating the charge of undutiful compulsion. I act for myself, and those under my command."

"Virtually compelling me to act with you, by reducing me from being the General of an army to be the leader of a troop; and by exposing our cause to the peril—the greatest of all—of a declared division between you and me. I yield, Christophe; but what I am going to do, I do under protest. Order in the French prisoners."

"Yet one moment," said Henri. "Let me reason with you a little further. Be satisfied of the goodness of the act before you do it."

"I do not need satisfaction on that. I do not quarrel with the terms we are to make. I do not protest against any of the provisions of the treaty. I protest against the necessity of treating. Summon the prisoners."

"Can you," said Christophe, still delaying, "can you improve upon the

terms proposed? Can the conditions be altered, so as to give more satisfaction to your superior foresight? I would not use flattering terms at this moment, Toussaint; you know I would not. But your sagacity is greater than mine, or any one's. I distrust myself about the terms of the treaty, I assure you."

"About anything more than the mere terms of the treaty?" asked Toussaint, again stopping in his walk.

"About the conditions—and about the conditions only."

"Your self-distrust is misplaced, and comes too late. Order the prisoners to be brought in."

As Sabès and Martin entered, L'Ouverture and Christophe renewed, by a glance, their agreement to speak and act with the utmost apparent sameness of views and intentions. It was but a poor substitute for the real coincidence which had always hitherto existed; but it was all that was now possible.

"I am going to send you back to your Captain-General, gentlemen," said Toussaint.

"Not without apology, I trust," said Sabès, "for having subjected to such treatment as we have undergone, messengers sent to parley—bearing actually the necessary credentials from the Captain-General. For nine weeks have my companion and I been dragged from place to place, wherever it suited your purposes to go, in perpetual fear for our lives."

"I am sorry you have trembled for your lives, gentlemen," replied Toussaint. "It was an unnecessary suffering, as I gave you my word, on your capture, that your persons were safe. Considering that you were found crouching among the ferns, within hearing of my private conversation with my son respecting the affairs of the war, I think your complaints of your detention unreasonable; and I have no apology to make, on that ground, either to yourselves or your commander. I cannot hear another word of complaint, gentlemen. You know well that by any general in Europe you would, under similar circumstances, have been hanged as spies. Now to public business. I am about to send you to General Leclerc, with proposals from General Christophe and myself to

bring this painful war to an end, according to the desire of the heads of both armies. We all know such to be the wish of the Captain-General.”

“No doubt. It was never his desire, nor that of any true Frenchman,” said Sabès, “to be at war on the soil of this colony. You alone, General Toussaint, are responsible for the loss of lives, and all the other miseries which it has occasioned.”

“How so? Let him say on, Lieutenant Martin. No one suffers by speaking his thoughts to me, be they what they may. On what consideration is it possible to impute this war to me?”

“It would never have broken out if you had not despised the authority, and thrown off the control, of the mother-country. This view cannot be new to you, General Toussaint,” continued Sabès, on seeing the look of amazement with which L’Ouverture turned to Christophe.

“Indeed it is,” replied Toussaint. “The charge is as unexpected as it is untrue. You, sir,” he said, appealing to Lieutenant Martin, “are a naval officer. Tell me how you would act in such a case as this. Suppose you commanded a vessel of the state, authorised and approved in your office? suppose another officer came—without notice, without your having heard a word of complaint—and leaped upon your deck, with a crew double the number of your own, striking down and fettering your men. If you resisted their violence in such a case, successfully or unsuccessfully, would you admit that you were the cause of the struggle—that you despised the government under which you held your command—that you threw off the control of your superiors?”

There was a pause.

“Such is my case,” said Toussaint; “and thus you must represent it, if you be men of honour. The purport of my letter to the Captain-General (which will be ready by the time you are prepared for your journey), is to declare the willingness of General Christophe and myself to negotiate, as the continuation of the war, under the circumstances which have arisen, appears to be without object. The terms which we require, and which it is supposed General Leclerc will agree to, are an amnesty for all who have ever fought, or otherwise acted, under our command; and the

preservation of the rank of all black officers, civil and military. My friend Christophe and I will retire to our estates, to pray for the peace and welfare of the colony—the peace and welfare which have, notwithstanding our prayers, been so unhappily broken up. Gentlemen, there can be little doubt that the Captain-General will agree to these terms of pacification.”

“We cannot answer for his replies,” said Martin. “Our representations shall be faithful.”

“I doubt it not,” said Toussaint, “after experiencing your companion’s courage and fidelity in rebuke; for which, though he is mistaken in fact, I honour him. Nor can I doubt the readiness of the Captain-General to treat with us on the terms I shall propose; for he must know that I shall always, among my native fastnesses, be strong to burn, ravage, and destroy. He must know, that though my negroes may be conquered, they will never more be subdued; and that, entrenched in the mornes, they can always effectually prevent an unfriendly settlement of the island. He must know that I am open to generous treatment; but otherwise ready and able to sell dearly a life which has done our country some service.”

The French officers assented; but waited, as if to hear something more, besides Christophe’s declaration, for his own part, of agreement in what L’Ouverture had said.

Sabès at length spoke, not without another cautionary sign from his companion.

“Your generous frankness, General Toussaint,” said he, “induces me to remind you of one more duty which, in case of the desired pacification, you will owe to the Captain-General. You will hold yourself indebted to France for all such treasure as, in an hour of alarm, you may have chosen to conceal.”

“What does this mean?” said Toussaint. “General Christophe, do you know of any public treasure being concealed in any part of the island?”

“None,” said Christophe, “public or private.”

“Nor do I. You hear, gentlemen.”

“You forget, General Toussaint, what we heard on the occasion of our capture.”

“You forget your own words to us,” said Lieutenant Martin—“that we had seen and heard too much for you to let us go.”

“I remember my words perfectly; and that they referred to my choice of a post in the mornes, and a retreat for my family—affairs long since made public enough. What else do you suppose you saw and heard? If I spoke of depositing my treasures in the mornes, I was doubtless speaking of my household. Did you understand me to mean gold and silver? What was it that you suppose you saw and heard?”

“We saw new-made graves, and the tools that dug them, after having heard shots.”

“You are welcome to dig upon the Plateaux, and to take whatever treasure you may find. You will find only the bones of the brave who fell in attacking and defending the post.”

“And of those who, being there, can tell no tales. You forget that we heard their death-shots before we saw their graves. The time is come for you to tell the secret that you buried with them.”

Christophe rarely laughed; but he laughed now.

“They believe,” said he—“apparently they believe—that you hid treasure in the morne, and then shot and buried the servants employed.”

“We do,” said the officers, gravely.

“Were you really about to carry this story to the Captain-general?” asked Toussaint, smiling. “Tell him that the wealth of the colony, sufficient for the desires of its inhabitants, is dispersed through all its dwellings, to be enjoyed—not hidden by avarice, and sealed with blood.”

“We are too well informed,” said Sabès, “concerning the wealth and splendour of the colony to believe that any part of its treasure has met our eyes that can be concealed. Duty to France now requires that she should be put in possession of the whole wealth of the island.”

“Let France cultivate an honourable peace,” said Toussaint, “and her authorities will assuredly see the wealth of the colony spread over all its fields, and amassed in every harbour. We can then present an overflowing public treasury. That is all I have to offer: and it ought to be enough.”

Sabès did not press the point further, because he saw it would be useless. But he and his companion were more and more persuaded of the truth of their notion of what they had seen and heard, the more they recalled the tales told at the Court of France of the plate, the gems, the bullion and coin, and the personal ornaments which abounded, even in the prosperous days of the old emigrants. Every one knew, too, that the colony had been more prosperous than ever since. It is not known by whom the amount of the hidden treasure was, at length, fixed at thirty-two millions of francs. Sabès and Martin simply told their story and their ideas to Leclerc, adding the information that Toussaint L’Ouverture was an adept in dissimulation; that they had as nearly as possible been deprived of this piece of insight, by the apparent frankness and candour of his manners; and that, but for the boldness of Sabès in pressing the affair of the buried treasure, they should actually have quitted the negro chief, after an occasional intercourse of nine weeks, without any knowledge of that power of dissimulation which had been formerly attributed to him by those who, it now appeared, knew him well, and which must be the guiding fact in all the Captain-General’s dealings with him. His cunning must be met by all the cunning that Leclerc’s united council could muster, or destruction would lurk under the pretended pacification. Accordingly, the whole of Leclerc’s policy henceforth proceeded on the supposed fact of Toussaint L’Ouverture being the prince of dissemblers.

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## **Chapter Thirty Four.**

### **Receding.**

Leclerc was eager to receive proposals of peace,—to owe a respite to dissimulation itself, rather than continue the war, under his present difficulties. It was weary work, keeping up a show before the eyes of the blacks, when, of the twelve thousand soldiers whom he had brought with



him, five thousand had fallen in battle, and five thousand more were in the hospitals. Twenty thousand had arrived within a few weeks, from France; and, of these, scarcely eleven thousand remained fit for service. Happy indeed was Leclerc to receive replies to his overtures of peace; and anxious was he to testify every respect to the generals whom he had lately insulted and defied. He revoked their outlawry, commending them to the esteem and good offices of those to whom he had desired to deliver them as traitors. It is true, he transmitted to France magnificent accounts of the surrender of the blacks, of their abject supplications for their lives, and of the skill and prowess by which he had subdued the rebels, and restored the colony to France. But these boastings were not known in Saint Domingo; though the true state of the case was whispered in Paris, as regarded the mortality among the white troops, and the formidable influence still retained by the negro leaders.

Leclerc invited Toussaint to visit him at Cap; as well aware, doubtless, as Toussaint himself, that this open indication of amity was necessary to protect the army from the ill-will of the blacks, who would not believe, on any other authority than L'Ouverture's own, that he had made peace with the invaders.

It was a mournful, though showy demonstration, and all parties were glad when it was over. As L'Ouverture rode from Le Dondon to Cap Français, followed by a guard of three hundred and fifty horse, he was greeted by the inhabitants with the profoundest respect. Only in by-places, or from the depths of some wood, did a few voices sing, in negro language, the new song which was spreading over the island in praise of August,—exhorting to patience and peace till August. As he entered the town of Cap, the thunder of artillery reverberated from the heights around. Every fort along the coast, every vessel in the roads, fired its salute; and the inhabitants of every colour issued from their houses, to pay honour to their adored L'Ouverture.

Leclerc stood ready to receive him, and to administer to him the oath of allegiance in the hall of Government-House, the doors of which stood wide, and were carefully kept so by Toussaint's own guard, who would not, for a moment, let their commander be hidden from their sight. They formed in the Walk, and in the court of Government-House, remaining in fighting order, with drawn sabres, during the whole of the interview

between the late and the present Commander-in-chief.

With an unaltered countenance, Toussaint took once more the oath of allegiance to France;—the oath which it had never been his desire to break. He smiled when he heard this simple act proclaimed by another roar of artillery, such as might have greeted a victory. Leclerc frowned; for it was not followed, as he had hoped, by acclamations. The echoes died away into deep silence.

It was an awkward moment. Leclerc hoped that Toussaint would lead the conversation. But Toussaint was deep in thought. Gazing on the anxious and sickly face of the Captain-General, he was grieving at heart that he, and so many thousands more who might have lived long and useful lives at home, should be laid low, in the course of a bad enterprise against the liberties of the natives. The mournful gaze of his mild eyes confused the Captain-General, so that he said the first thing that occurred, in order to break the silence. He observed that he understood there was some business yet standing over for settlement between the parties who had so happily met at last. He had no doubt that General Toussaint would see clearly that in his allegiance to France was involved the duty of accounting to the government for the wealth of the island, whether open to estimate or concealed in the mornes, or elsewhere.

“I have heard something of this before,” said Toussaint, “and are as ignorant as yourself of any buried treasure. In this island, Nature is so perpetually bountiful, that we have not the temptation which we are told exists elsewhere, to amass wealth against a time of dearth. I have no treasure.”

“If so, how could you have proposed to remain out of the bounds of the law, as you did till lately? Nature is not bountiful on the mountain-peaks, which must then have been your abode. At least, Nature does not there bring forth arms and ammunition. Without treasure, with which to purchase supplies, how would you have obtained arms and ammunition?”

“I should have taken yours.”

Leclerc saw that even his own followers were more disposed to applaud

than resent these words; and he, therefore, changed the topic.

“It is fortunate, then, for all parties,” said he, “that future struggles are avoided. We are friends. Let it go abroad through the whole island that we are friends.”

Toussaint made no reply. Leclerc continued—

“You, General, and your troops, will be employed and treated like the rest of my army. With regard to yourself, you desire repose.”—Looking round, he repeated the words emphatically. “You desire repose: and you deserve it. After a man has sustained for several years the government of Saint Domingo, I apprehend he needs repose. I leave you at liberty to retire to which of your estates you please. I rely so much on the attachment you bear the colony of Saint Domingo, as to believe you will employ what moments of leisure you may have during your retreat, in communicating to me your ideas respecting the means proper to be taken to cause agriculture and commerce again to flourish. Respecting your forces, and those of General Christophe, I hold full information. As soon as a list and statement of the troops under General Dessalines are transmitted to me, I will communicate my instructions as to the positions they are to take.”

“I will send a messenger from my guard to General Dessalines, this day,” said Toussaint. “I shall be passing near his post, on my way to my house at Pongaudin; and he shall have your message.”

“This day?” said Leclerc, in a tone of some constraint. “Will you not spend this day with us?”

“I cannot,” replied Toussaint. “I must be gone to my home.”

As soon as it was believed that he was fairly out of hearing, the acts of the morning were proclaimed throughout Cap Français as the pardon of Generals Toussaint and Christophe. This proclamation was afterwards published, by Leclerc’s orders, in the *Gazette du Cap*, where it was read by Toussaint in his study at Pongaudin.

“See!” said he, pointing out the paragraph to Pascal, with a smile. “This is the way of men with each other. See the complacency with which one

man pardons another for the most necessary, or the best deed of his life!”

During a halt on the road to Pongaudin, Isaac and Aimée appeared. Aimée was tearful, but her face was happy. So were her words.

“Oh, father!” she said, “who could have hoped, after what has happened, that all would so soon be well!”

“I am rejoiced to see you happy, my children.”

“And you, father, you are happy? Honoured as you are—the colony at peace—all parties friends—no more divisions—no more struggles in families! Father, answer me. Is it not all well?”

“No, my child.”

“Are you unhappy, father?”

“Yes, my child.”

“I am quite disappointed, quite grieved,” said Aimée, drawing back from his arms, to look in his face.

“Vincent gave us a glorious account on Tortuga,” said Isaac, “of the welcome you had at Cap. We thought—”

“I did not see Vincent at Cap.”

“He was not there; but he knew all—”

“But, father,” said Aimée, “you will see General Vincent. You will see him at Pongaudin. Now that you have done as he did—now that you are friends with the French, as he is, you will see him, father?”

“I have never done as Vincent did, Aimée; and my friendship with the French is what it ever was. If Vincent comes as your husband, I will see him as such. As a friend, I cannot. Is he your husband, my love?”

“No!”

“He is to be your husband?”

“If you would see him. If he were your friend. He urges me, father; and Madame Leclerc and Isaac urge me; but I cannot marry him yet. Father, you do not know how much my heart is with you and my mother.”

“Are you happy, Aimée?”

“Madame Leclerc is very kind; and Vincent’s love is everything that ought to make me happy, but—”

“Will you go home with me, my child?”

“How glad I should be, if only you loved Vincent!”

“I cannot, Aimée. Would that I could!”

“Then, when I have married him, you will see him as my husband? I cannot marry till my heart is more at ease—till I see everybody as friendly as Vincent said they were. But when we are married we will come to Pongaudin. May we?”

“Come, my dear, when you will. Your parents’ home and hearts will always be open to you. Meantime, write often to us, Aimée.”

“Oh, yes! I will. I will write very often; and you will answer. I have heard perpetually of my mother, and of poor Génifrède. But where is Placide? I thought we should have met him. Was not he at Cap?”

“At Cap! No, indeed! He was too heart-broken to be at Cap to-day.”

“I wish I could understand it all!” said Aimée, sadly. “I am sure there are many things that I do not know or comprehend. I thought all had been right now; and yet you and Placide are unhappy. I cannot understand it all.”

“Time will explain, my child. There will come a day when all doubts will be cleared up, and all woes at an end—when the wicked will cease from troubling, love, and the weary be at rest.”

“Must you be going, father, already? Oh! I wish—”

And she looked at Isaac, as if purposing to go to Pongaudin. Isaac, had, however, promised Madame Leclerc to return by an appointed hour. There could be no difficulty, he said, in going to Pongaudin any day: but to-day he had promised that they would both return to Madame Leclerc. Aimée, therefore, bade her father farewell for the present—only for a very little while. He must tell her mother that they should certainly meet very soon.

In the piazza, at Pongaudin, Toussaint found Christophe.

“I wish,” said Christophe, “you would send to Dessalines not only the Captain-General’s message, but your own request that he will yield.”

“I cannot, Henri.”

“But he may spoil all by holding out.”

“I have done what I can in yielding myself. I can do no more.”

“You approve our act? Surely you do not repent of what you have done?”

“I cannot repent of what I could not avoid. But enough of business for to-day, my friend. Where is Madame Christophe? Where are your children? Bring them here; and let us enjoy leisure and friendship once more, while we can.”

“We will. But, Toussaint, if you could only say that you are satisfied that we have done what is best, it would relieve me much.”

“I cannot, Henri. But, be assured, I fully acquiesce. One has not always the comfort of being able to acquiesce.”

“Can you say, then, that you forgive me, in as far as you think me wrong?”

“Can you doubt it?” replied Toussaint, turning upon him a countenance full of frank affection. “Are you not a friend of many years?”

“God forgive me if I have misled you, Toussaint!”

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## Chapter Thirty Five.

### Suspense.

Nature wrought with the blacks this season for the fulfilment of their hopes, and the defence of their precarious liberties. Never, within the remembrance of the young people at Pongaudin, had the heat set in so early, and the month of May been so sickly in the towns. To the eyes of such as Génifrède, who were ever on the watch for signs, it might almost seem that they saw Pestilence floating, on her poison-dropping wings, beneath the clouds which sailed from all quarters of the sky to the mountain-peaks; clouds muttering in thunder, and startling the intruders with terrific lightnings, from night-to-night. The reports of fever having broken out here and there among the invaders became more and more frequent. At first, those who were watching the times the most intently concluded that, early as the season was, “the wish” must be “father to the thought,” and believed little of what they heard. But before Toussaint had been ten days at Pongaudin, it was certain that disease was raging to such an extent among the French troops at Cap, that the Captain-General had retired to Tortuga, to join his lady, and others of the expedition who were the most carefully guarded. The garrison at Saint Marc was thinning, Thérèse sent word; and the country people conveyed to Pongaudin the news that funerals were becoming daily more frequent at Limbé, Le Dauphin, and other posts along the northern shore.

Not for this, however, was there any relaxation of the vigilance with which L'Ouverture was watched by the foe. His mode of life was simple, and open to the observation of any who chose to look on. He improved his gardens; he read much; he interested himself in Denis's studies; he rode out daily, and conversed everywhere with the people by the wayside. He wrote many letters, sometimes with his own hand, and sometimes employing that of his friend, Monsieur Pascal, who, with his wife, resided with the Ouvertures. Toussaint also received many letters, and a perpetual succession of visitors—of applicants about matters of business, as it seemed. The only mystery was, how all his despatches were sent to their destination. This was a mystery which grew out of the French practice of intercepting his correspondence. Accidents had happened to so many of his letters during the first week, that he presently learned the

necessity of some plan for securing the privacy of his correspondence: and some plan he did devise, which quite succeeded; as appeared from the French General having recourse to a new mode of surveillance—that of setting spies on the person and movements of the black chief.

Toussaint's family were alarmed at finding his steps tracked, and his repose watched. They heard incessantly of his path being crossed in his rides; and they knew that many of the trifling messages which were brought, at all hours of the day and night, to be delivered into L'Ouverture's own ear, were mere devices to learn whether he was at home. They saw that their grounds were never private; and felt that eyes watched them from the outer darkness when their saloon was lighted for their evening employments and amusements. Toussaint smiled at the alarms of his family, admitting the fact of this incessant *espionnage*, but asking what harm it did, and pointing out that it was only an inconvenience of a few weeks' duration. He would not hear of any strengthening of his guard. To increase his guard would be to encourage and authorise the suspicions which he was now daily weakening. He had nothing to conceal; and the sooner the invaders satisfied themselves of this, the better for all parties.

In answer to Madame L'Ouverture's frequent speculations as to what Leclerc could fix his suspicions on, Toussaint said he was probably supposed to be in communication with Dessalines. He thought so from his never approaching the morne, in his rides, without finding French soldiers overlooking his proceedings from every point of the hills. He was not in communication with Dessalines. He did not know, and he wished not to know even where he was—whether with the Bellairs, or training his soldiers elsewhere for further warfare. Dessalines had never submitted; and while this was the case, it was obviously prudent for those who had made terms to know nothing of any plans of his to which they might wish success. Thérèse would not compromise the Ouvertures by living with them, in the present state of affairs. She remained quietly on her husband's estate, near Saint Marc, only corresponding frequently with her friends at Pongaudin, in letters which all the world might see.

The chief subject of this correspondence was the fever-hospitals preparing at Saint Marc, as at all the other towns on the coast, for the reception of the sick whites. Whatever might be Thérèse's feelings



towards the whites, her compassion towards sick persons of every colour was stronger. Her gentle nature asserted itself whenever weakness and suffering appealed to it; and this season she began to inspire that affection in her neighbours—to establish that character for devoted charity, which afterwards made her the idol of the people. If her husband had been with her, he would probably have forbidden her to save the lives of any of that race whom he desired to exterminate. But though she could perhaps have taken away life, with her own hand, on the battlefield, with the cry of liberty in her ear, she could form no compact with such an ally as pestilence. In the season of truce and retreat, in the absence of the sounds and sights of conflict, she became all the woman—the gentle spirit—to whom the colony from this time looked up, as sent to temper her husband's ferocity, and wisely to direct his strengthening passions. She who was so soon after "the Good Empress," was now the Sister of Charity, actually forgetting former wrongs in present compassion for the helpless; and ministering to the sick without thought whether, on recovery, they would be friends or foes. It was matter of speculation to many besides the Overtures, whether the invaders omitted the opportunity of making a hostage of her, because their sick needed her services, or because they were grateful for her offices, or because they knew Dessalines well enough to be aware that, so far from such an act bringing him to submission, it would exasperate his ferocity, and draw down new sufferings and danger upon the discouraged whites.

One evening, the household of the Overtures were where it was now their wont to be at sunset—under the trees, on a grassy slope of the gardens, fronting the west. There they usually sat at this hour, to see the sun sink into the ocean; the darkness following almost as quickly as if that great fire were indeed quenched in the waters. On this occasion, the sun was still half-an-hour above the horizon, when Madame Dessalines appeared, in her riding-dress, and, as she said, in haste. She spoke apart with Madame L'Ouverture and Toussaint; and presently called Génifrède to the conference.

Thérèse had of late wanted help at Saint Marc—help in directing the nursing of the sick. Now she must have it. Monsieur Papalier was ill—very ill. The people of the house where he lived insisted upon sending him into the hospital this very night, if good attendance were not provided for him; and now—

Thérèse did not yet seem quite clear why this event had determined the moment of her application for Génifrède's assistance. She was agitated. She could only say that Génifrède had nursed Dessalines well; and she must have her help again now.

"You will go, Génifrède," said her father; "that Madame Dessalines may be at liberty to nurse Monsieur Papalier herself."

"No, no," said Thérèse, trembling. Génifrède also said "No."

"You would not have me nurse *him*?" said Thérèse. "Any one else! Ask me to save Rochambeau. Send me to Tortuga, to raise Leclerc from the brink of the grave; but do not expect me to be *his* nurse again."

"I do hope it from you. I expect it of you, when you have considered the tenfold mercy of nursing *him* with your own hands. Think of the opportunity you will give him of retrieving wrongs, if he lives, and of easing his soul, if he dies. How many of us would desire, above all things, to have those whom we have injured beside our dying pillow, to make friends of them at last? Let Monsieur Papalier die grateful to you, if he must die; and give him a new heart towards you, if he survives."

"It was not this that I intended," said Thérèse. "Génifrède will do everything, under my care. You shall have my help, Génifrède."

"No," said Génifrède. "Do not play the tempter with me. Find some one else. You will have much to answer for, if you make me go."

"What temptation, Génifrède?" asked her mother.

"Do not press her," said Toussaint, who read his child's mind. "You shall not be urged, Génifrède."

"You do not know—I myself do not know," said Génifrède, hurriedly, to Madame Dessalines, "what might happen—what I might be tempted to do. You know—you have read what some nurses did in the plague at Milan—in the plague in London—in the night—with wet cloths—"

"Do not speak of it. Stay here, Génifrède. I can do without you."

“If,” continued Génifrède, “they could do that for money—if the tempter moved their hands to that deed with whispers of money, with the sight of mere rings and watches, what might not a wretched creature do, at such a time, with revenge muttering for ever in her heart! My ear is weary of it here; and there—I cannot go.”

“No, you cannot,” said Thérèse.

“Christ strengthen you, my child,” said Toussaint, “as Thérèse is strengthening! She can already serve those whom she and you once hated alike: and she is about to save her foe of foes.”

“No, you will not save Monsieur Papalier,” said Génifrède.

“L’Ouverture is a prophet, as all men are in proportion as they are Christians,” said Thérèse. “If he says I shall save my enemy, I believe I shall.”

“You will, at least, try. If you are going, go;—the sun is setting,” said Toussaint. “What escort have you?”

“Old Dessalines and another, I want no more.”

“Old Dessalines!” said Toussaint, smiling; “then he must have wine. I must see him.”

“He is here,” said Thérèse, calling him.

The old man was, indeed, lingering near, preferring the chance of a word from L’Ouverture even to supper and wine within. He was ready enough to tell his story:—that he lived as butler at General Dessalines’; and, that though master and servant had changed places, he liked the new times better than the old. He was treated with more respect now, by everybody, than when he was a negro tradesman, even though he then had a slave of his own. The place of butler suited him too. General Dessalines and his lady drank only water; and they left him to manage the wine-cellar just as he liked; except at the present time, when a dreadful quantity of wine was wanted for the convalescents. It frightened him to think how soon the cellar might be emptied, if they went on at this rate. Old Dessalines was glad he had come to Pongaudin to-day. He had not only seen

L'Ouverture, but had heard from L'Ouverture's own lips that General Dessalines' cellars should never be quite empty while there was wine at Pongaudin.

When Toussaint resumed his seat under the tree, where the Pascals, Euphrosyne, Placide, and Denis remained (the rest having gone into the house with Thérèse), he found Denis discussing with Monsieur Pascal the principle and policy of nursing the sick who were hereafter to be mown down on the battlefield. Denis had been reminded that this was a time of peace, and that he was not authorised to anticipate more battlefields: and his reply had shown that he had no faith in this peace, but looked forward, like others of his colour, to August and its consequences. He was not contradicted here; and he went on to ask whether the Crusaders (his favourite warriors) nursed the wounded and sick heathens whom they found on their road, and in the cities they took.

"They were no Christians if they did not," said Euphrosyne.

"It was a savage age," observed Placide.

"Still they were the representatives of the Christianity of their day," said Afra; "and Christianity requires us to do good to those who use us ill."

"The Crusaders," said Toussaint, "lived in the early days of that Christianity which is to endure as long as the race of man. Like others, they did their part in acting out one of its principles. That one was not love of enemies,—which yet remains for us."

"I agree with you," said Pascal. "There are many ways of warring for the Cross. Theirs was one; ours is another."

"You always speak as if you were a black, Monsieur Pascal," said Denis.

"I would fain be a negro in heart and temper, Denis, if what your father thinks of the vocation of negroes be true."

"But about those ways of warring for the Cross!" inquired Afra.

"I mean, and L'Ouverture, I think, means," said Pascal, "that nothing can immediately alter the nature of men; that the glorious Gospel itself is

made to change the face of the world gradually; all the more surely, because slowly and naturally. This seed of life was cast upon the flood of human passions, and the harvest must not be looked for till after many days. Meantime it sprouts out, now here, now there, proving that it is alive and growing; but the harvest is not yet.”

“We find one trace of the Gospel here, and another there,” said Toussaint; “but a Christian nation, or race, or class of people, who has seen?”

“Not in the earliest days?” asked Euphrosyne. “Were not the first confessors and martyrs a Christian class?”

“They were so according to their intention, to their own idea,” said Toussaint. “They were votaries of the one Christian principle most needed in their time. The noble men, the courageous women, who stood, calm and resolved, in the midst of the amphitheatre, with the heathen altar behind them, the hungry tiger before them, and a careless or scoffing multitude ranged all around—these were strong witnesses to the great principle of Faith—noble proofs of the power of living and dying for things unseen. This was their function. It was for others to show forth the humility and modesty in which, as a class, they failed.”

“The anchorites,” said Pascal, “each in his cave, solitary, abstemious, showed forth in its strength the principle of Devotion, leaving Charity unthought of.”

“And then the nun,” said Toussaint—

“What possible grace of religion did the nun exhibit?” asked Euphrosyne.

“The original nun, Euphrosyne, was inspired with the reverence of Purity. In an age of licence, those who were devoted to spiritual things were the salt of the earth. But in their worship of purity they outraged human love.”

“The friar,” said Pascal, “was a perpetual emblem of Unworldliness. He forced upon the admiration of a self-seeking world the peace of poverty, the repose of soul which is troubled with no thought for the morrow. But for other teachers, however, industry would have been despised—the great law of toil would have remained unrecognised.”

“The Crusaders worked hard enough,” said Denis. “Thousands and thousands of them died of their toils, besides the slain.”

“They were the apostles of Zeal,” said Monsieur Pascal. “For the honour of the Gospel they suffered and died. They overlooked all that it teaches of toleration and universal love;—of peace on earth and good-will to men.”

“None of these Christians,” said Afra, “appear to have had much concern for men. They seemed to have lived for God and the faith, without love or care for those for whose sake God gave the faith.”

“Just so,” said her husband. “That part of our religion had not yet come into action. The first step taken towards this action was one which united with it the former devotion to God. The organisation of the great Church of Christ united, in the intentions of those who formed it, care for the glory of God and the salvation of men. It was a great step.”

“But still,” said Euphrosyne, “there was not the Charity, the living for the good of men, soul and body, which was what Christ taught and practised.”

“That, Euphrosyne, was a later fruit; but it is ripening now. We have more Sisters of Charity than contemplative nuns, at this time. There are hospitals in every Christian land for the sick and the aged. It is remembered now, too, that Christ had compassion on the blind, and the deaf, and the insane: and charity to these is now the Christianity of a multitude.”

“And what is their defect?” asked Denis. “What essential do they overlook, as the anchorite and the crusader overlooked this same charity?”

“It may be liberality—regard to the Christian liberty of others;—it may be —”

“Let us not look too closely into their failures,” said Toussaint. “Let us not judge our brethren. These are too near our own time for us to be just judges. We see their charity—the brightest light yet in the constellation of Christian principles; let us be thankful that our eyes have seen it. It is

brightening too; so that day telleth to-day of its increase, and night is witness of it unto night. It is now not only the sick and infirm in body that are cared for; but I am told there has been a man in England who has taken such pity on those who are sick and deformed in soul as to have explored the most loathsome of European prisons in their behalf. There has been a Briton who pitied the guilty above all other sufferers, and devoted to them his time, his fortune, his all. He will have followers, till Christendom itself follows him; and he will thus have carried forward the Gospel one step. The charity which grieves more for the deformity of the soul than the evils of the body is so far higher a charity, that it may almost be called a new principle."

"What remains?" asked Euphrosyne.

"Do you see anything further to be done, father?" inquired Denis.

With a mournful smile, Toussaint replied that mankind had advanced but a little way yet. The world was very far from being Christianised.

"In practice," said Euphrosyne. "But, supposing us all to fulfil what has been exemplified from the earliest days till now, do you suppose that many principles remain to be acted upon?"

"No doubt. If I saw none, I should believe, from all experience, that revelations (or rather verifications of what Christ revealed) will succeed each other as long as men exist. But, from the beginning till now, individuals here and there have lived by the principles which classes and nations have overlooked. By a solitary ray shining here and there, we may foretell something of the new lights about to rise upon the world. There will be more privileged classes, Euphrosyne; and, Denis, these privileges are lying within our grasp."

"A new charity, father?"

"A new charity, my boy. To solace the sick and infirm is good. To tend the diseased soul is better. But there is a higher charity still."

"To do good to those who hate us," said Monsieur Pascal; "in doing good, to conquer not only our love of ease and our fear of pain, but our prejudices, our just resentments, our remembrance of injuries, our

disgust at oppression, our contempt of pride—to forget or conquer all these through the love of men as men, is, indeed, a higher charity than any which classes have yet illustrated.”

“The negroes are the race that will illustrate it,” said Toussaint, with calm confidence. “The Gospel is for the whole world. It sprang up among the Jews; the white Gentiles hold it now; and the negroes are destined to fulfil their share. They are to illustrate its highest Charity. For tokens, mark their meek and kindly natures, the softness and the constancy of their affections, and (whenever tried) their placability. Thus prepared, liberty is about to be opened to them in a region of civilisation. When God has given them the strength of the free, it will exalt their meekness and their love into that highest charity of which we have spoken. I myself am old; and though I shall do what I can on this side the grave, I cannot see the great day, except in faith. But my children may witness at least its dawn.”

“In those days, wars will cease,” said Euphrosyne, recalling the thoughts she had revolved on the day of the death of Moyse: “there will be no bloodshed, no violence—no punishment of injuries to others, while your people forgive their own.”

“So will it be, I trust,” said Toussaint.

“Why not, then, begin now? Why not act upon your whole principle at once?”

“Because the nature of the negro has been maimed. He has been made selfish, cowardly, and indolent. He must be educated back into a fair condition; and this necessary education circumstances have imposed. We are compelled to the self-denial, toil, and danger of warfare, in order to obtain the liberty which is to carry us forward. I once hoped otherwise, Euphrosyne; but I now see the bracing process of defensive warfare to be inevitable, and, on the whole, good for my people. Their liberties, thus hardly won, will be prized, so as to shut out the future danger of war. If, however, one stroke is inflicted for other purposes than defence—if one life is taken for vengeance, we shall be set back, long and far, in our career. It shall not be, under my rule. Alas! for those who succeed me, if they permit it! It will not only make the first black empire a by-word



throughout the world, but it will render the Christian civilisation of my people difficult and slow.”

Toussaint spoke like a rider; and he was virtually still a sovereign, as he had been for years past. Nor were the tokens of sovereignty altogether wanting. At this moment, as was continually happening, despatches arrived, on affairs of great importance, on which he must think and act.

“See what these French commanders are doing,” said he, handing his letters to Monsieur Pascal, “at the very moment that they disclaim all intention of enslaving the negroes! What are they doing yonder but recommencing slavery? It must not be. Are you disposed for business?”

“This moment,” said Monsieur Pascal, springing up before he had finished the letters. “Will you provide a messenger? Slavery is restored; and there is not a moment to be lost.”

As in old days, lights were ordered into the library; and the royal-souled negro dictated his commands to his friendly secretary, who smiled, at such an hour, at the thought of the exultation of the French court over the “surrender” and “submission” of the blacks.



## Chapter Thirty Six.

### Departure without Retinue.

“Stand where you are, Thérèse; there, at the foot of the bed! Stir not an inch without my leave? I have let you have your own way too much of late. I call for hours, and you never come. I will not let you out of my sight again?”

So said Monsieur Papalier in the delirium of his fever, as Madame Dessalines was nursing him in his chamber at Saint Marc. It was a sad and dreary office; but she had motive to go through with it. The more he wandered back in his talk to the old days, the more strongly she felt herself called upon to use the present generously. The more imperious the tone of command with which he addressed her, the more easily could she pass over the error. There was a degree of pleasure in giving momentary ease to him, while he could not recognise the hand that bestowed it. She dreaded, however, for the sake of both, an hour of sanity. If he slept for a short interval, she feared to hear him speak coherently on his waking; and the more because little or no chance of his recovery remained. The thought of his carrying forward into the hour of death the insolent temper of his life was terrible. She almost hoped that, if he were to die, it would be without having been aware that he and his nurse were no longer master and slave.

She was his sole nurse. There was no alternative between this and her not being with him at all. It was impossible to allow any servant, any stranger, to hear his talk of old times—to witness the mode in which he addressed her. Except the physician, no one but herself entered his chamber during his waking hours.

She now sat, as he desired, full in his view, at the foot of the bed, encouraging repose by her stillness, and gladly turning from the ghastly countenance of the dying man to the scene without—visible in all its splendour, as the room had a north aspect, and the window stood wide, to admit the breathing wind from the sea. The deep blue sea, under the heaven of a lighter blue, looked glorious from the shaded apartment. The rustle of the trees in the courtyard, and the fall of water there, spoke of

coolness, and seemed to make themselves heard by the patient even in the midst of the fever-flames by which he was consumed, for he spoke of trees and fountains, and fancied himself at Arabie. He asked Thérèse to sing; and told her what to sing. She did not wish to refuse; she would have indulged him; but there was a choking in her throat which forbade it. Papalier was not long peremptory. From commanding, his voice sank to complaining; from complaining, to the muttering of troubled slumber; and, at length, into the silence of sleep.

Thérèse sat still, as before, looking out upon the sea, till its brightness, combined with the whispers of foliage and waters, made her eyes heavy, and disposed her to sleep too. Leaning back against the bed-post, she was dreaming that she was awake, when she heard her name so called that she awoke with a start. Papalier was himself again, and was demanding where he was, and what had been the matter. He felt the blister on his head; he complained of the soreness and stiffness of his mouth and tongue; he tried to raise himself, and could not; and, on the full discovery of his state, he wept like a child.

Gently, but not tenderly, did Thérèse endeavour to comfort him. He had irrecoverably forfeited her tenderness. Gentle, however, she was, as she told him that his state now, however painful, was better than an hour ago, when he was unconscious of it. Gentle was her hand, when she wrapped fresh, cool leaves round his burning head. Gentle was her voice, when she persuaded him to drink. Gentle was the expression of her eye, when she fixed its gaze upon his face, and by its influence caused him to check, like a child, the sobs that shook his frame.

“Thérèse,” said he, “I am dying. I feel that I am dying. Oh! what must I do?”

“We must wait upon God’s pleasure. Let us wait in quiet. Is there anything that can give you quiet of mind or body?”

Tears stole again from the heavy, closing eyes.

“We are all familiar with the end of our lives, almost from their beginning,” said Thérèse. “There is nothing strange or surprising in it. The great thing is to throw off any burden—any anxiety—and then to be still. An easy

mind is the great thing, whether recovery is at hand, or—”

“Do not talk of recovery. I shall not recover.”

“Can I do anything—listen to anything—so as to give you case? Shall I call father Gabriel? You may find comfort in speaking to him.”

“I want to speak to you first. I have not half done the business I came for: I have not half secured my estates for my daughters.”

“I believe you have. I know that L’Overture fully intends—”

“What does it matter what L’Overture intends? I mean no contempt to him by saying so. He intends very well, I dare say; but in the scramble and confusion that are at hand, what chance will my poor orphan girls have for their rights?”

“Fear nothing for them. If there is to be a struggle, there is no doubt whatever as to how it will end. The French army will be expelled—”

“You do not say so! You cannot think so!”

“I am certain of it. But the white proprietors will be as safe in person and property, as welcome to L’Overture, as during the years of his full authority. You were not here to see it; but the white proprietors were very happy, perfectly satisfied, during those years (at least, all of them who were reasonable men). I can undertake for L’Overture that your daughters’ income from their estates shall be sent to them at Paris, if you desire them to stay there; or the estates shall be sold for their benefit; or, if you will trust them to my care—”

“No, no! Impossible!”

“I am the wife of a general, and second to no woman in the island,” said Thérèse, calmly. “I have power to protect your daughters; and, in an hour like this, you cannot doubt my sincerity when I say that I have the will.”

“It cannot be, Thérèse. I do not doubt you—neither your word nor your will. But it is impossible, utterly.”

“Is there strength, even in the hour of death, to trample on the dark race? Oh! better far to trample on the prejudices of race! Will you not do this?”

“You talk absurdly, Thérèse. Do not trouble me with nonsense now. You will undertake, you say, that Toussaint shall secure to my daughters the estates I have left to them by will. That is, in case of the blacks getting the upper hand. If they are put down, my will secures everything. Happily, my will is in safe hands. Speak, Thérèse. You engage for what I have just said?”

“As far as warranted by my knowledge of L’Ouverture and his intentions, I do. If, through his death or adversity, this resource should fail, your daughters shall not suffer while my husband and I have property.”

“Your husband! property! It is strange,” muttered Papalier. “I believe you, however, I trust you, Thérèse; and I thank you, love.”

Thérèse started at that old word—that old name. Recovering herself, she inquired—

“Have you more to ask of me? Is there any other service I can render you?”

“No, no. You have done too much for me—too much, considering the new order of affairs.”

“I have something to ask of you. I require an answer to one question.”

“You require!”

“I do. By the right of an outraged mother, I require to know who destroyed my child.”

“Say nothing of that, Thérèse. You should know better than to bring such subjects before a dying man.”

“Such subjects lie before the dead. Better to meet them prepared—atoned for, in as far as atonement is yet possible. For your own sake, and by my own right, I require to be told who destroyed my child?”

“I did not, Thérèse.”

“You did not! Is it possible? Yet in this hour you could not deceive me. I have accused you of the deed, from that hour to this. Is it possible that I have wronged you?”

“I do not say that I disapproved of it—that I did not allow it. But I did not do it.”

“Then you know who did it?”

“Of course I do.”

“Who was it?”

“I swore long ago that I would not tell; and I never will. But you may lay the blame on me, my dear; for, as I told you, I permitted the deed. It was necessary. Our lives depended on it.”

“May you not find your eternal death depend on it!” said Thérèse, agonised by suspicions as to whose hand it was by which her child had died. In a moment, she formed a resolve which she never broke—never again to seek to know that which Papalier now refused to tell. A glance at the countenance before her filled her with remorse the next instant, at what now seemed the cruel words she had just spoken.

“Let me bring Father Gabriel to you,” said she. “He will give you whatever comfort God permits.”

“Do not suppose I shall tell Father Gabriel what you want to discover,” replied Papalier. “He has no business with more than my share of the affair: which is what you know already. I am too weak to talk—to Father Gabriel, or any one else.”

“But you need comfort. You will rest better afterwards.”

“Well, well; in the evening, perhaps. I must be quiet now. Comfort, indeed!” he muttered. “Yes, I want comfort enough, in the horrid condition I am in. But there is no comfort till one lies dead. I wish I were dead.”

He fell into a restless doze. Moved by his misery and melted by the thought that she had wronged him, all these years, by harbouring the image of his hand on her infant's throat—distracted, too, by the new doubts that had arisen—Thérèse prayed and wept, wept and prayed, on behalf of Papalier and all sinners. Again and again she implored that these wretched hatreds, those miserable strifes, might be all hushed in the grave,—might be wholly dissolved in death.

She was just stealing to the door, intending to send for Father Gabriel, that he might be in readiness for the dying man's confession, when Papalier started, cast his eyes round the room hurriedly, and exclaimed—

“It is in vain to talk of attaching them. If one's eye is off them for one moment— Oh! *you* are there, Thérèse! I thought, after all I had done for you—after all I had spent upon you— I thought you would not go off with the rest. Don't go— Thérèse—Thérèse!”

“I am here,” said she, perceiving that he no longer saw.

“I knew you would stay,” he said, very faintly. “I cannot spare you, my dear.”

The last words he said were—

“I cannot spare you—remember—Thérèse!”

To the pang of the thought that he had died unconfessed succeeded the question, more painful still—

“Could religious offices avail anything to a soul wholly unsanctified? Is there a promise that any power can put such a spirit into immediate congeniality with the temper of Heaven? Among the many mansions, is there one which would not be a prison to such?—to the proud one who must there feel himself poor and miserable, and blind and naked?”

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## Chapter Thirty Seven.

June.

Of the letters written by Toussaint and Pascal on the evening when news arrived of the imposition of compulsory labour on the negroes, some reached their destination; but one did not. That one was to L'Ouverture's aide, Fontaine, at Cap Français. It contained the following:—

“It is said that General Leclerc is in a bad state of health at Tortuga. Of this you will inform me. If you see the Captain-General, be sure to tell him that the cultivators are no longer disposed to obey me, for the planters wish to set them to work at Hericourt; which they certainly ought not to do.

“I have to ask you whether any one near the person of the Captain-General can be gained to procure the release of D—, who would be very useful to me from his influence at La Nouvelle, and elsewhere.

“Acquaint Gingembre that he is not to quit the Borgne, where the cultivators must not be set to work.”

This letter never reached Fontaine, but was, instead, made the subject of a consultation in the Captain-General's quarters. Amidst the boastings which he sent home, and by which France was amused, Leclerc felt that his thirty-five thousand soldiers had made no progress whatever in the real conquest of Saint Domingo. He was aware that France had less power there than before she had alienated L'Ouverture. He felt that Toussaint was still the sovereign that he had been for ten years past. He knew that a glance of the eye, a lifting of the hand, from Toussaint, wrought more than sheaves of ordinances from himself, and all the commendations and flatteries of the First Consul. Leclerc, and the officers in his confidence, could never take a morning ride, or give an evening party—they could never hear a negro singing, or amuse themselves with children, playing on the shore or in the woods, without being reminded that they were intruders, and that the native and abundant loyalty of the inhabitants was all for their L'Ouverture, now that France had put him in opposition to herself. Leclerc and his confidential advisers committed the error of attributing all this to Toussaint's personal qualities; and they drew the false inference (most acceptable to the First Consul) that if Toussaint were out of the way, all would be well for the purposes of France. Having never seriously regarded the blacks as free men and fellow-citizens, these Frenchmen omitted to perceive that a



great part of their devotion to Toussaint was loyalty to their race. Proceeding on this mistake, Leclerc and his council, sanctioned by the First Consul, ruined their work, lost their object, and brought irretrievable disgrace upon their names—some of which are immortalised only by the infamy of the act which ensued.

From day-to-day, they endeavoured to entrap Toussaint; but he knew it, surrounded as he was by faithful and vigilant friends. Day by day he was warned of an ambush here, of spies there, or of an attempt meditated for such an hour. During a fortnight of incessant designs upon his person, he so baffled all attempts as to induce a sort of suspicion among the French soldiery that he was protected by magic.

It was an anxious season for his family. Their only comfort was that it would soon be over; that this, like all other evils connected with the invasion, was to last only “till August;” the familiar words which were the talisman of hope throughout the island. The household at Pongaudin counted the days till August; but it was yet only the beginning of June; and the season passed heavily away. On one occasion, a faithful servant of Toussaint’s was brought in dead—shot from a thicket which his master was expected to pass. On another, the road home was believed to be beset; and all the messengers sent by the family to warn him of his danger were detained on some frivolous pretext; and the household were at length relieved by his appearing from the garden, having returned in a boat provided by some of his scouts. Now and then, some one mentioned retiring to the mountains; but Toussaint would not hear of it. He said it would be considered a breach of the treaty, and would forfeit all the advantages to be expected from a few weeks’ patience. The French were, he knew, daily more enfeebled and distracted by sickness. Caution and patience, for two months more, would probably secure freedom without bloodshed. He had foreseen that the present perils would arise from the truce; and still believed that it had better not have been made. But, as he had agreed to it, the first breach should not be on his part.

If Toussaint owed his danger to Christophe, he owed him the protection by which he had thus far been preserved. Worn as he was by perpetual labour and anxiety, Henri seemed never to close his eyes in sleep during this anxious season. He felt to the full his responsibility, from the hour of the first discovery of French treachery towards his friend. By day, he was

scouring the country in the direction of Toussaint's rides. By night, he was patrolling round the estate. It seemed as if his eye pierced the deepest shades of the woods; as if his ear caught up whispers from the council-chamber in Tortuga. For Henri's sake, Toussaint ran no risks but such as duty absolutely required; for Henri's sake, he freely accepted these toils on his behalf. He knew it to be essential to Henri's future peace that his personal safety should be preserved through this season, and that Henri himself should be his chief guardian.

Henri himself did not ask him to give up his rides. It was necessary that his people should have almost daily proof that he was among them, safe and free. It was necessary that the French should discern no symptom of fear, of shrinking, of departure from the mode of life he had proposed on retiring to his estate. Almost daily, therefore, he rode; and exhilarating did he find the rapid exercise, the danger, and, above all, the knowledge he gained of the condition of his people, in fortunes and in mind, and the confidence with which they hailed him, the constancy with which they appealed to his authority, wherever he appeared.

This knowledge enabled him to keep up more than the show of co-operation with the French in matters which concerned the welfare of the people. He pointed out gross abuses; and Leclerc hastened to remedy them. Leclerc consulted him occasionally in local affairs, and had his best advice. This kind of correspondence, useful and innocent, could not have been carried on to equal purpose but for Toussaint's rides.

By such excursions he verified a cause of complaint, concerning which he had received applications at home. In dispersing his troops over the colony, Leclerc had taken care to quarter a very large proportion in the districts near Gonaïves, so as to enclose the residence of Toussaint with the best of the French forces. The canton of Henneri was overcharged with these troops; so that the inhabitants were oppressed, and the soldiers themselves suffered from scarcity of food, and from the fever which raged in their crowded quarters. Having ascertained this to be the fact, Toussaint wrote to represent the case to Leclerc, and received a speedy and favourable reply. By Leclerc's command, General Brunet wrote that this was an affair which came within his department; that he was necessarily ignorant of the localities of Saint Domingo, and of their respective resources; and that he should be thankful for information and

guidance from one who had a perfect knowledge of these circumstances. He proposed that General Toussaint should meet him in the centre of the canton of Henneri, and instruct him concerning the better distribution of the troops.

“See these whites!” said Toussaint, handing the letter to Monsieur Pascal. “Till they find they are wrong, they have no misgivings; they know everything; and they are obliged at last to come, and learn of old Toussaint.”

“You will not meet General Brunet, as he proposes,” said Monsieur Pascal. “You will not place yourself in the centre of the canton, among their troops?”

“No, no; you will not! You will not think of going!” cried Madame L’Ouverture.

“For once, Margot, you bear ill-will towards those who compliment your husband,” said Toussaint, smiling. “But be easy; I shall not go to the canton of Henneri. If I walk into a pitfall, it shall not be after having seen it made. I must meet General Brunet, however. I shall invite him here with an escort of twenty soldiers; promising to limit my own guard to that number.”

“He will not come,” said Monsieur Pascal.

“I think he will; not because they trust me, for they know not what trust is; but because I could gain nothing by any injury to General Brunet and twenty soldiers that could compensate for a breach of the treaty.”

“The gain, from capture or violence, would be all the other way, certainly,” said Pascal, in a low voice.

“Henri will take care that General Brunet’s is *bona fide* an escort of twenty. There is reason for the meeting taking place here. Maps will be wanted, and other assistance which we might not remember to provide elsewhere. General Brunet must be my guest; and Madame L’Ouverture will make him admire our hospitality.”

General Brunet immediately accepted the invitation, promising to present

himself at Pongaudin on the tenth of June.

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## Chapter Thirty Eight.

### A Feat.

General Brunet brought with him no more than his allotted twenty soldiers, and a secretary. Christophe ascertained to his own satisfaction, and let the household know, that not another French soldier breathed within a circuit of some miles, when the evening closed in; so that the ladies threw off constraint and fear together as the two generals, with their secretaries, retired to the library, after coffee.

Placide had been with Christophe all day, and was the means by which the household had been assured of the tranquillity of the neighbourhood. He was of the patrol which was to watch the roads during the night. It seemed improbable, however, that, of all nights, that should be chosen for an assault when the Ouvertures must be particularly roused to observation, and when a French general was in their hands. Of all nights, this was probably the safest; yet Placide, glad, perhaps, of an excuse to keep out of the way of a guest from Paris, chose to mount guard with Christophe.

Denis was permitted to be in the library, as the business was not private, and, to one who knew the country as well as he did, very entertaining. For a time he found it so, while all the five were stooping over the maps, and his father was explaining the nature of the localities, and the interests of the inhabitants, and while words dropped from General Brunet which gave an insight into that object of Denis's strong curiosity—the French encampment on Tortuga. When all of this kind had been said, and the conversation turned upon points of military science or management, which he did not care about, Denis drew off to the window, and thence into the balcony, where he looked out upon the night—vainly, for it was cloudy, and there was yet no moon. The air was cool and pleasant, however, and he remained leaning over the balcony, revolving what he had heard, and picturing to himself the little court of Madame Leclerc—so near, and yet out of his reach. While thus absorbed, it is probable that

some distant voice of song instigated him to sing also. Like his race generally, Denis was almost always singing; always when alone and meditative. It is probable that some notes of the air sung by those who looked to August for freedom—sung by the whole negro population—now caught his ear; for he began, hardly to sing, but to murmur this popular air. The words were not heard within; and it would not have mattered if they had been; for the words were in the negro language. But the air was, by this time, intelligible enough to the invaders. In the interest of conversation, nothing escaped the eye of Toussaint. He saw an exchange of glances between General Brunet and his secretary, and a half smile on the face of each which he did not like.

He thought it best to take no notice; but, far from leaving off, Denis sang louder as he sank deeper into reverie. Monsieur Pascal became aware of some embarrassment, and of its cause.

“Denis, you disturb us,” he called out from the table.

They heard no more of Denis; and their business proceeded. Vexed, partly with himself, and partly at having been rebuked in General Brunet’s hearing, he went round the house by the balcony, and thence to the upper gallery, which commanded the finest sea view in the day-time, and the freshest sea breezes at night. There, in a somewhat perverse mood, he sang for his own pleasure the air which he had been checked for singing unconsciously. He remained there a long while—he did not know how long—till the moon rose, when he remembered that it must be midnight. As no one had called him, he supposed that the party in the library were still in consultation.

As his eye rested on the bay, while he was considering whether he must not go in, he perceived something dark lying on the waters between the island and the shore. As he strained his sight, and as the waned moon rose higher, he discovered that it was a ship. It was strange. No ship ever had business there; though he had heard that there was a deep channel, and good anchorage in that little bay. It was very strange. But something stranger still soon met his ear—sounds, first odd, then painful—horrible. There was some bustle below—on the beach, within the little gate—he thought even on the lawn. It was a scuffle; there was a stifled cry. He feared the guard were disarmed and gagged—attacked on the side of the

sea, where no one dreamed of an assault, and where there was no Christophe to help. Denis knew, however, how to reach Christophe. He did the right thing. Lest his purpose should be prevented if he entered the house, he clambered up the roof to its ridge, and swung the heavy alarm-bell. Its irregular clang banished sleep in a moment from a circuit of many miles. It not only startled the ladies of the family from their beds; but every fisherman rushed from his hut upon the shore. Christophe and Placide were galloping to Pongaudin almost before they had drawn a breath. Every beast stirred in its lair; and every bird rustled in its roost. Rapid, however, as was the spread of sound, it was too late to save L'Ouverture.

L'Ouverture himself had but a few moments of uncertainty to endure. In the midst of earnest conversation, suspicious sounds were heard. The two Frenchmen rushed to the door of the library, and Monsieur Pascal to the balcony. Monsieur Pascal re-entered in an instant, saying—

“The house is surrounded—the lawn is crowded. Make no resistance, and they may spare your life.”

“Hark! The bell! There is hope,” said Toussaint. “No resistance! but let us gain time.”

The door was burst open, and with General Brunet entered a personage whom he introduced as Admiral Ferrari, followed by a file of grenadiers.

“What can be your errand at this hour?” asked Toussaint.

“I have orders from the Captain-General to arrest you,” replied Admiral Ferrari. “Your guards are disarmed and bound. Our troops are everywhere. You are dead if you resist. Deliver up your sword!”

“I shall not resist such a force as you have thought it necessary to bring against me,” replied Toussaint, handing his sword to the admiral. “Am I to be a prisoner here, in my own house?”

“No, indeed! I have orders to convey you and your family to Cap Français. No delay! To the boats this moment! You will find your family on board the frigate, or on the way to it.”

“Do what you will with me; but Madame L’Ouvverture is in weak health. Suffer her and my children to remain at home.”

“Lose no more time. General. March! or we must carry you.”

Voices of lamentation and of passion were heard in the corridor, which quickened L’Ouvverture’s movements more than threats or insults could have done. He left the library, and found the ladies of the household in the corridor—Margot weeping and trembling, and Génifrède addressing Monsieur Coasson in a tone of high anger.

“You here! Monsieur Coasson!” said Toussaint; “and availing yourself once more of the weakness and woes of women, I perceive.”

“I came as guide,” replied Monsieur Coasson. “The admiral and his troops needed some one to show them the way; and, as you are aware, I was qualified to do so. I have always felt, too, that I had a sort of appointment to fulfil with this young lady. Her kind expressions towards the whites on my last visit might be considered a sort of invitation to come again—with such a train as you see,” pointing to the stiff row of grenadiers who stood behind.

Génifrède groaned.

“Make yourself happy with your train,” said Toussaint, as he seized the wretch by the collar, hurled him back among the grenadiers, and kicked him over as he lay, introducing great disorder into the formal arrangements of that dignified guard.

This would have been the last moment of Toussaint, if General Brunet had not drawn his sword, and commanded every one to stand back. His orders, he said, were to deliver his prisoner alive.

“Come, my love,” said Toussaint to Madame L’Ouvverture. “We are to sleep on board a frigate this night. Come. Génifrède! We may sleep in peace. General Brunet will hardly be able to digest your hospitality, my Margot; but *you* may sleep. Who else?” he asked, as he looked round upon his trembling household.

“We are following,” said Monsieur Pascal, who had his wife and

Euphrosyne on either arm.

“Pardon me,” said General Brunet. “Our orders extend only to General Toussaint and his family. You must remain. Reverend father,” he said to Father Laxabon, “you will remain also—to comfort any friends of General Toussaint whom you may be able to meet with to-morrow. They will be all inconsolable, no doubt.”

Monsieur Coasson whispered to the admiral, who said, in consequence, bowing to Euphrosyne—

“I can answer for this young lady being a welcome guest to Madame Leclerc. If she will afford to a countryman the pleasure and honour of conveying her, it will give him joy to introduce her to a society worthy of her.”

“I do not wish to see Madame Leclerc,” said Euphrosyne, speaking with surprising calmness, though her cheek was white as ashes. “I wish to be wherever I may best testify my attachment to these my honoured friends, in the day of their undeserved adversity.”

She looked from Monsieur Pascal to L’Ouverture.

“Stay with those who can be your guardians,” said Toussaint.

“For our sakes,” added Génifrède.

“Stay with us!” cried Monsieur Pascal and Afra.

“Farewell, then,” said Euphrosyne, extending her arms to Madame L’Ouverture.

“We are losing time,” said General Brunet, as the clang of the alarm-bell was heard again. By his order, some soldiers went in search of the traitor who was ringing the bell; and others pushed the captive family before them towards the door. Monsieur Coasson thrust himself between the parting friends, and began to count the family, in order to tell who was missing. It would not do, he observed, to leave any behind.

“Lose no more time,” said the admiral. “Those who may be left behind are



cared for, I promise you. We have a hundred of them safe already.”

“A hundred of whom?” asked Toussaint, as he walked.

“Of your friends,” replied Admiral Ferrari.

This was too true. A hundred of Toussaint’s most attached adherents had been seized this night. No one of them was ever again heard of in the island.

At the door of the mansion Denis was brought forward, guarded. His eyes were flashing fire.

“The country is up!” he cried. “I got good service out of the old bell before they found me.”

“Right, my boy! Thank you!” said his father, cheerfully.

“Give Génifrède to me, father. My mother is ready to sink.”

Proudly he supported his sister to the boats, carrying her on so rapidly as to prevent the need of any soldier speaking to her.

There was an array of boats along the shore of the bay. Distant firing was heard during the whole time that the prisoners and the troops were embarking.

“They must be very much afraid of us,” observed Denis, looking round, as soon as he had taken his place beside his sister in the boat. “They have given us above a hundred guards, I believe.”

“They are afraid of us,” said Toussaint.

“There is terrible fighting somewhere,” murmured the weeping Margot. “I am afraid Placide is in the midst of it.”

“He is in his duty if he be,” said Toussaint.

Placide had discharged this kind of duty, however, and now appeared to fulfil the other—of sharing the captivity of his parents. He leaped into the

boat, breathless, after it had pushed off from the shore.

“In time, thank God!” gasped he.

“He can hardly speak!” exclaimed his mother. “He is wet! He is wounded—cruelly wounded!”

“Not wounded at all, mother. Whole in heart and skin! I am soaked in the blood of our enemies. We have fought gloriously—in vain, however, for to-night. Latortue is shot; and Jasmin. There are few left but Christophe; but he is fighting like a lion.”

“Why did you leave him, my son?” asked Toussaint.

“He desired me to come, again and again, and I fought on. At last I was cut off from him. I could not give any more help there; and I saw that my business lay here. They say this frigate is the *Creole*. Whither bound, I wonder?”

“To Cap Français,” replied the officer in the stern: “to join the *Héros*, now in the roads there.”

“The *Héros*—a seventy-four, I think,” said L’Ouverture.

“A seventy-four—you are correct,” replied the officer. No one spoke again.

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## Chapter Thirty Nine.

### Truce no more.

When Toussaint set foot on the deck of the *Héros*, on the evening of the next day, the commander stood ready to receive him—and not only the commander. Soldiers also stood ready with chains, with which they lost no time in fettering the old man’s ankles and wrists. While they were doing this, Toussaint quietly said to the commander—

“By my overthrow, the trunk of the tree of negro liberty is laid low; only the

trunk. It will shoot out again from the roots; and they are many and deep.”

The moment the soldiers stepped back, and allowed access to him, Aimée was in his arms; and Isaac, in great agitation, presented himself.

“I will never leave you more, father!” said he. “These fetters! Nothing should have made me believe such treatment possible. I trusted Leclerc as firmly as I trusted you. I have been living with him while he meditated chains for you. I am humbled for ever! All I can do now is to devote myself to you, as Placide did at the right time. Would I were Placide! I am humbled for ever!”

“No, my son: not for ever. It is a common lot to be humbled for the credulous confidence of youth. It is a safer and a nobler error, Isaac, than its opposite. It is better than unbelief in the virtue of man.”

“You torture me with your goodness, father!”

“I deal with you as with myself, Isaac. In the young days of my freedom I trusted falsely, as you have done. I believed in Bonaparte, as you have believed in Leclerc. We have both received a lesson; but I do not feel humbled for ever; nor must you.”

“Would I were Placide!” was all that Isaac could say.

“You are so good to Isaac and me,” said Aimée, timidly, “that perhaps you would (could you?) see Vincent.”

“No, my child. Vincent is not like Isaac. He cannot be made wise by experience; and his folly is scarcely to be distinguished from treachery. I cannot see General Vincent.”

No choice was allowed, however. Vincent rushed forward, knelt before Toussaint, and clasped his knees, imploring, in a convulsion of grief, pardon for the past, and permission to devote every hour of his future life to the family whom he had ruined.

“My pardon you have,” said L’Ouverture. “I should rather say my compassion; for you never deliberately designed treachery, I am persuaded.”

“I never did! I never did!”

“Neither had you any good design. You have been selfish, vain, and presumptuous; as far from comprehending my purposes as from having criminal ones of your own. In the new circumstances in which negroes are placed, many must fall, however firmly some may stand. You are among the infirm; and therefore, however I may mourn, I do not resent what you have done.”

“Thank God! You pardon me! Thank God! Henceforth, with Aimée to watch over me—with you to guide me—”

“No, Vincent! You cannot be with me. Aimée is free as she has ever been; but you cannot be with me. I go to martyrdom: to fulfil what appears to be the solemn vocation of the Ouvertures. I go to martyrdom; and none but steady souls must travel that way with me.”

“You scorn me,” said Vincent, springing from his knees. “Your acts show that you scorn me. You take that poor fellow,” pointing to Mars Plaisir, “and you reject me.”

“My son’s servant,” said Toussaint, smiling. “He goes to his beloved France, free to quit us for any other service, when ours becomes too grave for his light spirit. I would not insult you by taking you on a like condition. You must leave us, Vincent,” pointing to the *Creole’s* boat, now about to put off from the *Héros*. “We will pray for you. Farewell!”

“Aimée!” said her lover, scarcely daring to raise his eyes to her face.

“Farewell, Vincent!” Aimée strove to say.

In vain Vincent endeavoured to plead. Aimée shook her head, signed to him to go, and hid her face on her father’s shoulder. It was too much. Humbled to the point of exasperation, Vincent throw himself over the ship’s side into the boat, and never more saw the face of an Ouverture.

“I have nothing left but you,” sobbed Aimée—“but you and my mother. If they kill you my mother will die, and I shall be desolate.”

“Your brothers, my child.”

“No, no. I have tried all. I left you to try. I loved you always; but I thought I loved others more. But—”

“But,” said her father, when she could not proceed, “you found the lot of woman. To woman the affections are all: to men, even to brothers, they are not. Courage, Aimée! Courage! for you are an Ouverture. Courage to meet your woman’s martyrdom!”

“Let me rest upon your heart, father; and I can bear anything.”

“Would I could, my child! But they will not allow it—these jailors. They will part us.”

“I wish these chains could bind me too—these very links—that I might never leave you,” cried Aimée, kissing the fetters which bound her father’s arms.

“Your mother’s heart, Aimée; that remains.”

“I will keep it from breaking, father, trust me.”

And the mother and daughter tasted something like happiness, even in an hour like this, in their re-union. It was a strange kind of comfort to Aimée to hear from her mother how long ago her father had foreseen, at Pongaudin, that the day might come when her heart would be torn between her lover and her family. The impending blow had been struck—the struggle had taken place: and it only remained now to endure it.

“Father!” said Génifrède, appealing to Toussaint, with a grave countenance, “you say that none but brave and steady souls must go with you on your way to martyrdom. You know me to be cowardly as a slave, and unstable as yonder boat now tossing on the waves. Do you see that boat, father?”

“Surely—yes; it is Paul;” said Toussaint, looking through his glass. “Paul is coming to say farewell.”

“Let me return with him, father. Let me become his child. I am unworthy to be yours. And he and I are so forlorn!”

Her father's tender gaze encouraged her to say more. Drawing closer, she whispered—

“I have seen Moyse—I have seen him more than once in the Morne; and I cannot leave this place. Let me stay.”

“Stay, my child. Seek consolation in your own way. We will all pray for you; we will all console your mother for your absence. We shall not meet again on earth, Génifrède.”

“I know it, father. But the time of rest—how long it is in coming!”

“My child, our rest is in the soul—it lies not either in place or time. Do not look for it in the grave, unless you have it first in the soul.”

“Then would I had never been born!”

“How different will be your cry when you have been a daughter to Paul for a while! When you see him consoled, and reposing upon your care, you will say, ‘I thank God that I have lived for this!’ A great duty lies before you, my dear child; and in the heart of duty lies rest—a deeper than that of the grave. Shall I give you a duty to discharge for me?”

“Oh, yes! I will take it as your blessing.”

“Convey to Christophe my last message. Bid him rejoice for me that my work is done. My work is now his. Bid him remember how we always agreed that freedom is safe. I bequeath the charge of it to him, with my blessing.”

“He shall know this, if he lives, before the moon rises.”

“If he does not live, let Dessalines hear what was my message to Christophe. He will know how much to take to himself.”

It was well that this message was given without further delay. Toussaint was summoned to speak with some officers of Leclerc's council, in the cabin below. At the clank of his chains upon the deck all eyes were upon him, except those of his own family, which were turned away in grief.

“Before your departure,” said one of the officers, in the small cabin to which Toussaint was conducted, “we would urge you to do a service to the colony which yet remains in your power. You must not refuse this last service.”

“I have never refused to serve the colony; and I am as willing to-day as ever.”

“No doubt. Reveal to us, then, the spot in the Mornes du Chaos, in which your treasures lie buried, and state their amount.”

“I have before said that I have buried no treasures. Do you disbelieve my word?”

“We are sorry to do so; but facts are against you. You cannot deceive us. We know that you caused certain of your dependents to bury treasure near the Plateaux de la Ravine; and that you afterwards shot these servants, to secure your secret.”

“Is it possible?”

“You see we have penetrated your counsels. The time for concealment is past. You take your family with you; and none of you will ever return. Your friends are, most of them, disposed of. A new order of things has commenced. You boast of your patriotism. Show it now by giving up the treasure of the colony to the uses of the colony.”

“I have already devoted my all to the colony. I reply once more that I leave behind me no treasure but that which you cannot appreciate—the grateful hearts of my people.”

The investigation was pressed—the inquiry made, under every form of appeal that could be devised; and in vain. Toussaint disdained to repeat his reply; and he spoke no more. The officers left him with threats on their lips. The door was locked and barred behind them, and Toussaint found himself a solitary prisoner.

During the night the vessel got under weigh. What at that hour were the secrets which lay hid in the mountain-passes, the forest-shades, and the sad homes of the island whose true ruler was now borne away from its

shores?

Pongaudin was already deserted. Monsieur and Madame Pascal had, by great activity, obtained a passage for France in the ship which was freighted with Leclerc's boastings of his crowning feat. They were already far on the sea before the *Héros* spread its sails. Leclerc's announcement of Toussaint's overthrow was as follows:—

"I intercepted letters which he had written to one Fontaine, who was his agent at Cap Français. These afforded an unanswerable proof that he was engaged in a conspiracy, and that he was anxious to regain his former influence in the colony. He waited only for the result of disease among the troops.

"Under these circumstances, it would be improper to give him time to mature his criminal designs. I ordered him to be apprehended—a difficult task; but it succeeded through the excellent arrangements made by General Brunet, who was entrusted with its execution, and the zeal and ardour of Admiral Ferrari.

"I am sending to France, with all his family, this deeply perfidious man, who, by his consummate hypocrisy, has done us so much mischief. The government will determine how it should dispose of him.

"The apprehension of General Toussaint occasions some disturbances. Two leaders of the insurgents are already in custody, and I have ordered them to be shot. About a hundred of his confidential partisans have been secured, of whom some are on board the *Muiron* frigate, which is under orders for the Mediterranean; and the rest are distributed among the different ships of the squadron.

"I am daily occupied in settling the affairs of the colony, with the least possible inconvenience: but the excessive heat, and the diseases which attack us, render it an extremely painful task. I am impatient for the approach of the month of September, when the season will renovate our activity.

"The departure of Toussaint has produced general joy at Cap



Français.

“The Commissary of Justice, Mont Peson, is dead. The Colonial Prefect, Benezech, is breathing his last. The Adjutant-commandant, Dampier, is dead: he was a young officer of great promise.

“I have the honour, etcetera,—”

Signed—

“Leclerc.”

On board the vessel which carried these tidings was Pascal, prepared to give a different version of the late transactions, and revolving, with Afra, the means by which he might best employ such influence as he had on behalf of his friend. Theirs was a nearly hopeless errand, they well knew; but the less hopeful, the more anxious were they to do what they could.

Was Euphrosyne with them?—No. She never forgot the duty which she had set before her—to stay near Le Bosquet, in hopes of better times, when she might make reparation to the people of the estate for what they had suffered at her grandfather’s hands. A more pressing duty also detained her on the island. She could be a daughter to Monsieur Raymond in Afra’s stead, and thus make their duty easier to the Pascals. Among the lamentations and prayers which went up from the mourning island were those of the old man and the young girl who wept together at Le Zéphyr—scarcely attempting yet to forgive the enemies whose treachery had outraged the Deliverer—as he was henceforth called, more fondly than ever. They were not wholly wretched. They dwelt on the surprise and pleasure it would be to the Ouvertures to find the Pascals in France before them. Euphrosyne had also the satisfaction of doing something, however indirectly, for her unfortunate friends; and she really enjoyed the occupation, to her so familiar, and still so dear, of ministering to the comfort of an old man, who had no present dependence but on her.

Her cares and duties were soon increased. The habitations of the Plain du Nord became so disgusting and so dangerous as the pestilence strewed the land with dead, and the survivors of the French army became, in proportion to the visitation, desperate and savage, that

Madame Ogé was, at length, like all her neighbours, driven from her home. She wished to take refuge with one of her own colour; and Monsieur Raymond, at Euphrosyne's suggestion, invited her to Le Zéphyr, to await better days. With a good grace did Euphrosyne go out to meet her; with a good grace did she welcome and entertain her. The time was past when she could be terrified with evil prognostications. In the hour of the earthquake, no one heeds the croak of the raven.

Among the nuns at Saint Marc there was trembling, which the pale abbess herself could not subdue by reason or exhortation. Their ears were already weary with the moans of the dying. They had now to hear the shrieks and curses of the kidnapped blacks—the friends of L'Ouverture—whose homes were made desolate. The terrified women could not but ask each other, "who next?" for they all loved L'Ouverture, and had declared their trust in him. No one injured the household of the abbess, however; and the sisters were all spared, in safety and honour, to hear the proclamation of the Independence of Hayti, and to enjoy the protection and friendship of its beloved Empress.

And where was she—Thérèse—when Saint Marc was resounding with the cries of her husband's betrayed companions and friends? She was on the way to the fastnesses, where her unyielding husband was preparing a tremendous retribution for those whom he had never trusted. She rejoiced, solemnly but mournfully, that he had never yielded. She could not wonder that the first words of Dessalines to her, when he met her horse on the steep, were a command that she would never more intercede for a Frenchman—never more hold back his strong hand from the work which he had now to do. She never did, till that which, in a chief, was warfare, became, in an emperor, vengeance. Then she resumed her woman's office of intercession; and by it won for herself the title of "the Good Empress."

The eyes which first caught sight of the receding ship *Héros*, at dawn, were those of Paul L'Ouverture and Génifrède. They had sent messengers, more likely than themselves to reach Christophe and Dessalines, with the last message of Toussaint; and they were now at leisure to watch, from the heights above their hut (their home henceforth), the departure of all who bore their name. They were left alone, but not altogether forlorn. They called each other father and daughter; and here

they could freely, and for ever, mourn Moyses.

Christophe received the message. It was not needed to rouse him to take upon himself, or to share with Dessalines, the office of him who was gone. The thoughts of his heart were told to none. They were unspeakable, except by the language of deeds. His deeds proclaimed them: and after his faithful warfare, during his subsequent mild reign, his acts of liberality, wisdom, and mercy, showed how true was his understanding of the mission of L'Ouverture.

There were many to share his work to-day. Dessalines was the chief: but leaders sprang up wherever soldiers appeared, asking to be led; and that was everywhere, from the moment of the report of the abduction of Toussaint. Clerveaux revolted from the French, and visited on them the bitterness of his remorse. Maurepas also repented, and was putting his repentance into action when he was seized, tortured, and murdered, with his family. Bellair and his wife conducted with new spirit, from this day, a victorious warfare which was never intermitted, being bequeathed by their barbarous deaths to their exasperated followers.

It was true, as Toussaint knew and felt in his solitary prison on the waters, that the groans which went up from the heights and hollows, the homes and the fastnesses of the island, were such as could not but unite in a fearful war-cry; but it was also true, as he had known and felt during the whole term of his power, that in this war victory could not be doubtful. He had been made the portal of freedom to his race. The passions of men might gather about it, and make a conflict, more or less tremendous and protracted; but the way which God had opened, and guarded by awakened human hearts, no multitude of rebellious human hands could close.

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## Chapter Forty.

### Meeting Winter.

It was a glorious day, that twelfth of June, when the *Héros* sailed away from the shores of Saint Domingo. Before the *Héros* could sail quite away, it was compelled to hover, as it were, about the shadow of the land—to advance and retreat—to say farewell, apparently, and then to greet it again. The wind was north-east, so that a direct course was impossible; and the Ouverture family assembled, with the exception of Toussaint himself, upon deck, gave vent, again and again, to their tears—again and again strained their eyes, as the mountains with their shadowy sides, the still forests, the yellow sands, and the quiet settlements of the lateral valleys, came into view, or faded away.

L'Ouverture's cabin, to which he was strictly confined during the voyage, had a window in the stern, and he, too, had therefore some change of prospect. He gazed eagerly at every shifting picture of the land; but most eagerly when he found himself off Cap Samana. With his pocket-glass he explored and discovered the very point of rough ground on the height where he stood with Christophe, less than six months before, to watch the approach, and observe the rendezvous, of the French fleet. He remembered, as his eye was fixed upon the point, his naming to Henri this very ship, in which he was now a prisoner, sailing away, never more to return.

“Be it so!” he thought, according to his wont. “My blacks are not conquered, and will never more be slaves.”

The wind soon changed, and the voyage was a rapid one. Short as it was, it was tedious; for, with the exception of Mars Plaisir, who was appointed to wait on him, the prisoner saw no one. Again and again he caught the voices of his children, singing upon deck—no doubt in order to communicate with him: but, in every instance, almost before he had begun to listen, the song ceased. Mars Plaisir explained that it was silenced by the captain's order. No captain's order had power to stop the prisoner's singing. Every night was Aimée consoled, amidst her weeping, by the solemn air of her father's favourite Latin Hymn to Our Lady of the

Sea: every morning was Margot roused to hope by her husband's voice, singing his matin-prayer. Whatever might be the captain's apprehensions of political danger from these exercises, he gave over the opposition which had succeeded so well with the women.

"My father crossed this sea," thought Toussaint: "and little could he have dreamed that the next of his race would cross it also, a prince and a prisoner. He, the son of a king, was seized and sold as a slave. His son, raised to be a ruler by the hand of Him who creates princes (whether by birth or royalty of soul), is kidnapped, and sacrificed to the passions of a rival. Such is our life! But in its evil there is good. If my father had not crossed this sea as a slave, Saint Domingo would have wanted me; and in me, perhaps, its freedom and civilisation. If I had not been kidnapped, my blacks might have lacked wrath to accomplish the victory to which I have led them. If my father is looking back on this world, I doubt not he rejoices in the degradation which brought elevation to his race; and, as for me, I lay the few years of my old age a ready sacrifice on the altar of Africa."

Sometimes he amused himself with the idea of surveying, at last, the Paris of which he had heard so much. Oftener, however, he dwelt with complacency on the prospect of seeing Bonaparte—of meeting his rival, mind to mind. He knew that Bonaparte's curiosity about him was eager, and he never doubted that he should be called to account personally for his government, in all its details. He did not consider that the great captain of the age might fear to meet his victim—might shrink from the eye of a brother-soldier whom he had treated worse than a felon.

Time and disappointment taught the prisoner this. None of his dreams were verified. In Brest harbour he was hurried from the ship—allowed a parting embrace of his family upon deck—no more; not a sentence of conversation, though all the ship's crew were by to hear. Mars Plaisir alone was allowed to accompany him. Two hurried whispers alone were conveyed to his ear. Placide assured him (yet how could it be?) that Monsieur Pascal was in France and would exert himself. And Margot told him, amidst her sobs, that she had done the one only thing she could—she had prayed for Bonaparte, as she promised, that night of prophetic woe at Pongaudin.

Nothing did he see of Paris but some of the dimly-lighted streets, as he was conveyed, at night, to the prison of the Temple. During the weeks that he was a prisoner there, he looked in vain for a summons to the presence of the First Consul, or for the First Consul's appearance in his apartment. One of Bonaparte's aides, Caffarelli, came indeed, and brought messages: but these messages were only insulting inquiries about the treasures—the treasures buried in the mornes;—for ever these treasures! This recurring message, with its answer, was all the communication he had with Bonaparte; and the hum and murmur from the streets were all that he knew of Paris. When Bonaparte, nettled with the reply—"The treasures I have lost are far other than those you seek,"—was convinced that no better answer would be obtained, he gave the order which had been impending during those weeks of confinement in the Temple.

When Bonaparte found his first leisure, after the fêtes and bustle occasioned in August by his being made First Consul for life, he issued his commands regarding the disposal of his West Indian prisoner: and presently Toussaint was traversing France, with Mars Plaisir for his companion in captivity—with an officer, as a guard, inside the closed carriage; another guard on the box; and one, if not two, mounted in their rear.

The journey was conducted under circumstances of great mystery. The blinds of the carriage were never let down; provisions were served out while the party was in full career; and the few baitings that were made were contrived to take place, either during the night, or in unfrequented places. It was clear that the complexion of the strangers was not to be seen by the inhabitants. All that Toussaint could learn was that they were travelling south-east.

"Have you mountains in your island?" asked the officer, letting down the blind just so much, when the carriage turned a corner of the road, as to permit to himself a glimpse of the scenery. "We are entering the Jura. Have you mountains in your island?"

Toussaint left it to Mars Plaisir to answer this question; which he did with indignant volubility, describing the uses and the beauties of the heights of Saint Domingo, from the loftiest peaks which intercept the hurricane, to

the lowest, crested with forts or spreading their blossoming groves to the verge of the valleys.

“We too have fortresses on our heights,” said the officer. “Indeed, you will be in one of them before night. When we are on the other side of Pontarlier, we will look about us a little.”

“Then, on the other side of Pontarlier, we shall meet no people,” observed Mars Plaisir.

“People! Oh, yes! we have people everywhere in France.”

When Pontarlier was passed, and the windows of the carriage were thrown open, the travellers perceived plainly enough why this degree of liberty was allowed. The region was so wild, that none were likely to come hither in search of the captives. There were inhabitants; but few likely to give information as to who had passed along the road. There were charcoal-burners up on the hill-side; there were women washing clothes in the stream which rushed along, far below in the valley; the miller was in his mill, niched in the hollow beside the waterfall; and there might still be inmates in the convent which stood just below the firs, on the knoll to the left of the road. But by the wayside, there were none who, with curious eyes, might mark, and with eager tongue report, the complexion of the strangers who were rapidly whirled along towards Joux.

Toussaint shivered as the chill mountain air blew in. Perhaps what he saw chilled him no less than what he felt. He might have unconsciously expected to see something like the teeming slopes of his own mountains, the yellow ferns, the glittering rocks, shining like polished metal in the sun. Instead of these, the scanty grass was of a blue-green; the stunted firs were black; and the patches of dazzling white intermingled with them formed a contrast of colour hideous to the eye of a native of the tropics.

“That is snow,” exclaimed Mars Plaisir to his master, with the pride of superior experience.

“I know it,” replied Toussaint, quietly.

The carriage now laboured up a steep ascent. The *brave homme* who

drove alighted on one side, and the guard on the other, and walked up the hill, to relieve the horses. The guard gathered such flowers as met his eye; and handed into the carriage a blue gentian which had till now lingered on the borders of the snows,—or a rhododendron, for which he had scaled a crag. His officer roughly ordered him not to leave the track.

“If we had passed this way two or three months earlier,” he said complacently to his prisoners, “we should have found cowslips here and there, all along the road. We have a good many cowslips in early summer. Have you cowslips in your island?”

Toussaint smiled as he thought of the flower-strewn savannahs, where more blossoms opened and perished in an hour than in this dreary region all the summer through. He heard Mars Plaisir compelled to admit that he had never seen cowslips out of France.

At length, after several mountings and dismountings of the driver and guard, they seemed, on entering a defile, to apply themselves seriously to their business. The guard cast a glance along the road, and up the sides of the steeps, and beckoned to the horsemen behind to come on; and the driver repeatedly cracked his whip. Silence settled down on the party within the carriage; for all understood that they drew near the fortress. In silence they wound through the defile, till all egress seemed barred by a lofty crag. The road, however, passed round its base, and disclosed to view a small basin among the mountains, in the midst of which rose the steep which bore the fortress of Joux. At the foot of this steep lay the village; a small assemblage of sordid dwellings. At this village four roads met, from as many defiles which opened into this centre. A mountain-stream gushed along, now by the road-side, now winding and growing quieter among the little plot of green fields which lay in the rear of the castle rock. This plot of vivid green cheered, for a moment, the eye of the captives; but a second glance showed that it was but a swamp. This swamp, crags, firs, and snow, with the dirty village, made up the prospect. As for the inhabitants—as the carriage stopped short of the village, none were to be seen, but a girl with her distaff amidst a flock of goats, and some soldiers on the castle walls above.

There appeared to be but one road up the rock—a bridle or foot road to the right, too narrow and too steep for any carriage. Where this joined the



main road the carriage stopped; and the prisoners were desired to alight.

“We must trouble you to walk up this hill,” said the officer, “unless you prefer to mount, and have your horse led.”

Before he had finished speaking, Toussaint was many paces in advance of his guards. But few opportunities had he enjoyed, of late, of exercising his limbs. He believed that this would be the last; and he sprang up the rocky pathway with a sense of desperate pleasure. Panting and heated, the most active of the soldiers reached the summit some moments after him. Toussaint had made use of those few moments. He had fixed in his memory the leading points of the landscape towards the east—the bearings of the roads which opened glimpses into two valleys on that side—the patches of enclosure—the nooks of pasture where cows were grazing, and children were at play—these features of the landscape he eagerly comprehended—partly for use, in case of any opportunity of escape; partly for solace, if he should not henceforth be permitted to look abroad.

A few, and but a few, more moments he had, while the drawbridge was lowered, the portcullis raised, and the guard sent in with some order from his officer. Toussaint well knew that that little plot of fields, with its winding stream, was the last verdure that he might ever see. The snowy summits which peered over the fir-tops were prophets of death to him; for how should he, who had gone hither and thither under the sun of the tropics for sixty years, live chained among the snows? Well did he know this; yet he did not wait to be asked to pass the bridge.

The drawbridge and the courtyard were both deserted. Not a soldier was to be seen. Mars Plaisir muttered his astonishment, but his master understood, that the presence of negro prisoners in the fortress was not to become known. He read in this incident a prophecy of total seclusion.

They were marched rapidly through the courtyard, into a dark passage, where they were desired to stop. In a few moments Toussaint heard the tramp of feet about the gate, and understood that the soldiers had been ordered back to their post.

“The Commandant,” the officer announced to his prisoners; and the

Commandant Rubaut entered the dim passage. Toussaint formed his judgment of him, to a certain extent, in a moment. Rubaut endeavoured to assume a tone of good-humoured familiarity; but there appeared through this a misgiving as to whether he was thus either letting himself down, on the one hand, or, on the other, encroaching on the dignity of the person he addressed. His prisoner was a negro; but then he had been the recognised Commander-in-Chief of Saint Domingo. One symptom of awkwardness was, that he addressed Toussaint by no sort of title.

“We have had notice of your approach,” said he; “which is fortunate, as it enables me to conduct you at once to your apartment. Will you proceed? This way. A torch, Bellines! We have been looking for you these two days; which happens very well, as we have been enabled to prepare for you. Torches, Bellines! This way. We mount a few steps, you perceive. We are not taking you underground, though I call for lights; but this passage to the left, you perceive, is rather dark. Yes, that is our well; and a great depth it is—deeper, I assure you, than this rock is high. What do they call the depth, Chalôt? Well, never mind the depth! You can follow me, I believe, without waiting for a light. We cannot go wrong. Through this apartment to the left.”

Toussaint, however, chose to wait for Bellines and his torch. He chose to see what he could of the passages of his prison. If this vault in which he stood were not underground, it was the dreariest apartment from which the daylight had ever been built out. In the moment’s pause occasioned by his not moving on when desired, he heard the dripping of water as in a well.

Bellines appeared, and his torch showed the stone walls of the vault shining with the trickling of water. A cold steam appeared to thicken the air, oppress the lungs, and make the torch burn dim.

“To what apartment can this be the passage?” thought Toussaint. “The grave is warm compared with this.”

A glance of wretchedness from Mars Plaisir, seen in the torchlight, as Bellines passed on to the front, showed that the poor fellow’s spirits, and perhaps some visions of a merry life among the soldiers, had melted already in the damps of this vault. Rubaut gave him a push, which

showed that he was to follow the torch-bearer.

Through this vault was a passage, dark, wet, and slippery. In the left-hand wall of this passage was a door, studded with iron nails thickly covered with rust. The key was in this door. During the instant required for throwing it wide, a large flake of ice fell from the ceiling of the passage upon the head of Toussaint. He shook it off, and it extinguished the torch.

“You mean to murder us,” said he, “if you propose to place us here. Do you not know that ice and darkness are the negro’s poison? Snow, too,” he continued, advancing to the cleft of his dungeon wall, at the outward extremity of which was his small grated window. “Snow piled against this window now! We shall be buried under it in winter.”

“You will have good fires in winter.”

“In winter! Yes! this night; or I shall never see winter.”

“This night! Oh, certainly! You can have a fire, though it is not usual with us at this season. Bellines—a fire here immediately.”

He saw his prisoner surveying, by the dim light from the deep window, the miserable cell—about twenty-eight feet by thirteen, built of blocks of stone, its vaulted ceiling so low that it could be touched by the hand; its floor, though planked, rotten and slippery with wet; and no furniture to be seen but a table, two chairs, and two heaps of straw in opposite corners.

“I am happy,” said the Commandant, “to have been able to avoid putting you underground. The orders I have had, from the First Consul himself, as to your being *mis au secret*, are very strict. Notwithstanding that, I have been able, you see, to place you in an apartment which overlooks the courtyard; and which, too, affords you other objects”—pointing through the gratings to the few feet of the pavement without, and the few yards of the perpendicular rock opposite, which might be seen through the loop-hole.

“How many hours of the day and night are we to pass in tills place?”

“How many hours? We reckon twenty-four hours to the day and night, as is the custom in Europe,” replied Rubaut; whether in ignorance or irony,

his prisoner could not, in the dim twilight, ascertain. He only learned too surely that no exit from this cell was to be allowed.

Firewood and light were brought. Rubaut, eager to be busy till he could go, and to be gone as soon as possible, found fault with some long-deceased occupant of the cell, for having covered its arched ceiling with grotesque drawings in charcoal; and then with Bellines, for not having dried the floor. Truly the light gleamed over it as over a pond. Bellines pleaded in his defence that the floor had been dried twice since morning; but that there was no stopping the melting of the ice above. The water would come through the joints till the winter frosts set in.

“Ay, the winter frosts—they will set all to rights. They will cure the melting of the ice, no doubt.” Turning to his prisoners, he congratulated himself on not being compelled to search their persons. The practice of searching was usual, but might, he rejoiced to say, be dispensed with on the present occasion. He might now, therefore, have the pleasure of wishing them a good evening.

Pointing to the two heaps of straw, he begged that his prisoners would lay down their beds in any part of the cell which pleased them best. Their food, and all that they wanted, would be brought to the door regularly. As for the rest, they would wait upon each other. Having thus exhausted his politeness, he quitted the cell; and lock, bolt, and bar were fastened upon the captives.

By the faint light, Toussaint then perceived that his companion was struggling with laughter. When Mars Plaisir perceived by his master’s smile that he had leave to give way, he laughed till the cell rang again, saying—

“Wait upon each other! His Excellency wait upon me! His Excellency wait upon anybody!”

“There would be nothing new in that. I have endeavoured to wait upon others all my life. Rarely does Providence grant the favour to wait upon so many.”

Mars Plaisir did not comprehend this, and therefore continued—

“These whites think that we blacks are created to be serving, serving always—always serving.”

“And they are right. Their mistake is in not seeing that the same is the case with all other men.”

In his incessant habit of serving those about him, Toussaint now remembered that it would be more kind to poor Mars Plaisir to employ him, than to speak of things which he could not comprehend. He signed to him, therefore, to shake down the straw on each side the fireplace. Mars Plaisir sacrificed some of his own bundle to wipe down the wet walls; but it was all in vain. During the silence, while his master was meditating at the window, the melancholy sound of falling water—drip, drip—plash, plash—was heard all around, within and without the cell. When he had wiped down the walls, from the door in the corner round to the door again, the place from which he had set out was as wet as ever, and his straw was spoiled. He angrily kicked the wet straw into the fire; the consequence of which was that the cell was filled with smoke, almost to suffocation.

“Ask for more,” said Toussaint.

Mars Plaisir shouted, knocked at the door, and used every endeavour to make himself heard; but in vain. No one came.

“Take some of mine,” said Toussaint. “No one can lie on this floor.”

Mars Plaisir shook his head. He proceeded mournfully to spread the other heap of straw; but a large flake of ice had fallen upon it from the corner of the walls, and it was as wet as that which he had burned.

This was too much for poor Mars Plaisir. He looked upon his master, now spreading his thin hands over the fire, his furrowed face now and then lighted up by the blaze which sprang fitfully through the smoke—he thought of the hall of audience at Port-au-Prince, of the gardens at Pongaudin, of the Place d’Armes at Cap Français on review-days, of the military journeys and official fêtes of the Commander-in-Chief, and he looked upon him now. He burst into tears as uncontrollable as his laughter had been before. Peeling his master’s hand upon his shoulder, he considered it necessary to give a reason for his grief, and sobbed out

—

“They treat your Excellency as if your Excellency were nobody. They give your Excellency no title. They will not even call you General.”

Toussaint laughed at this cause of grief in such a place; but Mars Plaisir insisted upon it.

“How would they like it themselves? What would the First Consul himself say if he were a prisoner, and his gaolers refused him his titles?”

“I do not suppose him to be a man of so narrow a heart, and so low a soul, as that such a trifle could annoy him. Cheer up, if that be all.”

Mars Plaisir was far from thinking this all; but his tears and sobs choked him in the midst of his complaints. Toussaint turned again to the fire, and presently began to sing one of the most familiar songs of Saint Domingo. He had not sung a stanza before, as he had anticipated, his servant joined in, rising from his attitude of despair, and singing with as much animation as if he had been on the Haut-du-Cap. This was soon put a stop to by a sentinel, who knocked at the door to command silence.

“They cannot hear us if we want dry straw,” said Mars Plaisir, passionately: “and yet we cannot raise a note but they must stop us.”

“We are caged birds; and you know Denis’s canary might sing only when it pleased his master. Have I not seen even you cover up the cage? But sing—sing softly, and they may not hear you.”

When supper was brought, fresh straw and more firewood were granted. At his master’s bidding, and under the influence of these comforts, Mars Plaisir composed himself to sleep.

Toussaint sat long beside the fire. He could not have slept. The weeks that had passed since he left Saint Domingo had not yet reconciled his ear to the silence of a European night. At sea, the dash of the waves against the ship’s side had lulled him to rest. Since he had landed, he had slept little, partly from privation of exercise, partly from the action of over-busy thoughts; but also, in part, from the absence of that hum of life which, to the natives of the tropics, is the incentive to sleep and its

accompaniment. Here, there was but the crackle of the burning wood, and the plashing of water, renewed from minute to minute, till it became a fearful doubt—a passing doubt, but very fearful—whether his ear could become accustomed to the dreary sound, or whether his self-command was to be overthrown by so small an agency as this. From such a question he turned, by an effort, to consider other evils of his condition. It was a cruel aggravation of his sufferings to have his servant shut up with him. It imposed upon him some duties, it was true; and was, in so far, a good; but it also imposed most painful restraints. He had a strong persuasion that Bonaparte had not given up the pursuit of his supposed treasures, or the hope of mastering all his designs, real or imaginary; and he suspected that Mars Plaisir would be left long enough with him to receive the overflowings of his confidence (so hard to restrain in such circumstances as theirs!) and would then be tampered with by the agents of the First Consul. What was the nature and efficacy of their system of cross-examination, he knew; and he knew how nothing but ignorance could preserve poor Mars Plaisir from treachery. Here, therefore—here, in this cell, without resource, without companionship, without solace of any kind, it would be necessary, perhaps, through long months, to set a watch upon his lips, as strict as when he dined with the French Commissaries at Government-House, or when he was weighing the Report of the Central Assembly, regarding a Colonial constitution. For the reserve which his function had imposed upon him at home, he had been repaid by a thousand enjoyments. Now, no more sympathy, no more ministering from his family!—no more could he open to Margot his glory in Placide, his hopes from Denis, his cares for his other children, to uphold them under a pressure of influences which were too strong for them; no more could he look upon the friendly face of Henri, and unbosom himself to him in sun or shade; no more could he look upon the results of his labours in the merchant fleets on the sea, and the harvests burdening the plains! No more could happy voices, from a thousand homes, come to him in blessing and in joy! No more music, no more sunshine, no more fragrance; no more certainty, either, that others were now enjoying what he had parted with for ever! Not only might he never hear what had ensued upon the “truce till August,” but he must carefully conceal his anxiety to hear—his belief that there were such tidings to be told. In the presence of Mars Plaisir, he could scarcely even think of that which lay heaviest at his heart—of what Henri had done, in consequence of his abduction—of his poor oppressed blacks—whether they had sunk

under the blow for the time, and so delayed the arrival of that freedom which they must at length achieve; or whether they had risen, like a multitudinous family of bereaved children, to work out the designs of the father who had been snatched from them. Of all this there could be no speech (scarcely a speculation in his secret soul) in the presence of one who must, if he heard, almost necessarily become a traitor. And then his family! From them he had vanished; and he must live as if they had vanished from his very memory. They were, doubtless, all eye, all ear: for ever watching to know what had become of him. For their personal safety, now that he was helpless, he trusted there was little cause for fear; but what peace of mind could they enjoy, while in ignorance of his fate? He fancied them imploring of their guardians tidings of him, in vain; questioning the four winds for whispers of his retreat; pacing every cemetery for a grave that might be his; gazing up at the loopholes of every prison, with a fear that he might be there; keeping awake at midnight, for the chance of a visit from his injured spirit; or seeking sleep, in the dim hope that he might be revealed to them in a dream. And all this must be but a dim dream to him, except in such an hour as this—a chance hour when no eye was upon him! The reconciling process was slow—but it was no less sure than usual.

“Be it so!” was, as usual, his conclusion—“Be it so! for as long as Heaven pleases—though that cannot be long. The one consolation of being buried alive, soul or body—or both, as in this case—is, that release is sure and near. This poor fellow’s spirit will die within him, and his body will then be let out—the consummation most necessary for him. And my body, already failing, will soon die, and my work be done. To die, and to die thus, is part of my work; and I will do it as willingly as in the field. Hundreds, thousands of my race have died for slavery, cooped up, pining, suffocated in slave-ships, in the wastes of the sea. Hundreds and thousands have thus died, without knowing the end for which they perished. What is it, then, for one to die of cold in the wastes of the mountains, for freedom, and knowing that freedom is the end of his life and his death? What is it? If I groan, if I shrink, may my race curse me, and my God cast me out!”

A warmer glow than the dying embers could give passed through his frame; and he presently slept, basking till morning in dreams of his sunny home.



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## Chapter Forty One.

### Half Free.

Autumn faded, and the long winter of the Jura came on, without bringing changes of any importance to the prisoners—unless it were that, in addition to the wood-fire, which scarcely kept up the warmth of life in their bodies, they were allowed a stove. This indulgence was not in answer to any request of theirs. Toussaint early discovered that Rubaut would grant nothing that was asked for, but liked to bestow a favour spontaneously, now and then. This was a clear piece of instruction; by which, however, Mars Plaisir was slow to profit. Notwithstanding his master's explanations and commands, and his own promises, fervently given when they were alone, he could never see the Commandant without pouting out all his complaints, and asking for everything relating to external comfort that his master had been accustomed to at Pongaudin. A stove, not being among the articles of furniture there, was not asked for; and thus this one comfort was not intercepted by being named. Books were another. Mars Plaisir had been taught to read and write in one of the public schools in the island; but his tastes did not lie in the direction of literature; and he rarely remembered that he possessed the accomplishment of being able to read, except when circumstances called upon him to boast of his country and his race. Books were therefore brought, two at a time, with the Commandant's compliments; two at a time, for the rule of treating the prisoners as equals was exactly observed. This civility brought great comfort to Toussaint—the greatest except solitude. He always chose to suppose that Mars Plaisir was reading when he held a book: and he put a book into his hands daily when he opened his own. Many an hour did he thus obtain for the indulgence of his meditations; and while his servant was wondering how he could see to read by the dim light which came in at the window—more dim each day, as the snow-heap there rose higher—or by the fitful flame of the fire, his thoughts were far away, beating about amidst the struggle then probably going on in Saint Domingo; or exploring, with wonder and sorrow, the narrow and darkened passages of that mind which he had long taken to be the companion of his own; or springing forward into the future, and reposing in serene faith on the condition of his people when, at length, they should possess their own

souls, and have learned to use their human privileges. Many a time did Mars Plaisir, looking off from a volume of the Philosophical Dictionary, which yielded no amusement to him, watch the bright smile on his master's face, and suppose it owing to the jokes in the Racine he held, when that smile arose from pictures formed within of the future senates, schools, courts, and virtuous homes, in which his dusky brethren would hereafter be exercising and securing their lights. Not ungratefully did he use his books the while. He read and enjoyed; but his greatest obligations to them were for the suggestions they afforded, the guidance they offered to his thoughts to regions amidst which his prison and his sufferings were forgotten.

At times, the servant so far broke through his habitual deference for his master as to fling down his book upon the table, and then beg pardon, saying that they should both go mad if they did not make some noise. When he saw the snow falling perpetually, noiseless as the dew, he longed for the sheeted rains of his own winter, splashing as if to drown the land. Here, there was only the eternal drip, drip, which his ear was weary of months ago.

“Cannot you fancy it rain-drops falling from a palm-leaf? Shut your eyes and try,” said his master.

It would not do. Mars Plaisir complained that the Commandant had promised that this drip should cease when the frosts of winter came.

“So it might, but for our stove. But then our ears would have been frozen up, too. We should have been underground by this time—which they say we are not now, though it is hard, sometimes to believe them. However, we shall hear something by-and-by that will drown the drip. Among these mountains, there must be thunder. In the summer, Mars Plaisir, we may hear thunder.”

“In the summer!” exclaimed Mars Plaisir, covering his face with his hands.

“That is, not you, but I. I hope they will let you out long before the summer.”

“Does your Excellency hope so?” cried Mars Plaisir, springing to his feet.

“Certainly, my poor fellow. The happiest news I expect ever to hear is that you are to be released: and this news I do expect to hear. They will not let you go home, to tell where I am; but they will take you out of this place.”

“Oh, your Excellency! if you think so, would your Excellency be pleased to speak for me—to ask the Commandant to let me out? If you will tell him that my rheumatism will not let me sleep—I do not want to go home—I do not want to leave your Excellency, except for your Excellency’s good. I would say all I could for you, and kneel to the First Consul; and, if they would not set you free, I would—” Here his voice faltered, but he spoke the words—“I would come back into your Excellency’s service in the summer—when I had got cured of my rheumatism. If you would speak a word to the Commandant!”

“I would, if I were not sure of injuring you by doing so. Do you not see that nothing is to be granted us that we ask for? Speak not another word of liberty, and you may have it. Ask for it, and you are here for life—or for my life. Remember!”

Mars Plaisir stood deep in thought.

“You have never asked for your liberty?” said his master. “No. I knew that, for my sake, you had not. Has no one ever mentioned liberty to you? I understand,” he continued, seeing an expression of confusion in the poor fellow’s face. “Do not tell me anything; only hear me. If freedom should be offered to you, take it. It is my wish—it is my command. Is there more wood? None but this?”

“None but this damp wood that chokes us with smoke. They send us the worst wood—the green, damp wood that the poorest of the whites in the castle will not use,” cried Mars Plaisir, striving to work off his emotions in a fit of passion. He kicked the unpromising log into the fireplace as he exclaimed—

“They think the worst of everything good enough for us, because we are blacks. Oh! oh!” Here his wrath was aggravated by a twinge of rheumatism. “They think anything good enough for blacks.”

“Let them think so,” said his master, kindly. “God does not. God did not

think so when He gave us the soil of Africa, and the sun of Saint Domingo. When he planted the gardens of the world with palms, it was for the blacks. When He spread the wide shade of the banyan, He made a tent for the blacks. When He filled the air with the scent of the cinnamon and the cacao, was it not for the blacks to enjoy the fragrance? Has He not given them music? Has he not given them love and a home? What has He not given them? Let the whites think of us as they will! They shall be welcome to a share of what God gave the blacks, though they return us nothing better than wet wood, to warm us among their snows.”

“It is true,” said Mars Plaisir, his complacency completely restored—“God thinks nothing too good for the blacks. I will tell the First Consul so, if—”

“The First Consul would rather hear something else from you: and you know, Mars Plaisir, the whites laugh at us for our boastings. However, tell the First Consul what you will.”

Again was Mars Plaisir silenced, and his countenance confused. Perpetually, from this hour did he drop words which showed an expectation of seeing the First Consul—words which were never noticed by his master. Every time that the increasing weakness and pain under which Toussaint suffered forced themselves on his servant’s observation—whenever the skeleton hands were rubbed in his own, to relieve cramps and restore warmth; or the friendly office was returned, in spite of the shame and confusion of the servant at finding himself thus served—with every drift of snow which blocked up the window—and every relaxation of frost, which only increased the worse evil of the damp—Mars Plaisir avowed or muttered the persuasive things he would say to the First Consul.

Toussaint felt too much sympathy to indulge in much contempt for his companion. He, too, found it hard to be tortured with cramps, and wrung by spasms—to enjoy no respite from vexations of body and spirit. He, too, found the passage to the grave weary and dreary. And, as for an interview with Bonaparte, for how long had this been his first desire! How distinctly had it of late been the reserve of his hope! Reminding himself, too, of the effects on the wretched of an indefinite hope, such as the unsettled mind and manners of his servant convinced him, more and more, had been held out—he could not, in the very midst of scenes of

increasing folly and passion, despise poor Mars Plaisir. He mistrusted him, however, and with a more irksome mistrust continually, while he became aware that Mars Plaisir was in the habit of lamenting Saint Domingo chiefly for the sake of naming Christophe and Dessalines, the companies in the mornes, the fever among the whites, and whatever might be most likely to draw his master into conversation on the hopes and resources of the blacks. He became more and more convinced that the weakness of his companion was practised upon, and possibly his attachment to his master, by promises of good to both, on condition of information furnished. He was nearly certain that he had once heard the door of the cell closed gently, as he was beginning to awake, in the middle of the night; and he was quite sure that he one day saw Mars Plaisir burn a note, as he replenished the fire, while he thought his master was busy reading. Not even these mysterious proceedings could make Toussaint feel anything worse than sorrowing pity for Mars Plaisir.

The Commandant had ceased to visit his prisoners. During the rest of the winter, he never came. He sent books occasionally, but less frequently. The supply of firewood was gradually diminished; and so was the quantity of food. The ailments of the prisoners were aggravated, from day-to-day; and if the Commandant had favoured them with his presence, he would have believed that he saw two dusky shadows amidst the gloom of their cell, rather than men.

One morning, Toussaint awoke, slowly and with difficulty, from a sleep which appeared to have been strangely sound for one who could not move a limb without pain, and who rarely, therefore, slept for many minutes together. It must have been strangely long, too; for the light was as strong as it had ever been at noon in this dim cell. Before he rose, Toussaint felt that there was sunshine in the air; and the thought that spring was come, sent a gleam of pleasure through his spirit. It was true enough. As he stood before the window, something like a shadow might be seen on the floor. No sky—not a shred the breadth of his hand—was to be seen. For six months past, he had behold neither cloud, nor star, nor the flight of a bird. But, casting a glance up to the perpendicular rock opposite, he saw that it faintly reflected sunshine. He saw, moreover, something white moving—some living creature upon this rock. It was a young kid, standing upon a point or ledge imperceptible below—by its action, browsing upon some vegetation which could not be seen so far-

off.

“Mars Plaisir! Mars Plaisir!” cried Toussaint. “Spring is come! The world is alive again, even here. Mars Plaisir!” There was no answer.

“He has slept deeply and long, like myself,” said he, going, however, into the darker corner of the cell where Mars Plaisir’s bed was laid. The straw was there, but no one was on it. The stove was warm, but there was no fire in the fireplace. The small chest allowed for the prisoners’ clothes was gone—everything was gone but the two volumes in which they had been reading the night before. Toussaint shook these books, to see if any note had been hidden in them. He explored them at the window, to discover any word of farewell that might be written on blank leaf or margin. There was none there; nor any scrap of paper hidden in the straw, or dropped upon the floor. Mars Plaisir was gone, and had left no token.

“They drugged me—hence my long sleep,” thought Toussaint. “They knew the poor fellow’s weakness, and feared his saying too much, when it came to parting. I hope they will treat him well, for (thanks to my care for him!) he never betrayed me to them. I treated him well in taking care that he should not betray me to them, while they yet so far believed that he might as to release him. It is all well; and I am alone! It is almost like being in the free air. I am almost as free as yonder kid on the rock. My wife! my children! I may name you all now—name you in my thoughts and in my song. Placide! are you rousing the nations to ask the tyrant where I am? Henri! have you buried the dead whites yet in Saint Domingo? and have your rains done weeping the treason of those dead against freedom? Let it be so, Henri! Your rains have washed out the blood of this treason; and your dews have brought forth the verdure of your plains, to cover the graves of the guilty and the fallen. Take this lesson home, Henri! Forget—not me, for you must remember me in carrying on my work—but forget how you lost me. Believe that I fell in the mornes, and that you buried me there; believe this, rather than shed one drop of blood for me. Learn of God, not of Bonaparte, how to bless our race. Poison their souls no more with blood. The sword and the fever have done their work, and tamed your tyrants. As for the rest, act with God for our people! Give them harvests to their hands; and open the universe of knowledge before their eyes. Give them rest and stillness in

the summer heats: and shelter them in virtuous and busy homes from the sheeted rains. It is enough that blood was the price of freedom—a heavy price, which has been paid. Let there be no such barter for vengeance. My children, hear me! Wherever you are—in the court of our tyrant, or on the wide sea, or on the mountain-top, where the very storms cannot make themselves heard so high—yet let your father’s voice reach you from his living grave! No vengeance! Freedom—freedom to the last drop of blood in the veins of our race! Let our island be left to the wild herds and the reptiles, rather than be the habitation of slaves: but if you have established freedom there, it is holy ground, and no vengeance must profane it. If you love me and my race, you must forgive my murderers. Yes, murderers,” he pursued in thought, after dwelling a while on the images of home and familiar faces, “murderers they already are, doubtless, in intent. I should have been sent hence long ago, but for the hope of reaching my counsels through Mars Plaisir. From the eyes of the world I have already disappeared; and nothing hinders the riddance of me now. Feeble as I am, the waiting for death may yet be tedious. If tedious for him who has this day done with me, how tedious for me, who have done with him and with all the world!—done with them, except as to the affections with which one may look back upon them from the clear heights on the other side of the dark valley. That I should pine and shiver long in the shadows of that valley would be tedious to him who drove me there before my time, and to me. He has never submitted to what is tedious, and he will not now.”

The door of the cell was here softly opened, a head showed itself, and immediately disappeared. Toussaint silently watched the kid, as it moved from point to point on the face of the rock: and it was with some sorrow that he at last saw it spring away. Just then, Bellines entered with the usual miserable breakfast. Toussaint requested fire, to which Bellines assented. He then asked to have the window opened, that the air of the spring morning might enter. Bellines shrugged his shoulders, and observed that the air of these March mornings was sharp. The prisoner persisted, however; and with the fresh air, there came in upon him a fresh set of thoughts. Calling Bellines back, he desired, in a tone of authority, to see the Commandant.

It was strange to him—he wondered at himself on finding his mind filled with a new enterprise—with the idea of making a last appeal to Rubaut

for freedom—an appeal to his justice, not to his clemency. With the chill breeze, there had entered the tinkle of the cow-bell, and the voices of children singing. These called up a vivid picture of the valley, as he had seen it on entering his prison—the small green level, the gushing stream, the sunny rock, the girl with her distaff, tending the goats. He thought he could show his title to, at least, a free sight of the face of nature; and the impulse did not immediately die. During the morning, he listened for footsteps without. After some hours, he smiled at his own hope, and nearly ceased to listen. The face of the rock grow dim; the wind rose, and sleet was driven in at the window: so that he was compelled to use his stiff and aching limbs in climbing up to shut it. No one had remembered, or had chosen to make his fire; and he was shivering, as in an ague fit, when, late in the afternoon, Bellines brought in his second meal, and some fuel.

“The Commandant?”

“The Commandant is not in the castle. He is absent to-day.”

“Where?”

“They say the First Consul has business with him.”

“With me rather,” thought Toussaint. He said aloud, “Then he is gone with my servant?”

“May be so. They went the same road; but that road leads to many places.”

“The road from Pontarlier?”

“Any road—all our roads here lead to many places,” said Bellines, as he went out.

“Poor Mars Plaisir!” thought Toussaint, as he carefully placed the wood so as to tempt the feeble blaze. “Our road has seemed the same for the last eight months; but it leads to widely different points. I rejoice for him that his has parted off to-day; and for myself, though it shows that I am near the end of mine. Is it this soldier, with comrades, who is to end me? Or is it this supper, better drugged than that of last night? Or will they wait



to see whether solitude will kill a busy, ambitious Commander-in-Chief, as they think me?"

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## Chapter Forty Two.

### Free.

Day after day passed on, and the prisoner found no change in his condition—as far, at least, as it depended on his gaolers. He was more ill as he became enveloped in the damps of the spring; and he grew more and more sensible of the comfort of being alone. Death by violence, however, did not come.

He did not give over his concern for Mars Plaisir because he was glad of his absence. He inquired occasionally for the Commandant, hoping that, if he could see Rubaut, he might learn whether his servant was still a prisoner, and whether his release from his cell had been for freedom, or for a worse lot than he had left behind. There was no learning from Bellines, however, whether the Commandant had returned to the fortress, or who was his lieutenant, if he had not. In the middle of April, the doubt was settled by the appearance of Rubaut himself in the cell. He was civil—unusually so—but declared himself unable to give any information about Mars Plaisir. He had nothing more to do with his prisoners when they were once taken out of his charge. He had always business enough upon his hands to prevent his occupying himself with things and people that were gone by. He had delivered Mars Plaisir into proper care; and that was the last he knew of him. The man was well at that time—as well as usual, and pleased enough to be in the open air again. Rubaut could remember no more concerning him—in fact, had not thought of him again, from that day to the present.

“And this is the kind of answer that you would give concerning me, if my sons should arrive hither in search of me some days after my grave had been closed?”

“Come, come! no foreboding!” said Rubaut. “Foreboding is bad.”

“If my sons should present themselves—” proceeded Toussaint—

“They will not come here—they cannot come here,” interrupted Rubaut. “No one knows that you are here, but some three or four who will never tell.”

“How,” thought Toussaint, “have they secured Mars Plaisir, that he shall never tell?” For the poor man’s sake, however, he would not ask this aloud.

Rubaut continued: “The reason why we cannot have the pleasure of giving you the range of the fortress is, that the First Consul thinks it necessary to keep secret the place of your abode—for the good of the colony, as he says. With one of our own countrymen, this seclusion might not be necessary, as the good people of the village could hardly distinguish features from the distance at which they are; and they have no telescopes—no idea of playing the spy upon us, as we can upon them. They cannot distinguish features, so high up—”

“But they could complexion.”

“Exactly so; and it might get abroad that some one of your colour was here.”

“And if it should get abroad, and some one of my sons, or my wife should come, your answer would be that you remember nothing—that you cannot charge your memory with persons and things that are gone by—that you have had prisoners of all complexions—that some have lived and some have died—and that you have something else to do than to remember what became of each. I hope, however, and (as it would be for the advantage of the First Consul) I believe, that you would have the complaisance to show them my grave.”

“Come, come! no foreboding! Foreboding is bad,” repeated Rubaut.

Toussaint smiled, and said—

“What other employment do you afford me than that of looking into the past and future, in order to avoid the present? If, turning from the sickening view which the past presents of the treachery of your race to mine, of the abuse of my brotherly trust in him by which your ruler has afflicted our hearts if, turning from this mournful past, I look the other way,

what do I see before me but the open grave?"

"You are out of spirits," said Rubaut, building up the fire.

"You wear well, however. You must have been very strong in your best days. You wear extremely well."

"I still live; and that I do so is because the sun of my own climate, and the strength of soul of my best days, shine and glow through me now, quenching in part even these damps. But I am old, and every day heaps years on me. However, I am as willing as you that my looking forward should be for others than myself. I might be able to forebode for France, and for its ruler."

Rubaut folded his arms, and leaned, as if anxious to listen, against the wall beside the fire; but it was so wet that he quickly shifted his position; still, however, keeping his eyes fixed on his prisoner.

"And what would you forebode for France, and for her ruler?" he asked.

"That my country will never again be hers. Her retribution is as sure as her tyranny has been great. She may send out fleet after fleet, each bearing an army; but the spirit of freedom will be too strong for them all. Their bodies will poison the air, and choke the sea, and the names of their commanders will, one after another, sink in disgrace, before they will again make slaves of my people in Saint Domingo. How stands the name of Leclerc at this moment in France?"

"Leclerc is dead," said Rubaut; repenting, the next moment, that he had said so much. Toussaint saw this by his countenance, and inquired no further.

"He is dead! and twenty thousand Frenchmen with him, who might at this hour have been enjoying at home the natural wealth of my country, the fruits of our industry. The time was when I thought your ruler and I—the ruler, in alliance with him, of my race in Saint Domingo—were brothers in soul, as we were apparently in duty and in fortune. Brothers in soul we were not, as it has been the heaviest grief of my life to learn. I spurn brotherhood of soul with one whose ambition has been for himself. Brothers in duty we were; and, if we should yet be brothers in fortune—if

he should fall into the hands of a strong foe—But you are saying in your heart, ‘No foreboding! Foreboding is bad!’”

Rubaut smiled, and said foreboding was only bad for the spirits; and the First Consul’s spirits were not likely to be affected by anything that could be said at Joux. To predict bad fortune for him was like looking for the sun to be put out at noonday; it might pass the time, but would not dim the sun.

“So was it said of me,” replied the prisoner, “and with the more reason, because I made no enemies. My enemies have not been of my own making. Your ruler is making enemies on every hand; and alas! for him if he lives to meet the hour of retribution! If he, like myself, should fall into the power of a strong foe—if he should pass his remaining days imprisoned on a rock, may he find more peace than I should dare look for, if I had his soul!”

“There is not a braver man in Europe, or the Indies either, than the First Consul.”

“Brave towards foes without and sufferings to come. But bravery gives no help against enemies harboured within, and evils fixed in the past. What will his bravery avail against the images of France corrupted, of Europe outraged, of the blacks betrayed and oppressed—of the godlike power which was put into his hands abused to the purposes of the devil!”

“But perhaps he would not view his affairs as you do.”

“Then would his bravery avail him no better. If he should be so blind as to see nothing higher and better than his own acts, then will he see no higher nor better hope than he has lost. Then will he suffer and die under the slow torment of personal mortifications and regrets.”

“You say you are sinking under your reverses. You say you are slowly dying.”

“I am. I shall die of the sickening and pining of sense and limb—of the wasting of bone and muscle. Day by day is my eye more dim, and my right arm more feeble. But I have never complained of evils that the bravery you speak of would not meet. Have I ever said that you have

touched my soul?"

Rubaut saw the fire in his eye, glanced at his emaciated hand, and felt that this was true. He could bear the conversation no longer, now that no disclosures that could serve the First Consul seemed likely to be made.

"You are going?" said Toussaint.

"Yes. I looked in to-day because I am about to leave the fortress for a few days."

"If you see the First Consul, tell him what I have now said; and add that if, like him, I had used my power for myself, he would have had a power over me which he has not now. I should not then have been here—nay, you must hear me—I should not then have been here, crushed beneath his hand; I should have been on the throne of Saint Domingo—flattered, as he is, by assurances of my glory and security—but crushed by a heavier weight than that of his hand; by his image, as that of one betrayed in my infidelity to his country and nation. Tell him this; tell him that I perish willingly, if this consequence of my fidelity to France may be a plea for justice to my race."

"How people have misrepresented you to me!" said Rubaut, bustling about the cell, and opening the door to call Bellines. "They told me you were very silent—rarely spoke."

"That was true when my duty was to think," said Toussaint. "To-day my duty has been to speak. Remember that yours, in fidelity to your ruler, is to repeat to him what I say."

"More wood, Bellines," said Rubaut, going to the door, to give further directions in a low voice. Returning, he said, with some hurry of manner, that, as he was to be absent for two or three days, he had sent for such a supply of wood and flambeaux as might last some time. More books should also be brought.

"When shall we meet again?" asked Toussaint.

"I don't know. Indeed I do not know," said the Commandant, looking at his watch by the firelight. His prisoner saw that his hands trembled, and that

he walked with some irresolution to the door.

“Au revoir!” said Toussaint.

Rubaut did not reply, but went out, leaving the door standing wide, and apparently no one to guard it.

Toussaint’s heart beat at the thought that this might give him one more opportunity of being abroad in the daylight, perhaps in the sun! He rose to make the attempt; but he was exhausted by the conversation he had held—the first for so long! His aching limbs failed him; and he sank down on his bed, from which he did not rise till long after Bellines had laid down his loads, and left the place.

The prisoner rose, at length, to walk, as he did many times in the day, from corner to corner of his cell. At the first turn, by the door, he struck his foot against something which he upset. It was a pitcher of water, which, with a loaf of bread, had been put in that unusual place. The sight was as distinct in its signification as a yawning grave. His door was to open upon him no more. He was not again to see a human face. The Commandant was to be absent awhile, and, on returning, to find his prisoner dead.

He used all means that he could devise to ascertain whether it were indeed so. He called Bellines from the door, in the way which Bellines had never failed to reply to since the departure of Mars Plaisir. Bellines did not come. He sang aloud, as he had never before been allowed to sing unchecked, since he entered the fortress. He now sang unchecked. The hour of the afternoon meal passed, and no one came. The evening closed, and no bolt had been drawn. The case was clear.

The prisoner now and then felt a moment’s surprise at experiencing so little recoil from such a fate. He was scarcely conscious even of repugnance. His tranquillity was doubtless owing, in part, to his having long contemplated death in this place as certain; to life having now little left to make its continuance desirable; and to his knowing himself to be so reduced, that the struggle could not be very long. But he himself believed his composure to be owing to another cause than any of these.

“He who appointed me to the work of such a life as mine,” thought the dying man, “is making its close easy to His servant. I would willingly have

suffered to the extremity of His will: but my work is done; men's eyes are no longer upon me; I am alone with Him; and He is pleased to let me enter already upon my everlasting peace. If Father Laxabon were here, would he now say, as he has often said, and as most men say, that, looking back upon life from its close, it appears short as the time of the early rains? Instead of this, how long appear the sixty years that I have lived! How long, how weary now teems the life when I was a slave—though much was done, and it was the schooling of my soul for the work preparing for my hand. My Margot! my children! how quietly did we then live, as if no change were ever to come, and we were to sit before our door at Breda every evening, till death should remove us, one by one! While I was composing my soul to patience by thought and by reading, how little did I dream that I was so becoming prepared to free my race, to reign, and then to die of cold and hunger, such as the meanest slave never knows! Then the next eight years of toil—they seem longer than all that went before. Doubtless they were lengthened to me, to make my weak powers equal to the greatness of my task; for every day of conducting war, and making laws, appeared to me stretched out into a year. These late seasons of reverse have passed over more rapidly, for their suffering has been less. While all, even to Henri, have pitied me during these latter years, they knew not that I was recovering the peace which I shall now no more lose. It is true that I erred, according to the common estimate of affairs, in not making myself a king, and separating my country from France, as France herself is compelling her to separate at last. It is true, I might now have been reigning there, instead of dying here; and, what is more worthy of meditation, my people might now have been laying aside their arms, and beginning a long career of peace. It might possibly have been so; but at what cost! Their career of freedom (if freedom it could then have been called) would have begun in treason and in murder; and the stain would have polluted my race for ever. Now, they will have freedom still—they cannot but have it, though it is delayed. And upon this freedom will rest the blessing of Heaven. We have not fought for dominion, nor for plunder; nor, as far as I could govern the passions of men, for revenge. We began our career of freedom in fidelity, in obedience, and in reverence towards the whites; and therefore may we take to ourselves the blessing of Him who made us to be free, and demands that we be so with clean hands and a pure heart. Therefore will the freedom of Saint Domingo be but the beginning of freedom to the negro race. Therefore may we hope that in this race will the spirit of

Christianity appear more fully than it has yet shown itself among the proud whites—show itself in its gentleness, its fidelity, its disinterestedness, and its simple trust. The proud whites may scorn this hope, and point to the ignorance and the passions of my people, and say, ‘Is this your exhibition of the spirit of the Gospel?’ But not for this will we give up our hope. This ignorance, these passions, are natural to all men, and are in us aggravated and protracted by our slavery. Remove them by the discipline and the stimulus of freedom, begun in obedience to God and fidelity to men, and there remain the love that embraces all—the meek faith that can bear to be betrayed, but is ashamed to doubt—the generosity that can forgive offences seventy-and-seven times renewed—the simple, open, joyous spirit which marks such as are of the kingdom of heaven. Lord! I thank Thee that Thou hast made me the servant of this race!”

Never, during the years of his lowliness, or the days of his grandeur, had Toussaint spent a brighter hour than now, while the spirit of prophecy (twin-angel with death) visited him, and showed him the realms of mind which were opening before his race—that countless host whose van he had himself led to the confines. This spirit whispered something of the immortality of his own name, hidden, lost as he was in his last hours.

“Be it so!” thought he, “if my name can excite any to devotedness, or give to any the pleasure of being grateful. If my name live, the goodness of those who name it will be its life; for my true self-will not be in it. No one will the more know the real Toussaint. The weakness that was in me when I felt most strong, the reluctance when I appeared most ready, the acts of sin from which I was saved by accident alone, the divine constraint of circumstances to which my best deeds were owing—these things are between me and my God. If my name and my life are to be of use, I thank God that they exist; but this outward existence of them is nothing between Him and me. To me henceforward they no more belong than the name of Epaminondas, or the life of Tell. Man stands naked on the brink of the grave, his name stripped from him, and his deeds laid down as the property of the society he leaves behind. Let the name and deeds I now leave behind be a pride to generations yet to come—a more innocent pride than they have sometimes, alas! been to me. I have done with them.”



Toussaint had often known what hunger was—in the mornes he had endured it almost to extremity. He now expected to suffer less from it than then, from being able to yield to the faintness and drowsiness which had then to be resisted. From time to time during his meditations, he felt its sensations visiting him, and felt them without fear or regret. He had eaten his loaf when first hungry, and had watched through the first night, hoping to sleep his long sleep the sooner, when his fire should at length be burned out. During the day, some faint sounds reached him from the valley—some tokens of the existence of men. During the two last nights of his life, his ear was kept awake only by the dropping of water—the old familiar sound—and the occasional stir of the brands upon the hearth. About midnight of the second night, he found he could sit up no longer. With trembling hands he laid on such pieces of wood as he could lift, lighted another flambeau, and lay down on his straw. He raised himself but once, hastily and dizzily in the dawn (dawn to him, but sunrise abroad). His ear had been reached by the song of the young goatherds, as they led their flock abroad into another valley. The prisoner had dreamed that it was his boy Denis, singing in the piazza at Pongaudin. As his dim eye recognised the place, by the flicker of the expiring flambeau, he smiled at his delusion, and sank back to sleep again.

The Commandant was absent three days. On his return, he summoned Bellines, and said, in the presence of several soldiers—

“How is the prisoner there?” pointing in the direction of Toussaint’s cell.

“He has been very quiet this morning, sir.”

“Very quiet? Do you suppose he is ill?”

“He was as well as usual the last time I went to him.”

“He has had plenty of everything, I suppose?”

“Oh, yes, sir. Wood, candle, food, water—everything.”

“Very well. Get lights, and I will visit him.”

Lights were brought. A boy, who carried a lantern, shivered as he saw how ghastly Bellines’ face looked in the yellow gleam, in the dark vault on

the way to the cell, and was not sorry to be told to stay behind, till called to light the Commandant back again.

“Have you heard anything?” asked Rubaut of the soldier, in a low voice.

“Not for many hours. There was a call or two, and some singing, just after you went; but nothing since.”

“Hush! Listen!”

They listened motionless for some time; but nothing was heard but the everlasting splash, which went on all around them.

“Unbar the door, Bellines.”

He did so, and held the door wide for the Commandant to enter. Rubaut stalked in, and straight up to the straw bed. He called the prisoner in a somewhat agitated voice, felt the hand, raised the head, and declared that he was gone. The candle was burned completely out. Rubaut turned to the hearth, carefully stirred the ashes, blew among them, and raised a spark.

“You observe,” he said to Bellines; “his fire was burning when we found him.”

“Yes, sir.”

“There is more wood and more candle?”

“Yes, sir; the wood in this corner, and the candle on the table—just under your hand, sir.”

“Oh, ay, here. Put on some wood, and blow up a flame. Observe, we found his fire burning.”

“Yes, sir.”

They soon re-appeared in the courtyard, and announced the death of the prisoner. Rubaut ordered a messenger to be in readiness to ride to Pontarlier, by the time he should have written a letter.

“We must have the physicians from Pontarlier,” observed the Commandant, aloud, “to examine the deceased, and declare what he died of. The old man has not been well for some time past. I have no doubt the physicians will find that he died of apoplexy, or something of the kind.”

“No wonder, poor soul!” said a sutler’s wife to another woman.

“No wonder, indeed,” replied the other. “My husband died of the heat in Saint Domingo; and they took this poor man (don’t tell it, but he was a black; I got a sight of him, and he came from Saint Domingo, you may depend upon it)—they took him out of all that heat, and put him into that cold, damp place there! No wonder he is dead.”

“Well, I never knew we had a black here!”

“Don’t say I told you, then.”

“I have no doubt—yes, we found his fire burning,” said Bellines to the inquirers round him. “They will find it apoplexy, or some such thing, I have no doubt of it.”

And so they did, to the entire satisfaction of the First Consul.

Yet it was long before the inquiring world knew with certainty what had become of Toussaint L’Ouverture.



## Appendix.

Those who feel interest enough in the extraordinary fortunes of Toussaint L'Ouverture to inquire concerning him from the Biographical Dictionaries and Popular Histories of the day, will find in them all the same brief and peremptory decision concerning his character. They all pronounce him to have been a man of wonderful sagacity, endowed with a native genius for both war and government; but savage in warfare; hypocritical in religion—using piety as a political mask; and, in all his affairs, the very prince of dissemblers. It is true that this account consists neither with the facts of his life, the opinions of the people he delivered, nor the state documents of the island he governed. Yet it is easy to account for. The first notices of him were French, reported by the discomfited invaders of Saint Domingo to writers imbued with the philosophy of the days of the Revolution; and later accounts are copies of these earlier ones. From the time when my attention was first fixed on this hero, I have been struck with the inconsistencies contained in all reports of his character which ascribe to him cruelty and hypocrisy; and, after a long and careful comparison of such views with his words and deeds, with the evidence obtainable from Saint Domingo, and with the temper of his times in France, I have arrived at the conclusion that his character was, in sober truth, such as I have endeavoured to represent it in the foregoing work.

I do not mean to say that I am the first who has formed an opinion that Toussaint was an honest, a religious, and a mild and merciful man. In an article in the *Quarterly Review* (Number seventeen) on the "Past and Present State of Hayti," so interesting an account is given of the great negro, as to cause some wonder that no one has till now been moved by it to present the facts of his life in the form of an historical novel. In that article it is justly observed that the *onus* rests with those who accuse Toussaint of hypocrisy to prove their allegation by facts. I would say the same of the other charge, of cruelty. Meanwhile, I disbelieve both charges, for these reasons among others:—

The wars of Saint Domingo were conducted in a most barbarous spirit before the time of Toussaint's acquisition of power, and after his abduction. During the interval, the whole weight of his influence was given to curb the ferocity of both parties. He pardoned his personal

enemies (as in the instance of the mulattoes in the church), and he punished in his followers, as the most unpardonable offence they could commit, any infringement of his rule of "No Retaliation."

When it is considered that the cruelties perpetrated in the rising of 1791, and renewed after the fall of Toussaint, were invented by the whites, and copied by the negroes (who were wont to imitate their masters in all they did), it is no small evidence of L'Ouverture's magnanimity that he conceived, illustrated, and enforced, in such times, such a principle as that of No Retaliation.

All the accounts of him agree that, from his earliest childhood, he was distinguished by a tenderness of nature which would not let him hurt a fly. He attached to himself the cattle and horses which were under his charge when a boy, to a degree which made him famous in a region where cruelty to animals at the hands of slaves was almost universal. A man who lived till fifty, remarkable for a singular gentleness and placability, ought not to be believed sanguinary from that time forward, on the strength of the unsupported charges of his disappointed enemies.

Piety was also his undisputed early characteristic. A slave bringing to the subject of religion the aptitude of the negro nature, early treated with kindness by a priest, evincing the spirit of piety from his infant years, finding in it the consolations required by a life of slavery, and guided by it in a course of the strictest domestic morality, while surrounded by licentiousness, *may* well be supposed sincere in his religion, under a change of circumstances occurring after he was fifty years of age. The imputation of hypocrisy is not, however, much to be wondered at when it is considered that, at the time when the first notices of Toussaint were written at Paris, it was the fashion there to believe that no wise man could be sincerely religious.

As for the charge of general and habitual dissimulation, it can only be said that while no proof of the assertion is offered, there is evidence, in all the anecdotes preserved of him, of absolute frankness and simplicity. I rather think that it was the incredible extent of his simplicity which gave rise to the belief that it was assumed, in order to hide cunning. The *Quarterly Review* quotes an anecdote thoroughly characteristic of the man, which is not introduced into my story, because, in the abundance of

my materials, I found it necessary to avoid altogether the history of the English transactions in Saint Domingo. It was only by confining my narrative to the relations between Toussaint and France that I could keep my tale within limits, and preserve the clearness of the representation. There are circumstances, however, in his intercourse with the British, as honourable to Toussaint's character as any that I have related; and among them is the following, which I quote from the *Quarterly Review*.

“General Maitland, previous to the disembarkation of the troops, returned the visit at Toussaint's camp; and such was his confidence in the integrity of his character, that he proceeded through a considerable extent of country, full of armed negroes, with only three attendants. Roume, the French Commissary, wrote a letter to Toussaint, on this occasion, advising him to seize his guest, as an act of duty to the republic: on the route, General Maitland was secretly informed of Bourne's treachery; but, in full reliance on the honour of Toussaint, he determined to proceed. On arriving at head-quarters, he was desired to wait. It was some time before Toussaint made his appearance; at length, however, he entered the room with two open letters in his hand. ‘There, General,’ said he, ‘before we talk together, read these. One is a letter from the French Commissary—the other is my answer. I could not see you till I had written my reply, that you might be satisfied how safe you were with me, and how incapable I am of baseness.’”—*Quarterly Review*, volume twenty-one, page 442.

The charge of personal ambition is, above all, contradicted by facts. If anything is clear in Toussaint's history, it is that his ruin was owing to his loyalty to France, his misplaced trust in Napoleon, and his want of personal ambition. He did not, as he might have done, make himself a sovereign when France was wholly occupied with European warfare. He did not, as he might have done, prepare his people to resist the power of the mother-country, when she should at length be at liberty to reclaim the colony. He sent away the French commissaries only when, by their ignorance and incompetency, they imperilled the peace and safety of the colony. He cherished the love of the mother-country in the hearts of the negroes, to the very last moment—till the armament which came to re-establish slavery appeared on the shores—till it was too late to offer that resistance which would have made him a king. Christophe's view of this part of his conduct is given in a manifesto, dated in the eleventh year of the Independence of Hayti:—

“Toussaint L’Ouverture, under his paternal administration, had reinstated, in full force, law, morals, religion, education, and industry. Agriculture and commerce were flourishing. He favoured the white colonists, particularly the planters. Indeed, his attentions and partialities had been carried to such a length, that he was loudly blamed for entertaining more affection for them than for those of his own colour. Nor was this reproach without foundation; for, a few months before the arrival of the French, he sacrificed his own nephew, General Moyse, who had disregarded the orders he had given for the protection of the colonists. That act of the Governor, added to the great confidence he had placed in the French authorities, was the principal cause of the feeble resistance the French encountered in Hayti. Indeed, his confidence in these authorities was such, that he had discharged the greater part of the regular troops, and sent them back to the tillage of the soil.”—*Haytian papers*, page 158.

Such conduct is a sufficient answer to the allegation that Toussaint was actuated by a selfish ambition, cunning in its aims, and cruel in its use of means.

Some light is thrown upon the character of his mind by the record of the books he studied while yet a slave. Rainsford gives a list, which does not pretend to be complete, but which is valuable as far as it goes. It appears that in his years of comparative leisure he was completely engrossed by one book at a time, reading it at all spare moments, meditating its contents while in the field, and quoting it in conversation for weeks together. One of the first authors whose works thus entirely possessed him was Raynal: afterwards, Epictetus, in a French translation; then others, as follows:—

Scriptores de Re Militari.

Caesar’s Commentaries. French translation, by De Crisse.

Des Claison’s History of Alexander and Caesar.

D’Orleans’ History of Revolutions in England and Spain.

Marshal Saxe’s Military Reveries.

Guischard’s Military Memoirs of the Greeks and Romans.

Herodotus.

Le Bean's Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres.

Lloyd's Military and Political Memoirs.

English Socrates, Plutarch, Cornelius Nepos, etcetera, etcetera.

Great mystery hangs over the tale of Toussaint's imprisonment and death. It appears that he was confined in the Temple only as long as Napoleon had hopes of extorting from him information about the treasures, absurdly reported to have been buried by him in the mornes (Note 1), under circumstances of atrocious cruelty. It has been suggested that torture was employed by Bonaparte's aide, Caffarelli, to procure the desired confession; but I do not know that the conjecture is founded on any evidence.

As to the precise mode of L'Ouverture's death, there is no certainty. The only point on which all authorities agree is, that he was deliberately murdered; but whether by mere confinement in a cell whose floor was covered with water, and the walls with ice (a confinement necessarily fatal to a negro), or by poison, or by starvation in conjunction with disease, may perhaps never be known. The report which is, I believe, the most generally believed in France is that which I have adopted—that the Commandant, when his prisoner was extremely ill, left the fortress for two or three days, with the key of Toussaint's cell in his pocket; that, on his return, he found his prisoner dead; and that he summoned physicians from Pontarlier, who examined the body, and pronounced a serious apoplexy to be the cause of death. It so happened that I was able, in the spring of last year, to make some inquiry upon the spot; the result of which I will relate.

I was travelling in Switzerland with a party of friends, with whom I had one day discussed the fortunes and character of Toussaint. I had then no settled purpose of writing about him, but was strongly urged to it by my companions. On the morning of the 15th of May, when we were drawing near Payerne from Freyburg, on our way to Lausanne, I remembered and mentioned that we were not very far from the fortress of Joux, where Toussaint's bones lay. My party were all eager that I should visit it. There



were difficulties in the way of the scheme—the chief of which was that our passports were not so signed as to enable us to enter France; and the nearest place where the necessary signature could be obtained was Berne, which we had left behind us the preceding day. I had, however, very fortunately a Secretary of State's passport, besides the Prussian Consul's; and this second passport, made out for myself and a *femme-de-chambre*, had been signed by the French Minister in London. One of my kind companions offered to cross the frontier with me, as my *femme-de-chambre*, and to help me in obtaining access to the prison of Toussaint; an offer I was very thankful to accept. At Payerne, we separated ourselves and a very small portion of luggage from our party, whom we promised to overtake at Lausanne in two or three days. We engaged for the trip a double *char-à-banc*, with two stout little horses, and a *brave homme* of a driver, as our courteous landlady at Payerne assured us. Passing through Yverdun, we reached Orbe by five in the afternoon, and took up our quarters at the "Guillaume Tell," full of expectation for the morrow.

On the 16th, we had breakfasted, and were beginning the ascent of the Jura before seven o'clock. The weather was fine, and we enjoyed a succession of interesting objects, till we reached that which was the motive of our excursion. First we had that view of the Alps which, if it were possible, it would be equally useless to describe to any who have and any who have not stood on the eastern slope of the Jura, on a clear day. Then we wound among the singular defiles of this mountain range, till we reached the valley which is commanded by Jougne. Here we alighted, climbing the slope to the gate of the town, while the carriage was slowly dragged up the steep winding road. Our appearance obviously perplexed the two custom-house officers, who questioned us, and peeped into our one bag and our one book (the Handbook of Switzerland) with an amusing air of suspicion. My companion told them that the aim of our journey was the fortress of Joux; and that we expected to pass the frontier again in the afternoon, on our return to Orbe. Whether they believed us, or, believing, thought us very foolish, is best known to themselves; but I suspect the latter, by their compliments on our cleverness, on our return. At Jougne we supplied ourselves with provisions, and then proceeded through valleys, each narrower than the last, more dismal with pines, and more chequered with snow. The air of desolation, here and there rendered more striking by the dreary

settlements of the charcoal-burners, would have been impressive enough, if our minds had not been full of the great negro, and therefore disposed to view everything with his eyes.

The scene was exactly what I have described in my story, except that a good road, made since Toussaint's time, now passes round and up the opposite side of the rock from that by which he mounted. The old road, narrow and steep, remains; and we descended by it.

We reached the courtyard without difficulty, passing the two drawbridges and portcullis described. The Commandant was absent; and his lieutenant declared against our seeing anything more than the great wheel, and a small section of the battlements. But for great perseverance, we should have seen nothing more; but we obtained, at last, all we wanted. We passed through the vault and passages I have described, and thoroughly examined the cell. No words can convey a sense of its dreariness. I have exaggerated nothing—the dim light, the rotten floor, shining like a pond, the drip of water, the falling flakes of ice, were all there. The stove was removed; but we were shown where it stood.

There were only three persons who pretended to possess any information concerning the negro prisoner. The soldier who was our principal guide appeared never to have heard of him. A very old man in the village, to whom we were referred, could tell us nothing but one fact, which I knew before—that Toussaint was deprived of his servant, some time before his death. A woman in the sutler's department of the fortress pretended to know all about him; but she had never seen him, and had no further title to authority than that her first husband had died in the Saint Domingo invasion. She did us the good service of pointing out the grave, however. The brickwork which surrounds the coffin now forms part of a new wall; but it was till lately within the church.

This woman's story was that which was probably given out on the spot, to be told to inquirers; so inconsistent is it in itself, and with known facts. Her account was, that Toussaint was carried off from Saint Domingo by the ship in which he was banqueted by Leclerc (the last of a line of two hundred), weighing anchor without his perceiving it, while he was at dinner. The absurdity of this beginning shows how much reliance is to be

placed upon the rest of her story. She declared that the Commandant Rubaut had orders from the Government to treat the prisoner well; that his servant remained with him to the last; that he was well supplied with books, allowed the range of the fortress, and accustomed to pass his days in the house of the Commandant, playing cards in the evenings: that on the last night of his life he excused himself from the card-table, on the plea of being unwell; that he refused to have his servant with him, though urged not to pass the night alone; that he was left with fire, fauteuil, flambeaux, and a book, and found dead in his chair in the morning; and that the physicians who examined the body declared his death to have been caused by the rupture of a blood-vessel in the heart. This last particular is known to be as incorrect as the first. As for the rest, this informant differs from all others in saying that Mars Plaisir remained with his master to the last day of his life; and we may ask why Toussaint's nights were to be passed in his horrible cell, if his days were so favoured; and how it was that no research availed to discover to the eager curiosity of all Europe and the West Indies the retreat of L'Ouverture, if he, a negro, was daily present to the eyes of the garrison of the fortress, and to those of all the inhabitants of the village, and of all the travellers on that road who chose to raise their eyes to the walls.

Our third informant was a boy, shrewd and communicative, who could tell us the traditions of the place; and, of course, young as he was, nothing more. It was he who showed us where the additional stove was placed when winter came on. He pointed to a spot beside the fireplace, where he said the straw was spread on which Toussaint lay. He declared that Toussaint lived and died in solitude; and that he was found dead and cold, lying on that straw—his wood-fire, however, not being wholly extinguished.

The dreary impressions of the place saddened our minds for long after we had left it; and, glad as we were, on rejoining our party at Lausanne, to report the complete success of our enterprise, we cannot recur to it, to this day, without painful feelings.

How the lot of Toussaint was regarded by the generous spirits of the time is shown in a sonnet of Wordsworth's, written during the disappearance of L'Ouverture. Every one knows this sonnet; but it may be read by others, as by me, with a fresh emotion of delight, after having dwelt on

the particulars of the foregoing history.

“Toussaint, the most unhappy Man of Men!  
Whether the whistling rustic tend his plough  
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
Pillow'd in some deep dungeon's earless den:—  
O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not: do thou  
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:  
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,  
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind  
Powers that will work for thee: air, earth, and skies  
There's not a breathing of the common wind  
That will forget thee: thou hast great allies;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and Man's unconquerable mind.”

The family of Toussaint were first sent to Bayonne, and afterwards to Agen, where one of the sons died of a decline. The two elder ones, endeavouring to escape from the surveillance under which they lived, were embarked for Belle Isle, and imprisoned in the citadel, where they were seen in 1803. On the restoration of the Bourbons, not only were they released, but a pension was settled on the family. Madame L'Ouverture died, I believe, in the South of France, in 1816, in the arms of Placide and Isaac.

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What Napoleon afterwards thought of the dungeon of Toussaint, is known through an anecdote which I have received from high authority.

The next occupant of Toussaint's cell was the Duc de Rivière, afterwards the first French ambassador to Constantinople. The Duc (then Marquis) was a young man, on the point of marriage with Mademoiselle de la Ferté, when, for some unknown offence, he was thrown into prison at Joux, and apparently forgotten. There he wasted three of the best years of his life. Mademoiselle de la Ferté never relaxed in her efforts to obtain his liberation; but she was told, at length, that Napoleon was weary of her solicitations, and that further efforts on her part would have no better result than increasing the displeasure of the Emperor. In the hour of her

despair, the kind-heartedness of Josephine came to her aid. The ladies caused a model of the cell at Joux to be prepared—bearing the most exact resemblance to the horrible abode; and this model Josephine placed, with her own hands, on the bureau of the Emperor.

“Ah! fi donc! Quel est ce lieu abominable?” said the Emperor.

The Empress informed him that it was one of his Majesty’s state prisons; to which he replied that it was impossible; that no man could live four-and-twenty hours in such a den. This brought out the information that the Marquis de Rivière had lived three years in it, and was still lying there, by his Majesty’s commands.

“Otez-moi ça!” cried the Emperor, tartly. “Cette vue me fait frémir.”

The model was removed. The Marquis was presently afterwards liberated. He retired to Germany, where he was met by Mademoiselle de la Ferté, whom he there married. In after-years he was fond of relating the anecdote which I have given, as nearly as possible, in his method and language.

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For some years I have read whatever came within my reach on the subject of my present work: so that it would not now be easy to assign my authority for every view and every statement it contains. The authorities which I have principally consulted while actually writing, I will, however, give. They are—Rainsford’s “Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti;” the above-mentioned article in the *Quarterly Review*; Bryan Edwards’s “Saint Domingo”; the article “Toussaint L’Ouverture,” in the “Biographie Universelle;” and the “Haytian Papers,” edited by Prince Sanders.

Of these, Bryan Edwards, who did not live to complete his history, barely names my hero; and the reports he gives of the Revolution of Saint Domingo are useful chiefly as representing the prejudices, as well as the interests, of the planters. The article in the *Quarterly* is valuable, as being an able and liberal digest of various narratives; some derived from Hayti itself. Rainsford’s book is nearly unreadable, from the absurdity of its style; but it is truly respectable in my eyes, notwithstanding, from its high

appreciation of L'Ouverture's character. It contains more information concerning Toussaint than can be found, I believe, anywhere else, except in the Biographie; and it has the advantage of detailing what fell under the writer's own observation. The Biographie furnishes many valuable facts; but appears, from the inconsistency of various parts, and the confused impression which it conveys as a whole, to be a compilation in which the workman has been more careful to record dates and other facts correctly, than to understand the personage whose portrait he professes to give. The "Haytian Papers" are the most valuable of all authorities, as far as they go.

Of my other personages, all had a real existence, except Monsieur Revel, Euphrosyne, and their servants; some of the planters mentioned in the second chapter; the children of Bellair; the Abbess and her establishment; and some of the visitors at Toussaint's levée; with a few other subordinate characters.

Of the real personages, several were probably very unlike what I have represented them. I knew the names of some, without knowing their characters; as in the instances of Placide and Isaac, Messieurs Pascal and Molière, Mars Plaisir, Madame Ogé, the Marquis d'Hermona, Laxabon, Vincent, and Paul.

Of others, I knew the character and history, without being able to ascertain the names; as in the instances of Madame Dessalines and Madame Bellair. Since the issue of my first edition, I have learned that the name of Madame Dessalines was Marie; and her second name, before marriage, Claire or Clerc. I have not thought it advisable to substitute Marie for Thérèse in this edition, as nothing could be thereby gained which would compensate for disturbing the associations of my readers in regard to one of the chief personages of the story.

Of others, such as the wife, daughters, and third son of Toussaint, Monsieur Papalier, and the tutors, Azua and Loisir, I knew only that they existed, without being able to learn their names or characters. The only character designed to be fully and faithfully accordant with history is that of Toussaint himself. Those which have much, but less absolute, pretension to historical truth are those of Jean François, Christophe, Dessalines, and the other negro Generals, old Dessalines, Bellair,

## Raymond, the French Commissaries and Envoys, Bayou, and Moyse.

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Note 1. I believe the term “morne” is peculiar to Saint Domingo. A morne is a valley whose bounding hills are themselves backed by mountains.

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[Chapter 1](#) || [Chapter 2](#) || [Chapter 3](#) || [Chapter 4](#) || [Chapter 5](#) || [Chapter 6](#) || [Chapter 7](#) ||  
[Chapter 8](#) || [Chapter 9](#) || [Chapter 10](#) || [Chapter 11](#) || [Chapter 12](#) || [Chapter 13](#) || [Chapter](#)  
[14](#) || [Chapter 15](#) || [Chapter 16](#) || [Chapter 17](#) || [Chapter 18](#) || [Chapter 19](#) || [Chapter 20](#) ||  
[Chapter 21](#) || [Chapter 22](#) || [Chapter 23](#) || [Chapter 24](#) || [Chapter 25](#) || [Chapter 26](#) || [Chapter](#)  
[27](#) || [Chapter 28](#) || [Chapter 29](#) || [Chapter 30](#) || [Chapter 31](#) || [Chapter 32](#) || [Chapter 33](#) ||  
[Chapter 34](#) || [Chapter 35](#) || [Chapter 36](#) || [Chapter 37](#) || [Chapter 38](#) || [Chapter 39](#) || [Chapter](#)  
[40](#) || [Chapter 41](#) || [Chapter 42](#) || [Appendix](#) |

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