

Chapter 1

Peter Keyes and his sons rode to Chambers Street in the late afternoon. They travelled up from Wall Street on horseback, for Broadway was occupied from curb to curb with men and the vehicles of war. Dust clouds rolled hugely up from each passing wheel and the oaths of the teamsters came from men whose sweating, bearded faces were not seen until the wheels were almost on you. The sounds of their horses' progress were lost in the rumble of the heavy wains. The wheels rolled faster when the teamsters found a stretch to work some quicker going into, then jerked, hesitated, creaked slowly and protestingly on again in the blustery passages as the bullwhips snaked forward and exploded above the flanks of toiling mules and oxen.

Peter Keyes rode in the lead and looked neither to the right or the left. His sons rode one behind the other, hunkered in their saddles and squinting through the dust and glare at the heaving backend of the animal ahead. Peter Keyes rode in a suit of sober brown. Sober brown was not his usual colour. The gilt buttons on his coat had been covered with worsted since the day, two months ago, that the victorious American army had come down from Boston. His hose now went no higher than plain, stout wool and the silver buckles has been removed from his shoes. An old-fashioned ruff at his collar framed his pale face. Close behind him, David rode. He had well set shoulders, broad for his medium height and wore his quilted blue coat and cashmere breeches with a quiet air of belonging.

Arnold Keyes was at the rear of the little cavalcade, fashionable in scarlet uncut velvet, pinched at the waist and wide in skirts and shoulders. His linen shirt and leather shoes twinkled in silver buttons and buckles. His cream waistcoat was trimmed in silver galloons and there was a light blue steinkirk at his throat — the same shade as the lacquered hat which added inches to his already tall frame. They all rode fine mounts and, in the case of Arnold, lashed about in wealthy trappings of polished leather and Mexican silver.

At the Maiden Street intersection with Broadway, Peter Keyes turned in his saddle to call back that, here, they would leave the main thoroughfare and take the side street to Aaron Logan's Chambers Street mansion. David muttered angrily and ~~and~~ pushed his mount forward, crowding the animal to the wall so the traffic could pass with fair way.

"Is it necessary or even right that we should do this, Father?" he asked loudly, his face reddening. "Surely the time has come when we must either stay on Broadway or quit the city altogether!"

Arnold had ridden up too and now the three riders were close together ~~an~~ by the wall.

Peter Keyes looked fixedly on David as he spoke, the bursts from the bullwhips ^{putting} punching holes into his quiet sentences so his sons perforce went forward on their stirrups to hear him.

"If it be not necessary, then indeed it is right for the sake of peace that we leave the Breede Weg," he said. "More especially, this is not the time we should seek trouble."

David slapped his saddle so the harness jingled and the horse jerked skittishly, shifting its rump to the edge of the waggon lane. Arnold said: "Whoa!" sharply and his brother kned the horse to safety.

"But — Father!" David protested. "There is no need for you to be so — so — apologetic to these men! Arnold and I are here, back from the fighting in Boston! Tomorrow we rejoin our Company on Long Island. Is there any man who dares question your loyalties when there are two of your sons facing the British over there tomorrow?" He waved a hand in the general direction of Brooklyn and earned a swift curse from a passing teamster whose lead mule ^{had} shied at the movement;

"Clear the road — rebel varmin!"

David threw up his hand again. "Hear that?" he cried, a triumphant air on him, twisting his head to stare after the disappearing ^{waggon} ~~waggon~~ and turning back to his father again. "Hear that? Rebels — that is what he called us!"

Peter Keyes' voice came out as if it was muffled by the ruff at his collar; "The vagabonds at Jamie's Tavern will not call you that."

"What does it matter what that scurvy crew call us?" Arnold asked ^{with} a twisted grin.

His father tightened his lips at the remark, but otherwise, ignored this other of his sons. "To these ruffians," he said, "any who have found prosperity and would keep the integrity of his country is a King's Man and a traitor. For the time being, we will continue to ride this way to Chambers Street. We leave the Breede Weg." He used the oldfashioned Dutch name for the street again.

"You will bring trouble on us using that name," Arnold said, the cold grin pulling at the planes of his face.

Peter looked sideways at him; said without inflection: "Ten minutes after your brother you were born. Allow him to speak for you."

Arnold turned the grin onto his brother. "Ask our father to cease using that name, Older One," he said mockingly.

David shrugged impatiently. Peter Keyes shook the reins of his horse. "We will ride on," he told them.

David Keyes opened his mouth to protest again, but clamped his jaws shut without speaking. Arnold clucked his ~~haxe~~ ^{mount} forward and pressured his brother's horse to the wall.

"Not now," he told David, his eyes speculatively taking in the signs on his face.

"We will leave Broadway as he said. Another time will be good enough to settle our scores with Jamie's Liberty Boys."

His brother clenched his hand. "I would break my knuckles on the first one of them who used a wrong word to me today!" he muttered angrily.

Arnold pushed his face forward. "And pray how would you pull trigger on the redcoats tomorrow? With your beautiful Dutch nose? God's blood! Do you ~~think~~ not believe that I too would like to thrust ^{an} ~~xx~~ inch of blade into their unwashed bellies?" He drew back his head and put forth an amused smile. "But not today, Older One. Not just now. Today, I follow my dear father, even though I know he loves me not."

David growled something angrily which Arnold cut off by pushing a finger towards him. "And another thing, another wise thing — so unlike him — that our dear father said today: If yon teamster had not been blinded by the dust, he would have noticed the rich garments worn by us Keyes — you and me. Then do you wager he would have called you rebel? Eh, ~~xx~~ sweet elder brother?"

David held his reins high, glaring at his brother. "It is a wonder that your peacock ⁿ raiment did not crow aloud to him as he passed. You are lovelier than a summer's sunset," he retorted. Arnold grinned and flicked at a dust particle on his velveted sleeve.

"Thank you, brother mine," he murmured.

"Oh, come on!" David said wearily, jerking his horse into Maiden Street. Here, with ~~the~~ traffic considerably lessened, Arnold rode beside him. Behind them, the noise of Broadway fell away. In a rounded tenor with just a hint of tremolo, the younger of the twins sing-songed as they walked their mounts.

"He loves me, he loves me not —"

"Bite on your tongue," David growled.

Arnold's eyes glinted with fun; he lifted his hand with a gesture like in the theatre. "Never will I offend thee, O Heir of the Silks," he said.

David glanced at the fluted shirt, raised his eyes to the rich lace frothing delicately at his brother's throat and dropped them to the ruffles at his wrist.

"You really are lovely, you know," he said mincingly.

"Oh, brother mine, you mustn't!" Arnold murmured; grinned when David made a sound through his nose.

The sun slanted in its last rays, tipping the wooded head of Gowanus Heights across the East River with burning yellow. A drove of cattle moved up the street towards them, ^{lowing} and swinging their great heads from side to side. ~~and swinging merrily~~ ~~xxxxx~~

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day, the lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea," Arnold whimsically recited.

"Cease showing off your classical education," David growled, reining aside for the cattle.

"That, my dear uneducated elder brother, is not from the classics," Arnold explained

willingly. "It was written, recently, by a mournful old codger who sat himself down on a tomb to do it. One of these days, when he himself is under a tomb, it will be on all the lips of all the world. But for now, reflect how fortunate you are to be hearing it from a master who could have made his name in any theatre of the land — if he but tried."

David looked at him with shattering admiration. "Lord, but you flow like a river. Like a sparkling little river busily gurgling towards the sea, words come from you without end. What a loss if someone should choke you!"

Arnold chuckled. His brother asked: "Amused, peacock?"

When the drove moved past, they shook their reins and moved out. "I am just reminded of the smug triumph on your face when the waggoner called you a rebel," Arnold said.

"Save your breath, jester," David grumbled. "You will be needing it to run with tomorrow when you see Howe's troops a-coming."

They rode into the street with the heat-glow from off the marshes at the river's edge prickling their faces. On the Long Island shore, evening shadows drew about the heights of Gowanus. Fifty yards ahead, Peter Keyes rode with a straight back.

"There goes our gentle sire, peace on his shoulders but a great fear in his heart."

"Oh, cut it," David said testily. "You talk too much."

"Do I?" Arnold asked, his eyebrows up. "Perhaps I do. Perhaps I do. Yet, lately, since coming down from Boston to the ancestral loft after so many years absence, I have been tempted to embark on a written history of the Van Keyes family — er, no, the Van was dropped several years ago by our dear sire. It is only the uncertainty of present life — what with all these bloodthirsty redcoats about — which has prevented me from commencing this important literary milestone. My dear elder brother, would you be greatly surprised if I told you I already have the opening chapter all shaped in my mind?"

"I will be greatly surprised if you shut up," David said rudely.

"Then I won't surprise you, dear David," Arnold said gently. "I hate surprises and I know how you must hate them too. But to return to this history of the Keyes: Has it not yet drifted into your head that our parent's pale passions in these times of fire and red courage might very well make him into a figure of history?"

David jerked his head angrily and looked at him. "Now what are you meaning?" he demanded.

Arnold looked mysterious. "Nothing, dear brother," he drawled.

"Then for God's sake, shut up!" David blurted.

"No," Arnold Keyes said unabashedly. "I must tell you of the opening chapter of my book. I would begin thus: 'Peter Keyes rode along Maiden Street with peace on his shoulders and a great fear in his heart. Once, there had been peace in his heart, for life had held out a handful of gifts to him and there had been no way for his untried soul to know that in the other hand, was a club. He had fixed his eyes on the gifts and saw not

the swing of the club.' How's that?"

David did not reply. Arnold grinned. He knew his impetuous brother was still half angry at not being ~~allowed~~ allowed to crack a knuckle on the head of one of Jamie's lads. But Jamie's tavern was no place to fool with when the odds were heavy against you. Too many of his Liberty boys would be hanging around there now. ~~There would~~ ^{There would} be a better time — soon.

Arnold caught the warm glance of a little housemaid leaning from the upper window of one of the two-storey houses on Maiden Street. She was closing the window against the mosquitoes which would soon rise from the marsh with the fall of evening. He closed an eye in a sly wink at the girl. She was pretty and her eyes sparkled; she winked back at him. But the grim face of an old lady appeared ~~at that instant~~ ^{over the girl's shoulder} at that instant and Arnold turned his head forward again.

"Then I will continue. 'Peter Keyes was a descendant of that Mynheer Van Keyes who had held title to a portion of Long Island, near Ravenswood, where he had fished and farmed to a satisfying living. The youngest of four sons, gentle Peter had early despaired of a stand on the farm behind his hard-riding elder brothers. He had no interest in ~~his father's~~ ^{crops or horseflesh.} His aptitude for, and devotion to arithmetic, made his brothers leave all the ~~x~~ farm's accounting to him. He would sooner square digits all night than lope across a meadow to a tryst. He showed more interest in net and tare than in the pattern of the swish of a petticoat. But Peter's father knew there was nothing unworthwhile in the ways of his youngest son. Their ancestors had been shopkeepers of Amsterdam, who, after migration to these great American colonies, had hitched to the plow in the face of the tempting bait of free lands which had been shaken before their frugal eyes. So, he spoke with his son.' That short sentence is for dramatic effect, dear David. Like it?"

"No."

"Good. 'So he spoke with his son. And weighted with a grant of a few golden sovereigns and parental expectations of new, rich lustre to the family escutcheon —' Did we have an escutcheon, I wonder, David? Yes? You said no? Well, no matter. 'Weighted, Peter crossed the East River to Manhattan and opened a small general store on Wall Street.'"

A cannon went off somewhere down the Bay and the booming echoes bounded up the river. David jerked the reins.

"What was that?" he asked.

"A sunset gun, Brother David," Arnold murmured. "Have you forgotten that today is July fourth and the British fleet have anchored off Staten? You have just heard one of the cannons from the frigate of Admiral My Lord Howe. Get used to it again. You will hear many more tomorrow than you ever heard at Boston."

Most of Maiden Street had gone down to the beaches to take their look at the British fleet which had that day hove to at the entrance of the upper bay. To the few heads which appeared at the windows, Arnold waved a reassuring hand.

"Rest your minds, good people," he called. "We are ready for them."

David looked aside at him. "My God ! Are you General Washington?"

"I am young yet, Dave," he murmured. "But, in a little while —"

"In a little while perhaps you will be dead," David said hopefully.

Arnold chuckled. They steered their mounts into Front Street with Peter Keyes still maintaining his distance in front of them. David glanced over his right shoulder to the Brooklyn shore where the tips of the trees still glinted in reflections from the ~~times~~ water. A year ago, before the flare at Lexington, his father had written that after their graduation from Yale this year, they would spend a month camping about Gowanus when they returned to New York. Uncle Aaron Logan had written them too, Arnold and he. Uncle Aaron had painted pictures of their camp in his letter, pictures in his expressive Welsh tongue. They would cross the river at Wallabout Bay, Uncle Aaron had said, and there would be woodcocks to ducks and ~~lobelias~~ fatten their tables, thick of flesh and soft. There would be armfuls of lobelia and wintergreen to be gathered and piled into the great box on the rear gallery to be dried and pounded into medicine by the servants against the winter's cold. Well, there would be no duck shooting on Long Island this year. Other quarry perhaps, but no duck shooting. .

"... So Peter Keyes married his English lady, and with his prosperity and her gentle upbrining, now he had means and breeding. Peter is very strong on means and breeding. It was the best investment he ever made. For, under her guidance, axes and flour and hams and hoes and iron wheels were sold out, and bolts of wondrously slithery silks and foamy ostrich plumes came in. Then, with everything well established, she died with the coming of the twins. Truly the swing of the club was a shock."

"It wont be the swing of my fist which will be the shock. It will be the impact on your jaw."

"Literary license, Davis," Arnold said calmly, the corners of his mouth turned down. "Then I would go on to tell how Uncle Aaron Logan's sister, Fanny, insisted that the twins be taken ~~away~~ from Wall Street and brought to Chambers Street. How she —"

"How she thoroughly spoilt you," David said.

"Quite," Arnold said. "Then we were sent to Boston for school and returned to New York as big-chested lads who had fired off their pans against the redcoats at Boston. Returned to find our father in fear and trembling of a crew of scurvy people who lurk at Jamie McGovern's tavern, particularly one low specimen called Nat. Nat Clinton."

David looked at him. Arnold had more than once surprised him with bits of the family history which he had learnt from Aunt Fanny Logan. When you thought of it, it was funny that they should learn of their own family from an outsider. For none of the Logans were their blood relations. Aaron Logan was a merchant of Wall Street and his family had been for many years friends of Peter Keyes. ~~At~~ After the death of ~~their~~ their mother, they had lived at the Chambers Street mansion with the Logans until their father sent them to the latin school at Boston.

"What has Aunt Fanny told you about Nat Clinton?" he asked bluntly.

Arnold shrugged. "Nothing much. Clinton is an old member of the Sons of Liberty. He used to be a small provision merchant years ago. One night, he stabbed a redcoat — during the fuss about the Stamp Act — and they chased him. He ran to Father's house but our dear parent would not let him in although he pounded like mad on the door. Seem to have regarded himself as quite a friend of Father's, but the poor nitwit neither had means nor breeding. The soldiers caught up with him and they flogged him and did everything else but hang him. Some other merchant, Aunt Fanny does not tell me his name, put up money for a first-rate lawyer who saved him from the gallows. Of course, brother Clinton lost everything — but gained a simple smashing hatred for our pater."

David said: "You don't like him much, do you?"

Arnold looked pained but David knew he was laughing. "Who? Dear Father? Oh, Davie, I am merely the historian."

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Chapter 2

The Chambers Street house was high and handsome and had been built by Aaron Logan's grandfather. It was framed in cedar, shingled, and boxed in white-painted clapboards, with the portico rising the height of both floors. The grounds sloped from the house to the row of beautiful Dutch elms which Aaron had acquired as seedlings from Boston and which in turn had been got from Brompton Park, London. Beyond the elms was the low stone wall, and then quiet Chambers Street; and beyond that, the roofs tumbled to roofs down to the spire of Trinity Church, the Battery, and then the harbour.

They had talked of everything; and although Peter Keyes would have preferred if the war was left out of the conversation, such were the Logans that they talked over the situation as easily as ever, even to wondering whether Grant Logan, youngest of the Logan pair of children, would be alright tomorrow. Shawn Logan, his sister, said:

"I was coming out of Lizzie Morgan's on Pine Street this morning and I heard two men saying that half the army were ill and most of the others had no arms to speak of."

She had turned eighteen last Easter and ^{received} acquired in the process, a dark and elfin beauty that showed her Welsh ancestry. She had a cameo-cut quality to her face which was still evident in her mother, Elisabeth Logan, although sweetmeats and chronic worrying was rapidly effacing it from her mother.

"Were families crossing to New Jersey today also, Peter?" Aaron Logan asked. He was square and solid. His brow was serene and his mouth shrewd. Fanny Logan, his sister, said he had a headful of proclamations. But then, Fanny, whose age had gone past the stated three score and ten, was irreverent of everything.

"Today and everyday," Fanny cut in dryly. "It was bad in the fields last night, Link tells me. Even the lads from King's College were leaping and burning effigies with the best of the Sons of Liberty." She chuckled a little. "Heh — that's what comes of a college without a president. I hear that old Tory hightailed across the river into Jersey as if someone had put fire to his tail."

"Fanny — you shouldn't speak of Doctor Cooper like that!" Elisabeth wailed. She always wailed these days. She was nearly mountainous in a flowered gown dominated by white jasmines and blue hollyhocks. She wore an enormous wig, bedecked with flowers and ornate beads. The wig trembled agitatedly as Shawn tinkled a little laugh.

"Your elms are doing well, Aaron," Peter said, striving to turn the conversation.

"Tory trees," snapped Fanny.

"Fanny Logan, they're God's trees!" Elisabeth wailed.

"Then the Tories stole 'em from God," Fanny said calmly.

"A funny thing though," Shawn said. "One of the men asked me what I thought of it."

Arnold looked up from the revolutionary pamphlet which was all Fanny's reading matter for the past few years. "Thought of what?" he asked.

Fanny's quick ear caught the sharpness in his voice.

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"Why — of what they had been saying," Shawn said.

Arnold asked lazily: "Who is Lizzie Morgan?" David looked at him.

"A milliner. Why?" Fanny asked sharply.

"Just wondered," Arnold said. "The liberty boys in Boston used to watch certain shops to see who bought in them. Said these shops were selling English goods, therefore anybody who bought from them were Loyalists."

"Well you can stop wondering," Fanny told him. ~~XXXXX~~ "Lizzie's bonnets are as American as an Injun's scalplock."

Fanny who had never married, had spent most of her years in New Hampshire on the edge of Indian territory, teaching school between raids. She had once felt the heft of a hatchet in her hand before it cleaved the shaven skull of an unlucky brave. She was thin like a sword, and her tongue and her mind were as edged.

David said: "Who told that lout he could speak to you?"

Arnold grinned at Fanny Logan, at whose side he was seated. David had been very angry. Shawn's eyes were tender on him. "He only asked my opinion, Davie," she said.

Aaron Logan cleared his throat. "I hope you made no answer, Shawn," he said gently.

The girl was momentarily confused. "Well - well - I did say that if this was so, then we should not fight."

There was a little silence. Arnold said: "Was this - er, lout tall ~~adganglingx~~ and gangling with red hair and a guttural voice?"

Shawn thought over the description. "Why - I think that's him exactly, Arnie," she said.

Arnold nodded. His thin lips formed a crooked grin. "Nat Clinton," he announced.

Peter Keyes' chair scraped the floor. "Boy! Must your tongue ever run away with you!"

Arnold shrugged. Elisabeth Logan said: "Oh dear!"

Arnold rose. The dusk was deepening. He said: "Grant has asked me to ride to the beach with him. You coming along, Davie?"

David joined him. "We will be back before you are ready to go, Father," he said. His eyes met Shawn's and he smiled a little.

Chapter 21

Jamie's Tavern had a floor gouged and pitted by the ironshod heels of workingmen's boots. A few rough tables and stools were placed about the room and a bench ran the length of one wall. The bar was made of planks, rubbed fairly smooth but nicked all along by coarse sleeves and the edged metal buttons of the men who stood up to it. Behind the bar was a shelved row of bottles, casks of ale and some demijohns of rum. On one side of the shelf was a large model of a full-rigged ship and on the other side, an almanac consisting of three wooden blocks of graded height showing the year to be ~~IXX~~ 1776, the month, July, and the date, Fourth. In the space between the bar and the shelf, Jamie held court.

His shoulders were wide and his belly flourishing. Great strength was stored in the thickly corded forearms which protruded like foreshortened trunks from the rolled sleeves of his smock. At the top of his smock, there showed itself a limp and greasy lace collar. Above this, you could see his moon face with its perpetual smile.

The smile was a muscular deformity. Even at his angriest moments, the smile hardly left Jamie McGovern's face. It widened or narrowed to the degree of his anger, pushing up the corners of his eyes, long and almost oriental, so they looked their cold business out of tiny half moons. A coiled pigtail was pinned at the back of his head and he had only one sound leg. The other ended in a wooden stump.

Jamie was once a boatswain's mate in the King's navy. From the cramped forecandle of a brig, to the carved headpiece of a mighty, triple-tiered ship of the line, he had known them all.

He was born when the pubroch's wild lay was particularly loud on his native heath. Taken prisoner in the first place as a lad, by the English at the battle of Culloden, after he had done his rebellious bit for the Young Pretender in the second Jacobite War, he was pressed aboard a sloop and served George, the Second, for the rest of the Austrian war. Then after this, the young Scotsman had fought for his English masters partways through the Seven Years war, until 'Fifty-eight, when a French cannon-ball came in low and smashed along the deck of his frigate, taking off his right leg in its course.

Jamie left the service with a small pension in his purse and a burning hatred for the English in his heart. And since life ashore in England or Scotland under the absolute authority of the English was raising the hackles on his neck, that same year he went to America. But restlessly tapping the outposts of the Empire for the cash to liquidate the heavy costs of her warring, the arm of England reached across the ocean to tickle some more the short anger hairs of her unwilling foster son.

For Jamie found that with the Stamp Act imposed by England on the American colonies, he

was being called upon to pay for the war which had taken his good right leg. His smile became narrower.

With Jacobite fervour, he had already formed a branch of the Sons of Liberty among the habitués of his tavern. Now, he mobilised them. He was outside the Town Hall when the Stamp Act Congress was called that chilly October morning. He warmed his smile at the burning and looting which followed its adjournment. His wooden leg clacked audibly that night outside the fort when the mob milled about the flaming effigy of Governor ^{Cadwallader} ~~End~~ Colden. But all these were merely preliminaries. Jamie panted for the real thing. He had welcomed Lexington.

He now leaned on his forearms and listened to the teamster talking. The teamster was a brown chunk of a man who rested on the balls of his feet while he talked, his tight body weaving against the rail of the bar and his sinewy hands flat on the surface. The sun on the trail had browned his face to mahogany.

"There are barrels and barrels of gunpowder gone over to Brooklyn enough to blow New York to Charlestown! There was food enough for two grand armies! I tell you, Jamie, host, ~~Capt~~ when the English comes ashore they will be coming in for something hotter'n Boston!" He thought awhile. "Hotter'n hell," he added.

He reached for the mug and hoisted it first to the man who stood beside him at the bar, and after wards to Jamie. He swigged a silent toast to the job of haulage he had done that day. Jamie nodded.

"How was the crossing, friend Teamster?" Jamie asked. "Were there many men?"

The teamster fisted at the bar so the mugs rattled. He stamped his foot hard while he swallowed then drew breath through his mouth. "Were there men, you ask? Were there?" He stopped as if overcome, turned to his companion: "Host asks were there many men. You tell him, ~~Lem~~ Lemuel."

Lemuel was long and lugubrious. He spoke with a nasal twang.

"Many men, too many, I reckon more'n we need. 'Twas just as friend Bill here said."

But Bill was not satisfied with that reply. He brought his hands uphefting them as if he carried a weight. "Men, Jamie?" he asked in an awed voice. "Men? Jamie, if there were less than a hundred thousand, you could make up what was wanted from the fingers of your hand!"

Jamie methodically scratched each elbow with the fingers of either hand. "The whole army is under thirty thousand, friend Bill," he said. "Seem the sun got into your eye."

Bill was not put out. "Maybe you are wrong, Jamie. Maybe you're wrong, Cap'n Jamie."

Jamie shook his head, the smile benign on him. "Ever known me to be wrong, Bill? Remember when the Tories were fixing to crimp the General? Was I wrong?"

Lemuel grope with his lips for the edge of the mug, his eyes on Jamie. The tavern-keeper was smiling, the corners of his eyes sprung up to form tiny halfmoons. Lemuel said:

"Any news from Congress?"

Jamie said: "They'll adopt the paper. Am I ever wrong?"

*Then he broke off
A loud steadfastly at the door.*

There was an open lot adjoining Jamie McGovern's tavern on Broadway. There was a fence down the front of this lot, with a board that had come loose in it. Arnold led his companions down the street, passed the dark elms and sycamores of King's College, crossed at Fulton and rode slowly by Saint Paul's chapel where the doors had been left open for such as would pray for the beleaguered city. They came to the fence. Traffic on Broadway had thinned to an occasional cart or horseman. Light from the interior of the tavern fell to the street through the open door. A couple of men loitered on the sidewalk; spat in the dust or rubbed their shoulderblades on the posts.

"Doesn't seem to be much doing in Jamie's tonight," Grant Logan said. His peaked young face was sweating in excitement. He had thought they would be riding to the beach to look at the fortifications, as they had planned. But leaving the Chambers Street house, Arnold had brusquely told him they would visit Jamie's instead.

Most of them must have joined up with the militia today," David said.

"That's why I followed our dear father today," Arnold observed drily. "I thought we'd better wait until the odds were down."

They were keeping their voices low, sitting slumped in the saddles. Arnold slipped from his horse. He pushed the reins into David's hand.

David said, sharply: "Where are you going?"

"Reconnaissance," Arnold told him cheerfully. "Forgotten your soldiering?"

"See that you dont. What shall we do meanwhile?"

"Ride in and hitch my horse with yours. Ask Jamie for a drink. See what happens. I'll be around with the reserves." Arnold groped at his saddlebags and stepped through the aperture.

Grant said worriedly: "He seems to know all about the tavern. He's playing with fire."

"He can take care of himself," David said shortly. They sent their mounts forward.

Arnold crossed the open lot and entered the tavern grounds. Jamie's living quarters were above the tavern. He mounted the darkened flight of stairs and gave a soft whistle. A door on the landing, opened silently.

The girl said: "I did not expect you tonight. I went to the Commons and waited. Then

I saw Burgoyne, Patty Travers' negro boy, and he told me you had gone to Chambers Street.

But why have you risked coming here?"

"To see you, my beloved."

"Thank you, Arnold. You do say such nice things. Now, suppose my father discovers you?"

"Don't let's talk about your father now. 'Struth, it fails me how that ugly slob can have such a beautiful daughter."

"I will call him up and ask him. Perhaps he would tell you just before his dirk went past your breastbone."

"India McGovern, you're as savage as your name."

"What nice things you do say! Why have you come here?"

"I told you."

"Thank you."

He published his humour with a sly chuckle. "When did those gaudy Sons hold their last meeting?"

"Is that all you wanted to hear about?"

He said: "My sweet brother and young Logan are downstairs."

He heard her tiny gasp. He waited for her fury. It came.

"You stupid wean of a scuppernose!"

That Spring of 'seventy-six, the guns at Boston were quiet; for the British redcoats had withdrawn from the city and gone up by sea to Canada. Then General Washington, who well knew the value of the prize at the mouth of the Hudson, and had no doubt that the Britishers also knew it, turned south with his staff for New York. Behind followed the American army.

Meanwhile, since the land was largely unfriendly and the sea was almost all theirs, the British army which had retired from Boston had sailed out of Halifax for New York under General Howe. And, at the same time, another host led by his brother, Admiral Lord Howe, was crossing the ocean from England to join him.

Arnold and David

~~Exerted their~~ had marched with the tattered patriots. They had listened to the blue-winged warbler on the trail and gaped in at the tall wooden works of ingenuity through the clockmakers doorways in the Connecticut towns. They had gone off the road to allow for the passings of the creaking old Brown & Brown passenger coaches as they caterwauled from Tetard's Mill and cooled their axles in the upwaters at Mill Brook, crossed Spuyten Dayvil creek at Kingsbridge, bypassed the little village at Harlem and welcomed, with grunts of thankfulness, the shining waters of Collect Pond at the city's edge. They had met up with Grant Logan at Chambers Street and Broadway and David had greeted him and said they would return to see Uncle Aaron Logan that same afternoon, but first they would visit their father at Wall Street.

But Arnold, a light of pleasure in his eyes at the teeming life of the city streets after days on the post road, was for a quick immersion. He nodded at a group of laughing girls, peeked out in holiday finery.

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"Something on at the Commons, Grant?" he had asked.

"They're holding a fair," Grant Logan said, "in honour of the army."

The boy was plainly hero worshipping his two older friends who had returned from Boston. He himself was in the uniform of the New York militia and had been drilling for three months. But here were two of the legendary men who had shot off their guns at the redcoats and made them turn tail. You could see what they were in how they stood easily, their hands brown and firm about the barrels of the long muskets, their eyes coolly going over the street.

"Then, if that be so, it is good manners that we should attend, eh, Grant? David, will you tell our dear parent that I am detained on business with the army?" David hadn't argued.

There were roustabouts and jugglers and a man dressed to be like the king of England and enthroned on an up-ended tea-chest, in mockery of the Boston tea-party. Arnold watched the wrestlers and the knuckle-fighters until he was wearied of the show — and then he saw her.

She was throwing hoops at a pink doll for a penny a three hoops and was being unsuccessful. "Grant," he asked, "who is the unattended lady?"

"Jamie McGovern's daughter," Grant said shortly. "Keep a-going."

But Arnold had placed his palms over the muzzle of his gun and rested his chin there. With a gesture of finality, India had payed over her last penny to the ratlike little attendant who scurried about the ring, picking up the spent hoops thrown by the customers. India took aim with the last of the three and sent it spinning towards the target.

"Made it!" Arnold had shouted, oblivious of the surprise on Grant's face at his unusual enthusiasm — then growled angrily as the attendant whipped it from around the doll before it could settle. He looked back at the girl. Her slender form held very erect, she tightened her lips to a line. Her face was scarlet. Then it came, in a hoydenish scream:

"Why — you little bilge rat — I could clap a guy on your stringy neck! Give me that doll or I'll come aboard your —!"

"Go to Hanover!" snarled the little man wickedly.

There was a flash of petticoats and the girl had cucked under the rail and picked up the doll and was battling the attendant for it.

"Get out of here, you pintlebit!" he squealed. "Get out!"

He struck her on the side of the head; then he was sailing out of the ring on a thin note of fear as Arnold reached his side and put his hands to his collar and the seat of his trousers. He laid on the ground outside the ring, snarling up at them. Arnold lifted the girl and stepped over the rail with her.

"La, but thank you kindly, s i r," said the girl, laughing up at him. Her face, still ~~fix~~ flushed from her exertions, was very near to his. Her voice was low and modulated, a world removed from the hoyden's scream with which she had assailed the ring attendant. Arnold grinned.

"Your skinx is as soft as a petal, the bones in your cheek were chiselled by some superb tool out of the east and your eyes are also a shade aslant, your mouth is as full of promise as a politicians manifesto and your hair is like ne w butter — but you screech like an Indian squaw who has sat down on an arrowhead."

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The girl gasped. "Put me down!" she whispered fiercely. "Put me down!"

"And you're also very beautiful," Arnold said, setting her on her feet.

"Why did you bring those two here?" India whispered angrily. "Do you want to provoke my father into murder?"

Grant had said at the fair ground: "Jamie McGovern's daughter, Arnold. You must know about Jamie's Sons of Liberty and your father?"

He hadn't known it then. Nothing at all about Nat Clinton and the mad-dog hatred he bore for Peter Keyes because of one night when he pounded on the Wall Street door and Peter Keyes would not let him in. Nor had he even known much about the confusion in the city where some were for the proposed Republic but many were for the Crown.

This has nothing to^{do}/with your murderous papa," he told her. "I am seeking Nat Clinton of the long lip. He isn't quite content with us Keyes. Now he's trying to stir something up against the Logans."

"Oh," India said. There was a pause. She spoke again: "Today they had a meeting in the room at the back of the tavern and Clinton made his usual remarks about you riding through the streets dressed in your foreign finery. He urged on my father that enough people had not been arrested for the plot on the General's life and that a few more should be denounced. Clinton said if there was no evidence against your father, he could rig it. Then my father — you know, the one you call the old slob — he said, no; no rigging. That closed off Nat Clinton for the time being."

"What about Shawn Logan?" Arnold asked roughly.

"He said that little Shawnie was one of the rich spawn — spawn is his word again, dear. Much too indelicate a word for me to use. He said she was one of the rich loyalist spawn who went about saying that the General will not fight because his soldiers were ill and without arms. He said that doubtless she had got it from the discussions between old Logan and our father, who is a frequent visitor at Chambers Street. For some reason, Father was angry at his reference to Logan, so Clinton backed down by saying they should keep an eye on the Dutchman — the sly Dutchman he said, Arnold dear. I wouldn't be so disrespectful —!"

"Oh, shut up," Arnold said brusquely. He rolled his tongue around inside his mouth. So it had been Clinton. That was the pattern for a certainty. Each little adverse wind of rumour which he could bring in, would be assiduously stirred into a roaring whirlwind with a neatly blown hole in the centre, tailored to fit any unwary member of the Keyes family, but preferably Peter Keyes. There was no doubt to it. Clinton would cast and cast until Peter Keyes rose to his fly. Then would come the gaff. He said casually: "I go to Long Island tomorrow."

If he had thought to surprise her, then there was no telltale catch in her breathing.

"I thought it would be tomorrow," she said softly.

"I don't expect we will see the lobsterbacks at all, child," he said. "Most likely they will be sailing up the Hudson."

The play was not going as it should. He had delivered the news of his going with a careful brutality that should have made her nicely poised to fall into his kind promises of seeing her again, which would follow. But she was not helping him by her attitude. She was every bit as carefully refusing to be jockeyed.

India said: "My good father who knows considerably more about killing than you do, said the British will make for Brooklyn, sure. Give him enough shot and a few decent pounders and he would lay New York flat, he says. Something to do with the Long Island shore being higher than M Manhattan."

She probably knew the possibilities more than he did, for the liberty boys had their ears to every important keyhole in the town. They had found out about the loyalist plot to assassinate General Washington before anybody else, and had been most zealous in putting the finger on those concerned.

"If he knows all this, why dont the old gargoyle apply for a commission?" he demanded.

"The gargoyle does not wear a cravat," India said quietly.

"Shut up!" he whipped out. He wasn't clear in his mind why he had gone curt.

A boot stamped heavily in the tavern below and his mind willingly went elsewhere. Grant and David were in the tavern. It was funny. Everything was funny.

"Perhaps you'd better go now," India said gently.

"Yes - yes, I suppose so," he said, turning to the rail. He turned again at the soft click of the latch, found the landing empty.

David Keyes and Grant Logan ~~at~~ stepped inside the tavern and advanced towards the counter. In the mirror, David saw that the loungers out front had followed him in. He saw also that Grant seemed worried and he questioned for a moment their wisdom in bringing the boy. But it was a little too late to think of that now. He met the tavernkeeper's eyes.

"What do you want?" Jamie asked harshly.

"A drink, my dear Boniface," David said, his eyes watchful. ^{From among} ~~among~~ the few men there, he saw that Nat Clinton was absent.

"You don't get served in here," Jamie growled. "Keep a-riding."

David raised his eyebrows. "In a public drinking place, Jamie?" he said.

"Public to the men of the country — not to the gentry who would rather heel to the English!"

"A pox on you for that pretty speech," David said genially. "I heel to nobody."

One of the men at the bar was eyeing Grant up and down. A teamster from the sweated shirt and the thick hands of him, thought David. The man's face was flushed from sun and drink. He tapped the bar with his finger.

"Jamie, who is the young popinjay in uniform?" the teamster asked, jerking his head at Grant Logan.

"Logan's cub," Jamie said softly. "Let him be."

The teamster nodded. He looked back at David. "Rich as anything, this one is. For forty pence I say those clothes he has on are from England."

"And what if they are?" Grant exploded, his young face drawn with anger.

The teamster leered at Jamie and took the leer right around the room, looking at each of the men in turn. "'What if they are?' the little popinjay asks. 'What if they are?'"

Jamie growled something softly at Bill again. Then he said aloud: "Keyes, you would be doing yourself a favour to be out of here with your friend."

"After we are served, Jamie," David said calmly. He turned back to the teamster. Since Clinton was not here, he would have liked to be out of the tavern; but he had to wait for Arnold. "Are there new laws from the Congress to tell a man how he should be dressed?" he asked the teamster.

^{counter}
Bill hit the ~~bar~~ with his fists. He was a little drunk.

"Hear me, Dutchman!" he blustered. "It is only the Tories who wear King George's finery and no Tories are wanted in this Tavern!"

David nodded. The man's manner had been offensive from the time they entered the tavern and David was becoming quite angry. "Thank you. But let me put you right to a few things. Firstly, the legitimate laws of the country do not prevent a man from buying what he can get in the stores; secondly, there is no proof that these clothes are of foreign origin; and lastly and most important, even if we were Tories, we have a perfect right to be anywhere we desire to be — and no damned sweating hulk of a teamster or a Boniface is going

to tell me what to do!"

His words whipped over them and set them momentarily back in their tracks. Jamie recovered quickly. He pressed his hands to the counter as if he would heave his bulk over it.

Bill had his bullneck thrust forward, his eyes gleaming.

"Gut the stinking Dutchman, Cap'n!" howled a voice near the door.

David saw in the mirror that the men were closing in on him. In his impetuosity, he had spoken before he was prepared to effectively back up his words. To strike for the pistol in the pocket of his riding cloak would be risky. But he had to take the chance. He would chalk up his odds for survival on the possibility that their eagerness of purpose would throw the tavern company into a brief moment of confusion.

Arnold's new voice said lazily: "Far enough, lads."

It was very effective. Even David found himself turning his head before he checked and moved swiftly from the bar. Arnold was standing inside the door, his pistols held away from his body. David said sharply: "Grant, over here!"

further

Arnold gestured eloquently with the weapons and the men moved over to the ~~other~~ wall and aligned themselves. He left them under the pistols of David and Grant while he surveyed the moon face and slitted eyes and the narrow smile of the tavernkeeper. Jamie did not seem to notice the pistols. He cracked his huge knuckles while Arnold spoke.

"You are uglier than ever, dear Boniface," he said. "I haven't seen you for quite some weeks — not since Nat Clinton called foul things after my father when we rode past here. We have not passed this way since and perhaps you thought ~~it~~ this was because we were afraid. Not so, Jamie, you couldn't be wrong. We were only avoiding trouble. But, today I ~~want~~ ^{learnt} that one of your Sons had the unpardonable gall to insult a lady of our acquaintance. I came to find him but —" he looked around again — "he isn't here. If he were, I would beat him to pulp —"

"With your pistols, Dutchman?" Bill called. He was against the farther wall. Arnold regarded him with narrowed eyes. "No, Teamster, with my hands."

Bill leered suddenly. "Then it was me who insulted your lady, Dutchman."

Arnold shook his head, eyeing the man. "You were hauling freight all day."

A heavy laugh shook Bill. "You do not want to believe me, eh Dutchman?"

The situation was dawning on the other men. Imperceptibly, there was a loosening of the tension that had been put into them by the pistols; and there was the flex of a wrist here, the shifting of weight from one foot to another, a snigger or two that rode lightly on Bill's confident guffaw.

Arnold's thin lips crooked into a smile. He settled his body easily on his straddled legs. "Davie? Grantie? Keep your eyes on the rest of this lot. I am taking Bill's word."

David jerked his head to look at his brother. The thin sneer of haughty indifference seemed to be directed at the whole room, including himself. He was unbuttoning his coat, his

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eyes on the teamster. He took the lace handkerchief from the ruffles at his shirtfront and dabbed his lips, and tossed it with his coat at David. Redfaced, David caught them.

"Isn't he going to loosen up that rather drab costume he wears?" Arnold asked of nobody in particular. Bill rumbled an oath as he fumbled at the leather thongs of his smock. Jamie McGovern smacked his palm hard on the bar counter, the smile widening and narrowing on his face.

"Alright, my masters, since you will," he said coldly.

The shuffle of their feet on the floor was the overture to violence. The faces of the ~~men~~ men who stood backs to the wall, showed ^{that} they too were savouring the mood. David wiped his face clean of the anxiety for his brother which took up most of his mind. He glanced at Grant.

A fretful hypnosis had haled the boy's attention to Bill's glowering bulk of truculence. Bill's bare arms and forearms ~~were tortured into appendages that~~ seemed strong as ships' cables with the muscles roped along them. The boy sucked air through his mouth as Bill threw the first blow — a wallop that could well have been employed from the ~~shaft~~ ^{tongue} of a bullock cart. It brushed past Arnold's moving head. Grant pulled in his stomach when the teamster was hit solidly above the waist. David saw that Grant was out there in the fight too. He made up his mind to remember to keep an eye on Grant until it was over.

Jamie McGovern grunted when Bill went back before the blow, kicked his heels hard on the boards and steadied himself on flat feet. Jamie McGovern had seen men battle in many ports. From the dank corridors of the East Indies to the cobbles of Bristol on a roistering Saturday night, he had himself felt the splintering of bones under the ram of bludgeoning fists. He had kneed and gouged with the best of them when he stood on his own ~~st~~ sound legs; and, even now, given a wall to stand back to, there was such service in his own mighty hands as could make a man sob with the wrack of it. He pursed his mouth in the perpetual smile and leaned on the counter, watching for the moment when a blow would fall which would begin spelling the end.

Lemuel's lugubrious face never lit up. He watched Bill steady himself and shake the last of the alcoholic fumes from his head. He watched him open his fists and work the fingers a little. He rose to the balls of his feet.

"Hold him Bill!" somebody squawked. "Get ahold of him!"

There was good floor f space between them, Arnold saw. He decided he would keep it so. He kept a long arm out, probing and measuring the space. Time enough to hit Master Teamster with his right when he lumbered in on his clumsy dance.

Sometimes, fighting a man was like making love to a woman. Everything you did was carefully calculated to bring her nearer to you, within arms' reach, so to speak. Just as you did with Bill here. With the woman, first, there was the glance; then the slower look, your

eyes wide open with wonder that you should ever have thought a glance enough. Then there came the longer look, brimming with interest. Flowers followed. It was the first physical contact, this passing of something that came from you, something imbued with a tit of your own personality. ~~XXX~~ If she was of family, one day you went to the house for tea with a mutual friend. If she was otherwise, you sent her a ticket for the John Street theatre and sat up in the gods where the lights were dim. Then here she was, right up to you — just like Master Teamster here!

Arnold rocked aside as Bill blundered by. He ignored the tempting offer of the rocklike chin and hit him hard, twice, in the stomach again.

From his pewter box, Lemuel took a large pinch of snuff and squirmed his long nose as he waited for the sneeze. Old Bill could wait. He had seen him wait before.

Bill belched when the fists rammed into his stomach. His drive took him past and his teeth clacked shudderingly as Arnold's other fist thudded on the back of his neck. He breathed loudly like an animal and whirled again to face his opponent. Bill rubbed the back of his neck.

You never know, you never know. ^{Now, then,} ~~Now, then,~~ a killer mule should never have a second chance. Too many men had been carried off the boards because they forgot and gave a second chance. But you didn't run away from the boards because a mule was a killer. And often they heaved hardest in the harness. And they were always good for the long pull. What you had to do was to teach him. Any stout hickory stick would do. You approached him innocently enough, as if he hadn't just tried to do you in. You clucked and said Hupp, Hupp, kind of soft, the hickory bedded in your palm behind you. ^{Then,} ~~XXXX~~ just as you saw the whites of his eyes, you gave it to him — WHAM!

He caught Arnold's fist on his elbow and brought up his knee. Instinctively as he gasped, Arnold held on. Jamie's smile widened.

"Keep away, Arnold!" Grant bawled.

Lemuel looked less lugubrious. Aye, here was old Bill now. You should do it just as Old Bill was doing. You caught the Dutchman's head between your hands, held him steady with your elbows gripping his neck and did the job with your knees. Watch his face come open with pain. Beat the breath out of him, and when that is gone, keep at it until he retches. Beat him, Bill, lad!

"Arnold! Arnold! Keep away — keep away!" David cried.

He heard Grant sob aloud. Then, before he could gauge the boy's attention, the boy had broken from his side and was running towards the locked pair.

"Avast there!" Jamie bellowed. "Grab him, lads!"

The men were coming forward from the wall. Like a team of runners, their heads thrust forward and their boots searching for grips on the floor, they were bouncing from the wall. David Keyes held up the pistol.

"Stop!" he shouted. ~~XXXX~~ "I'll shoot the first man who touches the lad!"

"Get the cub and bring him over here!" Jamie bellowed.

But David's pistols were effective persuasives to the men to remain ~~where~~ rooted. With no break in his stride, the boy picked a bottle from the counter and leaped to the side of the fighting pair. Bill saw the bottle descending to his head and was forced to release his hold while he flung his hand outwards, hurling Grant backwards to the wall. Arnold slipped out of his reach, drawing in great mouthfuls of air while he recovered from the damage wrought on him by Bill's working knees. His fine condition had him steady again by the time Bill began lumbering in. Then Arnold went to long range work.

Hitting swiftly but with power, he kept a battery of blows piling into Bill's middle. He was constantly on the move while a ~~battered~~ baffled and bewildered Bill kept turning his head like a puzzled bull vainly seeking his tormentor. Bill was strong; and, in fresher times, he would have withstood the punishment until Arnold had worn himself down. Would perhaps have even gone in, stolidly taking all there was until his hands could close around Keyes. But he had done a hard day's hauling and drunken more than his fair share of liquor. The sum of the young Dutchie's driving fists was assuming dangerous proportions. He was tempted to wince each time they raked up his body or dropped with shuddering force above his head. He had to finish the popinjay, quickly.

Bill pushed his weight up on the balls of his feet, his short, thick ~~arms~~ forearms moving back and forth like a swimmer poising for a take-off. His beery little eyes took on a sly look as they squinted at Arnold. Arnold smashed his right to one of the eyes and it promptly began to swell. He swung his left to Bill's middle and coupled it with a right to the teamster's heart. Bill squinted his eyes on the moving form, waiting. Arnold circled until his back ~~was~~ almost touched the nearest wall. Then, for an instant, he stood still.

Bill became a bullet. He projected himself forward with a roar, hurtling through the air with his lowered head aimed for Arnold's middle. Grant let out a shout of warning to Arnold. ^{It was} ~~that was~~ drowned by the howls with which the tavern company greeted Bill's use of the classic tour de force of the ^{best} ~~best~~ brawlers of their days. Then their howls caught in their throats.

Arnold, in pure anticipation, had ~~pivoted~~ commenced pivoting at the instant Bill left the floor. So ~~there~~ ^{there} was nothing between the teamster's head ~~the~~ and the planks of Jamie's tavern. His head crashed into the wall and Bill crumpled to the floor, a thin pencil ~~trickles~~ of blood coming from his nostrils. Arnold turned him over with one elegantly shod foot. Bill's stertorous breathing was the only sound in the room. He put his heel lightly on Bill's throat, turned to look at Jamie, a grin lifting one corner of his mouth. Jamie's eyes were unfathomable. David walked over to him. *Arnold e looked into his mocking eye.*

"Your rot's beginning to show," he said coldly. "Come along."

David swung reluctantly in the direction

"Get the cub!" Jamie bellowed. "Bring him over here!"

was still crossing
At dawn, part of the army ~~afzthaxRexx~~ to Brooklyn. At the bank of the river, they were waiting for their places in the line of squat, overladen scows. On the road to the river, there still flowed the stream of half drilled militia and tatterdemalion citizenry. Pikes were there nearly as often as muskets; there were fowling pieces and occasionally, the monstrous mouth of a blunderbuss. A few bullock carts creaked ponderously onwards. The rolling heads of the bullocks and the heaving haunches when they bowed to the yoke created a fascination that, with the ~~pungent~~ pungence of their dung-stained bulks, made the farmer-soldiers raise their horny palms and lay them on the brown hides as they had done on all the days in their lives.

"Leave hold of there, you gaggers! We have weight enough in the waggon already!"

"Come down from there and I'll twist your neck, teamster!"

"'Ods bobs! There is not fulness enough in your sleeve as in your mouth!"

Their laughter was heavy and quick. A pipe wandered ahead of the drumbeats. Some of the marchers sang a little.

Jig it, jig it, foot, there be all night before you.

"Hoard your breath to run from Howe!"

"Go whistle psalms to the taffrail!"

"Where do you go, Wooden Leg? Perhaps you will make a bodkin of your stump to stitch a bridge across the river, eh?"

"I would be thankful if I could stitch ~~a~~ you so I could no' hear your voice!"

Slog, clump, slog, clump went the march of Jamie. The smile was wide on his face when he shouted the insult to the teamster. It was a good day for Jamie. The ex-Jacobite had put ~~a~~ up the boards in front of his tavern to march to the river with these last of his band of liberty lads who would cross to Brooklyn today.

There were Matthew Fellowes, the little red-head thief who could sing all the songs anyone ever knew, in the softest of tenors; blonde John Lumsden who had deserted from the ~~in~~ last British ~~gill~~ fleet to anchor in the North River and had been taken straight to Jamie's heart; young Amos Fish, the once indentured iron worker originating from the New Jersey shore but shunned of it forever ~~when~~ ^{since} he had bludgeoned the ironmaster who had taken a whip to him; and Fraunces Gordon, the garroteer, who could climb the bleakest wall like a great fly. Each bore a new musket which Jamie had bought with his own money.

"Matthew, John, Fraunces, Amos lad, hear me."

They pressed closer to Jamie, pacing their steps to his while he talked.

"Yon wea pons have been bought with me own siller — to kill. They must not be disgraced." He jerked his eyes around. "Amos fretted with me when with me own hands I stained the ironwork so the gleam went from it. But when you see the sun a-flashing from the English muskets, then pray in thankfulness that they can no' see your own, and aim for the lash, Amos lad."

Slog, clump. Slog, clump. "I do not like that you have no' joined the militia."

Fellowes changed the musket to his other shoulder and spat ahead. "We have no stomach for their drillings," he said. "We will find a good spot on the island and await the English."

"Aye, it can be cruel, that drilling," Jamie agreed. "But I do not like being neither soldier nor civilian. Between two stools, you fall to the ground."

"We will not march like the ~~Engist~~ English sheep," Fraunces Gordon declared.

"Sheep, aye. But keep your breeches tight, Fraunces Gordon. They will not run in the fight. John Lumsden here will agree. When ~~grapes~~ ^{grapeshot and} langrage keep a-coming, sheep's obedience keep the flock together. How these on this side will act, I do no' know."

Matthew grinned engagingly. "Never fear, Jamie. If I run before the English, I will stop by the tavern long enough to heave in your gun."

Jamie nodded. "Heave it in, Matthew, lad. There will be use for it."

Back o n Broadway from the river, Jamie McGovern by a jerk of his head told his serving man to take down the shutters. Jamie leaned against the door and looked down into Broadway. A few hens fussed and pecked about the mounds of garbage gathered up by the negro servants before their masters' doors. An irregular rhythm of footfalls reached his ear. A dusty squad of militia was marching in ragged time down the street. Their cocked hats were beaten out of shape. They marched wearily, dragging their feet along the dusty cobbles. Their hands, rested on the muskets laid across their shoulders, drooped at the wrists. A tall, young sergeant walked behind, a peacock's feather with pathetic incongruity was jauntily apeak his cap. Jamie guessed they were upcountry soldiers, probably at march all night down the island to man the river defences. He grunted, straightened from the door and cupped his hands to his mouth: "Ahoy, soldiers!"

The sergeant tilted his head. Jamie beckoned to him.

"Douse your killick and stay for a drap o' something," Jamie said.

Every flaunt of the banner which Jamie had only so far glimpsed, received in return a response as practical as it was spontaneous. With his own silver, he had bought muskets for the four of his band who went to Brooklyn that morning. The tired men marching to the river must have a drap o' something to put zest in their steps. A horseman came down the street and Jamie narrowed his eyes and grunted again. He stumped back through the tavern and into the room at the rear. He signalled something to his negro serving man.

Aaron Logan dismounted outside and Jamie's negro was there to take his horse. The animal would be led away behind the tavern until Aaron was ready to go. His visits to Jamie were never advertised and this was the first time he had gone to the tavern during daylight. He crossed the tavern, empty except for the weary soldiers, and entered the back room. Jamie was seated at ~~the~~ the single table in the room. There were some chairs. Aaron Logan took one of them.

"I hear the lads were in here last night," Logan said. "There was a fight."

"Keyes," Jamie growled. Aaron Logan nodded. "Keyes — and Nat Clinton," he told Jamie.

The tavernkeeper looked hard at him. "What about Clinton?"

Aaron Logan told him. Jamie growled an oath. "That loudmouthed fool!"

Aaron shrugged. "Nothing we can do short of telling Clinton and that's not so good.

He is loudmouthed."

Jamie said: "I'll warn him off. If he troubles your girl again, I'll break his bones."

Aaron nodded almost absently. He waited. Jamie said: "The English will come."

Aaron Logan asked: "What will you do?"

"Close me tavern and go ~~upstatatix~~ upcountry to fight," Jamie said. He looked on Aaron hesitatingly, as if he questioned whether he should go on. He said: "I shall send me daughter to Boston. Perhaps I'll kill young Keyes."

He said it without emotion, but Aaron Logan knew the man of violence behind the deadly calm. "You," Logan said, "have no proof, Jamie."

"I'll kill him when I have proof," Jamie said. ~~XXXX~~ "The old one too."

Aaron Logan moved his shoulder. "I tell you again, Jamie. Peter is not actively with us but he is not against us ~~high~~ either. Just give him time."

Jamie grunted. Aaron Logan was one of the many of the New York propertied class which had been with the organisation known as the Sons of Liberty in the old days. But after the outbreak of violence in the organisation, many of this class had withdrawn their support. Partly a secret ~~organisation~~ body, few knew that Logan was with Jamie McGovern's branch. Among those who knew were Fanny Logan, ^{and} Link, the Logan's negro majordomo. And Burgoyne, Patty Travers' of Jones Wood negro boy, also knew. But Burgoyne knew almost everything about everybody in New York.

"Arnold Keyes is sound. He went with his brother to Long Island today. We need all the good men we can find now without you slaying them off in your private war."

Aaron Logan had spoken with a calmness to match the tavernkeepers. Jamie grunted again. The soldiers within the tavern had lost their weariness in Jamie's ^{free} ~~fee~~ ale and their voices were raised in a song. Jamie seemed to be listening to their voices.

Peter Keyes had no doubt that defeat and disgrace was the lot of the rebel country. He had never forgiven himself for not having removed his sons from the college at Boston at the first definite signs of large scale trouble. Even when they had come to New York with Washington's army in mid-April, he had hoped it was not too late. But his hope was broken after he had spoken with his sons. Now they too had gone to Long Island. Peter turned to his wondow at the sound of singing.

Crossing the intersection at Wall Street and Broadway was a squad of militia. They were dusty and their hunting shirts were torn and caked with grime. But there was a bounce to their march and a lilt to their song. A tall, young sergeant led them, a peacock's feather jaunty in his cap. Peter thought they must be upcountry men who had

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marched all night for the Battery.

"You fools!" he cried. "You poor young fools!"

Then he jerked away from the window and as he saw Burgoyne trotting up the street. Peter went down the stairs to the street door. He pulled the heavy bolt and opened an aperture just wide enough for the boy to slip inside.

"Well!" Peter barked impatiently. "Have you brought news?"

Burgoyne bobbed his head. No true expression dwelt on his sleek face. His cheekbones were high, tapering his face down to a thin-lipped mouth. His mouth was puckered at the corners with acquisitive lines. He straightened his head and viewed all of Peter's face from his curiously contractile pupils. Peter Keyes tapped his foot.

"Will the officer be there?" he snapped.

Burgoyne's still eyes were centred on the tip of Peter's stubby nose. The merchant's hands were held rigidly down his side. He opened his fingers and a golden guinea tinkled to the floor. Burgoyne seemed hardly to move but he had picked up the coin.

"At supper in John Digby's house tonight," he said tonelessly.

There seemed to be nothing more. Peter dismissed him with a curt nod.

Fanny Logan was preparing for a journey up to Patty Travers' farm at Jones Wood. She would be away all day and this entailed completing arrangements for the carrying on of the household in her absence. The carrying on of the household had long ago slipped from Elisabeth's fluttery hands. Elisabeth's interests were now mainly sweetmeats and her megrims. Fanny spoke to Link. They were in the small room in the north wing which Fanny had fitted up as her office.

"You've seen to the food? The fish was troublesome, I understand. Are the scallops alright?"

Link inclined his grey head. "Yes, Mis' Fanny."

Simply so. He never flounders. She wanted scallops for the Logan table and perhaps, last night while everyone slept, he had slogged through the dark and dismal alleys to the river front and bought the scallops from the fishermen of his own race on the North River. That reminded her of something else.

"There's something funny about that boy, Burgoyne," she said. "He is too much in town for his own good. I don't think Patty sees him three times a week."

Link breezed his hat at an insistent fly and stood quiet again. He had the knack of gathering himself together and holding immobility like sand in a sealed hour-glass. He had been born in the Logan household and those capable hands hung at his side had always ministered to their wants. But Fanny suspected that Link did not altogether approve of her taking over the housekeeping from Elisabeth. It perhaps did not suit his ideas of the fitness of things.

"Burgoyne is a young man who likes to talk with his elders," Link said. "He comes here often to see me. But he is not of my household. Can I say to him: 'Keep to

your end of the island'?"

So it is of my household, Link. Wager a shilling to a guinea that with Elisabeth, it would have been our household. God be with ye, Link, man.

Fanny wanted to know about Burgoyne. She wanted to know about everyone. She suspected that before long, knowledge would be power — or even the difference between life and death. The second feather from a live springtime swan had gone into this beautiful quill. Fanny put it back quickly on her desk before friction from her tightening fingers should spoil the web.

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Nat Clinton elbowed his way past the door of Jamie's tavern a morning two weeks later. He stood within the door, blinking his eyes. His red hair was matted and grew thickly down to his collar. His long underlip quivered with excitement as he steadied himself on his feet.

"Have you heard the news?" he asked hoarsely. Jamie shook his head. Clinton skidded his eyes along the line of men and women in the room. The novelty of having a hostile fleet in their harbour had worn off with the fortnight of inactivity from the manowars. There were taut and booted men across the river at Brooklyn and in the river fortifications, but the townspeople had almost forgotten what the presence of the fleet meant. Some hoped the negotiations ~~for peace would succeed.~~ "Speak, man," Jamie said sharply. "What news?"

Clinton's ears were big and set back on his elongated skull. His chin was solid but could be said to lack conviction. His torso was committed to a voluminous nankeen coat, bleached neutral by wind and weather, out of which his long legs flung themselves in close-fitting corded breeches, cotton hose, and shoes that were a wonder for size and disrepair.

"~~Stow~~ Stow it, Cap'n!" a woman cried. She was propped against the counter. "Nat Clinton of the full mouth has lost his voice!"

Farther down the room, Sadie Bliss struck her mug to the counter and gave a shake to her head. "Hold your tongue, Poison Ivy! Its no business of yours!"

Ivy shook herself preparatory to reply. "Stow it!" Jamie roared suddenly at the women. He turned to Clinton. "Spill your bilge, Nat Clinton."

Clinton executed a springy jump. "The - the - the - Declaration's been signed!" he croaked. Jamie's smile rapidly widened and narrowed. There came from him a soft sound.

"Nat Clinton," he said softly, "you speak with knowledge?"

Clinton found his voice. "Post-rider in from Philadelphia — saw him at the ferry. The Declaration - signed last week an' Hancock's asking the Congress at White Plains to ratify the paper quickly!"

"You got a copy?"

"Couldn't, Cap'n. He was making for White Plains but the Journal will print a broad-side of it today."

"Signed," Jamie said softly. Suddenly he flung up his head. "Signed!" he roared.

"Signed! It's signed — hear you all —? We will fight now!"

His eyes raced along the faces. The first stunned silence was cracked by Ivy's screech. Then a chorus of answering shouts shook through the room with Jamie's great bellow supporting them all as he heaved his big body over the counter.

"Pull up your killicks!" he roared. "Stand away, ye barnacle bottoms! Come behind me — we must spread the news!"

At Chambers Street, Aaron Logan heard the news from Link who quietly told him on the gallery.

"So now, a nation we are," he said as quietly.

He talked some more with Link before he turned back inside the house.

Peter Keyes had his clerk put up the shutters with the first jubilant yelling of the scampering outriders who came ahead of the turbulent crowd. A muscle at his cheek ticked constantly.

Burgoyne leaned in the angle of the wall outside the slave quarters at Chambers Street. He was suckling oysters from the barrow of Len, the free-negro seller.

"What the man saying they signed?" Len asked, his eyes wide.

"They done declared against the King," Burgoyne said. Nothing appeared in his eyes.

At Jones Wood, the needles click-clacked to a sudden stop and Fanny looked across to Patty Travers. The courier's ringing cry still echoed in their ears.

"You heard that, Patty?" she asked.

"Lord save us!" cried apple-cheeked Patty.

Fanny click-clacked again and she was wondering if there would be time.

Arnold met David at the ferry for Whitehall Stairs and was astounded that they had received similar instructions to report to their company headquarters in New York. They crossed the river together in the late afternoon and trudged up the beach towards Nassau Street. Everything seemed quiet and they wondered at it, until they realised that the streets were deserted.

Good and brave was my Cobina ^{as} ~~as~~ she went under. The whimpers which burst from her were not of fear, but torn from her suffering body by the pain which broke through her. The sweat filled up in the hollow of her throat. Her hand reached out as if seeking mine and although only a thin breadth separated our hands, yet, the settling rock which had now become a part of me, warned me that it would descend to be with her, if I bent any further. I wrestled it back up into its frame with agony running through me. Salt sweat ran down my face as I opened my eyes and found Cobina staring up at me.

Horror had come to live in her eyes. I saw that at the moment while I ~~was~~ ^{fought} the rock back into place, she had climbed out of the Valley and seen why I had not touched her hand.

"Labe — Laban — God o' mercy!"

Her voice battered at the walls of the cave.

"Quiet, Cobina — it is easily held in — the lads will come soon to take it from my shoulder," I told her.

My speech was hoarse with the phlegm at my throat.

"All this while — all this while and nothing from you about it!" Strength had come to my woman ~~with~~ with the knowledge on her of what I bore. She raised her head and cried at me, harshness beating in her voice:

"Let it fall! God love us — let it fall! We will be together — hold it no longer — let it fall!"

"Quiet — quiet — quiet — be quiet!" I bellowed at her.

Cobina saw that such as she ~~asked~~ asked would never be done by me. Her head fell back. Then, as I breathed a little freer, her eyes suddenly flew wide open, squeezed down again and pain broke up her face. It was a shuddering pain. I knew what had happened. I turned my head away. It was a year, it was a lifetime before her voice spoke to me.

"The knife — I must have your knife!" she whispered sobbingly.

The fear that she contemplated destroying herself made me ready to beat at her with my bellowings again. But the reason for her asking came to me before I did so. My stiff fingers fumbled and the knife clattered to the rock floor. She felt around until she had it in her hand. I thought of nothing at all.

The lads found us before morning. ^{Their} ~~There~~ shoutings ^{roused} ~~awakened~~ me out of a stupor. The bobbing of the lanterns at the mouth of the cave cleared my senses. It was Murph and Johnny M'Cook who stepped into line beside me and put their shoulders to the rock while I slipped to my knees to the floor. Nothing more I knew.

An ocean of heads moved uneasily outside the limits of the square formed by the soldiers drawn up on the common lands where General Washington would read the Declaration to them. The long, slow roll of drums at muster, rose and fell on the surge of voices. On the outskirts of the crowd, standing amongst his own men, Jamie chuckled.

A mighty turbulence was shaking him from within. Deep chuckles bubbled up past his spread lips. Hands pushed inside his waistband, he leaned against the trunk of a beech and accepted his absolution. Nat Clinton was his absolver.

"All we fought for has come, Cap'n!" Clinton declaimed hoarsely. "It is a mighty fine work we have done!"

Jamie nodded, his uncontainable emotions bubbling up in chuckles.

"Cap'n, its down with the Tories and the lobsterbacks now for sure!"

Clinton punched his fist heavily towards the ground between each word. His pendulous underlip trembled with excitement. Clinton was hoarse with having shouted the same words all afternoon while they flushed suspected Tories. The Tories had commenced leaving town in droves soon after the news had been spread.

"Down with them!" Clinton bawled suddenly. "Down with them I say!"

"Down with the gaggers!" Sadie Bliss cried beside him. "A pox on them, I say!"

The women of the tavern were there, tousle haired and flushed with running through the town with their menfolk. Now, pausing while the first phase was concluded, they were all gathered to Jamie.

"The General be a long time coming," ^{a man} ~~he~~ complained. "Our business will suffer."

Clinton turned to him, his mouth a cruel twist. "Do not be over anxious, August Davis," he said. "There is better hunting after dark and I want to spoil me a certain Tory, not chase him away."

Jamie nodded at Clinton. "After dark, Nat, lad. Better hunting then."

"I am for it now!" Sadie Bliss shouted. "They will be holed up like gophers by nightfall! We should kill them now!"

Jamie whirled on her. "Silence, woman!" he said softly, his lips wreathed in smiles. But Sadie saw his eyes and her hand fluttered uncertainly to her mouth. "We will no' leave the reading."

Clinton slapped her lightly on her mouth. "Hear what the Cap'n says? Hold your tongue." He stared ahead. "Hold your tongue and watch the nibs a-coming."

Jamie looked quickly at Clinton. The man's breath was leaving him in an audible whisper. He leaned a little forward, hate dwelt in his eyes. Then he was stepping slowly and stifflegged from the group.

"Nat Clinton!" Jamie's voice was a whip laid on his back. He stopped in his stride. "Avast, Clinton — there will be no violence here and now!"

Peter Keyes was entering the common lands . walking with Aaron Logan and Shawn.

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Nat Clinton flung out his arm. "Butx, Cap'n, that Tory — !"

"Let him be!" Jamie rapped out in sudden command; added quieter: " — for now."

Clinton dropped his arms, a puzzled frown between his eyes. The tavernkeeper
settled his shoulder to the ~~beech~~ ^{beech} again. "Soon there will be darkness," he said quietly.

The drums swelled momentarily and died away. They whispered that the General was in there. There was heard only the stamp of horses' feet and the jingle of accoutrements when their riders changed positions. A few birds ran a series of notes in the tallest trees and x there was a faraway rumble of wheels. Then there came a sharp burst of cheers from within the square and the cheering ~~camezbackxtatthex~~ ^{backed up, row on} row, until it came to Jamie's group underneath the trees. So they knew the Declaration had been read and they joined in with Jamie's bellow.

Late dusk was filling the commons. Jamie stood away from the beech. Clinton rubbed his palms up and down his thighs, his red hair standing on end. Clinton looked at his leader as the others were looking at him. Their faces were naked with the lustx for violence.

"We should hunt well now, Cap'n?" Clinton prompted in eager gutturals.

The smile on Jamie's face was tightening. "We hunt now, Nat, lad," he said quietly.

Clinton leaned forward. "First we take the Dutchman, eh, Cap'n?" he asked quickly.

Jamie smiled on him. "Secondly, we take the Dutchman. First, we lay aboard the biggest Tory in town — down on Bowling Green."

They were puzzled. "On Bowling Green...?" their voices ~~ran~~ ^{lives} ran. "Who/~~ix~~ on Bowling Green...?"

"Aye, who lives on Bowling Green?" Jamie mused. "Nobody but the biggest Tory of them all." He took his face nearer Clinton's, his eyes half closed. "You want us to be hunting that puny Dutchman when there are richer bottoms on the sea? We should waste powder and shot on a pinnacle when there be plate and siller lying not far off our bows?" His voice dropped to a venomous quiet as he faced the company.

"Who, above the ~~xxxxangut~~ ^{angels in heaven} or the weevils under the earth be more responsible for this oppression than anybody else? I ask you? Who be the carrion-eating albatross that has settled on our truck and brought evil to the ship? Tell me, Nat Clinton! Who has sent his frigates and gunboats to lay cannon balls athart our beams because we will no' turn to his rudder? Who do them tens o' thousands o' redcoats out yonder say 'Lief, My Lord' to —?"

"Pox on it, Cap'n!" adie Bliss shrieked angrily. "Nobody but the King can be all that!"

"Aye!" thundered Jamie. "Nobody but the King, says this wanton, and the King it is!"

A moment of amazed silence followed his words. Nat Clinton said with angry sarcasm:

"And so we find King George at Bowling Green?"

"That we do, Clinton," Jamie smiled. "King George stands there in lead. We will tear down the lead statue of King George and make bullets of it to slaughter his own soldiers."

The great irony of it went into them slowly. They whittled it down to homely derivatives, lining their limited telescopes on the ~~xxstixx~~ nucleus they could best understand. Nat Clinton thought it was like choking a man with his own teeth. August Davis likened it to

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plaiting the hemp for his own noose. Poison Ivy croaked a laugh. ~~READ THE TRUTH~~

"God's truth," she said with an understanding smile, "its like paying for your own hangman."

They double d on the turf with glee. Jamie watched their contorting shapes, sparing a sly glance at Clinton. He watched them until they were upright again. Then he jerked his head at Clinton and clumped off in the lead.

Burgoyne leaned against thw wooden lamp standard at Wall Street and Broadway. He seemed oblivious to the noise of celebration around him. In his pose was the sleek patience of a cat. At his back, hard to the corner, was Leonard and his oyster barrow. Tonight, Burgoyne did not eat oysters, but stood quietly half listening to Leonard's vague questionings. Leonard's interest was passionate only on the subject of oysters. Ova and spat embraced his mind in a trochoid clutch that left little room for such simple scholarships as a revolution. But the heave and bellow with which the town had faced up to the incoming order, shook a little freer even Leonard's well fitting shell. Idly, he worked his bright little knife inside an oyster valve.

"Burgoyne, how come this declaration?"

"Means the King dont king this town any longer."

Leonard thought it out. He looked up at Burgoyne's profile. "Then who will be king?"

Burgoyne's thin lips puckered at the corners. "A republic, this is now."

"A republic? What be that?"

"Means any man who takes a wife can make a king," Burgoyne said gently.

Leonard slewed his eyes about, waiting for comprehension. Vaguely it came and he jerked his head to see at Burgoyne's face more fully. He waved the knife in a tiny arc.

"Mean — you — m — me —?"

Burgoyne nodded gnaveily. Then he dismissed Leonard's questionings as a new, great slam rose above the noise of celebration. *Jamie came marching down B'way, leading his mob,* He watched Jamie marching out front, his heavy shoulders heaving and jerking with the swaggering roll of his good leg, followed by the prim thrust of the wooden appendage. His head was pushed forward, his eyes searching from side to side. Thus, he espied Burgoyne. With a crabwise shuffle, he gained the side of the street and jerked his head at the boy.

Arnold had taken part in the parade for the reading of the Declaration. By nightfall David and he had obtained a pass out from their barrack, and David said he would go to Chambers Street. Arnold thought of Shawn and grinned at his brother who told him to go eat his head. Arnold went to Wall Street. He was tapping all the sources in an endeavour to find out what lay behind the simultaneous transfer from Long Island of David and himself.

He turned into Wall Street and saw that the house was darkened. Muttering, "That's odd," he tried the street door and found it locked from outside. He turned to walk back to

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Broadway — and instead, flattened himself to the wall.

Clinton and two others had just passed under the light at the corner and were slipping up the street. Arnold thought something of the wolf must be in the man the way he padded up to the door, shot a glance at the upper floor from his raw eyes and whined an offscouring from his throat. His whispers came clear to Arnold's ear.

bet

"He is up there — I ~~may~~ my bottom shilling he is up there skulking in the dark."

Clinton had gently ~~tried~~ the lock before. Now, frantic with eagerness, he wrenched at it. His companions had moved in to flank him.

"Your noise will waken him," one of the men warned.

"Let him waken." Clinton was almost sobbing with frustration at the lock. "Let him — ^{shed} he just see my knife before it goes between his ribs."

The padlock was but a couple of pounds of iron obstacle between his prey and he. He fought it with a stubborn belief that his bald hands would crank the tongue open. The skin of his knuckles was barked on the edged plate of the lock. He wrapped his fingers about it and used leverage from his powerful biceps. His elbows lifted as he tired; then his sweating fingers slipped from the lock and, because of his prodigious effort, he slumped forward and his forehead grounded on the studded door. His oaths were without form.

He straightened and threw up his head. "Come down, Peter Keyes!" he howled. "Last time you hid behind the skirts of your stinking Tory friends — you saved your store — now you're rich —!"

A wedge of anger drove into Arnold Keyes' throat. If there had not been the accident of his father being away, Clinton and his ~~killer~~ ^{murderous} band would have erupted into the house on the lone, terror-stricken man. He snicked out his sword and it drew a faint ribbon of light to it. In his anger, he did not count the odds. They would be a scurvy crew, anyway.

"Alright, Clinton, I am here," he called.

were

A fraction of a second only ~~did~~ they transfixed by his voice. Then Clinton with a howl of recognition was bearing down on him, shouting to his two companions. Arnold Keyes moved lightly forward until they were in reach. Then he made a swift step to the right, pivoted so he flanked his attackers and gave his attention to the man nearest him. His weapon ^{him} gave the advantage over them since they were only armed with knives. He turned his wrist for a thrust in sixte — and sucked in his breath with satisfaction when he felt the blade go into matter and the kick at the heel of his palm as it touched on bone. A shrill scream from somewhere else was followed by the howl of the wounded man.

Cursing, Clinton whirled and came in again. Shuffling into position to meet this attack, Arnold was jostled by the wounded ^{man} who was ~~thrashing~~ ^{stumbling} about the street. He lost balance and pitched forward and Clinton's knife drove down as he went past. Arnold felt the swift sear of the knife wound, but he pushed the pain to a dark corner of his mind as his hurtling body plunged into line of the oncoming other of Clinton's companions. He heard the pained grunt as the edge of his shoulder charged into the other's abdomen. Swiftly, Arnold ~~Keyes~~ circled the other's knees with his left arm and hurled him over his shoulder. He

He
battered himself as the edge of his sword struck into the corner, a shadowy figure
Broadway — and instead, flattened himself to the wall.

Clinton and two men had just passed under the light at the corner and were slinking
up the street. Arnold thought something of the wolf must have slipped in down the line of
Clinton nuzzled the air in his excitement
Clinton's ancestry.

Clinton hurried and came in again. Sneaking into position to meet this
scream from somewhere else was followed by the row of the wounded man.

He ran into matter and the kick at the heel of his boot as it touched on stone. A snarl
for a minute in silence — and snarled in his breast with satisfaction when he felt the
blade the advantage over them since they were only armed with knives. He turned his head
loved so he thanked his attackers and gave his attention to the man nearest him. His motion
moved slightly toward him they were in reach. Then he made a swift step to the left. By
way of recognition was reaching down on him, springing to his two companions. Arnold knew

A fraction of a second only that they translated by his voice. Then Clinton with a
"Villain! Clinton! I am here!" he called.

Light to it. In his anger, he did not count the odds. They would be a small crew, surely.
The lone, fellow-stricken man. He snatched out his sword and it drew a faint shadow of
of his father being away. Clinton and his three men would have snatched into the house on
a wave of anger drove into Arnold's knees, spread. It there had not been the accident
now, the light —!

Time you his seeing the skirts of your striking body friends — you saved your score —

He staggered and threw up his head. "Come down! Peter Kyles!" he roared. "I saw
his forehead glowed on the shadowed door. His eyes were without form.

Fingers stretched from the lock and because of his prodigious effort, he jumped forward and
and used leverage from his powerful pieces. His arms lifted as he tried: then his swarming
of his knuckles was raked on the edged plate of the lock. He wrapped his fingers about it
thought it with a shuddering belief that his raw hands would crack the tough skin. The skin

The backlock was not a comb of bolts of iron braced between his feet and he. He
he had seen his knife before it goes between his lips."

"Get him taken." Clinton was almost sobbing with translation at the lock. "Get him —"

"Don't make any more noise!" one of the men warned.

It. His companions had moved in to flank him.

Clinton had bently at the lock before. Now, frantic with eagerness, he mentioned it

"He is up there — I saw my bottom striking he is up there striking in the dark."

From the door. His fingers came close to Arnold's ear.

to the door, shot a glance at the upper floor from his low eyes and turned an offshoot
up the street. Arnold thought something of the wolf that he in the man the way he barked up

Clinton and two others had just passed under the light at the corner and were slinking
broadway — and instead, flattened himself to the wall.

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heard the man strike the cobbles, then he whipped around and pushed forward on his toes towards Clinton.

But the stomach had gone out of Clinton at the glimpse of the naked sword which Arnold Keyes was bearing towards him. His career had not given him acquaintance with purposeful blades directed at him alone. He was educated to kill by stealth and it was only his crazy hatred of Peter Keyes which had made him stand in Wall Street and howl up at the man's window. So now, with one last howl, he turned and ran his loping run towards the river. Arnold Keyes held his ground. He knew it would be worse than foolhardy to chase Clinton through the back streets of the town. He stood with his chest heaving and the pain at his arm growing steadily worse. A noise behind him whirled him on guard.

"Who is there?" he called sharply. Clinton's companions had already taken themselves from the scene. He saw who it was and he remembered.

"So it was you who screamed. How did you know I was here?"

"I - I heard. Burgoyne told me. I saw it all — oh, it was terrible, Arnold, terrible!"

"So you are a friend of black familiars."

India drew away from him. She looked up at his face, trying to read his expression in the dark. "Why did you come back? Oh, why did you come back, Arnold? Why did you make him do it?"

She could not see the puzzle on his face. His voice was still as lightly humorous as it had been with his first words. "Why did I make me come back? I'll ask me — 'Arnold —'"

India gripped his arm angrily — then let go. "You're hurt, Arnold! You're bleeding!"

"As a pig that is stuck," he agreed amiably. The wound needed looking after but he also needed to hear more from India. It promised to clear up a little mystery. A reckless idea took form in his mind. Suddenly, he swept the girl up in his sound arm and lifted her until her fingers could close over the rail of the gallery over the store.

"Take hold!" he commanded. The girl gasped frightenedly, but clutched to the rail when she realised that he was letting go of his hold on her. "You addle-brained idiot!" she cried. "Get me down this minute!"

But all his strength and agility was otherwise employed in pulling himself up to the gallery with one arm. He succeeded, then leaned over and pulled the girl up to stand with him. He ignored her ragings.

"I," he said, "know a window. Come along."

"You grinning bedlamite!" India said furiously. "Suppose we were seen!"

Nevertheless, when they had gone inside and she saw ~~the wound on~~ his left arm, she hurled herself into the job of cleaning the wound and bandaging it. He sent a few direct questions at her bent head as she bandaged his arm, kneeling on the floor.

"Burgoyne told me your father had paid him to find out where your officer would be supping one evening. It was at the Digby house. Then your father met the officer there and persuaded him to recall you and your brother to New York. Now, I expect that Clinton will work up my father into believing that none of the Keyes want to be in this fight."

He had been staring at the opposite wall for some seconds after the girl spoke. Then she spoke again, her voice quickening.

"And — perhaps I should tell you that Father is sending me to Boston — soon."

"To Boston? Its a fine town, fine houses, fine schools, fine manners, fine feathered friends — why the devil is he sending you to Boston?"

"Oh, Arnold — dont you guess?" India wailed.

Arnold grinned. "Caw, caw, so the old crow knows, does he?"

India sprang to her feet. Her fists were clenched. "You are laughing at me!" she cried, her eyes blazing. "It doesn't matter to you at all you —!" She beat at his chest with her fists. He held her hands, the untied bandage trailing from his arm. He grinned mockingly at her. "See — you're making me bleed to death," he said.

India struggled against his hold. "Bleed? You've nothing to bleed with, Arnold Keyes!" said furiously. she ~~stared~~ "You're a piece of rotten ice! I'll go to Boston or anywhere else he sends me! And I'll be praying very hard that you stop a bullet in your belly when you return to Long Island — my Father says that's where it hurts most and where you die longest —!"

"Perhaps I wont go to Long Island at all, dearest," he murmured behind his twisted grin. "Per haps I'll be a dutiful son and obey my father's wishes."

India stopped struggling. She looked into his eyes at the light that mocked her.

"Do you know what you are?" she said. "You are lower than a bug in a slaveship."

He leaned his head to one side. "You've taken me pretty far down, my darling. Not even Jamie will be there for company."

India spoke quietly. "My father is keeper of a tavern which men would not speak of in the same breath with Fraunces' Tavern. He is gotch-gutted and does not wear the cleanest stocks. But, if ever the day comes when he joins you there, I'll spit his gullet myself."

"Spoken like a true McGovern," Arnold murmured with a bow.

"I'm going home," India announced ~~quietly~~ quietly. "Please let me out."

Arnold rose to face her. Then they both jerked in alarm as something crashed through the glass of one of the front windows.

Jamie's huge hands shot out and clutched Nat Clinton's shoulders. A scared light entered Clinton's eyes. A sudden quiet descended on the group about them. It was an island of silence in the storm of the rioting crowds on the Green who were still engaged in chipping lead bullets out of King George's statue.

"It was dark, Nat Clinton," Jamie said softly. "And you ran, remember? You ran when the mighty man took his steel to you. Remember you told me that? You could not ha' stayed to see, Clinton? Tell the Cap'n you were a-lying."

Clinton squeezed a gurgle from his tightened throat. Jamie's lips met again in a tiny smile that was almost a simper. "Just shake your head like this, Clinton. Tell the Cap'n you're a-lying."

All their eyes were strung on Clinton's head. Sadie Bliss wrapped her indignation

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into an imprecation at the poor showing of her man and hurled it at him like a spitball. The eyes of the company were strung on Clinton's head. He glanced around the ring of eyes, swallowed and nodded an affirmative. The eyes stared at him in horror.

Jamie hissed a breath through his clenched teeth. An oak of a ~~man~~ man, the tavernkeeper was nevertheless trembling in slight waves that moved over him. The trembling reached his arms encased in the soiled sleeves of his doublet.

"Cap'n! Cap'n — no!"

The sudden shriek from Sadie Bliss lashed them all into sensibility. It reached Jamie too. His huge hands which had crept up to encircle Clinton's neck, fell away. The madness left his eyes. Wordlessly, Jamie turned on his sound leg and walked up towards the foot of Broadway, his heavy shoulders swinging. They watched him while renewed life entered Clinton's eyes. Then they followed in his wake with Clinton leading them.

"Open — or I'll ruin the timbers o' your door!"

The bellow came right after the stone which had crashed through the window.

"Its your dear parent," Arnold said unnecessarily to the girl.

In the street, Jamie stood with his massive fists bunched on his hips and his face upturned to the house. About him stood his people. A couple of men hammered futilely at the heavy door while Nat Clinton and Sadie Bliss ran in circles seeking more rocks to bombard the windows. August Davis trotted from the door to Jamie.

"We could put fire to the door if you say so," he said eagerly.

Jamie backhanded him on the cheek. "Fool!" he roared. "Ha' you forgotten —!" he ended abruptly. Davis staggered back. Again and again Clinton slung rocks to the window. Then suddenly the window was pushed up. Jamie blinked in the light.

"What the devil is the meaning of this?" Arnold demanded.

To Jamie, who had imagination, there came no ready answer. The ease of the whelp's appearance after they had sought him with stones and wide throats, made him blink while he recovered his anger from the surprise which had come to swamp it. But stupid and wordy, Nat Clinton shuffled into the lead. He pointed his long lip up to the window.

"You dirty Dutch — you got the Cap'n's girl up there! We come to get her and do you in besides!"

Jamie blinked rapidly. He began ~~turnin~~ turning to Nat Clinton. In the recesses of Jamie's soul, a hate for Clinton's importunity had been created from the time he had blurted out his information on Bowling Green. He had accepted the report but it had not been welcome. Now at the delivery of Clinton's cock-a-hoop, the full meaning of the presence of the mob around him, exploded on him. He saw his daughter's shame exposed before the leering eyes of ~~the~~ cheap tavern company. He lifted both fists and held them aloft like twin hammers.

"You bilge rat," he said with implacable calm.

The fists thudded on Clinton's face. The broken cartilage in his nose squirted blood between Jamie's fingers. Jamie raised his fists again and again and smashed them down on Clinton. The heads of the tavernkeeper's company lifted and descended on each beat as they gazed fascinatedly at the gory work. Then as the ^{hammers} ~~fists~~ went up again, their heads hung briefly at the top of the lift before there was a quick sideways jerk to see the cause of the noise which had interrupted the sequence. Nat Clinton crumpled quietly to the ground under the final blow.

"It is the watch! It is the watch!"

A squad of soldiers ran into the street. The sergeant in command was grizzled and taut with the sense of police work, but he knew Arnold and accepted the explanation that the men who had run were the culprits. After the squad had gone, Arnold called down to Jamie. Clinton was still in a heap on the ground.

"You there, Boniface," Arnold said, "I suggest you hurry home and see if your darling daughter is between her sheets — get away, you darned old fool!"

Peter Keyes sat his horse in the dry marshlands near the river's edge and from here he could see the ~~gasts~~ forest of masts above the enemy ships hove to down the bay. A bittern drummed somewhere in the marsh and there was the faraway cackle of geese. A thin sound of bugling ascended from the ships in the bay. Peter Keyes turned his head for a final look at the ships. They held a fascination for him. He thought deeply on a pitiful little army that was digging itself in over on the Brooklyn shore. He thought also of his friend, Aaron Logan. He pursed his mouth angrily when he did so.

The buglers on the manowars were sounding the retreat. Peter heard in the bugle calls, the clanking bravura of bright steel and lifting hooves. He sat back in his saddle and thought on the men of arms. It seemed to Peter that the courage of arms was an easy courage since the majority of men favoured it. These made soldiers, these men. Good soldiers, he supposed they would be called. But moral courage was a great deal harder. Aaron Logan had agreed with him there, once when they had discussed it before the affair at Lexington. Then how was it that now, Aaron seemed to be changing? It was true that Aaron had never enquired outright whether he, Peter, was a king's man or with the colonists. But he had noticed the keen glances Aaron gave him whenever the situation became a topic of conversation.

Indeed, Aaron was too detailed these days about the means a man could employ to get out of the country, if he wanted to do so before the fighting began. Indeed, Aaron seemed anxious nowadays for the fighting to begin. The popular, destructive idea seemed to have gone to Aaron's head. How would he view a man who would decline to leave what he had built up, but could remain in New York in an endeavour to prevent what he, Aaron, was plainly hoping would come? Peter told himself he would not be a majority-man. He would not be put in any pack.

He would use his influence — and yes — his money to prevent his sons from sharing in the coming debacle. He was not made for formations; he would not succumb because a few malcontents had strung their whips with such catch words as liberty and freedom. There was another category of courage outside these formations. This category built warehouses and laid down roads; bridged ravines and dredged ports; raised sons and planted seeds. It turned askew the pack.

Hooves flogged into the marshy ground behind him.

"Peter, a saddle is not the place for day-dreaming!"

Aaron Logan's hand on his shoulder touched him into consciousness.

"If you would be meditating you should be at vespers, Peter," Aaron said with a smile.

Peter Keyes rubbed his forehead. "I did not hear the bells," he said.

Aaron Logan laughed. "Oh, Peter, you were day-dreaming. The bells are not rung for pel anymore now — their tongues are being kept to mark bloodier business."

Peter said: "Yes. I had forgotten." There was silence while they looked at the water.

"The attack will come anyday now," Logan said. The General has refused to treat with d Howe. He said the Admiral's emissaries should address him as Commander-in-chief of the

American army and not as Master Washington. He has returned the despatch — unopened."

A wind was rising off the river, swishing the marsh grasses about the feet of their mounts. Peter Keyes uttered a short laugh.

"So I suppose our great army will now — ha — fight."

"A fight — the outcome of which none may prophecy," Logan said quietly.

"Is it so hard to prophecy, Aaron?" Peter asked with gentle irony in his voice.

"A battle cannot be prejudged. The jawbone of an ass, centuries ago, spoke of the futility of such conjectures," Logan said dryly.

Peter Keyes' hands tightened hard on the reins and his horse threw up its head. He swung his face to Aaron. His eyes were twitching.

"Then tell me!" he shouted. "We will ~~smash~~^{bombard} the British with our hopes and wrap their dead in the winding sheets of our wishes? Then afterwards, we will just close our eyes and imagine that our dead sons are alive again? Hurrah! The victory is ours! Nobody died at Brueckelen!"

Aaron Logan met his eyes steadily. "If nobody dies at Brooklyn we will not know for sure whether the war be hopeless or not," he said. "Manny died at Bunker Hill and that did not prove hopeless."

Peter Keyes shrugged his shoulders and seemed to dismiss the matter from his mind. He said quieter: "You heard about last night? Jamie stormed my dwelling on the basis of a lying indictment by Clinton. The soldiers chased the men and caught one of them. He told the soldiers about it."

"How do you know Clinton lied?" Aaron asked bluntly. Peter Keyes started and glanced quickly at Aaron. "Arnold is a fine lad," Peter said. "He would not do such a thing."

Logan suppressed his surprise at such commendation from Peter. Peter's regard for Arnold had not been marked with such cordiality.

"It was not a lie," Aaron said brusquely. "Arnold was playing the fool."

"Aaron Logan!" snapped Peter.

"Oh, I am speaking of one who is as a member of my family, Peter," Logan said impatiently. "Jamie's daughter was at the house, exactly as Clinton said. Only that she was there to help Arnold with a wound he had received when he fought Clinton earlier. She was taken out the back way by David. He was told of the business by Burgoyne who had seen Clinton watching Arnold and the girl entering the house, and had hurried down to Jamie to tell him. And, incidentally, my dear Peter, you remember how I prevailed on you to stay the night? It was Jamie who sent Burgoyne to tell me that Clinton was planning to harm you if you returned to Wall Street that night."

"In my house — in the house of his mother — he takes a woman there —!"

Peter's voice was shocked. Logan noticed he had said nothing about Jamie's deed in warning him about Clinton.

"In the house of his mother —" he flared up suddenly; "It was an evil thing and I

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curse him for it!"

"Oh, Peter — stop being an Old Testament patriarch heaping curses all over the place. The boy has been a fool — but he meant no disrespect to you or to his mother's memory. You make too much of his mistakes."

"It is a mistake he shall pay dearly for!" Peter said savagely. "He shall not return under my roof!"

"Bless my soul!" Aaron Logan ejaculated.

For a moment, he was really angry at Peter and hot words rose to his lips. Then he shook his head slowly until the moment passed. He said: "I have invited a couple of young officers, Connecticut lads, for supper tonight. Can I count on you to be there?"

Peter jerked his bridle. He gave a muttered reply which might have been acceptance or refusal.

But Aaron Logan discovered later that Peter had accepted. David and Arnold were there too. Aaron was quickly drawn into a discussion by one of the Connecticut lads, a Lieutenant Jennings who had a tall, sad face but was enthusiastic about foot soldiers and mortar fire. Between Fanny and the other ~~visiting~~ lieutenant named Tombs, the table was kept in good humour, although Peter seemed strangely nervous while David hardly ate at all. The conversation had quickly gone off on the topic of the explosion which had shaken the lower part of the town that day.

"I understand that Sergeant Lee is also from Connecticut," Aaron Logan said.

"Who is Sergeant Lee?" his wife asked.

"He is the young man who caused the explosion which made you burst your stays this morning," Fanny told her. Elisabeth gasped in dismay. Fanny shook her head.

"Oh, I wager yours weren't the only ones burst this morning, Elisabeth," she said. "Dickie Howe's corset must have opened like the wings of a fat sparrow." Mr. Logan cleared his throat. He asked:

you gentlemen
"Do ~~anyone~~ know how it was accomplished?"

Tombs nodded, his mouth comfortably filled with tart. He was blackhaired and his eyes sparkled with humour. "They placed two hundred pounds of gunpowder into a sort of iron turtle with a clockwork firing device, then Lee was placed on a sort of cradle attached to this turtle and shoved off for Howe's ship. But the Irishman's saints were with him, for something went wrong with the steering ~~device~~ gear and the turtle never got to the ship. At dawn. Lee found himself off Governor's Island which fairly crawls with redcoats. So he got into the current for the island, set his clockwork and cut the turtle loose just as a boat was pushing off the island to get him. The redcoats did not like the look of things, so they turned tail and rowed back for the island just as the powder went off."

"What happened to Lee? What's his first name?" Aaron Logan asked.

"Ezra Lee," Arnold said. "He came ashore safely at Whitehall Stairs and had a hand-

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shake from General Putnam."

"A brave lad indeed," Aaron Logan said.

"The explosion this morning was a change anyway," Shawn Logan said.

"You'll soon get used to hearing them," Fanny said grimly. "Just a little patience, Miss Fire-Eater. Dickie Howe's biding his time."

Shawn's pretty face flushed, but she had inherited the ready Welsh tongue. "How do you know? Are you the Admiral's consort?"

Elisabeth, who had never been able to keep up with the family she had married into, looked flusteredly around. Arnold broke off a piece of tart and ^{held it} handed towards Fanny.

"Bite on this, Aunt Fanny," he said. "You've run into rough weather."

Shawn said: "But everything's been so quiet one almost expects those poor officers cooped aboard their manowars to come visiting ashore."

Fanny shook her head vigorously, her eyes snapping. "La, child, if and when those poor officers come a-visiting, tuck your petticoat between your legs and run as if a band of whooping red devils were after your scalp!"

"Fanny

~~Elisabeth~~ —!" Elisabeth exclaimed. "At table —!"

"When your scalp's in danger you talk about it even in church," Fanny retorted. "I knew an old scout once who was a very God-fearing man. Used to come into the Fort once a month for service in the chapel. But when service was over and he was setting off for the woods again, he would whet his blade on the pulpit steps and say: 'There aint no heathen what will lift Sam Weller's hair and deny him Christian burial.'" She nodded firmly. "He lived to be sixty before he died in the Fort — of blackwater fever."

Aaron Logan shared in the laughter. He always remembered that evening as one of the happier evenings. The cloths were white and the silver sparkled and Link, in his blue and gold livery, had set the port before him. All had been of an established order. It was then as he joined in the laughter and looked around ^{at} ~~as~~ their happy young faces, that an idea had crossed his mind. It hadn't taken form. Just crossed his mind at Fanny's words to Shawn; and a memory of Peter's face working ^{strangely} as he looked towards Brooklyn and said: Imagine that our dead sons are alive again.

And he always remembered that evening because there hadn't been much cause to laugh afterwards. ~~And~~ It was the evening that Peter had begun his slip.

Peter left the table early, saying he had a business appointment. Aaron Logan uncomfortably rubbed his fingers together after he had shaken hands with Peter. Peter's hand had been cold and clammy. Then a strange thing had happened, soon afterwards. With a choked excuse, David had leaped to his feet and rushed from the room. Aaron had ~~one~~ glimpse of his deathly pale face and blazing eyes before he left.

Across the river, the marshes which edged the tiderace at Gowanus held a company of its own which came alive when the night descended. From the world that quivered underneath the matted reeds, there came forth the noises of this secret population in slithery sounds and peculiar glugs. It was unholy, and Matthew Fellowes hated all of it.

He sat hunched over the small fire which they had lit in the hip trench they had made for a redoubt. His swift little eyes moved continuously about him. He poked at the fire with his foot, thankful for the flare which threw back the shadows for awhile. Town-bred, he hated the woods. He huddled deeper inside his cloak and thought on Jamie's tavern. Somewhere in the marsh, a water-snake uncoiled from a log and plopped back into the ooze. Fellowes jumped uneasily. One of the men around the fire stirred.

That would be John Lumsden, Matthew Fellowes thought irritably. The ex-sailor never failed to wake for his watch at the exact moment. He sat up now and yawned.

"Close by my time, Matthew?" Lumsden asked.

"Close as God's curse to a moneylender," Matthew answered shortly.

The blonde Englishman rubbed his eyes with his knuckles and stared at the little thief. "Something bad you are feeling, mate?" he asked goodnaturedly.

Fellowes, somewhat mollified by Lumsden's soft answer, ^{spoke} ~~replied~~ with more grace. "Its this swamp at me elbow. Its creepy, that's what."

Lumsden chuckled. "You be missing the tavern."

grunted. He

Fellowes ~~grumbled~~ jerked towards Lumsden: "What did we come out here for? To freeze our ends in the damp while Howe sits snug and warm aboard his ship and the General drinks his wine with the officers in New York? I would be better dicing for pennies with Clinton in the tavern."

Lumsden rubbed his cheek reflectively. "Aye, I daresay Nat is having a fine time with Sadie Bliss a-looting the Tory mansions."

Fellowes threw up his head. "Looting? I hadn't called that to mind!" His warm black eyes shone like marbles in his youthful face. He whipped a glance to where Amos Fish and Fraunces Gordon snored by the fire. He looked back at Lumsden.

"John," he said softly, "what are you thinking?"

The sailor returned a puzzled look. "What about?"

Fellowes said quickly: "By the grace --- who would be there to see us if we took a little trip across the river? We could find a Tory, bully him on the head and unlimber his pockets then we could be back here before morning!"

Excitement sparkled Fellowes' eyes. Lumsden shook his head. "Desertion? You want to be shot? And what about them?" he jerked his thumb at their sleeping companions.

Fellowes gestured. "Think they would peach on us? And I tell you we will be back before morning. Perhaps we would come back rich --- rich!"

Fellowes' voice dropped to a whisper on the word, but his eyes, dancing with cupidity, held John Lumsden's doubtful ones. Held them until the sharp little thief knew the message had gone home.

David Keyes sat his mount quietly in the shadow of a tree until the boat grounded. Then he jabbed spurs to the horse and rushed forward.

"Halt — or I fire!" he commanded.

The two figures which had stepped from the craft jerked around to see him. Burgoyne stood motionless, his hands at his side, but Peter Keyes gave a little cry and put his hand up to his mouth.

"Father," David said quietly.

~~David~~ "David!" his father cried in relief.

David jerked the pistol at Burgoyne. "Be off with you — and not a word about tonight or I'll seek you out with this!"

Burgoyne slipped away through the marsh grasses.

The Fates had played straight into Matthew Fellowes' hands. He took all three misguided goddesses and juggled them gleefully. There was no need ~~for~~ to take the risk of bullying a Tory. There was an easier way to silver. One in his right hand and ~~another~~ ^{another} in his left and the third tossed irreverently to the tip of his turned-up nose, he juggled the dazed goddesses as he led Lumsden straight to the tavern.

Jamie extended his hands flat on the counter and gave them a look which made Fellowes quake even though he knew the layout was fine.

"You dir-rtty, ~~deser-rtty~~ deser-rting sons o' Belial — what are you doing here?" Jamie roared.

Fellowes' cheeky courage returned to him and he made a comical leg. "We bring news, Cap'n Jamie — big news!" he cried.

Nat Clinton left the card game he had been engaged in and advanced to the bar. But lately restored to favour since his beating in Wall Street, he was more than fawning. His newly broken nose completed the picture of a sad but dangerous hound which he conjured as he loped his heavy body across the floor.

"Big news", he says, Cap'n," Clinton said, draping himself on the counter and inviting the tavernkeeper to join his sarcastic grin at Fellowes. "Now what big news could this thieving little deserter bring?"

"Shove your foot in your big mouth, Clinton," Fellowes retorted. "Cap'n, I have a nice Tory who, with me own eyes, and Lumsden's here, we saw a-going ~~from~~ ^{to the} English ships."

Jamie brought his hands together slowly. "And who be he?" he asked softly.

Fellowes looked at Clinton, his eyes bright. "Keyes, the Dutchie," he said.

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Clinton broke for the door.

"Avast!" thundered Jamie.

And Clinton was almost visibly struggling with himself whether to go on or halt. He gave a sort of whimper and turned slowly back to the bar. Jamie hadn't moved.

"How come you seen this?" Jamie asked Fellowes unhurriedly. "You were no' yaw-sighted?"

Fellowes rolled his eyes at them and grinned cheerily. "Well, now, wasn't me and Lumsden here doing a spell of watching by the river? Didn't we see this boat come a-stealing, a-stealing over the water? So we rowed out to challenge and this boat makes for this side. And something tells me: Matt — this is what I am thinking, see? — Matt, if you be a Britisher, there's only two of them in the boat. You be quiet and see where they go. So, we follow them, me and Lumsden here. The boat goes ashore and we are there before them, but further upstream. Then who steps ashore but someone I know. 'The Admiral, he be a fine man,' he tells the gagger what rowed him. Then they separate and there's nobody seen 'em but us, me and Lumsden here."

"Traitor!" Clinton howled suddenly. "Stinking Dutch traitor!"

"Stow it!" Jamie said sharply. He turned to Fellowes. "I will handle it. You and Lumsden return to duty." His voice slowed and his smile was pleasant. "The gaff must no' be blown by you — to nobody." Fellowes was not fooled by the smile. He accepted the coins Jamie shoved at them and bobbed his head. Jamie said:

"There's a yellow-boy for you and another guinea for Lumsden too. There is a saying that the General will be making a real army out of you — a-hanging deserters and all that. I would no' wish my muskets to fall into unknown hands."

Fellowes grinned so he was suddenly a cheeky, grubby-faced angel.

Nat Clinton fidgetted uneasily. For long minutes, he had stood watching the Jamie thinking his thoughts to himself. So far as Clinton could see, the solution was ridiculously easy. Just a nod from Jamie, and he would have been off to the soldiers. A rope would be fitted out for Peter Keyes. But Jamie hadn't given the nod.

Once, a few moments ago, when one of the men would have left the tavern, Jamie had peremptorily halted him with a lift of his hand. So now, they both were there with Clinton watching Jamie smiling and thinking his thoughts. Suddenly he reached for a towel and commenced wiping the counter. He made three or four passes and rested.

"Nat? Lads? What would ye have me do?" he asked genially.

Clinton was so stupified he was silent for a moment. But he recovered quickly.

"Do? Have the stinking traitor proscribed to the nearest gallows!" he cried.

"So say you lads?" Jamie asked. The two men nodded agreement with Clinton.

Jamie said softly: "And you think that would be enough punishment for such a crime?"

"Then what will you do?" Clinton employed a tiny scream for the question.

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Jamie wiped the counter again; then he put the cloth aside and rested on his elbows. "Nat, lads, there is a good, stout cellar underneath my tavern. Maybe if we had busy little the ~~Dutchman~~ Dutchman hove to down there for awhile, we could think of many little ways to slip his cable." Jamie leaned further over the counter. "Eh, Nat Clinton? What do you say? By the grace of God, Nat — we could even leave you alone with him for a couple of hours!"

Clinton licked his lips. "But if he were missing — his sons — this Arnold is a devil!"

Jamie's halfmoon eyes caught a lambent glow. He looked around on the threerapt faces. He spoke slowly. "Mighty though his thews and sinews be, there comes a dark night and we slip a piece of blade 'twixt his ribs. Where then is the mighty man?" He thrust his head towards Clinton. "I ask you — where?" he roared.

Clinton jerked back. "Still - quiet - the - mighty man!" he stammered confusedly.

Jamie polished the bar. "Still and quiet," he murmured, "forever and aye."

Clinton ^{rubbed} ~~washed~~ his hand over his stubble of beard, his eyes on Jamie. The tavern-keeper dabbed at the suds on the counter. Then he shook out the cloth and commenced polishing the counter. Clinton licked his lips.

"Cap'n?" Jamie raised his eyes. "Nat Clinton?"

"Cap'n —? When will you take the Dutchman?"

Jamie ceased to polish. "When I say we will, Nat Clinton."

Clinton asked with fearful hesitance: "When will that be, Cap'n?"

"When I say we are ready, Nat Clinton." He replaced the cloth and rested his hands on the counter. "There be one, two, three of you here. There be Matt and John Dumsden who will keep their mouths battened. That leaves —" he pointed wordlessly at each of them in turn. "If a word of this night's business be spoken, nobody has to tell Jamie McGovern where to find —"

Clinton watched the finger with terrified fascination as it stabbed at each of them in turn. He reared back as it probed towards him.

It took David some hours of riding and enquiry to put his path across his brother's. David had left the Logan house soon after Peter Keyes had excused himself on the grounds of another important engagement. Aaron Logan had asked Arnold to stay on as he had something to say to him. He found Arnold now seated in a tavern near the waterfront, drinking alone. It was well past midnight. Arnold welcomed him with a twisted grin.

"Hail, Neophyte," he said. "We who have been true mohucks for as long as we can remember, welcome you on this first step into the mire of liquor and late hours. And pray that you will rapidly sink to your beautiful white neck, as we have, so we may meet on common ground, as the saying is."

David hooked a chair with his foot. He looked at his brother suspiciously. "Arnold, are you drunk?" he demanded.

Arnold's smile was full of mirth. "Drunk? Dont be a fool, man. Such fine speeches are not born of liquor."

"Then why are you drinking alone?"

Arnold lifted his hand gravely. "Because tonihgt, I have been shamed as I have never been shamed before."

"Who is the genius capable of doing that to you?" "Alright. Never mind. I've come here to shock you."

Arnold shook his head. "No, Brother, mine. None of your shocks until I offer my own. You asked who was the genius capable of making me ashamed? Then, Brother, it was Aaron. Dear old Uncle Aaron Logan."

David was interested. "What has Uncle Aaron done to you?"

Arnold smiled. "Bless you, Davie, he hasn't done anything to me. I mrrerely told him something and he said — Oh. Just like that. Oh."

David moved impatiently. "Will you come to the point?"

"Of course, I will, dear Davie," Arnold said. "I will give you all, hilt and point. ~~No~~ Tonight after you had left the supper so soon after dear Father, Uncle Aaron told me that my parent had ~~he~~ cut me off with a shilling because I ^{had} desecrated the memory of my mother; to wit, that I had taken a lady under our rooftree. Then after we had talked some more, I told him I had managed to worm my precious body into the General's staff. That I would hold his quills instead of firing his muskets. It was then that Uncle Aaron said 'Oh', and gave me a look. And in his eyes I saw you and Grant and all the other poor devils who have not been as clever as I have been — and I was ashamed."

David asked shakily: "When was this new arrangement made?"

"I got my orders ^{earlier tonight} ~~this evening~~ — just before going to Chambers Street. Why, Davie, you look as white as a sheet!"

David Keyes was frightened. It was the second time tonight that he was tempted to murder. First, it had been a tortured little man, sick in mind and halting in speech as he

made his terrible confession. Now, it was a superciliously smiling renegade who talked as if no remorse had come to weight his conscience. He wiped his forehead with the back of his ~~his~~ hand. "Oh, I see," he said quietly.

Arnold nodded. "Same words and the same look. I will not be humiliated further tonight. No. I will regard them as if they had never been spoken."

David smiled back. "I thought what I am about to say would have been a shock to you. Now I see it will not. On the contrary, prepare yourself to be amused. Our father, yours and mine, is a traitor. He has been treating with the British."

It wasn't as if his brother had heard. His face hadn't changed. He just sat there; ~~then~~ then, after awhile, the chuckle came. "Now, what imagination, Davie? I ask you? I could never believe dear old Peter would show such imagination. You in the lines, me on the general staff, and he treats with the enemy. 'Ods trousers! His taproots ^{will} go deeper into the history of this America than anyone I know of! Just how did he do it?"

David forced himself to speak without inflection. "He heard today - er, yesterday, that the army was commandeering all the stocks in the city. It broke him. He went out to the fleet. He had Burgoyne take him out in a boat. By some miracle, he managed to reach the anchorage without being blown out of the water. He did not see the Admiral, but a flag-captain. Says he asked them to send an emissary to the General and to address him as the Commander-in-chief, not as Master Washington. Told them he believed the General would be amenable -- as his army was not very strong. They questioned him a good deal."

"Brilliant," Arnold said after a pause. "The old devil is really brilliant. Just on e thing I dont understand. How did you know all about this?"

"Burgoyne left a note for me this - er, yesterday afternoon. I did not know what to believe, so I went to Uncle Aaron's supper with him. Then I saw he was leaving early and I followed him. But by the time I got to the river, they had left. I waited until he returned."

Arnold shook his head. "That is what comes of the manumissioners teaching negroes to write. They begin leaving notes all about the place."

David shrugged. "Burgoyne runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds and finds it a paying business. He takes his gold where he can find it and salves his conscience by endeavour-^{good}ing to right the wrongs he is about to commit. He takes/care of the Keyes. We are family. We and the Logans and his Patty Travers. Old friends must stand by each other you know."

"Quite a lad, quite a lad," Arnold murmured. "Aunt Fanny thinks that between Link and he, they are running New York. She isn't sure why. " He pushed the bottle away and rose.

"Where are you going?"

Arnold looked at him from very bright eyes. "Why, to our own rooftop! I must go and speak to the Father Spider seated in the middle of his big, beautiful web!"

"You may go alone," David told him stonily. "You have mutual interests to discuss perhaps. I am returning to barrack. Tomorrow I will apply for a transfer back to Long Island."

Arnold laughed softly. "That is the precise reason why you must ^{accompany me} ~~go with him~~ to the

lair. Together we will persuade Father Spider to unravel the weave so you ~~xxx~~ may return to Brooklyn. My case is beyond help. This impoverished army has gone to the expense of quill and ink and paper on my behalf. Such solicitation is not easily put aside."

on earth
"What/are you blathering about?" David wanted to know.

"What on earth are any of us blathering about?" a voice asked over his shoulder. They both looked up into the face of a fair haired major who Arnold had noticed before, walking about the room, arguing his way into groups and getting steadily drunker. They nodded politely.

"Dont be polite," he said, shaking away a mop of hair that had fallen down his face. "Dont be poxy polite. Blather away. Blather at me. All of us are blathering so we wont ^{hear} ~~hear~~ our hearts knocking against our ribs. Fearful. Poxy fearful we all are. Seeking a poxy refuge in our talk — a poxy Boscobel in which to snivel and hide while Circumstance walk over our cellars — go on, blather at me!"

He gestured with his mug. A splash fell on the table between the brothers. He had drunk enough to float away his inhibitions. Now he was not afraid to cry out in the dark. The brothers folded their arms and sat back wordlessly. He stared truculently at their silence before he lurched away, muttering under his breath.

"What is this thing he is muttering?" David asked curiously.

Arnold was watching the departure with a twisted smile. "Boscobel? One of the places of refuge for young Charles when he was being chased by Cromwell's bully boys, ignorant brother. Every man has a few. Its when you have run out of them that Circumstance trample on your head instead. Even Jamie needs one at times. His is in threatening to send India to Boston everytime he feels the Boniface smock tightening about his neck and he commences to doubt that a lady can really live over a tavern. Aunt Fanny's? Hers is in arranging the destinies of others. So's Uncle Aaron's. Its a failing of the Logans."

"Where's yours?"

foolish
"My refuge? Its in laughing at the ugliness of our ~~xxx~~ papa. Oh, by the way, I haven't told you why you must come to Wall Street. I learnt some time ago that it was Father who had arranged for our transfer ~~to~~ from Long Island. He thought there would be less risk of our decease. Oh, well — India told me."

David held the table. "He did so?" he asked in a low voice.

"He did so," Arnold said brightly. David asked: "

"How did she know?"

"Burgoyne. The ubiquitous Burgoyne. He thought I should know. So he took this roundabout way of bringing it to my ear. You know, David, I think he must be our guardian angel who was tarred and feathered out of the upper regions because, inspite of his really sound righteousness, he could not be rid of the itch in his palm."

David pushed back his chair. "I am going to prove if this is true!" he said savagely.

The Logan carriage had swayed from the smoother going of Broadway and rattled into the Bloomingdale road. The horses trotted through an avenue of waving corn that showed their ^{green} bright/leaves above the coping of walls whose stones were moss covered and old. The postboy blew a joyful flurry of notes on his horn. Fanny Logan put her head through the window and breathed deeply. She spoke over her shoulder.

"This is air of quality, child. Get a sniff of it."

Fanny was going to Patty Travers' and Shawn was accompanying her. Fanny had her fill of upper Manhattan air and dropped back into the carriage with a weary abandon so unlike her, that Shawn turned to stare. Fanny sat with her eyes closed.

"I reckon you heard old Peter's cawing this morning," she said.

Shawn said: "I heard him telling Father out on the gallery. Do you know why ~~hazzidizit~~ Arnold acted so horribly?"

Fanny's eyes remained closed. "I know why, but I'm not telling. Anyway, Peter's is his Father, regardless. He should not have struck him."

Shawn had not overheard much. Peter had begun to tell Aaron Logan on the gallery, but her father had led him into the library before he was finished. She knew though, that Peter had been almost hysterical when he had commenced to relate how Arnold had knocked him down.

Fanny said: "David's going over to Brooklyn today."

Shawn sat up. She stared at ~~her aunt. "David —"~~ why didn't you tell me before?"

"Didn't think of it. Why?" Fanny opened her eyes.

Shawn looked unbelievably at her. "But — but — I won't be able to say goodbye to him!"

Fanny closed her eyes again. "I left our goodbye messages at the house," she said dryly. "He knows where we have gone to. He can be nigh if he wants to. I believe he will be."

Shawn hit the cushions with her fists. "Well — of all the —! Do you sit on the right hand of God to know all these things?"

Fanny did not reply. She might have been dozing. Shawn pushed her head out of the window and shouted up to the box:

"Link! Link! Turn back this instant! Turn back to Chambers Street!"

Fanny took to the other window. "Go on, Link," she called. "To Patty Travers."

A heavy guffaw came from a group of woodcutters trudging up the road who had turned their ^{heads} eyes at the disturbance; "Begorra! 'Tis a merry-go-round with real horses!" cried an impish redhead in unmistakeable Hibernian.

Fanny shook her head belligerently. "Bleat softly, Bog-trotter! There's more squeak than wool to ye!"

"Be ye holding the princess to ransom, Your Hagship?"

"More'n anyone would do for you, Michael O'Poop!"

She sat back with an air of satisfaction. "Always did like the Irish," she said.

The long, low farmhouse was whitepainted and had rose bushes creeping about the porch

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and bees droning in and out of the honeysuckle sweetness. Some of the paint had peeled and a board joined its creak with the chairs while they rocked. But the house was warm and welcoming in the sunlight. Patty Travers was ~~x~~ a widow and a girlhood friend of Fanny Logan. Farmer Travers had died leaving nothing to his widow ~~xxxxx~~ but an unforgettable love affair and — Burgoyne.

Link sat on a chair in the scullery while Burgoyne set wine and cake before him. Burgoyne stood waiting until Link nodded approvingly.

"Mis' Patty's hand is of the old cunning, Burgoyne man," he said. "Time was when Mis' Patty's cakes were the talk in every hall of the gentry." A light glimmered in Burgoyne's eyes. Link turned the nobble of cake slowly before his eyes, admiring the yeasty cells and the lightness of texture that was evidence of its rare mixing.

"Aye. Many in this town must have growed on Mis' Patty's cakes. It comes back to me now, Burgoyne. Times back in the 'Thirties, say. Long before your mammie and your pappie even stubbed their toes on the stones while they courted down by the creek. The days when Mis' Fanny and Mis' Patty were young and there were no houses at Kip's Bay."

He tested the mixture and slapped at a fly with his cocked hat. Then he hung the hat over the rosette at his knee before smoothing his hand down his cotton hose.

"Boy and man at Chambers Street, I have watched the town creeping from just above Wall Street to what it is now." His eyes clouded in thought. "I remember 'Forty-one. I was a grown man and your father was a wetting boy. That was the year they burnt many at the stake."

Burgoyne leaned forward, his eyes on Link. Link said: "Aye, it was Mis' Patty who stopped the white men from putting fire to your grandpappy and your pappie."

He paused to fill up on cake again. He leaned his head, his eyes on the rafters, and said thoughtfully: "There be walnut and buttermilk and a couple of eggs in it. That I know. Though what cunning her hand has taken to shake them together so they make a body's tongue to sing and his palate to cry out with the beauty of it — that, I do not know."

Burgoyne bore the digression without showing his impatience to hear more ^{about} ~~af~~ the days when Mis' Patty was young and poverty did not dwell in her house. Soon Father Link would take up his tale ~~xxx~~ again.

"A grand lady was Mis' Patty," Link said softly. "Likely, if you were ~~x~~ here and Mis' Patty was young, on a winter's evening, there would be a cry from her: 'Burgoyne — come here to me, Burgoyne boy! Go down to Cruger's Wharf and warm a seat at the theatre for me.'

"Or it may have been the old house at Kip Street with Mis' Hallam playing Juliet. But, wherever it was, there would be a sovereign put into your hand by Mis' Patty to buy the tag for her seat. Then into the balcony you would go to keep the seat warm, until, wrapped and powdered, she came down for the play. Then you would be off with the change to buy your own seat and enough besides for an orange to suckle while you sat in the gods."

Burgoyne spoke. "Did my pappie —?"

Link waved a hand. "Often and often, boy! And always she allowed him enough to buy a seat for your mammie besides, and change for oranges too." Link looked down at the floor. "No

life this is for gentry like Mis' Patty. Fit to be a queen, she is."

"To be queen of England!" Burgoyne said fiercely. Link looked up. ^{His mahogany} ~~quizzically~~ face under the white wig was expressionless. "The Queen of England is rich," he said.

"Much gold?" Burgoyne enquired. Link said gravely: "More than much."

"Say a hundred sovereigns?" "Say two hundred sovereigns."

"Then it is poorly that all we have is thirty sovereigns."

Link thought on it while he reached for another slice of cake. "Then you must work more, Burgoyne, and watch your soul."

"I got two sovereigns from Master Peter yesterday evening."

Link raised his eyebrows, looked startledly at him. "A hearty wage for a spell of rowing! How is your soul?"

"I did as Father Link said. I wrote a paper to Master David. He was there to meet us at the river."

"Aye. Then the white men can do you no harm. Keep your wage with a good mind."

Burgoyne said softly: "Master Peter is a King's man for sure now. Jamie McGovern and Nat Clinton would pay well to know it."

Link jerked his head. "Blood money. They would surely kill him. Leave it out. There's no repentance for it."

Burgoyne sought information. "But why so? I hear you read from the Book that there be repentance for everyone."

"Do you want to hang yourself?" Link ^{thundered.} ~~thundered~~ "Judas Iscariot took the blood money. How did he repent?"

Burgoyne recognised the drift. He swallowed and shook out a negative at Link. Link glowered at him until he was sure the lesson had gone home.

"Father Link?" Burgoyne said softly. Link put down the wine glass. He dabbed his with a clean cotton handkerchief. Burgoyne said: "There be two of Jamie's men who must hang. They were on the river and saw us land. They told Jamie and he gave them each a guinea."

Link behaved quite steadily. He merely wondered how he could hurry Mis' Fanny and Mis' Shawn. Master David was walking through the rose bushes with Mis' Shawn. But he had to get back to Chambers Street and his master with as little delay as possible. He nodded thanks at Burgoyne.

Aaron Logan was behaving brutally, but it was having its effect. Peter had not told him anything about his ~~trip~~ visit to the British fleet when he had earlier that day waxed hysterically on the act of his son in striking him. He had rather inferred that Logan must have upheld the boy when he had told him after the supper, that his father had barred him from the house; and that this had ~~made~~ taken the boy further along the road to viciousness. ~~Now~~ Aaron Logan believed he ^{now} knew why Arnold had struck his father.

Peter moistened his lips with a darting tongue. "What will they do?" he whispered.

"Nat Clinton will advocate hanging," Logan said bluntly.

Peter's face turned ashen and his knees folded under him. He slumped to a chair.

"There is no time for that," Aaron Logan said coldly. "I must see what can be done before Jamie goes to the authorities. I sent him a note. Come on."

They went on foot to the tavern. Logan did not speak. He would not trust himself. He ~~shepherded the~~ quaking man into the tavern without any attempt at concealment. Since the mobilisation, the tavern was usually scantily occupied. There were only three men there now and Aaron ~~did~~ gave no attention to the sharp yip from them when he entered with Peter. He walked straight to the bar. "Good evening, Jamie," he said calmly.

The ex-sailor nodded. His eyes were fastened on Peter Keyes. He jerked his head at ^{the} Logan and stumped along behind the bar until he came to a doorway with a soiled curtain before it. He entered it before them, waited until they were inside and closed and locked the door.

Peter took the chair Jamie pointed out to him, fumbling at his cuffs as he stared fascinatedly at the tavernkeeper.

"Jamie," Aaron Logan began as he sat down, "I will not ask after your health or the weather. I have come to talk about my friend here, Peter Keyes."

Jamie's eyes remained centred on Peter with a malevolence that could only be equalled by a basilisk. "Your note said: 'Do nothing about last night until I come to you. There is good news.' What is the news?"

Logan cleared his throat. "My friend was on the river last night. Say he went fishing, Jamie?"

McGovern twisted his eyes to look at Aaron Logan. He was met by an unwinking stare.

"Your friend went fishing, Aaron Logan, on a dark night and on rough water. Your friend is a brave fisherman."

Aaron continued as calmly as before. "My friend saw many boats, barges, scows, long boats, as if the ^{enemy was} ~~British were~~ building another fleet for his soldiers."

"Per haps he has brought home one in his deep pockets, Aaron Logan?"

Logan tapped the ^{table.} ~~table~~ "You jest. Perhaps the significance has escaped you."

Jamie folded his arms on the table, leaned forward and spoke softly. "Everything has escaped me but that I have an owners' man on my deck who should be pushed overboard in a canvas house with lead shots for company."

"He will talk of it later," Logan said calmly. "But give me your attention now. The barges and the small boats. Do you see it?"

Jamie McGovern turned his head away from Peter with an effort. Peter put up a shaking hand to his twitching cheek.

"Small boats?" Jamie asked. "Old Howe has his boats in the water?"

"That is the news, Jamie. In the water to seaward of his ships. They cannot be seen from the land."

Jamie smiled broadly. He seemed to have forgotten Peter for the moment. "Then there is truth now that he will ~~soon~~ try to come aboard o' us?"

"That is the news."

"And soon, too, if his small boats are in the water."

"The news come clearer to me while you talk."

"Then if his small boats are in the water, it means that the fleet will no' go up the river, but that they will land down here."

"You make a picture of it, Jamie. A picture in which no detail is lost."

Jamie looked on his fingers. "Is the news known to the army?"

"It is known to three people," Aaron Logan said. Jamie said: "Four."

Logan raised his eyebrows. "Four?" Jamie said: "Three — and Burgoyne."

"Oh." Logan allowed himself the luxury of a smile. Jamie said: "The army should know — and quickly."

Aaron Logan nodded agreement. They sat quiet in the room. Jamie inspected his fingers. He cracked his knuckles. Peter Keyes lowered his eyes until he too was staring at McGovern's great hands. Logan sent a quick prayer passing through his mind.

"Jamie, it would be good for your branch if the news came from its leader."

McGovern hulking shoulders moved. He sat quiet for another few seconds. Then he spoke with his eyes on his hands.

"A man should no' forget his stormwater friends when the seas are down and the sails are set again. But when it comes to the good of the ship, then friendship is little more than nought. When there is a call for 'All hands to the pumps', it is a call to those in the saloon with siller and white cloths on their tables, as well as to the men in the foc'sle. I have held in my hand and stayed those who would scour the bilges because of a friendship I bear. Nobody knew this. It was 'twixt you and me, Aaron Logan. Nat Clinton had a righteous cause. I beset him and plagued him with such tricks so that, out of his great love for me, he gave in to my judgment. How am I repaid for it?"

Logan did not speak. The time was not yet. Let Jamie rumble out his anger, then, in the quiet which would follow, might be found the wearing-stone of their friendship. It might still emit a spark. He hoped to goodness Peter would remain as quiet as he was.

"The whelp would visit my daughter backstairs and the old one goes by night to the duke the English into cutting our throats. And now the matter is put to me that I should

stifle my conscience and save his neck from the rope. The notion is no' pleasing."

"The notion is not pleasing, I allow, Jamie." Logan's voice was as quiet as McGovern's. "Friendship is a bond that can be overstrained. As for me, perhaps in my aging, I have forgotten which be more important, the ship or the souls."

His slow musings were being given out with a reticence that made his hearers strain to catch them. He turned up his palm on the table. "If my friend ~~ix~~ has erred, should I cast him overboard? If now he turns away from his errors and offers an amendment, should I be stiff-necked? Indeed, then I would be guilty of disregard for the ship."

He paused, his eyes on the further wall. "No. It seems to me I may be wrong there. There are other principles which I may not have taken into account. I do not press you, Jamie. That would be asking too much of friendship. Here is Peter, my friend also. I brought him here to you, with no sure knowledge of whether he will return with me. I reckon it is up to you, Jamie."

Jamie waited for awhile before he replied. He nodded at Aaron. "I will not withdraw my friendship without notice, Aaron Logan. Your friend leaves with you."

Logan breathed out softly. He nodded thanks at Jamie. "About the news," he said.

"It will reach the army," Jamie said.

Arnold Keyes stepped out of the shadows and said: "Steady, Boniface. I have a blade in my hand."

which he carried.
Jamie let his hand fall away from the knife ~~at his waistband~~ at his waistband. Within shouting distance, at the door of General Putnam's headquarters at Number One Broadway, a light there was a lit lamp over the sentry box. Jamie did not shout. They faced each other in the half-light, their antagonism proceeding towards contact in the brushing whisper of their clothing, in the movements of their boots on the road surface.

"So you go to the General's ear, ~~Master~~ Jamie," Arnold said softly.

"What be that to you, whelp?" Jamie rasped.

Arnold laughed soundlessly. He had got it out of Jamie easily enough. He had been going to the General. "So soon after my father leaves your greasy tavern, you go to the General?"

"Is there something you are afraid of?"

"The things I fear, I destroy, Boniface," Arnold said softly.

"You dont frighten me, Keyes!"

"I want to know what you go to tell the General."

"Then want!" Jamie's wooden leg clacked as he took a step. Arnold said: "You think I am letting you get away?"

Jamie halted. "'Tis murder you would be committing?"

"Without compunction."

Jamie bent and peered at him. "I could kill a pair like you with my bare hands. I could take you and twist your neck, bows about, before you knew. I could squeeze your gullet before you even let out a whisper. May I be struck by lightning if I could na. If it wasn't that my troth was on it to Logan, I would turn in your sire just so perhaps you might swing for it!"

Arnold added two and two together swiftly while Jamie cursed him. He saw that the sum lay in Aaron Logan's influence with Jamie. But then, why would Jamie be going to the General?

"Your troth!" Arnold exclaimed. "And now I find you on the General's doorstep!"

Jamie roared a reply. "I ha' information about the fleet from your snivelling sire! The General would not have known where it came from!"

"Dont shout, Jamie," Arnold said. "You think they would let you out after you turn up with information which only their spies could know? They would beat the source out of you!"

"Then how is the army to know?" Jamie demanded. Arnold laughed softly.

"Good Boniface, do you believe I haven't taken care of that? I mean the information with which you so proudly stumped from your tavern, has already been duly delivered."

Jamie peered at him for a long couple of seconds. Then he said quietly: "If you be lying, then let God watch between you and me when I ~~learn~~ learn of it."

"Quiet, McGovern. No swearing." McGovern said gently: "I do no' joke, Keyes."

Jamie returned up Broadway leaving Arnold sweating in the cool night. His footsteps crunched through the yard behind the tavern and he mounted the stairs. Inside his room, he

shot an iron bolt and made a light for the lamp. He commenced his grim preparations.

From a hook on the wall, he took down a heavy leather belt. He drew it through his fingers so the leather rasped and whistled over the rough skin. He took up the lamp and the light underlit his face so he was very ugly. He walked across the room and put a shoulder to another door. The door flew its lock with a loud wrench and cambered halfway open by the force of his entry.

India awoke suddenly, not sure why. Then in the light of the lamp she saw her father's face. Her harsh scream beat through the room.

"Keyes has been to see you," Jamie said woodenly. "I shall put my leather on ye."

She sat motionless with fear as he approached. She wondered how he had found out that Arnold had been to see her.

"He knew about Aaron Logan and the Dutchman being here tonight. He followed me and threatened me with his steel. He must have been here to have seen them."

Her gasp of understanding confirmed his deductions. He had ~~xxx~~ thought of it only after he had left young Keyes. If he had thought of it while they were together, he would have taken hold of young Keyes. His daughter was beautiful and she was a lady. Anybody could see that by just looking at her. This was a room he had always been secretly afraid of. A passer-by-thin sort of net fell around a man when he entered there and even ~~you~~ ^{his} breathing had to be gentle lest ~~you~~ ^{he} fracture a thread. Blow me down — she had been brought ^{up} as well as any gentry in the land. Did Keyes think she was for cuddling?

"I will whip the devil out of you, India," he whispered. "I'll score you so —"

The leather hissed down. He sent the thong whistling over his head and brought it down again. India's fogged mind was not sure whether he halted after the third or fourth. She did not at first hear the heavy crump, crump that had rattled the windows. But she saw him standing rigid, his lips forming words. "Twelve pounders. They are no' using the swabs on the big ones yet —" his voice rose to a sudden roar "— By the great God, they're landing!"

He pushed open the window by a sudden movement. The guns came into the room.

A lamp-lighter passed down Broadway, his red-hot link now doused but borne on his shoulders as his badge of office while he unhooked the lamps. He blew on the flame in a pomposity of swollen cheeks. The bon-wigged head under the cocked hat, shook with the effort to show off his importance on such a morning as this. The ~~opening~~ ^{opening windows} were tiered in night-capped heads that bawled queries at his civic form. These windows had never opened thus early. They were used to be shut, snug and warm, while he bested rain or snow.

"Its five o'clock on a fine summer's morn and God reigns in his heaven!" called the lamplighter spitefully.

The guns grumbled constantly, and soon the truth was known. Then there were bursts of booted feet on the cobbles, the clatter of a galloping horse and more galloping horses; then there was a full pressure of people, some exultant, some praying on the run as they pushed through the narrow streets, heading for the beaches. Then, on the beach, they pulled up, an awe-struck silence on them.

The fleet seemed to hang on the edge of the morning as the night drew away: gleaming copper sheathed ships of the line, spare frigates and fat, complacent transports with the tenders and the galleys nudging up to their sides and fast being filled by the red-coated tide which poured down into them from the transports. The boats beat in for the Long Island shore under a clearing light. The scene would have been memorably beautiful, but for the glint of bayonets which peopled them from bow to stern.

"God a'mighty!" Sadie Bliss cried, rubbing her sleepy eyes in confusion, "they will fill Gravesend Bay like jews in hell!"

"The dirty lobsterbacks!" Clinton kept repeating, "the dirty lobsterbacks!"

Jamie drew up his elbow and pushed it hard against Clinton's chest. ~~Behind~~ "Behind me, Nat Clinton and stow your muck!" he said.

A quiet smile was on Jamie's face. The babel of cursings and shoutings around him continued but he might have been listening to the bells.

The bells at Trinity had commenced clanging the call to arms. Then from campanile and belfry, from the church of the Presbyters to ~~Saint Paul's~~ ^{Saint Pauls-in-the-Fields}, the iron alarms were rocking and rearing in a mad ecstasy of news mongering. They took a message to Peter Keyes.

Peter Keyes did not go to the beach. He stood at his window and stared unseeingly down into the street while thoughts raced around in his head. Perhaps he had made a mistake not to have crossed to New Jersey like most of the loyalists. But again, perhaps his decision to remain was right. For now, unlike the others, he was no wandering refugee but still master of his own rooftree. Even going to Jamie's last night was not necessarily a miscalculation. He had made a blunder, but had redeemed himself — with the aid of Aaron Logan, of course. Aaron Logan was his friend. Of course.

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He shrugged testily as his memory brought in Nat Clinton.

That was different. Clinton had been running with vagabonds. He would wager that even had Clinton remain a store-keeper, he would have only been a small store-keeper just as he was a small, loud-mouthed politician. He folded his hands behind him and paced the carpet from window to bed.

Now that there was no longer any doubt that battle would be engaged, it was unwise for a man to be without friends in New York — until the British army came in. There was Aaron Logan of course, but he needed friends of his own — friends of the sort that Aaron had acquired without seeming to smirch his linen. A man could with a clear conscience go to any lengths in saving the things in which he believed, when they were in mortal danger. This house in which he lived was a hallowed memorial to the happiest years of his life; a monument to his successful pursuit of fortune which had built up this floor under his feet, lifted the proud, up-flung gable over his head, brought him a beautiful woman for wife, and — and sons. It was a hall of residence for the noble ghosts of those years.

In the days when they were gradually buying into the trade, he used to shyly admire the pelts gleaming in subtle richness against the rough wooden counters of the trading posts. It had been Mary, his wife, the romanticist, her eyes, bright reflections of camp-fires gleaming on snow, who acquainted him with the saga that sometimes preceded the commonplace arrival of these pelts to the counters, bundled in coarse twine. He learnt how in the long nights, the wolves howling and closing in on a sled speeding under the tarlight on frozen waterways, were sometimes momentarily appeased by a husky shot and thrown to them. But they only shot the less useful dogs, Mary said. The sick ones, she said. And even though it seemed like murder to the trappers, fine dog lovers that they were, their consciences were cleared when they reached the posts and heard the creaking scales and the tinkle of gold coins, Mary told him.

Peter stopped his paces. He stared at the carpet. Like any of those on the sled, he needed a pause. The pack would soon be in full cry again, despite Aaron Logan. He needed something expendable until the British army came into New York. Something temporarily expendable, that was. He had every intention of gaining camp with all his complement.

It took Peter a few days to think out his plan and make up his mind. In between, the city had settled down to wait. On Long Island, the General Washington's patriots had man-handled their small brass grasshoppers up to Gowanus Heights and used handspikes and drag-ropes for the larger pounders. They had tested the matrosses and set the sponges soaking; put new edges to their bayonets and laughed with honest humour at the reports of their scouts how, each morning, the redcoats on the beach at Gravesend Bay had polished their buttons and marked time on parade with hands akimbo and heads turned sideways like Bowling Green vestals.

Peter went to Jamie's Tavern the evening of the certain fateful day. He slipped into the backroom through the door leading from the courtyard at the rear. He dropped into a chair mainly because his knees had suddenly wobbled. Jamie came into the room and saw him.

Face now with Jamie, after his worried contemplations, Peter's voice was steady. both of us,"

"I have come to speak to you on a matter concerning ~~both of us~~" he said.

"Our children, yours and mine," he said again when Jamie did not reply.

The startling reply shot Jamie's eyes wide open for an instant before they narrowed again. He leaned forward and sniffed at Peter suspiciously.

"Your sheets

~~XXXX~~ need hauling, Peter Keyes," he said not unkindly. "Go back to where you had them — the nobs dont drink here."

"I am not drunk," Peter said testily. "I think my son is in love with your daughter."

Jamie's large hands went down, palm downwards, on the table. He said without expressions:

"There are two sons to you, Dutchman."

Peter Keyes got up and rocked from heel to toe. "I think you know the one I mean."

Jamie asked softly: "Now why should you be thinking I know the one you mean?"

A hautboy whimpered a high-keyed notice through Peter Keyes' brain. "Arnold told me."

There was no quiver to Jamie's bulk. Peter realised his reply was well chosen. It would have been fatal for Jamie to know that he was aware of all the causes leading up to the disturbance the night outside the Wall Street house. Likely, Jamie preferred to pretend to be unaware even of the incident itself, Peter's mind, hypersensitive in danger, ~~told~~ told him.

Peter took a breath. "I have come to speak about a marriage," he said. "Between ~~my~~ ^{my} son and ~~my~~ your daughter."

"Is it his wish that you speak to me," Jamie asked, unnaturally quiet.

"It was not voiced, but he is my son," Peter said cautiously.

"Watch your helm, Dutchman."

Peter shrugged. "These are troublous times, I warrant. Hardly the time to talk of such matters. But I know how the affair stands between the two young people and I thought it would do no harm for you to know that, whenever the times are propitious, I will be no obstacle."

Jamie stood still. A gleam of cunning tipped his eyes with a brief light, quickly blotted out again. "It will do no harm to know," he said humbly.

Peter nodded. A hint of pomposity gave weight to his head. "Er, we — you and I have had our differences of — er — opinion. But in this matter, I think I may hope and trust that we will see eye to eye."

"Eye to eye, mate, eye to eye," Jamie agreed amiably.

Peter bowed again. He felt in his bones that he was on top. He had done the right thing in seeing the tavernkeeper. The sled would run unencumbered.

"Dutchman?" Jamie said diffidently, his eyes lidded.

Peter had a moment's annoyance. He wished McGovern would be less informal.

"A question, Dutchman," he said humbly. "What I been a-thinking. Here we have these two young 'uns a-bracing and a-panting to go out of harbour. Seems to me that since nobody rightly knows when this business will end, 'twould be cruel for us to keep ~~us~~ ^{them} apart."

Peter was watching him closely, puzzle battling alarm for possession of his expression.

Jamie's eyes were hooded against scrutiny.

"Seems to me the best thing we can do for them in our agreement here now, is to help them up anchor at first tide. What I mean is, there is nothing as I can see why my girl and your son should no' be wedded immediately." His eyes had come out of hiding and were centred on Peter Keyes' face. "'Twould not be amiss to post the bans tomorrow at Trinity —"

Jamie paused. There, before him, he saw all the evidence he needed in the dismayed sag at Peter's jaw and the hurried spasm which crossed his face. McGovern's face grew ugly.

"By the wounds o' Christ!" he grated. "Aye — I understand right enough! You ha' come mealy-mouthing to me for no good purpose — but you think my girl is no' good enough for your-r son —!" He roared: "Go out of here, Dutchman! Go out — I do no' want Aaron Logan to sorrow —!"

Peter Keyes stumbled blindly for the door. There was an atmosphere of slow hastening towards an explosion in Jamie's manner that frightened him even more than the words. He broke from the room so suddenly that he almost surprised Burgoyne. And this would have been a poor result for the competent job of ~~shadow~~ shadowing which the boy had done.

It took some hours for Jamie's anger to simmer down. Then a cold ~~fury~~ hate for Peter Keyes and all his works, took its place. He leaned against the shelves behind the counter, his face bleak. Nearing morning, he suddenly straightened and bellowed for Clinton. Clinton jumped up from the table where he had been nodding sleepily and hurried over, his threadbares flapping and his mouth hanging loose.

"Clinton, the morning at the beach when yon Britishers landed. Saw you anything strange?"

Clinton thought with his mouth open. "Cannot say I do, Cap'n," he said finally.

"You have eyes only for wenching and bibbing. You know nought of warfare," Jamie growled. "Did you no' notice that no bullets were a-falling among the soldiermen?"

Clinton remembered that he had heard the landings were not opposed. He nodded and told Jamie so. Jamie grunted. After a while of staring at nothing, he said: "I am for the Fort."

Clinton was puzzled, until Jamie said: "I go to turn in the Dutchman."

Then his protruberant eyes almost popped from his head as he saw a certain plan he had been putting together, threatened with ~~complete~~ annihilation. He shivered like he had theague.

The first pink flush of day was brushing the high roofs when Jamie stood out in front of the tavern. He turned into Broadway, then he stood still as the sound of cannon fire came to him. He listened. "They ha' commenced fighting across the river," he said.

Clinton yelped gleefully but his eyes on Jamie were sharp and calculating. "Come on, up'n!" he shouted. "We will go to the beach!"

Jamie shook his head. "I am for the Fort," he said doggedly. "You go along, Clinton."

He did not notice the gleam of satisfaction which ~~erupt~~ came and went in Clinton's eyes.

It was known in the city by evening that the American army on Long Island was reeling. They knew that more troops were being sent across the river and that Washington had gone over to see for himself. And that the dead were numerous.

In the house at Chambers Street, the Logan family waited on the gallery and pretended dread no dread at each galloping hoof lest it stopped at the gate.

"That old buzzard made me a new apple peeler this morning," Fanny said. "It turns as smooth as silk and peels so thin you can as lief see Governor's Island with it as without it. 'Sakes! The things that black sachel can do with his hands!"

"I wish he would return," Elisabeth fretted, dabbing at her eyes. Mr. Logan held up his hand at the sound of footsteps. Shawn took the smelling salts bottle from her mother's suddenly nerveless hands.

Link mounted the stairs and doffed his three cornered hat. Aaron Logan said: "Its a dark night, Link, no moon. How did ye fare?" Link did not meet any of their eyes.

"I kept to the middle of the road and took the corners with leisure. Rumour has it that such and such is dead, or such and such has been made prisoner. There is no news of any of our family. Neither Master Grant nor Master David."

Logan nodded. Watching Link, he saw the old man's eyes look on him for a brief instant.

"Go inside for some wine, Link," he said. "You have walked a far way."

Aaron Logan went to his study. He had an idea that Link would want to speak with him alone. When Link came in, he said: "There's something gone wrong, master. Master Peter has disappeared and they have Master Arnold in the Fort, Burgoyne tells me."

"Anything to do with Jamie McGovern?" Aaron Logan asked sharply.

Link said: "The man is not evil. He has been sorely grieved."

Logan said slowly: "Should a man's word be broken because he is, as you say, grieved?"

"The sailor is well known to me," Link said stubbornly. "I have looked close and often at him since these years he has been shaking hands with you. He has been grieved. Master Peter went to the tavern and told Jamie he would stand in with his son anytime he wanted to wed his daughter. Jamie sounded this overnight friendship and found there was no deep water to it."

Logan said: "Then, perhaps I should ride?" Link said: "I will ready the animal."

"Golly!" Sadie Bliss cried ecstatically. "Its as if my chest and bedding was turned to pure gold and it was a-raining chinkers! The Dutchie is on the gridiron and we are rolling on flush. Wouldn't it make a fly laugh!"

Clinton swore at her. "'Od rot it, you will be all night with them things?"

The rain was falling in soft whispers from powdery black clouds, hanging low. The wind was rising. Clinton said: "The wind's rising. We must get back to see how he is."

Sadie leaned on one arm of the oyster barrow. Len, the oysterman, prodded at another

shall and handed it to her. Clinton paid for the oysters out of a handful of coin and Sadie swallowed hurriedly. "Plush!" she shrieked lightly. "We will stop in at Jamie and buy everybody a drink — Jamie too!"

Clinton backhanded her so she sat down in a pool of rainwater. "You muddle-head," he ground out. "I tell you we will not go to Jamie at all now. Keep away from there — unless you want I should throttle you!"

She pushed herself back to her feet and shook efficiently as a duck. "You will make me catch my death of cold," she fretted.

Clinton snarled at her, then he turned and loped off towards the East River. Sadie turned for a moment to shriek her thanks at Len, then she trotted after him. The black boy shrugged and bent for the handles of his oyster barrow.

The rain increased steadily as they sloshed from the alley into the ankle-deep mud of the track which paralleled the river. "Lord God, but I am that wet!" Sadie shrieked suddenly.

Clinton growled angrily, but handed her a bottle from his capacious pocket.

"In plush, Clinton," Sadie breathed after awhile. The liquor knocked at the props of her values. "By the seven angels, we will purchase the whole island soon. Then you will be King Nat and me — and me —"

The prospects dazzled her into silence. They pushed on in silence — until Sadie shrieked.

Swiftly Clinton whirled and clapped a hand to her mouth. There was a multitude of shapes around them. He reckoned that the noises of the rainstorm which had made them blunder unwittingly into the midst of the host of men, would also prevent any proper identification of Sadie's cry. He whispered a reply to Sadie Bliss' urgent queries at his ear.

"Its the soldiers a-running from Long Island."

They worked their ways forward, raising no particular notice in the multitude of milling men, until they had got past the landing and reached Clinton's darkened hut. They went in.

"Who is there?" called a high strung voice.

"Shut your trap, Peter Keyes," Clinton snarled. "They're soldiers all around." Clinton felt about until he found a candle. "Must have a light," he said. "Dont want any soldiers to come stumbling in here and find us in the dark. Even a fool's suspicions would be up."

Peter Keyes fell back on the sacks. His face was haggard. Clinton gestured Sadie to sit at the crude table. Then he took a position which would effectively hide Peter Keyes if anyone entered at the door.

"Today they had your name on a broadside," Clinton said. "Its a hundred guineas reward now, dead or alive. A master spy, they call you. They will hang you."

"But first they will put you in the stocks, then whip you in public, then the rope,atchie," Sadie said amiably.

Clinton spat on the floor. "They have your son in chains, now. But they wait until they find you so they can hang you together. The risk to me is greater now. It will mean another te."

Peter stirred on the sacking thrown on the floor in a corner of the room. "How much?"

"Not a penny more than the Fort is asking," Clinton said. "One hundred guineas."

Peter groaned and Sadie shrieked with nice control: "Plush!"

A sound came at the door. Clinton, with great presence of mind, kicked backwards so the sacking covered Peter. Then he jumped to his feet and joined in Sadie's shriek of welcome.

"Matthew Fellowes — Lumsden — Amos Fish — Franny Gordon — come in, come in out of the rain! By the wounds — it does me good to see you again. How do you fare?"

Clinton nudged Sadie and she went and closed the door behind the four men who shuffled into the room. They sank slowly to the floor, sitting with their feet spread, their toes of their boots sagging outwards. Clinton pulled a ~~fa~~ fresh bottle from his pocket. Matthew Fellowes, the red-head, tossed the empty bottle about in his hand after they had drank. A grin ~~stuck~~ on his face, he squinted at the label and looked slyly at Clinton.

"Six shillings a bottle Jamaica rum. 'Tis a friend you are indeed, Nat Clinton."

Clinton waved his hand hurriedly. "If you could see yourselves, you would know a body couldn't do less for you, you are that drabbled."

"Aye," Amos Fish said. "You'd be drabbled too if you had to crawl through swamps and wade a tiderace and scramble into a boat on a raging river in a night of wind and rain and fog — and not daring to as much as sneeze."

"How did it go?" Clinton asked. All four shook their heads. Fellowes looked ruefully down at his breeches. "Many's the time when I have paid my own sixpence for a ferry across the river, but I swear this passage at the General's expense is one I crave never again." He looked up at them. "'Not a sound, lads,' they told us. 'Not a sound if you value your lives. If Howe finds out that we are pulling out, the dragoons will be on you like a waggon load o' rocks.'" He twisted his lips and spat.

"So we flop through the salt-muck swamp over against Gowanus Creek, a-crawling on your belly while the Germans search the mud with their bullets for you, a-walking their topboots through the muck as comfortable as ever."

Fish shifted himself on the floor and took up the story. "Sometimes we did not know our own men when we met in the swamp, so you took to clubbing, clubbing clubbing, until perhaps an officer makes out that it is and cries 'Hold, lads, 'tis one of ours!'"

Gordon shook his head. "Then, at the river, there was another hell with some of the militia fighting among themselves to be first on the boats."

"There were men from Gloucester manning the boats, otherwise our timbers would be bloody stoved for sure," Lumsden said flatly. "It was bad enough, until the gale blew up. Then it became a Drury Lane festival with everybody loving each other with butt and heel. The British regulars had us like schoolboys. 'Slight, I dont see how we will fare against them next time."

Sadie Bliss said "Golly," shaking her head so her bright earrings flashed in the light of the candle. Lumsden drew in his feet and rose. The others rose too, but Matthew

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Fellowes, his gamish face lit up by a grin of pure ~~enjoyment~~ devilment, was regarding Sadie's earrings.

"I am not as strong as I believed, Lumsden," he said. "Tell the General I will sleep here and be in town tomorrow."

Clinton opened his mouth to protest but Lumsden was already leading out the little thief by his ear.

Aaron Logan had ridden to the tavern that same evening. He saw Jamie in the backroom and heard his story. Logan said: "I cannot say your word was broken, Jamie, but it was you who brought in Arnold and took his word that it would be reported to the army. Between the two stools you fell to the ground."

"So I gets up and kicks over both of them," Jamie said softly.

Logan returned to Chambers Street and told ~~link~~ the circumstances of it to Link. The old man said nothing. He knew it had gone beyond anything his master could do. Jamie had had taken as much as he would and ~~had~~ the violence in the ex-Jacobite, made dormant by his friendship with Aaron Logan, had broken out in a declaration that Peter and his son would be fruited with the rewards of their labours. But Peter Keyes had disappeared. That left Arnold Keyes. Link was not sure whether he could find someone who would be prepared to move mountains for Arnold Keyes.

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The forenoon after the retreat from Long Island, Fanny Logan went down Broadway. She walked a straight course ~~turning aside for nobody~~ down the centre of the street, turning aside for nobody. It was a long time since she had undertaken such a walk, but the army had commandeered the draught animals. She sniffed. When she was a girl, the town had been lovelier; with less riff-raff about and more of this heartbeat of green and russet foliage shading the roadway at King's College. Now there were rowdy companies of ~~tattered~~ bearded men, spitting tobacco juice or leering at her negro maid, Amelia, who walked behind her.

"Keep your eyes straight on, Amelia," Fanny commanded suddenly.

She heard the girl's quick gasp and knew the admonition had been justified. Well, it was good to sustain the feeling among the servants that she had eyes at the back of her head. She would have gone to Richmond Hill to see Georgie Washington and thus avoid the rabble; but Richmond Hill was too far for her old legs. Stones you had strode over in your youth had grown to obstacles of troublous prospects. So now she went to Number One Broadway.

"Take me to General Putnam," she told the sentry at the door.

The soldier took one look at the rolled umbrella which she held like a sabre, and led her inside the mansion to the office of the captain of the guard. Fanny eyed the young man.

"Are you General Putnam?" she rapped, looking down her nose at him.

He had come straight to the army from a home ruled over by an aunt who could have been the image of the lady before him. The young officer stuttered as he rose to his feet. Fanny snorted and looked fierce. That snort completed the picture of the home he had left behind. He backed quickly out of the room and left her across the hallway to another door. Fanny pushed in.

The man at the desk had calm eyes and wore his greying hair at shoulder length.

"General Putnam," Fanny began at once, "I will not waste your time. I am Fanny Logan.

I want Arnold Keyes released. ~~He is detained at the Fort because some muddle head of an officer knows or believes~~ He is detained at the Fort because some muddle head of an officer knows or believes ~~officer's officer's desire~~ that his father is a Tory. But suppose that is so? The boy was at Boston. He fought there and came down with the army last Easter. How can the lad be blamed for his father's politics? As fine and upstanding a young man as you would want — honourable, decent, kindly to everyone."

The officer said: "Keyes? I seem to remember his name. You say he is at the Fort?"

She flashed her umbrella dangerously past his nose to point towards the Battery.

"They have him in there. His father has disappeared. Most likely high an' dry in New Jersey by now. What will they do if his father never shows up? Keep him there while he rots and the army needs good men? Of all the stupidities! Heh — if this were Injun country I would wager that not even those red heathens would want the scalps of some of these baffle-heads I see around here! Sieves —!"

Fanny made a contemptuous sound through her nose. A twinkle appeared in the officer's eyes. He leaned back. He said: "Mis' Fanny, I am not General Putnam. I am merely a major.

Morrison is the name, ma'am."

Fanny jerked and gripped her umbrella tightly. Her eyes were stormy.

"No, dont," he chuckled. "I assure you I can do as well in this matter."

Fanny relaxed her grip. "You one of the Connecticut Morrison's?"

"That's right, ma'am."

"You have the Morrison nose," she announced.

"Thank you, ma'am."

"Dont thank me. Thank old Andy Morrison. He brought it from Scotland with him."

Major Morrison swallowed and cleared his throat. "About young Keyes, I know the case quite well. Complaint from one McGovern, a tavern-keeper. He came here. Seems to me that young Keyes assessed quite rightly — although it was not in his place to do so — that McGovern's information would be quite valueless to us at that late hour. Therefore, I believe out of fear for his father, he withheld ~~the~~ ^{it from} us. Technically, no harm has been done by young Keyes. So - o, if someone could dissuade McGovern from pressing charges, the lieutenant will be a free and wiser man. And possessed of all the qualities you so elo-
quently put forward, why, ma'am, he lieutenant will now be a veritable giant among his ^{peers!} ~~peers~~"

Fanny did not smile. "Jamie McGovern, eh? I want to meet that busy man. My boy is rot-
ting inside that place. He should be out soon. If Jamie were to say today that there is no complaint —?"

Major Morrison rose. "I will tell you in confidence, Mis' Fanny, I would buy the lieutenant a porter mys —"

Fanny shook her head. "'Twould be a bad new start for such a fine —"

"— Honourable, upstanding lad," finished the major. Fanny tossed her head.

"He isn't worse than many," she said.

She returned up Broadway with Amelia in tow. There was the same uncompromising quality about her progress. Opposite Jamie's, she reached back and steered Amelia with her umbrella into the tavern behind her.

The tavern had regained its popularity with the return of the men from Long Island. Jamie was in his place behind the bar listening to Matthew Fellowes loudly and profanely telling whgt a big man Clinton was now.

"Ol' Sadie has got jewels in her ears the size of all the gold in Africa," he was saying, his eyes like exclamation signs. "And there were sacks on the floor which likely must have held the swag. I tell you Nat has turned garreteer and doing better than Fraunces Gordon here ever did!"

Jamie's eyes were thoughtful as he took it in. So that was why he had not seen Clin-
ton. The man had given up politics for fly-work. Had turned bilge rat, the scupper! Likely as not, many of these others in the tavern around him who had eaten his salt would turn away from their noble purpose too when they saw the redcoats a-coming, the dir-rtly scourings from a beak-head —

"Which of you is Jamie McGovern?"

Jamie was conscious that an unnatural silence had fallen on the room. The men at the counter opened a lane and he saw Fanny an unknown woman whose bearing and appurtenances stamped her for a lady of quality. Fellowes jumped up from the bench on which he had been seated, swept his hat like a comic cavalier and made a leg.

"Your Hagship," he flapped the ragged headgear in the direction of the tavern-keeper, "allow me to present the laird, Jamie McGovern!"

A burst of ribald laughter applauded him. Fanny looked down at him. She waited for the laughter to lull. Then: "Which hell-hole spawned this little red-headed lump?" she enquired at large.

The unexpected sally from someone whom they thought would have folded up at Fellowes' attack, sent a surprised gasp floating around the room. Fellowes blinked and recovered. He held out two grimy hands.

"Mither!" he whimpered. "Me own mither---!"

They laughed, but cautiously as they waited to see whether the lady would reply.

"If," Fanny said distinctly, pausing a breath to get the silence she wanted, "you had a mother, you could have been any of a thousand errors to her, you little indiscretion. Out of my way!"

She strode to the bar and fixed Jamie with one open eye. "Are you Jamie McGovern?"

Jamie scratched his elbow and said nothing. Fanny eyed him up and down. "You eat too much and you need a wash," Fanny summed up. "Otherwise, you dont lack intelligence. I want to talk with you — alone."

As at the General's headquarters, there were no ordered ways to handle someone like Fanny. Jamie saw this and spent very little time glowering at her. He led the way to his door. Fanny hooked a stool with the handle of her umbrella and motioned Amelia into it after glancing around, once. She spoke as she entered the room behind Jamie.

"I am Fanny Logan, Aaron Logan's sister, but not a bit like him. I think you are mule-headed, but not a fool. You are making trouble for Arnold Keyes because you hate his father; but Peter is beyond your reach. I want you to withdraw the charges you have laid against Arnold, or I shall go to General Putnam and tell him you were in league with Peter all along, and only went against him when you were afraid something might happen to you. Then, Jamie McGovern, you will explain to the authorities why you did not name him to them from the time you knew he had visited the British on the river."

"By the same token, your brother will be scuppered too!" Jamie said, moving his hand in a chopping ~~fashion~~ motion. Fanny rested the tip of her umbrella on his great chest. She said softly: "Aye — but you wont let anything like that happen, for it means you will not be here to fight the English when they come across the river!"

Jamie looked as if a hard fist had been sunk in his belly. Fanny regarded him with more friendliness. "You are stupid, but not without intelligence. You have until evening. Then see Major Morrison at the Kennedy House. He will not ask any questions."

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She returned to the room and collected Amelia. She stopped by Matthew Fellowes.

"A treatment with a stout leather strop is all you need," she told him, not unkindly.

When she turned past the gates at Chambers Street, her shoulders were sagging a little. Link stood on the gallery. She rested on the umbrella while their eyes met. Her chin lifted.

"It is alright now. Everything you told me about McGovern turned out exactly. I did not mention his girl's name, made it seemed it was Peter he was after. When he heard he mightn't have a ~~change~~ chance of shooting the English, he wilted like a long plucked flower. Thank you, you old Pharaoh."

She went quickly. It wouldn't do to break down in front of Link.

Burgoyne sat on the wooden bridge which spanned the gully at Pearl Street. The afternoon was cool and clear with a promise of a fine night. Reddish-pink clouds scudded down the sky towards the sun. But there was no enchantment there for Burgoyne. There were things happening in his town of which he knew nothing and Burgoyne did not like any of it. His peculiar mode of financing made it completely necessary that he should know all of what was happening. He cooled his ankles in the water, tired from much walking.

Burgoyne knew that any let up in his pace would be fatal to his interlocked enterprises. He had learnt from Amelia of Fanny's visit to the General and afterwards, to Jamie's. This could only have meant one thing, so he had watched until he saw Arnold emerge from the Battery. ~~and xixix away~~ Then he had continued his search of each alley and street of the town which were as known to him as the kitchen of the Travers' farm. Nothing.

Yet, he believed he had scoured the most likely places. He had spoken to some of his race who fished for shad along the North River shore, had visited with the ostlers of the inns on the Bloomingdale road. Nothing.

Leonard, the oysterman, trundled his barrow on to the ~~foot~~ bridge. He said: "Soft clams and oysters. There is also scallops."

Burgoyne did not answer. The water below ran brown and swift like his thoughts.

Len said: "Burgoyne does not help my business like Clinton's woman. I am happy that prosperity has come to Clinton.X"

Burgoyne stilled his foot in the water. No, that couldn't be. There was no tie-up as he could see. Len said: "The shad fishers tell me that Burgoyne visited them today. If a man cannot see the wind, he can see the trees bending."

A flurry of excitement started up in Burgoyne. Len said gently: "There is apple vinegar to go with my oysters." Burgoyne said, his face impassive; "There is a sudden appetite in me for oysters."

The oysters were undoubtedly good, but they might have been pebbles as they slipped past Burgoyne's throat. Len skewered a dozen before he spoke to Burgoyne.

"Clinton and his woman prosper on the Dutchman," he said, his bright blade working.

Later that evening, Burgoyne waited outside the Chambers Street house until Arnold

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Keyes rode out. Then he moved up wordlessly and took hold of a stirrup. Arnold flicked the reins and moved the animal to stand under a sycamore. He canted in the saddle and pushed back his cap. "Where?" He said the single word quietly.

"In Nat Clinton's cabin of his own free will. He pays Clinton to hide him."

"Free will?" The words were as finegrained as the sycamore under which they ~~stand~~ talked. A filament of sweat appeared on Burgoyne's upper lip. He thought of the golden earrings Len had said Sadie Bliss sported. He spoke tonelessly.

"The soldiers went to seek him but Clinton had told him already. He will escape by Kingsbridge. If you go to the cabin, there will be no escape."

"Meaning Clinton will tell?"

"Clinton is afraid of you. The pig squeals at sight of the knife because of his great cowardice."

Keyes said: "And you? You are unafraid?" The point of his sword was an inch below Burgoyne's nose. Burgoyne's eyes ran along the blade to the hilt. He said: "Master Travers had one just like this. We sold it for thirt' guineas and it helped to fix the cellars. Mis' Fanny says such a cellar it is, a man could hide in comfort down there."

The sword went back into its scabbard with a snick. Arnold said: "Who else knows of this?" The boy said: "But for Clinton, you and me and God."

"So if I spit you and go for Clinton, it will be between God and me."

"Clinton should not be touched. He is a pig. I am your eyes and your ears."

"So you are both protected men?"

"Inteference can only bring suffering to Master Peter."

"Kind soul," Arnold said smoothly. "Kind, coal-black soul. You wouldn't be thinking of extorting from my father, would you?"

"Eh —? The word is not known to me, Master Arnold."

Arnold said: "I wager you know the meaning right enough. Your gall is as refreshing
xxxxxxxxxxxx
as the irony of the situation. My father running from the soldiers and seeking succour at Clinton's hands. Yet, if I am any judge, Clinton's quarters cannot be exactly luxurious. It may do my father's morals good, if he remained there for awhile."

Burgoyne said quickly: "There will be no harm done to him."

"If he is harmed, Burgoyne, then I will seek for you and Clinton," Arnold said gently

Burgoyne caught the coin. He waited until Arnold had ridden off and turned for the river.

Jamie McGovern sent for Nat Clinton at his cabin by the river. It took Clinton several hours to ~~make up his mind~~ gather sufficient courage to answer the summons. Jamie was annoyed at the delay.

"Prosperity makes bears out of jackals," Jamie growled as Clinton came into the backroom. The remark deepened Clinton's fears. His long body hunched in deference over the table, he stuttered out an unintelligible reply. Jamie looked up at him. His half-closed eyes picked up a pair of brilliant gleams from the lantern and swept them over Clinton's face.

"For many weeks now you have no' set foot in the tavern. I hear Sadie Bliss wears gold in her ears. You want to be hanged for a thief?"

Clinton was careful to keep the relief from his face. Evidently, Matt Fellowes had voiced his suspicions to the Cap'n that prosperity had come from being a fly-guy. His grin was properly self-conscious.

"They haven't got me in the clinkerum yet, Cap'n," he said ~~with~~ airily.

Jamie shrugged. He shaded his eyes from the light again while Clinton stood waiting. He said softly: "I ha' got four animals for you and Matt Fellowes and John Lumsden to ride with my girl to Boston. You will leave tonight."

Nat Clinton straightened. His jaws hung slack and he stared stupidly at the tavern-keeper who was now looking at him again.

"But - bu - Ce - Cap'n ---!"

Jamie thumped heavily on the table. "Sit down!" he bellowed. Clinton dropped into a chair. The smile shrunk on Jamie's face. He leaned ~~xxxx~~ nearer to Clinton. His voice had fallen almost to a whisper.

"Nat Clinton, I ha' sat here today and wondered. I ha' fought me own battle with meself. Should I give you to the soldiery to be choked with a rope or should I have come to your cabin and murder you slowly with me own hands. I ha' no' done either."

Somewhere, somehow, Clinton knew, Jamie's well dispersed lines had hooked into the one piece of information he had wanted to keep from him.

"You are a traitor worse than the puny Dutchman," Clinton," Jamie whispered. He paused, his shoulders working but his hands still on the table. Clinton looked at the hands. When Jamie said, as if he offered him a gift: "You will go to Boston tonight,"

Clinton shrieked: "Yes ---! Yes, Cap'n!"

Jamie nodded at him in dismissal, said: "There are horses in the manger at Pine Street. The ostler is no' averse to a drap o' Jamaica rum. Get a bottle from the counter. And Clinton?" He spoke slower, his eyes turned away from the man. "Clinton, make the Dutchman fend for himself. What you ha' bled from him, you may keep. In his wanderings be his punishment. I ha' stripped him and set him naked in the skerries."

Clinton's exit was delayed as Jamie's voice, weighted with sarcasm, reached him.

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"As you were a temporarily retired gent, perhaps you do no' know that the General will no' be holding the town. The army will back up to Harlem."

Aaron Logan told his family of it out on the gallery, that evening. Elisabeth looked wildly around and cried out: "Not holding the town? What are we going to do?"

"Wait," Shawn said stonily. Fanny looked quickly at her. "Grant and - and David are still missing. They may be - prisoners. We should wait."

Elisabeth turned on her daughter. "Wait? Wait to be murdered in our beds?" she shrieked, her bosom heaving agitatedly.

"Oh, come off it," Fanny said unpleasantly. "What do you want us to do? Run squealing into the four corners like rats caught in a trap?"

"Quiet, Fanny, please," Aaron Logan said. He turned to his wife. "Until the British attack comes, we can get away up-country. On the other hand, if we stay here and we find that Grant is alive, we may be able to help him. The choice is yours," he ended gently.

Mrs. Logan had an inborn hatred of choosing. It had made her take the easier road all her life, of leaving the decision to others. Now at a time and a place such as this, she was being asked to choose. Mr. Logan had never been so cruel to her. She looked helplessly around. There were all those faces, everyone of them used to ~~examining~~ deciding, looking at her. Hersacque quaked under her ~~emotional~~ emotions.

"She will speak for herself alone," Fanny said defiantly. "I know what I shall be doing." Logan looked at his wife. Her plum, tear-streaked face broke. "Oh, say you are staying too and be done with it!" she cried miserably.

"Well you say you are going and be done with it!" Fanny blurted angrily.

Elisabeth turned on her with unexpected spirit. "And be murdered by footpads on those wild roads?" she cried. "Really, Fanny, I think you should be more thoughtful for me!"

Fanny goggled at her. "Oh, Jehosaphat!" she cried weakly. Elisabeth said: "Well, Aaron? Aaron Logan was staring towards the town. He did not turn his head when he spoke.

"There are some of us who go our ways, content with what we find. Others, at the sound of any horn, must seek to find out what new game has been flushed and to where the chase is leading. Until my time comes, I must hearken to the sounds I hear."

His coat of blue velvet was wrinkled about his sturdy shoulders. His voice had the even stress of an organ. "The Congress will doubtless fall back with the army. Those, like me, who have not been public men and consequently unknown to the enemy — but who must ~~be~~ heed the sounds — our places are here. We stand on an island formed by rivers on three sides, a great safe harbour on the other side. One day, all the ships of the East will come to us with their treasures. Down the rivers will be floated one day, all the treasures of the vast trackless land at our backs. A new land, this is; a land to be preserved for a new, young people. Those are our responsibilities. Is there anyone who would have me fail them?"

Fanny whistled to herself. "'Sakes!'" she thought, "he has a headful of proclamations!"

Aloud, she ~~XXXX~~ said briskly: "Very well, Aaron, we can all go to Patty Travers. ~~THE~~ There's room for us there and we'll still be in New York — but out of reach of the bullets" ^{drew a breath and}

Aaron Logan looked at his sister. He ~~undazzledly~~ nodded slowly. He asked: "Has Link returned?" Fanny ~~shockchazakant~~ said no.

Link had the market basket hung on his forearm and his walking cane held in the other hand. His brown, walking-out wig was settled neatly on his head and he carried the chapeau bras, the three-cornered, flat silk hat tucked under the arm which bore the basket. He saw Burgoyne at Pearl Street, looking over the hawkers.

There were ducks and geese and plovers, plucked and displayed in wooden trays; skinned rabbits; ~~and~~ clusters of cherries, heads of cabbages and turnips, sprinkled with water so they sparkled as with dew on; the fishers in their leather smocks had pike-perch and sturgeon and muscallonge, and bowls of bony menhaden for shoppers with pinched purses to bargain for. Burgoyne turned his eyes in their sockets all about the hawkers but he did not look at Link. Link's face was cut in mahogany.

^{found}
"I have been to Jones' Wood and ~~seen~~ only Mis' Patty. She also has not seen you for many days. I told myself that perhaps Burgoyne works ~~for~~ to help our families. Yet I have not heard his voice saying to me that I am right."

Burgoyne moved an uneasy foot. "Master Peter is of his own free will in Clinton's cabin"

Link drew himself up so he was a black angel of vengeance. "Did you tell Master Arnold?" he asked sternly.

"There was a silver coin from Master Arnold."

Link shed a portion of his sternness. "Keep it. There is no sin committed."

Burgoyne stole a swift glance. "Master Peter paid gold to Clinton for his safety."

"It is better to pay in gold than in disgrace."

"There were gold coins to me for not talking to Jamie. From Clinton."

"Keep them," Link said, waiting.

Burgoyne took another look. The old negro's face was as still as bronze. "Now," Burgoyne said, "there's no more gold from Clinton. Jamie McGovern will send him to Boston with Mis' India. Clinton struck me, saying I had spoken to Jamie. He laughed at me that there will be no more gold. ~~from~~ Master Peter ~~x~~ will be alone at the cabin. He does not know that Clinton is gone from him."

Link sifted the information. What he saw at the bottom made him angrier. "Have you spoken to Master Arnold?" he demanded. "Have you told Master Peter that Clinton has gone and there will be no more need for him to pay out his gold?"

Burgoyne shook his head dumbly. Link's eyes flashed fire.

"Because you would be scum and become what Clinton is!" he barked.

"Mis' Patty should be a queen," Burgoyne said sullenly.

"A queen with her throne set in the mud which Burgoyne brings to it!" he said harshly. "Hear me. You will hurry to Master Arnold and tell him about Mis' India going to Boston and repent your sinful soul by fetching and carrying for Master Peter until he can leave the cabin. I will see after Mis' Patty."

Burgoyne gulped and nodded. He murmured: "Father link? If Master Peter of his own freewill should offer me a gold coin ---?"

"Of his own free will, there is no sin committed. Get you off!"

Link watched the boy depart. It was past sunset and he still had his marketing to do. Tomorrow was the Sabbath.

About sunset, half a dozen British ships, two being manowars and the others transports, passed between Governor's Island and Red Hook and went up the East River. Burgoyne counted the bowsprits, his lips moving silently. He watched them until ~~he~~ they melted from sight into the night. Then he remembered he should be looking for Arnold, so he wormed his way out of the crowd that had gathered at the river to see the ships. He found Arnold, but late.

Arnold rode swiftly for Chambers Street and had a conversation with Fanny. ^{She} ~~it~~ took some time to ^{be} convinced. She was very cutting.

"Do you keep your brain where you sit on?" she demanded.

"No, Aunt Fanny," he said gravely, "where my heart is."

"Oh, come off it. You sound like a bad actor doing Jane Shore in a frontier town. Do you believe I didn't know this was why you wouldn't go to Long Island? You - you --- petticoat watchmen!" He stared at her and for once he had no answer.

He was late at Jamie's.

Jamie had no trouble with India that his huge shoulders could not handle. He brought her down into the courtyard, gagged and with her hands tied. She was placed in the saddle by himself and tied on by a rope passed under the animal's belly. He stepped back and grunted.

"Hear me now," he said quietly, looking up into the faces of the three men seated in their saddles. "I do no' speak with idleness. My girl must come to no harm."

Clinton shifted uneasily. Jamie said: "Hands must no' touch her until ^{she is off} ~~after~~ the island. I ha' covered her mouth because she is no' averse to calling out to any passing soldiers that she is being carried off by force. But, off the island, you, John Lumsden, will loose her. When you are at Boston, put her in the safe keeping of Mistress Abigail Morrow. Clinton has the ~~letter~~ ^{paper to show} where she should be found. Then return with a paper from Mistress Morrow to say that the party arrived in safety. Hands must no' touch her, save ---"

Jamie gestured. Lumsden said softly: "Aye, aye, Cap'n."

Fellowes cocked one mocking eyebrow and said to Jamie: "Cap'n, there's no need for all of ~~us~~ us to return? John or Nat here can bring the letter?"

Jamie said grimly: "Then send back the muskets. There will be work here for them."

Peter Keyes rode down

Next morning, the guns began. The mug of ale was halfway up to Jamie's lips when he heard them. It remained there while his eyes roved through the suddenly quiet tavern and his practised ear concentrated on the placement of the sounds. There was no movement in the tavern — until Sadie Bliss leaped to her feet and threw back her head:

"Blind me if them lobsterbacks haven't put their flippers to us!" she screeched.

The room let go of its tension with a sudden roar and a slam of boots, the squeaks of chairs and stools pushed back.

"The redcoats are pounding the Battery!"

Black-haired Amos Fish looked up from under his brows at Jamie. Jamie shook his head.

"No, Amos, lad. No nearer than Turtle Bay, I reckon." He half-closed his eyes, listening to the gunnery. "Three-four frigates and a couple o' forty-gunners on the East River — few of the same at our backs on the North River."

Fraunces Gordon put down his empty mug. He hitched at his breeches. "Well, Cap'n?"

Jamie drank the rest of his ale. Slowly, his hands went up and he slipped the straps of his smock over his head. The smile had spread over his face. His fists smashed down on the counter: "Belay there, ye talkative pukes!" he thundered in a vast voice. "Belay!"

His great shout blew out their voices like candles in a wind.

"Listen!" he commanded. "Clear your ears o' the wax and listen. The English will be landing soon. They will come a-marching down the island to get you all ready for the gallows." He paused, his eyes stabbing here and there into the crowd.

"Me tavern will be boarded up," he said, so softly that they leaned forward to hear him. "Jamie is going to the wars. Them as have guns will take them and follow me. Them as have none — why, a bit o' dirk in a good man's fist is as good as any musket. All together, you will come behind me. My negro here will fill the mugs so no man marches without a drap o' something in him." He gestured to the counter and went out.

When he returned from his rooms above, a bullet pouch had replaced the smock. His pigtail was looped in an eel's skin and he wore an old English navy cap or woven wool. A second knife had joined that in his waistband. A musket was across his shoulders.

"All hands outside!" he roared. "We wi' march in columns o' fours!"

They had drilled in the yard at the back of the tavern since 'Seventy-three. With wooden muskets and pitchforks, they had picked up the rudiments from Jamie which would fashion them into journeymen of war. With little wasteful preliminaries, they shuffled and pushed until a semblance of Jamie's elaborate order was attained. Jamie McGovern jerked on his wooden leg to the head of the motley.

"You will come astern of me," he told them. "There will be no shoving on the march. Them as are anxious will soon get their bellies full."

They were well up to Eastchester when dawn came. India was weary to her bones. She

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sagged in the saddle a little. Since passing from the island, John Lumsden had quite gently released the ropes and they had made better progress. Last night, they had been forced to leave the road several times when India, hearing the approach of other travellers, tried to attract attention. Lumsden still held the lead rope.

Matthew Fellowes sniffed at the air. He threw back his head and drew in full gulps, then broke into a few bars of Lilli Burlero. He broke off the old Jacobite song and glanced at India. A gamish grin creased his face.

"'Tis a balmy morning," he said loudly. "The birds a-singing, the sun a-shining and we riding like one happy family, eh, Nat Clinton?"

Clinton, who rode beside in the rear of the little cavalcade, grunted sourly.

"Clinton's missing somebody," Fellowes said. "Nat's missing Sadie Bliss but I bet Sadie's aint a-missing him."

"You'll be missing your tongue if you wont hold it still," Clinton growled.

"Matthew Fellowes," Lumsden said, turning his blonde head, "you forget there's a lady present?"

The little pick-pocket's eyes snapped. He rode forward until he was alongside the girl. He doffed a greasy three-cornered hat and bent to peer at India's averted face.

"John Lumsden's reminded me there is a lady present. I been forgetting, ma'am, that you are no longer the Cap'n girl. 'You will tell any who ask that she's a lady on her way to Boston,' the Cap'n says we should tell the patrols. Says the Cap'n, ma'am: 'Not the girl who sleeps over a tavern and hobnobs with the cullies —!'"

But Lumsden had reached him and his speech was cut short by a blow on his mouth. It flung him back. His mount reared and he slid to the ground.

"Alright, ma'am," Lumsden said. "We'll lay here for awhile."

India was grateful to the English sailor for stopping. They were in a clearing of trees. A small stream tumbled towards the Bronx. She laved her face and hands and accepted from Lumsden the breakfast of cold meats which Jamie had caused to be wrapped for her. Clinton ate noisily, his eyes directed along his nose at the food as if he suspected it to make an attempt at a getaway. Fellowes had drawn his portion and was eating sulkily by himself.

India said to Lumsden: "Have you been a sailor all your life?"

She was grateful to him for the little kindnesses he had shown to her.

"All my life, ma'am," he said gravely. "All the seven seas. Grown up in Bristol and went to sea at twelve. It was the sea or the workhouse and the sea seemed cleaner. Though, I reckon, after I had seen my first keel-hauling and another flogged to death, I wondered as how —"

India stared at the ground. Land or sea, poor ^{boy} ~~man~~ he hadn't yet got it into his head that the station to which you were born determined whether you would be keelhaulsed or stand on the quarterdeck. If her father had been a Keyes, she would not be riding the Boston post road with a crew of cutthroats. A carriage and a horse would have been found

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even if the British had been knocking at the town hall. She would have gone to Trinity, the Tory church, attended by aunts who ~~looked~~ looked down their noses at you, like that of that whitefaced little idiot, the Logan girl.

What was it Jamie had once said in her hearing? He had been speaking to his branch of the Sons of Liberty in the backroom and India had gone down to see him. She had forgotten what for. In those days, he had been gathering his band; all hard cases, but young, everyone of them. It was strange the pains he had taken with them — money for food and shelter to those who needed it; protection from the law for others — a regular half-way house he had made of the tavern with the only requirement from those who came there; that they should be young and willing to pursue a course of resistance to the English authority. A bloody-headed old eagle, he had seemed to her, ready with rushing wings and merciless claws against those who would invade his eyrie, but fiercely gentle with his brood of vicious eaglets whom he taught to home among the shrilling upwinds of his own ruling passion. His words, when he was moved, rumbled from his great chest with an unforgettable brack and bravura ...

"Avast with your kings and their privileged poltroons. Free the earth of their kith and schooling, and a muckle good will be done to such as we who ha' been birthed without the siller spoon at our mouths. For that, lads, I tell ye Jamie McGovern is no' averse to picking the jewels from the crown of England wi' the point of his dirk —!"

"Matt Fellowes!" Clinton bawled, scrambling to his feet. "You dirty, theiving son —!"

The rest of his words was blotted out in the race of hooves as Fellowes' horse gathered speed and stretched into a gallop. Clinton made a diving leap for his musket.

"Dont take it up, Blubber-lips!" Arnold's voice called.

He stood on the edge of the trees, a pair of pistols in his hands. His face was drawn with fatigue and strain. His clothes caked with dust. "Stay where you are, India," he said.

The girl sank back to the grass. Clinton's mouth hung open. Lumsden sat still, his steady blue eyes on Arnold Keyes. Arnold moved the weapons.

"I could not risk wasting a charge on brother Fellowes," he said. "I am not much of a woodsman and he saw me sneaking up on your camp, so he ~~halted~~ quietly bolted. Now it is beautifully arranged. Just two of you." He cocked the pistols. "Which would like to go first?"

India looked into Clinton whimpered. Arnold raised the pistol. ~~and~~ Arnold's eyes.

"No — wait!" she screamed, ~~I~~ springing to her feet and running into the line of fire.

"Move away — move away!"

"No — no, I tell you — Arnold — you fool!"

His knuckles had whitened on the grips but the harsh desperation in India's voice came through to him. He caught her as she reached him, swung her to his side so he still had the men under his firearms.

"These — these men are alright — it was the one who ran away who was beastly!"

India cried. "Lumsden struck him from his horse when he was rude to me!"

Arnold stood unmoving for a moment. Then he let go of the girl. "Take their muskets and dunk them in the stream, India," he said.

The girl obeyed him. He walked over to where Clinton stood, looked at him curiously.

"I do not know why I have not yet been able to kill you, Nat Clinton," he said.

Clinton looked nastily at him. Arnold brought up his right hand with a sudden movement and laid his cheek open with the barrel. Clinton whimpered and sagged. He raised his hand to touch the wound. Arnold brought up his knees to Clinton's body, hit him on the back of his neck with the butt of the pistol as he was crumpling.

"That was not pretty, mate," Lumsden said. His eyes were contemptuous.

"Neither was ~~he~~ Clinton," Arnold said coldly.

That forenoon, but a little later, Peter Keyes rode down into New York like a king to a levee. He walked the animal while he listened to grape shot and langrage roar in from the cannons of the ships on both rivers. Flying iron was raking the island and throwing the city into terror, ploughing through cornfields and houses. Sometimes they reached the road and became grim scythes among the multitudes rushing from the town for the Harlem.

Earlier this morning, he had been taken from the cabin by Link, up to Patty Travers' to join the Logan family there. He had faced them without humility, had only winced when he heard from Aaron Logan that no broadsheet had ever been issued with an award for his capture and that Arnold had never been in chains. Clinton had been robbing him, he thought, his face stony. Soon afterwards, the guns had commenced and they knew the British would soon come in.

It was then Peter asked for the loan of Patty Travers' only horse and told Aaron Logan he would return to the city. He had managed to keep triumph ~~from~~ ^{out of} his voice.

Burgoyne walked at his stirrup, charged with the return of the animal. Burgoyne ~~mouth~~ mouthed and talked to each rocketing salvo as they tore at his eardrums. No fear was on his countenance. He addressed the salvos as if each were an importunate stranger, trespassing on property of folk who were absent for just awhile.

"Get you from Simeon Murray's orchard, Grape Shot — there's a deal of money gone into it, much of which he must account for to the Widow Bowen, although she doesn't know of it yet. Golly — but George Butler will be hopping mad to have his ^{new} ~~new~~ house ripped up that way —! Leave off Sean O'Malley's cornfield, Round Shot — whoa!"

Burgoyne held the mount to steadiness after the ball had ploughed past. They reached Grand Street and the cannons were less severe on their ears. Burgoyne's sharp eyes, skidding ahead, caught sight of a familiar figure. He shot a glance up at Peter's rapt face and gently steered the mount into an alley. Peter never realised the detour which took him ~~thru~~ through the alley and out again to Broadway after Jamie's column had passed up the street.

On H. M. S. Phoenix and Roebuck, the gunners were lifting their quarter-sights to the highest notch for maximum clearance of the trunnion caps. Then from the ships at the head of Newtown Creek, grenadiers and chasseurs commenced taking to the boats. Soon they were bounding forward under the now high-lifted guns for the Manhattan shore. By noon they had landed at Kip's Bay and were routing the Americans from their lines. By a half after twelve, they were throwing a red-coated boom across the island to the Hudson River shore. Down in the city, the soldiers under General Putnam saw the trap closing and commenced a wild scramble for the Harlem.

Jamie McGovern saw his first redcoat somewhere near the third milepost up Broadway. He halted what was left of his column by an upheld hand. He stuck his pegleg hard in the ground and reared back his head. He stood thus for a moment, his eyes almost closed. Then a series of chuckles commenced jiggling his stomach as he raised the musket. The grim old Jacobite chant reached his lips before he bit into the cartridge:

"Lor-rd, spare the green and pluck the r-riple!"

Jamie's column had been depleted by the scene of confusion which had swept the island in the vicinity of the British landing. Panicked from their lines on the Hudson by the fire of the manowars off Bloomingdale, the militia had rushed inwards to join those others retreating in wild haste before the landings on the East River. Within minutes, those from the Battery stampeding for Harlem, had swollen the ranks of helter-skeltering men all boiling madly up the post road to Harlem. Then the British and the Hessians arrived.

They were hatted and buttoned in their shiny trappings of an awfully neat order, moving as one towards the fear-crazed mob, firing their muskets in precise little flurries. Most of Jamie's band was swept away in the first rush for safety.

"Fish! Fraunces Gordon!" Jamie bellowed, his hulking body braced against the rush. ^{the} "Stand firm by me while ~~you~~ jackals scurry! Yon muskets must no' be disgraced! We will use the wall for our gundeck and fire from there."

Crouched to lessen any chances of the soldiers using him for a target, he made for the stonewall of the farm on his right and in the tall grasses there, stooped at the base of the wall while he worked at his pouch. Then he stood up and looked over the heads of the panicky militia rushing past; and saw when the redcoats emerged onto the main road in their advance from the beach landings. They swung across the road in two lines, cutting the retreat of the Americans from the city. One of the lines commenced preparations to fire into the backs of the running mob. A redcoated fugleman with heavy sideburns was leading them through the motions of reloading.

"Spar-re the green," Jamie whispered again and bit into the cartridge.

The old taste made him roll his lips and spit. His big hand sifted powder into the

pan with lightning ease while the fugleman was signalling the well-drilled squad up the sequence of port, half-cock, firelock, open pan to the prime. Jamie McGovern closed one eye.

The musket roared at the tavernkeeper's shoulder and the fugleman's body strained upwards on his toes before he seemed to slither sideways in a grotesque ballet of death and ~~fall~~ pitch to the ground like an ~~overturned statue~~ uprooted statue.

Jamie recovered from the kick of the heavy weapon long before the soldier fell. "Fish! Gordon!" he bellowed. "There is good siller gone into them! I ha' no' heard them speak!"

He gave a gratified grunt when the weapons of his companions answered a second before the volley came from the British line. Fish and Gordon made to spring from cover.

"Down — down, ye swabs!" Jamie whispered, his hand busy at the pan. "The second line has no' fired yet. When they do, watch me."

At the crash of the guns, he leaped up, his musket held in one hand like a walking cane. His movements had the agility of a great cat as he vaulted the wall with the aid of the musket and rolled into the cornfield. The men followed him over.

"Run with me to the ditch — we will no' stay on the road to be slaughtered!"

Scrambling half-bent-over along the line of the wall, they followed Jamie into the ditch, re-loading as they went. Then into the ditch, they dived through the drain under the wall and once more gained the tall grasses along the edge of the road. Under this cover, they drew their beads without agitation, picking their targets with deadly choice. Then they doubled back under the wall again to run and load to the next ditch. They fought their own guerrilla while the redcoats advanced steadily up the island and the greater body of the American militia retreated without a stand. Jamie fought profanely, the smile fixed on his face while the pan grew hotter and the brogue weighted his tongue:

"Lor-rd, spar-re the gr-green — yon beasties should ha' their necks stretched by Geordie Washington for a crew o' scuttling — Lor-rd, spar-re the gr-green — ugh! Yon puir body will no' return to Germany —!"

The kick of his musket spelt death to British or Hessian alike. It was a reaping long overdue for Jamie and he shewed his glee at the good crop by the wide smile of satisfaction fixed on his face each time he turned from the ditch and swung his wooden leg for a stiff run to the next embrasure.

"Cap'n, the wall is a-leaving us!" yelled Amos Fish. His powder-blackened face was creased in alarm.

"Sit on your hear-rt if it will no' stay where it ought!" snapped Jamie. "You should not be sich a coward body. We will come to another wall soon."

The cornfield had indeed ended at an angle of the wall, but Jamie knew better than to lurk in the cornfield for the redcoats would soon be ~~smoking~~ deploying ^{parties} ~~parties~~ through the field. They scaled the wall at the angle and reached the road where they joined the stream of hurrying militia. Jamie found that he had fallen in beside a boy whose shirt was heavily blood-stained. He was reeling with fatigue and his young eyes were flecked with fear. Jamie

"Rest ye arm on me shoulder," he grumbled. "Where be ye from?"

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"Baltimore," the boy sobbed as he leaned on the tavernkeeper's shoulder.

"Then I reckon the only sound of guns ever to your ears is the bounce o' kegs on McEldery's wharf," he growled. "Where be ye shot? Front or back?"

"Front — shoulder," the boy answered. "I had turned to fire —"

"Then rest heartily," Jamie said softly, his eyes warm on the youngster's face.

"I had — had turned to fire — the General he says: 'Take the cornfields!'" — his voice was weak. He leaned his weight on Jamie. Faster moving militiamen were running past them. Jamie turned his head and saw that they were near the end of the retreating army. The advancing Britishers would be somewhere near. He ignored the exclamations to hurry which came from Fish and Gordon.

"What happened when Geordie Washington called?" he said. His eyes were busy on the road. The boy said: "There was — confusion — the lobsterbacks nearly had the General — he — he beat some of his officers with his cane because they wouldn't fight —"

"Aye," Jamie said bitterly. The boy was sagging against him. Jamie looked around. He saw that they had reached the wood. "Amos, gi'e us a hand," he said. "The lad canno' go on."

They bore the boy between them across the road and ducked into the underbrush. Jamie sat down heavily for a moment before he was up again and at work on the boy's shirt.

"The laddie's hurt bad, Amos," he said softly.

Fish said: "Then we will have to leave him, Cap'n. The redcoats are close."

Jamie said without looking up. "You go on, Fish. I will be with ye presently."

Amos Fish hesitated a little while before he moved back into the road.

"Yon muskets must no' be disgraced, lad," Jamie called quietly at him. Then he sat down beside the Baltimore boy, wondering out of his lore of warfare and wounds, just how he could obtain hot swabs.

Aaron Logan said quietly: "My God," when he saw there was no more room.

The cellar was filled with wounded men, lying on pallets and on hastily gathered straw strewn on the floor. Their sleeves rolled to their elbows, the women were ministering with cotton swabs and pans of hot water which Link brought down to them from the kitchen. From the floor, Fanny looked up at her brother.

"Aaron, see if Patty is keeping her eyes open. They should be here soon now."
out into the daylight.

Aaron Logan mounted the steps and went ~~to the porch~~ Patty Travers, her plump, rosy cheeks shaking with excitement, teetered on tiptoes as she peered down the road under a hand shading her eyes. She turned at the footfalls and tripped along the porch to him. She pointed back down the road.

"Aaron, I think I saw a flutter of red down the road. It must be their dandy redcoats. Isn't it exciting?" she cried cheerfully. Aaron thought he saw it too.

"Run down and tell Fanny, Patty," he said. He took out his pipe and made a light.

The first landing of the British had routed the Americans and had halted, waiting for reinforcements before continuing the chase. The greater body of fugitive rebels had passed Patty's farm on their way to Harlem, leaving some of the litter wounded with Fanny who had called to them from the porch as they made to turn into the wood. Aaron Logan sat down heavily in a chair. He was remembering the men he had seen passing up the road, slack-jawed with real terror and peering back over their shoulders. Aaron rose and looked down the road again. He could see the red plain enough now. They were coming on almost unchallenged. Indeed, Fanny had in her own way offered a better challenge than all the militia. He remembered the way surprise had hit him when he had gone down into the cellar soon after their arrival at the farmhouse and had seen the pallets set against the wall. So that was why Fanny had suggested that they go no further away ~~next~~ from the city than Patty Travers'. On one of the pallets, he had ^{sent} seen Peter Keyes. Fanny had explained that she had ~~sent~~ Link for him at the cabin.

They had not spoken much. For the guns had commenced soon afterwards and Aaron had seen the look come and go in Peter Keyes' eyes.

The British column was nearing the farmhouse. It was small to think of his son at this moment; small even to think of Boston. But could one help if he found himself wondering to what purpose had his son — or the thousands at Bunker Hill and ~~Brooklyn~~ Brooklyn — gone to dust?

But they would be back. It was for him to believe, and he believed it with every noggin of blood, that the boy who had run away up to Harlem, would be back.

Fanny came out to the porch, a parcel held before her. It came to Aaron suddenly, that theirs was not a happy position. There were wounded lads in the cellar and, doubtless, the enemy scouts would be roaming the flanks of the column, inspecting every farmhouse on the route. Fanny called his name, telling him he should go down to the cellar and remain with Link. She shook out the parcel she carried — and Aaron Logan wondered if she had gone mad.

Whose wood this was, Jamie had no idea. He crouched in the underbrush as the steady tramp of feet went past. His face was screened by a shrub and the musket was pushed forward. The wounded boy was still in a dead faint. He sank his face to the ground, one eye only left exposed to blink rapidly at the never-ending line of gaitered feet. After a while, the muscles of the eye grew tired and he closed ~~them~~ it, trusting to his own good hearing.

So the moment the tramping ceased, his eye sprang open. The column had halted. They stood for perhaps ten minutes before he heard familiar commands and saw the gaiters collect in conferences of ten and twelve and squat for a bivouac.

The column halted on the road and an officer on horseback spurred forward towards the farmhouse. He dismounted and touched his cap to the four gentlewomen on the porch who were still shaking wisps of lacy handkerchiefs in welcome to his army. One could not simply pass on.

"Madam," he said, "allow me to present myself. Colonel Cooper, Thirty-third Grenadiers." He nodded at the wisteria bush which grew at the end of Patty's sun-splashed porch. "And I applaud you — everyone of you. ~~We~~ We had heard there were loyal people still in New York, but you are the first we have met."

Fanny glanced at the wisteria too and positively simpered. Elisabeth's legs suddenly folded under her and she sat down in a chair with a slight moan. Colonel Cooper glanced at her. Fanny said quickly:

"We are all still frightened. We heard the guns earlier but only lately did we know you had landed."

Colonel Cooper smiled grimly. "No doubt there were manifestations, madam."

He was corseted and powdered and was fully conscious of the fine figure he cut against the backdrop of his statuesque men who, at a lift of his finger, could turn into a machine of destruction. His eyes went to the dark beauty of Shawn and she smiled encouragingly at him.

"We saw them running, Colonel!" Patty exclaimed. "My, but it was funny!"

"If I were a rebel and you were after me I would hardly wait," Fanny said, smiling like a benign old cat. He laughed with uproarious gratification.

" — to cut your throat," Fanny added while he laughed. He stopped laughing suddenly as if he had it on tap. He cleared his throat.

"Now I must tear myself away. We must get after those devils you know."

Fanny shook her head firmly. "We say they were running, Colonel," she said. ^{"Bolting"} ~~"Running"~~ like scared jackrabbits. They are away across the Harlem by this. And you — you and your officers are staying right here for a cup of tea —" she clapped her hands " — hurry, Patty.

Colonel Cooper was faintly puzzled. He hadn't thought the confounded rebels had got such a start. But then he remembered Fanny's words and he laughed some more. He nodded.

Jamie was fed-up with boots. For an hour he had laid on his belly, viewing nothing else but footgear, all of a make and varying only in size. Somewhere nearby, he had made out the murmur of women's voices and the chink of chinaware, mingled with male laughter. He guessed the column must have halted near a house.

"Some turncoat Tories a-feeding the lobsterbacks," he muttered. "The Lor-rd will spare me so I will reckon with them afterwards."

Unable to hear the conversation, he had no knowledge of the subtleties and grim play acting which was brought on by the women to keep Colonel Cooper and his officers entertained. Nor could he know the shrill minor note which ran along their taut nerves each time they heard what seemed to be an alien note coming from the cellar. When Elisabeth seemed in danger of collapsing, Fanny took her inside and returned as full as zip as ever. But all that Jamie knew was his sense of relief when the order to march was given. He waited for the rear guard to pass.

He got to his knees and shook his head like a wounded bull. He turned his head in the direction of the farmhouse. For a moment, a snarl lived incongruously with his smile. Then he remembered the wounded boy and turned ~~as~~ quickly to him. He was alive but his breathing was slower.

"The laddie will swamp for sure if help is no' given him now," he muttered.

Jamie hesitated only for a moment before he made up his mind. Easily, he swung the boy to his shoulder and swept up the musket in one hand. Keeping within the wood, he took a path which brought him to the road at a point nearer the farmhouse. He stopped for an oath when he saw the wisteria. Nevertheless, with the lad on his shoulder demanding instant ^{walked out} attention, he stumped forward again. He halted suddenly as a man and a woman ~~appeared~~ on the porch and went to the wisteria. He saw their faces.

A tongue spoke within him. No words issued from his lips. The cry was loud inside him, rising in a screaming wonder at the crooked miracle which was shaking all his values at the roots. It was impossible that what he looked at was Aaron Logan, skulking in the bullrushes of friendship with the English; in the hope that he would be adopted into the king's people. He was going over to the English with all the valuables Jamie had banked with him.

Jamie walked on again. His finger sought the trigger of the already primed gun. A lift of the muzzle would suffice. The smile on his mouth narrowed and widened as he crossed the road and stumped into the drive. Aaron and Fanny Logan saw him and halted, the flag they had just taken from the wisteria trailing to the ground from Fanny's arms. Jamie reached the ~~po~~ porch. Fanny took one look at the face of the boy he carried and whispered: "Put him here."

She spread the flag on the boards.

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"No' on that filthy cloth!" Jamie grated, his cold blue eyes on Aaron Logan.

It came home swiftly to Aaron Logan. The hatred in Jamie's eyes, the tone in which he had spoken to Fanny all added up. "Then bring him in, Jamie," he said calmly, turning his back on the gun and leading the way into the house.

The suddenness of his move made McGovern follow him into the house. Aaron offered no assistance at the head of the steps. He went down into the cellar and waited until Jamie joined him at the bottom. The tavernkeeper raised his eyes from the floor where he had been watching his footing and stared wildly about him. He jerked up the musket and covered Aaron Logan.

"You have taken our wounded to be prisoners for the lobsterbacks!" he bellowed.

"Don't be more of a fool than your ugliness permits, Jamie McGovern!" Fanny's voice whipped at him. "Put down that boy and lend a hand — you wooden-headed idiot!"

He whirled to face her, his eyes blazing, but Fanny gave him no chance. "Are you going to bring that lad all the way here and let him die on your shoulders because you are too stupid to see further than your nose?" Fanny demanded, her hands ~~grasped~~ ^{on her hips.} Shawn and Link, bending over one of the pallets, looked up at them.

"We very nearly get ourselves hanged for harbouring wounded rebels, sit for ~~two~~ one hour talking to a fish-faced Colonel so he won't catch up with a lot of tin soldiers who ran at the sight of a gun and now a half-witted lump of lard comes to make fools of us all? Put down the lad and go find an ant-hole for your head so they can stir your brains you — you — you clod!"

Her heels were hitting the flagstones ~~axzzkzzkzzkzzkzzk~~ for emphasis and she shook with fury. As the import of her story reached Jamie, he blinked rapidly and his face flushed. Without a word, he stooped and allowed them to ease the boy to the straw.

"Patty," Fanny called up the steps, "hot water!"

Patty came happily down the steps with a can of hot water. She saw Jamie while she handed the can to Fanny.

"Who is he?" Patty asked.

"Jamie McGovern," Fanny said shortly. Patty looked wisely at Jamie. "I like him. He's always smiling. He wouldn't harm a fly." Shawn closed her eyes.

"Jamie," Aaron Logan said, "let us go up."

The man's bulk preceded him up the steps, marched through the house without stopping until they reached the porch. Then he stood looking towards the city. Aaron drew beside him.

"Yon soldier beasties were saying that others of them have marched down to take the town," Jamie said. "By nightfall there will be many people wearing their chains."

Logan asked: "But to what purpose? They are now in possession and the army has withdrawn."

"You do not know how it is with an army when they over-run a country. They be more fearful than ever of those who did not want them. There will be many giving information to save their own necks, Aaron Logan."

"Then there will be many of us wearing their chains," Logan said quietly.

Jamie kept his eyes ahead. "They will seek bodies like me. They will no' interfere with the men of substance."

"Is there a hidden meaning in your words?" Aaron asked bluntly.

Jamie said in a level voice. "Perhaps you will no' care to return to the town. There is a stout house here at your back and your womenfolk with ye. The Union Jack was at your masthead and doubtless there will be good words about you from the English who dined here with you."

Logan's stocky figure straightened angrily. He made to speak, but turned and paced the floor thoughtfully instead. He returned and faced Jamie. "You are a man of war, McGovern," he said. "You know a great deal about the business of warfare but you fall short otherwise."

Jamie shook his head stubbornly. "It was no' with honour that you stepped King George's flag awhile ago," he said.

Aaron looked steadily out. The fact that it had been the women who had remained on the porch to hold Colonel Cooper and his officers in talk while the beaten rebel boys reached Harlem and safety — and while, with Link, he tended the wounded below and kept them quiet — was knowledge with which he could purchase Jamie's goodwill. But much road lay ahead. To explain his actions now, would place Jamie in the role of judge of his actions.

"What," he said, "would you have done? Give up those lads below?"

Jamie blinked once. Then he sloped the musket to his shoulder with an unconscious precision of the once well known movements. He hitched at his waistband and passed his tongue over his teeth where the acridty of the gunpowder still bit.

"Dont squirt your tobacco juice all over the porch, McGovern," Fanny snapped behind him. Jamie's head jerked but he held it from turning. Logan said: "We did not hear you coming, Fanny."

"I daresay neither of you could hear anything but the rusty old wheels clanking around in your heads. I will tell you what Jamie McGovern would have done: Exactly what you did — even to using his wooden leg for a flagpole! But with this exception: The blamed fool would have spoilt everything by shooting off his musket in their posteriors as they rose to go!"

She waved her hands exasperatingly. "You both make me wish I could spear! What is this fool talk about a flag? Everybody knew that the British had more men and guns than us but most of you ~~shame~~ chose to ignore it. Well — I didn't. So Patty and I stitched this flag and cleaned out this cellar just in case —" Fanny walked right around and faced Jamie "— and that is how we come to save the life of the boy your brought in and the lives of many of those boys who went up the road and also those below — Big Head!"

She turned from the blinking tavernkeeper to her brother. Her voice changed without pause. "Burgoyne has not returned and I cannot tell when that little black devil will be back with the horse. Perhaps you'd better begin walking so you will reach town before dark."

Jamie swung his eyes to Logan. "Oh yes, Jamie McGovern," Fanny snapped. "He had ~~planned~~ planned to go back all along — you overs ized — oh, go away!"

Chapter

John Lumsden and Clinton had taken the Gunx Hill road to the Albany post road, rejoining the New York road at Fordham. Clinton cursed in spurts; the sailor kept silent with his thoughts. Clinton would have gone after Arnold who had kept to the Boston post road but he was dissuaded by Lumsden's simple refusal to have anything more to do with the matter. Clinton would not go alone.

He spoke to Lumsden with a leer. "The Cap'n will split your gullet when I tell him away with his girl, unmolested." You made young Keyes ride ~~unmolested~~ ~~unmolested~~

"She went freely, Nat Clinton," Lumsden said calmly. "I am no crimp."

They escaped being caught in the Kip's Bay landings by riding hard for the fields on the Hudson river shore. Thus they also missed Jamie. Their decision to return to the city instead of turning about and joining the wild retreat was based on different motives. To Clinton, New York had become a place desirable for its violence; Lumsden's was his calm determination to complete his mission by reporting the outcome to Jamie.

Clinton saw in the rush from the city, a betrayal of all the fine violence into which he had thrown his soul and his fortune these many years. In the war of ideas which preceded the revolution, it was this nucleus of passion which had kept the Sons of Liberty welded together to successfully oppose the cooler influences of the upper crust patriots. Now that they had moved into the next step of treatment by arms, it was unthinkable to Clinton that the brotherhood should melt away when it was most sorely needed. They had handled their business of burning effigies and general mobberies with no more appeal to military rituals than the natural laws which had brought to the front the toughest or most murderous in each band. Rushing to settle themselves in a trench and waiting for orders before they pulled trigger would be an unwholesome regimentation. They could wait around corners on foggy nights and place all their protests in a knife's thrust. With Jamie leading those from the tavern, a man unsurpassed in his genius for finding new ways for slaking a man's thirst for violence, they would lurk and strike in a manner that the old days never saw. Jamie would know how. He was the man who had chipped lead bullets out of King George. In the old days, the supply of ideas that a man could reach was not always heavy. Now here they would have a more satisfactory quantity, served up to them, fat, in little scarlet tunics all buttony and shiny.

Lumsden turned his head to stare at Clinton when he heard the animal noises coming from him. They galloped out of the fields into the head of Chambers Street, turned into Broadway and did their blowing horses at the tavern. ~~Clinton walked to the door~~ Not until they had dismounted did they notice that the boards before the tavern were up. Clinton walked to the door and stood to stare slack-jawed in unbelief. He faced slowly around to Lumsden.

"The — Cap'n?" he asked blankly.

The Englishman pushed his hat forward and fingered his queue. A rare grin lit his phlegmatic face. "He's gone to the war, Clinton," he said. "My gullet's saved."

Clinton turned to the tavern door again. He reached out and touched the boards in a ges-

ture of incredulity. He passed his hands over the nails, patterned them with his fingers and rubbed the tips of his fingers over them. Lumsden looked hard at the back of his head. He put out a hand and touched his shoulder.

"Mate," he said, "lets put these animals under cover before the soldiers get here."

He removed his hand from the other's shoulder when he commenced talking to himself. Clinton talked to himself that Jamie had gone too. Jamie too had failed to see that what they had built at such a cost to Clinton should not now be cast aside. He turned his head slowly and looked down Broadway. There were stores and good houses in which people had found security and happiness during the years he had wandered from pillar to post. That large, brown-painted one, four flights up, that was John Bingle's; a small gun-repairer in Pearl Street when he was more than a promising provision merchant in Wall Street. While he went down because of his politics, Johnny Bingle had prospered, moved up to Broadway, turned Tory because of his ewalth. Bingle had escaped to New Jersey the night Jamie, at Clinton's urgings, led the mob to his store. Doubtless now, he would be back, seeking Nat Clinton.

Craig Shepherd had dealt in grain; a large-headed, bull-voiced man, fisting his way from a farm-hand in Connecticut to a stevedore boss at Brewster's wharf on the west shore, to ownership of several grist-mills, a Broadway house and a place in the trade to the West Indies. He too had taken to scrubbing his hands with lye and greasing them to removing old callouses and had voted against sending the delegation to the Philadelphia congress. Fast horses had taken him through Weschester when Jamie, with Clinton and the band at his heels, visited him one night. Doubtless, he would be back.

"Mate," Lumsden said, his habitually slow voice quickening, "they're coming down the street." His foot sought the stirrup. "Come along, mate."

Clinton's eyes went to the church spire at Wall Street. Doubtless Keyes would be back. There was no need to wonder what ~~he would do~~ he would do.

He sat down on the tavern steps, his face in his hands. He had ceased to try to understand why his fellows had left the city. His mind had seized on food enough, telling him in shining sentences that he was Clinton, the Martyr, full of zeal but left to face the stoning at the end, while others went scot free. ^{But it} ~~It~~ would be different after this. If he escaped now, he would arrange his life so one of these days he too would wear uncut velvet and purchase a pew at Trinity. He would hold his nose higher than even Peter Keyes —

The shadows he had been fighting stole away as with the uptilt of his head, he looked up Broadway. The first wave of soldiers was nearing Fulton Street, their bayonets glinting. Clinton thrust his head forward, his pendulous lip fluttering. He could see their faces flushed and triumphant under the black visors of their caps, the ordered passage of their feet closing the distance to him. He gave a little whimper and ran.

He hurtled forward from the step, running loose-legged with his limbs flailing every way. He scooted down the street like a guilty boy fleeing an orchard; an angular little boy, awfully alone, running from Farmer George's redcoated keepers. His feet pounded and slithered on the cobbles; his mouth was wide opened and his eyes protruded. The ragged coat ballooned

about his body, the ends flapping around his hips. A cavalry man's carbine boomed and he gave another whimper. He reached Wall Street corner and slowed a little as he slapped one broad palm to the curb ~~wall~~ wall to assist his balance, one foot hopping ~~around~~ like a mighty heron and the other driving around to consume the extra ground. He straightened his course and leaped into the street, his breath coming ~~and~~ in noisy gulps. People on the streets were shouting at him, telling him not to run but to stand in line with them and await the coming of the conquerors. They shouted louder when they saw the mounted dragoons bound forward from the main body and ride after him. Clinton reached the store and twisted his body into a turn that threw him hard against the street door. The sweat glistened on his forehead and rolled from his nose into his open mouth.

"Peter! Friend Peter!" he howled. "Open the door!"

He beat at the door, shouting and screaming to be let in. The hooves scraped around the corner and the dragoons leaned back on their reins.

"Please — Friend Peter — open the door, Peter —!" Clinton yammered, his fists hitting the boards. Then the sound of his voice was swamped under by the thunder of the carbine fired at short range. The echoes slammed away down the street and his hoarse breathing could be heard again~~st~~ as he went slowly to his knees, the fingers tapping at intervals to the door as his wrists came to rest on the ground.

One of the dragoons dismounted and used a foot to turn him over. The other looked up at Peter Keyes dwelling. The dismounted soldier said: "He must be one of these here Sons of Liberty. That's why he ran." The other fingered his chinstrap and kept looking at the house. He said: "Seems as if one's up there too. We'll report it."

Peter Keyes, peering through the blinds above, held the sills until his knuckles whitened.

Burgoyne scratched his back on his favourite wall at Broadway and Wall Street and watched his town heave and die. He waited while the redcoats placed their guards and found billets in the empty houses, nobody paying attention to the quietly standing negro boy. About then he saw what he wanted. He watched a lone British officer, apparently inspecting the guards, turn through Beaver Street and Whitehall and skirt the Battery. Burgoyne flew straight as a blade through the salt marsh which the officer had avoided and was waiting for him when his detour straightened out.

"God save the King, Cap'n," Burgoyne said.

The grenadier slowly removed his hand from his scabbard. He was young and wore humour like the tilt of his shako.

"Which king?" he asked flatly.

"There is a horse I have fit for a king," Burgoyne said, added immodestly, "a horse and a servant fit for a king."

He wanted a good horse, Burgoyne had seen that. He was young and jaunty and not the

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man to be content with the nag he had managed to commandeer. It would be a stroke of business for Burgoyne that would serve as a door into this new life which was coming to his town. Clinton, in death would be useful; for it was his horse which Burgoyne had quietly removed from before the tavern while they were chasing him. He turned over a layer of dried salt marsh with his toe and didn't move when the officer cut ^{the crop} ~~his crop~~ over his shoulder.

"Bring it to the Battery, ask for Lieutenant Sloane — not captain, you sorry scoundrel."

That night Aaron Logan heard from Jamie that he would steal a ship. Logan said there were means for Jamie to get out of New York if he wished. Logan was only testing the metal with his teeth, but largely he knew it was sound. Jamie hit the table with his fist.

"To do what?" He glared at Logan. "To skulk through the country and no' able to meet face to face with the lobsterbakes?" He dropped his voice. "Today I find I canno' swing my rudder as before, with this timber at me foot. Since I canno' fight with the army, its the sea for me, Aaron Logan."

Aaron Logan shrugged. He had just been called to the door by Burgoyne and learnt that Arnold Keyes was a prisoner in the gaol at the end of the commons on Chambers Street. He did not know how Arnold had been captured, but he thought that first Grant and David, now Arnold had been swept up in the whirlpool. The saving phase of this last was that they knew Arnold was alive and unwounded. They weren't sure about the others. Perhaps Peter Keyes, who soon might be a man of influence, would be able to help Arnold.

Jamie McGovern put his elbows on the table and closed his eyes to slits. "Hear me, Aaron Logan. Yon harbour is as known to me as the palm o' me own hands. Give me a fair wind and a dark night and I will pick a ship from the bay even if all Dickie Howe's guns were turning this way and that a-seeking me."

"But how would you get her out of the bay?" Aaron demurred.

Jamie told him, using the lively words of his craft with skill and quiet passion; rousing out for Aaron a picture of a darkened ship heeling through the black water with ghosts in the shrouds. Logan sat quietly in thought. "And the men?" he asked when Jamie finished.

Jamie said softly, his eyes lost in thought: "I know a score o' lads whom I must save from this land o' iniquity and who can sail a leaky bottom through Biscay Bay."

Aaron Logan thought he knew something of the almost religious fanaticism which Jamie put into those words. Jamie McGovern would burst through hell to bring out any young man whom he was convinced was opposed to the English. There were many young men who needed to be brought out before what was in them was killed. He raised his eyes to Jamie.

"Then we'll do it," he said, his mind busy.

Chapter

Jamie left Aaron Logan's house and went down into the city as he would have crossed the deck on a stormy night — waiting as for a lightning flash in the grounding of a sentry's musket or the beat of heels on the cobbles, then slipping forward as if for a lifeline in his soft darts for the deeper shadows. His wooden leg was well muffled by strips of cloth bound about the end. He was nearing Ann Street when he saw John Lumsden.

Lumsden was in trouble between a pair of sentries. How or why he happened in New York when he should have been nearing Boston, Jamie did not know. But there he was, being questioned by a pair of sentries. Jamie switched his head to either side. It was foregone that the blonde ex-sailor would be arrested and taken down to the ~~Exatery~~ Battery, but Jamie needed him more than did the authorities. He slipped into Ann Street, cut through a narrow alley between Nassau Street and Broadway and went back to the main street by Maiden Lane. He waited in Maiden Lane.

Lumsden and his escort approached. They were four paces from the corner when Jamie stepped out into Broadway and the light at the corner fell on his face. Lumsden did not hesitate. He struck out at the soldier on his right, leaving the nearside guard for Jamie. Jamie poleaxed the soldier's face into a smear as they smashed down together. He hit the man ^{wooden leg.} again when he was falling, the smile wide on his face. Then he used his ~~exceeding~~ With a high-lifted knee, Lumsden had made short work of the other.

Jamie led Lumsden into the lane as shouts and a discharged musket told they had been seen. Pooling their knowledge of the city, they traced a bewildering path through the alleys and backyards until they had thrown off the pursuit and entered the rear of Aaron Logan's premises. They sat in the dark on the steps. Lumsden told the story baldly, then sat quietly while Jamie moved uncertainly. Again Jamie's heavy shoulder brushed his as the uncertain move was repeated. The man's urge for destruction was manifest in every movement.

"You are a brave man, John Lumsden," he said finally. The knife he had withdrawn went back into its leather with a soft sigh. Lumsden let out his breath.

"India must be found," Jamie said. Lumsden said she would be with young Keyes.

"The whelp is in gaol," Jamie said. "The lobsterbacks have him."

Lumsden drew in his foot. "Since it was I who lost her, I will find her."

Jamie said: "Sit, John Lumsden. You are a brave man. We can no' afford to lose brave men now." A measure of time later, he said softly: "I shall want the whelp."

had grown
 Aaron Logan wondered whether grass ~~was growing~~ in the streets of Peter's mind. It was a time of ^{moral} plague and pestilence. The files in the military centres were growing unhealthily fat with the names of those proscribed. The newly designated gaols — churches, school-rooms, some of the ships in the harbour — overflowed with the prisoners of war. Business was at a standstill and you could smell the unburied dead at Brooklyn. Men were being hung or shot for less than what he had told Peter, but Peter did not seem worried. He looked around Aaron Logan's study and said, his eyes far: "It's a good room, Aaron; books and old leather. I was never much for books but I believe there is great wisdom in them — the voices of all the ages putting their treasures between the covers and, here and there, perhaps a rewarding gem is found. Books warm a house when there is no longer a family."

This was after Logan had told him about his name being proscribed as a friend of Nat Clinton. Peter had smiled as at some secret joke and told Aaron Logan that Burgoyne had told him also. Peter said Burgoyne had also told him that Arnold was a prisoner.

"But, man, don't you want to get away from the island?" Aaron Logan asked angrily.

Peter smiled and shook his head. "I'll neither be hung nor shot, Aaron," he said.

Peter left in the late afternoon to return to Wall Street. He went quite openly, as if there was no reason to hide. Aaron Logan sat in the study and thought of all the other things he had learnt from Burgoyne. The boy had been installed in the service of Lieutenant Sloane by that smart young officer who had seen and recognized the genius in Burgoyne — for the mounts Jamie had provided India's escort were notable examples of horseflesh. Sloane was in the provost marshal's department, charged with the rounding up of prisoners and the keeping of the records and Burgoyne was sure that the smart lieutenant would be very useful to him.

Link entered the study and said that Jamie was at the back. Link had come down from Jones Wood that day to gather some male civilian clothing for Fanny.

"Out with every stitch, Link," Fanny had said, chopping her hand tomahawk fashion.

"Better that they walk out of here free and naked than be carried out in their pretty uniforms by Dickie Howe's redcoats."

So, in an enclosure of the orchard, screened from the road by a growth of windbreakers, Link had ruthlessly plied a fork. Leather hunting shirts and Jersey blues, a blue-and-buff 2 from Virginia and some few ragged miscellany — all went down into the hole. If the British should by an ill-chance search the cellar, the men lying there could have been civilians who had been caught in the crossfire between the retreating rebels and the invading forces.

"Jamie? Send him in, Link," Aaron Logan said in some surprise. He had not thought Jamie would move about in the day. Jamie came in with John Lumsden.

"There's a ship standing off the ferry, near Whitehall, which has caught me eye, Aaron Logan. She's a good bottom — a corvette. Named Ulysses — fifteen-sixteen guns.

John here and me reckoned we could round up the lads and drop down the river in the dead o' night and take the ship easy. The coins you gave me, we have been paying out to some o' the

Chapter 10
The first and best of the world's great men are those who have been brought out to some of the

It was a purge of faith in these nightmare days that left the valiant ones weakened, these, a great strengthening of the world's great men. The first and best of the world's great men are those who have been brought out to some of the

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The first and best of the world's great men are those who have been brought out to some of the

crew — Gloucester lads. We'll get the rest when we leave here. Reckoned to do it tonight."

Aaron Logan controlled a start. He hadn't expected Jamie to act so quickly.

"What time tonight?" he asked.

Jamie rubbed his hand over the surface of the table. "There's a job I must do first,"

he said slowly. "Young Keyes must meet me face to face. He has taken me girl."

Aaron Logan stared. A peculiar excitement was rising in him and he had to fight it down.

"She was going to Boston under escort. Young Keyes rode after them and took away me

girl. He brought her to New York, but she has no' been seen since. We will get him out," Jamie

said calmly. "Then I'll put me dirk to his stomach and make him tell. If harm has come to

her, I will push the dirk — slowly — then leave him there with his hands tied so he

canno' withdraw the blade. He'll suffer much before he is still and quiet."

Aaron sat quietly. This was rough company, he had known all along. Jamie was a dealer in

death whose friendship he had earned because they were on the same side of the fence. But

Jamie would brook no interference this time.

"Suppose you fail to release him, Jamie?"

"I will no' fail. I have some red herrings to trouble me trail with so the redcoats

will no' seek us much at the gaol. There will be a diversion in the town tonight."

Logan wondered what he meant, but only in a part of his mind. He matched his eyes with

Jamie's. "Bring the lad here, Jamie," he said.

Jamie McGovern got up. He ^{growled} ~~growled~~ at John Dumsden that they should go. He did not

look at Aaron Logan. Link stood by his master's chair, unmoving.

"Jamie?" Aaron Logan called as they reached the door, "Bring the lad here, unharmed,

and I promise on my word of honour that you shall learn far more than just the ^{whereabouts} ~~whereabouts~~

of your daughter."

After Jamie had gone, Aaron Logan said: "Link, the Ulysses is the ship which Jamie

plans to steal."

Link pursed his mouth. "It is a matter for thought," he said gravely.

They remained in silence while the candle glowed steadily between them. Then each

looked up and met the other's quizzical eyes. "Indeed, it would be a bold stroke," Aaron said

"None bolder, master, but a fell stroke too."

Logan said with an inflection in his voice: "Jamie?"

"He is not a reed to be shaken with every wind, master," Link said slowly, "but he is

a warrior and a leader who knows the worth of men. I will go now to Mis' Fanny."

Logan nodded. "Find Burgoyne and bring send him to me. I wish to know where Jamie has

left the boat which will take him to the Ulysses." His shoulders were ^{lightened} ~~light~~ when he rose.

Fanny sat out on the gallery of the Chambers Street house and tapped the sole of her shoe restlessly on the floor. She wondered irritably how it was that Aaron could sit so calmly in his chair while they all teetered on the brink of an ugly hell. She had come down from Jones Wood with Link, walking all the way, but she was not tired. There was a nervous excitement in her.

"I don't trust that murderous old devil, Aaron," she said sharply. "You are taking an awful gamble."

"It's the only odds we can get," Aaron Logan answered. A footfall sounded on the steps and Link came on the darkened gallery. He ~~went to the door~~ spoke hurriedly.

"Burgoyne's just here, Master," he said. "It's Master Peter. The soldiers went for him and he has locked himself in his store —!"

Aaron rose. Fanny Logan's tense voice hammered at him out of the dark: "Sit, Aaron Logan! There's nothing you can do down there!"

But Link was hurrying on: " — Burgoyne says he peered in through the back and Master Peter was pouring oil over everything! Burgoyne says he will set the store alight!"

"Good God!" ejaculated Aaron. Fanny spoke quieter: "He has set the place afire."

Aaron Logan gripped the gallery rails as he saw the glow downtown and across the roofs of the few blocks which separated them from Wall Street. A startling thought lit up his mind that Peter had meant something like this ever since he ^{had} heard that he would be arrested.

"He's going to kill himself!" Logan cried fearfully.

But there was no fear in Peter as he stood on the edge of the growing inferno in the store and laughed at his burning bugaboos. As the ~~zizzak~~ butts of the soldiers' carbines hammered on the bolted doors, he shrieked out a full-mouthed laughter. He laughed that now he was cheating the fate which had made the lopsided rules — rules ^{which} ~~he~~ roused a man to effort, yet provided a pit for his ~~feet~~ foot. He remembered a redwood on Gowanus. A full hundred feet it grew to, throwing its mighty limbs about the wood like a giant who had no law to heed. Then, one morning, a woodsman addressed his shiny axe to the roots ...

Their ~~these~~ roots seemed firm to the ground now, all of them, redcoats and rebels alike. But each in his own part of the forest was growing to his hundred feet. And each had no notion of the approach of the woodsman. He laughed and laughed so a Hessian outside said:

"Ach — but this one is mad! He laughs in hell!"

Jamie looked around him in the dark and could see the blurred faces of his men. A round dozen of them were there. They stood at the base of the gaol walls. He said:

"I will heave a rope up to his window. Soon as he catches on to what we be doing, he will grab it and make fast. Then I will climb up to him and see if them bars will shame me shoulders." He answered one of the men who had asked about the guards: "I ha' paid the riff-raff down by the water to make a diversion. The guards will no' bother us."

While he made the casts, they saw the glow from Peter Keyes' store. Jamie drew his brows together. "Its the diversion — but it should no' be on this side of the town. I paid the riff-raff to have their fires set on the west side to draw attention from the river —"

He stopped talking as he tugged at the rope and found it fast. He let go of the rope and rubbed his hands together.

"John Lumsden, lad," he whispered, "soon as the whelp is out, you escort us to the commons and leave me there with him. After I ha' talked with him, I will join you by the boat. If the soldiers come at us, you run with the rest o' the lads so they will follow you and leave me alone with young Keyes. Whatever it be, we will meet at the boat."

Lumsden said: "Aye, Cap'n." He was staring at the glowing lease which the flames had taken in the sky. New Yorkers had accepted the general idea implicit in Peter's firing of his store and the diversion wrought by Jamie's riff-raff and were applying the torch in several places. It would light up their actions uncomfortably well. Jamie swore softly and held the rope.

Aloft, he climbed with a heavy grace, swarming hand over hand like a huge monkey. He reached the wide ledge of the window and grunted as he swung to a seat.

"Who is it?" Arnold whispered, his face at the bars.

"Stand away, whelp," Jamie said quietly.

Arnold sucked in his breath. His eyes narrowed puzzledly. "Boniface — by the wounds!"

"Stand abaft o' me!" Jamie said thickly. He twisted a slack of the rope around his wooden leg. He spat into his palms and put them to the bars, working his fingers as he ^{searched} ~~settled~~ for the right purchase. He had removed his doublet and his biceps quivered as he called in his great strength. Slowly, he built up the effort, bearing down on the iron, his lips flattened to his teeth. His eyes were slitted and glazed with the concentration into which he grouped all his faculties for the assault on the half-inch bars. Softly, the bars bent outwards.

He blew out a shuddering breath as he let up from the disfigured pair/.

Jamie shook the rope from his wooden leg and commenced to climb down while Arnold squeezed through the opening. But they had not calculated on the illumination provided by the preading fires until the discharge of a musket sent a ball whistling past Arnold's head. It urged him to swifter measures. The rope skimmed through his hands as he hurtled down on Jamie. he ^{hold} ~~impact~~ shook Jamie's ~~hanks~~ loose and he finished the last ten feet without the staying influence of the rope. His wooden leg snapped under his weight and he laid in a heap with Arnold. Jamie let loose a mighty roar from the ground: "John! John! Away lads!"

There was a smashing flurry of feet and John Lumsden led the men in a run for the river. t effectively drew fire from the guards who had come tumbling out at the discharge of the musket. Arnold picked himself up and, bent double, broke into a long-striding run. He had taken two or three steps when he braked sharply and spun, peering along the ground. He saw Jamie hopping for the shadow of the wall like a great, wounded bird. Arnold plunged forward to his side

"Dont tell me you are winged, Bonifa ce," he called softly.

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"Begone, swab," Jamie said tersely. "The redcoats will soon be back."

Arnold whistled soundlessly as he saw the reason for Jamie's inability to run. A desperate idea flashed through his mind. He leapt for Jamie.

"Come on," he whispered fiercely. "Arm over my shoulder — we'll do a three-legged race."

With a quick motion, he got underneath Jamie's arm and held him about the waist. They hustled from the shadow into the street and across, making for the deeper gloom under the trees which adjoined the grounds of the Logan house. Arnold had roamed these grounds in his youth and knew each ^{wonderful} inch of its shrub-covered area. He thought he might make it without being seen, but two steps away from the edge of the road, he was convinced of his error. There were more shouts and more firearms went off.

They ducked under the trees and ^{he} ~~Arnold~~ led Jamie through a shallow gully course, covered with bushes, to where they could duck under the fence and gain the grounds of the house. They were let in ^{at} ~~by~~ the rear door by Link who had stationed himself there for just this purpose. He bolted it behind them.

"The master is standing by the front door — we heard the shooting — I will take you to him," Link told them.

"Belay darkie," Jamie said quickly. "Its some wire ^{or stout} ~~and~~ cord I want — no' your master."

Link seemed not to have heard. Arnold grinned. "It would take several earthquakes and a handful of volcanoes all loose at once to make Link forget the proprieties, Boniface. I will get you the wire — follow him to the study."

Aaron Logan and Fanny came into the study while Arnold went to seek the wire. Jamie was seated at the desk calmly notching the length of broken wood. His hands moved in ordered nautical patterns as he spliced the wood together. Aaron and Fanny looked around the room for ^{Arnold.} ~~xxx~~

"How did it go?" Logan asked him. Jamie turned the wood about in the light of the candle.

"The cub's out but there was noise," he said. "The whelp shattered me timber but I will not hold it against him. He's a brave lad."

Logan let go his tension. He looked at Fanny. Jamie hadn't asked after India. Logan said: "Your daughter — "

Jamie said softly: "I have no' asked, Aaron Logan." Fanny made a sound in her throat and came forward. She stood in front of him.

"No, you have no' asked," she said cuttingly, mimicking the man. "You wouldn't have come here at all if you hadn't broken that peg and had to lean on the boy. But whatever your plans might have been, Jamie McGovern, you are here now and I'll tell you where your girl has been. She's been with me at Jones Wood from the day Arnold took her from your cut-throats. He told me he was going after her and I gave him my blessing. Now — put your dirk on me."

"That whelp of iniquity!" Jamie whispered.

"She is his betrothed," Fanny snapped. "He gave her his ring before he left ~~trying~~ to try to make Harlem and was captured."

Jamie leaned to her, his eyes blazing. "Then I will break her finger!"

"It is her heart you will be breaking, Big Head!" Fanny shot back.

Jamie rose on his single leg, gripping the edge of the table. "Where is me girl?" he grated at Aaron Logan. Fanny looked around at a sound at the door and saw Arnold standing there. She did not move. Logan said: "She's at the boat — waiting for you."

Arnold Keyes strode inside the room. He carried the length of wire in his hand. He looked startledly at Fanny, a frown furrowing his forehead. "What is this?" he asked. "What is Uncle Aaron talking about?"

Fanny gestured at Jamie, a curious gleam in her eyes. Jamie did not see the gesture. Arnold turned swiftly and clutched Jamie's shoulder.

"Speak, man!" he shouted. "What is this about India?"

Jamie glared at him before he broke the grip at his shoulder by a sweep of his arm. He snatched the wire from Arnold, dropped back into the chair and commenced binding the splice with quick fingers. Arnold spun to Fanny again. She said wearily:

"Alright — sit on it. Your India will go with her father."

It rocked him a little before he stiffened again.

"Go — go with her father? Are you mad? Who told you she should go with him — wherever he's going? What's the matter with you? Are you gone mad?" He whipped around in sudden suspicion and stared at Aaron Logan. Logan's hands were over his eyes, shading them from the light. Arnold looked from him to Link, standing impassive by his master's chair. He took a stride towards Logan. "Who asked you to interfere?" he shouted. "Who do you think you are?" His hand went roughly to Aaron Logan's shoulder. He removed it when Logan looked quietly up at him.

Jamie had risen during the furious stream of words. He stamped on his repair job to see it held firm. Fanny had gone swiftly to his side. She whispered urgently at his ear. Jamie's tugging at his waistband, the smile pursed on his mouth. Fanny kept whispering at his ear till he nodded. Then Arnold turned on them from Logan: "And you —!" he shouted at Jamie. "Govern. If you lay your hand on her again, I'll —!"

A heavy pounding at the front of the house interrupted him. A voice of authority demanded: "Open — in the King's name!"

Aaron Logan sprang to his feet. "Through the back, Jamie!" he whispered tensely. He signalled to Link. "To the door, man — delay them for a minute!"

Jamie met Fanny Logan's eyes. The old woman nodded vehemently. He touched Arnold Keyes on his shoulder. "You will go wi' me, young Keyes," he growled. Then he was moving softly and quickly behind Logan. Link at the door was undoing the chain. He left the chain hanging at the slack so the door only allowed an aperture when he opened it.

"Whom shall I announce, sir?" the old negro enquired calmly.

The pair of soldiers behind the officer looked woodenly at him. Link's ears were keyed for the click which would tell that the rear door had closed behind Jamie and Arnold. Jamie did not know that a little extra caution exerted by Aaron Logan had sent the bolt home,

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quietly. Logan, walking swiftly across the hall, saw the gesture the officer made. A great fear drummed up inside him.

"Link!" he cried strangledly. "LINK!"

His harsh cry went through the house. Link turned his head at the call. The plug bayonet affixed to the soldier's carbine went in and out. Link's eyes opened wide.

Flames from the burning city danced a bacchanalia on the river. The boatload of Gloucester sailors was drifting nearer the Ulysses, guided by a single oar in the stern-sheets. Lumsden, in the bows, has his hand ready to fend the boat from bumping. Arnold, close behind him, fingered the hilt of the knife Jamie had obtained for him from one of the crew and wondered how it felt to kill a man with a knife. India was somewhere near the stern. Arnold hadn't seen her since the one glimpse he had received when, with Jamie, he had reached the boat at the river. He heard a whisper from Jamie as he gave last minute orders, turned his head, and at that moment, Lumsden fended silently.

The Gloucester men felt for the rails. Their bare feet made no sound up the wooden sides, especially with the hiss and roar from the burning city. They pattered forward and went to work. It was easy, for the few guards on the ship were crowded at the rail, watching the fires ashore. Jamie surveyed the deck and helped to ease the bodies over the side with his wooden leg. The smile had spread like an oil slick over his face.

"Alright, laddies, look alive," he said. "We must run her out o' the bay."

Sails were slatting and booms were creaking all around as the vessels in the harbour, too close to flying sparks for safety, ~~commenced~~ began getting underway. The sailors on the Ulysses commenced to run up canvas.

Arnold felt a movement at his side and saw India. She said: "Grant and David are aboard."

He stared at her. She said: "Burgoyne saw the lists of prisoners made out by a British officer for whom he was working. Its a prison ship."

Jamie appeared out of the shadows of the deckhouse. ~~xxxxxxgirlxxxxxx~~ He whirled the girl from Arnold's side. Arnold Keyes moved angrily forward but was blocked by Jamie's body.

"Prison ship?" India's father growled at her. "Did Aaron Logan know this?"

The girl said with surprise: "Of course! That's why he was glad you had chosen the Ulysses. That you would rescue the lads —"

She stopped. Jamie was reeling out a string of oaths, his fists upflung.

"Aaron Logan canno' do this to me!" Jamie raved. Suddenly he stopped and looked at Arnold. Wordlessly, he walked away. Presently, they heard his voice allotting the gun crews.

There was none better at stealing a ship, John Lumsden said to himself as he stood at the wheel on the half deck and watched Jamie complete his gun crews. He had brought up the prisoners from below, those who were not too ill to stand. Grant and David would have gone to Arnold, but a bellow from Jamie had sent them to the guns.

"This is no' a social affair," he told them~~xxxxxx~~, his eyes closed to slits. "You will

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obey me or-rders or stay below — in irons." He gave no orders to Arnold and Lumsden wondered.

Lumsden hailed with a silent nod the craft ~~which~~ of Jamie which kept the Ulysses bearing through the ~~port~~ quarter-points, close-hauled to the wind as she left the river and entered the upper bay. Now she had cleared the Battery on her starboard beam and was reaching down the bay to put Governor's island well to port. Jamie was meaning to sail a clear course to the Narrows. No lurking through Buttermilk Channel for him to ^{perhaps} rouse questions from the shore batteries there. Lumsden saw now why Jamie had chosen a corvette. They were the despatch boats of the fleet and their movements would be less open to query.

"Keep her closer, mate," Jamie called.

There was such a new lilt to his voice that made India look at Arnold Keyes. In profile to her from the poop, to which Jamie had sent her, Arnold stood at the half-deck's rail, the reflection from the water painting a side of his face to red sandstone, mounting his cheekbone to a high, hard polish and falling off at the ridge of his jaw. Lumsden put down the helm and brought the head up.

"No higher, mate, Jamie said. [The ship was making good time under main and mizzen in the freshening wind. They had Red Hook well astern when Jamie ordered the ship on the port tack. They went past New Brighton and Owl's Head unchallenged by any of the manowars which stood at the mouth of the Narrows. Slowly, with her canvas reefed in, the Ulysses crept through the narrow channel. The crew at their stations were carven with tension as the stolen ship inched through the water under the guns of the towering frigates at anchor. Any broadside from one of these could have blown them to a memory. Jamie looked up to where the British red ensigns flew at his top-gallant and remembered what Fanny Logan had told him on the porch at Patty Travers'. He spat into the water.

The slap of the waves under her counter and the whistle of the wind through her shrouds took possession aboard the Ulysses as they drew through the strait. The racks of cannonballs and powderkegs stood ready by the pounders; the matches were ready for lighting. Gravesend Bay came abeam. The lower bay was empty of ship except for two or three frigates which loomed to starboard. They were warped to shore for repairs and their masts and spars were stripped.

Jamie said: "Take over, mate," to Lumsden, and walked to the ~~main~~ ^{rail of the} half-deck where Arnold stood. He put his back to an angle of the rail and said to Arnold:

"Keyes, reach for your steel if you want — for I'm going to beat the de'il out from you."

There were no more than two feet between them. Arnold whipped around at the sound of Jamie's voice and ^{saw} the hands reaching for him. He was taller than Jamie and had a longer reach. He had heard the deadly earnestness in the man's voice and saw it now in his face. He struck out savagely as Jamie's hands gripped ^{at} him. He went in under the grasping hands and tipped his fists to Jamie's middle. Jamie grunted, ~~and~~ bent his forearms upwards and brought down his elbows on Arnold's shoulders. His immense strength beat Arnold to the deck. He twisted clear of Jamie's grasping fingers, taking advantage of a roll of the ship to scam-

Jamie's reach. He got to his feet, braced against the rail. Jamie glared at him. "Well, whelp?" he said. "What will ye do now? Draw your steel — or run?" The noise of the wind and ~~waves~~ the sea answered him. He looked quickly around him. A had run to the rail of the poop-deck and was staring down at them. Some of the ship's company had gathered at the foot of the half-deck, also staring at the strange business above them. He turned to John Lumsden. "Put her up, John Lumsden!" he bellowed.

Lumsden jerked a look at him. Jamie's head was swinging from side to side. "Do as I say!" he snarled. The Englishman obediently turned the wheel. His job was to obey, but he could half wonder whether Jamie was a bloody bedlamite to be telling a cove to put her up higher when the wordhand of Sandy Hook was grasping a battle-axe in the shape of the line-ship which everyone could now see, tall between sky and sea. [Everyone could see this was the guardship to the bay. He counted the bows through the quarter-points until Jamie growled a staying order. Arnold looked towards the shore and made a computation. For his calculus, he took the three gun-decks of the frigate, added the narrowing searoom between the Ulysses and the Hook, and wrote it all down in ink dipped from the insane spleen of Jamie. No seaman he, the meaning of Jamie's manoeuvre was yet clear to him. It was a gesture of hate and defiance. He would not leave the ship until he had lodged a memento with the British of what they could expect in the future from Jamie McGovern — now that he had his own deck under him —

He whipped his head back at India's sudden cry. Jamie had leaped forward, regardless of the handicap of his wooden leg, and was on him. Arnold fought back as best as he could. The big sailors' fists thudded into his body twice and he smashed his own fists into the moon face. Making swiftly, Arnold went forward and Jamie grasped him with a grunt of triumph. Then Arnold ~~throw his weight sideways so the sailor had to follow him off the rails.~~ Arnold ~~his weight in another direction, crowded his fists into the man's face, brought up his~~ Jamie's belly, felt the man's grip about his waist slacken — and would have got away but an unexpected heave of the deck threw him forward again into Jamie's clutch.

He hit the sailor with everything he had as he felt himself being borne backwards. He divined that Jamie's intention was to push him into the angle of the half-deck rails and he fought every inch of the way across the slippery deck. But with unbudging purpose, Jamie took all the punishment Arnold's driving fists put into his head and body, forcing him backwards and onwards until they came up against the rail.

Jamie put a forearm like a plank across Arnold's chest and pinned him to the rail. Then he doubled his right fist and drew it back. He drove it into Arnold's belly. He smiled when Arnold's face twisted with the pain. He drew back the fist again.

flying down the steps to the India was ~~down on the half-deck, fighting~~ half-deck, shrieking at John Lumsden. Her hair streaming behind her and madness on her face, she held to Lumsden at the wheel, shrieking at him. The Englishman took a look at Arnold's face against the rail and saw how white it was even under the glass fire-red glare. His lips tightened and he ~~suddenly~~ threw the wheel over. The vessel heeled like a crazy thing. Lumsden swung the wheel again on its course, his face impassive as he ~~listened~~ listened to Jamie's oathings while the sailor climbed erect from the scuppernars

Jamie McGovern rested his elbows on the ~~the~~ counter of his ~~the~~ tavern and ~~the~~ thought how best to steal a ship. The ship lay in the East River, all ^{thirty} ~~the~~ barnacled tons of it. Between it and the ocean lay ~~the~~ miles of tricky roadstead and several British ships. The ships were loaded to the strake with guns and hostile men. It gave Jamie thought.

Nat Clinton gave no thought to it for ~~the~~ a man could safely leave all that kind of thinking to Jamie. What he gave thought to, was, India. India McGovern, Jamie's daughter, and to ^{young} Aaron Logan. He thought mainly on ~~the~~ the hour when Jamie would look up at him and crook a thumb. The crook would be by way of saying, ^{Ye ken what to do,} ~~the~~ Nat, lad.

Which would mean to lope out of the tavern and up Broadway and into Chambers Street and work his blade into young Aaron Logan. Nat Clinton was mightily keen on working his blade into young Aaron Logan.

Jamie grunted and ~~the~~ put his brawny left forearm behind him ~~the~~ and felt around for the towel. It meant that now he would talk and Clinton closed ~~the~~ his ~~the~~ mouth which had been ~~the~~ weighted open with thought. And listened to Jamie.

"I do no' like yon Br-reetish," was what Jamie said.

And Clinton nodded vigorously as if he had been waiting a long time to hear just such a statement. Yet, the statement was ~~the~~ one that had been made several times a day since the month ago when the redcoats had crossed the East River from Long Island and cut off Manhattan from the mainland.

"The siller old Aaron Logan is putting up is to be tr-reated wi' consider-ration, Nat Clinton," Jamie said, his ice blue eyes coming to rest and to probe into Clinton's flat, grey pupils.

Which wasn't good at all for Nat Clinton and made him squeal with anger.

"But the lousy cub seeks to backstair your girl!" was what he squealed.

Jamie had a wooden leg as substitute to the real one which a French cannon ball had taken with it when it rolled along the deck while he was swabbing a gun for King George years back in the 'Forty-three war. It had taken an entire pressgang to get

him to that deck and [redacted] weeks of whip-endings [redacted] afterwards to conform him to navy rules. But, in his [redacted] rebellious heart, he had remained a Jacobite.

Now the wooden leg scraped along the floor and his huge shoulders twitched.

"I dinna hear-r you, Fr-riend Clinton," he rolled the r's softly. "You will say it again?"

Clinton's sloping form straightened from the counter as if shot from a spring. He was elongated, in a bean-pole shape, and his face was very unlovely.

"Th - the cub - has no respect for you, Cap'n Jamie," he stuttered, hoping that Jamie would ^{ease} [redacted] off the pressure.

Jamie did so. There were bigger things afoot, he remembered.

"A vast, Nat Clinton," he growled. "Yon laddie fits into me scheme. About the good lads down at the fish-market — you been aboard o' them?"

Clinton sighed with relief and draped to the counter again. He was on the public side of the counter and the tavern was empty.

"They are willing, Cap'n Jamie. I told them it would be tonight."

"You been alongside the negro laddie too?"

"He had his oyster barrow all morning outside the prison, Cap'n Jamie. He's sure he got his peepers on the right window, he tol' me."

"A ye, mon. A good morning's [redacted] wor-rk. I'll nae [redacted] be forgetting it, Nat."

Nat Clinton's lugubrious face showed a dim flush of pleasure. Unhappily, the comment screwed up his courage again.

"But we shouldn't be risking so much for the cub, Cap'n Jamie!" he protested. "We might be caught at it — we don't need Aaron Logan's money — we could go overland and forget about the ship — we — uh!"

It was a heavy hand but swift moving as sin and it slammed [redacted] across Nat Clinton's mouth ^{and} ended his protests in a grunt of pain.

"The laddie fits into me scheme, Nat Clinton. I do nae want to paste you harder. I tell you, I canna move [redacted] quickly about ^{with} this plank strapped to me knee an' I will nae leave me [redacted] gir-rl in the reach o' them foppish redcoats. She goes on blue water-r ^{with} [redacted] me."

Clinton ceased his whimperings. His eyes held the same [redacted] light of

puzzled love as in a hound chastised by a master. He bowed his head to the counter.

"But, Cap'n, Cap'n, Cap'n, why do we need Logan's cub? Why must we risk your neck to get him out when we could be on our way?"

Jamie hit the counter with his fist. "Have I ever failed you, Nat Clinton?" he demanded. "When the r-redcoats came in and would have chained you and the other lads for-r being joined up wi' the Sons o' Liber-rty, didn't Jamie McGovern convince them that all who come to me ~~ta~~ taver-rn wer-re for-r ^{Farmer} ~~Geordie~~ Geordie — God Save the King — an' nae for-r yon ~~r~~ r-rebels ~~swabs~~ swabs?"

Nat Clinton put out his palms in entreaty and nodded vigorously above them.

"Yes - yes - yes, Cap'n Jamie. But - this —!"

"Then let it be!" roared Jamie.

He said, quieter: "You will take Aaron Logan's siller down to the fish-market in the gloaming an' ser-rve it to yon good laddies who will make th' diver-rsion. Then you will join me an' the rest o' our lads in Chambers Street. Then, please God, we will r-rumple King George's skir-rts."

THE BRITISH had taken over the new gaol at Chambers Street to house the captured American officers. The windows were stacked four tiers up and so numerous, they could mystify in the dark. But Len, the oyster-boy, had sharp eyes. As he had the best oysters in New York and, out of his ~~gratitude~~ gratitude, never pressed ~~the~~ the Liberators for payment, he could loiter with impunity for hours ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ the restricted gaol area. ~~■~~

He met Jamie ~~■~~ in the dark, close to the foot of the wall.

"Count ^{foah} ~~■~~ from this corner and its the ^{foa'th} ~~■~~ one up, Cap'n. ^{Ah} ~~■~~ will push me barrow to the gate. ^{Ah} ~~■~~ got some special ones from the Bay foh this night."

"Gi'e 'em all away to yon monkeys so they'll nae pay us any mind," Jamie growled.

Len was in business ~~■~~ because of old Aaron Logan's silver, so it didn't matter anyway, Jamie thought. "Nat," he whispered into the darkness behind him, "hae the lads bring up th' line."

Rough Royal Navy ~~■~~ discipline had oriented him in everything

of the sea and ships from [redacted] truck to [redacted] keel. He looped the rope [redacted] through the eye he made of thumb and forefinger, tasting the roughness of it on [redacted] the skin of his palms like [redacted] salt spray on his lips. The knot at the end came up, with the bent hand-spike for a hook. He gave back three or four feet for the swing and the bent hand-spike dangled like a pendulum at the bottom of the give. He swung it pendulum fashion first, hissing softly through his teeth, then increased the arc until the hand-spike was going full circle.

And all the while, his eyes were opening a way up through the gloom to the window Len had told him of, watching it swim slowly into view, first as a blurred deceit in which he saw three or four silhouettes of sills and bars [redacted] where there should be a single set, then [redacted] becoming vaguer until it was almost lost, but, returned [redacted] in better outlines which gradually grew firmer until his eyes were adjusted and there the bars were.

Aaron Logan's silver had worked well indeed, for the [redacted] subdued exclamations came [redacted] at that moment and Jamie knew the diversion had gone off on time. He waited for the first shout from the guardhouse at the gate, before he let go the bent hand-spike. It hooked [redacted] with the slightest clatter --- a clatter lost in the [redacted] shoutings of the [redacted] thoroughly excited guards who were watching the lower town set afire.

Jamie tested the rope and felt it hold firm. He rubbed his hands on the seat of his trousers. He said without removing his eyes from the window:

"Wher-re ha' they made the diver-rsion, lads?"

"The whole bloomin' place, if you ask me," one of his men said. "From the Green to Wall Street."

"Aye --- it should be wiped out like Sodom an' Gomorrah," Jamie growled. "Now, Nat Clinton, you hold fast to the end wi' some o' the lads while I see if yon bars will humble me."

He swarmed aloft, riding his great bulk easily up the wall with the help of his wooden leg. He reached the sill and rested his hip ^{on} [redacted] the wide ledge, took a bend with the rope around his wooden leg.

His bulk blotted out the light at the barred window and young Aaron Logan who had been asleep in his cell, raised himself on one elbow and asked in a voice tight with

strain and waiting: "Wha- who is it? Speak up! Who is it?"

And there was Jamie, wriggling about seeking his creature comfort on the ledge and cool as if he was in his tavern, drawing a mug of ale.

"Belay, ~~whelp~~,^A" he grunted, "'fore the r-redcoats wrap a lanyard ar-round your throat for trying to escape."

So there was a gasp of surprise from within the room and young ~~man~~ Aaron Logan was bounding from the spread of blankets on the floor and ~~man~~ was clutching the bars with both hands.

"Boniface!" he exclaimed with delight. "My own personal, father-in-law-to-be Boniface!"

But, it being dark, he did not of course see the scowl which darkened the heavy face. "Stand away," Jamie growled after the momentary pause. "I'll be ha'eing a tussle wi' the bars an' dinna want your-r pr-retty ~~man~~ countenance to be mar-rked wi' them when they bur-rst."

Jamie spat into his palms and rubbed them together. He worked the fingers a little and wrapped them around the bars. They were of iron, set into mortar, stout against ordinary strength. But he ~~man~~ set his forehead close to them and grunted. And, under his coat, the biceps bulged until they corded when his endeavour reached the peak. The iron bent.

The bars first bent; then the ends set in the mortar could withstand the pull no longer and ~~man~~ the mortar came up like swollen skin and then cracked and broke away. He gathered both bars in one hand and tossed them clear of the prison, ~~man~~ into the field. He unwound the rope from his wooden leg and slipped quickly from the ledge. ~~man~~ Above him, young Aaron Logan worked his shoulders through the shattered window and followed down the rope.

Lower New York was burning; and the ^{British} garrison at the prison gave their attention to nothing else as they climbed to vantage points and leaned out of windows to see ~~man~~ flames shoot ~~man~~ into the night sky.

Jamie's dozen men padded swiftly and silently in the leader's wake. Young Aaron Logan, loose-limbed and athletic in his tattered uniform of the New York militia, stepped along, thoughtfully, with Jamie. He had not expected to be rescued, but least

of all by Jamie McGovern.

Since his capture at the Harlem by the British, he had resolutely put India McGovern from his mind. He had not known, had not expected to ever see her again. Men were dying like flies on the prison hulks anchored in the East River and in the churches and schools and the regular gaols which the British had taken over for their prisoners of war. Now, here he was, out of it, ~~and~~ and indebted to the man whom, he had been convinced, hated him best of all.

They came to the end of Chambers Street and turned through the marshes at the edge of the East River. Their feet sank into the mud and Jamie had trouble with his wooden leg. Young Aaron Logan held his shoulder while he tugged and pulled the appendage out of the hole into which he had stepped; and, when it was cleared again, he swept aside the helping hand with a swing that almost grounded young Logan.

"Lay off, ye scuppernose," he growled at the young man and Logan righted himself and whistled soundlessly and narrowed his eyes in thought.

They continued down the river bank ~~and~~ and young Logan reckoned they were somewhere ~~off~~ Wall Street, nearing Whitehall Stairs, when they ~~at~~ halted.

One of Jamie's men, whom young Logan thought were seafarers from their garb, made a sound that could be mistaken for a bittern drumming upriverwards. And there ~~was~~ was a low, answering hail at the river's edge, at which they all stepped forward again and young Logan saw a boat at the water's edge and in it, India McGovern.

The bright flames ~~lit~~ lit up the water and, in the reflection, she was ~~beautiful~~ beautiful.

~~There~~ There was the sweet turn of her throat and mouth and nose and, ~~there~~ there, the bright flame was in her hair. He knew how beautiful she was.

But he did not move towards her, ~~and neither did she,~~ although ~~she~~ she saw him for her hand went to her throat, ~~and he~~ followed her father into the boat. He went to the thwart Jamie indicated and stepped by Nat Clinton, whom he had noticed waiting in the boat with the girl, and Clinton said, like spitting:

"You dirty womanizer!"

Clinton
Jamie hit ~~him~~ on the side of the head and felled him to the gunwale.

"Nat Clinton," he said, ~~cruelly~~ cruelly, "pull your cock again an' I wi' twist your-r ~~neck~~ neck until you see backwar-rds."

Young Aaron Logan forced himself not to move and ~~waited~~ listened carefully at the conversation around him. It was lowpitched and dealt mainly with tides and the possibilities of the British turning their guns onto a strange ship and shooting it out of the water. He picked up that these were ~~sailors of Gloucester, Massachusetts,~~ sailors of Gloucester, Massachusetts, of the same breed which had ferried the American army across the river a month ago, snatching them off Long Island out of the closing pincers of Hessian and British soldiers. Jamie stood by the boat's head, a figure cloaked in silence ~~since~~ since his brutal fisting of Clinton. ~~Jamie~~ Jamie seemed to be waiting and young Aaron Logan wondered at this; for his escape would soon be discovered and the guards would naturally search the marshes among the other places.

Then he heard a low call from one of the sailors and Jamie turned his head. Two figures came out of the dark. One was the negro, ~~the~~ Len, and the other was his father.

Old Aaron Logan rushed up to the boat, arms ~~out~~ waving and completely beside himself.

"Jamie! Jamie McGovern — you fool — why have you fired the town?"

And Jamie, who hadn't moved except for his head turning, rumbled softly:

"Dinna fret, Aaron Logan. You got your money's ~~worth~~ wor-rth. I must ha'e a diver-rsion for-r yon soldier beasties."

Aaron's fine shoes of English leather ~~was ruined~~ were being ruined ~~in the~~ in the East River mud as he jumped.

"A - A diversion? You call firing my store a - diversion? You ruin my business and stand there talking about - diversions!"

Jamie took a jerky step towards the boat. "You had better-r go back to your-r town now, mon. You will ha'e the redcoats on us wi' your-r shoutings."

"Go back to what?" Old Aaron Logan shrieked. "There's nothing you've left — you rascal — your men fired my store first!"

Jamie McGovern heaved ~~himself~~ his bulk into the boat. "Then — inside wi' him, lads," he said coolly. "The puir body should nae ~~be left~~ be left to star-rve here."

Young Aaron Logan sat still as ~~the~~ the sailors suddenly took his father from his feet and hoisted him into the boat. A pair of them held him down and muffled his shouts. ~~with their hands.~~ Then the others were pushing off the boat in a skilful quiet.

The wide keel entered the water with hardly a ~~disturbing~~ ripple and it rode easily while everyone got into the boat and into their places and put out the oars. A grim smile thinned young Aaron Logan's lips as he took stock of his worth to his father. The old fellow had paid Jamie to rescue him from the British and to take him out of New York. He was bound by his code to protect his name, flesh and blood by pounds, his ~~money~~ shillings and pence. ~~But~~ But his code did not include love and affection. With his store burnt to rubble he could not be expected to be remembering to ask ^{son} whether his ~~son was safe.~~

The boat was nearing Whitehall now and the men shipped their oars and let her drift silently on the stream. The town was burning fiercely. The hiss and crackle of flames, the bursts of explosions and the ~~extra-bright~~ hideously ~~bright~~ yellow light which hung over all completed the effect that they were ~~skirting~~ skirting on the outer edge of inferno.

Now they were passing through shipping and Jamie put the tiller over so they drifted nearer the Long Island shore. There were prison ships and regular navy ships but the crews ~~had~~ had all crowded to the Manhattan side of their ships to view the flames. They drifted along in comparative safety, until Jamie said:

"Ther-re she be — the Ulysses."

She was long and built close to water for speed. She was a despatch boat and contained speed in her lines carried only twenty guns, but she ~~was~~ like how sand is contained in an hour glass. The boat drifted to her and the men in the bows put out their hands to fend.

Everybody got to their knees and some put their knives between their teeth to make climbing to her deck easier. Young Aaron Logan ripped off his stock and bound it about his fists since he had no other weapon. The idea of action at last, was mounting excitedly in him. But a pair of heavy hands closed about his arms at Jamie's soft growl and he knew he would not be permitted to share in this work.

The boat fended. And the Gloucester men were up on their feet and were swarming over the rail. Young Aaron Logan saw them ~~spread~~ spread like a fan as they left the rail, their elbows close to their sides and their blades bright whenever they passed through the light. Something like a physical blow hit inside him and, with one great

wrench, he was freed of the holds on his arms and was leaping to the deck of the Ulysses.

He knew all about the girl in the boat ~~as one knows~~ as one knows about his own body and he knew the ~~exulting~~ cry, half ~~exulting~~ half pain which he ~~heard~~ heard must have come from her. He carried it with him, the cry, unsure in himself whether he wanted it ~~with~~ with him, this burden, but carrying it with him as a banner. He caught up with the Gloucester men when the first wave of them reached the Britishers on the far side of the ship. They went to work.

He had no other weapons but his fists; but he had ~~the weeks of~~ humiliations to be rid of and a driving curiosity to see just what Jamie was laying up for him. And to hell with Jamie if he thought he would sit supinely in the boat while they cleared the ship.

In the first rush, they had cut down the odds considerably by the surprise of their attack. But they were still outnumbered, even although several British sailors had dropped to the deck under their knife thrusts. A big sailor placed oakum-smelling, rope-toughened hands on young Aaron Logan's shoulders, ~~wrenched him in~~ and butted him over the eye. The blow was glancing, because, young Aaron Logan, who had learnt much of his fighting in the more turbulent coffee houses, knew the old trick. So, he continued going forward when the sailor would have braced him properly for the butt and piled the edge of his shoulder under the man's heart, locked his forearms about ~~his~~ his waist, and heaved. The heave threw the sailor into the welter of fighting bodies about them and young Aaron Logan wheeled and lashed out with his fists.

With fists and knees and elbows, he fought until his clothes were in shreds. Weariness gnawed at his muscles and blood from a few cuts made him a gory picture. Above the ~~klupp klupp~~ klupp klupp of blows, the groans, the bubbling whimpers when a knife went in, he heard the bellow of Jamie's voice chanting the wild old Jacobite cry Lor-rd — tak' the r-ripe an' spar-re the gr-green!

Jamie had placed his back in an angle formed by the rise of the poop from the lower deck and was mercilessly engaged in cracking skulls and breaking limbs when they came ~~within~~ within his reach.

The fight was going their way, but, at this moment, young Aaron Logan was

cornered on the rail by a pair of seamen who were experts at rough housing too. One had gained a hold which locked his arms behind him and the other was using his foot, freely. Young Aaron Logan covered up with his knees best as he could and tried to break the hold, but he was taking terrible punishment and knew he could not hold out much longer. Grimly, he knew what would happen when he could not cover up longer.

Then it was that he heard the bull voice of Jamie and saw the huge figure loom behind the foot-using seaman. The seaman went up, up and out, his body thudding sickeningly on the ship's side as he bumped overboard. ~~_____~~ ^{Jamie jerked and hobbled forward} again, reached behind young Aaron Logan and brought down a forearm like an ax on the other seaman's head. Young Aaron Logan staggered forward and was brought up by Jamie's wide chest. He was straightened by a push. "Stand on your-r feet, cub," Jamie growled.

THE FIGHT WAS OVER and Jamie had brought order to the deck by simply shoving the surrendered seamen overboard. It was an easy swim to shore for those alive. The others wouldnt mind. The wounded, he had placed in his own boat after having India and old Aaron Logan brought aboard. Then he set about completing his steal of the ship.

He had put up the main and mizzen and they were closehauled to the wind as the Ulysses left the river and entered the upper bay. He had allotted the gun crews and now these stood, tense and silent by the guns as they cleared the Battery on the starboard beam and ~~_____~~ ^{were} reaching down the bay to put Governor's Island well to port. Jamie meant to steer a clear course to the Narrows. No lurking through Buttermilk Channel for him to perhaps rouse questions from the shore batteries there. Nat Clinton saw now why Jamie had chosen a corvette, instead of a tidy little brig, say. Corvettes were the despatch boats of the fleet and their movements would be less open to queries.

"No higher-r, mate," Jamie called to the man at the helm he had chosen to be mate.

"Aye, aye, Cap'n," the mate replied and young Aaron Logan grinned.

Jamie cast an eye upward, roved it forward again to where his crew stood to quarters and looked back at the burning city. He grunted and spat over the side.

[Young Aaron Logan could see India and his father without turning his head. Jamie had placed them to stand on the poop deck but had kept him by his side. The wind was laying her hair back from her face, sculpting her gown to her body and the strong spread of her legs. It was funny that her father who had always tried to keep them apart, should

now have brought them ~~away~~ away from the city together. He knew that Jamie had objected to him because he was a rich merchant's son. ~~Gravesend Bay~~ The sons of rich merchants, in Jamie McGovern's reckonings, were notorious for their intentions towards inn-keepers' daughters. That old Aaron Logan was a "friendly" rich merchant who had helped the cause of the Sons of Liberty against the British with gifts of cash, made no difference.

Softly, Jamie ordered the ship on another tack and they went past New Brighton and Owl's Head, unchallenged by any of the manowars which stood at the mouth of the Narrows. The crew at their stations were carven with tension as the stolen ship inched through the water. One broadside from any of these towering frigates could blow them into a memory. They crept on through the narrow press of the Narrows. A sudden exclamation from the man at the helm turned their attention to him.

Gravesend Bay had come abeam and, directly ahead of them, a frigate swung at light her anchor. Jamie muttered a ferocious oath as a ~~small boat~~ suddenly appeared from around the frigate and bobbed towards them.

"Bear away a half an' stand by, por-rt gunner-rs!" *harshly whispered* snarled Jamie in a whisper.

The small boat was bobbing nearer. Young Aaron Logan felt his hairs raise. The fool or both poor ~~fool~~ would be doing either/of the two things which would bring instant disaster — run away or fight. He took a step nearer to Jamie.

"They will knock you over like a sitting duck if you do this," he told him.

"Avast, whelp!" Jamie ripped out at him. "I'm sailing the ship!"

"You wont be for long, you fool! Cant you see you haven't a chance?"

He felt the violence in Jamie reaching out for him in the brushing whisper of ^{But a} the man's clothing as he moved a little. A hail from the small boat ~~stopped~~ halted any action Jamie may have contemplated.

Jamie's whispered command was taken down the length of the ship: "Stand by to run out the port guns."

The hail from the boat, impatient now, came again. Young Aaron Logan knew that the noise of the guns being run out would be borne to the frigate. The frigate was a guard-ship and therefore, suspicious of any unexplainable action. The frigate would not ask questions after those suspicious noises. Suddenly, he leaped away from Jamie to

the rail. His answering shout came clear above the slap of water underfoot.

"The Ulysses — bound for Halifax with despatches from my Lord Howe!"

There was a short pause. Finally:

"I say, Ulysses, what is happening ashore?"

Young Aaron Logan grinned until the muscles of his face ached. "Its those benighted Rebels. A few of them, led by an old Scot scallawag are trying to burn the place down," he answered in accents that were pure English.

"Hope they take him alive for the hangman," the English officer called back grimly.

"Very well, Ulysses, carry on."

"Hope so too," young Aaron Logan called with too much fervence in Jamie's opinion.

The boat bobbed back towards the frigate. Young Aaron Logan returned to Jamie's side.

Jamie McGovern screwed up his eyes and peered at him for some moments, whistling softly between his teeth.

"Ye are nae without usefulness," he muttered after a while. "Stand her-re."

Jamie turned and threw back his head. He bellowed along the deck:

"Alr-r-right, ye lubber-rs —up wi' the peak an' trim the sheets! We will nae be her-re all night! —" he twisted his head "— Old Logan, come forwar-rd and bring me girl with ye! Nat Clinton, ye will be the fr-riend o' the gr-room! Mister-r Mate, ye will witness that the ceremony is perfor-rmed 'cording to the Ar-rticles o' Sea. Now all the hands what can be spar-red maun view the wedding o' the cap'n's daughter to the son of a verra poor-r-r merchant who has nae got a penny to his name — poor-r mon."

The Ulysses was meeting her first seas. She lifted herself like a huge bird, trembling in each plank with eagerness.