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THE GOLDEN BEES

*The Story of Betsy Patterson
and
The Bonapartes*

BY
DANIEL HENDERSON

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To
B. C. H.

YOU HAVE URGED ME TO WRITE A
NOVEL—ACCEPT THIS DEDICATION.

"Madame Bonaparte [Elizabeth Patterson] belongs to history as well as to romance; she had known princes and philosophers, queens and poets, men of science and men of letters. There was about her the brilliancy of courts and palaces, the enchantment of a love-story, the suffering of a victim of despotic powers.

"Her husband was a king, but she wore no crown; her brother-in-law was an emperor, but she was excluded from all the honors of royalty. Yet her name will always be found in history. The story of the most remarkable man of modern times cannot be written without mentioning her ill-starred marriage."

—EUGENE L. DIDIER

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THE GOLDEN BEES

CHAPTER I

PROPHECY

A coach and four stirred the red dust of the Towson road. Its driver, a white-gloved negro whose high black silk hat was no more darkly lustrous than the face beneath it, cracked his whip unceasingly—to the discomfort of the squirming young slave who served as postilion.

Elizabeth Patterson, driving with her younger brothers and sisters to visit the Caton girls at their father's country-seat outside of Baltimore, tried to exercise over the turbulent youngsters the authority of her seventeen years and when she failed, looked out on the blossoming road and gave her thoughts to romance. Bluebirds dipped into pink orchards; the road ran through woods that had just become aware of the miracle of fresh, unfolding leaves; a glinting stream twisted through a meadow clouded with buttercups. The thoughts of this exquisite girl-woman were as vivid as the springtime scene.

Her arrival at the Catons', where the entire family had assembled on the front porch to greet Betsy and her noisy company, heightened her contentment. The prosperous plantation; the wide halls; the grounds bright with tulips, crocus, iris and daffodils; the sun glowing on green lawns and valleys; the gracious old ladies who, in tarlatan caps, sat knitting and talking on the veranda; the fluttering servants as eager for visitors as their young mistresses; the wafers and quince marmalade brought by the ceremonious black butler—here was an atmosphere that intensified the dreaming girl's happy mood.

Upstairs, in the girls' spacious rooms, amidst the high bedsteads, the tall mirror-topped bureau and spindle-legged washstand, Betsy's spirits bubbled into sprightly chatter—of concerts and tableaux and dancing and beaux.

The Caton sisters were younger. Betsy, for all their background of family, felt infinitely superior to them. Yet eagerly she gossiped.

"Who do you think is home from the sea, Mary?" Betsy asked.

"I could guess a dozen persons," said Mary pertly, "but I'll say James Duncan, that young Scotch skipper your father employs."

"I don't know where he is—and I care not," said Betsy. "All I like in him is his tongue—bringing me tales of foreign ports. I am thinking, instead, of an older person, but still a very gallant one—Commodore Barney."

"Commodore Barney," echoed Mary. There was infinite boredom in her silvery young voice.

"Commodore Barney," as indifferently repeated Elizabeth Caton.

"Oh, yes, he's an ancient," Betsy Patterson agreed, "but it's not him I'm interested in—he brought news of a fairy prince sailing from the West Indies to Baltimore, and"—loftily—"if I am truly informed, this personage has asked especially to meet me!"

The indifference of the Caton trio vanished.

"You don't mean Jerome Bonaparte!" cried Mary.

"I mean no one else," said the calmly triumphant Betsy. "How fortunate that I've kept up my friendship with the Pascaults. They may seem too French for some people, but I think they add grace to our town. When dear Henrietta Pascault married that handsome Frenchman General Rewbell, it might have been anticipated that the pair would interest the princely Jerome in Baltimore and its people. Did I tell you that Henrietta wrote me from Martinique, where they joined young Bonaparte's suite, that she had spoken of me to him? I'd blush to tell you what she said, but anyway—Jerome really did express himself as eager to meet me."

Mary, Elizabeth and Louisa gazed with awe at the demure, lovely face of their visitor.

"You wouldn't encourage him, Betsy—you wouldn't marry a foreigner?"

"Wouldn't I? Have you heard that Napoleon intends to make himself Emperor of France? Do you realize that when it happens Jerome will be a prince, and perhaps a king! It is quite probable that I should encourage him!"

"But," said Mary Caton, "Father says that war may break out again between England and France. In that case the French officers would be recalled from America!"

"That would be magnificent! Think of exchanging dull Baltimore for glorious Paris! Think of exchanging the company of dull young men who talk only of barter and shipping for the companionship of dukes and princes! But I haven't come to the climax of my tale yet. Jerome Bonaparte is really on his way to New York, and is likely to come here. Commodore Barney, who was Jerome's companion-in-arms in the West Indian campaign, has sent word to him by stagecoach that he must come to Baltimore with his entourage. There'll be other gallant young Frenchmen in his suite. Girls, there may be a fairy prince for each of us!"

"I don't fancy marrying a Frenchman," Mary Caton said, "but if a young English nobleman should appear—that would be something to think about!"

"There's more fun to be had in Paris than in London. Napoleon's going to be a modern Cæsar—a new Charlemagne. How splendid it would be to be one of his train and live at Versailles!"

So chatted seventeen and younger—for early romances and marriages were the fashion in their day.

The sun dipped toward the western oaks of the plantation.

The Patterson coachman came to announce that the hour set for the return had arrived.

"Very well, Isham," said Betsy, reluctant to leave an audience in which she knew she had created envy and awe, "but first gather up the younger Pattersons."

"Yas'm, Miss Betsy," said Isham, "you kin talk on fo' some time yit, because dat sholy is a flock to congregate."

At last, however, the Patterson children, attended by worshipful small servants, were tucked in the Patterson coach, which drove away with Betsy sitting among them as regally as became one who entertained such magnificent dreams.

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Probably Elizabeth Patterson and the Caton sisters soon forgot this chat, yet for all of them it was prophetic, since the sisters, with beauty scarcely less devastating than that of Betsy, and with wealth as great, were destined to rival her in society abroad. One was to marry the Duke of Leeds; another, after varied fortunes, was to marry into a family as outstanding in history as the Bonapartes—none other than that of Napoleon's dethroner, the Duke of Wellington.

CHAPTER II

A PRINCE COMES TO AMERICA

"Jerome is a good lad!"

Madame Permon, close friend of Bonaparte's mother, was speaking. The First Consul, whom she addressed, was threatening to discipline his youngest brother.

"He is an excellent lad, all warmth of heart and good sentiments," Madame Permon pleaded. "However, you do well to transfer him from a regiment to a warship. He will make a good sailor—we need commanders who can cope with Nelson and his lieutenants. Jerome will return to you a gallant officer."

Napoleon wrinkled that forehead "which seemed formed to wear the crowns of the world."

"I confess to you that I am troubled about that brave little citizen. My mother spoiled him. I fear you helped her to do so, Madame Permon, for I admit that he was a lovable child. When he came to me from the College of Juilly, I found him reckless—wilful in matters in which he should have been obedient.

"Did he ever confess to you the first scrape he plunged into when at fifteen he came to Paris from college? I was away—at Marengo. Jerome had entered the service, but because of his youth had been assigned to duty in Paris.

"On my return, I was presented with a number of bills, amounting to a considerable sum. One was from M. Beinnais, Rue Saint Honoré, at the Sign of the Singe Violet. That worthy gentleman said that I owed his shop for an item of 10,000 francs.

"I had a notion to arrest the merchant for his audacity, but, fortunately for him, I decided to investigate."

"Jerome?" laughed Madame Permon.

"You have guessed it. The boy had purchased a magnificent traveling case, containing everything that could be invented of elegance and luxury—toilet articles in gold, mother-of-pearl, silver, ivory, the finest porcelains—it had the magnificence of a set of jewels. The cream of the jest was that while the lad had as yet no sign of a beard, the traveling-case contained razors, combs for mustaches, and china and silver shaving-pots of all sizes.

"Contrast that with the poverty of our childhood, madame, when we boys of Corsica had to be sent away to be educated on the bounty of the King."

Madame Permon nodded. "I remember, my friend, when your father took you away from the island to the school at Brienne le Château. And I remember his telling your mother when he returned that he had submitted evidence to the court of France that his sons were of the nobility, but that he was too poor to educate his boys in accordance with their birth. Did he not receive in Paris 4,000 francs as a gift from the King in reward for helping to keep Corsica loyal to the Crown? And though he left you at school with scarcely a sou in your pocket, did he not bring back to Corsica twelve suits of silk and velvet to adorn his precious back?"

The First Consul flushed at this sly attack upon his father, but to reprove the woman who had rocked his cradle did not enter his head.

"Jerome's extravagance, then," he said, "has a root in the past."

Madame Permon nodded. "You have done wisely to send him to sea. I admit that your mother spoiled him—was he not her youngest boy? But the ocean should wash out his freshness!"

"I beseech you," said Napoleon, "that you will persuade my mother that I have acted wisely. Madame Bonaparte is not willing to concede that her son, the First Consul, is a good administrator of the affairs of our family."

* * * * *

Jerome Bonaparte, youngest brother of the First Consul, had, it was true, by his indiscreet conduct and prodigal habits,

given his family much worry. Too young to have had a part in the struggle which elevated Napoleon, he yet felt himself entitled to enjoy all the advantages his brother's success had brought. No one was feared by him except Napoleon, who, though immensely fond of him, scolded and lectured him as if the culprit were his own son.

And so it was proposed to send Jerome to sea, not to make a naval hero of him, but to remove him from the seductive temptations into which the environment of Napoleon drew him.

The young man, hungry for the pleasures of Paris, sought desperately to escape. "I am not feeling well," he pleaded. "Indeed, I am unfit for sea service!"

"That will be determined by the examining board of the navy," the First Consul said sternly.

Finding that Napoleon was resolved to send him to sea despite his excuses, the young man made this last despairing plea:

"Instead of sending me to perish of *ennui* at sea, you ought to take me for an *aide-de-camp*!"

"What, take you, greenhorn?" hotly replied the First Consul. His gaze rested on the scarred Colonel Lacuée, who was standing near. Napoleon directed Jerome's gaze toward him.

"Wait," he said, "till a ball has furrowed your face and then I may find a place for you near my person!"

And so, in November, 1800, Napoleon sent Jerome into the navy, with strict injunctions to Admiral Gantheaume, upon whose flagship he was to serve, to "make him work."

The young man's mettle was soon tested. The *Swiftsure*, an English ship of the line, of seventy-four guns, which had become separated from Lord Keith's squadron, surrendered to Gantheaume's fleet on June 24, 1801. As a reward for his coolness in action Jerome was sent on board the *Swiftsure* to receive the captain's sword and to take the prize to Toulon.

Buoyed up by this honor, he now looked forward to at least a vacation from naval duties. Napoleon, however, was sending an expedition in command of General Leclerc, his brother-in-law, to crush the insurrection of Touissant and his negroes on the island of San Domingo. Instead of giving Jerome permission to return to Paris, he ordered him to accompany the expedition.

San Domingo gave the not too enthusiastic Jerome his first military experience. The National Assembly of France, when it proclaimed equality between whites and blacks, had set these West Indian islands in a ferment. The French planters had refused to recognize the decree and against them a hundred thousand blacks had risen in revolt. Touissant, leader of the blacks, though at first he had restored peace, later boasted that he was "the Bonaparte of the Antilles," and, expelling the French governor, had assumed rulership of the island. This presumptuous act Napoleon, in spite of his pretenses at democracy, resolved to punish—and so, with a great flourish, the French fleet sailed to restore French authority on the troubled island. As the black chieftain retreated into the interior, Leclerc, with Jerome at his side, led fifteen thousand men into the pathless forests and treacherous swamps in search of him.

Yellow fever broke out and the French officers and soldiers perished like flies. Jerome's sister, the beautiful, capricious Pauline, wife of Leclerc, tried to lift up the spirits of the fever-stricken colony by keeping open house; by concerts and balls at which the surviving musicians of the general's band played as merrily as if they were in a Paris ballroom, but past those gayly lighted rooms a long procession of carts rumbled to the cemetery of La Fossette, taking dead soldiers to the grave to the music of the dance. The number of deaths had risen to eighteen thousand. In this crisis the low-spirited Jerome was overjoyed to be sent back to France as bearer of dispatches to Napoleon.

Again he showed himself to be too susceptible to the temptations of Paris. Gossip connected his name with a charming little *danseuse* of the opera. He was shockingly gay at *grisette* balls, and was too bold a spirit in the carnival. Again the First Consul sent him to sea. This time, however, he was given an independent command and, in 1803, as Capitaine de Vaisseau, accompanied by his friend, General Rewbell, and by a secretary, a physician and a large suite of attendants, cruised in the waters about Martinique during the hostilities between England and France.

* * * * *

It chanced that General Rewbell, Jerome's boon companion, had met and fallen in love with a French girl living in

Baltimore—no other than Betsy's friend, Henrietta Pascault, and after an impetuous wooing had married her.

Young Madame Rewbell, whose father, Marquis de Poléon, had once been a landowner in the West Indies, felt it no hardship to go from Baltimore to Martinique with her husband. When she was presented to Jerome, she captivated him with her slim grace and her amazing gift of blending decorum with freedom in a circle where it was quite expected that a husband or a wife should have "supplementary friendships."

One afternoon Jerome escorted the charming Baltimorean to Trois Ilets—that part of Martinique where Josephine had spent her girlhood.

"Why did I come to this place!" he burst out. "It depresses me. Here my sister-in-law Josephine spent her childhood; here 'the little Creole,' a girl playing with dolls, was told by her father that she should sail to France and marry a boy she had not seen since she was seven years old. From here the fifteen-year-old Josephine sailed—the doll still clutched to her breast. You know, madame, how when her young husband Beauharnais was guillotined by the Convention, Josephine's beauty allured my obscure, ambitious brother. Why he married her is plain—she had alliances by which he could climb. But now, so swiftly his ambition soars, it has risen beyond Josephine, his star. There is no limit to his lust for sovereignty. I should not care, if he did not include me in his schemes.

"Here I am, bound in my youth as firmly as was Josephine. Since the match-making First Consul has at his disposal the hands of scores of princesses of Europe, what chance have I of following the impulses of my own heart? Indeed, the First Consul has already admonished me by letter and by envoy to be careful of my conduct abroad—which means, no doubt, that he is selecting a bride for me."

Madame Rewbell, with a show of New World independence that would have dismayed her husband had he overheard, bade Jerome ignore the First Consul's wishes.

"One of your free spirit, monsieur, should marry a Baltimore girl," she said airily; "indeed, I will take it as an affront to myself if you do not. It will mean that my marriage—the first case of a French-American union, does not seem to you an example worth following. It will imply that you think General Rewbell might have made a better choice if he had returned to his own shores!"

"It will mean," the gallant young Bonaparte returned, "that my friend Rewbell plucked the loveliest American rose."

Madame Rewbell curtsied. "You could not have truly paid me that compliment if you had met Elizabeth Patterson."

"Though she were the loveliest woman in the world—which means of course, dear lady, that she would be your counterpart, I could not marry her. It is written in the stars that I must make a marriage of convenience."

"But it might influence your brother, monsieur, that she comes of a fine family; and that her father is one of the wealthiest men in the United States. Even if these facts did not impress the First Consul, you would do well to weigh them carefully, for his fortune would make you independent of your brother."

"He controls me by law," Jerome answered. "I cannot make my own decisions until I am thirty. My brother, though he is fond of me, regards me as a pawn in the game he is playing with the sovereigns of Europe. His dream is to link some principality to France through my marriage to its princess, however homely she may be!

"It's too bad for me," Jerome went on, "that the circumstances of the Bonaparte family are not favorable to Napoleon's scheme of a line of Bonapartean rulers. He himself is united to a woman who cannot bear him a child; his eldest brother Joseph has no son; Lucien is a widower with two daughters by his first wife, and is now marrying a woman of whom the First Consul disapproves. He has already had a son by that woman, but how could France some day set the boy on a throne, when he is only made legitimate by the tardy marriage of his parents? Louis, it is true, has married Hortense Beauharnais, the daughter of Josephine, and has a son for whom Napoleon displays a remarkable affection. The boy's parents have no fortune or station beyond what Napoleon gives him. Sister Pauline, it is also true, by marrying Prince Borghese, has linked the Bonapartes with one of the great families of Europe, but this alliance, illustrious as it is, will not help in the establishment of a hereditary line of kings.

"You see, madame," Jerome concluded in vast disgust, "why Napoleon is counting on me to link him with some royal family of Europe. I doubt not that even now, among his multitude of duties, he is compiling a list of unmarried princesses. Soon he will write, 'Come home and marry this one or that one!'"

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Nevertheless, the thought of lovely Betsy Patterson remained in Jerome's mind. To hear her beauty praised, without being able to view it, tantalized him. Was not her city the dwelling-place of his American friend, Commodore Barney, with whom he had many a jovial glass in the taverns of Martinique? And had not the Commodore urged him to visit him? Even if the girls of America were barred from him, he could at least behold their graces. Mon Dieu, these West Indian islands were stifling. He would sail for the United States, even if it were a violation of orders.

CHAPTER III

THE INCOMPARABLE BETSY

Elizabeth Patterson had come early to womanhood. Her slim grace at fourteen had become exquisite beauty at sixteen. Young men courted her. Older men, wise in the ways of the world, delighted to pour out for the absorbed girl their experiences. And travelers, stopping over in Baltimore on their way to Washington, bore away from the Patterson home the memory of a girl whose wit and loveliness were surpassed by none of the famous beauties they had met in Europe.

It delighted her to be told that there was something foreign about her beauty; to be informed that she resembled Pauline Bonaparte, or that her features had some of the classic grace of Madame Récamier. Surely born for large conquests was this lily-like creature with her face of pure Grecian contour; with her large dark-blue eyes that flashed and softened so disconcertingly; with that delicately molded brow and chin and breast; with that scarlet bud of a mouth and that complexion of peach bloom; with those beautifully rounded shoulders and slender, tapering arms.

Thrown thus early among admiring men, the calculating girl measured her lovers shrewdly. It was sweet in a moment of forgetfulness to yield to the rough embrace of handsome, sea-smelling James Duncan. But it was characteristic of the girl, when the door had closed on the hopeful sailor, to estimate her fortunes with him and to decide that he would never do for a husband.

It was nice also to listen to young David Warren telling of his plan to lead a train of wagons loaded with merchandise west to Pittsburgh and to help him figure his profits on the adventure; but as for her exchanging satin for homespun and staking her career on the outcome of David's pioneering—that was not to be thought of.

By the time the girl was seventeen she had exhausted the social resources of her background and decided that there was no prospect in Baltimore of a brilliant match or a happy career. Deliberately, she began to look abroad.

"They say," the girl mused, "that I have unusual beauty and wit. My father is a man of wealth. I have been bred to hold up my head in the best society. Why should I not employ these assets in getting a husband who will give me a European setting? I might become the wife of a foreign ambassador—perhaps I could even attract a title. I must not allow a kiss from Jim Duncan, or a tongue like Dave Warren's, to lead me into one of those humdrum marriages I see other girls making—a babe every year, beauty gone, figure ruined, and her only horizon a yard full of babies' things."

There were, in truth, not many polished beaux in Baltimore society—the country was in too crude a state to breed them. Those that were eligible among her townsmen Betsy continued to allure and fascinate. Most of these, however, found before long that her wit and cleverness made them uncomfortable. Her loveliness was scarcely a balm for her sharp repartee. It ended by their contenting themselves with the companionship of girls who, if not so beautiful, were yet more soothing to their self-esteem.

The girl's imperious spirit had been fed by her environment. While her parents and aunt managed the household, she, as the oldest daughter, had become the mistress of the younger element, including kin and servitors—no small group.

During her early girlhood, as regularly as the coming of New Year, a baby had come to the Patterson home. Their amusement, if not their care, had fallen largely on her. Grudgingly fond of them individually, she conceived a hatred for babies as a class.

"We must welcome what God sends," Mrs. Patterson said submissively when the girl rebelled.

"When I get married, I hope God overlooks me," Betsy retorted.

When her reading of French customs had begun—through frank, spicy memoirs smuggled to her by sea-captains in her father's employ—it was her brothers and sisters that she used in her practise of those customs. For instance, when she was sixteen:

"Come, children, I've a new French game. We will call this our drawing-room. Get chairs. Each of you take a seat. Sit up stiffly. Now only one person talk at one time. I shall be Madame Récamier. You may choose other names. Madame de Staël, Monsieur Sismondi, Benjamin Franklin, Josephine Bonaparte, Monsieur Voltaire, Monsieur Talleyrand, M. Châteaubriand. This sofa shall be my *chaise-longue*. Now I shall talk."

With vivid fancy aided by a retentive memory, she launched forth into a description of France under the Bourbons.

"What in the world are you talking about?" one of the boys said sharply.

"What fun is it—sitting stiff in a chair listening to your chatter?" put in another.

"Barbarians!" Betsy said frigidly. "We are supposed to be portraying the cream of French society. This is a *salon*. It is foolish of me, of course, to expect you to enjoy it. Go away—the empty chairs will be a more appreciative audience!"

* * * * *

The Patterson home was one well equipped for the training of a girl who dreamed so imperially.

In her father's house, with its colonial silver, mahogany furniture and tall candles, there was a small community of guests, relatives, and slaves, whose care and entertainment required talent and ability that made excellent training for court life. Nor was the hospitality less lavish. There was a never-ending round of meals served by blacks; there were waffles and corncakes; muffins or Sally Lunn; fish, soft-shell crabs, terrapin and oysters from the Chesapeake; a roasted young pig with an apple in his mouth; and a turkey stuffed with oysters, with a nip of punch for sauce, or a canvas-back duck with its jelly accompaniment. Also, there was a constantly replenished supply of delicacies brought by ships from abroad that were rare enough to delight the taste of the *bon vivant*. Yet, even before a gleaming table crowded with delicious Maryland foods, the girl's romantic fancy longed for the confections she imagined princesses enjoyed.

Among so many relatives and visitors, there was no need that Betsy should make a formal *début*. As she passed from girlhood to young womanhood, she passed from school to ballroom.

For entertainment outside of the family circle, there were occasional visits to the adored brick theater, where a troupe of idolized players appeared in Elizabethan dramas; also there were dances at the brilliant Assembly Balls in town, and frequent dances or fox hunts held at Colonel John Eager Howard's home at Belvedere, or at Charles Carroll's estate Doughoregan, or at Captain Ridgely's country-seat Hampton.

Sometimes the girls and men rode to balls on horseback, and then Betsy and her girl friends thought nothing of covering their fine muslin gowns with blankets to protect them from the dust. Winter with its snows did not hinder their merry-making, for there were capacious sleighs which when hitched to blooded horses gave them rides as exhilarating as the dances that followed.

There was one of her father's cronies who more than any other person established her in her purpose to have a career abroad. That individual was Commodore Barney, who fed her imagination with his memories.

"Tell me, Commodore," she coaxed, "how did it come about that you kissed Marie Antoinette?"

"Ah, Betsy," chuckled the sea-fighter, "there's mischief in your eye. You're poking fun at me!"

"Indeed, no," Betsy swore solemnly. "The Caton girls were asking me about that exploit, and I promised to bring them the truth of it."

"Well," said Commodore Barney, "here's the yarn—do with it what you like.

"I was the bearer of official letters from Robert Morris, at the head of the Navy Department, to Benjamin Franklin, who, with John Jay and John Adams, were winding up in France our war with England. The French people idolized Dr. Franklin—the shop windows of Paris were crowded with portraits, medallions and busts of him. Against the luxury of the French court, his plain dress and simple manners pleased the citizens. The common people, disgusted with kings, idolized the good doctor as the friend of mankind.

"When I delivered the letters to him at Passy, which was near the King and his court at Versailles, I felt ashamed in the presence of the great man, and told him I must soon join my ship.

"He laid his hand on my shoulder.

"'It would be a pity,' he said, 'to return to your ship without the enjoyment of a few days in Paris.'

"So he introduced me into the society of ministers, generals, noblemen and gentle ladies of Paris. He insisted on

presenting me, rough sailor though I was, at the court at Versailles.

"Louis XVI seemed to me a weak, pathetic figure. But his fair young queen, Marie Antoinette! When I looked into her eyes, I clean forgot the gossip of the streets about her flirtations and scandals.

"I do not know what made me so bold. Perhaps there was a challenge in her gaze. Perhaps it was the teasing of her gay maids-of-honor. At any rate, it was not her slim, lovely hand I kissed, but instead—her cheek, as soft as a damask rose!"

"Bravo!" cried Betsy. "Of all your honors, Commodore, let that be the proudest memory—you busied a queen—you kissed the lovely Marie Antoinette!"

"Yes," said Barney dryly, "we simple, democratic Americans have yet a hankering after royalty."

As the girl approached womanhood, one man was outstanding in the world—Napoleon Bonaparte. Beside his career, that of any other man in public life seemed tame. The talk of her household, whenever it drifted to Europe, centered upon Napoleon, whose sword was changing the map of the world. Next to the magnificence of courts, she esteemed military glory. When her father hoped that the victorious Corsican would prove to be the Washington of France and lay down his arms to promote peace, she wished that he would go on like Cæsar. Washington had created just a republic; Napoleon might create a new, a more glorious aristocracy. Great generals and great battles made life thrilling—long live Napoleon!

Discovering that Commodore Barney had met Napoleon, she questioned him repeatedly concerning the Corsican's appearance and habits. She asked also about Josephine. "What good fortune," she exclaimed, "for an obscure Creole to become the wife of a man who may rule Europe! Given her background, how far could I go?"

It was then that Commodore Barney, watching the animated girl with amused calculation, had said:

"What would you say, miss, if a noble young Frenchman, the very brother of this Napoleon, should come to collect from you the kiss I gave poor Marie Antoinette?"

The girl's eyes were flashing jewels.

"We will answer that, sir, when the payment is demanded!"

"I won't say more now," he said, "but there may come a day when those pretty lips will have to pay the price."

Still another gentleman of Baltimore who had the power to transport Betsy's thoughts was Monsieur Pascault, the Marquis de Poléon, who, escaping the massacre at San Domingo, had chosen to live in Maryland rather than in disturbed France. His house—the oldest one in Baltimore—had been ornamented by beautiful iron gates that he had had shipped to him from France.

Here was a place Betsy delighted to visit with her father. She found in the Pascault home an air of refinement the like of which she had never seen even in the finest Maryland homes. Monsieur Pascault, tapping his gold snuff-box, gave the girl a satisfying picture of a gentleman of the old régime. And then, to give a keener edge to her aspirations, there was pretty Mademoiselle Pascault waiting for General Rewbell, friend of Jerome's, to come and propose. The Pascaults gave frequent suppers, and often there were young diplomats from Washington as guests. How stupid Baltimore men seemed to Betsy beside these courtly, vivacious gentlemen.

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Commodore Barney, having received news by stage that Jerome had arrived in New York City from the West Indies, sent by the returning coach a letter warmly inviting his young comrade-in-arms to be his guest.

Jerome, his interest in Baltimore heightened by what Madame Rewbell had told him of Maryland society, accepted at once. His train of coaches started southward. In the autumn of 1803, he rolled into the politely expectant city that had welcomed in Revolutionary times Lafayette and Rochambeau and that had continued its hospitality to the French noblemen who, at the beginning of the French Revolution, had saved their heads by crossing the Atlantic.

If Baltimore then had delighted to welcome and entertain Bourbon sympathizers, it did not mean to let its hospitality flag when a young and charming young democrat—who might develop at any moment into a Prince of France—came to visit

it.

To the young Frenchman, used to picturesque Old World cities, Baltimore indeed needed beauty in its women to relieve its lack of distinction. He had found the streets of New York disgustingly unclean. The chewing of tobacco, with its eternal spitting, had disgusted him. His reception, while hospitable, had been crude. Baltimore he found not quite so dirty, yet the town could not by the widest stretch of politeness be called charming.

The growth of the town was epitomized by Market Street, with its line of low-browed hip-roofed wooden houses, which had leaped into the surrounding fields, dragging commerce with it. The paint of the houses—blue, white and yellow, with here and there a substantial mansion of red brick—made the streets colorful if not beautiful. Under the locust trees that lined the walls, white urchins played with half-naked pickaninnies.

In the lanes of Baltimore, past the spire of St. Paul's Church, brisk ship-owners and merchants, on their way to the bank or wharf, paused to watch the young voyager from the Old World; and ancient gentlemen, who did not realize that they were relics, in three-cornered cocked hats, high-colored coats with narrow capes, knee-breeches, striped stockings, buckled shoes, long, dangling watch-chains and full Revolutionary costume—made him deep salutations when his carriage stopped, flourishing their canes backward with the grace of swordsmen, and told him that they remembered Lafayette, and besought him to carry back to the Marquis their regards.

Ladies, tripping full-skirted to the circulating library, gazed with awe on the handsome youth, and forgot their book heroes.

Occasionally, the traveler passed a courtyard from which bright-eyed girls gazed out with shy yet eager curiosity at the prince flashing by with his gay train.

Having come at the season for races, Jerome on the first day of his arrival was whisked away by his host to the race-track at Govane's. He traveled thereto amidst a thick procession: elegant coaches or farmers' carts turned into conveyances for the family; girls and gallants on horseback; here and there a tallyho thronged with gay ladies and gentlemen, its postilion trumpeting haughtily. Between the two streams of horses, tradesmen and laborers plodded on foot, while white ragamuffins and half-naked black boys clung to the backs of wagons to hasten their pace, or besought drivers of half-empty carriages for a ride.

In this merry procession jaunted the lacquered coach of the irresponsible and irrepressible Jerome, who behind his ebony coachmen glanced left and right, returning with a D'Artagnan gaze the glances of daringly coquettish girls.

It was not, however, the races, exciting as they were, that Jerome went to see. When he reached the race-track he could no longer conceal his eagerness to meet the rare Elizabeth.

"Why have I not seen Miss Patterson?" he inquired.

Commodore Barney dug his thumb into the youth's ribs.

"Still the same romantic Jerome! Well, while there was no falsehood told about that girl's beauty, if I were you I'd not be so eager. For when you meet her, it will mean your absolute surrender to her loveliness!"

Suddenly the Commodore caught sight of a slim girl who rose above her shining coach like an enthroned princess. She wore a simple gown of buff-colored silk, with a lace fichu, and a leghorn hat with tulle trimmings and ostrich plumes, under which her brown hair waved and glinted.

"There is Miss Patterson!" said the Commodore.

At that moment the girl turned. Jerome found himself staring into haunting blue eyes that lit up a face of marvelous beauty. Her gaze met his for an instant, then shifted—it seemed indifferently.

Jerome's long stare, if he had not been a distinguished visitor, would have been labeled rudeness.

"Madame Rewbell was right," he breathed. "Never have I beheld such beauty, such grace! I could seek the world over and not find so fair a *'belle femme.'*"

The girl's feigned indifference to his ardent glances—the exquisite coquetry by which, at a distance, she invited his

admiration, fanned his ardor.

To himself he said, "Why must I be mated to some homely member of the nobility when I might win this beauty? Yonder is one worthy to sit on a throne! How she outshines those heavy, dowdy German princesses about whom Napoleon is always talking! The First Consul, if he saw her, would yield himself to the influence of her loveliness. But, connoisseur in beauty that he is, I should have to guard her from his intriguing!"

That day both the girl and the youth went home unsatisfied. Tossed here and there by surging crowds, they had not met.

"Patience," the Commodore consoled Jerome. "You have been invited tomorrow to a ball at the house of Samuel Chase, a distinguished Marylander, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Elizabeth will be there. You will dance with her—delicious intimacy!"

"For that chance," said Jerome, "it was worth being exiled from France—worth risking the displeasure of the First Consul, who dreams I am dutifully sailing the Spanish Main."

CHAPTER IV

COURTSHIP

"Guess where I have been! Guess whom I have seen!"

William Patterson, startled and curious, glanced from his news journal.

In the doorway Betsy stood, a breath-taking vision of youth and ardor and grace.

"Why, girl!" he exclaimed. "What a color the races gave you! Please stop growing lovelier. Give some of these other girls a chance to catch up with you. I don't want to entertain too many beaux."

"If today is an augury," Betsy teased, "you may not be bothered by my suitors very long. A young nobleman of France appears to be much taken with me. Yet, if what Commodore Barney says is true—that he came to the United States mainly to meet me—why does he delay? Does he want me to call on him, I wonder?"

"So it's young Bonaparte!" her father chuckled. "Barney had meant to bring him here tonight, but the French residents are giving him a dinner."

William Patterson was less at ease about it than he seemed.

Plague take Joshua Barney for ever inviting the Bonaparte to Baltimore! A lot of cheek this young Frenchman had—coquetting with Baltimore maidens after those affairs in the West Indies. If the worst came, William Patterson decided, he would tell his girl gossip his captains had brought from Martinique. He would have liked it if a meeting of the headstrong, headlong Betsy and the gay blade from France could have been avoided—they might blend like flame!

Betsy's tongue ran on:

"We looked across a sea of heads at each other, and I could tell that he was speaking to the Commodore about me. He pretended to be watching the horses, but his face was ever in my direction. The girls said it was noticeable that he looked at me even in the hottest excitement of the races. I hardly glanced at him. At last Commodore Barney and he started toward our party, but the crowd and the carriages came between us, and, of course, we drove home without waiting—it wouldn't do to appear too eager."

"Quite right, Elizabeth," Miss Spear, her prim aunt, cooed above her clicking needles; "even with a prince, that's the wiser course!"

Betsy made a face behind her aunt's back, but her talk flowed on vividly.

"Prince—how like one he is! It doesn't seem so far away now—my dream of becoming a great lady of the salons and courts of Europe!"

William Patterson, easily provoked, began to boil.

"For shame, Betsy! For shame! If this Bonaparte were owner of all of France, he'd be less desirable a husband for you than any of a score of American young men I could name."

"Please don't mention them, Father," said Betsy, icily; "please don't mention even one in the same breath with the brother of Napoleon! American young men! What do they talk to me about? Trading expeditions westward. Cargoes of flour and staves for Europe! Prospects of war between England and France that will give them a chance in their tricky clippers to make fortunes privateering! Never a topic such as the cultivated men and women of Europe discuss. A dull country produces dull people!"

Miss Spear, in high indignation, quit the room. William Patterson, quivering, rose to his feet.

"Girl, I tell you to hush! A fine American you are, speaking so uncivilly of your countrymen. If one of your brothers said that, I'd cowhide him. Don't try my patience too far—I'll contrive that you never meet this Lothario!"

Fearing that she had gone too far, Betsy fled upstairs.

"Lothario? What did Father mean by that?" she asked herself as she escaped to her own room. The question did not trouble her long—she gave her thoughts completely to the captivating Jerome. With flushed cheeks the entranced girl lay awake the night through, dreaming of a dark-eyed, aristocratic lover, breathing again and again the words: "Madame Jerome Bonaparte, sister-in-law to the Emperor of France."

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The pair met, as predicted, at the home of the Honorable Samuel Chase, Commodore Barney's father-in-law.

The ornamentation of the Chase mansion was impressive. Plants and flowers lined the hall and staircase. Great chandeliers with myriad prisms shimmering above the mahogany floor gave a soft glow to the brilliant uniforms of the officers and the white shoulders and jeweled necks of the rarely beautiful women.

Most of the guests had arrived, and sat chattering in a fever of expectancy. Suddenly horses' hooves clashed in the driveway. Betsy, for all her feigned coolness, trembled as the Bonaparte entered.

The orchestra began; dancers filled the floor. There were no couples—the young people, dancing the quadrille, stepped about gracefully in groups, never clasping more than their hands. No dance like the iniquitous waltz—which, a decade later, daring Americans borrowed from Europe—was introduced that evening to send shocked chaperons hurrying out of the room with their fair charges. No gentleman's hand dared encircle a lady's waist. The day had not yet come in Baltimore when, as Fielding wrote, "a delicate girl who would shudder at the gross idea of a man's advance, has come to permit herself to flourish around the room to a wriggling German air, with a strange man's arm around her waist, and her delicate hand upon his brawny shoulder."

Yet for the distinguished pair, brought suddenly together and rapidly introduced in the quadrille, there were moments of intoxication even in this prim dance, moments of adventure on his part and of retreat on hers; of soft words hinting at admiration and love; of daring feminine glances alternating with shy downward looks.

"How princely he seems! What a lover he would make!" Betsy's heart was whispering. "Every girl in the room wants him. But he sees only me. I shall be coy yet bold if need be. . . . If my French were only better . . . will he think me stupid beside those brilliant women of the salons and courts?"

In one of these delicious moments Bonaparte, twirling suddenly, felt the long, gold chain he wore about his neck suddenly taut. Turning, he found that its links had become entangled in Miss Patterson's hair. With soft words and gentle fingers, he disentangled the chain from that exquisite neck.

"So in this way," breathed Jerome, "Fortune has answered my prayer. I trust, mademoiselle, this chain is an augury—while I apparently release you, still I trust you will be bound to me in friendship."

Betsy was dazed by the swift, subtle attack. Yet she had the wit to answer: "I fear, Captain Bonaparte, that you but add me to a chain of many captives!"

He gave her a startled look. Could she have heard of his West Indian affairs? Seeing, however, that she had made the retort out of utter innocence, he replied in kind and pleaded that he might dance in the next quadrille with her. Dowagers, clucking, gathered their disappointed marriageable daughters to their sides, and whispered disapproval at the Frenchman's fervor, at the girl's surrender. The tongues of Betsy's friends married them that night.

Facing this radiant girl, Jerome forgot brother, empire and the future.

"Another dance—we cannot separate!" he whispered. "To miss a dance would mean an eternity of waiting."

She glanced about at wistful maids and scandalized matrons. "How warm I am!" she said. "Let us go outdoors."

It was moonlight in the fragrant garden. Among the rose-bushes and asters and boxwood, the fingers that had disentangled the chain from the lovely neck pressed her waist.

She felt his breath against her cheek—eighteen wooed impetuously by twenty.

"I have known you scarce an hour," she breathed; "you must not kiss me!"

"Our hearts came together long before this hour," he pleaded. "Do not keep your kisses from me longer!"

The girl yielded her lips—Jerome ravished them.

All of a sudden she recovered from her intoxication. He must not think her too easily won.

Returning at last at the dismayed Miss Spear's command, Betsy met with cool indifference the searching eyes of envious girls and outraged mothers, but her flushed cheeks and lustrous eyes betrayed her secret.

Mary Caton, at the first opportunity, came up to her breathlessly.

"Are you in love with him? Did he propose?"

"Mercy!" pleaded Betsy. "Give him time. He has not proposed yet, but he kissed me!"

"Betsy!" the shocked Mary cried.

"Pshaw," said Betsy coolly, "it's the French way. As for my being in love with him—I don't know. He is handsome and polite and he makes love divinely, but he's a foreigner, and I must admit that while he fascinates, I also shrink from him. When I shut my eyes and think that he is soon to be a prince, I can imagine myself marrying him. But if he had as a rival an Englishman with the same prospects, I couldn't say what I'd do."

"But there are no titled Englishmen coming to Baltimore," sighed Mary. "I want one of those myself."

"You mustn't throw over brother Robert," Betsy chided as Mary blushed. "You'd better let me be the pioneer in title-hunting."

"Then you think you really can learn to love Jerome Bonaparte?" Mary asked.

"I'm going to let my head rule my heart," Betsy replied. "We shall see what we shall see."

From the night of the Chase ball, Jerome devoted himself to the furtherance of his courtship. General Rewbell tugged in dismay at his mustache, while his pretty wife exulted. Le Camus swore. Bonaparte swept aside their doubts and protests as if they were thistledown, and went to enlist Commodore Barney as love's advocate.

"Well," the Commodore greeted him, "you've met her!"

"And been conquered!" sighed Jerome. "She is adorable! I have not slept a wink since I parted from her. This is no light flirtation. I realize there is only one way to win Elizabeth—I desire to marry her. My friend, you must aid me. Tell me about her family—so that I can write to my mother and win her to my side in case Napoleon is nasty about it. What can I say that will convince them that I will not marry beneath me?"

"Beneath you!" the Commodore exploded. "One look at her will show them that there's as much quality to her as to any of your fine ladies of France! William Patterson, her father, may seem to you to lack some of the polish of your French associates, but over here we like our diamonds in the rough. Sit down and I'll give you his pedigree.

"Betsy's father was one who preferred to flee from royalty rather than pursue it. 'Tis the county of Donegal he claims as a birthplace—though there's English and Scotch blood in him too. His father was a small farmer there whose farm was too poor to enable him to give his flock that learning every son of Erin desires his children to have. An older brother had gone to Philadelphia and was doing well there. Will, when fourteen, came out to join him. An Irish shipping merchant of Philadelphia gave the lad work. At twenty-one Will was in the shipping business for himself.

"Then his big chance came. When the Revolutionary War started, he foresaw that munitions would be required by the American troops, and so he invested all his savings in two vessels, loading them with native products for which there was a market abroad. These ships he sent to your country, going himself as passenger. There he reinvested the money he got for the cargoes in arms and ammunition, and sailed home.

"Never was the arrival of arms more opportune. The army of General Washington was then entering on the siege of Boston with scarcely enough ammunition to fire a salute. The guns and bullets brought by Patterson were rushed northward.

"Sailing to the West Indies, he helped the American cause there with profit to himself. On his return two years later he landed at Baltimore instead of Philadelphia, and was shrewd enough to see the advantage of this town for a man in the shipping trade. So he decided to live here. Half of his fortune he has invested in Baltimore real estate. The remainder he devotes to shipping. He is now one of the two wealthiest men in the State—the other being the Signer—Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

"I've made considerable money myself, at privateering, but I can't hold a candle to Will. His ships are on every sea. He is president of the Bank of Maryland—the first bank to be chartered south of Philadelphia. He married Dorcas Spear—a woman of high social position, a lady to her fingertips. His wife and he move in the highest circles; he has relatives in Congress and in administrative offices. The President is proud to count him his friend. Permit me to assure you that your marriage into his family will bring honor rather than discredit to the Bonapartes!"

"I beg you to understand, my dear friend," said the humbled Jerome, "that my inquiry was not to set at rest any fears on my own part. Her attraction for me would be as strong if she were without wealth or family. But you know my brother. It will be happier for Elise—should I win her—if by such honorable facts the way is paved for her in France."

Monsieur Pascault's became a trysting-place for the pair. Madame Rewbell devised ways of bringing them together. They were seen at balls and theaters. And always it was Jerome the pursuer and Betsy the coy and capricious.

"Has the head decided that the heart will take him?" Mary Caton asked.

"Both head and heart seem to be on the point of agreement," Betsy confessed.

Betsy had decided—she could give to Jerome Bonaparte as much love as she could give to any man. To mate with him would bring her grandest dreams true—she would marry him.

The town talked and talked. Mrs. Caton, Mrs. Mansfield and other estimable ladies deemed it wise to have a talk with Betsy's mother. Mrs. Patterson, a woman of many children and many cares, realized at the end of the talk that her eldest daughter was on the verge of an engagement which, however romantic it seemed, promised no happy ending.

She went to her husband with her problem. He listened frowningly.

"Take her down to Virginia—I'll force her to go!" said William Patterson. "The Frenchman will be gone in a few weeks. Keep her there till I send you word."

Betsy would not hear of leaving Baltimore.

"We are betrothed—you shall not separate us. I was born for court life—Jerome will make me a queen. My ambitions make me wretched here. It amazes me that you do not see the advantages a marriage with the brother of Napoleon would bring me. It might be a blessing for us if I could stay here as the wife of some respectable young man in business; but nature never intended me for obscurity."

"Don't be ridiculous!" said William Patterson. "To Virginia you'll go if I have to send you there bound in a coach. If you make further trouble, I'll disown you. There'll not be a penny for your wedding-dress or a relative to attend your marriage. I wonder what Jerome will say to a bride without fortune, and what Napoleon will think of a girl cast off by her family."

Betsy grew frightened. Jerome's family could be counted on to oppose the match. If her family also remained hostile to it, it might never take place. She would yield now, that she might gain later. And maybe absence would intensify Jerome's desire for her.

So, after a long, tearful talk in Jerome's embrace, the girl yielded to her parents. "I'll find a way to come back soon," she promised her lover. The coach and four, with Isham sitting somberly on the carriage-box, and with the slaves saying farewell as sorrowfully as if the occasion were their young mistress's funeral, rolled away to the hospitable but undesired Virginia.

The Randolphs welcomed the girl warmly; yet all the diversions the plantation offered—pleasures that in her childhood Betsy had relished to the utmost—abundant food, dancing, fine horses, corn-husking, merry-making in "the quarters," failed to lift Betsy's spirits.

Lovely as she knew herself to be, captivating as she had proved to Jerome, she knew that there were at home scores of beautiful girls who, envying her, would make the most of her absence. She grew madly restive as she pictured her prince surrounded by them, dancing with them, in moonlit gardens with them. Was it true what people whispered—that he was a light-of-love?

Listlessly she drove to the county fair; abstractedly she watched a dozen blooded horses race round the three-mile course. She could scarcely smile when young men cudged each other for a prize of five dollars; or when a score of fiddlers contested; or when a number of singers, having wet their windpipes with good liquor, tried which could render a song most pleasingly. Had she not been in such a distracted state, she might have joined Nancy Randolph in dancing for the prize of a pair of handsome slippers. As it was, she looked on tragically, and when handsome, soft-spoken James Randolph, Nancy's brother home on a visit from the college of William and Mary, begged her to dance with him she did so with a listlessness that caused other girls to pity her partner.

James, however, having been a beau among the girls of his college town, was resourceful. Challenged by the girl's lack of interest, he drew upon all these resources—his fiddle, his sweet tenor voice, his knowledge of the world as gained in the enlightened circle of Williamsburg, and the shy, merry sayings that had conquered other girls almost as charming as this one.

He wooed her on horseback; he wooed her by telling her of how he was reading Blackstone and how, through his family's friendship with Jefferson and Madison, he hoped for a chance some day to represent Virginia in the Congress of the United States; he wooed her by telling of his plans to emulate Roger Taney and move to Annapolis where the judges sat so solemnly in long scarlet cloaks. The girl, however, checkmated him by weeping on his shoulder.

"Don't speak of love, James," she sobbed. "Don't make life any harder for me! I am pledged to Jerome Bonaparte. Separation can't change my feelings. Please, James, help me to persuade Mother to take me home. I shall run away if she doesn't."

There was then, of course, nothing for a chivalrous young Virginian to do but to put his arm about her, wipe the tears from her enchanting eyes, fortify his heart against their lure, and assure her his aid though it were like plunging a dagger into his heart.

Her heartbroken appearance melted her mother as it had melted James Randolph.

"I'd rather have her the wife of a foreigner than see her pining away," Mrs. Patterson told Mrs. Randolph. "Home we'll go. I've done my best to break it off and my conscience is clear."

And so, leaving James Randolph lorn and disconsolate beside his fiddle and law-books, Betsy, preparing to use her wits to the uttermost to overcome her stubborn father, returned home.

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Had the girl been able to watch Jerome's distress at her vanishing, and his utter dejection in the midst of the very girls she feared as rivals, she would have been happier in Virginia.

"I have never seen Jerome in such a mood," said crafty Le Camus, his secretary, to General Rewbell. "He's really in earnest this time. It will never do—we must get him back to France."

"It will do well enough—that girl would grace a French throne!" returned Rewbell, happy in his own marriage.

Again Jerome came and went to the Patterson home, for Betsy's first act on stepping out of the coach was to make Isham the bearer of a throbbing note to Jerome. That night the room that held them was Paradise. All the romance and passion of France and Corsica throbbed in the embrace of Jerome. Betsy, warm eighteen, forgot for the hour her ambitions and yielded herself to rapture.

On the other side of the wall, William Patterson puffed his pipe, scowled and confessed himself on the verge of defeat. Still, however, he hoped against hope.

"Napoleon will never allow it. He'll soon call the lad home, and then it'll all be over. The girl will mourn him only until the proper man comes along—then she'll boast her life long how once a prince asked her to be his queen!"

As if reading her father's thoughts, Betsy at that moment was whispering to her lover:

"Tell me it's not true that some day a French frigate will come and bear you away from me!"

He stopped her speech with his lips. "Flower of my heart," he said, in his fascinating broken English, "when that frigate comes, never fear, you shall go aboard it as my wife!"

"Once Napoleon looks into your eyes he will say that I could have made no other choice. My mother and sisters will be fond of you, for you are not at all the American type; indeed, beloved, you are remarkably like my sister Pauline and strongly resemble the women of the Bonaparte family!"

Betsy was delighted with this declaration. She took it as an acknowledgment by Jerome that she was fit to grace a palace. It gratified her immensely to be linked in a careless compliment with the sisters of the Corsican.

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On the day the two announced their engagement, William Patterson went to Washington to see the French Consul-General.

"Why didn't you have the young man sent back to his ship? What will his family say?" he queried.

"Napoleon has been advised that he is away from his post of duty. The marriage would be disastrous for your family, monsieur," said that courteous but adamant official. "Napoleon designs to protect France by making alliances with the leading powers of Europe. Eugene Beauharnais, his stepson, has, at the First Consul's suggestion, married Princess Augusta of Bavaria. Napoleon regrets the union of his brother Lucien with a woman who is not of royal birth. Estimable as your daughter is, should Jerome make such an alliance, he will provoke the wrath of his brother. He will assuredly be cast off without position or money. You will have the young man to support.

"Remember, too, that according to the laws of France the marriage of a man of Jerome's age is not legal without the consent of a parent or a guardian. Jerome cannot obtain the consent of his mother, who is obedient to the will of her illustrious son, the First Consul."

Back to Baltimore came William Patterson. Betsy, a lovely volcano of wrath, sneered at "the lying diplomat!"

She was more certain of Jerome now; less fearful of provoking her father.

"I have won Jerome's love! I shall win Napoleon's admiration! They say he is only an ogre at a distance, that he is the most susceptible of men to a fair face. If you will help me play the game, Father, you shall see me conquer the court of France—you will be proud to be the father of the only American girl who has attained distinction in the French empire!"

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To the Baltimore County Court House the couple rode one afternoon, and there Jerome obtained a marriage license.

Utterly defeated, William Patterson resolved to "play the game." However, six days later than the one on which the license was issued, he received in a bold hand, a well-written anonymous communication:

"Is it possible, sir," [the letter ran] "you can so far forget yourself, and the happiness of your child, as to consent to her marrying Mr. Bonaparte? If you knew him, you never would, as misery must be her portion—he who but a few months ago destroyed the peace and happiness of a girl of a respectable family in Nantz by promising marriage, then ruining her, leaving her to misery and shame. What has been his conduct in the West Indies? There he ruined a lovely young woman who had only been married for a few weeks! He parted her from her husband, and destroyed that family! And here, what is his conduct? At the very moment he was demanding your daughter in marriage he ruined a young French girl, whom he now leaves also in misery!"

"His conduct at Nantz and in the West Indies has already reached his brother's ears, and he dares not appear before him! His voyage to this country proves it! He now wishes to secure himself a

home at your expense until things can be arranged for his return to France—when, rest assured, *he* will be the first to turn your daughter off, and laugh at your credulity! Nothing that can be done will be binding on him; and if you knew his true character of dissipation, you would never! no, never! even with the approbation of his family, trust your daughter to him.

"Then take advice in time and break off everything before it is too late. Let nothing on earth tempt you to such a union! What is here said may be depended upon, and much more might be said, for, without exception, he is the most profligate young man of the age. Demand seriously of Miss Wheeler, and you will there find he has already asked her in marriage with the same intentions!

"Will he marry your daughter at the Catholic Church before the Bishop in open day, as did his friend? I say no! because he knows such a marriage would be in some measure binding upon him; and that he will not do, nor anything else that will appear against him. Trust not his honor! There never was any in his family!

Yours,
A FRIEND."

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE

William Patterson, methodically noting upon the envelope of the anonymous letter: "*Received this letter by Penny Post, on Saturday, 5th November, 1803, at one o'clock, P.M.*," stowed it away in his desk. The sting of it, however, could not be so easily disposed of.

Early that evening he spoke of the letter to Commodore Barney.

"Now, William," the Commodore advised, summoning to meet the situation all the diplomacy he had learned in French circles, "you mustn't be overwrought by an unsigned letter. It is true that while he was in the West Indies Jerome was quite a beau, but you can't judge a Bonaparte by the standards you apply to a young American business man. You and I have both been abroad. We know that the social code of Europe is quite different from ours. With the example before him of the open infidelity of the Continent, you can't expect Jerome to be a Joseph!

"Betsy is too sensible a girl to let such rumors shatter her romance. French girls, when they take a husband, accept such things along with him. However, when you come to draw up the marriage settlement, it would be well to safeguard her against any possible fickleness on the part of our guest."

"She's marrying him mainly through ambition. He's marrying her through infatuation," cried William Patterson. "It's too much like one of the marriages of royalty and aristocracy abroad to suit my notions. That young man must understand that he is to conform to American social conventions if he weds my girl. Rewbell's a sober, sensible fellow. I'm going to question him about young Bonaparte's morals."

He had his chance when the General accompanied Jerome later in the evening to the Patterson home. While the lovers were absorbed in their own intimate affairs, William Patterson beckoned him into the library.

The General found himself in a most difficult position. When the matter was bluntly put to him, he shrugged his shoulders, spread his palms, and gazed at the ceiling.

"Monsieur Patterson," he said, "it seems to be a question of two standards of morality. Permit me to assure you that Jerome Bonaparte is a most estimable young man according to his light.

"As for his friendships with women, that, sir, is no one's concern—so long as Jerome is discreet, what does it matter? Young Bonaparte can hardly be expected not to have amours. Has not his illustrious brother set him an example? The young man was forbidden to marry—would you have him forbidden to love—especially when his charm and rank make him a target for seductive young women? All that is asked of a Bonaparte by my countrymen is that he conduct his amours decently—that is, that he keep them secret and avoid having the Government accused of licentiousness. Jerome has been very discreet. These things are but whispers—they will never become public to scandalize your daughter!"

Their voices had grown loud. William Patterson was bursting into an explosion that would have hurled to the winds Maryland traditions of hospitality when the brocaded tapestries at the end of the room parted. Betsy, all the roses fled from her cheeks, came forward. Jerome, bravely endeavoring to appear at ease, sauntered after her.

"Father," she asked, "what accusations have been made against Jerome?"

Steeling himself against pity for his headstrong daughter, William Patterson opened the table drawer and drew out the scandalous letter.

"It is well that you should be forewarned of what folks say of the man you desire to marry. This is what came to me by today's post."

As rigidly as if chiseled from marble, the girl read.

As she turned then to the uneasy Jerome, her slender fingers, like steel grips, clutched and creased the damning paper.

"Are these things true, Jerome?"

He burst into a torrent of French exclamations.

Betsy stood listening for the ring of truth in them. When she did not hear it she burst into sobs. Romance had temporarily submerged ambition. She had not counted upon accepting gallantry as part of the price she must pay for a royal position.

Suddenly she ran to her father and hid her face against his coat.

"Tell him I will not marry him!" she said.

General Rewbell stared at her as if she had uttered treason. Jerome drew himself up in his finest military style. It was unthinkable that a brother of the Emperor should suffer this humiliation, yet if it must be, the girl would not see his wound.

Pale but regal, Betsy, without looking at Jerome, left the room on her father's arm.

* * * * *

The dazed girl spent a sleepless night brooding over the disaster. Now that Jerome was gone, she was panic-stricken at her rashness in sending him away, and a little ashamed that she had permitted the primitive emotion of jealousy and an unsuspected tendency to adhere to a strait-laced code, to have brought her careful planning to ruin.

"What a fool! What a fool!" she accused herself, dabbing at her lovely wet eyes with her handkerchief. "It is as the Rewbells say: a question of two standards of morality. Baltimore rules of conduct can't apply to Paris. Here I have been railing at American Puritanism, yet have allowed myself to be swayed by it. If I want a brilliant career, I'll have to shut my eyes to some things. A prude never made a success at court. What's past is past—why should I let it make me miserable—wreck my future? If this be forgiven, I think he loves me enough to be faithful!"

The next morning found the girl, pale and distraught, prepared to announce that she had reconstructed her ideas of morality.

"Tell my father," she said to her black attendant, "that I must see him before he goes to the wharves."

Fearfully, William Patterson went to her bedroom.

"I've changed my mind since last night," she told him. "I want Jerome to come to me. It is the custom for European rulers to have mistresses. There must be Nell Gwynnes and Du Barrys. If those tales are true, it just means that Jerome has played the gallant a little earlier than the rest. It does not imply that he will not be faithful to me."

"Betsy!" cried her father. "You'll condone anything—so long as it gains you a place near a throne! Your dreams have blighted your sense of decency!"

"I can't give him up," sobbed the proud girl. "I don't care if French standards are different from ours. I'm going to live there anyhow, and if it's the custom, I'll have to bear it! See how great a man Napoleon is—has the tattle about his private life harmed him? You may cling to American ways of thinking—I must take a broader view. I was too hasty last night—I played the part of a village scold. I'll not break my engagement!"

* * * * *

A few minutes later, Isham, greatly perturbed, went forth in a frenzied search of Jerome.

"Lawd A'mighty," he said to Uncle Lige, as he passed that puckered, inquisitive darkey, "this noble young Bonaparte sho' is causing a lot of foot-work fo' Isham. De skin'll be worn off mah feet, if dere ain't a settled understandin' soon 'twixt Miss 'Lizabeth and her dandified French beau!"

Jerome, distressed in his way as much as Betsy had been, came rushing forward as he recognized the Patterson slave.

"Ah, it is from Mademoiselle Patterson!" he exclaimed, as the negro's coarse fingers held out a delicate cream envelope.

"Yas, suh, and I suspects it's good news," Isham said, with the boldness of a favored servant.

"Come back to me," Jerome read. "If there is anything to forgive, my love is deep enough to wipe it out. It is foolish of

me to try to view France through a Baltimore peephole!"

Bonaparte kissed fervently the note.

"Love conquers, Le Camus," he called to his secretary. "She is not as provincial as you thought. Quick—a quill that I may answer my adored!"

"I come, dear heart," he scrawled. "You must give me many kisses to compensate for this agony!"

Le Camus chuckled to himself. "May she never rue the day," he thought, "when she slighted a Bonaparte!"

* * * * *

William Patterson made a final attempt.

"Your Captain Bonaparte," he stormed the same evening, when the reconciled lover had gone home from his long tryst, "desires only to enjoy the pleasures of a home while he is in America; when he returns to France he will be the first to turn you off and laugh at your credulity!"

"Now, see here, Father," Betsy retorted, "we've thrashed this all out. No matter what other letters come, no matter how you and others try to shake my confidence in my lover, I am going through with the marriage. I think he has more honor than you give him credit for.

"And if he does prove false to me I'll not burden you with regrets. I would rather be the wife of Jerome Bonaparte for one hour than of any other man for life!"

News of Jerome's intended marriage had by this time reached Napoleon. Astounded and furious, the First Consul gave orders that Jerome should be at once recalled and that a vessel should be dispatched from France to bring him home.

Jerome, with characteristic prodigality, had imported a superb trousseau for his bride. Opening an immense rose-colored portmanteau, the delighted girl displayed to her astounded relatives innumerable small packets tied with pink and blue favors; chemises with embroidered sleeves; handkerchiefs; petticoats; morning gowns and dressing-gowns; nightcaps; morning caps of many colors and shapes—all embroidered and trimmed with Mechlin lace or English point.

In still another portmanteau, covered with green embroidered silk, there were exquisite gowns; ball dresses for a bride; India muslin dresses embroidered in silver lama; Cashmere shawls; veils of English point; gown trimmings of blond and Brussels point; ribbons of all sizes and colors; gloves; fans; slippers; stockings; and scented bags and essences.

"These," Betsy told her mother and aunt, "are but a small part of a court lady's wardrobe. You begin to see now why I wanted to share in the splendor of Napoleon's reign—a girl should go as far as her looks and talents permit!"

Bitter as had been his opposition to the marriage, both pride and caution prompted William Patterson to spare no expense to make the wedding of unparalleled magnificence in Baltimore society. To make the ceremony secure for Betsy, he invited as many dignitaries as he could number.

The ceremony was performed by the Most Reverend John Carroll, Archbishop of Baltimore. The marriage contract was drawn up by Alexander Dallas, who afterwards became Secretary of the United States Treasury. M. Sotin, the Vice-Consul of France, veiling his skepticism, attended the ceremony, as did also the Mayor of Baltimore. Assisting Jerome was his dapper secretary, Alexandre Le Camus, who, when his master's heart later turned in another direction and earned a kingdom thereby, was to serve his lord as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the newly created Kingdom of Westphalia.

A picturesque figure at the wedding was General Turreau, the French Minister at Washington, whose gold lace had offended Jefferson. The British in America declared that he had risen from the dregs under the favor of Bonaparte. He was said to have married a jailer's daughter, and had a secretary who played the violoncello, and it was whispered that the secretary was called on to perform every day while Turreau horsewhipped his wife. His presence effectually hushed those who were eager to entertain doubt of the sanction of the ceremony by France.

Betsy decided to reserve her magnificent clothes for her reception at the court of Napoleon, and for her wedding wore a simple white low-cut dress of India muslin, exquisitely embroidered. Perhaps it was due to Le Camus's malicious

whispers: "All the clothes worn by the bride might be put in my pocket," that the whisper ran through Baltimore boudoirs that beneath her dress the bride wore "but a single garment."

It seemed to Betsy that she was in a delicious trance. Against a background of roses, satin gowns and brilliant uniforms she saw a dark-eyed prince putting a ring on her finger. Out of the cloud of faces she saw the lovely eyes of the Caton girls, round with awe and wonderment.

However malicious the tongues were, none could report that the bride had not borne herself regally. She went to her wedding as to her coronation; she received the toasts, at the dinner that followed, as a princess receiving homage, and she went that night to her bridal room as a queen goes to the arms of her emperor.

Long after her husband had gone to sleep, one arm thrown across her white breast, she lay reflecting, planning.

Thank heavens, she had completely lost that dread she used to feel at the thought of mating with a foreigner. Jerome seemed like her own kind—all but his excessive politeness and his queer accent. She thought that she loved him quite as much as she could have loved James Randolph if he had had a title and could have taken her abroad.

How infinitely tender Jerome had been as she lay in his arms. Surely when he had given himself with such utter devotion, it were folly to fear that she was the darling of a caprice, the temporary sweetheart of a young man on his travels. By her response to his every mood, she had sought to show him how implicit was her trust in him. How cruel it was for ironical writers to say of a man in love that "the hunt is the thing," and that the fulfilment of desire means a flagging in the chase.

A moonbeam, falling across the pillows, gave the princely head an aura in keeping with her dreams concerning him. She gazed at the handsome, boyish face of her Corsican husband.

"I must keep his love at any cost," she said to herself. "To be separated, to be forced to resume life in America with my plan of a brilliant career in the courts of Europe unfulfilled, would be a calamity too hideous to contemplate. Jerome shall find me the most affectionate, the most thoughtful, of wives. I shall be a Diana at times, and the most melting of wives at other times. I shall study the methods French beauties use with their adorers—Madame Tallien, Madame Récamier. I shall be as broadminded as any of them. I shall learn how Josephine, whose youth has passed, manages to keep Napoleon's devotion. I must keep Jerome so ardent for a year that he cannot bear to return to France without me. If we get to France, his love can wander then if it must. I shall have seen Napoleon. I shall have shown him that I am not the adventuress he thinks me—that I, indeed, have graces that will not be out of place in Malmaison!"

Blissfully confident, she snuggled her pretty head against the black locks of her mate and went to sleep.

* * * * *

"I predict," said Le Camus to General Rewbell, "that the marriage will not last longer than the honeymoon."

"I think you misjudge our friend," said the General. "You must have noted that William Patterson saw to it that so far as the American end of the marriage was concerned, there could be no loosening of the knot. You noted that John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore, brother of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, performed the ceremony, and that the ritual was that of the Roman Catholic Church, and you cannot have lost sight of the fact that in the marriage contract Jerome engaged 'at the request of Elizabeth Patterson or her father, to execute any deed necessary to confer on the union all the character of a valid and perfect marriage according to the respective laws of the State of Maryland and the French Republic.'"

Le Camus yawned. "Yes, I am aware of all that. Yet the fact remains that Jerome is a minor in the eyes of the law. His mother's consent is needed, and Napoleon controls the mother. Would you like to make a little wager, General? I'll bet that they separate within a year!"

"I do not consider it," said General Rewbell, "a thing to base a wager on. I hope devoutly the girl's trust is not misplaced."

Betsy's family, seeing her utter happiness and confidence, had smothered their forebodings. "I may be pleasantly disappointed in my son-in-law," William Patterson confessed to his cronies. "He tells me, in case the First Consul refuses to recognize the marriage, that he intends to live among us as an American citizen. A spirit like that is not to be scoffed at. I am glad he has had sea experience. I shall probably find a way to use his knowledge of France and the West

Indies in my business."

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The honeymoon was past. Out of their blissful seclusion, Betsy and her husband emerged to be caught up in a whirl of entertainment. Her happiness was unbroken—except that there had come to her husband no congratulatory letters from his relatives in France. It was embarrassing, as the weeks went by, to explain to her relatives and friends why such messages had not come.

"Do not worry, my dearest," Jerome assured her. "I have a private message from my mother that all will be well. It is because they have not seen your portrait and cannot realize how queenly you are. Give me your picture to send to my mother and brother, and your conquest of them will be assured."

"Then drive me to Mr. Robert Gilmore's," said Betsy. "Gilbert Stuart, the portrait painter, has arrived today to visit Mr. Gilmore. If I am as lovely as you say, perhaps he will choose me for a subject."

The pair drove to the Gilmore home. Stuart, introduced by Gilmore, did not wait for her plea.

"I came down here attracted by the fame of Madame Bonaparte's beauty, hoping to paint your portrait. You are the loveliest creature a painter ever prayed to sit for him!"

Betsy beamed. "If Mr. Stuart thinks I am lovely," she whispered, "then my conquest of Napoleon is a certainty!"

CHAPTER VI

JEFFERSON TO NAPOLEON

Thomas Jefferson, a tall, mild-mannered man with red, freckled face and gray straggling hair, had shut himself off from visitors to the President's House to chat with his friend from Baltimore, William Patterson.

The President's dress was surprisingly informal. He wore a blue coat, a thick gray-colored hairy waistcoat, green velveteen breeches with pearl buttons, yarn stockings, and slippers down at the heels. Merry, the British Minister, might sneer at his garb as a concession to the democratical party, but the homely dress warmed William Patterson's heart and seemed to invite confidences. And so the story of Betsy's marriage came out.

"These young people," sighed the President, "how they do insist on burning their fingers! I suppose, my friend, that you think because I won what our country considers a victory over Napoleon in the Louisiana affair, I can triumph in this affair of hearts. That is a battlefield of a vastly different kind, and the weapons are all in Napoleon's hands. However, I am interested in this marriage: I have, in fact, at the solicitation of Mr. Robert Smith, your good friend, already written a letter in your daughter's behalf."

He left the room to obtain a copy of the note, and William Patterson was left to smoke his pipe and recall "the Louisiana affair," hoping that, in this unfamiliar realm of love, a like victory could be achieved.

The President returned.

"My letter was sent," he said, "to Mr. Livingston, our Minister to France, who has the readiest approach to Napoleon."

The father, duly impressed that his private affairs had become an international matter, read:

"Dear Sir:

"A report reaches us from Baltimore that Mr. Jerome Bonaparte, brother of the First Consul, was yesterday married to Miss Patterson, of that city. The effect of the measure on the mind of the First Consul is not for me to suppose; but as it might occur to him, *prima facie*, that the Executive of the United States ought to have prevented it, I have thought it advisable to mention the subject to you, that, if necessary, you may by explanations set that idea to rights.

"You know that by our laws all persons are free to enter into marriage if of twenty-one years of age, no one having a power to restrain it, not even their parents; and that under that age no one can prevent it but the parent or guardian. The lady is under age, and the parents, placed between her affections, which were strongly fixed, and the considerations opposing the measure, yielded with pain and anxiety to the former.

"Mr. Patterson is the president of the Bank of Baltimore, the wealthiest man in Maryland, perhaps in the United States, except Mr. Carroll; a man of great virtue and respectability; the mother is the sister of the lady of General Samuel Smith; and, consequently, the station of the family in society is with the first of the United States. These circumstances fix rank in a country where there are no hereditary titles."

"From my heart's depths, I thank you, Mr. Jefferson," said William Patterson. "Forgive me that I must let this personal matter interfere with your public labors."

"You need not apologize for the delightful—and, if I may say so, amazing—Betsy," the President replied. "The marriage has become a matter of State, and so it becomes my duty to help you conciliate the First Consul. Let me, however, send a word of advice to young Madame Bonaparte—a word I will repeat when she brings her husband to dine with me. It is, let her not place too high a value on the institutions of Europe.

"During the years I spent in France, I discovered the truth of Voltaire's observation, that 'every Frenchman must be either the hammer or the anvil.' There is no class in America that is not happier now than the people of France. There intrigues of love absorb the younger, intrigues of ambition the elder. Conjugal fidelity is regarded by them as something provincial and ridiculous; there is no such thing known among them as the domestic felicity which prevails in America."

"So I have had reason to suspect," said William Patterson. "I wish I had called on you for help when I was trying to persuade my girl not to enter upon this mad marriage."

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Betsy tossed her rebellious head when Mr. Patterson repeated to her a part of the President's advice.

"My affairs," she said, "are not worthy of an oration from our President. Mr. Jefferson is so pronounced a Republican that he has blinded himself to the color and romance of the courts of Europe. You will not find his daughters talking in such a strain. Why? Because they saw Europe with the eyes of youth. Don't worry, Father—my life with Jerome in France will be even more pleasant and brilliant than I anticipate."

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In spite of her indignation at the President, Betsy was delighted when General Turreau, the French Minister, brought word that the President had invited Jerome and her to dine with him.

Jerome went in full naval dress, princely in gold braid and gold decorations, to be greeted by a simplicity that amazed him.

Mr. Madison met them—a calm gentleman with a penetrating blue eye. Betsy, with Jerome as her pattern of masculine beauty, tried not to show her horror of the Secretary of State's bald spot and protuberant stomach.

Escorted by the courteous Madison, the pair sought the President first in the hall of audience. The room was empty.

"Strange," murmured Mr. Madison, "but we'll probably find him in his study."

There the President was found, standing in slippers—his coat and pantaloons indicating to the young Frenchman's eye the carelessness of the scholar rather than the dignity of the statesman.

However, despite the plainness of this reception, the President's eye kindled as he chatted with the vivacious Betsy and the ardent stripling beside her. It delighted Jerome to have Mr. Jefferson converse fluently with him in French and to continue through dinner the conversation brilliantly begun.

At the dinner—served at four o'clock—the Bonapartes found the Virginia fashion of "Come one, come all, come again, keep coming and bring your friends," was observed, though the President could ill afford such lavish, unceasing hospitality.

The meal was served in a long dining-room, and the Bonapartes found a dozen guests besides themselves—congressmen, foreign notables, cabinet officers and their wives, plain and distinguished Americans and soft-voiced Virginia neighbors.

It amused Betsy to observe that a complaint against Jefferson's hospitality which she had heard the British Minister make was true. When dinner was announced, no escorts were assigned to the ladies. Mr. Jefferson took in Betsy and Mr. Madison took in the lady next to him, but the rest of the guests were left to shift for themselves.

At candle-lighting time came a late guest—a diminutive gentleman who was introduced by Mr. Madison as "Mr. Thomas Moore of Ireland, author of 'Odes to Anacreon!'"

The gentleman at Betsy's left had been forced to depart, and the newcomer dropped into the vacant seat and with an eagerness scarcely polite, emptied a wine-glass and passed his plate to a servant.

Moore's odes were unknown in America; he had not yet published the songs that brought him world fame. It was excusable that the company did not yield the poet the deference his proud, impetuous nature sought.

Betsy viewed him at first rather haughtily, but, discovering in him a fresh source of tidings concerning Europe, began to

draw him out.

"Don't ask me for news of the isles, sweet miss," Moore said between mouthfuls. "It's from Bermuda I've come. Thank God, I'm delivered from that place, and have a deputy to perform my duties as Registrar of the Court of the Admiralty! Will you be insulted if I say that I go home after traveling through your country greatly disabused of democratic visions that haunted my youth?"

"Far from it," laughed Betsy. "Let me whisper to you—at the President's table—that I wish the Georges were still ruling this land!"

"Egad!" he remarked. "You're as lovely a rebel as you are a clever one. I should like to transplant so beautiful a flower as you, and see you blooming in an old English garden!"

"That may happen," said Betsy, "but probably the garden will be France!"

In low tones Moore spoke his vexation at the western world:

"I am completely disappointed in every flattering expectation I formed of your country. When I was first introduced to your President, he greeted me in slippers and Connemara stockings. Your unpolished society represses my hope of the future greatness of America. An illiberal zeal embitters your conversation. The Democrats exhibit vulgarity and rudeness that is imitated by the Federalists. It is no wonder that, in an epistle I sent yesterday to Lord Forbes, I wrote:

". . . *even now,*
While yet upon Columbia's rising brow
The showy smile of young presumption plays,
Her bloom is poisoned, and her heart decays!"

Betsy, amused, glanced mischievously around the room, and saw that ears were strained to catch Moore's lines.

"Cease," she murmured, "or else you will be ridden out of Washington on a broomstick!"

"I hope for another occasion, dear lady," said the poet, "when I can read you a rhymed tale of my travels:

"O'er lake and marsh, through fever and through fogs,
'Midst bears and Yankees, democrats and frogs."

"I fear you are an ungrateful creature," Betsy tittered. "Sir, when we meet again, I prefer to hear you tell of English society, for I may soon be seeking an entrance there!"

"Glorious!" Moore said. "What a fine match you'd be for my dear friend, Lady Morgan. Permit me to send you some of her books. And I will send you a copy of my 'Odes to Anacreon,' too. When you go abroad, I shall stand at the threshold of England, waiting to welcome you to the isle that has been so hospitable to myself—a poor bard from Erin!"

* * * * *

Betsy was delighted to note that her husband had captivated the company.

"Your family comes from Corsica, does it not," a lady addressed him. "Do tell us about those thrilling vendettas!"

"Madame," he answered, "while Corsicans can cherish hatreds and kill one another they yet venerate a first-class shot. A father, informed that one of his sons had been shot in a family feud, went to the place. On examining the body, he found that the three balls with which the gun was loaded had all entered the heart. His grief and rage yielded to admiration for such supreme skill. 'See,' he exclaimed, 'what a grand shot!'"

"As witty as he is handsome, Madame Bonaparte," drawled the President. "What a well-matched pair you are."

Turning from the radiant girl, he sought to lead the talk toward Napoleon. The purchase of Louisiana was mentioned.

"You have much reason for satisfaction," Jerome assured the President; "but on the other hand, it was not a bad bargain for my brother. I understand that he has said that 'sixty million francs is a pretty good price for a province of which he

has not taken possession, and might not be able to retain for twenty-four hours.' He feels that in thus strengthening the power of your country he has given to England a maritime rival that will sooner or later humble her pride."

This conclusion, the company agreed with enthusiasm, was logical and true.

"But now," Mr. Jefferson whispered to Jerome as they rose, "I fear that *you*, with your marriage to our charming young friend, have placed upon Mr. Livingston, our Minister, and myself a greater diplomatic burden than our Louisiana negotiations."

Betsy, who had overheard, rested a slim arm on the President's shoulder.

"I am sure," she said with captivating grace, "we can trust the diplomacy of our Government, and the wisdom of our President, to bring it to as successful an end."

CHAPTER VII

THE UNOFFICIAL ENVOY

If Betsy Patterson were a wild swan, Robert Patterson, her eldest brother, was of the same feather as his father—a domesticated young man who had yet sufficient poise and shrewdness to make his way round the world, form friendships with influential persons, and advance the family's fortunes. If Betsy's romance upset her parents, Robert could be depended upon to give them no concern about his own choice of a mate. It was a surety that he would wed an American girl of fine family. He was a frequent visitor at the Catons', was paying special attention to pretty Mary, and it was rumored that their engagement would soon be announced.

It was Robert who had vigorously supported his father's efforts to check Betsy's headlong leap into uncertain matrimony. However, now that his sister was married, he had become just as energetic in obtaining Napoleon's acknowledgment of the marriage.

In a family gathering, when Betsy had adroitly brought up the topic of how soon and by what means they might sail for France, and when the still enamored Jerome had announced vehemently his intention of finding a swift way of taking his bride to Paris, Robert volunteered to go to France ahead of them in one of his father's ships to enlist the aid of the American Minister and other persons of influence.

"It'll be well for me," he advised Betsy, "to feel the pulse of Napoleon before you sail. He is ruthless in his dealings with any one who interferes with his ambitions. Now that England is at war with France, he must be persuaded that an alliance with America, by marriage, is more important than an alliance with some small kingdom. They are saying in Washington that if there were not war at this time between England and France, the French arms would be turned against the United States on account of the marriage."

"I did not dream," mocked Betsy, "that I could become a modern Helen—inciting nations to war. I intend, my dear brother, to make such charms as I have, weapons for peace!"

To Jerome she said: "Probably Robert is wise. Our engagements in Philadelphia and New York will occupy us for months. It will be nice to meet the French people of Philadelphia and Boston and New York, and to be entertained in New York by the officers of the French fleet. In the meantime Robert can be showing your brother that you have married into a family of wealth and influence—one that may some day offer him, if he has ill fortune, a sanctuary not to be scorned."

In France at this time was sojourning Captain Paul Bentalou, of Baltimore, who had served with distinction in Count Pulaski's legion of cavalry during the American Revolution.

"I can visit Bentalou," Robert suggested to his father, "and he can act as my interpreter if I manage to see Napoleon or his brothers."

William Patterson consented, especially since Robert could combine business with this family duty, the son having become attorney for some American gentlemen who wanted to press certain claims against France.

Bearing an appealing letter from Jerome to the First Consul, Robert went first to London. There James Monroe, American envoy to England and France, a friend of the Pattersons, met him.

"My sister Elizabeth, sir, desires to be remembered to you," Robert said.

Mr. Monroe chuckled.

"And what does that lovely disturber of nations desire me to do? It would be highly indiscreet for me to add anything to what the President has written."

"You know men in Paris who—"

"Oh, letters of introduction, eh? Of course I'll give you those. Would I could do more to pry open the doors of the French court for the charming Elizabeth."

To Barbé-Marbois, an influential French gentleman who had acted as a negotiator for President Jefferson in the Louisiana purchase, Monroe wrote:

"You have doubtless heard that Jerome Bonaparte is married to Miss Patterson of Baltimore. Her father is wealthy and one of the most respectable citizens of that town, or rather of the State of Maryland. Her mother is a sister of General Smith, a member of the Senate of the United States, the officer who defended Mud Island below Philadelphia in our Revolution. The young lady is amiable, very handsome, and perfectly innocent. The bearer of this is her brother, who goes to Paris, from this place, to carry a letter from Jerome to the First Consul, which was transmitted to me by her father."

The envoy's immensely interested daughter, having been a schoolmate of Madame Louis Bonaparte at Madame Campan's Academy in Paris, supplied Robert with a letter to that lady, and added for good measure a letter to Madame Campan herself, who was on intimate terms with the family of the First Consul. Thus fortified, the herald and advocate of the Jerome Bonapartes sailed for Paris.

Unfortunately for the youngest brother of Napoleon in his hope of winning the First Consul's approval of his marriage to a girl of the people, his brother Lucien had already set Napoleon aflame by his union with Madame Jouberton, a beautiful young woman of twenty-four, widow of a Paris stock-jobber.

The scheming First Consul, on the death of the puppet King of Etruria, had planned to promote the interests of France in Italy and Spain by marrying Lucien to the King's widow, the Infanta Maria Louisa, daughter of Carlos IV of Spain, even though Lucien had protested that she was "ugly, fat, lame, crooked, and almost a dwarf."

Terrible was the wrath of Napoleon when he learned that Lucien had contracted a civil and legal marriage with Madame Jouberton—and realized that by the ceremony Lucien had recognized as his legitimate son a boy born to Madame Jouberton in the previous May. This meant that if Napoleon or Joseph failed to have sons, a boy that was "the fruit of a union that a tardy marriage alone had legitimated," would become the heir to the throne of France. This fact had given the Royalists, and other foes of the Bonaparte dynasty, a choice weapon.

Napoleon had furiously forbidden Lucien to permit his wife to bear his name and had demanded that he divorce her.

"See how far," he stormed, "you have carried your infatuation for a *femme galante*."

"At least," Lucien retorted, alluding to Josephine, "mine is young and pretty!"

The boldness of the reply had enraged the First Consul beyond all bounds. He had in his hands at that moment his watch. Dashing it with all his might to the floor, he cried:

"Since you will listen to nothing, see, I will break you like this watch!"

Lucien, still defiant, not only had directed his wife to take the name Bonaparte, but also had induced his mother and Joseph and his wife to receive her. Napoleon's treatment of him, however, remained bitter and oppressive.

If Lucien had offended against the personal Napoleon, that might have been condoned, but instead—let Jerome take warning—he had committed the unforgivable sin of hindering the dynasty the First Consul planned to establish.

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Paris, at the time of Robert's visit, had become the capital of the civilized world. The too simple manners and coarse language of the Republic under the convention had been succeeded by politeness in speech and elegance in manners and dress. Fashion had resumed her sway. The streets were thronged with foreigners, to the delight of the shop-keepers, who applauded Napoleon for having brought them trade.

Robert went at once in search of the American Minister, whom he found occupying modest lodgings, seemingly lost in the swarm of diplomats surrounding Napoleon.

Mr. Livingston, with little ceremony, demolished the none-too-ardent hopes of the young man.

"I can offer you not even a shadow of encouragement," he said. "Though I have made every possible effort to influence Napoleon favorably, I have had no success. Upon this matter it has been impossible for me to obtain an audience with the First Consul, nor can I promise that he will give you an interview. Joseph Bonaparte, who acts as his Grand Vizier, has made one little concession. He will see you privately and alone, and will give his porter orders accordingly. I confess I felt shocked at the proposal and observed with some warmth that it would be unbecoming for you to introduce yourself in that mysterious way, and perhaps meet with a humiliating reception."

Robert brooded upon his information.

"I quite agree with you, sir," he said, "that it would be humiliating both to me and my family to approach the Bonapartes in the way suggested. I would rather return to America without seeing them."

"It will not be necessary to go that far," said Mr. Livingston. "Now that I have warned you of the apparent hopelessness of the case, let me give you this word of encouragement. Mr. Lucien Bonaparte has returned to Paris and intends to invite you to call on his family. Lucien is adored by his mother, who is none too well pleased with the First Consul's autocratic sway over the family.

"'Madame Mère,' as we call the mother of the Bonapartes, is an important person for you to meet, for I understand that so long as she withholds her consent to Jerome's marriage it is invalid in France—and Napoleon is coercing her not to give that consent. Lucien may prove to be your key to the old lady's heart."

From the American Minister's, Robert went in search of Captain Paul Bentalou, whose welcome was far more inspiring.

"Whatever your errand, the gods be blest for sending you to Paris!" cried that gay-hearted gentleman, his spirits bubbling with the wine he poured. "So you have come yourself to plead in behalf of the adorable Betsy with the Eagle of France! I fear you will have small success, for the Eagle is spreading his wings to fly to a royal perch and your sister, attractive as she is, has no kingdom to offer him. However, be sure that I will be a devoted servant in her cause!"

Robert produced the letters he had brought.

"Ah," said the Pole, as he fingered the notes, "this one from Miss Monroe to Madame Louis Bonaparte—Josephine's daughter, Hortense Beauharnais, you know—should carry weight. Lucien, however, is your best approach. He is the least under the influence of Napoleon—he scorns the First Consul's ambitions to be Emperor, and he has influence with his mother. If Napoleon sees that the entire family is on Jerome's side—he may yield. But I warn you that the chances are instead that he will use titles and gold lavishly in his efforts to win them to *his* side. It has got to be that to resist Napoleon's slightest wish is the most serious offense a Frenchman can commit!"

The next morning a messenger brought Robert a note from Lucien Bonaparte:

"Mr. and Mrs. Lucien Bonaparte are extremely desirous of seeing Mr. Patterson, brother-in-law of Mr. Jerome. They will both remain at home the whole morning in hopes he will have the goodness to call on them."

"The Bonaparte door is an inch open," Robert cried to Bentalou as he summoned the Captain to be his interpreter in the approaching interview.

"Would that I with a blow on Monsieur Napoleon's nose could knock it off its hinges!" whispered the gallant Pole, in his zeal careless of how he mixed his symbols.

Lucien and his wife, a pretty, animated little woman, received the pair with sincere cordiality. Robert saw before him a gentleman who lacked the handsomeness of Jerome, but who yet seemed more dependable. His host appeared to be under thirty. He was tall and ungainly, having huge limbs and a small head. He had, however, an agreeable smile which redeemed his plain features, and because of that smile Robert dared to hope.

After Lucien had inquired earnestly concerning the health of "Madame Jerome Bonaparte," and had read to him by Robert certain letters showing the high position occupied in American society by the Patterson family, he said to Robert through Captain Bentalou:

"Tell Mr. Patterson, and let his father know, that our mother, myself and the whole family, with one voice, and as

heartily as I do, highly approve of the match. The Consul, it is true, does not for the present concur with us, but he is to be considered as isolated from his family. Placed on the lofty ground on which he stands as the first magistrate of a great and powerful nation, all his actions and ideas are directed by a policy with which we have nothing to do.

"We still remain plain citizens; and, as such, from all we have learned of the young lady's character and the respectability of her friends, we feel highly gratified with the connection—they need not in the least be hurt by the displeasure of the Consul; I myself, although of an age to be my own master, and occupying distinguished places under the Government, have also by my late marriage incurred his displeasure, so that Jerome is not alone. But, as when we do marry, we are to consult our own happiness and not that of another, it matters not who else is, or is not, to be displeased. Our present earnest wish is that Jerome may remain where he now is, and take the proper steps to become, as soon as possible, a citizen of the United States."

"Pardon me, sir," said Captain Bentalou, "that is not such an easy matter as you perhaps think—it requires an ordeal of seven years previous thereto; and then he would have formally to swear fidelity to the United States, and to renunciation of all titles of nobility, places of honor or profit, allegiance or attachment to all other countries, and particularly to the one of his nativity."

"Very well," retorted Lucien, "Jerome must do all that; he must go through that novitiate. The dignified attainment of a citizen of the United States is well worth it. His situation is much preferable to ours. We are yet on a tempestuous sea, and he is safely moored into a safe, and incomparably happy harbor. He must positively change his mode of living, and must not, as he has hitherto done, act the part of a prince of royal blood; not to think himself anything more than he really is, and to strive as soon as possible to assimilate himself to the plain and uncorrupted manners of your incomparable nation, of which we will all rejoice to see him a worthy member. We are now making arrangements to provide genteelly for him. We wish him to live on equal footing with your most respectable citizens, but never beyond any of them."

At parting, Lucien exerted himself to show that he considered Robert rather in the light of a relative than of a friend.

"I shall expect you gentlemen to dine with me tomorrow. I shall expect to see you every three or four days, and if you disappoint me I shall be obliged to quarrel with you."

* * * * *

"That," said William Patterson, as he read to Betsy from Robert's letters that the Bonaparte family desired Jerome to reside permanently in America, "is a most sensible proposition. I can make something of Jerome if he enters my employ. This Napoleon skyrocket will come to earth in a shower of sparks some day—why should Jerome be one of those sparks?"

Betsy's heart had sunk as she read the letter. This would never do. She had married Jerome to gain a distinguished place in Europe. She might as well have married James Randolph if she was to spend her life in America. Jerome must be persuaded not to yield to Lucien's appeal. It relieved her to see that he was not enthusiastic concerning the proposal.

"It is a foolish thing to do," Betsy said to her father. "You forget the joy of being a skyrocket—of flaming across the skies of Europe—even if just for a moment. But we are to be stars, not cinders."

* * * * *

It was at a later meeting that Robert told Lucien of his brother Joseph's desire to receive Robert Patterson secretly.

"Your Minister has certainly misunderstood!" he said. "Joseph is eager to see you. He is now at Malmaison, the Consul's residence, but when he returns he will see you. I shall be glad to attend you there!"

With particular interest the American brother-in-law of the Bonapartes looked forward to meeting Hortense, wife of Louis. Had not her mother come a stranger to France from western shores? Surely she of all this ambitious family was the one most fitted to sympathize with Betsy. But, because she was overruled by the First Consul, no notice was paid by her to the letter of introduction Robert had conveyed to her.

Failing to receive encouragement from Hortense, Robert took comfort from Bentalou's comment on Joseph's career, which tended to prove that Joseph, Napoleon's eldest brother, by birth the head of the family, should by his own marriage be bound by a common sentiment with Jerome.

"Whom," asked Bentalou of Robert and the ceiling, "did Joseph Bonaparte marry? Was his bride of as high a station as your lovely sister? I think not! She was Julie Clary, daughter of the wealthy soap-maker of Marseilles, and it is known to all of France that while his wife has a good heart and an affectionate disposition, she is singularly unprepossessing in appearance, with a dowdy figure, a flat nose and a shapeless mouth. But that was a time when the Bonapartes needed gold—if Napoleon were poor today and needed money as a stepping-stone there would be no opposition to a Bonaparte-Patterson marriage!

"And what of Napoleon's own marriage? Did he not, putting ambition foremost, shock his mother and family by marrying a woman of thirty-four who had grown-up children, a woman with far from a spotless reputation—a *ci-devant* viscountess, needy, frivolous, extravagant—with relatives, friends and ex-lovers ready to contend with them for the crumbs that fall from the Corsican's table!"

"Hush, Captain," laughed Robert; "it is not fitting that I, who am asserting my right to enter this family, should hear members of it pictured so bluntly."

"Your pardon," said Bentalou. "I but repeat what any man in the street will tell you. If ambition is a sin, your sister is not the only erring one!"

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For two weeks Robert waited an opportunity to see Joseph Bonaparte. That disappointing meeting, when it occurred, Robert thus described in a letter to his father:

"On Saturday I had the honor of dining with Mr. Joseph Bonaparte. None of the family were present but his lady. It is a little singular he did not throughout the evening speak a word of his brother's marriage, and only mentioned his name when I was departing, to request I would forward him the letter which I now enclose. As he possesses the confidence of the First Consul, he probably for this reason declined saying anything on that subject, lest I might imagine he gave the sentiments of his brother. My being admitted to his table cannot but argue more favorable to our wishes than otherwise; though it had been infinitely more satisfactory and pleasing had he been less reserved.

"Lucien is a firm and decided character. On all occasions he thinks and acts independently. On this one he nobly and candidly uttered what he thought. The consular recognition or disavowal of the marriage will probably be determined by future occurrences. Much will depend on Jerome. If he acts the part of an honorable man everything must go right.

"I have been asked if I have the portrait of Madame Jerome, more than once. The family is desirous of seeing a miniature of her. If one has not been taken already, it may not be amiss to have it done, and sent either to some of the family or to me, that I may present them with it."

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Robert, as he read the French periodicals and listened to the talk of the people, became more depressed than his letters home showed. He saw that a throng of senators, army officers and other persons of note were constantly being admitted to the chambers of the First Consul. He saw in the procession a substantiation of the rumor that the army and a great number of the citizens—who idolized Napoleon as the hero of Italy and Egypt, and the potential conqueror of England—openly desired to see him wear a title worthy of his renown. They desired France to be an Empire and the First Consul to become its Emperor, and it became plain that the humbly born Corsican was not only listening to their pleas with a receptive mind, but was also planning actively to assume the throne and hear himself addressed no longer as "Citizen" but instead as "Your Majesty."

Robert Patterson waited and waited, but no invitation came from Napoleon himself. He read in the public hints that the wrath of the First Consul toward Jerome was coming to a boiling-point; that he would soon define his opinion weightily with respect to the marriage; that it would be suggested to Robert Patterson that he go home; and that Jerome would be dismissed from the service and severed from his French associations. Mr. Livingston had also had no conversation with the Consul about his brother's marriage, but continued his attempts to reconcile him through his Ministers. They, however, had informed the American Minister that when they introduced the subject he had remained silent. At this sign of his displeasure, they had dropped the matter.

Robert meanwhile, heartsick at the failure of his mission, turned his attention to money-making schemes, and showed that

he was a worthy son of his father.

The United States Government was then negotiating with Spain for a cession of East Florida. Young Patterson became a promoter, and endeavored to obtain a grant from the court of Madrid for part of the East Florida country before it was ceded to the United States.

"Be assured," he wrote his father, while asking him to invest from \$25,000 to \$30,000 in the project, "that I prize too much your good opinion and confidence to embark you in a speculation in which I do not see my way very clear. If I could with propriety mention the name of the person with whom the scheme originated, you would be satisfied it is well conceived.

"I imagine there are about three million acres unlocated, which may probably be purchased at three, four or five cents per acre. This business has appeared to me so important that I have written to Lucien, to induce him to take an interest in it for himself or Jerome, to whom it would secure a brilliant fortune."

Before the father could say yes or no to the ambitious project, word came from Robert that the negotiations were becoming difficult. "The United States expects," he wrote, "to get East Florida as a recompense for the claims of its citizens against Spain for depreciations, and, thinking it has a right to the country, will probably take it by force of arms."

The letter ended with a warning to Betsy: "As for Napoleon, he still remains obdurate; it is the duty of my sister, as a wife, to maintain and increase the affections of her husband; and her exertions ought, if possible, to be doubled, from the peculiarity of her situation."

Betsy mocked as she read the closing admonition. "There is not to be found in Europe or America," she said, "a more devoted, more affectionate, wife. Do you see any signs of a diminishing of Jerome's ardor?"

She was now desperately impatient to go to Europe. Robert's letters had made her fearful. She regretted that she had committed her cause to blundering man. She felt confident that if she stood face to face with the mighty Napoleon she could sway him.

To Jerome she said: "It hasn't worked out well, our sending Robert as the herald of our wedding. I am woman enough to know that we are overlooking our best chance. The Emperor is notoriously susceptible to pretty women. You say that my beauty surpasses that of those of whom he is fond. Then take me where his eyes may rest upon me, where my wit may match his, where any charms I possess may plead our cause. Every month's delay will make the task a harder and more uncertain one."

"I would sail tomorrow if there were a ship available that could outsail those British sea-hounds," Jerome returned. "It is my hope to find a fast frigate in New York harbor."

"If not," said Betsy determinedly, "we will take passage in one of Father's clippers. There is no English warship on the seas that can overtake one!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE GOLDEN BEES

Never had Baltimore seen a more fervently devoted couple. Yet the town people, stirred by rumors of Napoleon's wrath, clung to their doubt.

"Wait till after the honeymoon!" murmured those who, at the wedding, had called down heaven's blessing on the pair.

Aware of the skepticism, Betsy was not sorry when an episode occurred which revealed to the public that the devotion of her prince had not faded in the first rapturous weeks of the honeymoon.

It was midwinter. A snowstorm had made sleighing possible. The fur-wrapped pair, to the gay music of bells, glided along Market Street, admired even by the envious.

But the street urchins were no respecters of princes and princesses. Dashing horses and splendid drivers to them were magnets only because they offered conspicuous targets. So into an ambush Isham drove, and Betsy and Jerome, behind their pelted, dodging servant, shrank from a storm of hard round snowballs.

Jerome bore the bombardment good-naturedly enough until melting snow trickled down his backbone, and until a cry from Betsy told him that she had been hurt.

Then, snatching the horsewhip, he charged the youngsters as if, being Napoleon, he were charging the English ranks.

When the boys escaped his cracking lash, Bonaparte, in high indignation, reported the attack to the constables, and gave the reporters a different bit of news by announcing a reward of \$500 for the arrest of "the perpetrators."

It soothed him the next day to discover an editorial endorsing his act.

"The younger part of our city patriots," commented the newspaper, "are troublesome and dangerous with their snowballs. The evil certainly requires a remedy."

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France was preparing for the coronation of Napoleon. Betsy's heart sank when the realization came that Jerome, through his disobedience, had been excluded from the magnificent ceremonies.

A stream of court gossip, from the pens of Jerome's mother and sister, came, however, to cheer the exile and his bride. Betsy saw in the chatty letters a sign that the Bonaparte women were not displeased with the marriage.

"The Empire," they wrote, "will soon be proclaimed—with Napoleon as Emperor. We all think that Napoleon should divorce Josephine. . . . It will never do to make her Empress, for then the succession may go to her children, Eugene or Hortense. . . . Napoleon, despairing of having a son, wants to adopt the son of Louis Bonaparte and Hortense, but Louis will not hear of it. Napoleon, alas, has announced that he will stick to Josephine—she is to be crowned—horrors, your sisters are to carry the train of her robe. . . . We are rehearsing court usages. . . . Fontainebleau is being put in order to receive the Pope. . . . All the decorations, jewelers and costume-makers in Paris are busy night and day. . . . Nothing is talked about but the coming spectacle in Notre Dame. . . . Josephine's coronation-gown is of white satin embroidered in silver and gold. . . . It hangs from the shoulders and is confined with a girdle of gems. She will also wear a mantle of red velvet, embroidered in golden bees and in the imperial N surrounded by garlands. The mantle will be bordered and lined with ermine. She will wear a magnificent necklace of sculptured stones surrounded with diamonds, and on her head will be a diadem of pearls and diamonds."

"How ridiculous," Jerome's mother wrote to him, "is this fever of court etiquette that has spread through the imperial palace. Napoleon now esteems etiquette as one of the chief guards of the throne. He has studied all the ceremonies formerly in use in the courts of Louis XV and Louis XVI and has directed the most scrupulous conformity to them. Monsieur le Talleyrand has been made Grand Chamberlain, and is being consulted by the new-made princes and princesses on everything. Madame Campan, who, you will recall, was First Bedchamber Woman to Marie Antoinette, has been made our authority on costumes and customs. I fear we are subject for jest among royalists and in the salons of

the clever. It is said that the motto of the day among those Napoleon has slighted is: 'Let us avail ourselves by railing at them.' Yet it has been truly said that the number of those who dare to censure success is small, and flattery is much more common than criticism.

"It is indeed amusing to see the French Brutuses clothed in the livery of Napoleon's court. This throng of new courtiers, almost all of whom once swore eternal hatred of kings and royalty, now attend regularly Napoleon's levées, to repay a look from the Emperor with the titles 'Sire' and 'Your Majesty.'"

"Ah, Betsy," said Jerome as he finished translating to her his mother's letter, "there is a woman who would win simple American hearts. Picture her as a woman who still preserves many traces of the striking beauty she possessed in youth. She dresses plainly—in robes of muslin. I have heard Napoleon reprove her for dressing too plainly for the mother of a ruler.

"She is frugal. When my sister told her that she could now afford to spend more money, I heard her say: 'When I had the care of a family, and had to provide for nine children, I got along with less than one hundred louis d'or a year. It is always best to be economical; you don't know what may happen.' She deceives Napoleon by hiding away part of her allowance—before I left I knew of a picture behind which was a secret deposit of money. I don't mind confessing, my love, that my mother has often been my bank—and may be so again, if Napoleon persists in stopping my allowance."

His bride drank in feverishly these intimate details of the life she hoped soon to enter. Josephine especially fascinated her and fed her hopes, for had not she been born in the New World and become an Empress of the Old? It disappointed Betsy that Jerome, who shared his family's dislike for Josephine, refused to talk about her.

"She is old, has no beauty and very little wit," was his verdict. "Her natural freshness of complexion is gone and she resorts to the arts of the toilet. In the brilliant company of the court, she is so inferior in loveliness to the other women that she scarcely attracts attention. We wonder how on earth she captivated Napoleon. Do not, my sweet child, hope to reach my brother through her. You are so beautiful that she would not willingly prepare a place for you beside the throne!"

"You intoxicate me!" Betsy cried deliriously. "Will I ever have the thrill of matching this beauty you say I possess against the women flatterers of Napoleon? Just imagine Josephine wearing her robe of red velvet embroidered in golden bees. If you were ever crowned king, Jerome, I should like to wear a cloak like that!"

Day after day she rehearsed her words and deportment when she should meet the Emperor.

"I always imagine him," she said to Jerome, "as he will appear at the coronation—his classic head crowned with laurel leaves, his mantle shining with golden bees. What is it the bees symbolize?"

"They are the emblem of activity," Jerome replied. "How appropriate a symbol for Napoleon! They seem to be eternally stinging him to action."

Betsy glanced at her indolent spouse. She recalled his hesitation at critical times. "Perhaps," she said guilelessly, "we will want to borrow some of those golden bees. I hope Napoleon will permit me to wear at least one on my cloak. Since it represents activity, it would not be inappropriate, for no woman would be more zealous than your wife in behalf of his empire."

New ships arrived from France, and new tidings of the coronation came. Young Bonaparte, veiling his chagrin at being ignored in the ceremonies in France, constructed in fancy for Betsy the magnificent scene at Notre Dame.

According to the First Consul's notion, there was no bishop in France worthy to place the crown upon the head of the French Cæsar. Napoleon's vaulting ambition craved that he, the modern Charlemagne, should be anointed by the Sovereign Pontiff.

The venerable Pope consented to crown the Bonaparte.

"I shall," Napoleon gloated, "derive a great advantage from it, and the French will not, with indifference, behold me laboring in conjunction with Pius VII again to make the Lord's vine flourish. I want him to reside in my palace; the presence of the Holy Father is necessary to the purification of that place, which, since the Revolution, has become the abode of the powers of Hell."

The Vicar of Jesus Christ was met on his way to Paris by a splendid escort, and the First Consul himself brought the Pontiff from Fontainebleau to Paris in his own carriage. They saluted each other with the kiss of peace. A remarkable feature of the procession was that a regiment of Mamelukes—Mohammedans—formed a guard for the carriage, with the Crescent protecting the representative of the Cross.

To a philosopher watching the procession, the contrast of the two great men riding tête-à-tête must have been striking. The Pope was paying a visit to France to confirm the reestablishment of religion, while the one he came to crown sought only that his illustrious visitor should confirm his material power and authority.

The humility of Pius VII was cynically observed by Napoleon.

"He is an Italian," he said to Josephine. "We are seeking to entrap each other. 'Tis no matter what posterity may say about Chiaramonti, I must attend to my own business. My wish is to make the ceremony of my coronation magnificent and imposing. In splendor it shall surpass that of any of the kings of France."

On that memorable December 2nd, the coronation ceremony was held at Notre Dame. It had been planned by the Master of Ceremonies with the greatest care, and permission had been granted him, if necessary, to tear down certain houses to expedite the arrival of the Emperor's train at the Cathedral. A throne had been erected in front of the grand altar.

The ancient walls of the church were covered with magnificent tapestries. Along the walls were ranged deputies from each city of France, while over the pews waved the plumes that adorned the hats of senators. Military splendor, ecclesiastical pomp, and the worldly beauty of young, bejeweled women composed a magnificent background for the humble Pope and the laureled Emperor in his imperial trappings.

In a gorgeous state carriage drawn by eight horses, Napoleon and Josephine, attended by Joseph and Louis Bonaparte, rode from the Tuileries to the palace of the Archbishop, where Napoleon put on his coronation-robe and Josephine fastened to her left shoulder the royal mantle that had fired Betsy's fancy—that had become the oriflamme of her ambition.

The cortège proceeded then to the Cathedral, where, striding up the aisle, surrounded by the monarchs of Europe, Napoleon ascended the throne. Josephine, looking every inch a queen, her brilliant mantle trailing two yards on the floor, took her place beside him.

With a strange meekness, the Emperor entered into the ceremony, receiving from the Pope the triple unction on his head and both hands, listening with pious devotion as Pius VII delivered his impressive prayer:

"Diffuse, O Lord, by my hands, the treasures of Your grace and benediction on Your servant Napoleon, whom, in spite of our personal unworthiness, *we this day anoint Emperor, in Your name.*"

The prayer concluded, the Pope was about to lift the crown, called the Crown of Charlemagne, from the altar, when, to the amazement of the Pontiff and to the consternation of the congregation, Napoleon himself seized it, and placed it upon his own head.

The crowning of Josephine, which followed, held a strong element of amusement for the ladies of the salons, for there supporting her glorious train were the sisters-in-law who despised her. A whisper went around that Napoleon had had to threaten to withhold rank and title from his sisters before he could force them to bear the little Creole's robe, and sharp-eyed ladies in the audience nudged each other and vowed that they had seen these princesses tug spitefully at the robes they carried, as if inspired by the wish to bring humiliation upon the Empress. However, with triumphant grace, Josephine received from Napoleon's hands the small crown surmounted by the Cross, and wore it with a grace that brought a flash of pride to his eyes.

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Betsy drank in the ceremony to the tiniest detail.

"How mean to shut us out of it!" she lamented. "But, never mind, Jerome, the Emperor will surely give you a kingdom, and we'll have our own splendid coronation!"

"Now that Napoleon is crowned," she said later with renewed hope, "and now that all the Bonapartes are potential

emperors and empresses, what will be the titles of your brothers and sisters?"

"Joseph and Louis will both have the title 'Imperial Highness,' Julien and I, if we are forgiven, will bear the same title, and be in the line of succession to the throne of the French people!"

"And what will your sisters and sisters-in-law be called?"

"Imperial Highness, also."

"Well," laughed the girl, "we'd better be rehearsing our rôles, for I know, once I meet him, I shall conquer Napoleon's stony heart. Bow to me, Jerome, and hail me as 'Imperial Highness!'"

Jerome swept the floor with his bow. Betsy curtsied.

"Imperial Highness, Imperial Highness," she murmured.

In vain, however, they waited for letters from Napoleon.

"The affairs of the coronation have doubtless occupied all his time," Jerome consoled Betsy. "Now that it is over he will find time for family affairs. There should be letters soon."

"It has been a mistake to delay our sailing," Betsy lamented. "We missed the magnificent coronation by waiting for an invitation. You had a natural right to be there."

"No French warship would have conveyed us without Napoleon's consent," the embarrassed Jerome explained.

At last came a letter from the brother nearest to the Emperor: Jerome's eldest brother, Senator Joseph Bonaparte.

Betsy, a veritable flame of expectancy, listened to the translation. Joseph had written thus to Jerome:

"I have received your letter from Albany which Mr. Esmenard delivered to me. I have told him what I wish most ardently to be effected—I mean, my dear Jerome, your arrival in France. I cannot give you my advice respecting the way of undertaking that voyage. I am sensible that it would be an excellent one if, taking your passage on board a man-of-war, you might have a glorious engagement which could enable you to soften the dissatisfaction of those who love you, and are displeased only at the oblivion in which your distance and your stay in a country so remote seem to have left them.

"Tell Mrs. Jerome from me, that as soon as she will be arrived, and acknowledged by the chief of the family, she will not find a more affectionate brother than I. I have every reason to believe, after what I have heard of her, that her qualities and character will promote your happiness and inspire us with esteem and friendship that I will be very much pleased to express to her.

"Do not accustom them to your absence, particularly for such a length of time."

The bride, detecting no undercurrents, was delighted with the letter.

"There!" she said. "That means that the only one left to conquer is the fierce Napoleon. I am prepared, I am eager for that campaign!"

"Joseph's letter means nothing," Jerome said gloomily. "Napoleon's word is law for the entire family. Joseph, you will notice, has left a big loophole for himself, and if Napoleon frowns, he will scurry through it."

"What my husband needs," Betsy confessed to herself, "is a fighting spirit. However, I shall supply it for him." She continued to urge their early sailing.

Then came through Robert in Paris fresh urgings by Lucien that Jerome become an American citizen.

Betsy's tiny foot stamped the rich carpet. "We'll do no such thing! Jerome's destiny is in Europe!"

William Patterson, who had read to the pair Robert's letter, turned stubbornly from the defiant Betsy and pleaded with his wavering son-in-law.

"Remember, Jerome, that Lucien's views for your settlement in this country are very pleasing to me. Consider the precarious and unsettled state of things in France at present. Remember the risk you would take of being captured by the British were you to sail for home. Your brother, I think, has in the back of his mind that in case of a revolution in France, America would be a refuge for your family, and that it is wise to have you establish such a sanctuary. It will make us very happy to have you become a citizen of the United States."

Jerome stood bewildered between wife and father-in-law.

"I should like to make you happy, sir," he stammered, "but there are things to consider not apparent to you. Joseph, and not Lucien, is the spokesman for our family. He has spoken urging me to sail for Europe. Lucien, on the other hand, is not overly fond of me. He takes pleasure in thwarting Napoleon. It would suit him very well to have me stay in America. I want to follow Joseph's advice, but the trouble is that he does not include Betsy in his plans—she could not sail on a French warship. If Napoleon does not soon send us his sanction of our marriage, perhaps we had better sail together in a merchant vessel, even though there be danger of capture by the British."

When they were alone, Betsy said to her husband: "That note of uncertainty may be the diplomatic one to use when you are talking to my father, but surely, my dear, you will not let a few obstacles at sea make you a prisoner in America. The brother of Napoleon will not flinch at the prospect of meeting the British—your record in the West Indies proves that. We will sail, won't we?"

"General Turreau tells me that certain frigates have recently sailed from France," Jerome answered with dignity. "They will touch at New York and may bear an official message from Napoleon to me. We will go to New York. If they bear no tidings, then, in some way or other, we will sail for France. Do not fear, little wife, you will have your opportunity to plead your own cause before the Emperor."

CHAPTER IX

THE MESSAGE IN CIPHER

It was Maytime as the Bonapartes drove through the blossoming country to New York. At once Jerome was surrounded by inquisitive reporters, who dogged the couple's every move. The fame of Betsy's beauty had spread; the romance of her marriage was on every tongue. It had become a choice matter for speculation and gamble as to whether in Betsy America was to produce another Josephine or whether Napoleon would refuse to receive the lovely American bride of his rash youngest brother.

French warships had arrived, but British vessels were off the coast. It was gossiped that the coming of young Bonaparte and his bride had brought the warships to the vicinity. For weeks the papers speculated as to whether Jerome intended to sail in one of the French frigates and as to what chances he had of escaping the British frigates.

Neither Jerome's hope of a letter nor Betsy's wish for a swift departure for France was fulfilled. The French commanders, while extraordinarily polite, revealed that their orders would not permit them at that time to sail for Europe, even though the brother of Napoleon desired it. They would entertain Jerome and his bride aboard their ships, and defer to young Madame Bonaparte as they would to a princess, but as for taking her to France as a passenger without orders from the Emperor—surely Jerome could see how impossible that was. Jerome saw and sighed. Betsy saw but pretended not to see.

Oddly enough, though not strange to one versed in diplomacy, the first inkling of Napoleon's position in regard to Jerome's marriage came through a Paris newspaper.

Robert had clipped the revealing item and sent it to his father, who forwarded it to Betsy without comment.

The editorial ran:

"One of our journals, in saying that the American journals speak often of the wife of Mr. Jerome Bonaparte, observes that it is possible Mr. Bonaparte, a young man who is only *twenty* years of age, may have a mistress, but it is not possible he can have a wife, since the laws of France are such that a young man, a minor of twenty, or twenty-five years, cannot marry without the consent of his parents, and without having fulfilled in France the formalities prescribed."

Shocked and tremendously hurt to have the word "mistress" applied to her, Betsy hated for the minute France, Napoleon and Jerome. "Would the Emperor stoop so low as to try and dishonor me?" she sobbed. "Or is it just his cruel diplomats using any weapon that comes to hand?"

"I shall write to the *Moniteur*," Jerome cried in a fury. "All France shall know that you are my legal wife!" His promise calmed Betsy.

Later on in her career, Elizabeth Bonaparte spoke sourly of the fickleness of the French. The seeds of her bitterness were planted during this period. The French circles into which Jerome brought her were lavishly polite and hospitable, and accepted her as a princess, yet she was keen enough to perceive that behind her back they were urging Jerome to sail to France without her. It was thus with suave consuls and ship commanders; it was thus with his friends abroad who sent her affectionate greetings in their letters while devoting the rest of their writings to adroit appeals to him to return, singly, to the Emperor's favor.

Of the last-named, de Maupertius, who had visited America, was especially two-faced.

Writing to Le Camus, for Jerome's ear, he said:

"Offer him the assurance of my respectful devotion; also to the interesting lady who shares with him the rigors of his fate. A thousand compliments to Mr. Patterson.

"I dare not write Jerome. He must have been very obstinately pursued by a fatal destiny, to hinder him arriving here for the coronation. In his place, I would come back *alone* to France."

Fortunately for the girl, as a relief from this intrigue, she had resources of American companionship in New York

society.

If the seat of Congress had moved from Manhattan to the South, there still remained to greet the bride of Jerome a pleasant society of bankers and merchants, residing between the present sites of the City Hall and Battery Park. Handsome dwellings lined Wall Street and Broadway, and William Patterson, through his commercial interests, was well enough known to the leading families of New York to insure for his daughter a warm welcome outside of French circles.

Betsy was never more gay or lovely or witty than she was in the drawing-room of the Livingstons, Jays, Roosevelts, Clintons, Duanes and Van Cortlandts. Few of these New Yorkers detected that her gayety was a mask for heartsickness.

Stephen Jumel, a French merchant of New York, was known to William Patterson through commerce. Betsy, after meeting the handsome Monsieur Jumel and his attractive lady, told Jerome that "those rumors about her and Colonel Burr just couldn't be true." Yet as she saw Madame Jumel, with her Marie Antoinette curls, flirting night after night with men of note, she became guarded in her friendship with the French lady.

The couple visited the Falls of Niagara—a dozen towns were thrilled by the dashing pilgrimage.

The return was made to New York. There other French warships had arrived and the bride and groom were elegantly entertained on board the French frigate *Didon*, where the French officers addressed Jerome, to Betsy's delight, by the title "Your Imperial Highness."

In September there came to the frantically impatient Betsy, still in New York, a bitter setback.

Mr. Livingston had been recalled because of his deafness. The President had appointed General Armstrong to succeed Livingston as Minister to France, and the Pattersons, using their influence in politics, had schemed to take advantage of the new appointment.

"We have made a journey here for nothing," Betsy wrote bitterly to her father, "as General Armstrong, the Ambassador, after writing to Mr. Bonaparte that he would be delighted at taking me to France with him, changed his mind, and went off without me. I thought the opportunity of going with an Ambassador too good to be missed, and Mr. Bonaparte was to have gone in the frigate a few days after me."

Ezra Murdock, a Pennsylvania merchant acquainted with William Patterson, came to the young couple's aid.

"I'm sending the Philadelphia, a three-master, to Cadiz," he told Patterson. "If Betsy and her husband can put up with the accommodations, they're welcome to go as passengers."

Betsy was willing to endure the hardships. Miss Spear, the severe aunt, amazed her by offering to accompany her. Jerome agreed. Jealously guarding her elaborate trousseau, she went aboard.

Fortune still refused to aid the daring young woman. A sudden gale dismasted the vessel, shifted her cargo, carried away sail and mast, and almost tore away her small-boats.

Her captain, rigging out a broken boom and setting the foresail, steered for Lewes, Delaware, while the crew toiled desperately at the pumps to keep the vessel from foundering.

Jerome delighted Betsy by his gallantry and devotion. "You," he cried, "are more eager to save your gowns and jewels than your beautiful self."

Miss Spear, distressed at the lack of fire and candle, at the beds soaked with sea water, and the cabin torn to pieces, alternately prayed and wept.

After hours of anxiety, the vessel was brought into Lewes harbor. Snatching up Betsy, Jerome stepped with her into the tossing boat, and when the boats crunched the sandy beach, Betsy was the first to step ashore.

A gentleman in the neighborhood opened his doors to the rescued. Under his roof, Betsy's chief concern was to save her trousseau from the shipwreck, and to see that her bridal finery was dried without sea-stain. Long the hospitable people of Lewes remembered how the young *Madame* ran back and forth from the house to the yard, surveying anxiously her lovely clothes drying upon the line.

"Betsy," called the shocked Miss Spear, "you should be with me upon your knees, thanking God for sparing our lives!"

"Oh, do come down, aunt," the girl cried. "Here's a meal of roast goose and apple sauce waiting us that it would be *sinful* to miss!"

Returning downcast to Baltimore, the pair reached the South Street house simultaneously with the post and found William Patterson opening a letter received from Robert.

"Well, Jerome," said his father-in-law, "let's hope here is forgiveness for you—and a welcome for my girl. Humph—it doesn't look promising—part of it's in cipher. We arranged a secret code for tidings that were not for the world's ears, but it looks bad when Robert is forced to use it."

The note they bent over read as follows:

"Dear Father:

"*T. L b v f x b e a t* informs me that he saw a person yesterday who mentioned to him that *x u r R v c-b*, say that it is his determination to *x u b e p Q-r o a-x e c b o f e a* the moment of his arrival, where he should remain till he *b r c h i o l x r i* his *p o m r* and *v l b b o r i* another which he should designate.

"The gentleman thinks from the decided manner in which he spoke, that he will certainly put his threats into execution. *L.* and myself are now of opinion *Q.* will only be safe by remaining where he is. Be on your guard when you receive advices different from other quarters."

"What can it all mean!" Betsy said, aquiver with suspense. "Please, Father, if you have a key, unravel the mystery!"

"Here's the solution." Her father had fished a paper out of a desk drawer. Looking over his shoulder they read:

"*A n, B r, C p, D b, E o, F s, G c, H u, I d, J c, K x, L a, M f, N k, O i, P w, Q j, R e, S y, T g, U h, V m, W z, X t, Y l, Z q.*"

"*A* represents *N*, *B* stands for *R*, and so forth," Mr. Patterson explained.

"Ah, how ingenious, how diplomatic!" said Jerome. "Now we will soon know the news that alarms Robert. No more, I wager, than my mother has written to me."

William Patterson thus deciphered the message:

"*General Armstrong* informs me that he saw a person yesterday who mentioned to him that *the Emperor* says that it is his determination to *throw Jerome into prison* the moment of his arrival where he should remain till he *repudiated* his *wife* and *married* another which he should designate.

"The gentleman thinks from the decided manner in which he spoke, that he will certainly put his threats into execution. *General Armstrong* and myself are now of opinion *Jerome* will only be safe by remaining where he is. Be on your guard when you receive advices different from other quarters."

Jerome had thrown his arm affectionately about Betsy.

"What a blustering fellow my brother is!" he said. "His threats shall not prevent us from sailing on the first vessel that will take us!"

"Here," said William Patterson, "is a shorter letter from Robert:"

Using the key, he read:

"Betsy ought by no means to come to France. If she sailed, I think, she would be fortunate in only being sent back. Report says that Lucien was arrested at Milan, and he is now confined in the prison there."

At last Napoleon had spoken. This direct order was issued:

"Pinchon, the French Consul-General in New York, is instructed to withhold Jerome's supplies, and the commanders of French vessels are prohibited from receiving on board the 'young person' to whom he has attached himself."

* * * * *

The Emperor, while Robert Patterson fidgeted and fretted, rode to Boulogne to distribute crosses and heartened his fleet for the invasion of England. There Napoleon had a private talk with M. Dacres, French Minister of Marine.

"Madame Bonaparte informs me," said Napoleon, "that she has received a letter from the scapegrace Jerome telling her that he planned to sail with Miss Patterson to France.

"You will order Citizen Jerome, in his capacity of lieutenant of the fleet, to come back to France by the first French frigate returning thither. You will inform Citizen Pinchon, our Consul-General at New York, that no money shall be advanced on the order of Citizen Jerome, and tell him to inform the young man that only obedience to my order that he return alone to France will enable him to regain my affection.

"You will prohibit—and so inform Citizen Jerome—all captains of French vessels to receive on board the young person to whom he has connected himself; that it is my intention that she shall by no means come into France, and my will that, should she arrive she will not be suffered to land, but be sent immediately back to the United States.

"The glorious and brilliant career to which his destiny calls him, requires of him a necessary sacrifice. In proportion as I delight in exalting and honoring those of my relations who share my sentiments, I shall feel coldness to those who do not partake of them, or who walk in a different path from that which I have traced out for myself.

"Point out to the Consul-General, for conveyance to Citizen Jerome," Napoleon went on torrentially, stamping to and fro across the room, "that Citizen Joseph, his eldest brother, distinguished by the eminent services he has rendered, had been invested with the senatorial robe and of the first rank in the Legion of Honor. Not yet sufficiently clothed with glory, he has just been given one of the regiments to bear into England the national vengeance.

"General Louis, general of division, known until now by military glory, is about to add to that the glory of the statesman, and has just been admitted into the legislative council.

"Citizen Lucien, with the reputation of past conduct, and a fortune perfectly independent, has formed connections repugnant to my views; and the consequence is that he is just quitting France; and that, obliged to abandon the theater of the glory of his own family, he has exiled himself to Rome, where he becomes the simple spectator of the destinies of his august brother and the Empire.

"These examples will inform Jerome what his brother expects of him, and what he may expect of his brother. Young as yet, and of an age when the laws authorize not a marriage to which relations have not consented, he has indiscreetly and rashly contracted one and has abandoned the labors which the country required of him. Yielding to an irrational passion, he has without doubt acted grievously wrong, but his youth shall be suffered to plead his excuse, provided he is wise enough not to disobey the voice which calls him.

"Ashamed of his indolence, too long protracted, let him seize the first occasion of returning to share the labors whereof he should have given an example, and he will recover his brother in the head of the State. It is the only means to consecrate the ties which unite them."

The torrent ended. Napoleon bent his head. It lifted again, and the gush continued:

"Jerome is wrong to fancy that he will find in me affections that will yield to his weakness. The relation in which I stand to him does not admit of parental condescension; not possessing the authority of a father over him, I cannot feel for him a

father's affection. Sole fabricator of my destiny, I owe nothing to my brothers. In what I have done for glory, they have found means to reap for themselves an abundant harvest; but they must not on that account abandon the field when there is something to be reaped. They must not leave me isolated, and deprived of the aid and services which I have a right to expect from them. They cease to be anything to me, if they press not around my person, and if they follow a path that is opposite to mine.

"If the delirium of passion should render Jerome inaccessible to the voice of reason, you have only one thing to represent to him, which is, that the passions cease, or at least decline, and that in this case the consequence would be endless.

"Moreover, if, unfortunately for Jerome, he should prolong his stay in the United States during the war, if peace should be made before his return, what a grief for him to have passed with a woman a season of dangers. Let him return and keep near me—I will give him credit for the sacrifice. But let him not bring her along with him. Be her accomplishments what they may, they would produce no effect, for most assuredly the order is given to prevent her landing, and it would be fresh trouble, and a disobedience too gross of my orders to go without punishment."

Having thus unburdened himself, Napoleon returned to his estate at Malmaison. Never was he so agreeable as he was that evening—pinching the ears of the young ladies, playing chess with generals and senators, calling for Italian recitations by the charming bride of his friend Junot.

The next morning seventeen-year-old Madame Junot, if her memoirs say truly, was awakened at daybreak by a slight noise, and opened surprised eyes to see Napoleon by her bedside. His sportive mood still continued, for does she not describe how he pinched her foot through the bedclothes?

A strange person was this opposer of his brother Jerome's honest marriage. So strange that, after repeated morning visits and toe-pinchings, Madame Junot demanded of her absent husband that he take her out of Napoleon's court. So strange that while he preached morality, he trained his valet Constant in the art of leading young women whose attraction and responsiveness he had noted in his journeys about Paris to his quarters without being detected by the Empress Josephine.

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Betsy, now fully aware of all aspects of the situation, watched Jerome keenly. The first test had come of the endurance of Jerome's love. The way to France lay open to him, but not to his bride. He might go aboard a French warship and sail away without her, and for his desertion of her, be splendidly rewarded by Napoleon.

She saw that the full power of the French court was now being used in every available way to separate her from her husband. Against them she had pitted every resource of her nature. Were her attractions of mind and flesh strong enough to overcome the ruler of the French court?

Jerome reaffirmed his decision. "When I sail," he assured her, "it will be with you at my side."

She embraced him in an ecstasy of admiration and delight. Here was no light-of-love, but instead a man of fidelity and character.

Any fears she had entertained that when he came again under the influence of Napoleon's star her power over him would wane, vanished. She awaited the ordeal of France with confidence—but would the day ever come?

William Patterson surveyed his son-in-law with new respect.

"I'm not so fearful now," he told his wife, "that Napoleon will twist him around his finger when he lands in France."

CHAPTER X

ABANDONED

Motherhood. . . . A new complication. Betsy had told Jerome that she was with child.

The discovery had frightened her—most of the girls she knew lost their looks after they had borne babies. Without beauty she could never fulfill her career. Before her own marriage, she had looked with disdain on the cooing young mothers of her circle. "Babies!" she had exclaimed. "That is the chief end of domestic life in America! Nature sacrifices the one to breed the many, and women have not the sense to rebel. As for me, I do not intend to be tied to a cradle!"

Yet here she was, for all her rebellion, nature's captive. Dare she tell Jerome? Would the thought of paternity set him to sulking—breed estrangement? She feared this new complication, yet it had in it elements of hope. Napoleon needed boys to fulfill his dreams of a dynasty. Perhaps she might bear a son who would link her to the throne. And maybe some of those skilled French physicians who administered to the court beauties could bring her through her ordeal unmarred. Those lovely French women certainly must have had babies, if all she had heard of court life were true.

One thing was plain—she must get to France quickly. Once the child had been born, she would not be able to do much traveling. During the next few months she must achieve her conquest of the Emperor. Jerome must be shown the importance of having his child born in France.

That night, looking her loveliest, Betsy had that most intimate of talks with her husband. Utterly feminine and dependent, she appealed to his most chivalrous impulses. Yet, when she had told him, before he assured her of his utmost devotion, it seemed to her that he had smothered an oath.

In the next few weeks, Betsy watched her husband closely. There was an increasing restlessness in him. She noted, too, with a pang, a weakening of his resolution not to sail without her.

"If I am to be a father," he said, "I should be in France, smoothing away hostility toward you that will hurt the fortunes of our unborn child. Perhaps it would have been wiser if I had sailed on the *Didon* and arranged for you to follow. My brother has cut off entirely my allowance since he learned that I let the French frigates depart without me; and now he has made all his brothers and sisters princes and princesses except Lucien and me—because both of us have married contrary to his wishes!"

"Doubtless it was a mistake for you not to go back in the *Didon*," Betsy agreed. "Take passage on the first ship that sails, and I shall follow in one of my father's clippers. I am willing to face war at sea and the wrath of your imperial brother in Paris, for the sake of having my child born on French soil. That will be a fact hard for Napoleon to elude."

Jerome continued his martial pacing of the room.

"I suppose that's the wisest thing to do," he said. "You of course would be safe from British interference. Perhaps you are counting too much on your power to sway my brother, but it is true that if the child is a boy our cause will be strengthened. Yet let me warn you, my dear, so that you will not be bitterly disappointed later, that neither your beauty nor your delicate condition may influence Napoleon now that France is in a state of war. It is true that you are the equal of my family in loveliness and intellect and, indeed, origin—but you must remember that as Napoleon assumes imperial power and changes the republic to a monarchy, such equality is lost sight of. He has become drunk with the wine of ambition, and now that he is directing a war as well as an empire, I fear that neither diplomacy nor your own true worth will save you from a humiliating reception."

Betsy, her eyes widened by doubt, stared at him. It was not his words that frightened her, but instead an undercurrent—as if he nursed doubts or fears of which he had not told her—as if he were almost, unconsciously, preparing her for tragedy.

She went up to him.

"Whatever the Emperor's attitude, Jerome, whatever the temptations he puts in your path, it is your purpose to acknowledge me before all France as your lawfully wedded wife?"

"It is for that purpose only," he assured her, smothering her in his embrace, "that I would return to France!"

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News came that the French frigate *Le President*, of forty-four guns, was at Annapolis. Its commander had received no orders forbidding Jerome Bonaparte's lady to embark on it. He agreed to give the pair passage to France. They went aboard and proceeded down the Chesapeake; but information reached her captain that the British frigate *Revolutionnaire*, of forty-four guns, was waiting for them in Hampton Roads. *Le President* sailed on, but Jerome and his bride disembarked.

Betsy, after this failure, took matters into her own hands.

"Father," she said, "the *Erin* is ready to sail. No British or French frigate can overtake it. It is due me that you send Jerome and myself to France in it. We will impress the Emperor by visiting him in our own vessel."

William Patterson, himself anxious for Napoleon's decision, agreed.

It was fortunate for the pair—or unfortunate, depending on how one interprets following events—that William Patterson owned ships. The merchant-trader had early interested himself in that Baltimore type called "clipper" that had originated in St. Michael's, Talbot county, Maryland, which, because they were marvelously speedy in light airs and in turning to windward, could outsail the tubby overmasted sloops and brigs of the British navy.

The clipper *Erin* had been fitted up and ballasted; a general cargo had been put aboard her and she was ready to sail down the Chesapeake, past the capes, and there give the slip to the swiftest English sea-hound.

Under assumed names, the pair went aboard. They took as companions William, Betsy's brother, and Mrs. Anderson, a pleasant woman fitted by inclination and experience to preside at births.

The air was misty and the wind faint. Off Cape Henlopen, it was discovered from the foretop that a frigate was bearing down in pursuit of them. Jerome, his own fears masked, marveled at the bravery with which his wife faced the ordeal of battle.

"I must be worthy of my destiny," she whispered.

The frigate's twelve-pounders began to hull the *Erin*, and it seemed that her captain would soon have to strike, but at the height of danger the shot began to fall short, and it was seen that the pursuer had become becalmed, while, for the *Erin*, the wind freshened. Night fell. At daybreak the ocean was clear of enemies.

Gale succeeded gale, but being mostly from the western quarter, it gave them a fair wind. In spite of heavy seas, the *Erin* scudded under close-reefed topsail and reefed foresail. After a stop at St. Croix de Teneriffe for fresh provisions, they at last came in sight of the restful blue hills of Portugal.

Betsy was on deck at dawn when the clipper weighed anchor in the crowded harbor of Lisbon. Here Jerome, in his own handwriting, sent to Baltimore news of the safe voyage. His letter, with its peculiar English, ran thus:

On board of the *Erin*,
the 2d April, 1805.

"I have the pleasure of writing to you, dear father, from the arbour of Lisbon where we arrive this morning the 21st day of our departure from Cape Henry. We shall be obliged to perform a quarantine of 16 days, but I have already found the way for not doing it, and in three days I shall be ready to proceed on my Long, monotonne, and fatiguing journey. My feelings for you, my second mother, and all your good family are very well known to you, and it is easier for me to feel them than to express them. I have left one of my family and will be soon among the other. But the pleasure and the satisfaction of being in my first will never make me forget my second.

"My dear wife has fortunately supported the fatigue of our voyage perfectly well. She has been very sick, but you know as well as anybody that seasick never has killed no body.

"I pray you, dear father, to do not forget my near by friends, and particularly General and Mrs.

Smith and family, Nancy, Dallas and Dr. McHenry, and remember that you solemnly promised never to show my letters, and to burn them after having read them."

"So the prodigal returns home!"

Napoleon, rubbing his hands, addressed Joseph, who had brought him news of the arrival of Jerome at Lisbon.

"Come now," the Emperor continued, "our mother and sisters must be informed that we want no interference in our dealings with the scapegrace. For all his folly, I intend that young man to play a large part in the Bonaparte destiny. He shall be separated from the young woman. Neither her beauty nor her approaching maternity shall move me. In whatever port he lands, my hand shall pluck him from her side!"

Joseph made no protest. He knew that Napoleon the Emperor was speaking and that he was approaching this problem in a mood of granite. The mind that had conquered kings had no intention of yielding to the pathetic entreaties of Jerome. Lucien had failed him—Jerome should not.

Lucien, Napoleon reasoned, had his woman at his side to encourage him in his resistance to the Napoleonic will. It would then never do to allow Jerome's companion to land. The pair, if supported by Lucien, might create a sympathy that would be embarrassing. What if the American were as lovely as reports said? A way must be found to combat that beauty: it must be separation. If Jerome could be parted from his so-called wife, he could be brought under the influence of women who rivaled her in loveliness, and her fair image would begin to pale. An embargo against American grace and charm must be surely planned.

The Emperor's determination was revealed in this letter to his mother:

"M. Jerome Bonaparte has reached Lisbon with the woman with whom he lives. I have sent orders to this prodigal son to proceed to Milan, by way of Perpignan, Toulouse, Grenoble, and Turin. I have given him to understand that, if he diverges from this route he will be arrested. Miss Patterson, who is living with him, has taken the precaution of bringing her brother with her. I have given orders that she be sent back to America. . . . I shall treat this young man severely, if, in the only interview I shall grant him, he shows himself unworthy of the name he bears, and persists in wishing to continue his intrigue. If he is not prepared to wash out the dishonor he has brought on my name by abandoning his country's flag on sea and land for the sake of a wretched woman, I shall cast him off forever. . . . On the supposition that he is going to Milan, write to him; tell him that I have been a father to him; that his duty towards me is sacred, and that he has no longer any way of salvation except in following my instructions. Speak to his sisters, that they may write him also, for when I have passed sentence on him, I shall be inflexible."

The arrival of the couple at Lisbon had given the Emperor the chance he had long awaited. With hawk-like swiftness he acted. A boat filled with French soldiers rowed out to the vessel and an official representing Napoleon went on board.

Jerome was greeted effusively. Then, to his chagrin, the ambassador asked to meet "Miss Patterson"!

With a regal dignity that created deference in the envoy, Betsy greeted Napoleon's messenger.

"I have been requested by the Emperor to ask what I can do for *Miss Patterson*."

The girl's eyes flashed. She caught at once the insinuation. Not as Madame Jerome Bonaparte could she land, but as "Miss Patterson," a girl surrendering all claim to membership in the Bonaparte family.

"Tell your master," she coolly replied, "that *Madame Bonaparte* is ambitious, and demands her rights as a member of the imperial family!"

But her spirit had met another as adamant: she was forbidden, with or without a title, to set foot on shore.

"Would you have me lose my head?" wailed M. Sérrurier, the French Consul at Lisbon, when Jerome pleaded the condition of his wife. "The wisest—the most considerate thing you could do for the lady would be to send her to Holland."

Another special ambassador from Napoleon went aboard the ship and conferred with Jerome. Betsy, watching her

husband's face, told by his dejected expression that he brought no good news.

The messenger, on leaving, bowed repeatedly to Jerome's wife.

"Crocodile! Hypocrite!" she murmured.

Jerome led her down to the cabin. "My pleadings are in vain," he said with great tenderness. "There will be no hope of forgiveness; no hope of safety for you or acknowledgment for our child, unless I go alone to Paris to appeal personally to the Emperor. The one refuge for you is Holland—and your condition makes it imperative that you go there. I have decided to go to him, to leave you aboard the *Erin*—a sacrifice that I make only that we may be happily reunited later. I shall come for you, my dearest, the instant Napoleon relents. I count upon my talisman, this lovely miniature of you, to melt his will!"

Jerome spoke with the tone of utmost sincerity.

Betsy looked to William for advice. Jerome seemed to him trustworthy, his sister's state was such that a landing in any port was desirable. He seconded Jerome, as did the fluttered Mrs. Anderson.

Tearlessly, Betsy yielded to the strength of circumstance and accepted Jerome's decision. "I shall bear hardships as becomes the wife of a Bonaparte," she said. "I need exact no pledges from you, my husband, than those you have already given. Our child shall be the token of our marriage. I wanted him born on French soil, but since Holland is under Napoleon's sway, it is better than America."

A gallant company came to escort Jerome ashore. At the deck's rail the pair clung to each other. Officers and sailors turned away their heads and dashed tears from their cheeks.

At last M. Sérrurier tugged at Jerome's sleeve, while Mrs. Anderson opened her arms to Betsy.

Queenly in her grief, the girl watched her husband's boat cleave the blue water until it disappeared among the shipping. Jerome, standing at the stern, waved to her repeatedly. So he vanished.

The harbor was gay with flags. In honor of the arrival of the celebrities, ships hung gay banners. But aboard the Ishmael ship *Erin* Betsy looked seaward and shoreward forebodingly.

Yonder on shore lay the courts of which she had dreamed—the grandeur and enjoyment for which she had turned her back on her family—on America. She felt depressed and fearful. Her campaign had been founded on the plan that she should meet Napoleon and win him with her wit and beauty. The Emperor had forestalled her.

Her hopes now rested on Jerome—who was like a child in arms compared to his brother. Would he be as resolute in France as in America? She feared that he would not. A premonition had come that her magnificent dream had already ended; that those brilliant courts would remain an unrealized ambition, that her prince would never return.

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The *Erin* sailed for Amsterdam. There the young wife of Jerome met a rebuff severe enough to daunt the bravest spirit. It was the mother of Napoleon who had suggested that Betsy await Jerome in Holland. He had been sincere in his belief that she would be welcomed there. But Napoleon, now master of the continent of Europe, had brought into action all his military and diplomatic resources to prevent Madame Jerome Bonaparte, "or any person assuming that name," from landing in any port of the continent. So, when the ship anchored off Amsterdam, Schimmelpennick, the Grand Pensionary of the Batavian Republic, head of the Holland Government, ordered her captain to keep his vessel away from the shore, and forbade all persons, under severe penalty, to hold any communication with her.

No sooner had the clipper come to anchor, than a warship of sixty-four guns and a frigate sailed alongside and remained there. The *Erin* carried no guns or contraband. She flew the flag of a neutral country. She had broken no law. Yet to this indignity her flag was subjected.

Protest was made to Sylvanus Bourne, United States Consul, and permission was asked to supply the vessel with fresh provisions. The official the Consul addressed replied with regret that he was powerless to grant the request.

"I have been instructed," he said, "to inform you that the Emperor Napoleon has forbidden the Government of Holland to

permit the lady who accompanies you to land in this country!"

"I would never have believed," Betsy said, "that the Emperor of the French could deal so mercilessly with a helpless woman."

So it was that English papers reported a few weeks later that the ship *Erin* of Baltimore was at Amsterdam, with Madame Bonaparte on board, "where she was not suffered to go ashore. Madame is in the last stage of pregnancy. Her brother did not think it safe to proceed to Baltimore."

One sanctuary only was open to the distressed woman. To England she sailed. When the *Erin* arrived at Dover, her untamed spirit took comfort in the fact that she had become such a personality that dispatches from the English fleet heralded her arrival, and that Mr. Pitt, the Prime Minister of England, sent a military escort to keep back the multitude that came to see her disembark.

"If one cannot be a personage of France," she said dryly, "it is comforting to know that there are honors to be had in England. I shall not be ungrateful to this hospitable people."

James Monroe and his family came from London to receive her.

"What a celebrity you have become!" the solicitous Mr. Monroe said. "The cruel treatment you have received at the hands of Napoleon has made every British heart beat in sympathy for you. If you choose to remain in England, what a brilliant career you will have. Don't worry if you never see Jerome again. With your wit and beauty, you can gain a better kingdom here."

Betsy was in no mood to plan further conquests—her birth-pangs were upon her. At Camberwell, near London, under the care of one of England's leading physicians, on July 7th, 1805, she bore Jerome a son.

When they laid in Betsy's arms her boy-child, she cuddled it with no lack of tenderness. If she had scorned motherhood yet she accepted it bravely, and the natural feelings of a mother had sprung up in her to give the babe a welcome.

"There is a venture before us we must share together," she murmured as she held the boy-child close to her.

"So this is where my dream has led me," she mused, emerging from the travail of the flesh to one of the spirit. "A stranger in London; barred from the court which I am entitled to enter; separated from my husband and doubtful of his loyalty; my child born in a country with which France is at war; the mother of a babe who may some day inherit a throne, but which is now, so far as his father's family is concerned, as deserted as I am.

"They say," her thoughts ran on, "that Napoleon fervently desires a son—that he will divorce Josephine because she cannot bear him one. This babe might become his idol if he once held it in his arms, yet he spurns the child and me.

"My boy shall be called," she announced, "Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon may deny me his family name, but my husband, from whom I am only temporarily parted, wishes our son to bear the name I have given."

The blunt question she asked her physician after her recovery indicated that Mr. Monroe's suggestion had not been forgotten:

"Will I lose my beauty or my form?"

"You will be the slimmest, prettiest princess in the Bonaparte dynasty," the physician exclaimed. "Even the glorious Pauline will be jealous of you!"

Robert, who joined Betsy in England, sandwiched in between his business reports to his father, matter-of-fact tidings of Betsy and her baby.

"My sister is well recovered from her confinement . . . She has been downstairs two or three days. The child was vaccinated five or six days since, and is doing well. . . . He is really a fine large fellow. We have prevailed on Mrs. Anderson to remain here, so that Betsy will not be left alone. . . ."

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Let us now follow the unhappy Jerome, and see what, under Napoleon's influence, became of his determination to stand

by his wife and child.

General Junot, close friend to Napoleon, was visiting Spain and Portugal on a diplomatic mission for his chief. With him was his pretty and talented young wife, who had known the Bonapartes from childhood.

The pair stopped at an inn, and Junot explored the grounds. Suddenly his wife saw him in a state of agitation, approaching her carriage.

"You won't believe it," he exclaimed, "but, on my honor, I have just met Jerome Bonaparte! While I knew him only as a boy, I recognized him at once by his likeness to the other members of the family. I have invited him to dine with us!"

Young Madame Junot alighted and met Jerome in the garden. She was amazed at the change in him. She had known him as a gay lad—one of those young men who do neither good nor harm in the world. Now, there was a marked alteration in his manners. His face had assumed a look of pensive melancholy which so transformed his appearance that the friend of his boyhood scarcely recognized him. She had heard rumors, however, of his romantic attachment to a rich young American girl, and being young and romantic herself, her heart warmed.

The devil-may-care Junot, who conceived that he could speak freely to the young man since he had known him from boyhood, endeavored to dissuade him from resisting the Emperor's wishes.

"I consider myself bound by honor," Jerome answered without wavering, "to adhere to my marriage with Miss Patterson. I obtained the consent of my mother and my eldest brother to the union; I therefore do not think that I should be blamed by Napoleon for the step I took.

"My brother, I am confident, will withdraw his objections when he has heard me. He has always been kind and just.

"Even admitting that I have committed a fault by marrying Miss Patterson without his consent, is this the moment for inflicting punishment—with my wife on shipboard in her delicate condition? Upon whose head will that punishment light? Upon that of my poor, innocent wife! No, no. Surely my brother will not outrage the feelings of one of the most respectable families of the United States, and inflict at the same time a mortal wound on one who is as amiable as she is beautiful!"

Opening a locket hung round his neck, Jerome showed proudly to his friends a fine miniature of Betsy.

"How exquisitely beautiful!" exclaimed Madame Junot. "How closely she resembles your sister Pauline!"

"That has often been remarked," Jerome replied. "She has graces I fear Pauline cannot claim!"

"Well," laughed Madame Junot, "I will at least admit that she seems to possess more animation than the lovely Princess Borghese!"

"Judge then," resumed Jerome, replacing the charming portrait in his bosom, "judge whether I can abandon a being like her; especially when I assure you that to a person so exquisitely beautiful is united every quality that can make a woman lovable. I only wish my brother would consent to see her—to hear her voice for but a single moment. I am convinced that her triumph would be as complete as that of the amiable Christine (Joseph's wife, whom the Emperor at first repulsed, but at length liked as well as his other sisters-in-law).

"For myself, I am resolved not to yield the point. Strong in the justice of my cause, I will do nothing which hereafter my conscience will make me repent!"

To these brave and sincere words, Junot made no reply, though his comely little wife could scarcely keep back her tears. Junot had begun the conversation with a desire to prevail on Jerome to conform to the Emperor's will, but Betsy's beauty had made another conquest.

"I felt," he admitted to his wife when Jerome had left them, "that I would be doing wrong to exhort Jerome to follow a line of conduct which now appears to me to be highly dishonorable. But, my love, never mention to any of the Bonapartes that I felt this way!"

When Jerome reached Paris, he requested an interview with Napoleon, which was refused.

"Tell Citizen Jerome to address me by letter!" said Napoleon to Joseph, who acted as go-between.

Jerome wrote the letter—pleading Betsy's worthiness, entreating forgiveness.

Napoleon replied in writing:

"I have received your letter this morning. There are no faults that you have committed which may not be effaced in my eyes by a sincere repentance. Your marriage is null, both in a religious and legal point of view. *I will never acknowledge it.* Write to Miss Patterson to return to the United States, and tell her it is not possible to give things another turn. On condition of her return to America, I will allow her a pension during her life of sixty thousand francs per year, provided she does not take the name of my family, to which she has no right, her marriage having no existence."

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The Emperor, several mornings later, appeared in an unusually cheerful mood. As he shaved, assisted by three valets, he lathered himself so vigorously that the mirror, window-panes, curtains, and also his dressing-gown were covered with soapsuds.

After both cheeks and chin were scraped, the Emperor washed his face and hands and yielded his nails to a servant to be cleaned. His valet Constant next removed his master's flannel undershirt, and rubbed his torso with a soft silk brush, afterwards liberally anointing him with eau-de-cologne, a custom which Napoleon had acquired in Egypt.

Next Constant put on his lord's white silk stockings, fine linen drawers, knee breeches of white cassimere, and soft riding-boots, to which were attached small silver spurs. Then the Emperor donned a flannel vest and shirt, a neck-cloth of fine muslin, over which went a black silk stock. Finally he arrayed himself in a vest of white piqué, and a grenadier's coat, to which were attached a star and two crosses, that of the Legion of Honor, and that of the Iron Crown. Under his uniform and over his vest, Constant had placed a red ribbon—the *Grand Cordon Rouge*. His toilet ended, he was handed his handkerchief, his tobacco-box, marked with an *N* in a coronet, and a little box of shell filled with anise-seed and finely ground licorice.

As he drank a cup of tea in his bedroom, which was perfumed with aloes wood, sitting beside the grate fire which his nature—sensitive to cold—demanded, Napoleon glanced through a pile of new works and romances. The latter he hurled aside in disgust.

The first serious volume—by Madame de Staël, on Germany, he hurled into the fire.

"Let that lying thing burn—it is all that it deserves!" he cried to his amazed secretary. His custom was, if a writer spoke too well of a foreign country, to condemn the volume to the flames.

"Constant," he said suddenly to his valet, "this should be a pleasant morning. I have agreed to see that truant Jerome. You will see how I will break down that young man's resistance. We can't have two Luciens in the family."

Jerome was announced. Like a guilty schoolboy he came into his august brother's presence.

Then his face cleared. Instead of frowning a Jovean frown and delivering a terrible judgment, Napoleon was smiling at him—pinching his cheek.

Yet, when the Emperor spoke, his words were severe enough:

"So, sir, you are the first of the family who has shamefully abandoned his post. It will require many splendid actions to wipe off that stain from your reputation. *As to your love affair* with your little girl, I pay no regard to it!"

Jerome stammeringly endeavored to plead his cause. Thunderously, Napoleon demanded that he hush.

"Hear me!" cried the Emperor. "I can no longer have obscure kinsmen. Those who do not rise with me, cease to belong to my family. I am making it a family of kings, or rather of vice-kings. I am willing to forget the behavior of two of my brothers towards me. Let Lucien put away his wife and I will give him a throne. As for you, after a year's cruise, I shall marry you to a princess!"

Feeling like a criminal, Jerome sheepishly retired to wait further orders. The Emperor, summoning his secretary, wrote

thus to Pope Pius VII:

"I have frequently spoken to Your Holiness of a young brother, nineteen years of age, whom I sent in a frigate to America, and who, after a sojourn of a month, although a minor, married a Protestant, a daughter of a merchant of the United States. He has just returned. He is fully conscious of his faults. I have sent back to America Miss Patterson, who calls herself his wife. By our laws the marriage is null. A Spanish priest so far forgot his duties as to pronounce the benediction. I desire from Your Holiness a bull annulling the marriage. I send Your Holiness several papers, from one of which, by Cardinal Casselli, Your Holiness will receive much light. I could easily have this marriage broken in Paris, since the Gallican Church pronounces such marriages null. But it appears to me better to have it done in Rome, on account of the example of sovereign families marrying Protestants. I beg Your Holiness to do this quietly, and as soon as I know that you are willing to do it, I will have the marriage broken here by civil process.

"It is important for France that there should not be a Protestant young woman so near my person. It is dangerous that a minor and a young man of high rank should be exposed to such seduction against the civil laws and every rule of propriety."

The Emperor rose.

"A package shall accompany that letter. I have ordered that a magnificent gold tiara be sent to His Holiness. It may help!"

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In stating his case it will be noted that Napoleon made important misrepresentations: Jerome, when the marriage took place, had been in the United States four months instead of one; the ceremony had been performed, not by a Spanish priest, but instead by the Right Reverend John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore; the term "seduction" might apply to Jerome's general conduct, but never to Betsy's coquettishness.

The reply from the Pope, which came after considerable delay, goaded the Emperor into a fury.

The Pope politely refused to issue the bull. A precedent for the proposed annulment could not be found. The Catholic Church has always held the marriage tie inviolate. The marriage of Jerome Bonaparte and Elizabeth Patterson had been celebrated with all of the formalities required by the Church; therefore Pius VII announced that he neither would nor could annul the union.

As to the marriage being that of a Catholic and a Protestant, the Pope answered Napoleon's argument in this manner:

"The difference of religion considered by the Church as an absolute impediment does not obtain between the persons who have been baptized, even when one of them is not in the Catholic communion. This impediment obtains only in a marriage contracted between a Catholic and an infidel. These marriages between Protestants and Catholics, although disapproved of by the Church, are nevertheless acknowledged as valid."

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Surrounded by an ever-widening circle of solicitous English people, Betsy, her dreaded experience of maternity quickly past, began to get a taste of English social life. Her secret admiration for Napoleon she concealed. The coldest duke and haughtiest duchess must yield to this demure and wistful martyr to Napoleon's ambitions. She typified for Englishmen the fate of Albion if the isle should fall into the Bonapartean clutch. The days that brought her Jerome's ardent letters were periods of exultation to be shared with her close friends, nor was she particular to caution them to keep the messages secret:

"You think Jerome has forgotten me," she cried. "Listen!

"My dear and well-beloved wife: Life is nothing to me without thee and my son. Be tranquil; thy husband will never abandon thee!"

On another triumphant occasion she read:

"My good wife, I have never had the fatal thought of leaving thee; I act as a man of honor, as a brave and loyal soldier. I love my country, I love glory; but I love them as a man who, accustomed to fear nothing, never forgets that he is the father

of Jerome Napoleon and the husband of Elise. I embrace thee as I love thee, and I love thee as my life!"

And again:

"Believe, my Elise, that my first thought on waking, and my last in falling asleep, is always of thee; and if I were not sure of the happiness of rejoining my well-beloved wife, I should cease to live."

When she read these ardent letters from Jerome, Betsy's passion for splendor was submerged in one more common to womankind. He had been an adorable lover, her prince. Her maternity had sharpened her love hunger. She had learned that in spite of her intellectual yearnings, she was at heart a primal woman. She might scoff at her sisters for being in bondage to sex. She might rail at nature for creating romantic ardors to veil from men and women her scheme to use their love to replenish the earth, but she recognized now that nature had not made her an exception, and that she could not escape the common yearning.

There were tides in her that she must check; there were longings she must stifle; there were long nights of wishing that Jerome, however short he had fallen of her ideal, was with her in the flesh. Those who later deemed her cold and without sentiment knew nothing of the flame that, reviving or diminishing through many months, at last burned futilely to ashes.

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When she was not dreaming of Jerome and France, Betsy's thoughts strayed to America.

"I suppose," she said to herself, "the Caton girls are saying that a marriage into a noble family has its drawbacks. I shall yet confound them. It shall be no small factor in my plan to make France acknowledge that my son has in his veins the blood of the Bonapartes.

"Resentment toward the Emperor will not be exhibited by me. The English shall hear me make no word of complaint against him. They must be told that I have implicit confidence in my husband. Any crumb that Napoleon offers me I will take—however insignificant it is, it will be a link with the Bonapartes."

Meeting the solicitous gaze of her attendant, she rallied herself.

"A mirror, please, Mrs. Anderson."

"There," the woman consoled her mistress, as she brought one, "don't worry about your looks. You're the same beautiful girl, for all your troubles!"

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In no such vein as Jerome's letters to Betsy had his secretary written to Betsy's father. While William Patterson was longing for news of Betsy, there came this letter from Alexandre Le Camus:

"Mr. Bonaparte did not let you hear from him since his arrival among his family, on account of painful circumstances in which he was placed. Notwithstanding the difficulties there were to be leveled in adjusting the affair with his brother, he constantly entertained great hopes; but your daughter has far removed, if not destroyed forever, the possibility of a reconciliation.

"Being obliged to leave her in Lisbon, Mr. Bonaparte thought she could not have been committed to a better guide than her brother, and that her conduct would have agreed with the plan that he was to carry into execution; her situation, and her own interest, would have advised her not to take any improper steps; but finding in Holland orders which prohibited her landing on French territory, she imprudently went to London, instead of going to a neutral port such as Emden or Bremen; and her arrival in that city mentioned in the newspapers, has excited some rumors, and will certainly give occasion for any kind of observations directed against his family. The Emperor, in a letter which Mr. Bonaparte received yesterday, expressed to him a strong dissatisfaction at it. In the present circumstances of war, such conduct was not dictated by a good policy. It breaks all correspondence between them both, and offends the Emperor, whose generous heart would have been converted to more favorable disposition.

"However, Mr. Bonaparte begs me to assure you that he will never deviate from the principles of honor and delicacy which were always the basis of his character, and on which his happiness is established. He desires you to rely entirely

upon him, and let time obliterate the first impressions made on the mind of the Emperor."

"Devil take the fellow! Has he no heart?" cried William Patterson. "What a fool to think he can pull wool over my eyes! So Betsy, in her sad plight, should have gone to a country whose language she did not understand, where she had no friends, where there was no guarantee of safety or comfort! So, 'it breaks all correspondence between them,' does it? Well, it need not be broken off unless he chooses. If Le Camus can write to America he can write to England, and Jerome might conduct his correspondence with my girl without his signature."

Several weeks later Le Camus wrote again.

Jerome, he stated, had had news of Betsy from her physician . . . Mr. Bonaparte would leave nothing undone to bring the Emperor to a reconciliation, "but now too much precipitation would be fruitless and operate nothing else than the ruin of your son-in-law. Your daughter has only to yield to the present, and expect a better time."

The close of the letter was a startling revelation of Jerome's change of attitude. It expressed Mr. Bonaparte's desire that his wife "return to America and live there in her own house, and in the same way as she did when she was in Baltimore, as if she were expecting her husband, until he shall succeed in obtaining her recall. He is ready to sail in a few days for a mission. If he is successful, he will ask his wife as a reward for his conduct. Mr. Bonaparte kisses the children tenderly and sends love to the family."

The Emperor, "offended" by Betsy's presence in England, attempted now to speed her return to America by repeating the offer of a substantial bribe. Declaring again that he would never acknowledge the marriage, he had directed Jerome to write his wife to return to her family. He repeated that on condition she would not assume the name of Bonaparte, he would direct his minister in America to allow her a pension of 60,000 francs per annum.

Le Camus, who was the Emperor's emissary, appealed to Betsy's father to advise her "not to reject the marks of benevolence of the Emperor, since a refusal would offend him and destroy everything."

Two months had passed since the birth of Betsy's child. Three letters had been sent by her to Jerome in care of Lucien, but no reply had come. Robert had seen Le Camus, and had brought to her news of Napoleon's offer of a pension.

"A pension!"

Indignation and calculation combated each other in Betsy's mind. "This means that the Emperor does recognize me as a factor in his fortunes. It gives me, in an obscure way, a connection with the French court. Because of that, I may not reject it, but I shall relinquish no claim on my husband or on France!"

"My advice," said Robert, "is never to hear of a settlement unless the Emperor forces Jerome to marry again. In no case should you give up your name." He paused, flushed, and then blurted out: "It is generally understood in Paris that overtures have been made to some desirable queen by Napoleon to marry Jerome, but that she spurned the suggestion with the greatest contempt, and said she would rather abdicate her crown. Yet, I doubt, as time goes on, if all princesses will be as firm, especially if the Emperor's troops are threatening their kingdoms."

Robert had expected his sister to be heart-broken at the news. Instead, she received it as if she had expected it. In the weeks that had passed since the separation, she had studied her extraordinary situation from every side, and had prepared herself for every emergency. Her infatuation for Jerome had spent itself. She was conceiving a contempt for him that was slowly slaying her love for him. His name only, she coveted—that, she would not relinquish. Thank God, she was still young and with a brilliant title much in the way of a career might still be accomplished.

"So Jerome, after all his vows to me, is listening to such proposals," she answered Robert. "Such cold-blooded unfaithfulness is beyond one's imagination. Well, he can be sure that I will not let the princesses of Europe forget that I am his lawful wife, and the mother of his child."

From a Parisian source, however, news came to her offsetting the devastating tidings her brother had delivered.

"Jerome has received your letters—there can be no doubt of it. I was present at his sister's on an evening when he appeared extremely dejected and pensive—doubtless from reading your notes. Later he took me for his partner in a dance and in the course of conversation spoke of you several times, always calling you by an endearing name, and relating occurrences of a nature most affecting. Among the rest he said:

"I will forever remember the shipwreck we had encountered together. How well on that trying occasion she behaved. How, when danger was over, I pressed her into my arms."

"All who are in this company agree that he is almost always talking about you, delighting in the recollection of your good qualities. He never mentions your name without saying, 'My wife! My dear little wife!'"

"From a heart apparently so well disposed, I think some ultimate good may be reasonably predicted."

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In a strain of mingled hope, doubt and worldly wisdom, Betsy wrote to her father:

"I am sure that the French Minister Turreau has orders to try and sound you with respect to my consenting to a separation from Bonaparte on certain conditions; but as we have no reason to suppose that he will ever consent to give me up, we must certainly act as if we supposed him possessed of some principle and honor . . ."

"We imagine that Bonaparte is in some measure a prisoner, and we must wait patiently to know how he will act; in the meantime I must avoid getting into any scrapes which I might be led into from thinking that he would desert me. No matter what I think, it is unjust to condemn until we have some certainty greater than the present, and my conduct shall be such as if I had perfect reliance on him."

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The preparations of the English to repel Napoleon's threatened invasion, amused Betsy. "Perhaps, if I stay here long enough," she said to her companion, "I shall meet Napoleon on English soil!"

Betsy heard over and over outside her window an invasion song whose words were set to the tune of the "Blue Bells of Scotland."

*"When, and O when, does this little Bony come?
Perhaps he'll come next month; perhaps he'll stay at home;
But it's O in my heart, how I'll hide him should he come!"*

*"Yet still boldly he brags, with a consequence full cramm'd,
On England's happy island his legions will he land;
But it's O in my heart, if he does may I be d—d."*

"There couldn't have been more alarm," Betsy observed to Mrs. Anderson, "in the days of the Spanish Armada. Imagine beacons being burnt all around the coast—with tar barrels at night to warn of the coming of Napoleon's fleet of flat-bottomed boats. And do you hear the nurse-maids frightening the poor charges with threats of the Corsican Ogre, the Man of Sin, the Beast of the Apocalypse? Why, just this morning I rebuked one of our servants for telling her child: 'If you don't stop being naughty, Bony will eat you up!' Since I hope to continue bearing the Bonaparte name, I desire to correct the impression that I belong to a child-devouring family."

CHAPTER XI

SECOND MARRIAGES

The brig *Mars* had passed from the Chesapeake into the Patapsco, her voyage from London having been made without adventure. William Patterson was waiting at the wharf. Beside the excited coachman stood the gigantic Aunt Caroline, who had been Betsy's "mammy."

The brig lowered sail and dropped anchor. A boat put out for the pier. Two women sat in its stern. Their attention was concentrated, not on the shore line, but on a bundle the younger woman held close to her bosom.

"Dar's Miss Betsy," chuckled Isham. "Lawd, doan' seem no time since I was drivin' little missus out to de Caton gals, and now dar's a baby in her ahms!"

"Miss Betsy knows whah to bring him to be nussed," Aunt Caroline chimed in. "Dis ole woman's had huh hands full, raisin' de young Pattersons an' now it's beginnin' all ovah again. Lawd to goodness, what a 'sponsibility. Dey say Miss Betsy calls dat child a Prince!"

The boat swung into the dock. Betsy, lifted ashore, became the center of consoling relatives and adoring negroes.

Her father, with unexpected tenderness, lifted her child into his arms.

"A splendid boy, Betsy," he said huskily.

"Yes, Father, a child to be proud of," Betsy replied tearlessly.

In the privacy of the home, she admitted that she had lost faith in Jerome.

"He has sacrificed us to be reconciled to his brother. The Emperor would not be reconciled to Jerome on any other terms than that he forsake me and marry some princess of Napoleon's choice. He is being offered now to this or that fair lady. He is to become, I understand, a Prince of the Empire, and Admiral of the French Navy!"

To the amazement of her family, she defended Napoleon.

"I would probably have been as ruthless if I had been in his place. This offer of a pension shows that privately he has feelings. I stood in the way of the expansion of his kingdom and he hurled me aside. Yet, had he permitted me to talk to him, I am sure that he would have counted me an asset instead of a liability. He may yet want to acknowledge this babe and honor its mother."

Because a pension from him could be regarded as a link to his throne, she accepted it, while evading making a promise to surrender the Bonaparte name.

"I had no throne to offer Napoleon and so I was barred," she told the Caton girls. "In his scheme to control the continent, he must make alliances, and he can't afford to waste a brother on an untitled American girl.

"Yet," she added mysteriously, "he has been negotiating with me. His envoy desired to know my wishes. He is making provisions for Jerome's wife. We have not yet come to the end of the chapter."

To the public, however, she presented a different front. Following the suggestion Jerome had made through Le Camus, she lived as if expecting to be summoned any day to join him. By signing herself "Madame Bonaparte," she continued to impress upon her friends that she had made the most brilliant marriage ever made by an American woman.

Though the marvelous beauty of her girlhood still clung to her, the girl in her had died. She cloaked her hurt spirit in the cynicism of Rochefoucauld. Her brief but eventful visit to Europe had taught her to search behind the soft protestations for the sinister or selfish motive. Jerome's betrayal of her had changed the zestful Betsy into an embittered, satirical woman, with a lightning-like wit that permitted no rival to gloat over her misfortunes.

It comforted her always to reflect that a stronger tie with France than the pension was her possession of the son of Jerome Bonaparte. The babe was developing into an unusually attractive child, who accepted like a native youngster his

surroundings, and put his grandparents under bondage by his winsomeness. Her father's slaves became the boy's subjects.

While his grandparents might consider him an American child, Betsy herself intended never to let "Bo"—her abbreviation for Bonaparte—forget that he was an heir to the throne of France. Jealously she watched the journals for news of Jerome. It humiliated her deeply to have her friends know that Napoleon was playing the match-maker for him, and that this or that princess had considered and refused Jerome.

"I could win him back to me in a moment," she said to her reflection in the mirror, "if I dared smuggle myself into France. But why try when the moment my back were turned, I would lose him again."

When the boy was three years old, his restless mother decided to test her theory that Jerome's son meant something to Napoleon, and sent him an appeal that her boy be reared in France. With immense gratification, she found that his anger against her had vanished.

Her friend, M. de Champagny, to whom she wrote, sent her the Emperor's reply:

"I have read Miss Patterson's letter. I will see her child with pleasure, and will take charge of him, if she will send him to France; as for herself, she can have all she wants. At the time I refused to recognize her I was influenced by political considerations; apart from that, I wish to provide for her son to her satisfaction."

This letter was of tremendous value to her in her attempt to restore her prestige. She carried it tucked among the laces of her gown and showed it on every occasion.

From the date of its receipt, she fixed upon France as the ultimate scene of her son's career.

The health of her mother was failing. William Patterson, himself burdened by years, begged his eldest daughter to take upon herself the management of his household. Reluctantly, fearing that she was foregoing chances for herself, she assumed the direction of "Aunt Mag" and "Aunt Lucindy" in the kitchen; "Aunt Ceely" and "Aunt Judy" at the washing and ironing; "Uncle Zeke" and "Young Mose" at the window washing and floor polishing; Joe and Cæsar in the dining-room; Roxy, Sal and Penelope at the housecleaning; Isham and Bob and Daniel in the stables and garden.

Parties she shunned. When free from household duties, she searched the newspapers for European dispatches and made it a law that no sea-captain could return to Baltimore from England or France without bringing a bundle of journals.

Her resentment toward Napoleon had vanished with the receipt of his kind letter. Her early admiration for him revived. The desire to be one of his intimate circle burned within her—a steadfast flame. The barriers he had placed between them intensified her longing.

With a fierce interest, she saw Napoleon triumph at Austerlitz; saw Prussia and Austria sue for peace; saw the Emperor reorganize Central Europe; saw him crush the Russians at Friedland; saw him defeat Austria at Wagram; saw him make the Pope prisoner; saw the thrones of Spain and Naples occupied by brothers of the Emperor; saw the Kings of Bavaria, Württemberg, Saxony, and many more, become his vassals; saw, indeed, the Emperor wield a power which no European, since Charlemagne, had wielded.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "why did not fortune, instead of binding me to a blackguard, bring me into friendship with his superb brother!"

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Captain Samuel Gibbs, of the Patterson schooner *Falcon*, arrived in Baltimore from Bordeaux with a bit of news he brought hesitatingly to his employer's daughter.

"They say, Mistress Betsy, that Jerome's going to take another wife—a German princess. Napoleon has got her country in his clutch and is forcing the marriage."

Betsy listened coolly, though her fingers clenched and her heart pounded.

"I have been expecting that bit of news for many months. It is well known that Napoleon has gone wife-hunting across Europe for his abject brother. What specific news have you?"

"Well, Napoleon, they say, first sought an Archduchess for Prince Jerome, but she was too young. Then he picked out a Grand Duchess, but her mother would not yield her to a Frenchman. Then Napoleon grouped a lot of little German dominions and called the kingdom Westphalia. He offered Catherine, daughter of the King of Württemberg, queenship over Westphalia—with Jerome as her partner. They say she was reluctant, but at last she yielded."

The news he whispered spread as if it had been shouted. Later the foreign journals substantiated it.

"Betsy Patterson has just been pretending that she expects Jerome to call her to Europe," women chattered in drawing-rooms. "He's getting another wife! She's jilted for good and all!"

"Well, it's been a lesson to our daughters. Princes indeed!"

The tidings of Jerome's second marriage were true.

Napoleon, having conquered Prussia, was strengthening his hold in his usual way of setting his relatives on available thrones. Prussia's pretty queen, despoiled of her dominions, had appeared before him as a supplicant, willing, it was whispered, to offer all she possessed to the conqueror if her dominion were restored.

"She is handsome, but she does not suit my taste," Napoleon was said to have remarked, as he continued his search for a wife for Jerome.

Catherine of Württemberg had at last been selected. The ceremony was to take place at Raincy, and separate instructions were sent to Catherine and Jerome to meet at that place.

To welcome Princess Catherine to French soil, the Emperor sent several ladies of Josephine's circle. Among them was Madame Lallemand, who, as fortune would have it, had been with her husband in Jerome's suite when he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Patterson.

Betsy's relations with Madame Lallemand had continued friendly, and it was a long letter from the French lady that gave Jerome's American wife a clear picture of the second ceremony.

From this malicious and indiscreet correspondence, Betsy gathered that the Princess of Württemberg was about nineteen. Her figure was short, and her head sank between her shoulders. Though her features were regular, they lacked pleasantness and graciousness.

As it was Napoleon's policy to isolate foreign princesses who came to France, Catherine, two days previous to the journey to Raincy, had been separated from all her German attendants.

Loving her country and prejudiced against France, she had yet yielded to force of circumstances, and had come to give her hand to a man who—bitter thought—had already contracted a marriage; whose wife and child were still living and claiming their rights by that union. When Catherine, plain and gloomy, was received on her entrance into French territory by the court of honor Napoleon had bade attend her, it is not to be wondered at that Madame Lallemand confided to her companions that she was not to be compared for charm with Madame Jerome Bonaparte of Baltimore. Nor did it escape the sharp eyes of Madame Lallemand that the dress of the Princess as she waited the coming of Jerome was crude and ungraceful compared to the bridal array of Miss Patterson.

Catherine's gown was bluish-white moiré, trimmed in front with badly worked silver embroidery, both the cloth and the embroidery, from the Parisian view, being out of style. It was a tight frock, with a little train resembling the tail of a beaver, and with flat sleeves that bound the arms tightly above the elbows. Her hair was dressed in an old-fashioned style, and while her jewelry was magnificent, it was too heavy and clumsy to be ornamental. The smart French ladies whispered that Catherine looked like an ugly duckling trying by dress to look like the swan, but failing.

At dinner, Jerome not yet having arrived, the Princess grew greatly agitated.

"Would it be possible," she asked Madame Junot, coloring, "for me to have some minutes' notice previous to the Prince's arrival?"

Her court of honor, pitying her since they saw that her agitation rose from fright, assured her that such warning would be given, and sent M. de Grand Saigne to watch at the end of the long avenue of poplars leading up to the mansion, with instructions to bring word as soon as Prince Jerome's party came in sight.

Madame Junot whispered to Madame Lallemand, out of Catherine's hearing: "It is just like the fairy tale; with M. de Grand Saigne yonder playing the part of Sister Anne."

Raising her voice, she called:

"Sister Anne, Sister Anne! Is any one coming?"

"I see, dear lady," the sentinel called, "only the grass that's growing, and the dust that's blowing!"

At that moment a cloud of dust indeed arose on the road to Paris and presently several carriages rolled up to the grand entrance of the mansion.

Notice had been sent to the Princess. Her face crimsoned and she became so agitated that her attendants feared she would swoon. Soon, however, she recovered her self-command and waited for the fateful interview with the Bonaparte to whom she had been pledged, though she despised the very name.

Prince Jerome entered, preceded by Marshal Bessières and attended by Cardinal Maury and the ubiquitous M. Alexandre Le Camus.

On the Prince's entrance into the *salon*, where Catherine was seated near the chimney, she rose and with dignity advanced two steps toward him.

Jerome bowed. Madame Lallemand, who had concealed herself lest the sight of her should recall to him the Baltimore wedding, remarked, as she peered out at him, how constrained were his actions as compared with his devil-may-care grace at his first marriage. "That," she said to herself, "was spontaneous; this is under compulsion!"

After an exchange of a few words, Catherine offered her suitor a chair near her, and the two sat and chatted about her journey. Soon Jerome arose.

"My brother," he said, "is waiting for us; I will not longer deprive him of the pleasure of making acquaintance with the new sister I am about to give him."

The Princess smiled and accompanied Jerome to the entrance to the music-room. When he had left her, she sank down as if about to faint, but after eau-de-cologne was brought her, she recovered herself, and announced that she was ready to continue her journey. When Jerome came to inform her that the carriages were ready, she went with him, cool and self-possessed.

On her arrival at the Tuileries, the Emperor, when she made an effort to kneel and kiss his hand, stooped and bade her rise, and conducted her to the throne-room, where his family caressed her as a sister.

From Madame Lallemand came also to Betsy a kindly yet cruel account of the fêtes in celebration of the marriage of Jerome and Catherine, when the court of Fontainebleau blazed with a splendor exceeding that of the Court of Louis XIV.

"I wonder," mused Betsy, "if Jerome bought her a robe of golden bees?"

She felt not the slightest pang at the loss of Jerome—her pride, not her heart, was hurt. Contempt for her husband had long since replaced her affection. But it rankled her to feel that, after all, despite the marriage ceremony, she belonged with those women he had loved and forgotten.

"I wish you joy, Catherine," Betsy breathed as, imagining the scene of magnificent luxury, she tossed sleeplessly on her bed. "You have reaped what I sowed; you are sharing what I dreamed of enjoying, but I fear with it all you will be no happier than I am."

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Baltimore society, insatiable for news of the amazing Madame Bonaparte, knowing nothing of her discouragements, had made much of the tidings that her husband, now that he was enthroned, had offered her the title of Princess of Smallcalden, with an allowance of two hundred thousand francs a year, and that she had contemptuously declined it.

"Why," the ladies of her set asked, "should she let the two hundred thousand francs go, and accept instead the sixty thousand francs per year Napoleon himself offered her?"

"It is because," explained her aunt, Miss Spear, "she despises Jerome and respects Napoleon. When Jerome wrote her expressing displeasure that she should decline his pension and accept one from his brother, what answer do you think the girl made?"

"I prefer to be sheltered under the wings of an eagle than to be suspended from the bill of a goose."

A titter went around the circle.

"And," went on the prim Miss Spear, who seldom found reason to be pleased with her niece's conduct, "how do you suppose she replied to his offer to her of a residence in his kingdom of Westphalia?"

"Westphalia," wrote Betsy, 'is a large kingdom, but not quite large enough to hold *two queens*.'"

"No need to worry about Betsy," said Mrs. Caton. "My own girls are flitting to Europe. Thank heavens, however, their ambitions tend toward Englishmen. These Frenchmen are so fickle! I hope that they are equipped as well as is your niece to deal with the nobility."

"A discreet audaciousness," said Miss Spear, "seems a necessity. Why, when Napoleon heard of the witticisms, he was so delighted he sent her word that he would like to do something more for her than the pension. You can't imagine what she replied—"

The crochet-needles stopped in mid-air.

"Tell the Emperor I am ambitious, and wish to be a duchess."

"Ah," said Mrs. Caton, a trifle enviously, "will he do that?"

"He has promised," said Miss Spear, "but we have not heard as yet that the title has been bestowed."

The dames of Baltimore waited patiently for the news of Betsy's title; but Napoleon was busy getting himself a second wife, and the pledge was forgotten.

"He was cruel to me," Betsy said to herself, when she heard that Napoleon had divorced Josephine, "and now he is as heartless to Josephine. Will he go on always choosing and rejecting women as it suits his ambitions? Can no woman thwart him, make him suffer?"

First it was said that Napoleon's new wife would be the Grand Duchess Anne, sister of the Emperor Alexander of Russia. The purpose of the marriage—to provide Napoleon a son and successor—was mentioned in the gossip with a frankness that shocked even the worldly-wise Betsy and that horrified her aunt, Miss Spear, to whom Betsy repeated it.

"I heard it from the French Ambassador's wife—that Napoleon requested his envoy at the Russian court to inquire very privately concerning the qualities of the young Princess, and especially when, after the marriage, she might be expected to become a mother, since in the present troubled state of politics, a six months' delay might make a difference of great importance."

Miss Spear shuddered. "Is that the sort of talk you hear in the fine courts of Europe?" she asked her niece. "It's worse than stable language!"

"Oh, the French are frank," said Betsy, "and the birth of a son to Napoleon is a matter of such importance that delicacy is thrown to the winds."

When it seemed certain that Napoleon would marry the Russian Grand Duchess, tidings came that the Emperor, impatient at the Russian Emperor's hesitation, had gone to Austria for a bride.

"The Hapsburgs fear the marriage of Napoleon to the daughter of the Czar," Betsy explained. "Since France controls Italy, such a marriage would imprison Austria between two powerful empires. Its one chance of escape is to marry the Princess Marie Louise to Napoleon. It has escaped from perils before by matrimonial alliances. Its motto is: 'Let others wage war; do you, happy Austria, marry.'"

"They say she is rather plain, but that she has a beautiful figure, and when she is properly dressed and put into shape, she will do very well."

"But," said Miss Spear, "Austria has been at war with France. The girl has been brought up to regard Napoleon as a foe—as an invader and tyrant. It's like sending her to be the bride of a dragon!"

"You don't understand, Aunt," Betsy explained. "The children of the courts of Europe are taught not to consider their own feelings above that of the empire. When the interests of the empire are at stake, a princess must be willing to sacrifice herself to relieve it, just as I, a person without throne or title, was forced to step aside for Catherine. Marie Louise will ask her father what his wishes are, and will be guided accordingly.

"The girl is eighteen; Napoleon is forty. It may be that he will fascinate her. It is said that success and glory have softened his temper. For my own sake, I wish they had come to him earlier. Since he has become Emperor he has become familiar with the usages of courts, and will spare no effort to please her. She will be lonely at first, but I do not think she will ever think she has been sent to the dragon's den. If I were in her shoes, how proudly would I go to be Empress of so great a kingdom."

A year went by in which Betsy discussed divorce. Then tidings came that caused her to recall vividly the birth of her own son among strangers. It was the news of the birth of a son to Napoleon.

"So he has a heart, after all, when one finds the way to it!" she said when told of the Emperor's anxiety when the birth of the child was delayed.

"Yes," said the wife of the French Ambassador; "I hear that he was in a frenzy of emotion—that he was far more anxious as he stood by his wife's bedside than he ever was on a field of battle. They say that when Dubois told him he feared that he should not be able to save both the mother and child, the Emperor stormed: 'Come, come, Monsieur Dubois, don't lose your head; save the mother; think only of the mother. Imagine she's just some shopkeeper's wife in the Rue Saint-Denis—that's all I ask of you. In any case—I repeat it—save the mother!'

"Yet," the French lady added, "he was wild with joy when his baby son was handed to him. Never had his glory brought a tear to his eyes, but the happiness of fatherhood softened the soul that had been proof against victory and public adoration."

"It is too bad," said Betsy, "that Josephine had not given him a child before my boy was born. With an understanding of what it means for a woman to be *enceinte*, he might not then have turned me away from France!"

Later, when she read the list of those present at the baptism of the babe, and saw there the name: *Prince Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia*, she commented: "So he was there, shouting: 'Long live the King of Rome!' I wonder if he remembered then his own son for whose welfare he has expressed no wish!"

CHAPTER XII

WHEN THE WAR CAME TO BALTIMORE

Washington—and the society of the charming Mrs. Madison, who through four administrations had held the leadership of society at the capital—now saw much of beautiful Madame Bonaparte. It was a delight to the keen Betsy to see Mrs. Madison in a crimson cap, which, contrasting with her jet-black curls and white satin gown, reminded one of a crown, presiding like a queen over her crowded drawing-room, chatting about literature, men and manners and European affairs. It amused her, too, to see Mr. Madison, because of his shortness, almost lost in the mass of jostling guests.

Here Betsy had grown intimate with Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, a member of an aristocratic family of Geneva who at nineteen had emigrated to the United States, and had risen to carry on, under Jefferson and Madison, the work of Alexander Hamilton. Because of his culture and knowledge of European politics, Betsy found in him a congenial spirit and, to the secret disapproval of his wife, was much in his company.

Guarding her own loveliness, it pleased Betsy immensely to receive compliments from Mrs. Seaton, wife of one of the owners of the *National Intelligencer*.

"Never have I seen," Mrs. Seaton remarked to Betsy at a reception given by Mrs. Gallatin, "such incongruity of dress. The splendid dress of these antiquated dames serves only to make the contrast more striking between them and the young and beautiful, among whom you are outstanding. The older women rouge and pearl and paint—seeking an appearance of youth they will never attain. Mrs. Madison, true, does not rouge—I have seen her color come and go—but of what other dames can you say it?

"The dress of the young girls, on the other hand, seems equally incompatible with propriety. They have made you, Madame Bonaparte, a model of fashion, but how vainly they imitate you, for you have certainly the most transcendently beautiful back and shoulders I have ever seen!"

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Of a more serious nature was the conversation that went on in William Patterson's office, where he sat with Commodore Barney, and Captains Jim Chaytor, Joe Almeda and Jim Barnes, discussing the sinking fortunes of Bonaparte, and speculating upon how many British troops the Corsican's downfall might release for warfare against the United States, if her accumulating affronts to the Republic resulted in war.

"It's no use of saying we don't want another war with England," Patterson said testily; "we've a heap sight more cause for resentment than our Annapolis and Boston patriots who held tea parties in '76. It reminds me of something I read in the foreign press picturing the British navy as an admiral grown old and full of honors yet unable to wrest from the enemy the means of comfortably sustaining those honors, because of the competition our clippers are giving them.

"Yankee enterprise on the high seas," he went on, "won't be tolerated by a race that holds that their supremacy at sea must be maintained at any cost. So their aggressions against our shipping can be expected to increase. We'll have to build ships of the line or take the consequences. The reason they have so steadily captured and destroyed the American ships they could lay hands on, is that we have begged for, not *fought* for, the freedom of the seas as our natural right."

"'Tisn't only the British," said Captain Jim Chaytor. "Your relative by marriage, Napoleon, in spite of his American connections, has been destroying our shipping too."

The other men chuckled.

"In trying to avoid war," Commodore Barney put in, "Madison is being dragged into it. The foxy Napoleon pretends to stop seizing American ships so that the President may pound the harder at England for fair dealings on the seas. Bony will continue to seize our ships and cargoes after we have become involved in war with Great Britain, but our minds seem to be made up to overlook France's deceit and fight England—though we have disbanded our army and dismantled our navy. Just now, France is doing more to injure our trade with neutrals than England is doing. Fortunately for those who hate Britain, her impressing our sailors blinds us to what we suffer from the French."

"Right, Commodore," said Captain Jim Chaytor. "There ain't a man of us but has had Yankee sailors taken off his ships to

serve in British frigates; but we ought to settle that matter without war. Where'll we find another George Washington? As for ships, our clippers can sail around them, but can we sink them? Moreover, there's a lot of property been built along these shores that would be pie for British raiders. Wouldn't like to have the Duke of Wellington burning down your warehouses, would you? Who's going to defend them? Maybe Madison is going to roll up his State papers into guns and shoot wind through them. I don't see any other kind of army being built up!"

"We sailors," said Barney, out of a cloud of tobacco-smoke, "are merely wasting our breath. I'm going to buy a farm in Anne Arundel County and turn planter."

Betsy had entered. Above the grumble of the sea-dog her laugh rippled.

"Your plan, Commodore, is admirable! After your sea-fights and land duels you've well earned the right to exchange sword for plow-blade. But I, for one, hope that you and our other fire-eaters will not be able to rouse Mr. Madison to declare war against England. I shudder to think of some of the nice British officers I have met becoming targets for your soldiers. Besides, you know that the Caton girls want English lords for husbands. Then, too, I am thinking of exchanging my French turncoat for a loyal English duke. Why make it so difficult for us?"

William Patterson grunted.

"Thank heavens, you have that boy to anchor you here!"

"Deuce take it, Betsy," cried Barney, "a war would be a good thing if it could show you young women the qualities of American men. Private affairs aside, our non-resistance is costing us our national dignity—our spirit of independence. George Washington will turn over in his grave if we do not make England humble herself for these outrages."

Betsy shrugged her pretty shoulders.

"Buy the farm, Commodore. Let the war-cloud blow over."

"I'll buy the farm, Betsy," Barney chuckled, "if you'll forget your snobbish dreams of European life and marry a good American husband. I met James Randolph in Annapolis. I've heard he paid you a lot of attention when you were in Virginia, and that he hasn't looked at a woman since you married Jerome Bonaparte. He's making a brilliant success there as a lawyer. I gathered that when you decide to be legally separated from Jerome he'd like to act as your attorney, with your hand for his fee!"

Betsy, her cheeks burning, started toward the door.

"You forget," she said with hauteur, "that you are speaking to Madame Bonaparte! I have no intention of surrendering that title."

William Patterson surveyed the ceiling and said nothing. His cronies stared at one another embarrassed.

Commodore Barney, startled at her lightning-flash of temper, gazed after her in admiration, tempered with pity.

"She's a match for me and any man—poor girl! God, how I'd like to Americanize her so she could see the worth of a man like Randolph! He's a bachelor on her account!"

"There are others who'd propose at a drop of an eyelash," said her father; "in Washington, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Eager enough she may be to divorce herself from the weak-kneed Jerome, but she'll never divorce herself from the name he gave her."

"Looks as if that jellyfish Jerome will get his deserts," said Barney, "married now to a woman he can't love and dependent on his brother's falling fortunes. Now that the Powers have a ring of bayonets about Napoleon, Betsy should thank her stars that she can cut loose from the Bonapartes."

In bed that night, the troubled woman pondered Barney's remark, weighing two names against each other.

"Mrs. James Randolph . . . Madame Jerome Bonaparte!" she murmured. Then, settling her pretty head decisively among the pillows, she sighed: "It's too great a descent—poor James!"

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War was casting an ever-darkening shadow upon the Atlantic—a shadow that chilled and depressed the proud Madame Bonaparte, wishing ardently for a peace that would make smooth her passage to Europe.

Betsy for the first time was losing confidence in the Emperor. If he were to be useful to her in the training of her boy, it was high time that Bo be taken to Paris—Napoleon might soon be banished from Fontainebleau. With such things to worry her, why should America and England be clawing at each other, making difficult a passage across the Atlantic?

To the Europe-enamored Mistress Bonaparte, it seemed unbelievable that two countries still in the shadow of the War of the Revolution should fly to arms again: yet here were America and England in a death struggle; the harbor full of ships fitting out for privateering; the sons of minute men taking up arms again, and young scarlet-coated English soldiers crossing the seas to fight on the fields once crimsoned by the blood of their fathers.

Betsy, rebelling as usual against obdurate fate, saw her father help finance Barney's privateer, the *Rossie*, and watched later that beautifully molded schooner come into port after a ninety-day cruise that brought Barney plunder worth one and a half million dollars—the richest cruise an American privateer ever made. She saw him also, when war was declared and the British ships came to destroy shipping in Chesapeake Bay, made commander of its flotilla.

"You'd better get such of your property as you can moved away from the water-front," Barney told William Patterson, "because no matter how gallantly our boats resist, the British frigates are bound at last to bottle us up somewhere, and then their crews will work such havoc as they please. They've got an excuse for it, too—they say the American troops that crossed into Canada destroyed flourmills and private houses and Vice-Admiral Cochrane has been ordered to retaliate. An army under General Ross, now at Bermuda, has been ordered to join him. It's Ross's troops that will do the work of destruction ashore."

Betsy, now that war had come, resigned herself to wait. Indeed, she confessed to herself as it went on that she found it thrilling—a welcome agitation in America's monotony. To be in a city bombarded by a foe for whom she felt no bitterness was stirring and colorful.

It amazed her to see how accurately Commodore Barney had predicted what would happen. His flotilla was at last abandoned and blown up, and its crews led ashore to take part in the more necessary enterprise of resisting General Ross's audacious march on Washington. It was a choice bit of news for her satirical spirit that a British general could lead his small army leisurely through settled country and meet no resistance before coming within sight of the capital. Jefferson's ideal of a citizen soldiery, inspired by their love of home, flying to arms to repel an invader, was, under Madison, put disastrously to the test.

When messengers brought the news of the rout at Washington to the Patterson home, three of her brothers were among the hastily gathered forces of Winder and Barney. William Patterson read to his family with huge disgust of the retreat of General Winder's yeomanry before the British veterans.

"Looks as if we've lost our minute men," he commented. "Think of it, Madison caught between the lines and nearly captured. The President and his Cabinet taking refuge in the Virginia woods. The city of Washington sacked, and the Capitol and the White House set on fire."

The old gentleman's voice lifted.

"Joshua Barney again! How that fellow does come out on top! Ranges his fine cannon in the field and groups his marines and sailors on guard—volleys of rockets fail to shake the sea-dogs—Redcoats try to storm the battery and fall back—they attempt to flank it and are driven back—Barney's five hundred now fighting—alone in a sea of British—repulsed three charges with cutlasses, muskets and handspikes—nor is it until their leader is wounded and they see themselves deserted on all sides that they quit the field."

Patterson paused to wave his newspaper as if it were the flag for which his comrade was fighting. "Bully for you, Barney! You ought to be over here in charge of our defenses. God deliver Baltimore from another Winder!

"Harken," he went on, "here's Joshua again, as proud in defeat as when charging British cannon." In stirring tones he read:

"General Ross, learning that his forces had taken a distinguished captive, approached the wounded Barney.

"I am really glad to see you, Commodore."

"I am sorry I cannot return the compliment, General," the bluff old sailor replied.

"Commodore," General Ross complimented him, "you have given us the only real fighting we have had today. I shall see, sir, that you are paroled."

"Deuce take it," went on William Patterson, "that means that we won't have Barney's services here."

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Mrs. Seaton, a refugee from Washington, fluttered into the Patterson home.

"My dear," she gasped, "I never thought I should live to see it happen—four British officers on horseback, with *chapeaux de bras* and sidearms, riding along Pennsylvania Avenue as if they were going to pay a friendly call! They stopped at one of my neighbors', and the two foremost introduced themselves as Admiral Cockburn and General Ross. They told the family to have no alarm—that citizens and private property should be respected. Then Admiral Cockburn asked:

"Where is your President, Mr. Madison?"

"He's visiting in Virginia," my neighbor replied.

"We're on our way to call on him," said the Admiral. "How far is it to the President's House?"

"On being told, they rode away with a polite farewell, but the family a half-hour later saw the President's house suddenly wrapped in a sheet of flame. Not only that—the elegant Capitol, the National Palace, and the Treasury Department—all were burned."

"Poor Mrs. Madison—what of her?" asked Betsy.

"She held the fort till the very last moment, and waited until the valuable portrait of George Washington that hung in the dining-room was cut from its frame, and placed in the hands of two gentlemen from New York—Mr. Baker and Mr. Depeyster, I think—for safekeeping."

"Dear, dear!" said Betsy. "It all adds to the bitterness between England and ourselves. I doubt if they'll ever receive Americans again!"

"Indeed!" retorted the pretty refugee. "Well, you'd better be making your preparations to receive Englishmen! Their torches may be at *your* door soon!"

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Baltimore was now in a frenzy of preparation for defense. Young men who had served under the unfortunate General Winder straggled home shamefacedly to tell their sympathetic families how their companies had been borne back by the retreat with scarcely a chance to fire a gun.

James Randolph, whom Betsy never met without a feeling of discomfort, remembering how she had rebuffed him in wooing in Virginia, had indeed established himself as an attorney in Annapolis. Many a fair Virginia or Maryland girl would have been glad to announce her engagement to him, but he had courted none.

He occupied more of Betsy's thoughts than she cared to admit to any one. There were nights when she lay awake wondering if her love-life were over. How empty and lonely her nights had been—after those rapturous months of mating!

"If I ever had to marry an American," she confessed to herself, "James might be the one."

She was glad that there was one man among her friends who conducted himself with the ease and grace of men she had met in London, and whose mind was concerned with ideas other than merchandise. If no word had come from him indicative that his early passion for her could still leap into flame, it was not needful that it be told, since there was ever in his eyes a hungriness that told her plainly enough what Commodore Barney had put so bluntly.

If he dared not talk about love, Randolph could talk war, and Betsy was glad to draw him out.

"You see," he drawled as they discussed the disaster at Washington, "it was a little difficult for us to turn from law books or ledgers to rifles. We were green militia under uncertain leadership, facing cool veterans of European wars. We expected the same miracle to happen that took place at Lexington; but for some reason it didn't. However, it looks as if the British will give us a chance here to show cooler heads and sterner mettle."

Later, to Betsy's amusement, he let his wrath against the British shatter his usual tranquillity.

"They betrayed British sportsmanship," he said. "Destroying our Capitol and White House is excessive vengeance for a few barns and distilleries burned by us in Canada!"

"So Mr. Gallatin writes me," Betsy replied. "He says to blow up and burn the House of Congress and the President's mansion is an act of vandalism to which the Twenty Years' War in Europe cannot offer a parallel.

"War," she went on, "brings out the savage traits of the most cultured races. It brutalizes all of us. I refuse, therefore, to become alienated from England. I expect, James, to go there as soon as it is safe for Father's ships to sail. I am choked—suffocated here. You need not be surprised to hear of me deciding to spend my life abroad."

She had not intended to be tantalizing, but she realized that she had been when she saw the hurt look in his eyes.

"But if your life were different here, Betsy?" he ventured. "If you had your own home—a husband who understood you—who would not try to keep your spirit chained to a dull existence—who could travel occasionally with you and share those pleasures which you say can only be found in Europe? Could you not then be satisfied to be an American? I have heard rumors that you intend to have the Maryland Legislature declare your marriage to Jerome Bonaparte void. I have hoped that it's true—that France lies behind you."

Betsy laughed softly.

"Are you going to propose to me again, James Randolph? Do you think I am capable of a love so absorbing in itself that would make me forget the dullness of America—its lack of color and drama? I wish, for your sake, I were that kind of woman. It is true that I despise Jerome, but I do not despise his background. Why not wait until you see if I am going to obey Dame Rumor?"

Just then the Patterson young men, swaggering a little in their new uniforms, hallooed to James.

"Coming!" he called. To Betsy he said, his eyes tender, his breath warm on her face:

"Contrary to what the world says, I think you have a heart, and that emotion could be kindled in you that would tame your wild ambitions. I've been patient—I'll still bide my time. Meanwhile, we'll try to save our city from these esthetic Englishmen!"

* * * * *

News came that General Ross was withdrawing his men from Washington; that his troops had gone aboard transports on purpose to raid the shores of the Patapsco and to advance on Baltimore when Cochrane's fleet had shattered Fort McHenry. Seven British warships were anchored off North Point, and sixteen smaller vessels were making toward the harbor.

Business was suspended. Every able-bodied man had gone into the ranks of the defenders, and, under Betsy's relative, Samuel Smith, were taking their stations at North Point, Fort McHenry and at other natural barriers along the twisting shore.

It was a motley army, composed of sailors idle during the blockade; teamsters whose caravans were waiting for the trek across the Blue Ridge; ministers, attorneys, merchants, schoolboys and clerks. All available men had been gathered into working committees and were building breastworks, bastions and redoubts. Some local bard had given them this prosaic chantey, to the strain of which they toiled strenuously:

*"The general gave orders for the troops to march down
To meet the proud Ross and to check his ambition,*

*To inform him we have decreed in our town
That he cannot enter without our permission.
And if life he regards, he will not press too hard,
For Baltimore freemen are ever prepared
To check the presumptuous, whoever they be
That may rashly attempt to evade our decree."*

On the thirteenth of September, the war came to Baltimore. The citizen militia—some of them in morning coats and silk hats—crowded down to support Major Armistead's regulars, and in their journey passed hordes of refugees swarming to outlying houses and inns.

William Patterson, stained with mud and powder, came back triumphantly on horseback from the breastworks erected where the Patapsco widens into the broad Chesapeake Bay.

"General Ross has been killed by a Baltimore bullet!" he shouted. "He swore he should eat his supper in Baltimore or in Hell. He won't eat in Baltimore, but I hope not in Hades! He was picked off by two of our sharpshooters, who stood under a fruit-tree. His death has taken the heart out of the British. Our men were panicky, and our leaders none too cool, yet we withstood the Redcoats; we're driving them back to their transports.

"There'll be a sea-attack tonight. Cochrane will seek revenge for Ross's death. Fort McHenry is crowded with defenders and if we can keep the flag flying above its walls Baltimore is safe. The shoal water and our barricade of sunken hulks should prevent the heavier ships of the British approaching near enough to make their fire effective. If we can withstand the bombardment of the lighter ships, we'll come through safely."

The attack began. All that day the harbor and town shook beneath the reverberations of double-bursting bombs that had Fort McHenry as their target. The cannonade from the fort told the citizens that the ships were held at a safe distance.

That night an everlasting tempest of shells came thundering and screaming over Fort McHenry, which, a decade before, the citizens had themselves built at the mouth of the harbor.

Betsy, who had gone with her family and friends to Belvedere, beyond the city's outskirts, watched with curiosity rather than fear the long gashes of vivid flame that tore the darkness of the water-front.

At one o'clock the guns of the fort roared tremendously without cessation, for bomb-ketches and rocket-boats under cover of darkness had passed the fort and entered the cove beyond, where twelve hundred men, with scaling-ladders, were preparing to land and attack the fort in the rear. The batteries at Fort Covington and along the city's front were firing to frustrate the movement. With heavy losses, the British withdrew.

The only sign the agitated watchers had of the success of the defenders was the rumble of their guns. As the firing waned, faith wavered; as it grew stronger, hopes soared. Past midnight, they noted with delight that the lightning flashes from the enemy's guns were decreasing, while the guns of the fort seemed stronger and more steady in their reply.

* * * * *

Dawn came. The attack had failed; Admiral Cochrane's fleet was sailing down the bay.

Out of the sun-pierced haze of the Patapsco glided a little vessel. From it, boisterously welcomed, landed three men: the young lawyer, Francis Scott Key; Colonel John S. Skinner, Government agent for the parole of prisoners; and the burly Dr. William Beane, of Upper Marlboro, whose wordy assaults on the British troops had led to his imprisonment by Admiral Cochrane.

Key, as the vessel neared the wharf, was seen to be making notes on the back of a letter.

"A harrowing experience and a fortunate escape," Skinner cried to the crowd. "Admiral Cochrane detained us on his ship, the *Royal Oak*, and later sent us under guard to the frigate *Surprise*. Then, when the ships got ready for action, we were put aboard our own little boat, still under guard. Don't ask me to tell you what I felt. My friend Key here has expressed it in a noble poem—a poem written by the light of the bombs and rockets he sings about."

"Inspiring sight—splendid stanzas!" mumbled Dr. Beane. "Philip Freneau himself could not surpass it!"

A printer seized Key's arm. "Come up to the *Advertiser's* office and we'll set it in print. All my men are out celebrating, but there's an apprentice there who'll set it in good style."

The poet allowed himself to be led away.

* * * * *

That evening Betsy, escorted by her brothers, moved with the cheering, rollicking crowd down Holliday Street. Randolph was not in the company. With a twinge of anxiety, she wondered why no news had come of him.

Passing a tavern, they heard the soaring notes of a male singer.

"Harken!" said Betsy. "Yonder's a strange, stirring tune. What is it, and who's the singer?"

"That," said George Patterson, "is Ferdinand Durang's voice. Listen!"

The street had hushed; the crowd was listening. For the first time rang the words of the song Francis Scott Key had written when at daybreak he saw his country's shot-torn flag still flying:

*"Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were
So gallantly streaming!"*

The singer stopped. Boisterous applause burst forth. There were cries for Mr. Key. Betsy saw a young man lifted to the shoulders of the crowd.

"Pinch me!" she said to her brothers. "I, Elizabeth Patterson, stirred by patriotism?"

A soldier touched George Patterson's arm.

"Sorry to bring bad news in our hour of triumph, but I've just come up from North Point. While we killed General Ross, we lost Jim Randolph. He died almost instantly from a bullet wound."

As Betsy, with a cry, turned to him, the courier spoke to her:

"I was with him when he died. Madame Bonaparte, he was murmuring your name!"

Betsy, the next day, stood by James Randolph's newly dug grave.

"They have buried," she whispered, "my last link with America."

CHAPTER XIII

THE FALLING CONSTELLATION

The office of professor of Bonapartean history to the boy Jerome had been early assumed by his mother, who sought with ardor to kindle a Napoleonic spark in the even-tempered lad. Many a tedious hour of his vacation he was forced to spend with his lovely mother in the musty Patterson library, listening to her tinkling voice as she read from recent journals of the amazingly ambitious energies of Napoleon.

"Your uncle, the Emperor," had become a phrase of which the boy wearied, for Betsy's stories of the Emperor's triumphs at Austerlitz, Wagram, Jena and on a score of other battlefields had aroused infinitely less enthusiasm in him than had Old Hickory's victory at New Orleans—than Commodore Barney's scrimmage at Bladensburg.

"Why does Uncle Napoleon want to fight so many battles? When he defeats an enemy, doesn't that bring peace?" Bo asked. "Don't Frenchmen want to do anything but fight?"

"Don't be a blockhead, Bo!" his mother's silvery tones rang like steel. "It's because the French empire is surrounded by a ring of bayonets. To save his country, the Emperor must be continually driving his foes back on all sides! How I admire that man! It's a pity he hasn't a woman of spirit beside him to help him fight his battles. If only fate had made him the youngest brother, and sent him to Baltimore instead of that weakling Jerome! What couldn't we have done!"

She sat with her delicate hands in her lap, staring into space, her dream becoming each instant more magnificent.

The boy broke in on her dreaming.

"If Uncle Napoleon is waging only a defensive war, why then did he seize Italy and Spain and Switzerland and Holland, and why is he threatening to invade Russia?"

"Because the farther he pushes his enemies away from French soil, the easier it is for him to prevent combinations designed to destroy his empire."

"Well, Mother, I'll admire Uncle Napoleon if you wish me to, but I'm glad you're not going to send me to be brought up by him. I'd rather serve in our militia, and have time to live at peace and raise ponies and race horses."

The grandfather, who had been a silent listener, chuckled. Betsy glanced up indignantly.

"Reckon, daughter, you'd better train Bo for our diplomatic service—when it arrives. One thing's plain—Bo, if he holds to those views, will never become a marshal of France!"

"Not, sir, if I leave him too much under your influence. But I want him to know that if France summons him I expect him to respond as becomes the nephew of the Emperor, to say nothing of the son of a king and general!"

The old man lifted his spectacles and stared at her.

"Jerome a general?"

"King Jerome's name is mentioned in the dispatches as a lieutenant-general!"

William Patterson gave his knees a resounding slap.

"Well, well," he chuckled, "Jerome a general! It's queer that I overlooked his martial qualities. I'll wager that over in France titles go by favor. Let me know when you hear of his winning a battle!"

Betsy made no reply. They could scoff at Jerome, to their heart's desire, but let them keep their tongues off Napoleon. Despot he might be. Yet where was his equal for brains or pluck?

A few days later—her son being out of hearing—her father brought to Betsy some newly arrived English journals.

"I see," he said, "the English have published some of Napoleon's correspondence. You'll find a letter here which Bony wrote to Jerome after the battle of Wagram. I wonder how many letters like that Napoleon had to write before he

whipped Jerome into the caliber of a general."

Betsy, with no resentment at the irony, read the Emperor's scolding note to her husband:

"I have seen an order of the day signed by you that makes you the laughing-stock of Germany, Austria and France. Have you no friend who will tell you the truth? You are a King and the brother of the Emperor—ridiculous title in warfare! You must be a soldier, and again a soldier, and always a soldier! You must bivouac with your outposts, spend night and day in the saddle, march with your advance guard so as to get information, or else remain in your seraglio. You wage war like a satrap. By heaven! is it from me you have learned that?—from me, who with an army of 200,000 men live with my skirmishers?"

"You have much ambition, some intelligence, a few good qualities—but spoiled by silliness, by great presumption—and have no real knowledge. In God's name, keep enough wits about you to write and speak with propriety."

In spite of such discouragement, Betsy persevered in her instruction of Bo. What she termed her duty to her son had become her chief pleasure and solace. The thought of Napoleon flamed like a sun across her dull horizon. Once, in her exaltation, she frightened herself by admitting: "I do not wonder that great women are glad to be his mistresses!"

Her sense of duty to her boy fed thus by her hot imagination, it became a mania to implant in Bo a French mind, to train him to think that he had sprung, not from a family of merchants, but instead from a line of heroes—and that he was destined to succeed them both at court and in the battlefield.

Yet, with every year that went by, her task became harder, since, if she could deceive herself, she could not conceal from the clear-eyed boy that the Corsican idol he had been called upon to worship was crumbling. It had been easy in his early boyhood to stir his fancy with colorful accounts of Napoleonic victories and conquests, but now as the Emperor's fortunes wavered and declined the boy's interest flagged.

Ardently, when Napoleon's campaign against Russia began, Betsy seized on it to recapture for her hero her son's interest.

The fiercely ambitious woman watched confidently the Emperor's march into Russia—he appeared to her to have irresistible power.

"See," she cried to her wavering son and her skeptical father, "the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia are dominated by him and other sovereigns rival each other in vassalage. Is this spectacle of his leading an army of twenty nations against Russia, not enough to have you admit that he is a veritable king of kings?"

Little did she dream that the King of Prussia, Napoleon's ally, had sent word secretly to the Czar of Russia:

"Strike no blow at Napoleon. Draw the French into the heart of Russia; let fatigue and famine do the work."

Nor did she know that the Austrians, remembering Austerlitz and Wagram—and the Prussians, remembering Jena—were waiting only a single defeat of Napoleon by Russia to turn against him.

With an exultation that gradually gave place to bewilderment and dismay, Betsy watched Napoleon's Russian campaign; the steady retreat of the enemy; the capture of Moscow—the strange lingering in the devastated city from September 15th to October 19th with the cold increasing, the number of Russians around Moscow growing larger, and with no replenishment of food. Then the retreat over barren fields, with winds cutting like swords and Cossacks goading them night and day.

"It was a frightful calamity," Betsy was at last forced to admit to her father and her son; "it will take all of Napoleon's marvelous resources to recover from it—his *Grande Armée* of 600,000 tried soldiers reduced to 30,000 men! But you will see France rally and his star rise again. He has inexhaustible resources of valor."

Out of Betsy's hearing, William Patterson voiced a contrary opinion:

"Bony's star is setting," he told Bo bluntly.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WILD SWAN SPREADS HER WINGS

The boy Jerome, now grown to be a handsome fellow who Betsy's friends said was the "spit image of her husband," had become a promising pupil at the Mount St. Mary's Academy. His mother had let no chance slip by to impress on him that he was connected with the great of Europe; that his father lived abroad, and, because he was a king, could not come to him.

"Remember, Bo," she repeated, "that you are a Bonaparte—a prince's son. Even if something happens to your Uncle, the Emperor, other Bonapartes will succeed him on the French throne. You are expected to behave as becomes one who may some day be ruler of the empire of the French."

"But I don't want to go to Europe," the boy pleaded. "I don't want to sit on a throne and rule people. All I want is you and grandpa and grandma, and my ponies and puppies."

"There, there, Bo," William Patterson broke in; "it'll not be with our consent that you'll be troubled by a throne. Run along and tell Isham to saddle your pony, and forget there are such things as crowns and rulers!"

Betsy, when the boy fled into the garden, turned on her father with a flare of the old rebellion.

"You have no right, sir, to seek to turn Bo from his destiny. It is plain to every one that he is an unusual child, intended for an exalted position. It is by no means improbable that he will be called to the throne of France. Bo is strongly in the line of succession!"

William Patterson lost his temper.

"Will you always be a ninny about royalty?" he stormed. "Not satisfied with the disaster your crazy dreams have brought to your own life, you'd offer your son as a sacrifice to those same absurd fancies! America is a good enough land for him, no matter how brilliant he becomes. This country gave your father an opportunity for wealth and service; it will deal even more kindly with his grandchildren—if it be permitted to do so. Let the boy grow up naturally—give him an American schooling—let him imbibe our ideals of simple living—freedom—democracy. I warn you if you keep on preaching to him this royalty business you'll be rearing—a second Jerome!"

"Do you have to bring in Jerome?" the daughter flashed. "If my prayers come true," Betsy retorted, "I will be breeding—a Napoleon!"

* * * * *

Thus, countless times, father and daughter argued fruitlessly. Headstrong Betsy gave her sire's advice no more weight than she had given it in the days when he advised that her marriage with Jerome would lead to unhappiness. The death of her mother and of a sister who shared Betsy's duties had left her father wistfully dependent on her—a bond under which she fretted more and more. Fate seemed to be spreading a chain to bind her life to Baltimore, and the more the mesh became apparent, the more she yearned to escape.

The war was over. Albert Gallatin had gone to England with Adams, Clay, Bayard and Russell to make terms of peace. The climax of Napoleon's career seemed near. She wanted to be in Europe.

Bo, at school in the hills of Maryland, had made such progress in French that he was able to write this letter to his grandfather:

"Seminary of Mount St. Mary.

"My dear Grandfather:

"I have never written to you a letter in French, because you do not understand it; but to give you proof of my good will to learn it, I take my pen for this purpose. I want to give you a proof of my love for you, in writing you a letter in French. How do you do? for me, I am very well, and I

have a great desire to see you!

"Farewell, my dear grandfather, it is all I write to you for the present; but I want you to answer my letter soon. I am your very obedient and loving son,

"JEROME BONAPARTE."

The Emperor's promise to supervise Bo's education in France was Betsy's best excuse for going abroad. She announced her intention of sailing. Her clever argument did not conceal from her father that she was using the boy as an excuse to go to Europe herself.

"Napoleon," he predicted, "will be forgotten before you get there."

"I am not depending on him," she returned. "Folks who know both countries advise me that a child with Bonaparte talents should have a European background. He would indeed be more highly considered in Europe than in America, because here, unfortunately, he possesses no rank. I want him to have a profession, and his talents might lead him to the highest eminence abroad. You'll admit that America, compared with France or England, is in a state of infancy. It offers but a limited field for a lad like Bo. An intellectual endowment such as Bo has will prove either a misery or a blessing to him. If he remains in the United States, I fear it will be the former."

"Elizabeth," retorted William Patterson, "you are the one single case of the burnt child sticking her fingers again into the fire. You seem to be callous, but it's too bad that Bo must suffer."

His argument dropped to a lower level.

"What will the world think of a woman who, having recently followed her mother and her last sister to the grave, quits her father's house? As the only female of the family left, duty and necessity require that you stay with me."

"Let them think what they want," Betsy said. "I can rely on them to put the very worst construction on my acts. I will not spend the remainder of my life cooped up as your housekeeper, sir. I claim the right to live in my own way!"

* * * * *

None of William Patterson's skippers could have obtained permission from him to take her across. But the Black Ball Line from New York to Liverpool had come into service—packets of from 300 to 500 tons, carrying passengers, mail and cargo, with cabins lighted by candles and whale-oil lamps, with pig- and sheep-pens in the longboat; with chicken crates and a cowhouse made fast to the deck. In such luxury, Betsy sailed—leaving her son temporarily, as a concession to her father, at Mount St. Mary's Academy.

Her circle buzzed:

"Betsy Bonaparte has sailed for England! . . . And her mother dead, and her poor father with no one to look after his household!"

"I suspect she's gone to find Bo a kingdom! They say she has a list of the child princesses of Europe!"

"Or maybe it's to see if her husband has had enough of his German princess!"

"A spoiled, silly, title-seeking woman!"

"She'll be home again when the English and French have snubbed her sufficiently!"

"We'll never hear of it if they do snub her, but if they pay her the slightest attention, we'll all be getting letters!"

Serious-minded men stopped William Patterson on his way to the bank to hint that he ought to "put his foot down on Elizabeth's gadding."

"I have put my foot down. I've put both down! I've stamped them! And I've put my fists down too! But the girl's gone—who could control her? Her final argument was that she needs the advice of the famous physician who attended her when

Bo was born. 'Stuff and nonsense!' I told her. But she packed her things and went. Poor moth—royalty's a compelling flame to her and no matter how badly she got scorched before—she flies to it!"

* * * * *

Meanwhile, the moth fluttered among the candle-lights of London society with no fear of scorching. In haughty, brilliant, vainglorious letters that enraged and bewildered her parent, she told of her progress:

"If I have friends in America, they would have wished me to come to a country where I am cherished, visited, respected and admired. . . .

"I confess that it would have been perhaps a blessing if I could have vegetated as the wife of some respectable man in business; but you know that nature never intended me for obscurity, and that, with my disposition and character, I am better as I am.

"I am going to dress for a ball at Lady Condagne's, and am then obliged to go to one at General Trivin's. I expect the Americans in Europe who cannot go will write lies about those who can."

On the heels of this letter came another:

"The reception I am happy to meet in England makes me regret the loss of health which sometimes obliges me to decline brilliant parties. The Portuguese Ambassador, Count Tonsall, sent me, through Viscount Lord Strangford, late Ambassador at the Portuguese Court, an invitation to a grand ball given to the nobility of Cheltenham. I left my bed at ten o'clock to go, as my attendance was expected, and at one in the morning I found myself so ill as to be unable to go to the supper-table, and to be obliged to return. The Count La Châtre, Ambassador from France, has just sent me my passport for Paris; but that beautiful country is still torn by faction.

"In this country the term *old*, which is so often repeated in America, is completely banished from the polite vocabulary. Women of forty, even fifty, are more cherished and as advantageously married as chits of sixteen. They are not here cheated out of their youth, as with us, but retain the glorious privilege of charming until at least sixty. Another advantage, too, they possess—of generally marrying men as young or younger than themselves.

"Since I am so happy as to be in the best society, I much deplore the absence of American friends to witness the estimation in which I am held. I have taken a house for myself, as the customs of this country do not authorize any person of fashion remaining in a boarding house; Lady Falkener has been kind enough to chaperon me, and my house communicates with hers. There is no danger of my committing a single imprudent action—circumspect conduct can alone preserve those distinctions for which I sighed during the years.

"The laureled hero, the sceptered monarch, the subtle statesman, the profound politician, have all been betrayed by the *ignis fatuus* of admiration into ruin and degradation. The situation of a young and beautiful woman has ever been one of peril. Detraction accompanies praise, and the advantages of loveliness are dearly purchased by the pains envy inflicts.

"I have experienced the perfect truth of the observation that in mediocrity alone can be found happiness.

"The British are, as they modestly confess, the greatest nation in the world. We must acknowledge that their monstrous vanity is excusable when we know that their gold, their armies, and their councils have successfully directed the efforts of combined Europe against the man whose talents menaced their existence. He was the object of their admiration and dread, and they have in him subverted the glory, the existence of France as a nation. They do not in England pretend to revile Napoleon, as some persons in America have done. His stupendous abilities are admitted—his misfortunes almost respected by his enemies. I listen silently to any discussion in which he bears a part. I easily perceive that he has more justice done him here than with us. . . ."

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In London, Betsy met Lucien Bonaparte, who, because he had been out of sympathy with Napoleon, was lionized by the English. She herself had been grateful to Lucien for his championship of her in her bridal days, but now when she sought to express that gratitude he remained formal and aloof.

"He thinks," she decided, "England is too small for two persons with the Bonaparte name. From what I have heard of

him," she went on, "he was my advocate not through any admiration for me, but because he was jealous of Napoleon and chose to be contrary."

* * * * *

The more disastrous Napoleon's career grew, the more concerned Betsy became. Assured that he would some day be the conqueror of all Europe, with what dismay she watched his enemies close around him, like hounds that had run a fox to earth.

She saw Prussia, which since her humiliating defeat by Napoleon at Jena had been raising a new army, now rise against him, gaining for allies, Russia, England, Spain, Prussia and Sweden.

She saw Napoleon conscript the very children of France to meet this new army of a quarter-million soldiers.

She saw a circle of armies drive back the French; saw Napoleon's allies go over to the enemy.

She heard Napoleon's wail: "All Europe was marching with us a year ago; today all Europe is marching against us."

She tried, in the end, to comfort herself with crumbs:

"They have offered him peace terms that are not dishonorable," she wrote to her family. "France is merely to retire to her national boundaries."

Then came the news that the Emperor had refused, and that the Allies, now convinced that there was no hope for Europe but to get rid of Napoleon, were preparing to crush him.

She saw Wellington advance from Spain toward France; she saw the Allies cross the Rhine; she learned that France had now been offered new and harsher terms—that she must go back to her limits of 1789; her heart seemed to echo Napoleon's cry: "What! leave France smaller than I found her? Never!"

She saw, with Napoleon encamped at Fontainebleau, Paris capitulate; saw the allied sovereigns enter it. She winced as she read of a fickle people crying to the victorious leaders: "*Long live the Bourbons! Long live the sovereigns!*"

She saw Napoleon's generals won from him; saw the Senate release the army from its oath to the Emperor; saw her hero experiencing not only disastrous defeat, but treachery and abandonment.

There came swiftly an hour when Betsy, refusing to believe that her hero had attempted suicide, was forced to acknowledge that the Bonaparte régime was at an end. With what dismay she read the Emperor's abdication:

"The Allied powers having announced that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole obstacle to the reestablishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces, for himself and his heirs, the thrones of France and Italy, and that there is no personal sacrifice, even that of his life, which he is not ready to make in the interest of France."

"For himself and his heirs," Betsy repeated, discerning in the words the death of her hopes.

"He does not mean it!" she burst out. "It is a ruse. The army will not let him yield. Talleyrand may plot an ignoble peace with Alexander, but the soldiers will stand by the Emperor. He may retire to Elba, but that island is too small to contain him. The Bonapartes will return—they *must return!*"

In a calmer mood Betsy read a note prepared by those who had brought Napoleon to defeat:

"The Allied Powers, wishing to prove that all animosity on their part ended at the moment when peace was established, and desiring to treat the Emperor Napoleon with due consideration, since his name will occupy a place in history, have agreed to cede to him the entire possession of the island of Elba with a revenue of six million francs, three million for himself and three million to be divided between his three brothers, Joseph, Louis and Jerome, and his sisters Eliza and Pauline, and Queen Hortense, who will be considered as a sister on account of her position with respect to her husband."

"It is evident," Betsy conceded, "since the Allied Powers have so decreed the fate of the Bonapartes, that the dynasty is overthrown. Imagine Jerome sharing in the three million francs. Since Napoleon's pension to me will cease now, Jerome ought to assume it. Some means will have to be tried to get a share of those francs for Bo's further education. I wonder if

it means that Jerome, too, is to be a prisoner on Elba. It's like caging a sparrow with an eagle. Mark my words—I'll wager he deserts the Emperor."

A month later, when more news came, she laughed sardonically on finding that her prophecy had come true—Jerome had obtained from the Allies a passport to Switzerland.

CHAPTER XV

LADY MORGAN ENTERTAINS

Betsy, in London, found herself as much an object of interest as ever. She met the Prince Regent, called "the first gentleman of Europe," who looked very red and acted as if he had been drinking. Mr. Brummel, one of the Prince Regent's most intimate friends, amused her greatly. It delighted her to hear that though Brummel was most insolent to the Prince, the latter imitated him in dress.

Wearing her rose-glasses, Madame Bonaparte overlooked London's dirty streets and grimy houses; overlooked the Prince Regent's shameless display of his reigning favorite; overlooked that among fashionable people swearing was as much in vogue as drunkenness, and that ladies of society cursed with both tongue and pen; overlooked Caroline's accusation of the King that "your court was the scene, not of polished manners and refined intercourse, but of low intrigue and scurrility, in which spies, bacchanalian tale-bearers and foul conspirators swarmed."

She did not write home to her father that at an entertainment given by the Prince Regent at Brighton, which she attended, some of the gentlemen were disgustingly drunk and that the tipsy "First Gentleman" retired early to attend a cock-fight.

* * * * *

Thomas Moore had become the fashion in London, and was a welcome guest at the tables of the aristocracy. Betsy, who remembered keenly her piquant chat with the Irish poet at President Jefferson's table, was delighted to meet him again in the drawing-room of Lady Brooke Falkener.

"I am counting on you," she told him, "to make good your promise of a decade ago—I desire to meet the woman who wrote 'The Wild Irish Girl.'"

"Would that all my pledges," said the poet, "were as easy to redeem. Tomorrow afternoon, I shall take you to Lady Morgan's house in James Street, Buckingham Gate, which she has leased from Sir Henry Bulwer."

The next afternoon the poet came in a carriage and drove Betsy off into a world she much desired to penetrate—the Bohemia of London.

The walls of Lady Morgan's drawing-room, covered with pictures of great contemporary interest but of slight values, rivaled in their ghostly way the distinguished company that moved under them, among whom were the Dean of St. Paul's, Thomas Moore and Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton. An exquisite miniature of Lord Byron, presented to Lady Morgan by Lady Caroline Lamb, was the prize piece of the collection. There were also portraits of Madame La Pompadour, Marie Antoinette, Bonaparte, and other celebrities. Small pictures—each with history clinging to it—memorials of the great and lettered, dead and living—gave individuality to the rooms. On tables in corners precious relics and rare books contributed to give the place a literary atmosphere.

On a little red sofa in the corner sat Lady Morgan, the central figure of the *salon*, waving gently a green fan.

Sir Charles Morgan, her husband, a retired physician, hovered over the teacups of his wife. Betsy watched with well-screened amusement this sober gentleman—a large, blond, heavy man in spectacles—alternately worshipping and admonishing his frail wife.

The pair, it amazed her to note, had the power to draw to their rooms the best company in London upon the economical principle of "plenty of tea and wax lights."

Sensitive Betsy, who had imagined a romantic personality, was keenly disappointed as Lady Morgan, small, slight and middle-aged, rose to greet her. Betsy thought her dress juvenile to a fault, for she wore white muslin, short sleeves, a broad green sash tied behind, and a lace scarf over her shoulders.

"She is still the Wild Irish Girl in her fancy," one of her companions whispered to Betsy, "though rather an old Irish girl."

Yet though such cattish things could be said of her; though she was hated by the Tories, sneered at in the *Quarterly*

Review, and rather shunned by the aristocrats of Grosvenor Square, her sprightliness, her real kindness of heart, and her genuine talents had won her a secure place in London's Bohemia, and soon conquered the American visitor.

As Betsy entered, the talk was about the fabulous price—three thousand pounds—Moore had exacted from Messrs. Longmans for his poem "Lalla Rookh."

"He was fortunate," Lady Morgan commented to Betsy, "in first capturing clergymen with his verses—they're usually, you know, seeking pretty passages to adorn their sermons. Have you heard that an early copy of 'Lalla Rookh' was brought by a guest to the house of a Nonconformist minister in a London suburb? I understand that after supper the owner of the book began to read it aloud to the company, composed mainly of ministers. The poem so entranced the divines that they sat up nearly all night, taking turns reading it until the story was finished. The next day was Sunday, and several of them had preaching engagements, so 'Lalla Rookh' was quoted in a number of pulpits that day. When a poet can capture the pulpits, no wonder he can drag fortunes from publishers!"

"Will he not give us," Betsy asked, "the treat his book gave the clergy?"

"They have more patience than we," said Lady Morgan. "I shouldn't want to insult Tom by falling asleep. But he is going to sing us 'Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms.'"

The poet, with no resentment at the jest, came forward. Betsy, immune to sentiment, was forced to admit that there were stirring qualities in the poet's lines.

"Your songs almost melted me," she said to him afterward. "Life having made me a cynic, it is a triumph for your compositions that I have had to keep back tears."

Moore watched her curiously.

"I suppose," he said, "that after your experiences with the Bonapartes, you consider marriage a humbug."

"I mock at marriages for love," Betsy returned, "yet I do not advocate spinsterhood. In spite of my unfortunate adventure, I think the best thing a woman can do is to marry—even quarrels with one's husband are preferable to the ennui of a solitary existence. There are many hours besides those we give to the world which cannot be occupied. If I marry a second time it will be to avoid *ennui*."

"You remind me," interposed Lady Morgan, "of the widow of my old friend, Monsieur Suard. His widow gave a dinner a week after his death, because she was afraid of being bored. She received visitors as usual, and took her daily promenade on the boulevards, because, she said, '*mon bon ami m'a dit qu'il fallait vivre*.' Of course her friends encouraged her—it induced her to give them parties."

Laughter stirred the circle. Then Moore, snatching at one of Betsy's phrases, argued that marriage without love was an evil thing.

"Good heavens," Betsy retorted, "you're talking poetry—not truth! Love in marriage is quite unessential. I don't mind admitting that I married for position—anybody is a fool to allow love to be the only consideration in choosing a mate!"

Tom Moore, silenced, lifted his palms to betoken his dismay.

"A rarely beautiful woman," he whispered to his hostess, "but destitute of all *sentiment*!"

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Tête-à-tête with her hostess, Betsy remarked that Lady Morgan's book on France had made keener her desire to go there.

"So you were forbidden to enter France!" said Lady Morgan. "Well—behold in me one who shares that disgrace with you. The Bourbon did not like my book and I was barred from the country; but the delightful Lafayette—to whom we all seem to be indebted—invited me to come, and assured me that the interdict was only a matter of form—so I went and found that if *Louis des Huîtres* would not receive me, the Marquis—and also the common people of France—would!"

"So you met the Marquis!" said Madame Bonaparte. "I wonder if he remembers his visit to our house in days before I was born?"

"Your father knew Lafayette?" exclaimed Lady Morgan. "Then *you* must visit him! How delightfully he entertained Sir Charles and myself! What a hospitable household—and what a romantic place La Grange is—when we drove up at the close of the day and saw the old ivy-covered tower silhouetted against a flaming sunset, I thought I was entering Avalon! There in his castle gate stood the noble Lafayette amid his grandchildren and servitors—a touching scene. Nor was it any the less pleasing inside the castle, for we were welcomed in the *salon* by charming persons: Scheffer the artist, Carbonel the composer, who sang to us the songs of Beranger he had set to music.

"At dinner there were a score of guests under the groined roof of the old stone hall, an assembly without ceremony and ostentation: an excellent, plain, French dinner and delightful conversation forming the entertainment, although around that board were the descendants of some of the most renowned families of France. At eight the great hall was filled with peasantry and all the company. When a musician struck up a *ronde*, the national country dance of France, the whole company—peers, artists and peasants—danced. What a democratic scene!

"Nowhere else, I declare, have I found such a beautiful picture of domestic happiness, virtue and talent, as at Château La Grange!"

"I must assuredly visit the Marquis," Betsy laughed, "because domestic tranquillity is such a rare jewel it is worth crossing the world to see. When I go, I mean to wheedle Lafayette into telling me of his younger days. He knew Marie Antoinette intimately, I have heard from Commodore Barney."

"Ah, you rogue," responded Lady Morgan with a shake of her green fan, "I have already sounded him about that. I asked him if it were true that he had gone with Marie Antoinette to a masked ball in Paris, the Queen leaning on his arm.

"I am afraid," he answered, in that low, emphatic voice peculiar to him, 'that it is so. She was,' he added, 'so indiscreet, and I can conscientiously say, so innocent!'"

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As time went on, the America-rejecting Madame Bonaparte surprised herself by showing the company that sneers at America in her presence were not welcomed. True, she had laughed with Tom Moore at her country, but now her pride spoke. On foreign ground it was due to her dignity to show that she had not sprung from a tribe of barbarians.

At dinner, ill-fortune gave her as escort the Honorable Mr. Dundas, who had more than once that day winced at her satire.

Seeking a chance to even the score, he said in a loud tone:

"Madame Bonaparte, have you chanced to read Captain Basil Hall's book on America?"

"I have," Betsy replied.

"Well, Madame," laughed the Honorable Dundas, "you observed, did you not, that Captain Hall pronounced all Americans vulgarians?"

"Yes," Betsy answered, "and I am not surprised at that. Were the Americans the descendants of the Indians and the Esquimaux, I should be astonished; but, being the direct descendants of the English, it is very natural that they should be vulgarians."

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Suddenly, with frenzied enthusiasm, her palaces rising again with the swiftness of Aladdin's, Betsy set her thoughts marching with the reviving Emperor. "I knew," she exulted, "that the Eagle could not be permanently chained!"

Napoleon had escaped from Elba. He had eluded the foreign ships guarding the island and landed at Cannes. At Grenoble he won back his soldiers.

"Here I am," he had said to the guard; "if there is a soldier among you who wishes to kill his Emperor, let him do it!"

"Long live the Emperor!" they cried, and tore off the white cockades of the Bourbons. Out of the inside of their caps they drew the old tricolors. Marshal Ney, sent by the Royalists to stop the Emperor's advance, went over to his side. Louis

XVIII fled from Paris; Napoleon entered.

"Bo," she wrote, "the restored Napoleon is speaking to you as well as to his army. You, acknowledged or not, are in the succession! Be loyal to the head of your family. Hear his words:

"Soldiers! In my exile I heard your voice. Your general, called to the throne by the voice of the people and raised on your bucklers, is back among you; come to him. Put on the tricolor cockade; you wore it in great days. Here are the eagles you had at Ulm, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Friedland, at Wagram, at Smolensk, at Montmirail!

"Soldiers, rally to the standard of your chief! Victory will advance at the double! In your old age, surrounded and honored by your fellow citizens, you will be able to say with pride: "And I also was one of that Grand Army that twice entered the walls of Vienna, of Rome, of Berlin, of Madrid, of Moscow, and that cleansed Paris from the stain left on it by treason and the presence of the enemy.""

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But then came Waterloo and Betsy's hopes and aspirations went definitely to their burial.

CHAPTER XVI

THE POLISH COUNTESS

The Gallatins were in Paris—and had promised to smooth Betsy's way through France. Albert Gallatin had accepted from James Monroe a mission to France, and had written to Madame Bonaparte that there would always be a *couvert* for her at their table.

"You do not often show such hospitality to Americans," said Mrs. Gallatin to her husband. This lady, daughter of Commander Nicholson and granddaughter of Sir Francis Nicholson, once Governor of Maryland, had a Puritan piety that disapproved of Betsy, though she was willing to agree that Madame Bonaparte was able to combine popularity with virtue.

"I feel very sorry for her," said Albert Gallatin. "She has been badly treated. She is a woman of brilliant intellect, but her troubles threaten to ruin one who might have been a most delightful personage, as well as a power."

"Her misfortunes need not have made her so vain," Mrs. Gallatin, who could not pride herself upon her good looks, retorted. "Besides, she is still so insanely ambitious. It is true that she has a list of the different princesses who will be available for her son to marry. As he is only a fat little boy of ten, how far ahead she is looking!"

Madame Bonaparte arrived—her baggage nearly filled the antechamber of the Gallatin house. James Gallatin, the seventeen-year-old son, and Frances, his younger sister, gazed at her in awe.

"How beautiful she is!" the youth whispered to his sister.

"But her expression is hard," Frances whispered back. "I don't think she has much heart."

Betsy sent an admiring glance toward the pair. "How you both have grown!" she said. "Frances, you are going to make a lovely woman—I do hope you will make a good match. . . . James, what a handsome fellow you are! They tell me you posed as Cupid for David's portrait of Cupid and Psyche. I hope he posed you separately—I have seen that painting. What a gay time you must be having here! Think of it, to be seventeen—in Paris! I want you to tell me of your experiences—I will be very discreet. You see, I am going to bring Bo over soon, and I must know what lies ahead of him."

The visitor's tongue was so sharp that the son and daughter were disposed to take the side of their mother. But just then Betsy gave young James a brooch of turquoise for his choker, and handed to Mrs. Gallatin a ruby-velvet frock to cut up for Frances. The two forgave her.

Even Mrs. Gallatin was forced to concede that Madame Bonaparte's conversation had been most brilliant. Among the sparkling anecdotes she told in her visit, was one that exhibited her vanity so clearly that the hostess gave her husband a glance of malicious amusement.

Betsy had attended a ball at the British Embassy. She noticed that she was much stared at by the ladies of Paris, and that some of the women curtsied to her; on asking the Duke of Wellington what it meant, he told her that she was taken for Pauline Bonaparte, as she was strikingly like that beautiful woman, and that people were amazed that with Napoleon banished, Pauline should dare to return to France.

"I am not so sure," said Albert Gallatin, "that that is as much a compliment as you think. However, here is a tribute you may accept with pride: I had an audience this morning with the King. He suddenly said: 'I hear that Madame Jerome Bonaparte is with you. Pray express to her our regret she will not come to our Court, but that we know her reason for not doing so.'"

"The temptation to go was great," Betsy said. "You know how long I have dreamed of such a presentation. Yet I couldn't go. I sent word to the King that I have received a pension from the former Emperor. Ingratitude is not one of my vices—therefore, I cannot appear at the Court of his successor."

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Betsy arrived in Paris a year after Louis XVIII, the new King of France, made his entry into that city. It deepened her cynicism to observe how fickle Parisians, turning their backs on the works of Napoleon, plunged gayly and extravagantly into the new era.

It amused her to hear the citizens chattering about Louis XVIII: how he had arrived from London in an English dress with an English hat, wearing an English white cockade; how, suffering from a fit of the gout, he had been unable to walk; how he had appeared with powdered hair and velvet boots, as if he had come to bring back pre-Revolutionary customs; how M. de Talleyrand, who had accepted Napoleon's lavish favors, remained to bask in the Bourbon court; and how Marie Louise, when the allies had refused to give her the title of Empress, had exclaimed, "Have I, for the six years I have lived with Napoleon, and called him husband—have I been only his mistress, his slave?"

For her own purpose, to associate with celebrities, the return of the Bourbons was fortunate. Madame Récamier, Madame de Staël, and the other beauties who had been forced into retirement by the upstart Napoleon, now returned and opened their salons to the princes and the notables of the world.

Napoleon's once-feared name was now a jest in the streets. "He shouldn't have abandoned Josephine," Betsy heard his veterans comment; "when he threw her over he destroyed his star. He should have stuck by the old girl; she brought him luck—and us too!"

As for men like Châteaubriand, they honored themselves as prophets:

"We knew," they said, "when he went to Moscow his star had set. We foretold that the Russians would retire before him like the Parthians, and that that would be the rock on which his power would split."

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Of the women she met in Paris, it was not the witty Madame de Staël or the lovely Madame Récamier who engaged her interest the most. The woman who absorbed and fascinated her to the exclusion of all others was one whose name was only spoken in whispers—one who never appeared in salons or on the boulevards. This woman was the famous Pole—Marie Walewska, of whose strange career Betsy had heard whispers in the drawing-rooms of London.

"I would give much to meet your lovely country-woman," she told Captain Paul Bentalou.

To herself she said: "I have sometimes wondered if to be intimate with a man like the Emperor it was worth sacrificing conventional standards. The Countess should enable me to test that theory."

"Countess Walewska is leaving Paris soon," Bentalou told Betsy. "You may never again have the chance of meeting that extraordinary woman unless the matter is arranged at once. I think it can be done."

"But," said Betsy, "she may not want to meet me."

"She knows of your career. She is as interested in you as you are in her."

And thus the two women met.

"So this," Betsy said to herself as she faced the cultured and charming Polish woman, "is the type Napoleon admired—how far short would I have fallen in pleasing him?"

With a cynical amusement, Betsy retraced history, recalling that while Napoleon was destroying her marriage and holding before Jerome impossible ideals of patriotism and sacrifice, he himself was making this lovely countess one of his mistresses.

Seeking the key to this duality of the Emperor's nature, and to the personality of women who so easily succumbed to the Emperor, she probed the heart of the mysterious woman.

She imagined she saw her at the age when she first captivated Napoleon. The Countess, who had been Josephine's most formidable unofficial rival, was a blonde, with blue eyes and a skin of dazzling whiteness. She still retained her beautifully proportioned figure.

"You, too," said Madame Bonaparte, "found a Bonaparte irresistible."

"I remember it as if it were a week ago," said the Countess, speaking as if in a dream. "His Majesty had come to Warsaw. He had been traveling about in one of the uncomfortable little coaches of our country, and had been lodging in barns and outhouses. Warsaw was therefore heavenly to him. The Polish nobility flocked to do him honor—to make him welcome. We regarded him as the one who could save our poor country from the Prussian oppressors.

"He occupied the grand palace. In his honor were given magnificent fêtes and brilliant balls, at which were present the flower of Poland.

"It was true that my country was gay and frivolous—its men reckless, its women in a mood for anything. That is the Polish nature. New hopes had awakened a spirit of folly in the aristocracy.

"I was a bride. I had been given in marriage by my parents to Count Walewska. He was withered. He had an exacting temper and harsh manners. He was more in love with his rank and titles than he was with me. I could not love him—it was even hard for me to respect him.

"Napoleon, 'the Liberator,' was then at the height of his physical powers. He became conspicuous in the palace revels.

"I was made to feel, by statesmen, by friends, that the future of my country depended upon my captivating Napoleon, for on the night of the first ball he had approached me, had entered into conversation, had showed more than a passing interest in me. He had learned from his counselors that I was a woman who had been sacrificed—that I was unhappy in my domestic relations, though I concealed my wrongs proudly.

"I resented the appeals of my friends. I told them that Bonaparte was generous and fair—that he would free Poland, that he would deliver my countrymen from prison and persecution without asking a woman to sacrifice her honor.

"But they came to me again and said: 'We asked this and that of Napoleon concerning our country and our countrymen, and he replied: "*Their fate rests with Madame Walewska!*"'

"Again I assured them that they were mistaken, and I promised to petition Napoleon in their behalf.

"An hour later General Murat came as ambassador from Napoleon. He bore a request that I be present at a ball given in his honor. I was overwhelmed. I turned hot and cold by turns. What my countrymen had said seemed indeed to be true. I thought of leaving Warsaw, but my friends, my relatives, beseeched me to humor Napoleon, and I found that a mysterious power was influencing even my husband. He had shrugged his shoulders, implying consent.

"I went to the ball. I danced and talked with the Emperor.

"The next day his confidential servant Constant brought a note. It read:

"I saw only you, I admired only you, I desire only you. A quick answer will calm the impatient ardor of Napoleon!"

"I fought against fate. I told Constant there was no reply.

"Two days later a second note came. Its words are seared in my memory:

"'Was I mistaken? You have deprived me of sleep. Oh, grant a little joy, a little happiness to a poor heart ready to adore you. Is it so difficult to obtain an answer? You owe me two.'

"Still I resisted his prayers, while my countrymen continued petitioning him. A week later he wrote:

"'Oh, come, come! All your wishes will be complied with. Your country will become more dear to me if you take compassion on my poor heart.'"

The Countess started. "What have I been saying? I have been too intimate—too . . ."

"It is because, madame," said Betsy softly, "you feel my sympathy. Pray, go on. You at last yielded?"

"You would know that I did if you had read another note that came three days later, a note I treasure:

"'Marie, my first thought is of you. You will come again, will you not? You have promised that you would. If not, the eagle will wing his way to you!'"

"And," Betsy asked tensely, "he granted the appeals of your countrymen? Your sacrifice saved Poland?"

"So the nation said. Our leading statesman praised my conduct. He likened me to that woman of the Bible who saved Israel. Is it strange that his words have remained with me:

"Did Esther, think you, give herself to Ahasuerus out of the fullness of her love for him? So great was the terror he inspired in her that she fainted at the sight of him. We may therefore conclude that affection had little to do with her resolve. She sacrificed her inclinations for the salvation of her country, and that salvation it was her glory to achieve. Poland will say the same of Marie Walewska. All honor to her!"

"And you have never hated Napoleon?" Elizabeth Bonaparte asked.

"Never—I have loved him, followed him, given him my devotion in his direst misfortunes. He possesses a gold ring I gave him, inside which these words are engraved: 'When you cease to love me do not forget that I love you!' Through lattice blinds I have watched his parades and triumphs.

"All my thoughts, as well as all my inspirations, came from him, and return to him; he is all my happiness, my future, my life. I go neither to the theater, the promenade, and seldom into society. My world is the pretty residence Napoleon bought for me in the *Chaussée-d'Antin*. My life was in his visits, his letters. My future happiness—like yours—rests in my son."

Betsy winced when she added, "Perhaps the boys will meet some day—are they not cousins, madame?"

The Countess arose. "I suppose you hear nothing from Jerome. Ah, he has not the stability, the depths of my poor Napoleon. I shall probably not see you again—I desire to join Napoleon in exile. Though the Empress cannot or will not visit him, I shall show him that my loyalty does not waver with his fortunes."

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"There are no such depths in me," Madame Bonaparte sighed when the Countess left, "but *I* should like to have seen just how strongly that fascinating Emperor could have attracted me. There must have been merit in him to inspire such devotion. Certainly there was none of his quality in the man I chose."

CHAPTER XVII

INTRIGUES

Betsy one day became aware that she had a formidable American rival in Europe—none other than the much-admired Mrs. Robert Patterson, her sister-in-law.

"Mary is on her way—she's wanted to live abroad," she told Mrs. Gallatin. Then she added a comment which revealed that estrangement had already begun: "She's title-hunting, I suspect. Her sisters are not yet married. Considering their persevering endeavors and invincible courage, this surprises me."

Robert Patterson had died. Reviving her early dreams, influenced by Betsy's enthusiastic accounts of her triumphs abroad, his widow had indeed sailed in quest of a broader social career. Betsy, priding herself on her friendship with the Duke of Wellington, suddenly became aware that he was more interested in her sister-in-law.

The friendship between the Great Duke and Mrs. Patterson developed quickly into an intimacy: Madame Bonaparte amazedly watched the growth of the affair. Other persons were putting into words what Betsy confided only to her father. James Gallatin recorded in his diary:

"Madame Patterson Bonaparte is here. She is much sought after; her wit and beauty seem to open all doors to her. She is very bitter at the present moment against Mrs. Caton, one of whose daughters married Madame B.'s brother Robert and is now a widow. There is a great scandal about her and the Duke of Wellington. He follows her everywhere."

On another day young Gallatin recorded:

"Madame Bonaparte dined with us, yesterday. She is really more brilliant than ever, a little embittered perhaps, particularly against the Catons; they are her *bête noire* for the moment. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Robert Patterson, née Caton, came in for her full share. It seems that the Duke of Wellington writes to her every week and there is much scandal about their relationship."

Her father, perceiving how indiscreet were his daughter's disclosures about Mary Caton, cautioned her to hold her tongue.

In a worldly-wise, if not repentant mood, she replied:

"I quite agree with you that abusing the Catons can do me no good, and I have resolved not to speak of them again. . . ."

The dazzling Madame Bonaparte continued to be much sought after. The Gallatins, entertained by Madame de Staël, were astonished to see Prince Demidoff arrive in a superb sleigh with eight horses harnessed in the Russian fashion. He brought the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Princess Potempkin, Princess Galitzin, and Madame Jerome Bonaparte, Betsy being led in by the Grand Duke. The youthful James Gallatin noted that night in his diary that "she kissed me on both cheeks, which made me very shy," and also that "she is quite beautiful still, was wonderfully dressed, and covered in fine jewels."

Such an atmosphere invited scandal-mongers, yet no one whispered behind Betsy's back. It is significant that Madame de Staël, speaking to Mr. Gallatin of Betsy, referred to her as "the beautiful, witty and *virtuous* Madame Bonaparte."

Of the prudence of which Betsy had boasted in her letters to her father, she stood now in utmost need. In the gallantry of the Restoration an unattached woman of her loveliness and distinction was a shining mark for the light-of-eyes of the nobility.

"Heartless," Tom Moore had termed her, but her icy wit masked an inner fire that could flare again if there came a man in whom passion and ambition could be fulfilled. Failing in meeting him, she clung to her title, and the fires burned low.

The brilliant Châteaubriand was one of those who looked upon Madame Jerome Bonaparte with marked interest. His genius attracted her while his reputation warned her. Châteaubriand's looks were so striking as to leave her no cause for wonder at his success with women. His hair and eyes were black. Melancholy and piety were expressed in his oval countenance. His eyes, flashing with the fires of genius, illuminated his features. While past fifty, he appeared to be

under forty.

His literary reputation stood higher than that of any other living Frenchman—he was worshiped by women, and he looked down upon life from the pinnacle he had attained, disgusted with the prospect. The world knew that he had begun his relations with the exquisite Madame Récamier—herself as accomplished in affairs of the heart.

Châteaubriand aroused from his languor when he met Betsy in Madame de Duras's drawing-room. Here was an American heart to be conquered; a new friendship to be pursued to such an end as fortune might happily lead.

Betsy was flattered by the attention paid her by the brilliant Frenchman. He had recently returned from his tour of the Holy Land where he had been, in Sainte-Beuve's words, "the first Childe Harold of the century," and his enthusiasm found utterance in his first chat with the fascinating American.

"Ah, Madame," he said, "that is a pilgrimage one with your thoughts and feelings should do well to take. The desert—it still seems dumb with terror, as if it had not dared break silence since the day when it heard the voice of the Eternal."

"Monsieur," she said, "I have read with interest your '*Voyage en Amérique*,' and have been amazed that a man of your tastes should be attracted by our wilderness. The account of your travels especially interested me, since you landed in my own city of Baltimore."

"Ah, yes, I went there from Saint-Pierre, where I was sadly rebuffed by a beautiful girl when I offered to send her on my return a corset of Parisian style. Unfortunately I did not tarry long in your city. Had I done so, I would doubtless have lost my heart as—"

"As that philanderer, Jerome Bonaparte, did," Betsy supplied.

"Ah, madame," said Châteaubriand, "however much that young man was to blame for his actions later, who blames him for losing his heart and his head in the presence of you? How you must have suffered, madame, though you show no trace of it. It is our hope that you will let truer hearts in France compensate you for those heartaches."

"Monsieur Châteaubriand," Betsy fenced, "there seem to be so many of your own countrywomen who need your comforting."

Châteaubriand grew more ardent—his aim seemed unmistakable.

"Isn't he satisfied to have jilted Madame de Duras and gained Madame Récamier?" Betsy mused. "I'll have to show the sentimental gentleman that I am not a candidate."

Her opportunity came a few evenings later.

"Monsieur Châteaubriand," she said, "I took occasion last night to read your volume, '*Atala*,' in which you describe the wilds of the New World. I am amazed at the impressions you received. I met many hunters and trappers in Baltimore who came out of the same wilderness you describe, but none told me of bears that 'intoxicated themselves with grapes and walked with staggering steps upon the branches of the elms,' nor have I heard any other traveler say that the banks of the Mississippi were peopled with parrots, monkeys and flamingoes."

"Ah, Madame Bonaparte," said soulful Châteaubriand, "you must remember that I traveled fast, and often there were Indians hunting for my scalp. Under such circumstances, woodpeckers might appear to be parrots, and turkeys flamingoes."

"However," he added, surveying her shrewdly, "you need say no more. I see that your adverse criticism of my poor work is your way of revealing that other enterprises of mine are equally foolish in your sight. Madame has given me proof that her heart is as ice-bound as it is reported to be."

"Ice-bound," Betsy mused later. "Ice-bound against drawing-room heroes. It has not yet been tested by the truly gallant who prefers a soldier's tent to a lady's boudoir."

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Mrs. Robert Patterson continued her brilliant career in English society in France. The young Pepys of the Gallatins,

when she dined with them, found that she was "really beautiful and has a wonderful charm of manner." He went on to record, "Her one topic of conversation is the Duke of Wellington. They say he allows her 100,000 francs a year; at least, so says Madame Bonaparte. Her jewels are very fine. Madame B. says they are mostly imitation, but I think it is a case of sour grapes."

The truth was that Betsy, obviously envious of her sister-in-law, was becoming aware of an ugly fact that was to destroy her hopes of permanent eminence in European society.

She was a single woman, lovely and desirable. Few of the great men she met were willing to form permanent friendships on the basis of intellectual companionship alone. The more rich and powerful they were, the less they were inclined to accept her wit and to ask no more. She might continue to scintillate here and there, but never for a long period. Those whom she could attract by her intellect as she approached middle age, would be scholars, or old people, seldom those in the highest positions.

Fate had placed her in a position where the easiest way was to be a mistress of a lord. She refused to comply. She would rather surrender her dream than her chastity. But she must still struggle to achieve her aim without the surrender. All around her she saw men and women yielding to corruption.

Who would have thought that her brother's wife would trade principle for social success—if she could call it success. Princes and dukes were offering her jewels too, approaching her with subtle flatteries—but her beauty was not, would never be, in their sordid market.

"Ambition and virtue in a woman," she concluded, "are incompatible qualities."

"I suppose," she confessed in another honest moment with herself, "that I am seeking what I will never gain. But at present, the quest is pleasant, and there are plenty of lesser triumphs to veil the truth that the greater ones elude me. In the end, I shall have to submerge my fortunes in Bo's. What my husband should have given me, perhaps the son will give."

To assure her father, she wrote:

"I preserve amidst the corruption, the pleasures, the liberty of Paris, the most irreproachable conduct. I have the courage to submit to every privation when a departure from the strictest propriety is required."

CHAPTER XVIII

MR. ASTOR'S MISSION

"It is quite useless to argue—'Cricket' (an affectionate name for Jerome) must be educated abroad."

Betsy was speaking. She had been in her father's house scarcely an hour after her sudden return from Europe when she announced that she intended to take "Cricket" out of Mount St. Mary's Academy and continue his education abroad.

"There you go again," burst the startled William Patterson, shaking his head so that his cue became a pendulum. "Bo's an unspoiled, lovable fellow, but now you plan to turn his head by throwing him among snobs. He likes American life and knows nothing of the vanities of Europe. For heaven's sake, Betsy—pursue your own vain ambitions if you will, but leave us to develop your boy into a sensible, industrious man."

"A pretty tempest," Betsy said coolly, "as if a parent has no control over her own child. All your storming, Father, will not change my plans. 'Cricket's' education is the only certain fortune which I can count on for him. I want him to receive instruction that will enable him, independently of my aims for him, to pursue some useful and honorable occupation in life. That education may best be obtained in Europe.

"I desire," she went on while the old man swore under his breath, "to give him a tincture of Greek, considerable knowledge of Latin and mathematics, perfect acquaintance with the French and English languages, a course of chemistry, physics, etc., and then one in jurisprudence. History, mythology and geography will form part of his studies. He will be instructed in drawing, equitation, fencing and dancing. Politeness, *usage du monde*, must not be neglected.

"I wish him to meet his uncles and aunts and cousins. If the Bonapartes are ever restored to the throne of France, intimacy with them will be invaluable to Bo.

"You say," she added, "that I am a fool for educating the boy in Europe. Let me inform you that the wife of the French Consul at New York has written to me that the fur king, Mr. John Jacob Astor, is going abroad for the purpose of placing his son in school at Geneva. It is true that Mr. Astor is crude—the Gallatins say that when he dined there he ate his ice-cream and peas with a knife—yet you know how sagacious he is!"

William Patterson, nonplussed, made no reply.

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Betsy, still bent upon having her son regard Napoleon as a heroic figure, found Bo's questions embarrassing at times.

"Uncle Napoleon," he remarked as he read reports of the battle of Waterloo, "was given an everlasting good licking—seems to me Wellington is the man to make a hero of!"

"Napoleon was not himself," the mother, without her usual spirit, protested. "His imprisonment at Elba weakened him—he could not summon the same amazing energy that had won him previous battles; there are strange reports of his sleeping and loitering when time was vital to him, of his want of decision at critical moments—that is not like the early Napoleon!"

"Napoleon, Napoleon, Napoleon, that's all I've been hearing," the boy said in a fret. "What of my father—wasn't he at Waterloo?"

"Your father seems to have fought with credit to himself," Betsy replied. "However, his usual ill-luck followed him. His troops made the first attack, and tried to take Hougoumont, which fortified Wellington's right. Napoleon thought that Wellington would weaken his center to hold Hougoumont, but 1,200 Coldstream Guards successfully defended the place against Jerome's 12,000 infantry. It was your father's misfortune to lead a useless attack which weakened Napoleon's line of battle with little harm to the English."

"Was he hurt?"

"He is not mentioned among the wounded or killed."

"Did he return to Paris?"

"He was sent into exile by the Allies—to Rome, I believe!"

"Will Napoleon go back to Elba?"

"He escaped from there too easily. He tried to escape to America—the British would not allow that. They have made him a prisoner. If you will search your maps for the loneliest island on the face of the waters, you will find St. Helena. An English warship is taking him there. There will be no return! Let us see now if he can be glorious in adversity!"

So ended Bo's schooling in Napoleonic history. The period left the teacher querying of herself: "I have clung in the face of everything to the Bonaparte name. It is being greeted with scorn in America. What of Europe? Why shouldn't it be more awe-inspiring there than ever? Won't the fact that I bear it and was yet ill-treated by the Emperor, give me a vogue? Even if Napoleon's sun has set, why shouldn't mine rise more brilliantly than ever?"

Madame Rewbell, the friend of Betsy's girlhood, came to entertain Madame Bonaparte with an account of her life as first lady-in-waiting to Jerome's wife, the Queen of Westphalia, in their palace at Cassel, built in imitation of Versailles.

"He is paying nothing towards Bo's support?" Madame Rewbell cried in amazement. "Why, nothing could equal his extravagance of living! His Westphalian troops proved quite useless to Napoleon because they were never maneuvered. All was a life of pleasure there from morning to night."

In her travels, and in her talks with statesmen, Betsy had learned for the first time what high hopes Napoleon had reposed in his youngest brother, whom he had counted upon elevating to one of the highest stations at his command. The more she comprehended this, the more she understood why the Emperor long ago had dealt so implacably with her.

"But, Napoleon," she said, addressing an invisible presence, "in your judgment of me you erred. You tried to make Jerome an admiral and failed. You tried to make him a general and failed. You sought to make him a king and he played with mistresses instead of building an army to support you. If you had sanctioned our marriage, you should have had my utter loyalty, and what talents I possess would have been devoted to making Jerome fulfill your ambitions for him. As it is, look at what he has become—and see how lonely and useless I am."

If there was hemlock in the news she seized so avidly, there was also food for her satire.

It had amused Betsy to learn from French sources of the important mission Napoleon assigned Jerome as ruler of the new kingdom of Westphalia. The new monarchy, founded on German soil, had been designed by him to implant ideas of self-government among a people who had no democratic ideals. Jerome's task was to teach his new people to be citizens instead of subjects.

"What the German people desire with impatience," Napoleon had told Jerome, "is that persons who are not of noble birth, and who have talents, shall have an equal right to your consideration and to public employment (with those who are of noble birth); that every sort of servitude and of intermediate obligations between the sovereign and the lowest class of people should be entirely abolished—your people ought to enjoy a liberty, an equality, a well-being unknown among German peoples—what people would wish to return to the arbitrary government of Prussia, when it has tasted the benefits of a wise and liberal administration? The peoples of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, desire equality, and demand liberal ideas should prevail—Be a constitutional king."

"An admirable spirit," Betsy had commented, "but not one to arouse much enthusiasm in me. I do not share the Emperor's trust in the herd. As an American, I should be expected to applaud, but with my aristocratic tendencies, I'm inclined to wish that Napoleon would lose such thoughts in the business of being an emperor, of out-Bourboning the Bourbons. The golden bees of Napoleon should not try to gather honey from the common flowers.

"However," she went on, "I need have no dread that democracy will corrupt my husband's kingdom. Jerome will live surrounded by lackeys and mistresses. His extravagance and scandals will drive the Westphalians back to Prussia. What a poor stick he is on which to repose such hopes!"

"How miserably Jerome shrinks when compared to Napoleon," she said at another time to Albert Gallatin. "Take even the question of money. How generous Napoleon was to me; how stingy Jerome is! I hear that a note signed by King Jerome has gone to protest, and that Napoleon has written him: 'Sell your diamonds, your silver plate, your furniture,

your horses—anything to pay your debts. Honor comes first!"

It had frightened her, watching with unfaltering zeal the Emperor's campaigns, when she learned that Napoleon, on his march to Moscow, had entrusted his third army to Jerome's command. "His love for the fool has blinded him," she exclaimed tensely. "What did Jerome do with the troops of Westphalia?"

It had brought her no joy when her prediction of Jerome's failure came true—when she heard that Jerome, by his tardiness in marching, had let the enemy escape.

"So," she exclaimed, "even the Emperor has found him out and cashiered him. What fools Napoleon and myself were—staking our fortunes on a weakling!"

She had sneered when Jerome, at the Emperor's downfall, fled incognito, a king without a country.

Her heart had beaten faster when it was whispered that Napoleon had admitted his mistake in depending on his brother to carry on his dynasty.

"Ah," she said, "if he could only have realized that before these events, then he would not have barred me from his empire!"

On a fine May morning in 1819, the mother and son sailed for Amsterdam, from which port they rode in a private carriage to Geneva, the city Betsy had selected for the polishing of the potential emperor.

In that peculiar city, Betsy selected as her abode the Hôtel de la Balance—selecting the rooms in which Madame de Staël held her famous literary receptions when she visited "the City of Calvin."

Bo, to her delight, fell readily into the ways of his boarding-school. Watching him with calculating affection, she persuaded herself that he was vastly more intelligent and at the same time quite as industrious as other boys of his age.

However, her penny-watching habits growing upon her, she became distressed at the large expenses of his schooling.

"Miserly" they had begun to call her because of her complaints of high meals and high rents, but it was a miserliness that sought to serve her offspring, not herself.

"It is improbable," she said, "that I shall ever marry, but I will marry no one unless Bo is made the heir of what I have saved up for him. My first inclination and my first duty are to provide for that child who has the charge of a great name which shall be supported if economy and pains on my part can do it."

To this end, Betsy dealt shrewdly with the merchants and landlords in every town she visited. She made Genevans respect her adroitness, and boasted that she got the better of a people of whom the French said: "It takes four Jews to make a Genevan."

"These Genevans!" she exclaimed when the lad brought to her his school bills. "All classes of them cheat strangers! Here in one year I've spent a thousand dollars on your education, and still they demand money for this and that! A learned people, truly! Learned in the art of emptying the purses of visitors!"

Betsy's hopes that her son should develop qualities that would enable him to live up to what she called "his rank," were not disappointed. Her distinguished friends were lavish in their compliments of his appearance and bearing.

"I am constantly tormented," the mother confessed in one of her letters home, "with the fear of seeing him spoiled by the compliments paid him in society. He goes to a ball each Saturday evening, where he meets some of the first persons of Europe.

"This boy has more conversation and better manners, a more graceful presentation, than other children of his age, and consequently he excites more attention. He has grown taller and much better looking; he is thought very handsome, but I do not myself think him by any means a beauty, and regret that others tell him so, as it is a kind of praise which never made any one better or happier."

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"The dukes and duchesses are very obliging," Betsy satirically observed. "They assure me that I may always command

anything in their power. But these great people, when they say 'You may command us,' only mean that they will invite you to their houses, or recommend you to other great people, or speak a good word if one is looking for a place from the Government. None of them ever give money, which, indeed, they seem much more bare of than American merchants."

Betsy's contempt for Americans had become tempered in the cases of those of wealth. With interest she learned that the fur king, John Jacob Astor, was staying at the Hôtel de la Balance.

"I suppose I'll have to ask him to dine with me," she said, "though I tremble lest he wipe his fingers on my sleeves, as Frances Gallatin declares he did on hers. He seems, poor man, afflicted by possessing a fortune he had greater pleasure in amassing than he can ever find in spending."

She liked, however, the pleasant, deferential German-American, so proud of his rise from a fur-peddler, so wrapped up in his own commercial ventures, and so intent on finding not only a good school for his son, but a promising husband for his daughter.

To the unattractive Miss Astor, Betsy was friendly. The maid was so humble in the presence of the Baltimore beauty that Betsy pitied her.

"Poor girl," she said, "there is no hope for a great match for her. She can only be disposed of to some painstaking man of business, or to some ruined French or Italian nobleman."

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Mr. Astor, having found a school for his son, announced one day to Madame Bonaparte that he intended journeying to Rome.

"Rome," Betsy exclaimed wistfully. "It is a journey Bo and I should take, yet so much forbids it."

"Is it not possible, madame," Astor asked, respectfully, "that I may be of service to you there—that I may take a message from you to the Bonapartes?"

"Bo's relatives are there," Betsy said. "His grandmother and aunts. But my husband is there too—and I avoid him. I should, of course, infinitely prefer Rome to Geneva; elegance to economy. But I must think of my son—Rome would have too many distractions for him!"

"On the other hand," she went on, "it might be to his advantage to go there—to meet the Bonapartes. I have heard from Lady Morgan that the Princess Borghese—Pauline Bonaparte—is eager to meet the boy. She told my friend that she had heard I was like her, and wanted to see with her own eyes if there were a resemblance. She has a fortune in her own name, and is said to be the handsomest woman in Europe of her age. I needn't go on—there is no one in Europe who has not heard of her beauty, her luxurious habits—her capricious attachments!"

"But, madame," interjected the shrewd Astor, "why hold aloof? She might do something very substantial for young Jerome!"

"Doubtless," Betsy answered, "if Bo got along well with her, a share of her fortune would come to him as one of her nephews. Yet the fortune of a pretty woman of thirty-seven is a bad object of calculation. It is his grandmother I would want Bo most to impress. They say she has hoarded the large sums Napoleon gave her. If she survives him, there will be a fortune to divide among her sons and grandsons, and Bo should share in it. Once there, I might not be permitted to take him away—and I know the means of education there are vastly inferior to what they are here."

"Another thing: Lady Morgan says that Pauline does not like the Queen of Westphalia, Jerome's present wife. She thinks that her desire to have Bo visit her rises from a wish to provoke the Queen. I do not wish to estrange father and son. King Jerome may be of use in finding a wife for Bo among the nobility."

Astor chuckled admiringly.

"You were born to be a queen and rule diplomats," he said. "I beg of you to make use of me—I may seem blunt, but I will be discreet. It will be an honor for me to serve you. I have friends in Rome who will introduce me to the Princess Borghese. I shall speak to her of your charm and of your promising son, and then I shall make a faithful report to you of her words—her interests—her companions."

Betsy accepted his offer.

"Be sure not to give the impression that I am too eager to have my son meet the Bonapartes," she cautioned him. "Let the advances come from them. Thank you so much, my dear Mr. Astor."

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In the scraps of news her father gleaned from Betsy's vain letters, he detected that, despite the mask of indifference she showed to the world, she was yet intensely curious about her husband and his fortunes. For instance:

"The Queen of Westphalia is lying-in of another child."

"The ex-King of Westphalia is now living at the court of Württemberg. He has a large fortune and is too mean to support his own son."

"The King of Westphalia spends everything he can get hold of, and will keep up kingly state until his expended means leave him a beggar. He has never taken the slightest notice of his son, and is said to be as extravagant and thoughtless as he was fifteen years ago. He buys houses and then leaves them, and is less popular than any of his family."

"Jerome is entirely ruined, his fortune, capital, income, everything spent and his debts so large that his family can do nothing for him if they were inclined, which they are not. He has two children by his wife, who I suppose will be maintained by her family."

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At last, alarmed at the expense of maintaining her son at Geneva, Betsy wrote to Jerome, requesting him to help educate their son.

Thus came to the embittered woman the thrill of receiving a letter from her husband.

It was not, however, the thrill of tenderness, though she could not help remember when the receipt of a letter in her prince's handwriting had set her heart beating wildly. It was rather a blow that brought her cynicism to its keenest edge as she recalled Madame Rewbell's account of his former extravagance and read his cold, cowardly words:

"I regret, Elizabeth, that I can send you no money to help educate Jerome. My fortune is not sufficient to provide for my present family, who must be taken care of by their mother."

CHAPTER XIX

PAULINE

Pauline Bonaparte, the exquisite beauty of the Bonaparte family, had pursued a career that shocked her no less lovely American sister-in-law. "One must know the Corsican temperament, I suppose," Betsy mused, "to understand the indiscretions of that woman."

When Prince Borghese, head of one of the most illustrious, and indisputably the most wealthy of the great Roman families, came to Paris from Italy and fell under the spell of Pauline, Napoleon had welcomed the match.

"But," expostulated Pauline, "he has a poor figure, and is deplorably ignorant!"

"Nonsense!" Napoleon answered. "He is a brave soldier and a fine horseman. As his bride, you will be not only a princess, but a very wealthy woman, able to indulge your extravagant desires. You will wear the famous Borghese diamonds and toilettes a queen might envy! Do not say no, my spoiled Pauline. Our birth should cause us to regard all Italians as fellow countrymen. I am not blind to the fact that your alliance with a Roman prince will be a great honor for me as ruler of France. Not all the laurels I have gained will be esteemed as greatly by a certain class as to have in the family the right of displaying two crossed keys in one's armorial bearings."

The picture enchanted Pauline. She saw herself as Madame la Princesse Borghese outshining the hated Josephine—she saw herself ablaze with diamonds; diamonds on her corsage, diamonds on her coiffure, diamonds in her ears, on her neck, on her arms, on her fingers—her beauty encrusted in diamonds so that men would be speechless with admiration and women with jealousy.

So she married Borghese.

Napoleon's hopes that his gay and fickle sister would be satisfied with her brilliant station were not to be realized. She conquered Roman society, was received by Pius VII in his own apartments, and had received as gifts from him a magnificent chaplet and a superb cameo. She had been made mistress of a palace filled with the masterpieces of Raphaël and Titian, of Correggio and Botticelli, of Lorenzo di Credi and Leonardo da Vinci. But after a few weeks of sumptuous dinners and splendid fêtes given in her honor by the Roman nobility, she began to feel and reveal herself profoundly bored, having learned, after the enchantment of his rank and wealth had diminished, that she did not love her husband, and that his mother and relatives were detestable.

Making no attempt to conceal the *ennui* her husband's society had brought her, Pauline had set forth on a long series of romantic but indiscreet adventures. A fascinating painter, a noted composer, a gallant major, a celebrated wit, a commandant of artillery—so she went through the years until, after abandoning her love affairs and loyally sharing Napoleon's imprisonment on Elba, she had returned a decade after her marriage to Rome. Her health was gone, her loveliness impaired, her fortune largely dissipated.

Being on bad terms with her husband, she did not take up her quarters in the Palazzo Borghese, which indeed had been let to Charles IV, the ex-King of Spain. Instead she had as her residence the Palazzo Sciarra, a mansion of Renaissance design, situated in the most fashionable quarter of Rome. Here she stayed on, watching the dwindling fortunes of the Bonapartes. It was here that Betsy was to visit her.

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For all her profligacy, Pauline had yet won popularity among multitudes by her loyal support of Napoleon in his misfortunes. It was Pauline's devotion to the fallen Emperor which led the strict Betsy, in her judgments of her son's pretty aunt, to condone her "affairs" with what seemed an interminable procession of more or less gallant figures. The woman who in her vanity had bared her exquisite form for the sculptor Canova had yet been willing to sacrifice all her jewels to finance Napoleon in his escape from Elba, and while she had thrown herself into the gayest circle of Roman society, it was said by her true friends that her pleasure madness was but her way of forgetting that her brother was reported dying on the island of St. Helena.

John Jacob Astor, however his acquaintances might jest at his crudeness, had made his way among the fashionables of

Rome. Pauline, dwelling in splendor in the Palazzo Sciarra, which had become one of the most hospitable mansions in the Eternal City, welcomed the rich Mr. Astor, fortified by letters. The leaders of Roman society and the most distinguished foreigners attended her elegant dinner parties and weekly soirées and the American fur trader was glad that his acquaintance with Elizabeth Patterson and other notables made the inner doors of her palace swing for him.

Meanwhile, Betsy waited curiously for news from Rome.

At last there came to her gloomy Geneva lodgings a letter bearing the magical Roman postmark. With quick fingers she tore it open; with a quick glance she absorbed the part of the message vital to her ambitions:

"Last evening we had the honor of an introduction to the Princess Borghese, who immediately inquired after you and your son. When I informed her that I had left you at Geneva, she expressed much regret at your not having made the journey with me.

"She then said: 'I am very happy to find an opportunity of speaking frankly to you. I wish very much to see Madame Patterson and her son here. My object is to make some provision for the son of my brother, who is poor and can give him nothing. I am rich and have no child, and find in myself every disposition to do everything for him. Please write to her at once in my name, to invite her to visit me, and to bring her son.'"

Betsy pondered a long time before, as suggested by Astor, she wrote to the Princess. Then in a letter formal yet cordial, independent yet friendly, she set forth her desire to let nothing interfere with her son's schooling at Geneva. But she added graciously:

"This will not prevent me from making a voyage to Italy a few months hence, for the purpose of telling you, madame, how I am touched by the interest you have taken in my son, and of expressing to you my gratitude. I would at the same time present my son, if I had not decided not to interrupt his education."

Astor, the zealous counselor, delivered this letter to the Princess, who seized the occasion to question him closely about "Madame Patterson."

"What, my friend," asked Pauline, in a voice of singular sweetness and sympathy, "are Madame Patterson's circumstances? At the time of the marriage Jerome told us that she belonged to one of the richest families of America."

"That, madame, is true. Her father is very wealthy, but his property chiefly consists of houses and lands, which at present do not produce much. He has a large family—ten in addition to the mother of young Jerome. So it can be readily understood that she must economize to educate her son."

"But does not my brother Jerome," Pauline asked, "help to support the lad?"

"I am pretty sure," replied Mr. Astor, "that his American wife has never received so much as a dollar from him."

"But Napoleon did?" questioned Pauline tensely.

"He once made provision, but of course, since his misfortunes, that has not been forthcoming."

"He was generous—he would have kept it up if he could," said Pauline.

Astor waited uneasily, disturbed that out of the conversation painful thoughts had come to the beautiful princess.

At last she spoke: "I must see Jerome's son. I am eager to help him. Write to his mother. Tell her that I urge her to bring him! That his grandmother desires to embrace him!"

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While Madame Bonaparte debated, life was becoming more colorful in Geneva. Summer brought many distinguished visitors to the city, among whom were princes of every nation.

The Prince of Württemberg, completely conquered by the beauty and brilliancy of the American princess, exclaimed in her hearing:

"What a fool Jerome was, to desert so charming a woman!"

The Prince even undertook, so far as could be done without offering money, to aid Betsy with her son's education.

"Keep him away from actresses. Don't let him know the midnight life of Paris. Don't let him smoke, madame—I have lost all of my teeth by use of my pipe!"

"As you are upwards of sixty," Betsy said to herself, "time may have aided tobacco!"

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Betsy had responded to the frivolous gaiety of the summer capital with a zest that astonished her admiring son.

"Why, Mother," he remarked, as he watched her dress for a grand ball, "how young you look! You could pass for five and twenty. I never see you now at night—there's always some prince or duke waiting to take you to a party. And now that you've employed a dancing-master, I'll see less of you than ever."

Betsy's emotions were for once close to the surface. She had feared that time had begun to ravage her beauty. She was afraid of her own judgment when she looked in the mirror. It was sweet to appear beautiful to the pitiless eyes of youth. Romance was still worth seeking as long as young people thought her lovely.

"I am glad," she said, "there is at least one whose love for me deceives him about my appearance—one who craves more of my company than I give him. Don't grudge me my dancing lessons, Bo, or the good time I appear to be having. They may be more pretended than real. Besides, my best years may be about over. I dance because when the pretty young princesses throng about you, and when you pick one of them as your bride, I want to be able to dance with grace at your wedding."

"You have more of a relish for princesses than I have," Bo grumbled. "Imagine you compiling that list of eligibles. Since I have been in Europe, going around with you to the homes of the great, I've found no girl that I liked as well as the girls of Baltimore, and I've found no dinner as much to my taste as the roast beef I ate in my grandfather's house in South Street. I might as well tell you now, Mother, that I've no idea of spending my life in Europe. As soon as my education is finished, I want to return to Maryland."

Betsy's neat foot went up and down like a hammer.

"Such a life," she cried, "I am educating you to *escape*! The training you are getting in Geneva would be entirely wasted upon you if you should go back to Baltimore and enter business there. Baltimore girls indeed! I shall be heart-broken if you do not marry into some noble family. The Prince of Württemberg expressed his surprise at your resemblance to Napoleon. Others who knew the Emperor have remarked the same thing. Never say such a thing again! Let no false notions of romance ruin your career! You were born, as I, to shine in the atmosphere of royalty. Be satisfied with no less!"

As Bo mumbled his rebellion, his mother warned him.

"While we're on the subject, let me tell you that some of your well-wishers here are advising me to make an early match for you with some girl of noble birth. I'm sure if you ever visit Rome, you'll find your aunt and grandmother picking you a bride. If it happen so, do not say the rude things you have said to me. Listen to them seriously. Later, you and I will decide what answer we will make. It is important for your future that we injure nobody's feelings!"

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Betsy was possessed by three passions during these monotonous years—whist, the society columns, and Napoleon. The last-named pursuit became more exalted the closer the Emperor came to his death. Constantly she watched the English and French journals for reports of Napoleon's condition at the place he had described as "the little rock at the world's end," reading avidly the statements of returned attendants or of travelers who had been allowed to talk to the prisoner.

She pictured to herself the lonely man gazing out to sea with his hands clasped behind him. She imagined him feverishly dictating his memoirs to his secretary and wondered if her ill-starred romance was to have a line in it. She saw him devouring the books he had not had time to read while war-making and wished that she could have joined him in discussing the *Iliad*, *Ossian*, the *Barbier de Seville*. She saw him dressing ceremoniously for his lonely dinner, wearing the Decoration of the Legion of Honor though there was no company to admire it. She saw on the table the service of

china that depicted his battles. She wished that she had had the opportunity to give him a keepsake and to win his affection so that he might have put on his shelf beside the two eagles, the marble bust and miniatures of his boy. She was not to know until later that Napoleon at St. Helena mentioned her to Bertrand.

Later, though she was a woman who never wept, she was to shed real tears as she read her hero's outburst on his deathbed:

"I surrendered to the British people, that I might settle down at a British fireside. In defiance of international law I was loaded with chains. England overpersuaded the princes, and the world saw an unprecedented sight. Four great powers hurled themselves on one solitary man. How shamefully you have treated me on this rock—With cold calculation you have slowly done me to death! The vile governor has been the executioner appointed by your ministers!—I bequeath the shame of my death to the royal family of England!"

There rang in his American devotee's ear his last utterance:

"France . . . Armée! . . . Tête d'armée . . . Josephine!"

"What a triumph for the Creole," Betsy murmured, "that her name should be the last word on the Emperor's lips!"

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There still came from Rome letters of urgent invitation, not only from John Jacob Astor, but also from the Princess Borghese. Madame Bonaparte, finding Geneva dull, at last changed her mind and decided to go to Rome, taking Jerome with her.

"To tell the plain truth," she said to Lady Morgan, "I am haunted by a fear that if I don't let Bo meet his relatives it will work out to his disadvantage. I must risk injury to his education to put him in the way of such social advantages as there may be in Rome.

"We'll spend only the winter there, and during that time he can get lessons in Latin and Italian. I wanted to wait until he is two years older, but his grandmother Bonaparte may not live so long, and you say, too, that Pauline is in bad health."

"Go, then, by all means," returned her friend. "I'll match your wits against that of the Bonaparte clan. Jerome's education will suffer, never fear, but he'll gain a knowledge of the world that may not be bad for him.

"If your husband comes to Rome, my dear lady, don't again fall under the lazy fellow's charm. It's too bad he isn't in Napoleon's place at St. Helena. Such a sluggish life would be eminently suitable for him!"

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And so Madame Bonaparte and her son, in a six-seated carriage, traveled from Geneva to Rome. In her methodical way she recorded the price paid for transportation: fifteen louis d'or for each, and seven louis d'or for her maid, who sat on the coachman's box. The price included, besides their seats, two meals a day, bed at night and fire if wanted.

"We must, however," she noted, "pay something at the inn to servants, and at least three louis to the coachman if content with him on our arrival, besides paying for the days we may desire to spend at large towns on the way. The bargain is one of the best that has been made here, but I find it quite dear enough."

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When Betsy met Pauline the interest of each was keen. Pauline saw a woman whose face still had great charm, but whose petite figure was losing its graceful curves. Betsy saw a face that she recognized as the original of the lovely sculptures she had seen in France and Italy, but worn and hollow from indulgence and illness. Pauline's lovely eyes, however, as the other charms faded, seemed to sparkle with increasing luster. Surveying her exquisite figure Betsy could understand why artists had said that for "grace of form and perfection of proportion, its equal could not be found except in the Venus de' Medici." She appreciated now to the utmost the compliment that she herself resembled Pauline.

Animated enough as the Princess was while conversing with Betsy, the American yet observed that nothing interested her hostess—she talked vaguely and disjointedly, as if her thoughts were wandering.

"It is because," her companions told Betsy, "she can think of nothing but her brother, the Emperor, who she fears is dying, exiled from his friends."

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With curiosity no less sharp, Betsy looked forward to meeting the mother of King Jerome, who was living with Pauline. She remembered how, when she became the bride of Jerome, her heart had warmed to his mother, knowing that she had championed them and declared herself eager to receive his bride. When, however, Madame Mère had at last yielded to the imperious commands of Napoleon and signed the papers repudiating the union, this feeling had cooled. Yet, through the years, her interest in the old lady had never waned. The unacknowledged American daughter-in-law had shared the amusement of the aristocrats when the mother demanded, after Napoleon's coronation, that she be known as "Empress-Mother and Majesty," and had laughed with the diplomats when her son, to soothe her, gave her the title, "Mère de Sa Majesté l'Empereur," which was soon abbreviated by the world into "Madame Mère."

If Betsy had laughed at such episodes, she had in turn been deeply touched to learn that Madame Mère, when Napoleon had been sent to St. Helena, had declared to Cardinal Consalvi: "I am indeed a Mater Dolorosa!"

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Tall and imposing, with a face that even with age did not lose its perfection of feature, Madame Mère, as she swept forward to greet the visitors, seemed to Betsy the sort of woman of whom it could be expected that she would bear an emperor for a son. Napoleon's characterization of his mother flashed through the young woman's mind: "A man's head on a woman's body."

"Ah, madame," exclaimed the mother of Napoleon when she met Betsy, "I have longed to meet you—to embrace you!"

"So," she added, as Jerome bowed in his handsomest manner, "this is Jerome's son. How tall, how fine he is! How like his father at his age! What a pity that diplomacy had to divide such a family. You have forgiven Napoleon, haven't you? You can remember him now only with pity—the eagle chained to the barren rock of St. Helena."

"Yes, madame," Betsy said softly, wondering if she knew that Napoleon lay dying, "I forgave him long ago. My admiration for him has conquered all resentment. I had so little at stake compared to him."

While the Princess led the awed Jerome through her magnificent palace, Betsy talked earnestly to the mother of Napoleon about her great son.

"It is pleasant," the old lady ran on, "to find new friends. I have so many enemies. The Allies accuse me of using my finances to excite rebellion in France. 'Monseigneur,' I said but yesterday to the Pope's Secretary of State, 'I do not possess the millions with which they credit me, but if I did I should not employ them to gain adherents for my son in France, since he already has enough. I should use them to fit out a fleet to liberate him from St. Helena, where the most infamous perfidy is holding him captive.' He is ill, yet the Powers forbid me to go to him. I am old to make the journey of two thousand leagues. Perhaps I should die on the way; but I should die nearer him. Why is Marie Louise not with him, instead of amusing herself in Italy? Ah, madame, *you* would have been a faithful friend!"

"I *am* his faithful friend," Betsy almost sobbed. "How I have longed to help him! I have many times wished that my father would send one of his ships to evade the British frigates off St. Helena, deliver Napoleon, and bear him to safety in America!"

The soul of the old woman suddenly blazed in her weary eyes.

"What a dream!" she cried. Then she went on: "Such a plan reflects in the highest degree, a benevolent heart! What thought your sire?"

"Ah, Madame, he is not so much interested in helping the Emperor. He has not forgotten what I have forgiven. He and the politicians to whom it was mentioned, said that such a movement might involve the United States in war with the powers of Europe. However, there are men of daring in America who, I make sure, would undertake the commission—Commodore Joshua Barney for one. He knew Napoleon!"

"I have heard of him—he was Jerome's friend in the West Indies. Dare you write to him?"

Betsy pondered.

"A letter could be sent in code to him through my father."

"It is not the first time," said Madame Mère, "that such a plan has been proposed. Americans in Paris urged Napoleon to flee for sanctuary to your country. I remember he showed me one letter which said:

"Fly to the United States! I know the hearts of the leading men and the sentiments of the people of America. You will find there a second country, and every source of consolation."

"My son," the mother went on, "once confided to me his intentions regarding America. He meant to collect there all his relatives around him, and form the nucleus of a national union, a second France. 'America,' he said, 'is our proper asylum. It is an immense continent, possessing the advantages of a peculiar system of freedom. I should have established there the center of a new French fatherland. They will grant me land, or I will buy an estate. I shall end where manhood began. I shall live upon the produce of my fields and my herds.'"

If Betsy had been in a mood for irony, she might have contrasted in her thought Napoleon's scorn of an American bride for his brother and his admiration for the United States in his hour of need. No unsympathetic thought flashed through her mind. She shared wholly in the old woman's grief.

"After Waterloo," Madame Mère continued, "when the Allies were approaching Paris, Napoleon fled to Rochefort, hoping to reach a vessel that would carry him to your country; but the coast was guarded by the despicable English—there was no escape! . . . I will make inquiries—we will speak again of your plan."

* * * * *

The Princess Pauline returned with Bo. Betsy observed with satisfaction that the interest of the moody lady in her son was more than perfunctory. Madame Mère, she also observed, was watching the lad with an admiration akin to affection.

"We must make life pleasant for him here," she said. "My life stopped with the fall of the Emperor. From that moment I renounced everything. I ceased to go into any kind of society; I ceased to visit the theater, which had been my one distraction in times of trouble. My children and my nephews frequently urge me to go to the play, but I always refuse."

Now, however, Madame Mère insisted that Bo and she should drive around Rome in her carriage, which, as a relic of her former grandeur, bore the Imperial Arms.

"Why should I take them off?" she said. "Europe bowed to the dust before my son's arms for ten years, and her sovereigns have not forgotten it."

The crowd on the Corso was so great that Madame's coachman was compelled to walk his horses. Close to them in the throng were two mounted Austrian officers, who, seeing the Imperial Arms on the panels of the carriage, drew rein and peered curiously in at its occupants.

"What, gentlemen, is your pleasure?" Madame exclaimed. "If it is to see the mother of the Emperor Napoleon, here she is!"

The abashed officers, saluting, rode away.

Next morning, Betsy received an early summons to go to Madame's room. The mother of the Emperor, with a face of doom, embraced her with tears.

"It is too late for us to benefit by your plan," she sobbed. "Abbé Buonavita arrived last night from St. Helena. He brings news that Napoleon has so failed in health that not even liberty could benefit him."

CHAPTER XX

THE MATCH-MAKERS

Young James Gallatin had written to Betsy a pitiful letter asking her advice as to how to be rid of a certain Madame S. "She embarrasses me," he wrote. "I feel hot all over, as I am quite certain people must see how she looks at me."

"I wonder why he chooses me as his confessor?" she mused. "I shall write him to place the whole affair before his father. I wonder how far the affair has gone? He'll probably have to buy the woman off."

Her thoughts turned to Bo, rapidly approaching manhood. "I'll have to shield Cricket from these designing women. There are so many of them—from dancers to duchesses. Life is hard for a youth in the capitals of Europe. I didn't bring him over here to add to the crop of wild oats. An early marriage would relieve me of that worry—if he marries a girl of the proper station."

Bo, she had observed truly enough, was becoming attractive to women. He had heard, without vainness, an eminent Roman painter beg his mother for permission to paint his portrait.

"Your son, madame," the painter had said, "has the finest head and expression I ever saw. What a classic profile! His resemblance to the Emperor is remarkable!"

The youth, she was glad to see, remained entirely unaffected by the admiration he excited among the ladies of Rome. He seemed not aware that the glances of beautiful women were more of coquetry than friendship, nor was he conscious of the fact that at a ball a German princess followed him from room to room.

Meanwhile, Betsy, expecting to find great wealth among the Bonapartes, had been disappointed. "There is no one of the whole connection," she told her son, "rich enough to allow me twelve hundred a year for your maintenance."

One morning Pauline and Betsy—with the latter forcing the occasion—had a plain talk about finances, in which Betsy told Bo's aunt that the expense of his board and lessons, the hire of her apartments, servant's wages, dress, eating and washing for him and herself were consuming her entire income.

"If that is the case," Pauline said, "I shall make Bo an allowance large enough to cover his dress. There is only one way," she continued, "of relieving yourself of this expense. You can expect nothing from the King of Westphalia. He is coming to Rome, ostensibly out of a desire to visit his dear relatives, but really, I am sure, to beg money from his mother."

"He shall have no more," Madame Mère interposed. "I am weary of his pestering. It is folly for him in his poor state to continue the luxurious habits he acquired during years of prosperity. A man must live in accordance with his position. If he has ceased to be king, it is ridiculous to pose as one. Rings adorn fingers, but they fall off, and the fingers remain."

"Oh, you'll yield to him as usual," replied the Princess; "but that is aside from the plan I desire to suggest. My brother Joseph in Philadelphia is enormously rich. His youngest daughter, Charlotte, who has sailed to join her father, would make a splendid wife for young Jerome. Joseph himself suggested the plan in a letter to us written several months ago. She will inherit part of my brother's fortune. They could live in America in tranquillity and comfort. In Europe there are too many young Bonapartes rising up—our finances cannot support all of them. An American marriage for Bo, provided it bring wealth to him, is an admirable solution to your problems."

Madame Mère surveyed Betsy shrewdly.

"What Pauline says is true," the old lady said. "It should be a very happy marriage. We will both write to Joseph of our wishes. My desire is that Jerome marry into the family, on account of the name, and to preserve the Bonaparte fortune."

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Betsy, a thorough Corsican in the matter of money, decided after a night's thought that the idea was a good one, and gave little consideration as to whether Charlotte Bonaparte had beauty and health, or as to whether it were wise for her son to marry at so young an age.

Madame Mère, for her part, lost no time in informing Joseph that she approved of the match.

"My dearest Son," she wrote, "before this you will have embraced your Charlotte; she will be a great comfort to you. You were right to decide to marry her to Jerome's son. The young man has been here two months. I am amazed at him; it is hardly possible to find so much *aplomb* and good sense in one of his age, and there is no doubt that Charlotte will be happy.

"You will find enclosed the letters from his father and Catherine; they will show you their desire to see this union effected. I have written you, as Pauline did also, that she had promised, in the event of this marriage, three hundred thousand francs to be paid at her death. If you are of the same opinion, it will only be necessary to write to Jerome to return to America at once.

"Addio, dear son, I am
"Nostra Ottima Madre."

William Patterson, astonished at nothing Betsy proposed to do, was nevertheless confounded when she wrote him that a plan was afoot to advance her son's fortunes by a marriage of convenience.

"Devil-take-it!" he cried. "Can the Pattersons never rid themselves of the Bonapartes!" For a long time he sat in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, thinking. "Well," he decided, "it will bring the lad back to America. Maybe it won't work out so badly after all!"

The tidings had come with sharper surprise because, in a boyish letter received from Bo several weeks previously, the youth had made no mention of such a plan.

"I have been received," Bo had written, "in the kindest manner possible by my grandmother, my uncles and aunts, and cousins, and all my nearest and most distant relations, who are in Rome. We mean to stay here during the winter. I have been so much occupied in looking for apartments for mama, making tight bargains, and seeing my relations, that I have not had time to see anything of Rome, except St. Peter's celebrated church, which I have seen but superficially."

Bo made no protest when the match was proposed to him. The thought of marriage did not alarm him because he could not grasp its significance. All he considered was that he was weary of jabbering French and Italian, weary of seeing Roman ruins, weary of greasy food; and here was offered—escape!

The prospect of returning to America delighted him. The boredom of marriage seemed infinitely less than the boredom of life among his European relatives. So he wrote again to his grandfather:

"I have been now seven weeks in Rome, and have been received in the kindest and most hospitable manner possible by all my relations who are in Rome. And my father is expected, but I don't know whether he will come. My grandmother and my aunt and uncle talk of marrying me to my uncle's, the Count of Survilliers' daughter, who is in the United States. I hope it may take place, for then I would return immediately to America to pass the rest of my life among my relations and friends. Mama is very anxious for the match. My father is also, and all my father's family, so that I hope that you will also approve of it."

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"This is the way to look at it, Cricket," Betsy told her son in one of the many practical talks she was having with him in the solitude of their rooms. "I have spent my time and money on your upbringing and can give you no more until my death. Your father is ruined and can give you nothing; in fact, he'll probably be borrowing from you if you make a good match. Such a marriage is the only way of ever getting anything like pecuniary aid from any of the family."

"But when I am educated, mother," said Jerome, "I could support myself and a wife too. Though I'm willing to go through with it, I hate to think of marrying just for money."

"Support yourself indeed!" Betsy retorted. "It will be a long while before a young man of your breeding will grow harsh and coarse enough to grasp a living from the world. Your name, your appearance and your training are assets that can be used now to establish you for life. The daughters of Joseph Bonaparte are the best matches in America or Europe. They will have at least five hundred thousand dollars from him each, and something besides from their mother. You will be making a royal connection, too; they are the nieces of the Queen of Sweden."

Jerome appeared not the least impressed by this information, so his mother added a caution:

"I do hope, when you go to America, you will not let your grandfather or any of my Baltimore friends attempt to advise you against such a union. I know several old women there who would be interested in getting you for their granddaughters. Your grandmother Bonaparte is wise in urging that we do not wait for a reply from the father of Charlotte—she advises me that I send you at once to America that your handsome person and nice manners may persuade your Uncle Joseph that you are a fitting husband for Charlotte."

At the mention of America, life took on a new tint for the young man. The thought of his grandfather's table laden with choice Maryland food, the horses he could ride, and the friendships he could renew allured him so that a marriage with a cousin he had never seen seemed a small price to pay for such satisfactions.

"I think Grandma's advice is good," he said, "and if Charlotte will have me, she can. When will I sail?"

"I shall write at once to your grandfather that you are coming. I'll request him to see that there is a liberal marriage settlement. It should be one hundred thousand dollars—or fifty thousand at least. I'll warn him, too, against Baltimore busybodies who'd interfere with my plans. Any one who would attempt to advise against this connection, the first wish of my heart, is either an idiot or an enemy."

In this same resolute strain she wrote to her father.

"Dear Sir: Jerome sails in the *White Oak*, to leave Leghorn the 14th or 20th of February. I do not think it is absolutely necessary for me to go out, as I should think you might do everything I could do. The principal and only thing is to see that he will not be left without provision if she dies before him, or that he will not be entirely dependent on her as long as she lives. They tell me here, Joseph means to give a hundred thousand dollars on the marriage. . . . There is no knowing how marriages may turn out—women may treat husbands ill, leave them, die before them, but if a good provision be made for the husband, there is nothing lost by risking a marriage. . . .

"I beg you neither to tell any of the family a word about this marriage. George and Henry know too little about the world to understand the propriety of this marriage. The others, although I am sure they have Bo's interests at heart, as well as George and Henry, have too many prejudices and much folly about love and idle matches. . . .

"I do not expect my poor child to live where I do, although his society would be a great comfort to me. If the marriage takes place, he must live with his uncle in America. My health, and my taste for European society, render it quite impossible for me to live near them."

Departing amidst a storm of embraces and good wishes, but with his purse flat, the young bride-seeker went from Rome to Leghorn. To strengthen him in his resolution, his mother informed him at the moment of parting that though the Princess Borghese was lavishly affectionate as her nephew departed, she had declared the evening before that she would give Bo nothing, either during her life or after her death.

"She has made the same threat to all her other nephews. She makes a new will every day and has quarreled with every human being on earth. I'll wager she leaves her fortune to strangers. She is mad—quite mad."

Upon the heels of her son's going, his father came to Rome.

Pauline, still angry at his drafts upon his mother's resources, refused to see him. Betsy, glad of this refuge from the man she had so long avoided, remained in the palace. Jerome, however, invaded the palace; and Betsy, to avoid meeting him, resolved to return to Geneva.

She was not, however, to escape the embarrassment of an encounter. On her way to Geneva with her friends, the Packards, she stopped over at Florence. Jerome and his wife chanced to come from Rome that day to the same city. They met by accident in the gallery of the Pitti Palace.

She saw a middle-aged man inclining to stoutness, one whose features had become coarsened with indulgence. It was as if a veil had fallen between her lover and herself which had the power of rendering gross and grotesque the handsome prince of her youth.

Her cool eyes looked contemptuously into his for an instant and then turned away. Jerome, after an admiring, frightened glance, whispered confusedly to the Queen of Westphalia: "There is my American wife."

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When her son had sailed, premonitions of misfortune beset Betsy.

"I am glad," she brooded, "that I cautioned father to say nothing of my project. The affair may fail, and people get nothing by publishing their disappointments. It was Joseph's wish, but I well know there is little reliance to be placed on any of that race."

She began to chart a course for her son if his uncle should not approve of the match.

"If they have some other plan for Charlotte," she decided, "Bo shall go to Harvard."

CHAPTER XXI

A SUITOR COMES TO BORDENTOWN

The first impulse of young Jerome on arriving in New York harbor was to take the stage to Baltimore. After the monotonous fare aboard ship, the Baltimore fleshpots were tremendously more alluring to him than a visit to his cousin Charlotte at Bordentown. He longed for the "beefsteak and onions" of his grandfather's table.

However, his mother's admonitions remained with him. He knew that he would bring down upon himself her terrible anger if he did not first call on the family of his Uncle Joseph. Dutifully then, he scribbled a note to his grandfather, stating that he would stop off for a few days at Bordentown en route to Baltimore.

"Mama," he added, "has written you the object of my journey. I left her in Rome. She intends to go thence to Geneva, there to remain, her health being too delicate (as she thinks) to support the American climate."

As he rode by stage to Bordentown, near Philadelphia, the youth uneasily recalled his mother's instructions:

"You must neither seek nor avoid being with Joseph and his daughters. If they invite you to, stay with them; if they do not, you are not called upon to run after them. . . .

"Let your conduct be natural, respectful and as affectionate as nephews generally are to uncles, but avoid obsequiousness or meanness. You are in every respect on an equality with them; although you have not money, you have other advantages—name, rank, good natural capacity, good appearance. If you do not suit them, there are many other families of wealth and rank that you will suit. Hold your head high, my son, but not too high. Remember that modesty and station are not incompatible."

In Philadelphia lived Madame Toussard, who, in America, was Betsy's intimate friend.

Madame Toussard, when she beheld a handsome youth alighting at her door, came out in a flutter.

"I knew you," she said, "the moment my eyes fell on you. You're quite as handsome, young man, as your father, but I hope you're less of a flirt than he was. Dear, dear, how he did have our hearts palpitating!"

"Did Mother write you why I had come to Philadelphia?" Bo asked uneasily, squirming beneath her compliments.

"Indeed she did—and if she had not told me, your Uncle Joseph would. It happens that he sent the invitation through me!"

Having discovered sympathy in Madame Toussard, the young man unburdened himself.

"Do you know," he said, "that this visit to Uncle Joseph isn't the sort of thing I enjoy. It didn't seem anything like an ordeal when Mother and I first talked about it, but now I'd almost just as leave face a firing-squad. I suppose Charlotte feels the same way about it."

Madame Toussard smiled at him over her teacup. "Don't let it fluster you. It's merely to get acquainted. If you like Charlotte, you won't have to go down on your knees to her. Your uncle, the ex-King of Spain, is diplomatic enough to arrange a betrothal without embarrassing the principals. Perhaps it will cheer you to learn that you have a rival. It is rumored that young Achille Murat, son of Caroline Bonaparte, is coming to America to woo her. Whether or not you win her, Joseph's money must be kept in the family."

Jerome took heart at the news.

"If she likes Achille better, he's welcome to her. I was homesick for America when the match was mentioned to me, so I didn't protest. But all the way over I kept thinking of girls I had played with in Baltimore. You can't realize how strongly I'm tempted at this moment to take the stage for home and let Achille have her! Is she good-looking? Every one I ask about her looks evades me."

"I shall leave you to find that out," laughed Madame Toussard. "You'll see her in a few hours, and it's wiser that you become the sole judge of her beauty."

Bo watched her shrewdly. "You're like the rest—I'm sure she's ugly!"

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Baltimore was mentioned. Madame Toussard remembered that she had recently received a letter from William Patterson.

"I thought," she said, "that your grandfather would be in opposition to the match, but in this case, for once, he seems to have accepted Betsy's European notions."

"Hear," she went on, producing the letter, "how he has been paving the way for your courtship:

"If you have an opportunity, you will oblige me by making yourself acquainted with the Count's intentions and everything respecting this business, as far as they can be ascertained with propriety; also that you will inform me of the age and disposition of the young lady, how she stands in the estimation of those who visited her, and whether handsome or otherwise. This is an unusual way of making matches in this country for those that are capable of choosing for themselves; but if it should take place, I hope it will be for the best—at any rate, it will keep the family property better together than by marrying strangers.

"Jerome is said to be very handsome and is certainly very promising for a boy of his age, and you may well suppose it will afford me great pleasure to see him happily settled in life before my own departure.'

"That last," said Madame Toussard, "is a pathetic touch. He thinks highly of you, Jerome—you must not disappoint his hopes."

"I mean to merit his esteem," said the youth. "I consult him about everything. Mother and he don't seem to get along very well, but I am very fond of him. However, I don't like to see him so eager to marry me off."

"He but echoes what your mother has written him," said Madame Toussard.

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Thus the reluctant young fortune-hunter came to Bordentown—where five years before Joseph had acquired an estate of one thousand acres, situated on the Jersey banks of the river Delaware.

We have seen that after Waterloo, the Emperor had considered seeking refuge in America. In the presence of his brother Joseph and some of his officers, he unrolled a map of the United States, and placing his finger upon the region of New Jersey, said:

"If I am ever forced to fly to America, I shall settle somewhere between Philadelphia and New York, where I can receive the earliest intelligence from France by ships arriving at either port."

When the Napoleonic star had set, Joseph, King of Spain, determined to seek sanctuary in the United States and urged Napoleon to join him. A few hours before embarking on the French brig which was to take him to America, Joseph, who had assumed the title Count de Survilliers, sent his secretary Maillard to the Emperor with a note urging the latter to exchange places with him and make his escape from France in Joseph's vessel.

Napoleon toyed with the letter, then said to Maillard:

"Tell my brother that I have well considered his offer and that I cannot accept it. It would seem like flying away from danger; besides, I could not leave behind me so many brave officers, who have sacrificed everything for me. Tell my brother that I hope he will escape the cruisers of England, and arrive safely."

America proved as hospitable to Napoleon's eldest brother, Joseph, as it had been, years before, to his youngest brother. On his arrival at the port of New York, the fleeing King of Spain found all the hotels crowded, but Henry Clay, who had just returned from the mission to negotiate the treaty of Ghent, when he learned that the distinguished visitor was seeking lodgings, immediately surrendered his apartment to Joseph. Mr. Clay's dinner was being served, but the American statesman led Joseph to the well-filled table and said:

"Here is a dinner ready for yourself and your suite!"

Joseph at first fixed upon Philadelphia as his place of residence, living in a house of rough-cast brick on the west side of Ninth Street, near Spruce. Later he occupied a dwelling at the southeast corner of Eleventh and Market Streets, which afterwards became the "Bingham Hotel." When he moved to Bordentown he still retained a city residence in Philadelphia, renting an elegant house on Chestnut Street, below Twelfth.

His wife, Marie Julie Clary, had been prevented by delicate health from joining him in his exile, but his daughter Zenaïde accompanied him, and Charlotte came later.

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Like a prince riding to bring the glass slipper to Cinderella—except that in this case the French Cinderella had a plenitude of slippers and other apparel—Jerome, in Madame Toussard's carriage, drove through the gate of "Bonaparte's Park" at Bordentown.

The ex-King, a smooth-shaven, plainly-dressed, unaffected person, short in stature and, like Napoleon, inclined to corpulency, stood in the doorway among his uniformed servants as the carriage drove up.

The youth, with grace and poise approached the company.

His uncle Joseph warmly embraced him.

"If I had met you in a crowd," he said, "your resemblance to your father would have attracted me to you. It would have been a vast pleasure to have welcomed also your mother, about whom so many fine things have been written to me."

"The pleasure of meeting you is one to which she has long looked forward," Jerome murmured, in a fine ambassadorial manner.

Joseph turned to an attendant. "Escort Prince Jerome to his room. Inform my daughters that their cousin has arrived and will meet them at dinner."

The family's misfortunes, Jerome noted, had not embittered his uncle. He was to find him—in every situation—graceful, elegant and affable, esteemed not only by his guests but by his neighbors. He was a liberal patron of the shops, and gave employment to all who asked for it. There were roads to be graded, grounds to be leveled or raised; trees to be planted, improvements of all kinds to be wrought. He paid liberal wages, in hard cash, at the close of each day. In return for the praises of the tradesmen and workmen, he complimented them by saying he had never seen an American ask for money; it was always for work.

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As the keenly curious Jerome was escorted to his suite, he perceived that his uncle still clung to the splendor with which he had surrounded himself when a king.

In every niche Joseph had endeavored to reflect the glory of the Bonaparte dynasty. The large and finely-carved doors to the entrance of the country house; the liveried servants and attendants; the superb grand hall; the great dining-rooms, art gallery and library, with their paintings by the Italian masters, Luca Giordano and Correggio; the pillars and mantels covered with exquisite sculptures; the priceless statues, busts, paintings; the heavy chandeliers and rich tapestries—these indicated that the mansion was the residence of a most distinguished person. The impression was emphasized by the alien dress and appearance of the host and his guests, and by the torrents of French poured forth in every room.

At eight o'clock, Jerome came down to dinner. He was glad that the formality of his introduction to his cousins was relieved by the presence of many guests. He went in to dinner, not with Charlotte, but with Zenaïde, the older daughter, whom he thought rather pretty.

Opposite him, talking to an aged Frenchman who had come to America with Lafayette, sat a girl whose unattractiveness no arts could disguise.

"Can that be Charlotte?" he asked himself in a terrified moment before the introduction.

It was Charlotte.

"So this is the price," Bo mused between his chats with the animated Zenaïde, "I must pay for a future without financial cares. I see now why Grandfather, with his experience of the world, inquired of Madame Toussard as to Charlotte's looks. And I understand, too, why Madame Toussard was evasive. Well, the match isn't made yet, and perhaps I can find a way to prove myself an undesirable match."

Inspired by his disgust, he developed a mood which, while suave and gentlemanly, was undoubtedly contrary.

The sisters, when the conversation turned to the Old World, expressed ardent hopes that a change of fortunes would open to their father his barred château in Switzerland.

"I dream every night," Charlotte said to Bo across the candles, "of returning to France or Italy!"

"How can you wish to return?" the young man answered. "I should think this democracy, with its lack of jealous courts and their intrigues, would appeal to all of you!"

He felt Zenaïde stiffening beside him. Charlotte regarded him frostily. Glancing past a line of shocked French guests, he saw his uncle's eyes fixed on him with a surprised, searching look.

"It is natural, my nephew"—Joseph's voice broke the cold silence—"for one born like you in this pleasant country, to entertain a patriotic regard for it. It is likewise natural that we of the Old World should sigh for its cultivation and for other charms we fail to find in this scarcely developed civilization. Tell me, if the Bonapartes should again be called to govern France and Europe, would you not desire to have a part in that government?"

"Why, yes, of course," Bo stammered, "but couldn't I be ambassador to America? It would be quite delightful to represent France and live in Washington or New York, wouldn't it, Charlotte?"

"I cannot imagine myself, Cousin," said Charlotte, "preferring life in Washington or New York to that of Paris or Florence or Rome."

"Quite so," her cousin stammered. "It would be strange if you didn't prefer the Old World to our crude country. Yet, to one born in it, it has its charms."

"Your mind," said Charlotte, "runs in a different channel from your mother's."

"We do think differently about many things," Bo admitted.

His uncle, in a torrent of French, diverted the conversation.

"Well, Achille Murat," Bo ungallantly thought, "I've cooked my own goose and paved the way for you, and I'm not sorry! If the girl's dowry were a million dollars, I'd still have been cheated."

After dinner, Bo's indiscretion seemingly forgotten, his uncle directed his servants to bring him a large, magnificently bound volume, which was full of pictures of Napoleon's life and the many battle scenes in which he had figured. The ex-King paused at every picture to describe the different scenes.

With flushed cheek and flashing eye, Joseph declaimed, as if testing his nephew's loyalty to the Napoleonic tradition:

"There never was but one Napoleon! I sigh for him! Ah, they did him great wrong!"

Jerome, who shared none of his feelings toward Napoleon, nodded hypocritically. He felt that his scheme to render himself unacceptable was progressing well enough without committing sacrilege here.

There was, he soon saw, no escape from the memory of the Emperor, for there were countless rich trophies in view that had once belonged to him. Charlotte, touching a secret spring, brought into sight a set of drawers in which were several caskets containing splendid jewels of every nature; the jeweled handles of swords; portions of gemmed crowns; diamonds and emeralds in exquisite settings.

"These," she said, opening one casket, "are the crown and rings my father wore when King of Spain."

Again: "In this compartment lie the crown, robe and jewels in which Napoleon was crowned."

"How my mother reveled in these things!" sighed Zenaïde. "There are enough jewels here to buy a kingdom, and deck a dozen princesses."

"If Mother had known your house was such a treasure-trove of Napoleonic relics," said Bo, "she would most certainly have come with me."

Zenaïde pressed another concealed spring, which gave to view drawers containing valuable Napoleonic papers, fastened by jeweled clasps.

"Read them," said Charlotte. "They are treaties and letters upon which, when written, the fate of kingdoms and armies hung—but what are they now? Here are private and confidential papers of the Emperors Alexander and Francis, of the King of Prussia, of other sovereigns of Europe which, if published now, would cover those sovereigns with shame."

Later, Joseph, showing his awed nephew to his sleeping apartment, escorted him first through his own richly decorated chamber, the walls of which, the young man blushed to see, were hung with oil paintings of almost nude young women. Joseph, with the air of a connoisseur, enumerated for his nephew the charms of the paintings.

In one of the rooms he pointed out the statue of Pauline by Canova.

Joseph paused enraptured before it.

"You met your Aunt Pauline! Then you can appreciate this. What a beautiful head! What a magnificent bust. What a dainty little foot! Ah," he ended, "very beautiful, very beautiful was Pauline, but too ambitious! Nothing could satisfy her; she always felt as if my poor brother was robbing her of a kingdom, instead of bestowing one upon her!"

Jerome, remembering the fading middle-aged beauty he had met in Rome, made no remark except: "I can see, Uncle, why men went crazy over her loveliness."

* * * * *

A May chorus of birds awakened Jerome the next morning. A bright sun challenged him to arise and explore the blossoming park. The challenge had come to the girls also and the trio, while their uncle slept, strolled through the grounds.

The young man saw, beyond a broad dew-wet lawn, a paradise of wild rhododendrons and native and exotic flowers and plants, in the midst of which were splashing fountains and exquisite sculpture. The park, he observed, was laid out in the style of the Escorial grounds, traversed by twelve miles of drives and bridle-paths, winding through clumps of pines and oaks. By winding stairs and balconies, the trio climbed to a paved summit where concerts were held. On every knoll was a statue. Ferns fringed the banks of the calm Delaware. Scattered through the grounds were rustic seats and rain shelters, roofed springs and solitary retreats. The streams were prettily spanned by rustic bridges. In the lake were several islands on which grew velvet grass and fragrant shrubbery. Swans swam on the surface of the water and little fleets of pleasure boats lay moored at the foot of a winding stairway.

"Is it true," Jerome asked his cousins, "that your father has dug underground passages all through the park, the iron doors of which are closed and bolted on the inside; and that those passages are supposed to end in the dark recesses of the wood, affording secret means of escape from the English—if they send raiding parties ashore?"

Charlotte giggled. (Jerome told himself that she was still less attractive when she laughed.)

"Have you, too, been gulled by that absurd story? There is an underground way connecting the lake with our house, but it was built by Father to give Zenaïde a sheltered passage in stormy weather. It was because of the purpose back of it that he carved in Italian, over the doorway: '*Not ignorant of evil, I learn to succor the unfortunate.*'"

"It was the building of this passageway," she went on, "that led to the fanciful stories that my father keeps a sentinel posted upon the tower to watch for any hostile English, Spanish or French frigates that might sail up the Delaware to capture him, so that he may escape in the way you say.

"These Americans, you see, imagine that a romantic past produces a more romantic present, when the truth is that our existence here, aside from these lovely surroundings, is quite prosaic."

The hours Charlotte and Jerome spent alone widened the gulf between them instead of lessening it. Bo tried to converse with his cousin in English, but she always replied in French. At last she burst out: "I despise the English language—I avoid it as much as I can."

"You'll have to get over that if you continue to live in America," Bo said with a bluntness that would have tortured his mother. "You can't enjoy the benefits of a country without speaking its language!"

"Benefits indeed!" sneered the French girl.

Jerome had thrilled to the enchantment of the scene—to the ecstasy of the mating birds; to the warm, exciting sun; to the smell of earth and the fragrance of roses, mignonette and honeysuckle. Yet these influences had not stirred a spark of feeling in him for Charlotte.

"Napoleon," he thought, "may have forced my father into this type of marriage, but Napoleon is dead. My mother, ignorant of Charlotte's looks and disposition, may desire it, but she is on the other side of the ocean. If there's any wooing done it must come from the lady, and if she does she'll be rebuffed. Yet—to do her justice, she doesn't seem any more eager for the match than I am."

After this dull fashion three days passed. Then, obedient to his mother's admonitions not to stay too long, he said good-bye. Joseph, in a fine coach, accompanied him to Philadelphia.

"You must visit us again," said the ex-King, embarrassing him with a public embrace. "We are proud to have such a fine fellow at Bordentown."

He paused, and Bo squirmed. "Now it's coming," he told himself.

But his uncle only added: "Charlotte tells me you plan to attend Harvard College. That is well, Jerome. Since you will have abundant opportunity to visit us while traveling between Baltimore and Cambridge, do not deprive Zenaïde and Charlotte of the pleasure of your company!"

"Thank heaven," said Bo, as he waved farewell to the stout figure in the splendid coach, "he didn't mention the match. Perhaps she disliked me as much as I disliked her. What a fortunate escape! But what will Mama say—poor Mama!"

CHAPTER XXII

A YOUNG MAN WITH A GREAT NAME GOES TO HARVARD

Exuberantly, Bo journeyed to Baltimore. His outbursts of whistling were forgiven by his fellow passengers because they came from so carefree and zestful a youth. As the stagecoach bounced across the Maryland line a pride that would have outraged his mother possessed him. The sun seemed to shine with a more cheery radiance; the gold patches of black-eyed Susans made the meadows seem lovelier to him than the trim gardens of Europe. Orioles and blackbirds, flashing against cool maples and pines, seemed to him to be peculiarly welcoming him. The estates and farmhouses he rolled by were hospitable. The slaves grinning across fences at the stagecoach were but outposts of those that waited to greet him in his grandfather's house. As the stage dipped down through the lovely rolling country towards the town, he assured himself—and his fellow travelers—that there was no country in all the world so fine.

William Patterson, meeting his grandson in the door of his South Street house, was startled by the resemblance the youth bore to the gay young Bonaparte who had come, nearly two decades before, to court his Betsy.

Relatives and slaves thronged to welcome young Odysseus. Uproariously he went from one to the other. "It's glorious," he cried, "to be back in plain Baltimore. Mother can have Europe if she wants it—I wouldn't swap my town, my friends, my horses, for all of Europe!"

"Hark to that," cried his grandfather, hugely pleased. "Spoken like a true Patterson! But, I fear, my boy, you'll not make yonder young princess up in Bordentown share your views. Confess that you found her as enamored of Europe as that mother of yours is!"

"What Charlotte thinks," said Bo loftily, "can have no effect on me. I might as well tell you now, Grandfather, that that plan has been knocked into a cocked hat! I wasn't enough of a Frenchman for her! Achille Murat will perhaps fill the bill. As for me, well, sir, I can't confess to have fallen captive to her charms."

"From what Madame Toussard wrote," chuckled William Patterson, "there exist no charms to make you captive!"

With delicacy, Jerome changed to another theme.

"College, Grandfather, is preferable to courtship. Uncle Joseph said not a word to me about marrying Charlotte, and I, sir, you may be sure, made no mention that I had been sent there to be surveyed as a prospective son-in-law!"

"College it shall be," said his grandfather. "You're too young for marriage—we were foolish to consider it. Of course, your mother will be disappointed. Here's another case of her setting her heart on the undesirable and impossible. However, she will soon unearth another titled young lady for you. We must check her there. After you finish college, we'll find an American bride for you, eh, my boy?"

"A Baltimore one, sir," Bo gayly corrected.

A month later Betsy received a letter from her son in which he told her plainly that she might spare herself the trouble of coming to America to advance his matrimonial prospects—that he hadn't gotten along well with the Bonapartes.

She did not take the matter deeply to heart.

"They are both young yet," she said to herself. "Probably Joseph desires to see how much wealth there is in our family. Well, any marriage settlement must be on his side."

"There is nothing can, or ever will," she wrote home, "surprise me in that family. One would be mad ever to calculate any pecuniary advantage from them. Joseph is notorious for want of stability in his plans, and there is no Frenchman whose word is less brittle than pie-crust.

"There is no use fretting about what one cannot help. If Bo takes a good education and continues handsome, there is always a probability, with his name, of my marrying him advantageously. But if I cannot, he has only to live a bachelor, because the next thing to making a good match is not to make a bad one.

"I console myself with the comforting conviction that my son's name and rank are beyond the influence of any one's caprice."

"Don't fall into their bad graces," she cautioned her son. "Although they are likely to want and keep all the money they have, they are not to be neglected by you for many reasons."

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Harvard had been chosen—William Patterson did not oppose Betsy's choice of the northern college for the completion of Bo's training.

"I hear George Ticknor is a professor there now," he said to his grandson. "A fine, cultured fellow. I met him at Robert Oliver's when he traveled through the South and we were delighted by his personality. He's a brilliant talker, too. If they turn out such men in Massachusetts, I have no fear of entrusting your training to the Bostonians!"

When he was ripe to enter Harvard, Jerome, bearing a letter of introduction to Professor Ticknor, went to call on that gentleman.

The young man's respect for this teacher was firmly based upon his having learned that Thomas Jefferson, when he undertook to establish six years previously the University of Virginia, had pleaded with Ticknor to accept a professorship in "Ideology, Ethics, Belles-Lettres, or Fine Arts," holding out the inducement that the genial climate of Virginia would be more friendly to his constitution than the rigorous climate of Massachusetts.

The professor gave young Bonaparte a welcome warmer than the awed young man had expected.

"We are complimented," he said, "that you chose Harvard instead of Virginia. Do you know, my dear fellow, that it was only after a hard tussle that I declined a chair at Charlottesville? I have recently visited the University—it is a mass of buildings more beautiful than anything architectural in New York, with a rotunda on the model of the Parthenon. I say again—we are fortunate that we have inducements here that can draw you young Southerners away from that promising endeavor!"

Jerome had listened in confusion. "Why hadn't he gone to Charlottesville?" he asked himself.

"My mother, Madame Bonaparte, sir," he said, "met at Geneva Mr. Steele, a Harvard graduate. He impressed her with his intelligence, his knowledge of affairs, his gracious manner, and his perfect composure in a circle that includes some of the most learned men of Europe. I am therefore to be poured into the Harvard mold, in the hope that it will turn out again such Steele!"

Professor Ticknor chuckled. "Well said—I see you will hold your own among our wits."

Geneva—Bonaparte—the words incited Ticknor to rich conversation. He had been an interested if hostile student of Napoleon's career; he had been in Paris, Geneva and Rome; he had met Bo's grandmother and Aunt Pauline. The talk filled the afternoon—young Bonaparte must stay to tea.

Thus auspiciously, Jerome Bonaparte made his entrance into Harvard.

Betsy, who had trained him to be fastidious about his dress, would have lowered her opinion of Harvard if she had seen her boy falling in with the customs of his fellow-students, wearing a battered cocked hat and well-worn peaked-toe shoes and, in summer, a loose long blue-gray gown of calico or gingham, and, in winter, a similar cloak of woolen stuff called lambskin.

Through the patronage of Professor Ticknor, Jerome's circle of friends rapidly extended. He came to know by sight Daniel Webster, Dr. Channing, Mr. Bowditch, the mathematician, and the gifted historian Prescott. He was brought to the President's house, where he was fascinated by the brilliant conversation of Dr. Kirkland, the President, a gentleman with a round, comely face, who, it was irreverently said among the students, was too indolent to use the full powers of his mind.

To the religious controversies stirring Harvard and the churches of Boston, Jerome paid no heed. While he admired Dr. Kirkland's witty sayings, he detested his long conversational prayers, and appreciated the college quip that Kirkland was "on terms of friendly but courteous familiarity with Heaven." The youth, in his first week at college, had his own

religious problem to settle, and was relieved when Dr. Kirkland, to whom he went with it, met him with sympathy and understanding.

A requirement of the college, Jerome had learned, was that each student should attend Protestant religious services. His mother, herself a Presbyterian, had yet a reverence for the Roman Catholic belief because, as she said, "it is the religion of princes and kings." Since her consuming ambition was to make Jerome a prince, and since the Bonapartes were a Catholic family, she had reared him in the Catholic faith, and the Protestant "chapel" was an institution he meant to avoid.

"I have been brought up a Catholic," he pleaded to Dr. Kirkland, "and I do not wish to change my religion. Moreover, my father's mother and several of his family are great devotees, and they would think it a crime for me to enter a church which they consider heretical."

The President nodded. "A Daniel who will not bow his knee to Baal," he said. Then, unbending, "We do not desire you, Mr. Bonaparte, to worship against your convictions. You will be excused from attending Protestant services."

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If he shrank from chapel, Jerome did not avoid the college playground on the Charlestown road, or flinch from measuring his strength with a sophomore in a wrestling-match—such being an annual custom set for the second week of the term.

Besant, his opponent, was a burly fellow twenty-five pounds heavier than himself. Against his experience Bo had only the suppleness of a fish. A cheery, urgent circle saw a strange contest in which the feet of Bonaparte seemed to be at once skyward and at all points of the compass, while his nose seemed doomed to be forever burrowing in the turf. At last his strength gave out and he was hurled flat on his back with the breath gone forever, it seemed, from his lungs.

Gamely he smiled congratulations up at his now solicitous rival, while spontaneous admiration went around the circle.

"Bravo! That's the Napoleonic spirit, old fellow!" exclaimed his friend Adams, speaking for the crowd.

With this initiation, Jerome entered zestfully into the college games: running and leaping; playing at quoits, crickets or ball and bat.

His attendance and attention at classes were conscientious, though he found no other teacher could lecture as inspiringly as Professor Ticknor. As for studies, he came soon to sympathize with the harassed rhymester who scribbled:

*"Now algebra, geometry,
Arithmetick, astronomy,
Opticks, chronology and staticks,
All tiresome parts of mathematics,
With twenty harder names than these,
Disturb my brain and break my peace."*

Accustomed as he was to bountiful and delicious Maryland dinners, Jerome had soon become disgusted by the food served the students at "commons."

"So they call this roast goose!" he remarked to Bradford, as he toiled desperately to gain a knifehold on the piece of fowl set before him. "Well, never have I seen placed on the table such a tough, raw-boned, shocking, ill-looking creature. Look at this bread: it is not even half-baked—it is dough! Mr. Cooley may advertise upon the University board that he has now employed cooks superior to any in the United States, but this food belies his statement. After today, I shall board out, no matter what the expense be."

"Well spoken, Prince Bonaparte," said Bradford; "but you can afford it. You Southerners come to Harvard rolling in wealth, but we of the North must be content with the terrible food Cooley sets before us."

"If I have more funds than you," said Bo contritely, "I am willing to share them. I ask permission to be your host once a week at Porter's Tavern!"

Dine they did, with Bo proposing the toast: "The bonds of friendship, which always tighten when they are wet."

Such unstinted hospitality, of course, contributed to make young Bonaparte a favorite with his classmates, and gained him admission to Harvard's clubs.

While he had no intention of becoming a physician, he eagerly accepted an invitation to join the Med. Fac. Society, a notorious organization formed a few years previous to his entrance.

"We want you up in my room this afternoon, Bo," James Lawrence called to him one morning. "The Med. Fac. Society is going to examine candidates for membership."

Bo screwed up his courage and went. On entering Lawrence's room he saw that it had been made as dark as possible. The "Faculty," wearing wigs and strange and antique costumes, sat around a table, upon which the candidate, by candlelight, saw several gruesome specimens of man's anatomy.

"Step up, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte," the president said in sepulchral tones, peering at him from beneath an academic square cap, "and tell me what bone is this."

Bo took the bone gingerly into his hands. "I should say a thigh-bone, sir," he replied.

"And this one?"

"An arm."

"And this one?"

"A jawbone?"

"Humph. We hope you are as proficient during the rest of the examination. What are you standing on?"

"A floor."

"You are wrong—it is an ocean. Dive, sir, and swim in it!"

Two tall "gendarmes," armed with muskets and bayonets, stepped out of the darkness and prodded the candidate until he obeyed the command.

After being thus hazed, Bo was declared a member, introduced to Professor Bugologiaë, Professor Craniologiaë and other oddly titled individuals, and sat down with them while the society solemnly voted an honorary degree to the Sea Serpent.

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"Now do live within your income, Bo," his mother cautioned him as she planned with him his allotment if he should go to Harvard.

"I know that living within one's income is considered parsimony by our friends, and I have little doubt that they consider me a miser because I have not spent everything. But I want to impress upon you thoroughly the high value of money, and the importance of always increasing one's fortune. I fear for you that you will be influenced by the examples of prodigality you have found in your own family."

Having set aside \$1,200 a year for Bo's college expenses, Betsy had been astounded to learn that the expenses of his first year had amounted to \$2,150.

At once an alarming picture had come to her of Bo's following the example of his spendthrift father, and of acquiring what she termed "the ridiculously extravagant habits of the Americans, who always live beyond their means."

"I'll excuse the folly and thoughtlessness of youth," Betsy paused in the midst of her engagements to write to William Patterson, "but he must now be restrained to a more reasonable mode of living. I have economized in every way myself—perhaps more than my position in society allowed—but I am resolved not to permit him to suppose that I was born only to minister to his extravagant fancies. I may as well spend my income myself, as see it squandered by him; there is indeed little encouragement for me to endure privations, if the result is to be—

'This year a reservoir to keep and spare,

The next a fountain spouting through my heir."

More than she feared Jerome's extravagance Betsy feared that he would become attached to an American girl.

"I am not sorry," she mused, "that he is in college for a few years. If he excited the admiration of the ladies in Rome, how attractive must he seem to the girls of the United States. It would spoil everything to have him fall in love with one."

"I hope," she wrote to her father, "there is no danger of his forming an imprudent matrimonial connection. If he cannot marry suitably—and in America he could not (with one exception, and that, I fear, is out of the question)—he can live single.

"I am not happy when I think of his falling in love, for I recollect the folly and simplicity of the men he will meet—the kind who, without giving a thought to the future, marry poor young women from the caprice of the moment, and consign themselves to their insipid society and the torment of bringing up a family of children. I hope he'll have no such nonsense put in his head.

"Love in a cottage," she continued, "is out of place even in novels. I should consider an amiable, prolific daughter-in-law a very poor compensation for the trouble and anxiety I have had in training him, and I hope the amiable, scheming young ladies will select some other unsuspecting dupe."

To Jerome she wrote: "The dread of your making some imprudent match is ever on my mind—of all fatal imprudence, that would be greatest. It is almost the only misfortune from which a person of sense cannot recover, and in America there is no attention paid by parents to this subject. Here in Europe it is the parents who make all matches, and much better it should be, for they always look out for money.

"Women in all countries have wonderful cunning in their intercourse with men; they succeed better in America because the men there are a century behind them in knowledge of human nature."

The mother need not have feared. Her son in Boston had few of the temptations young Gallatin had in Paris. If Jerome had his girl friends in Boston, his study and sports so occupied him that he had little chance or inclination to break down the barriers of reserve which New England traditions had taught young women to maintain.

Once, it is true, on a December day, he went on a pilgrimage to Plymouth with a party of young people under the chaperonage of Professor and Mrs. Ticknor, to take part in the celebration of the landing of the Pilgrims, and with the town filled with visitors, bands playing, inns and houses decorated and alight, found opportunities to dance and flirt in spite of the awe the approaching commemoration cast over the elders. There were Sallie Perkins and Prudence Stockton and Anne Trowbridge, for instance—any of whom might have melted if Jerome had tried to attract them in the way the older Jerome had used with Betsy Patterson; but with none of the girls did his friendship go beyond a daring handclasp.

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It was irritating to the cool youth, then, to find the subject of his marriage continually dwelt upon on each side of the ocean.

"I thought I was rid of that for a while," he said to himself, "when I broke up their scheme to have me wed Charlotte. But I suppose it'll be out of the frying-pan into the fire!"

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One morning there came a letter in an unfamiliar handwriting, under a European postmark. It startled him to find that it was from his father. Its gist was that Jerome, senior, had been looking for a suitable match for his son, and it closed with the point-blank question as to how much money the Pattersons would give as his marriage portion.

"So there's some penniless princess in sight," Bo muttered.

"I am too young to marry," he wrote both his father and his grandfather, "and am perfectly contented with my present situation and prospects."

William Patterson cursed the Bonapartes roundly when his grandson forwarded to him King Jerome's letter.

"That shows," he stormed, "how the skunk has learned Napoleon's tricks. Now that the boy whom he has neglected is coming of age, he wants to make him a pawn in his game of politics. By heaven, we'll have to save Bo from both mother and father!"

In the middle of his college career, General Lafayette visited the college as the guest of Professor Ticknor. Betsy, having dined with the Marquis in France, was eager that her father and son meet him on his visit to America. The old general in turn was curious to meet the young Bonaparte, the grandson of his friend Patterson, who had sent to him in France some fine cows.

"They say around college that when the Marquis had his headquarters in Boston during the war," Jerome wrote to his grandfather, "he kept a huge bowl of grog on his table for all comers. You have told me that he was then one of the finest-looking men in the army, with his deep-red hair, fine face and noble carriage. Now I suspect he wears a wig. What an old man he is! What noise and disorder accompany him. He singled me out for attention and was quite delighted with your gift of cows."

So Bo progressed from freshman to senior, with an occasional fine of ten dollars for going to the theater in Boston without permission, or a fine of five dollars for going to a party in that proscribed city. Though his studies were attended by bodily discomfort because of the cold rooms in winter and the insufficient light of candles, he satisfactorily passed his examinations and had the pleasure of sending to relatives and friends an invitation thus worded:

Madame Elizabeth Bonaparte
requests the honor of ——
company at Dinner at the
Rooms of her son, at
Mr. Blank's, in
Cambridge, on Commencement Day.

If he regretted that few of his far-away friends could attend, it yet made him smile to read such formal notes of regret as:

"With their respectful acknowledgments to Madame Elizabeth Bonaparte, Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Barney regret that indispensable avocations must deprive them of the satisfaction of participating personally in the pleasures of a Commencement which will place on the theater of the world her promising son."

CHAPTER XXIII

MORE MATCH-MAKING

Betsy, too devoted to her pursuits to attend her son's commencement, had gone to Paris, glad to escape from Geneva, "that center of prudery, heartlessness and illiberal feeling." She was meeting all sorts of people, and filling her letters with their titles.

New and amazing rumors concerning her sister-in-law had set Betsy avid for substantiating news. There followed a frantic correspondence with Lady Morgan in England, and the truth came out. Her sister-in-law was engaged to marry the Marquis of Wellesley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, brother of the Duke of Wellington.

Her chat with Mrs. Gallatin turned to the grandfather of the Caton girls, Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

"With Mr. Carroll's money to support them in their rank," Betsy said, "they may be considered the most fortunate of women. Of course, he will strain every nerve to maintain the two girls, now that they have connected themselves so highly."

"Do you call it a good match," said Mrs. Gallatin, "for Mary to marry a man who is sixty-five; who has a family by another wife—an Italian singer; who not only has no fortune, but is head over heels in debt—so much so that his salary is mortgaged, his carriage is seized for debt in the streets of Dublin, and the plate on his table is hired?"

"I repeat," affirmed Betsy, "that the match is a magnificent one. It insures Mary a permanent place in the highest society."

Her indignation at the bold conduct of the Caton sisters in pursuing noblemen suddenly vanished, erased by their brilliant prospects.

Yet, for all her enthusiasm, Betsy did not go to the wedding—Mary Caton's former association with the Duke of Wellington had led Betsy to utter words that Mary found unforgivable and Betsy had not been warmly encouraged to cross the Channel for the ceremony. Fortunately for the satisfaction of her curiosity, Lady Morgan attended and gave her a gay lengthy account of the transition of an American belle into a Marchioness.

"Was the Duke, Great Bolingbroke, at the wedding?" Betsy had queried maliciously.

It was not long before the lately condemned Caton family again became the envy of Betsy.

"I think they are the most fortunate people I have ever heard or read of!" she exclaimed. "Now it's Louisa, a really lovely girl, who has made a great match. No old man this time: the eldest son of the Duke of Leeds, not more than twenty-eight; very handsome."

For all her apparent elation, the experience of Mary Caton had driven home to Betsy's heart the lesson she had long been pondering.

"Mary's position and mine," she reasoned, "are about parallel. We were both single women moving in the highest social circles of Europe. Our desire is to hold the position we have gained and to advance ourselves. Mary has done so—yet she has had to run the gauntlet of scandalous tongues to do so, and in the end gains, not the man with whom her name is coupled, but his wreck of a brother, who, however, insures her a brilliant place. His being without fortune," she admitted, "is of little consequence when his rank is considered. Mary Caton, in my opinion, has made one of the greatest matches any woman ever made. The match places her in the best society of England and France, and if her money holds out, she will spend the rest of her days there. If Jerome were a girl, and had made such a match, I should have died of joy!

"I cannot marry a two-penny nobleman after being the bride of a king, nor can I demean myself by making an attempt to attract dukes and earls. I shall remain Madame Bonaparte and be satisfied. If I were given the choice of having my name dragged in the mud that I might later gain such eminence, I should prefer to remain obscure. America is horrid, Baltimore is a prison, but better an existence there than such notoriety in Europe. I want all the glory and magnificence European life can give me—but I shall dictate the terms and withdraw if they are not accepted. If I must shine henceforth only in the reflected glory of my son, better that than to have him blush at certain episodes in his mother's career."

The amazing change of fortune of the Caton girls spurred her to renewed efforts to find a titled bride for Bo.

"If I am ever to get anything out of King Jerome," she reasoned, "now is the time. If he won't give money, he can use his influence in behalf of his son. One who has had so much to do with courts, certainly ought to be able and willing to help Bo make a fine match. Without knowing that I am pulling the strings, King Jerome shall help.

"I must secure Bo," she went on planning, "an honorable position here in Europe; a rich match; and more of his family's money. To obtain all three, Bo should come to Europe, regardless of what his grandfather thinks. Every American who returns from Rome tells me that the Bonapartes inquire for Bo with the greatest affection. Madame Mère is in poor health. She should see my son again before she dies. I hope she will leave Bo some sort of legacy, because it is always a compliment to be remembered in people's wills, and a legacy here and there adds to one's means. Then there's Bo's granduncle, Cardinal Fesch—they say his health is failing. When he sold his hotel in Paris it brought five hundred thousand dollars. He hates most of his nephews and nieces and I hope he will leave my son a trifle. There will be no harm in jogging his memory by a sight of the boy. If they were fond of him once they will like him more, with his classical profile, and *un esprit juste*.

"If Bo gains nothing in this way, he will at any rate be introduced into the best society of Europe, and have the opportunity of improving himself in every way. One cannot tell what his future will be, but it will be improved by having a European polish put to his manners.

"And," she concluded, "while he is visiting the Bonapartes, I won't mind if he visits his father. His patronage must be secured to forward Bo's career."

Always in the back of Betsy's mind was the thought that in case of a restoration of the Bonapartes to the rulership of France, her son might, through his father, acquire a kingdom and a title.

Imperative letters to Bo, persuasive letters to her father, were dispatched to Baltimore. Her son was to be sent out at once, and was to write to his father concerning his coming, but the voyage was to be kept secret from Joseph Bonaparte and his family, "who are jealous about the old lady's money."

To assure her father's cooperation, she promised that at the end of a year's travel she would return with Bo to America, so that he might begin there the study of law.

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Tidings of the proposed visit reached King Jerome at Württemberg, from the Bonapartes in Rome, who had lent themselves readily to Betsy's plans. Thereupon that cautious parent sent a letter to his son that well might have discouraged the latter—had it not arrived in America after the second Jerome had sailed.

"My dear child," the father wrote from Rome, "I have received your letter. You are right in thinking its contents have long occupied my serious attention; but my position is so complicated on account of the Queen and the Princes, our children, that I do not know how to reconcile their rights with your peculiar position; for, although my wife, whose noble and generous heart is well known, would consent to many things on your account, we might find that the courts of Württemberg and Russia would protest against any act which would have the appearance of invalidating the marriage of their princess.

"My dear child, you are now a man, and I desire to place you in a natural position, without, however, prejudicing in any way the condition of the Queen and the Princes, our children.

"I approve and desire that you should make your arrangements so as to arrive at Leghorn during next October. You will find at the American Consul's a letter which will inform you whether you are to wait for me at Leghorn, or where you will go to find me.

"I often speak of you to my mother, and it is after consulting with her that I have written this letter, which, as you may imagine, is known also to my excellent wife."

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Jerome, meanwhile, had completed his course with honors and had received his degree.

When his mother's imperative summons came, Jerome, as amiably obedient as in his academy days, paid his \$140 fare and booked his passage for France.

Mother and son had not met for four years. Jerome found her loveliness scarcely marred and her brilliancy even more lustrous. His maturity had brought to him, however, a measure of disillusionment. It pained him to observe that her cynicism had grown keener, her tongue sharper, her fondness for material things greater.

Europe, he felt, as he listened to her chatter about balls and celebrities, instead of giving her real happiness had robbed her of something sweet and desirable in a woman. He wondered if, despite her mask, she had not experienced abroad what Professor Ticknor had observed:

"I never knew so many people and knew them so long, where I found occasion to be familiar, and so little to be intimate; where there was so much to amuse, and so little to attach my affections."

The first exhibition of her bitterness came in the first hours of their reunion, when she gave him the news that Charlotte Bonaparte had preceded him to Europe and had married there, not Achille Murat, but instead another cousin.

"They say," Betsy fumed, "that the young man was forced by her perseverance into the match, and that he showed no small reluctance to marry the hideous little creature. Her marriage portion, which they promised to be seven hundred thousand dollars, has not been paid yet; probably it never will. They're living with his father near Florence, and she is said to be a vixen.

"I could have told that minx Charlotte that I was too sharp to have let you run your head into the noose in the way her present spouse has done without any ready money. Well, she is married at last—and since we've found out that she lacks a fortune, I'm glad. Most assuredly she was not the wife for you!"

Jerome laughed.

"I am glad to hear you reach a conclusion that I arrived at years ago!"

Wearily he listened while she went over their finances.

"What thieves these hotel-keepers are! In these genteel boarding-houses, there was no feast ever to be found. The hosts are too *spirituel* to imagine their *pensionnaires* possess a vulgar appetite for meats and vegetables, tarts and custards. One Baltimore family dinner would feed a family here for at least a fortnight.

"There's no need for any of the Patterson family to gloat over Napoleon's downfall—it cut me off from twelve thousand dollars a year. It's good for both of us that I invested it wisely. I hope you didn't blame me for restricting your school expenses. You know, your father sends me nothing. They say he is ruined, though the courts of Russia and Württemberg send him a liberal pension. I hear also that he has wheedled out of Madame Mère the greater part of her fortune—he need not grudge entertaining you. Maybe when he sees you he'll open his purse-strings. If he asks you, tell him I am very happy. Mention my friends—Sir Frederick Forke, Prince Demidoff, the Count de St. Crig, Sismondi. Say I go to dinners and balls every night—that I am greatly sought after."

If Jerome had expected to be idle in Paris, he was soon disillusioned. Recalling young Gallatin's temptations, she watched her son like a hawk. Remembering that at Breslau his father had been more interested in his actresses than his army, she saw to it that no actress had the chance to tempt Bo. Notwithstanding the expense, Betsy insisted that he continue taking French and Italian lessons. At seven every morning his French master came. At eleven, his Italian master arrived. In addition, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons there were studies in Latin translations, while on the afternoons of Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday were lessons and recitals designed to help him acquire the spirit of French authors. At five, mother and son dined. In the evening they mingled in good literary society at soirées.

"I am taking you," Betsy informed Jerome with inordinate pride, "into soirées quite as brilliant as those that existed in the days of Louis XIV—it is an ideal polishing-off for you—how valuable all this will be to you if I get you a place in an embassy!

"James Gallatin, who had as good an opportunity as you, chose to steal out of the ambassador's house after his parents had gone to bed and go to shocking grisette balls, choosing for an example not his noble father, but the beau, Duc de Berri, whom he met in his midnight rambles. How glad I am, Bo, that you do not show those wild tendencies!"

The young man, a little fretful at playing the rôle of a model young man, tried patiently, nevertheless, to enter into the spirit of these soirées. He behaved dutifully toward the faded Madame Récamier. It intrigued him to learn that this famous woman, in the height of her beauty, had been offered the post of lady of honor to Josephine, carrying with it the proviso that she was to be the favorite of Napoleon—but had refused to permit herself to be thus seduced by magnificent offers. He liked Frances Gallatin, but she was older than he, and, besides, his mother warned him that she was without money, and must become the bride of some rich nobleman.

Wearied by a brilliancy he could but half comprehend, saddened at the sham delights of his mother, he was glad when it was time to go to meet his father, though he feared a continuation of the same kind of experiences.

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Heigho, here is Betsy playing a different rôle than the one she assumes toward Bo: advocating for an American youth abroad an American marriage—and in addition a marriage of poverty. At the same time she combs her list of princesses who could give Bo the position and wealth she desires, she turns the thoughts of James Gallatin westward, and induces that likable young man to go to the despised Baltimore for a wife.

Should you chide her for inconsistency, she would answer: "Bo's character can withstand the temptations of Paris life. James Gallatin is a dear boy, but quite too fond of the gay carnivals and the grisette world. He is likely to become more and more absorbed in amorous adventures. For such a young man, the simple life of America is just the thing—he can't go far wrong there."

"Be careful of Bo," the same James Gallatin had cautioned her, "for such strange things can happen to a young man who craves gaiety in Paris. Do not tell my father this: A few nights ago I met a charming little danseuse at the opera. She invited me to sup with her at her apartment. The room was luxurious, covers had been laid for two. While we were dining a noise was heard in the antechamber.

"*Mon Dieu, je suis perdue! Cachez-vous!*" she cried. I hid behind a curtain. She opened the door and I heard the voice of the Duc de Berri, whom I had met at the Palais Royal.

"I heard the dancer explain that, since the Duke hadn't come, she was entertaining her mother, who had fled abashed before his Highness.

"Unfortunately, I had left my hat on a chair and he spied it.

"So your mother wears a man's hat!" he laughed.

"I stepped out and explained: 'Monseigneur, it is my hat! I am mademoiselle's mother.'

"He laughed heartily and then said kindly: 'You have acted in a most honorable manner not to play the eavesdropper. You shall sup with us.'

"Afterwards as we left together, he told me that he had been eager to break off with Mlle. Clare, and he was glad I had given him the chance."

Madame Bonaparte listened appalled.

"My dear boy," she said, "I hope you are not disposed to boast of such an experience. I shudder at your being exposed to such adventures. I should die to think of Bo so ensnared. Before you are wholly spoiled, I must find you a wife, who will divert you from such temptations."

And so we find Betsy playing zestfully the rôle of go-between.

"Don't lose your heart to one of these Parisians, James," she persuaded. "Now that your playmate Katinka Galitzin is married, I fear you'll be making a hasty, unworthy choice. There's just the girl for you waiting in Baltimore. She's the only girl in America I'd want Bo to look at, though, of course, she's too old for him. I mean Josephine Pascault, Madame Rewbell's youngest sister."

James, remembering that Madame Rewbell when he met her had seemed to him past middle age, whistled in dismay.

"Well, wouldn't her sister be too old for me, also?"

"There is twenty-two years' difference in their ages," Betsy explained. "She is a wonderfully beautiful girl, carefully reared and altogether charming. Your father tells me that he intends to return to America. I am glad of that, because, if I am forced to return there, your family will be an oasis in a desert of the commonplace. Your return with him will give you an opportunity to meet Josephine. I have written her about you—told her what a fine boy you are, and omitted to say other things that might blemish the picture."

James gave a little laugh of embarrassment. "That's nice of you. It bores me to think of going back to America, but the prospect of meeting so lovely a girl cheers me."

"I know you will deal with her honorably," Betsy hinted. "Being the youngest, she is the darling of her gentle old father."

"I am ashamed to think that you have to so caution me," James replied.

The Gallatins sailed. The swiftly developed romance of James and Josephine is sketched in the diary of the young man:

"I have seen Miss Pascault; Madame Bonaparte is right. I have never seen anything more lovely . . . I went this afternoon to Monsieur Pascault's house . . . Mlle. Pascault was charming. I am without doubt in love with her. Her father has lost most of his money. I am quite off my head; Monsieur Pascault, who is the Marquis de Poléon, is a gentleman of the old régime. No wonder his daughter is so well bred. He received me with the most wonderful courtesy—tapped a beautiful gold snuff-box and offered it to me . . . I will speak to Father tomorrow and beg him to approach Monsieur Pascault—with a view of my paying my addresses to his daughter."

"I have again called at Mr. Pascault's and was received most kindly. I had some conversation with Mlle. Josephine; she is so absolutely gentle and sweet, I am certain I am not good enough for her."

"Father has returned, and called yesterday on Monsieur Pascault. He gave his consent to my paying addresses to his daughter. Father was so kind, he said her want of fortune should not stand in the way."

"My suit is progressing. Josephine likes to hear about France. She plays delightfully both the harp and the spinet. I talk all sorts of nonsense which all lovers do. It has cheered her up, as her youth has not been very cheerful."

"All is settled. Mlle. Pascault has consented to be my wife and we are to be married early in the New Year. Mama and Frances are delighted with her. She is so gentle and innocent. Mama says she is like a beautiful lily."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE TWO JEROMES MEET

"This is a nice situation," the usually patient young Jerome grumbled as he drove toward the Château of Lanciano at Siena in Tuscany. "There's Mother feverishly eager to bring about a loveless marriage for me, and Father grudgingly inviting me to come and be looked over to see into what matrimonial class I fit. I suppose he will lead me around to this and that coterie and *conversazione* to be viewed by every single lady with any claim to title and fortune.

"Well, here goes to feign interest in the literary hopefuls of Italy; to hear amateur archaeologists chatter about their discoveries; to delve among the ruins and bathe myself in antiquity; to flirt and play the courtier; to dine at dark and get up at noon. If I come unmarried out of it all, how happy I shall be! How gladly would I exchange the grandest career my mother or father can conceive for me for a profession of some kind in Baltimore, with perhaps some unassuming American girl for my wife!"

Pausing under the almond-trees of an inn, he relieved his feelings by penning this note to his grandfather:

"I have seen a great many things since my departure from home, but the more I see, the more firmly I am persuaded of the superiority of my own country, and the more I desire to return to it and remain in it. This journey was absolutely necessary for me, on many accounts, but when it is over I shall settle myself quietly in America."

In this unpromising mood, the young man approached the château his father had designated as a meeting-place.

King Jerome—suave, polished, magnetic, if somewhat world-worn—embraced him with many manifestations of sincere affection.

"At last, at last," he said, in an unsteady tone, "we meet and know each other with a full understanding of our relationship. Life, my boy, places us in cruel circumstances that require severe decisions."

He held his son at arm's length.

"What a fine fellow you are!" he exclaimed. "Quite as handsome as my mother led me to expect. Well can I understand why there was talk of uniting Charlotte Bonaparte and you—how did the girl let such a handsome beau slip through her fingers? Or maybe it was because you gave her the slip, eh?"

Father and son entered the hallway.

"Yonder," King Jerome whispered, "is my wife Catherine. She is prepared to welcome you unreservedly. Let there be no restraint between you. So it is also with my children.

"Catherine," he said to a woman, fair, heavy, placid, "at last Jerome has come to visit us—this is my American son."

Catherine opened her plump arms. The younger Jerome submitted to their clasp and received a resounding kiss.

"Napoleon and Mathilde," the father called to a hesitating pair, "here is your American brother. You have heard your grandmother speak of him. You will have much to say to each other."

Jerome embraced Mathilde—a girl who had few charms except youth.

In the eyes of his half-brother Napoleon he thought he detected hostility, yet the latter was cordial enough when the American discovered common ground for a chat.

It was Jerome who did the talking for the group. Finding that the young people knew Charlotte and Zenaïde, he launched upon a detailed description of Bonaparte Park at Bordentown.

At dinner, unembarrassed by the scrutiny of four curious pairs of eyes, Jerome told of his experiences at Harvard and answered, as best he could, his father's questions about this and that person. No one mentioned Betsy.

At breakfast, King Jerome surprised Bo by announcing that they would leave that afternoon for Rome. With little ceremony they started. Reserve vanished in the intimacy of the post-chaise.

Jerome found that the Bonapartes, who now belonged to no nation, were living among their own people, the Italians, as among strangers. Yet he also observed that their society was more sought by visitors to Rome than that of any other persons.

His grandmother, Madame Mère, shared the palace of her brother, Cardinal Fesch, who lived in a magnificent suite in the upper part, where he maintained a superb private gallery of pictures, and received in person those who came to see it.

Madame Mère, he found, lived in queenly state in a lower apartment of the palace. In the evening, as the Cardinal joined "Madame," their usual coterie gathered. In these soirées, wealth, intellect and fashion blended with the splendor of the Bonapartes, but Jerome found it fully as dull as he had feared.

One memory dominated their daily conversation—"Napoleon."

"If I could but go to his grave," mourned the Emperor's mother. "They say my son was a despot—I knew his tenderness. They say that he used the noble ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity to found a tyranny, but the millions who adore his memory know that he changed corrupt, crushed France into a prosperous empire where the people had work and bread; that he brought back her exiles and encouraged them to paint pictures and write books; that he gave her just and clear laws as well as liberal institutions; that his genius as a statesman was as great as his genius as a warrior."

"Madame," said Jerome diplomatically, "the longer I stay in France, the more the greatness of my uncle is revealed to me. I know that what Châteaubriand says is true:

"The world belongs to Bonaparte. Living, he missed the world; dead, he possesses it. You may protest, but generations pass by without hearing you. The giant had to fall before we could measure his height."

Madame, greatly moved, embraced her grandson.

"How splendid of your mother," she wept, "to instill in her offspring this admiration for the Emperor!"

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On his first meeting, years earlier, with his Aunt Pauline, Jerome had not been mature enough to appraise her. No connoisseur of women's charms, and still indifferent to sex, he yet noted that at forty-four her form was girlish and that her face still retained much of the exquisite beauty which had won for her the devotion of husbands and lovers. He recalled the statue of her by Canova—an enchanting nymph said to have been molded from her own body—and blushed.

As a compensation for the dullness of the coteries came the pastime of watching Pauline's nightly flirtations.

It amused him to see her as grave as a nun in the presence of her uncle, Cardinal Fesch, or when conversing with the aged Cardinal Albani and the Cardinal Vicar, and then recklessly flirtatious in her own luxurious palace, among the young noblemen who attended her receptions.

He wondered at times if she were testing his own impressionableness as she showed him her jewels and told him of the romantic history connected with each—a background crowded, it seemed, by as many lovers as there were trinkets.

"You are too quiet, too even-tempered, my nephew," she said. "Your nature prevents you from absorbing the romance of Italy. Is marriage a bugaboo? Pooh—accept the choice of your father, and if the lady is ugly or dull, find your compensation elsewhere. I have already seen a dozen women casting glances at you which your father, when he was your age, would have been quick to interpret. Come, must I lead you into their arms?"

The uncomfortable Jerome went for refuge to his Uncle Lucien's. In this pleasant family he found an abundant variety of temperament, for there lived with Lucien, besides the two children by his first wife, seven by the second, as well as the daughter of his second wife by her first husband.

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At Lucien's Jerome also met his Uncle Louis, the former King of Holland, a simple, kindly soul whose chief occupations seemed to be the making of verses and the training of his son Louis—an absent-minded young man about Jerome's age who later, as Emperor of France, was to be the arbiter of his fortunes.

Weeks passed. In them, Christine, Lucien's second oldest daughter, at a whisper from her Aunt Pauline, had assumed the duty of breaking down her American cousin's reserve. He found her an impetuous, irrepressible, fascinating creature untamed by her recent marriage to Count Possé, a phlegmatic Swede, who, quite plainly, was an uncongenial mate. In addition to singing, playing and dancing well, Christine seemed to have taken her Aunt Pauline as her model, and in the corner of the *salon* where she held her own court she gave not only Jerome but her younger sisters recently out of a convent, entertainment and edification in the art of coquetry.

"It would not be bad at all," Jerome mused, remembering the mocking words of his Aunt Pauline, "if I were asked to marry a girl like Christine—or even her sister Anna—isn't it just my luck that Uncle Lucien has no money?"

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One evening, stealing away from a wearisome *conversazione*, Christine, Jerome and a group of young people went singing across a bridge. Suddenly rose before them St. Peter's, its magnificence heightened by the flood of yellow magical moonlight drenching its dome, façade and colonnades. The song ceased. The gay Christine—her arm linked in Jerome's—had grown so still that he could hear the beating of her heart.

"Christine," Jerome whispered as the other couples wandered on, "tonight is the first time since I landed in Europe that I have seen something more lovely than any I have seen in America. I understand why you love Rome."

"I shall take you to see ruins of the Colosseum by moonlight," said Christine, "and you will love Rome more. But, Cousin," she added, "there are persons in our city whom we desire you to love just as much as our ruins!"

Her head—was it merely in a cousinly way?—rested on his shoulder. His arm—was it but cousinly affection?—circled her heart.

Suddenly intoxicated and bewildered, Jerome found devilishly tempting the pretty lips held up toward his.

"It's moonlight madness," he stammered. "There is the barrier of marriage between us!"

"As there has been between thousands of lovers," she laughed.

They kissed.

"Let us go home," she said, the delirious moment ended.

As they passed along the enchanted streets, she spoke calmly and practically. "Aunt Pauline would quite approve of that scene. She thinks you are not responsive enough to the charms of Italian ladies."

Patting the hand that still enfolded her waist, she went on soberly: "Of course, this can lead to nothing. Away from this mad moon, we will behave ourselves.

"I wonder, Jerome, if your American marriages for love are not better than ours. Father did not force me to marry, but Mother was not unwilling to have the Possé fortune joined to our miserable funds. And here you are in danger of being drawn into the same mesh. Forget this hour, my Cousin; and remember I shall despise you if you do not exercise your American right to marry for love. Even if it sunders our sweet—and perhaps dangerous—friendship, marry your own heart's choice!"

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To workaday Baltimore—in sharp and enjoyable contrast to cosmopolitan Betsy's falsely glowing epistles with their ceaselessly depreciating comments on American life—came Jerome's letters, so manly and fine that they had no repose in his grandfather's pocket, but were pulled out and shown to every relative and friend whose inquiries veiled a suspicion or fear that his grandson would be spoiled by European life.

"Spoiled, is he!" chuckled William Patterson. "Tell me if this letter sounds as if it had been written by a spoiled boy.

"Dear Grandfather," the old man read aloud with touching pride, "I have now been three months with my father; two in the country, and one month at Rome. He continues always very kind to me.

"My father is very anxious for me to remain with him altogether, but I cannot think for a moment of settling myself out of

America, to whose government, manners and customs I am too much attached and accustomed, to find pleasure in those of Europe, which are so different from my early education. It would, however, give me pleasure to remain this year with my father, and be of some advantage to me; but I see too many objections even to this postponement of my return to America, of which one very important objection is, that with my father, I am living in a style which I cannot afford, and which, if I once became accustomed to it, I should find it very difficult to give up; moreover, I am now of an age in which I must think of doing something for myself, and America is the only country where I can have an opportunity of getting forward!"

"A sensible, patriotic young man! A grandson to be proud of!" said the tottering Charles Carroll of Carrollton. "I'd rather a thousand times have a man like him for a grandson than these penniless or bankrupt noblemen my granddaughters set such value on."

William Patterson's breast heaved. "I'm afraid, sir, my mad Betsy turned all our young girls into a flock of geese flying across the Atlantic. Devil take it—how it maddens me to see the fruits of our industry going to support bankrupt nobility! I'd like to spank Betsy—calling a republic an extinguisher of society! Thank God, she can't win my grandson from his love of home!"

The young man's letters home, with all their frankness did not reveal a tithe of his disgust at his father's way of living—with breakfast at one, dinner at seven, tea at twelve, and with bedtime delaying until one o'clock in the morning.

During the greater part of the twenty-four hours, he found the whole of the family assembled in the parlor, principally, in his own words, "for the purpose of killing time." Because every one in the house wanted to talk, our earnest American found it impossible to read or study.

His fright at the enormous expenditures of his father never wore off. He saw clearly that the exiled King had not the means, even if he had the inclination, to support him. At times, when he viewed some unusual extravagance, and heard it whispered that his father's money was equal only to one-third of his debts, he had hard work to restrain himself from rushing out of the palace and away from Rome.

"Do not worry," his cousin Louis soothed him; "he's spending Grandmother's fortune. You know Uncle Napoleon requested Grandmother to leave her money to the King of Rome—his son by Marie Louise. There is justice in the request, because Napoleon gave her her fortune. Your father, however, is Madame's pet son, and he'll see to it that the King of Rome will get little. No one except him can get a farthing from her."

This bit of information gave a keener edge to Bo's scruples.

A constant humiliation to him was his lack of funds, because while his mother had restricted his allowance, his father offered him nothing.

"Affection I can lavish on you," King Jerome apologized, "but money—it is a scarce article."

The father paused. His eyes wandered from those of his son.

"It is because our funds are scarcely adequate for our own expenses," he stammered, "that I am urging on you, my son, to marry a woman of fortune. I have an estimable lady in mind—a countess who when her husband died inherited considerable wealth. You will meet her at carnival time. I shall give a ball at which you will meet her."

With this prospect before him, all too soon for the American son came the Roman carnival, with masked revelers in carriages and on foot bombarding each other with sugar-plums; with riderless horses, pricked by nails hidden in their ornaments, racing through the vacated streets; with a continual round of balls, theater parties and dinners.

The King and Queen of Westphalia, not to be outdone by the prodigal Pauline, gave a brilliant ball to which both Roman and foreign celebrities thronged.

The American Bonaparte danced every dance he could with his cousin Christine, and when his Aunt Pauline warned him that the Count Possé was growing sullen, lost himself with her in the alcoves. There his father found him.

"It is kind of you to so entertain my son, Christine," the King said; "but you'll find your husband vexed if you do not go to him at once. Come, Jerome."

Christine reluctantly left them. King Jerome led his son into a palmy niche where a lady sat fingering a fan.

"Countess, my son!" he said. He turned to Jerome. "The charming Countess of A——, Jerome. I have told her what an adorable fellow you are. Do not disprove my words, or disappoint her expectations."

Jerome's heart dropped. The Countess had removed her mask. He saw that she was dumpy, doll-faced and simpering—and quite ten years older than himself.

She drew him down beside her, chattering in French. He answered dully. Her eyes flashed invitations; he avoided them. When her chatter became unbearable, he asked her to dance and when he led her out among the swirling waltzers was disgusted at her awkwardness.

He saw Christine watching him. Through her mask, her eyes flashed with tenderness and pity.

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King Jerome came into his son's room as, near daybreak, the latter prepared for bed.

"Well, my son?"

"I shall have to dream about it. Do fortunes belong only to the middle-aged and homely?"

With a good round French oath, his affronted father left the room.

Jerome thought of Betsy and shivered. Here he was flouting money and a title. What would she say? He felt that in this thing her spirit was allied with his father's against him.

The next morning Jerome poured out his soul in a letter to his grandfather. Later, his Uncle Lucien, who had heard from Christine of King Jerome's match-making, exhorted him to escape it by returning to America.

"That I shall do—at the earliest chance," said Jerome; "but what a plight I am in—dependent on my mother or father for passage money, and able to obtain it from neither!"

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Sooner than he expected, came a letter from America stiffening him in his resolve not to marry the Countess.

"It appears to me," William Patterson had written, "that your father has not reflected sufficiently on your situation and prospects in this country, to propose looking out for a wife for you in Europe. Your education and habits will not be at all suitable for the kind of life you must lead there in case of marrying and settling in that country, nor would it answer to bring a wife from thence to this country; for she would never be satisfied or reconciled to our manners and customs. Besides, as you observe yourself, you are much too young to think of marrying at present.

"I hardly think you could be reconciled or happy to live in Europe under any circumstances. It will be time enough to think of future prospects and arrangements after you have finished your education. Your mother's fortune will be sufficient for you and her so long as she and you can live together, but will not afford a division for two establishments.

"Your father's family are all on the decline and going downhill, and will soon be reduced and scattered so they will be of no consequence whatever. Should you return to this land and make good use of your time and talents, you may rise to consequence; but in Europe you would be nothing, and must come to nothing with the other branches of your family. I have thus given you my opinion and advice, fully and clearly, which I hope you will consider well before you take any steps that might interfere with your future happiness."

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The visit to the King of Westphalia of his son by his American wife had been noised about Florence, and had created among the nobility fresh interest in his mother. Flattering attentions had been paid her by king, councilors and diplomats. At the balls given by the English Ambassador and at the suppers given by the Sardinian Minister, the woman "who charms by her eye and slays by her tongue," was a favorite guest. Distressed by letters from Bo urging her to call him to Florence, in all her conversations she kept his fortunes in mind. Lamartine, chargé d'affaires from Charles X, with whom she flirted mildly at parties, thrilled her by suggesting that her son would make an excellent ambassador to England.

"Get him that ambassadorship," he said, "and it will then be possible for him to be appointed envoy to Sweden. Our King, I am sure, on account of your son's connection, would be glad to aid him."

Sighting a way to realize one of her cherished ambitions for Jerome—a place of influence in Europe—Betsy at once sought to bring American influence to bear. That Jerome might be near Lamartine, she sent word to her son to join her.

Christine's company had been forbidden Jerome. The King, his father, was renewing his advocacy of the Countess. Jerome left Rome with almost impolite haste.

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"I think," Betsy had written to her father, "if you and General Smith would write to President Jackson and ask for the place of Secretary of Legation to England, it is possible that out of regard to you he might give it. I should in that event be willing to allow him as much as I can afford out of my income to enable him to live comfortably in England. It would be a great thing if I could get Bo made Secretary of Legation."

"That means," Jerome exulted when the plan was broached to him, "that I must go home to be presented to the President and to meet the officials who can obtain for me the appointment."

"I suppose you should be in Washington," said Betsy, "though why you are so eager to go back to America baffles me."

He grew as weary of Florence as he had been of Rome. He was bored with attending a ball every night—singularly unresponsive to the lovely Florentine ladies who invited the attentions of the potential prince.

Exasperating Betsy with his fidgeting, provoking and disappointing her with his outspoken affection for America and with his defense of it against her gibes, he brought matters to so tempestuous a point that she consented to his sailing.

Repenting of his rudeness, Bo then became tender, and had almost persuaded his mother to sail with him. At the last moment, however, she wriggled out of it. Europe might be dull, but Baltimore was worse.

"I am too ill," she declared, "to take an ocean voyage; tell your grandfather I will sail a few months from now."

Her decision not yet to relinquish the pursuit of pleasure in Florence opened the way for the second great calamity of her career. Even if she had reached middle age, her personality was yet appreciated in Europe. With whom could she be companionable in Maryland? Clinging to the company of princes, prime ministers and, ambassadors who might use their power to elevate her absent son, she yielded him to influences that, in a few swift months, were to wreck the ambitions she had nursed since the first stirring of the babe under her heart.

CHAPTER XXV

THE GIRL OF THE FOX HUNT

"Better give up hanging about Old Hickory's doorstep! I'm opposed to his crazy financial schemes—Jackson's not in the habit of granting favors to the opposition!"

The impatience in William Patterson's tone made Jerome uneasy.

"I'll take your advice on that matter," he said importantly. "I resolved—coming over in the coach from Washington—not to return there till Andrew Jackson himself sent for me!"

"Good!" said William Patterson dryly. "Your carriage won't wear ruts in the road to Washington. And I hope you resolved also," the old man exclaimed, "that you'll settle down to your Blackstone and Coke. If you're going to be a gentleman of leisure, there's no need of my trying to offset your scheming mother and save you from a European marriage."

Jerome soothed his grandfather with assurances that in pursuing his ambition to be a diplomat, he had not allowed his studies in law to suffer.

"Haven't you heard," he asked, "what a faithful law clerk I have been? How I've been familiarizing myself with procedure, examining evidence and digesting arguments? I really can't count how many hours I have spent in law libraries."

"If that is so," said William Patterson, "we should see you handling some of our court business soon. Go back to your books, Jerome! It's high time you were beginning to fight that love of ease you inherited from your father. It'll be Patterson grit you'll need to make a success of life in America."

Irritated yet sobered by this advice, Jerome, with a spasm of determination, plunged into his law books. His attention, however, was not so deeply concentrated that he would decline invitations to dance or ride or hunt.

He had fallen easily—too easily, his grandfather thought—into the ways of the young bloods of Baltimore; and could wine, dine, back racehorses and follow the hounds with the most dashing of them.

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One morning Sydney Williams, who was reading law with him, tossed him across desks an invitation to follow the hounds.

"I'd like nothing better," Jerome said quickly. "Perhaps we can scare up that old red that got away from us last week behind Brooklandwood! I have some new hounds—from the best stock of fox-dogs in Virginia. We'll send them after that old red fox and there ought to be others hiding out there. It doesn't seem possible that we've wiped out all those reds we imported from England!"

"Well, red fox or gray fox," said Williams, "we'll set the horn blowing and the pack running. Meet me at Belvedere at sunrise. There'll be a dozen of us!"

Out the turnpike at dawn the next morning Jerome galloped. It was to be an informal hunt: no smartly clad gentlemen, no master of hounds, no grooms following with second horses. There might be ladies, but if so they would be good horsewomen, not driving in smart carriages to the meet, but instead mounted on spirited horses, prepared to follow wherever man led, or perhaps even to show him the way.

As Jerome approached the rendezvous, misty figures hallooed to him. A girl was riding beside Sydney Williams, but before he could be introduced, a fox was sighted and the baying hounds were off in pursuit of him over the frosty fields along a brook fringed with bare alders. The fox, a big red one, suddenly broke covert in a brown field farther on. The party scattered, the hunting cry rang out, and Jerome was away on his own hook after the tenacious hounds, swearing to be in at the death if he had to ride to nightfall to do it.

Over corn fallows and rough pastures; through green pinewoods or thin, leaf-carpeted woodlands; past plantations

where laborers leaned over the fences to point the direction the fox took, young Bonaparte followed the music of the straggling hounds. The sky lightened, the blue swelling hills became perceptible. Was there ever a country more beautiful—a sport so fine?

"The dogs are streaking through yonder wood!" a farmer cried to him. "Cross that fence and you'll be in the thick of it! I know where that old fox is making for!"

A girl came up the hill behind him. As Bo urged his bay to a leap, she put spurs to her mare. A crash, a tangling of hoofs with fence rails. The girl was tossed out of her saddle while her mare fell and rolled over.

Jerome urged his horse through the gap, leapt off, and lifted the girl's head.

She was conscious—her cry of fear was not for herself but for her horse.

"The mare's all right," he assured her, "but you must be badly shaken up!"

"Not at all. If Dolly's all right, let's be off. I'm Sue Williams—I suppose you're Mr. Bonaparte—or Patterson?"

"What splendid pluck!" Jerome murmured, as the farmer led up the mare.

The chase had gone on; the hounds were baying in a thicket a mile away. The man and the girl galloped together to where a half-dozen hounds had brought the hunt to a finish.

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To the Williamses' for dinner went Jerome. Chilled by the ride, a snug feeling of being at home came to him as he sat before a spacious brick fireplace and watched across the glinting andirons great oak-logs blazing merrily and throwing an amber glow on the wainscoted walls. The well-trained negroes, the furniture gathered from London, Dublin, Paris and Rome, the bounteous table, and the ease and graciousness of the family, told him he was among his kind.

Because the girl had forbidden it, he made no reference to the accident.

"I want to hunt again," she had cautioned Jerome, "and if Mother hears of my fall, I'm doomed to knit while Brother rides!"

"In which case," said Jerome, "permit me to hold the thread!"

"Not you," she laughed. "One bay from the pack would make you a deserter!"

When, on the hunting-field, Sue Williams's mass of turbulent chestnut hair had rested in the crook of his arms; when, in lifting her, he had gazed between her long lashes into eyes beautiful in their alarm; when his glance had darted down and then fled from the sight of the tumultuous ivory her disordered dress revealed, Jerome's heart had been strangely stirred.

There had been girls in Cambridge, Florence, Rome—virginal creatures awakening to romance or experienced coquettes lured by the fresh beauty of youth—but for none of them had his blood pounded so furiously or his impulses surrendered. It may have been that there on the field her danger and helplessness, appealing to the protective spirit of the male, had whipped his passion; it may have been that he had met for the first time a girl who combined the graces of her sex with an almost masculine love of sport; whatever reason, though he calmed his pulses and talked to her coolly, he knew that he had surrendered—that his spirit, melted by sudden flame, would leap into any mold she prepared.

Her indifference to name and station, however, amazed him. His display of fine manners, acquired in the courts of Europe, left her singularly unimpressed. The girl's independence was not feigned. Warned by her women folk that the Bonapartes were fickle—a sad lot when it came to fidelity in love; cautioned that Jerome's mother had highfaluting notions and would despise her son's bride if her birthplace were Baltimore, she early in the friendship secretly resolved not to surrender to manners that smacked of Old World courts.

The very quality that Elizabeth Bonaparte would have ridiculed in her—her passion for her town, state, country—moved her to behave with an unbending dignity that, whether or not provincial, baffled the young man suspected of Europeanism, and lashed him to the conquest.

Added to the attraction of this flashing spirit were other qualities: Sue had been well educated; could dance, ride, coquet

and manage a household; could provoke him to wrath and in the next moment innocently display such allurements as a court siren might covet. It can easily be fancied why our girl-shy young man suddenly found himself head over heels in love.

How deliciously tantalizing she was! For instance: "My mother writes," he gossiped, "that Louisa Caton has made a great match—a handsome young English duke."

"I wish her joy with him," Susan said coolly. "One thing is certain, I'll never worry my mother to send me title-hunting."

"Almost," he said in vexation, "I wish I hadn't taken the name Bonaparte!"

"In truth," she retorted, "I like Patterson much better!"

His ambition to be appointed secretary of a legation aroused in her no enthusiasm.

"Rather an idle, luxurious life, isn't it?" she queried.

"Well," he hesitated, "you do have to attend teas and balls, be courteous to old bores, and nice to dowdy dowagers."

"And you fancy that kind of career? You must be on pins and needles to get back to Europe!"

"No such thing," he said hotly. "I hate Europe! I was bored to death in Rome and Florence. Even Paris failed to attract me. There's proof of it in my letters to Grandfather! I wouldn't live permanently abroad if I were given an empire. I'm just as loyal an American as you!"

It was fascinating then to see her melt; to catch a glimpse of hitherto unrevealed capacities for tenderness; to see her grow contrite, even if she were, the next instant, mocking.

"Forgive me, Jerome, but you must admit that your conversation and conduct is that of a prince touring America, rather than that of a citizen."

Through the drawing-rooms of Baltimore ran a strange rumor. Young Bonaparte, almost as great a catch as his father before him, had been won by a girl who had never been considered a possibility.

"Imagine Elizabeth Patterson learning the news!" said Mrs. Mansfield to her group. "There she is in Paris, pulling the strings to bring Jerome back to Europe to marry some stupid duchess, and he losing his heart to an obscure American chit of whom she has never heard."

"And they say she's not at all impressed with his name and family and has really given him no encouragement. I'd write to his mother about it, if I were not afraid it would bring her home by the next boat in time to shatter the courtship. That wouldn't do at all. If fate is preparing to revenge us for all the slights Madame Bonaparte has put upon us, why should we stand in the way! I hope Jerome does marry Sue—he could do far worse!"

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A snowfall brought the lover a sudden opportunity of which he made the most. It was in the traditions of his family that his father and mother had gone sleigh-riding through the streets of Baltimore. Sue and he revived the tradition.

As she cuddled down beside him in the roomy sleigh, behind the jingling, gayly-caparisoned horses, how near she seemed to him and yet—how infinitely distant!

Under the thick bearskin robes he could have circled her little waist with his free arm, if only he had courage. He had an impulse to do it whether or no, but fear that she would exile him forever held him in check. And still—how inviting were her eyes; how caressing her tone! Plague take it—would he ever understand women?

"Really, Jerome," Sue told him one night when the season was at its dizziest height, "you must let me retire, and gather my wits, and make my Christmas presents, and help with the puddings and cookies. Please stay away for a fortnight—then, if you come out during Christmas week, I'll reward you with syllabub and fruit-cake."

A new experience—to be told to stay home. He planned to call on Nancy; to take Lydia to the opera, to invite Corinne to a dance. "If they tell Sue," he said aloud to the stars, "I won't care a damn!"

But, instead, several evenings during the fortnight he mounted Spitfire and rode out past the Williams estate, pausing under the shadowing trees at the big gate, watching for a graceful figure to flit by the window, thinly lighted by candle-flame—a tall, furtive watcher, a banished angel peering into Paradise.

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Christmas week came at a snail's pace but gave him small chance for a tête-à-tête. The Williams place seemed to him to overflow with young men, devouring all sorts of cake and gulping glasses of egg-nog till they staggered.

Yet, at last, when he had persistently sat the last caller out, and seen the last member of her family go candle-lighted to bed, there came the moment for which he had agonizingly contrived. But a new obstacle had risen in Sue herself. How could he break down the barriers she seemed determined to erect between them?

The presents had been examined. The last bit of gossip had been threshed.

"Dear me," she said, hiding with a pretty hand a pretty mouth opening in a yawn, "it'll soon be time to take these decorations down."

Her eyes wandered about the room, but her gaze did not go sharply aloof to take in the huge mistletoe spray her brother had brought in and hung with a jest that was not for Jerome's ears.

"Up at Cambridge," said Bo, "I never saw mistletoe hung."

"Nor in Europe?"

"I promised not to speak of the Old World. Well, since you asked, I guess they hang it in England—because the Druids once worshiped it there, didn't they?"

"I'm willing to take your word for it," she teased; "you're the oracle on affairs abroad."

"Sue!"

"What, Mr. Bonaparte!"

"Damn Mr. Bonaparte! Stop plaguing me!"

"Why, Jerome! What language! And on New Year's night, too!"

The girl, in a fierce, feigned protest, had risen.

He went toward her. She confronted him rigidly. He seized her, bent her backward until her eyes revealed to him their longing, then, with the fierce hunger of young love, he kissed her. Her body relaxed deliciously; wholly yielding she lay in his arms. When she spoke her protest was consent:

"'Twasn't fair—I wasn't under the mistletoe!"

And so began a sweet truce between America and Europe.

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William Patterson had been out late that evening. Jerome and he met on the doorstep. Ezekiel brought them a bottle of port.

The old man looked shrewdly at his grandson. The young man's bright eyes and flushed cheeks reminded him of the earlier Jerome—that feverish, unrestrained wooer of Betsy.

"You've been out to the Williamses', I suppose. I'm hearing rumors, my boy, but they haven't alarmed me. The Williams are fine people."

"Grandfather," Jerome burst out, "it's settled! I asked Sue tonight—we're betrothed! No matter what match Mother plans for me abroad, it'll be squelched. I'm going to marry Sue before Mother can interfere."

"Bully for you!" cried William Patterson.

He lifted his glass, while in the background dark Ezekiel beamed and squirmed under the weight of great news he wanted to pour out to Clo and Dinah.

"A toast to the bride-to-be! God bless her!"

The two drank solemnly.

"You've taken a course I heartily approve—one that I'll defend to the last ditch against your mother!" the old man avowed. "If you've made up your mind to be a thorough American, that's the way to start—with a wife whose ambitions are centered in this country. Now that you've cut the apron-strings, count on us all to help you keep them severed."

He paused and frowned.

"You're sure of yourself, boy? You're certain this is not merely an infatuation? There's been enough light-o'-loves in your family!"

Suddenly wrath flashed in Jerome's eyes. The candelabra clashed as he banged his fist on the table.

"My love for Sue," he said, "goes to bedrock. I'm amazed at her power over me. I've felt that way for months. I'll feel that way a life-time!"

His grandfather, highly pleased, lifted another glass.

"From all I've heard, the girl merits all the affection you can give her. A good-looking, sensible, accomplished little person—one who appreciates her home and country. No one can say a word against that family, and there's plenty of wealth in it.

"You don't need to be warned that your mother will rage and call her a nobody, a designing piece. Oh, yes, we can count upon Betsy to write us letters that will scorch our fingers, and set fire to our hearts. But, as you say, 'twill be too late. You let me be the one to send her the news—I'll time my letter to her so that she'll receive it too late to take action. Make sure 'twill bring down perdition upon our heads, but before the thunderbolt strikes the knot will have been tied. . . . By Godfrey, boy, nothing you could do could give me so much pleasure! Damn Betsy's royal notions—this will bring her down to earth!"

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So, with as much swiftness as was consistent with dignity, the preparations for the marriage went on. In the hours in which Sue eluded him, Jerome wrote letters to his father, his grandmother and his cousins.

Replies came promptly.

His father, though he chided him because he had not notified him of his intention to become engaged, yet sent "his paternal blessing and wishes for your happiness."

"My dear Nephew," Uncle Joseph delphically wrote from Bordentown, "your grandfather has seemed to me to be a man of great sense, and much consideration and deference in a matter which he believes will be for your advantage. You ought yourself, by this time, to know where you may hope for the most success and happiness."

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The wedding of Jerome was scarcely less brilliant than that of his father and mother. Madame Mère, who had approved and then withdrawn the elder Jerome's marriage to an American girl, sent her unrestrained blessing. Christine sent a letter that, as he read it privately, brought tears to his eyes. Princess Charlotte, for whom he had once been intended, sent congratulations and good wishes. Only one bitter thought dulled Jerome's enjoyment of the gentlemen's punch-drinking which followed the ceremony: no blessing had come from his mother.

The pair were united at the Williamses' residence on North Charles Street. The Archbishop of Baltimore, the Most Reverend James Whitfield, performed the ceremony. Among Jerome's groomsmen was Pierce Butler, the husband of Fanny Kemble. The French Consul, with the same smooth phrases one of his predecessors had used at the marriage of

Betsy, felicitated the bride and groom.

CHAPTER XXVI

FRUSTRATION

Betsy, blissfully ignorant of Jerome's lovemaking, was still in Florence. Her visits to England, since her sister-in-law's marriage, had been somewhat awkward. She felt that there she was on the fringe of society—she had no relish to be merely a star in London's Bohemia. Paris, too, had palled a little. The friends she had made there had left the city or had died or grown old. It was a bore to talk to old people even if you yourself weren't as young as you used to be.

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More and more had it been forced on her, however, that her glorious horizon was dwindling—her brilliant career was waning.

Prince Demidoff had died. No longer could she ride to balls and salons in his fine carriage behind fine horses. He, one of the wealthiest noblemen in Europe, was one of the few she could go with often without risking her reputation. There were always other brilliant and witty women in the company of the Russian prince, and—on the moral side—she had found safety in numbers.

"I am losing my best friends, and acquiring none to take their place," Betsy lamented.

Playing the rôle of the first of American feminists, Betsy had found herself defeated by her sex. "A single woman traveling in Europe," she had confided to Lady Morgan, "is exposed to much disagreeable comment." With her unusual intelligence and attractiveness, she yearned always to be in the center of things; to be intimate with men of talent. Yet the more she traveled, the more had the truth been driven home that intimate, lasting friendships with men, based on the intellectual alone, were impossible.

If her morals had been less rigid, if she had chosen to follow the example of the beautiful and frail ladies of English courts and French salons, she might have spent her time continually in the company of royalty, noblemen and wits, instead of suffering the boredom of a lonely life in family hotels. But, for all of her temptations, for all of her acquaintance with the brilliant and lovely women who were content to sacrifice their reputations to enjoy the company of great men, she remained to the last as severely aloof from intrigues and affairs as if she were living aunt-guarded in her father's house. She had liberated herself from the opinion of her own townsmen—she could not free herself from her own code.

To Lady Morgan she had made a full revelation of her disillusionments; when her son had joined her, she tried vainly to hide them; in writing to her father, she wore ever the mask, filling almost every letter with enthusiastic accounts of brilliant soirées, receptions and entertainments she attended, at which, in an atmosphere unflinchingly enchanting, she met princes, duchesses, celebrities in literature, music and science, whose company made her life one of infinite zest and ever-increasing pleasure.

When, irritated at such messages, her lonely old father had grumbled at her frivolity, she had retorted:

"I think it quite as rational to go to balls and dinners as to get children, which people must do in Baltimore to kill time. I should prefer a child of mine going to court and dancing every evening in the week in good company, to his or her marrying beggars and bringing children into the world to deplore their existence."

While she was writing home so alluringly of her career, one person alone saw the other side of her life—the side she kept masked from American eyes.

"Oh! my dear Lady Morgan," she confessed, "I have been in such a state of melancholy, that I wished myself dead a thousand times—all my philosophy, all my courage, are insufficient sometimes to support the inexpressible *ennui* of existence, and in those moments of wretchedness I have no human being to whom I can complain. What do you think of a person advising me to turn Methodist the other day, when I expressed just the hundredth part of the misery I felt? I find no one can comprehend my feelings. What shall I do with these long mornings?"

Once Lady Morgan, wondering at the absence of patriotism in her friend's composition, teasingly suggested a voyage to America.

"Go home, my dear," she said, "and discover with Châteaubriand the wonders of your own country. I've a notion that if I went there I would find a far more appealing country than you've described."

"How I wish you would return with me!" cried Betsy. "You could make *any* country interesting you wrote about. Still, however, would I protest that it is the region of *ennui*. You have a great deal of imagination, but it can give you no idea of the mode of existence inflicted on us in America. The men are all merchants; and commerce, although it may fill the purse, clogs the brain. Beyond their counting-houses they possess not a single idea; they never visit except when they wish to marry. The women are all occupied in the details of the household and in nursing children; these are useful occupations; but they do not render people agreeable to their neighbors.

"Do you recall the description Madame de Staël gives of the subjects of conversation at Lady Edgerman's table—in England—which were limited to births, marriages and deaths? It was just so in Baltimore. My opinion of the three topics has long been decided. It is a misery to be born, and marriage is a painful experience that does not lessen one's dread of death.

"Should I go back to Baltimore," she went on, "I would be condemned to solitude—for I would find my own solitary company less insupportable than the dull reunions to which I might be asked. To embroider and read would be the only distractions open to me."

"But, surely," said Lady Morgan, "there is one eligible man in Baltimore who is not a tradesman?"

"If there is, he is already married, be sure of that," Betsy retorted. She thought of James Randolph and was silent for a moment. Then she added: "I will admit that my family has tried to persuade me to accept *very respectable* offers; but I prefer remaining as I am to the horror of marrying a person to whom I am indifferent."

The loss of her friends sharpened her regret that she had permitted Jerome to return home. "President Jackson is not doing anything for him," she complained. "Bo would advance his fortunes quicker here." She thought of returning to America and bringing him back to Europe with her.

"I shall not need to fear loneliness if he marries into a European family," she said to herself. "I will bring him to Florence next winter and persuade the Grand Duke to present him at court. It is of the utmost importance that he frequent society. Lady Rutland is eager to present him to English society. How foolish of me to allow him to waste a year in Baltimore!"

A maid handed her a letter with a Baltimore postmark; the handwriting was that of her father.

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Her prolonged unearthly screaming brought friends and servants rushing to Betsy. She was babbling in English.

Catching Jerome's name, a servant cried to another: "Poor madame, her handsome son is dead!"

She caught the words.

"Yes, he is dead! Dead to me! Dead to this splendid world for which I had fitted him! A social suicide. Engaged, perhaps married, to Susan Williams—a Baltimore nonentity—and he might have occupied a throne!"

The hysterical Madame Bonaparte was put to bed. For hours she raved. When her fury exhausted itself, she called for sailing schedules, but renewed her hysterics when she found that none of the boats scheduled would land her in America before a date mentioned in her father's letter.

The Princess Galitzin flew to console her.

"Princess, save me from going mad!" wailed Betsy. "My son—"

"The poor lad—the smallpox?"

"No—marriage—to a girl of Baltimore!"

"Oh, my poor Elizabeth!"

"There, there!" the Princess later remarked in a vain endeavor to console. "It was quite impossible to make the young man like yourself. If he can endure the mode of life and the people in the wilderness of America, it is better to let him follow his own course!"

"You know," sobbed Betsy, "that I have done my duty in trying to elevate his ideas above marrying in America. It was impossible for me to bend my talents and ambitions to the obscure destiny of a Baltimore housekeeper. I think I would have committed suicide rather than pass my life in that trading town. But Jerome has shown himself to lack my pride, my ambition, my utter abhorrence to vulgar company! I hope my father and my son can reconcile their conscience to the way they have treated me! What a conspiracy—they are hurrying the marriage to prevent my breaking it off!"

* * * * *

For months Elizabeth Bonaparte gave vent to her outraged feelings, repeating in her letters home her ravings to her friends.

"This marriage must, as you all knew, separate me from my son. It must, as you all foresaw, be to me during life a source of deep affliction and burning shame. My son by his *birth* was a much greater person than I have become by marriage, therefore he had to stoop much lower than I should have done if any sordid consideration could ever have induced me to forget the respect I owe to my place in society. It would be folly for me to starve myself any longer for a child whose conduct has convinced both the public and myself of the disregard in which he holds me."

Yet, for all the frenzy in her conversation and writings, there would creep now and then a calm, shrewd note:

"As the woman has money, I shall not try to break a marriage which I would never have *advised*. There is no one in America on an equality with my son, but, since she has money, I shall not oppose it. They ought to settle on him, in case of her death, half of her fortune at least. I hope most ardently she will have no children; but, as nothing happens which I desire, I do not flatter myself with an accomplishment of my wish on this subject."

As an antidote, the outraged Betsy became a spender.

"The miserly way in which I have been obliged to live," she declared, "has been a handicap I could have spared myself. I was willing to deprive myself that my son could be educated for a career in Europe. But now I shall live up to my income and make as good an appearance as I can in the world."

Vigorously she demanded that her gems, laces and "black lace dress" be shipped to her in care of the American Minister at Paris.

Suddenly she blazed out in jewels.

"They are my one joy, my one extravagance," she said to her fascinated circle.

Her emerald ring and cross, diamond garter-ring, garnet cross and pearls and topazes, she had made into a magnificent ornament for her head.

Presented at the Tuscan court, with her well-preserved beauty set off by a short-sleeved black velvet dress, and with this flashing head ornament so contrived to serve for the head, the neck and the waist, she boasted: "If I had been crowned queen I couldn't have worn handsomer jewelry."

"But," a listener ventured, "I shouldn't think the white topazes would be in harmony with the rest?"

"Harmony!" came the retort. "No one thought them topazes—they were meant to be mistaken for diamonds. I wore them as a necklace and in a belt-buckle. No one has them in Europe—they are found in the Brazils. You needn't appear so shocked at the thought of my wearing imitation diamonds. I gave some to the Princess Borghese and she wore them with delight. They gave us an economical elegance."

One object alone gave her comfort—Le Loup, her dog. That aristocratic animal conquered socially along with his mistress. Great ladies admired him and bade him good day. Miss Fabri once sent him an invitation to a large evening party, to which his mistress escorted him.

Later, forced to leave him in her father's care, Betsy sent the old man in every letter minute directions for his care:

"There have been persons bitten by mad dogs here this Summer. I have felt uneasy about Le Loup, as possibly they may neglect to keep him out of the sun, and to give him plenty of water with a roll of brimstone in it—a precaution taken here by the ladies, who all keep dogs."

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In her heartfelt wish that Jerome's wife should bear him no children, Betsy, as she had expected, was soon disappointed.

In January, 1831, King Jerome wrote to congratulate his son on becoming the father of a male child, born November 5, 1830.

"I send," he said, "my blessing to him and also to yourself, and love to think that one day I may be able to fold him in my arms. Greet him and your wife for me."

The same announcement was sent to Elizabeth, but brought no response.

William Patterson, with a premonition of his own passing, worrying over the estrangement resulting from his part in Bo's marriage, sent at last to his wilful daughter an urgent appeal to return, saying: "Sweet home and the natural intercourse and connection with our family is, after all, the only chance of happiness in this world."

He closed with a more practical plea: "Your presence here is absolutely necessary to look after your affairs and property."

Betsy's reply showed no softening: "My spirits have been severely tried by a marriage, begun against my approbation, and conducted in all its stages with the most open and decided contempt of my sentiments. I have been treated as if I had been a maniac or a wretch convicted of some infamous crime. I can never forget the treatment I have been made to experience in the conduct of this marriage. It is a recollection which will haunt me through life, and prevent my ever knowing an hour of happiness. I hope your conscience will not reproach you for your conduct, which has been even more unnatural than that of my son. I have not been able to write to the latter about his marriage. Since it took place, the subject always brings on the most dreadful feelings, and makes me ill for days."

Yet despite these scolding letters, Betsy was gradually yielding to her father's desire that she return home. At last honest with herself, she realized that her career had come almost to a close in Europe. The disaster of her son's marriage had given what seemed the final blow to her dream empire. Most of her influential friends were dead or scattered. She saw nothing ahead of her but a career in miserable hotels. Then, too, there was also looming up in her thought, as contrast to her dull condition, the splendor of the Catons, who looked down on her from the crests of English society.

Betsy herself was now living in the so-called "palace" of the Count and Countess Arrighetti, who, for all their grand style, yet "*hired*" rooms to the American woman.

"I keep a carriage by the month," she had written to friends, "which has become indispensable to the preservation of my health. The infirmities of age have not spared me, which I find in my inability to walk as I did formerly or sit up late unless I refresh myself during the day by country air and exercise in a carriage."

In contrast to this sham splendor, was her sister-in-law's grand mode of living.

Lady Wellesley had indeed become a great lady and it was bitter for Betsy to have Mary Caton inviting mutual friends to be entertained at the Viceregal court at Dublin—one of the few circles in which Elizabeth Patterson had never been given a chance to sparkle.

In the face of this gloomy prospect, Betsy decided, for a time at least, to quit Europe. Perhaps on a later visit her castle of dreams might blaze again.

And so, after an absence of nine years, Madame Bonaparte returned, bringing enough finery—including twelve bonnets—to last her, she hoped, "as long as she lived."

She found it, after all, not unendurable to have an American girl for a daughter-in-law. The heart that had been fortified against Bo's wife, yielded in some measure to the mother of his son.

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Betsy had been back in Baltimore scarcely a year when her father died. In spite of her lifelong disobedience, her mourning was heart-felt. Then, from the grave, he exacted punishment. It was almost as sharp a blow as the news of her son's marriage when, as she sat in that group of expectant survivors, she heard the family lawyer read this attack upon her in her father's astonishing will and testament:

"The conduct of my daughter Betsy has through life been so disobedient that in no instance has she ever consulted my opinions and feelings; indeed, she has caused me more anxiety and trouble than all of my children put together, and her folly and misconduct have occasioned me a train of expense that first and last has cost me much money. Under such circumstances it would not be reasonable, just or proper that she should inherit and participate in an equal proportion with my other children in an equal division of my estate; considering, however, the weakness of human nature and that she is still my daughter, it is my will and pleasure to provide for her as follows, viz.: I give and devise to my said daughter Betsy, first, the house and lot on the east side of South Street, where she was born, and which is now occupied by Mr. Duncan, the shoemaker. Secondly, the houses and lots on the corner of Market Street bridge, now occupied by Mr. Tully, the chairmaker, and Mr. Priestly, the cabinetmaker. Thirdly, the three new adjoining brick houses and the one on the corner of Market and Frederick Streets. Fourthly, two new brick houses and lots on Gay Street, near Griffith's bridge; for and during the term of the natural life of my said daughter Betsy; and after her death I give, devise and bequeath the same to my grandson, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte."

Rage drove out grief. Thereafter, the dead man was referred to as "my unnatural parent."

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Her real estate agent feared her calls as much as she in her childhood feared the Presbyterian catechism:

"Has Mr. R—— vacated my granite front house? When will Mr. F—— succeed him in that house? The first was a good tenant—I am sorry to lose him. I hope you have done as well in Mr. F——. Has Mr. W—— paid you the rent due me? Is it true that Mr. P—— has sublet my Frederick Street house to a vender of artificial flowers? And now, please, give me a complete statement of how payments are being made on my ground-rents!"

Her son, Betsy had learned, while economical and systematic, had as little taste for business as his father. Thrown upon her own resources by her father's death, she freed him from responsibility and managed her affairs herself.

In a black velvet bonnet with orange-colored feathers, and with a red umbrella which, for the balance of her life she never went without, Betsy went about the town she despised, profiting by its expansion, yet grudging to recognize that along with its quiet industry a feeling for beauty was struggling to find expression.

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At war with the world, her heart softened only to her promising grandson.

"Tell me a story, Grandmother," Jerome lisped, when his father brought him to visit her.

Looking into the child's frightened eyes she saw the twice-thwarted dream again awaken. In this lad was a new prince, a potential emperor.

"I've got a better story for you than Dick Whittington and his cat," she said, catching him up. "Come, I'll tell you about your granduncle, the Emperor, and how he conquered Europe and made kings tremble. And remember, child, you bear his name—Bonaparte. You will be proud of that some day. It will bring you great honor."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SECOND EMPIRE

Louis-Philippe, descendant of a brother of Louis XIV, has become King of France. The fear of a restoration of the Bonaparte dynasty has died away. Lamartine, French Envoy to the grand ducal court at Florence, sends to Madame Bonaparte word that King Jerome has been allowed to return with his family to France, and has been promised a yearly pension of one hundred thousand francs.

"Also," adds the romanticist-diplomat, "the Prince Napoleon, your son's half-brother, has been elected to the Assembly!"

"The only thing that interests me in that news," Betsy dryly remarked, "is the matter of the one hundred thousand francs. Perhaps now he can afford to give an allowance to his first-born."

But the year 1848 brought the thunderbolt of the French Revolution and Prince Louis Napoleon, the adventurer of Strasburg and Boulogne, was by an overpowering majority elected President and Emperor of the French Republic.

The prospect again became dazzling; again Betsy's spirits soared; her hopes of grandeur and empire revived. The Bonaparte dynasty had been restored. Her son was friendly with his cousin Louis. Had not Jerome met him while visiting his father? When Prince Louis had been temporarily exiled to the United States, had not Jerome invited Louis to visit him, and would he not have been his host had not the Prince been recalled by the illness of Hortense, his mother? There must be favors to be got for the asking. Her retiring son must be prodded to take steps to clear a way that would bring him closer to the succession.

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Betsy gave Jerome no peace night or day.

"Send to Prince Louis our most ardent hopes for his empire," she urged. "The Bonapartes are no longer a proscribed family in France. It is time for you to demand of the French Republic your rights as the eldest son of King Jerome!"

Jerome's wife combated Betsy's arguments until the conflict wearied her.

"You swore to me once," Susan said to Jerome, "that you had put Europe out of your dreams forever. I suppose if you get a French throne, I'll be left over here to look after the estate, while you, Bourbon style, will be a squire of dames. What fools men become in middle age! However, I know I'll never hear the end of it from your mother if I thwart you, so go forth on the proverbial Bonapartean wild goose chase. When the madness is out of your blood, come home."

Jerome hesitated, wrote to friends in France, weighed the answers he received, and sailed with his mother for Europe, making this voyage in one of Mr. Cunard's newly invented steam paddle-boats.

His half-brother Napoleon, vastly important now as a member of the Assembly, was chillingly formal in his greeting. Princess Mathilde, Jerome's half-sister, was the only one of his relatives who greeted him now without restraint. Her help, however, could not go far.

"My father's wishes are opposed to yours," she warned him. "He vows he will never consent to your being recognized as an heir to the French throne."

King Jerome deliberately shunned his American son, who noted that the King, as unofficial adviser, was hovering in the background of Prince Louis, and that as such was busy promoting the fortunes of himself and his son Napoleon.

If Jerome got little encouragement from his half-sister, he was rewarded for his visit to her by meeting in her house a pretty Spaniard, destined to be an important person in his cousin's court.

"Who is she?" he inquired concerning a girl lovely of face and graceful of figure strolling in Mathilde's garden.

"That is Mademoiselle Eugénie de Montijo, a beautiful Andalusian—Louis Napoleon has been her companion in the chase and is smitten."

And so Jerome, when he joined his mother, had an amusing tale to tell.

"Louis Napoleon," he gossiped, "is in love with a Spanish girl named Eugénie—a ravishing creature! He has confessed his love to my father.

"'Yes,' King Jerome is said to have responded, 'it is quite natural and proper to love Mademoiselle de Montijo, but of course one cannot marry her.'"

"Ah, how time changes your father's views!" Betsy jeered.

"Yet," said Jerome, "it was whispered among the guests that the lovely Eugénie will never be a candidate for the place Miss Howard occupies in the amorous attentions of the Emperor. Eugénie is said to have avowed 'that the only way to her bedroom is through a church.'"

"There," laughed Betsy, "is a girl after my own heart. I must contrive to meet Mademoiselle de Montijo. France will soon need an Empress and an heir. We may see the shrewd Eugénie crowned, even if King Jerome does disapprove of our presence."

The Emperor, a few weeks later, formally announced the betrothal.

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Meanwhile, the American Jerome had dined with the Emperor at St. Cloud and had received encouragement in his desire to be considered a legitimate child of France—the first step to greater honors.

"Your father," said the Emperor, "tells me he will never consent to your living in France. I answered him that, if the laws of France recognized you as a legitimate son, I cannot do otherwise than recognize you as a kinsman, and that if your residence in Paris is embarrassing, you alone are to be the judge of that."

Disappointment awaited Betsy; though her son was duly declared a French citizen, there came an imperial family council in which Jerome's father and half-brother made the appeal that Jerome Patterson should be forbidden from assuming the name Bonaparte, "which did not legally belong to him."

The verdict, while it brought the star of Betsy and her son once more to the attention of the universe, supplied also its veil. It was that the descendants of Madame Elizabeth Patterson were entitled to the name Bonaparte, but the right to succeed to the throne of France was denied them. Prince Louis Napoleon, generous as he had appeared in his talk with his American cousin, endorsed the judgment.

"As I was born legitimate," the American Jerome protested, stung by the implication in the verdict that his mother was unmarried, "as I have always been recognized as such by my family, by the laws of every country and by the entire world, it would be the height of cowardice and dishonor to accept a brevet of bastardy. If the family council has rendered an illegal and unjust decision, at least it has been stopped by the impossibility of depriving a man of the name which he has borne from his birth to the age of fifty years without its ever being contested."

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Four years pass. King Jerome is dead. He leaves an autographed will appointing Prince Napoleon, the son born of his second marriage, his sole legatee, and confirming the marriage portion of his daughter, Princess Mathilde. His first-born son is not mentioned in the testament.

When, through Jerome, the mother appealed to the French Court for a share of her husband's estate, the eloquent advocate M. Berryer made a plea in her behalf that reëchoed through the courts and salons of Europe. Again was told the story of the romantic marriage of Elizabeth Patterson and Jerome Bonaparte, brother of the First Consul; of her abandonment and repudiation; of her wealthy and honored family; of how the great Jefferson, friend of liberty, had been her advocate.

Subtly aligned, however, against Jerome and his mother was the fear that recognition of their rights by the French Court would admit them to membership in the imperial family and complicate the claim to succession. While Europe sympathized, the court denied the claim.

If the validity of Elizabeth Patterson's marriage had been recognized by the Court of France, it would have established

her son's precedence over King Jerome's children by his second wife. Thus close came the tenacious Betsy to realizing her apparently foolish ambition to see her son, a Patterson, occupy the Tuileries as Prince President.

"Old Mrs. Patterson," as the Bonapartes now called her, continued to watch the pageant of France as a hawk watches. She saw Emperor Louis Napoleon join with England in the Franco-British expedition to the Crimea; watched the expedition to Italy against Austria; the disastrous expedition to Mexico; the beginning of the Franco-Prussian war. Tremendously thrilled and expectant, she saw the Emperor and 80,000 men made prisoners at Sedan; saw Louis Napoleon deposed by Paris; saw the Third Republic begin; saw all these events as stepping-stones that were bringing her second champion, her grandson Jerome, to the throne of France.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

The Patterson drama of careless childhood guarded by ardently ambitious age unfolded once more. Betsy noted with thrilled delight that her grandson—the third Jerome—was far more responsive to her tales of the Napoleonic era than her son had been—and far more dazzled by the promises she held out to him of eminence in Europe, because he bore a magic name.

Finding the boy so ambitious, the soil so receptive, she determined to devote her remaining years to obtaining for him the place her son, by his marriage, rejected.

There would be, she predicted, many political changes in France during the coming years. The honors that had escaped her son were now beckoning, she dreamed, to her no less attractive grandson. She vowed to dedicate her fortune to the elevation of Jerome the third.

To serve this undying passion for vicarious power, she studiously economized. "The greater wealth Jerome lives to inherit," she said to herself, "the greater will be his chances for the crown." Amassing more than a million dollars, she kept it in securities and mortgages so that it could be converted into cash in thirty days.

They were saying now that Betsy was "eccentric." The laughable extreme to which she went in preparing to finance the future Emperor came when, on a visit to Paris, she sent her largest hatbox home as a gift to the youthful Jerome. When he opened it he found that it was filled with loaf sugar. A note he found among the sugar-lumps explained that they had been collected from the trays sent to her room with her tea and coffee.

Susan watched with malicious enjoyment her ambitious son's amazed receipt of the gift.

"I hope," she said, "there will be as much sweetness in the royal French dish she is cooking for you!"

Ridicule had been an effective weapon for Susan against her husband, but it failed entirely against the sublime confidence of the third Jerome that he had been chosen to fill the seven-league boots of the founder of the Bonaparte dynasty.

It was Betsy who had advised that Jerome be educated at West Point. It was she who had first advocated, after he had served a brief period in the United States Army, that he resign and enter a French regiment. With a pride she had never been able to take in her unwarlike son, she had received in 1853 the news of her grandson's appointment to a regiment of French rifles.

"I wish you to appear," she said to him with the air of one officiating at a coronation, "in a manner befitting your birth, as the grandson of a king. I shall pay for your equipment and you shall have sufficient money to live as befits your high rank!"

Off then sailed soldier-of-fortune Jerome, a devil-may-care young stripling—handsome, clever, ambitious—apparently deserving his grandmother's praise:

"A true Bonaparte."

"Rest assured, Grandmother," he promised her, "that I will lose no chance to distinguish myself in France. If the French demand courage and enterprise as proof of Bonaparte blood, I shall not be lacking in those qualities!"

"Bravo!" she cried. "I stake my all upon you!"

From the very first he fulfilled her proud predictions. In a few months his zeal and bravery had impressed itself upon the French mind—upon which remained no impress of similar gallantry by his father or grandfather. News that set Betsy frantic with joy told of honors the third Jerome had won in the Crimea; of endeavors by the leaders of France to quench this star that seemed to be rising with Napoleonic brilliancy.

Again Betsy exulted. After the fall of Sebastopol and the triumphal return of the troops to Paris, came tidings that the Emperor had sent for her grandson and offered him the title of Prince de Montfort, which his grandfather had assumed

after the battle of Waterloo, when he retired from the Court of Württemberg and went into exile. With the title was offered an allowance of \$20,000 a year.

"Of course," Jerome wrote, "the Emperor's object was to obscure my family name. I refused the title and the money. I told him I had been born and baptized Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, and that Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte I would remain till my dying day."

"He has the mind as well as the heart of Napoleon!" exclaimed Betsy.

Susan doubted the wisdom of her boy's course. "If he means to pursue a European career," she said, "why shouldn't he let France pay for it, rather than draw on your income or mine?"

"And lose his right to the kingship! Be submerged under a title and forgotten by the French people! I expected some offer like that when it was announced that the Sultan had decorated for valor Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte! Your son has all the qualities that endear a ruler to the popular heart. He is strikingly handsome, suave in manners, highly intelligent, bears a strong resemblance to their idol, the first Napoleon, and is a brave and daring soldier. No wonder the Emperor seeks to hide him from the public gaze! It is proof of Jerome's qualities of leadership that he declined the offer!"

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The year 1870. Jerome Bonaparte the second lay dying of cancer, but his mother's hopes splendidly survived him. Had not her grandson Jerome gained eminence in France? Her second grandson, Charles Joseph Bonaparte, whom later Roosevelt was to appoint Secretary of the Navy, was twenty years younger than his brother Jerome and was removed by his youth from the fierce play of her ambitions.

So prominent and popular a figure was the third Jerome that at Sedan a rivalry had flared up between himself and Prince Napoleon, King Jerome's heir. The Prince had gone so far as to object to his American relative being in the army and appearing before the enemy under the forbidden name of "Bonaparte," and had petitioned the Minister of War to request the Emperor to change the third Jerome's family name from Bonaparte to Patterson by an imperial decree. Catching a rumor of Prince Napoleon's petition, Jerome telegraphed the Emperor that such a decree would force him to resign on the eve of battle.

The Empress Eugénie hated Prince Napoleon and admired his American rival. She championed Jerome's cause vigorously and the movement came to naught.

"That was fine of Eugénie," Betsy told her companion, "but it was no more than her duty. . . . It is easy to see why Prince Napoleon is jealous. He is as unpopular with the people of France as our boy is popular. The Prince's hasty retreat from the Crimean War when cholera broke out in the ranks set all France against him—he was jeered at by both army and nation!"

There was truth in her bitter words. Losing thus the confidence of the people, the Prince had unwittingly given the American Jerome the right—if a republic did not loom up—to be a foremost candidate for the succession, second only to the Prince Imperial, son of Eugénie.

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The gay and gallant third Jerome was now in Paris—in charge of the depot of the Dragons de l'Imperatrice quartered at the Champ de Mars. Eugénie, his friend, invited him often to St. Cloud, where he chatted with the weary, sad-eyed Emperor, played with Eugénie's pet monkey, or sat by the side of the Empress, hearing her plan what gown she should wear at some brilliant party. The presence at the palace of his cousin, Princess Caroline Murat, born at Bordentown three years after his own birth, and playmate of his childhood, made life thrilling and colorful for the American soldier.

"Bismarck is maneuvering us into a war," Jerome said to Caroline, whose closeness to Eugénie was of immense aid to the young man in maintaining a place in court circles. "We can't have Prussia extending herself beyond the Pyrénées—and Bismarck knows the Emperor will meet his challenge."

"France is in for hard times," Caroline said. "Eugénie has been telling me how, through Metternich and Nigra, she hoped to induce Austria and Italy to join arms with France against Prussia, but it seems that we shall fight alone."

The streets of Paris, a few weeks later, were filled with men shouting "*A Berlin!*" while the *Marseillaise*, banned for eighteen years, was being furiously sung.

War had come—the Emperor with the Prince Imperial was leaving St. Cloud for the front. Jerome, bidden to stay home, fretted as he saw Emperor Louis taking leave of Eugénie, and as he watched Eugénie draw the sign of the cross on her boy's forehead.

"Why won't the Emperor permit me to share his fortunes? No one is more loyal!" Jerome, in a frenzy, cried to Princess Caroline.

"Because, my dear boy," she whispered, "you have won too many military honors. I see it all: if our army is not victorious, the French people will demand a new President or Emperor. Who is the most logical successor to Louis? Who should be kept from having a chance to further distinguish himself? Who—but you!"

In August came news of the disaster of Worth—then of Gravelotte. The Emperor's commanders had advised him to concentrate his troops around Paris.

"If you are at the Tuileries," they entreated, "the Empire may yet be saved!"

Dispatches reached Paris from Metz announcing the Emperor's intention of returning. Thereupon, the Empress Eugénie and the Cabinet sent indignant telegrams to the Emperor, saying that his return would be an admission of defeat.

"The feeling in the capital will be so strong against you," the Empress cautioned, "that you will not reach the Tuileries alive."

Jerome, knowing that Von Moltke was succeeding in his attempt to lock the ineffectual Emperor and his army in Metz, pleaded with Eugénie to call the Emperor back to Paris.

"Those whose interest it is to keep the Emperor away are deceiving you," he said. "Do not send those dispatches. Let me go to escort the Emperor back to the Tuileries; I will answer for his safety with my own life!"

"This is not a matter in which you can help me!" Eugénie rebuffed him.

To her husband she wrote again: "If you leave the Army, all Paris will say you fled from the dangers of war. Do you forget that Prince Napoleon has never lived down the rash act he committed in returning from the Crimea?"

Jerome, for consolation, sought Caroline. He found none.

"General Trochu," she told him, "has been made Governor of Paris. Have you not heard that you are to be relieved as the Empress's guard? He has changed the troops guarding the palace!"

"He is a traitor!" said Jerome. "A tool of the Emperor's political foes."

Together they went to Eugénie.

"Madame," Jerome cried, "you are virtually a prisoner in your own palace. I entreat you to order at once the return of your dragoons!"

"I am safe with General Trochu," she assured him. "Has he not sworn to protect me? Have I not confided myself to his honor?"

"If you will not listen, madame," said Jerome in despair, "prepare for a revolution in Paris!"

Came the climax of the news: the Emperor had sent a white flag through the streets of Sedan, and had capitulated to the King of Prussia.

And so Jerome found himself tossed hither and thither in a crowd clamoring for the fall of the Empire, for a proclamation banishing Napoleon III and his family.

The Empress, aware at last of Trochu's treachery, fled to England with the Prince Imperial.

Jerome remained in Paris eating black bread, enduring the privations of the siege. When he joined Princess Caroline

later in London, he confessed that he had been forced to dine on her St. Bernard dogs.

"As for rats," he added grimly, "we came to consider them food far more delicate than young chickens. Every animal in the parks and museums was eaten—I have dined on cats, wolves and peacocks!"

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Meanwhile, his grandmother sat surrounded by European journals. As she awaited tidings of the bright warrior in whom reposed her entire hopes, she swung between hope and despair.

"I doze away existence," she said. "I am too old to coquet and without this stimulant I die with *ennui*. I am tired of life and tired of having lived. It is a bore to grow old, yet one event—the selection by France of my grandson—can make me young again!"

News came at last—Jerome was free. Perplexing dispatches followed: he was sailing for New York.

"I can't see the wisdom of that," Betsy fretted. "In France, politics change overnight. A soldier today may be an emperor tomorrow. Jerome is the likeliest candidate, if not for Emperor, for President of the Republic. In this crisis he should stay as close as possible to the center of things. Yet I will not doubt his shrewdness. He is coming, make sure, on a diplomatic mission that will endear him still more to the French people. His will only be a brief visit."

"If he cares to go back to his black bread and rat fare," said Susan, "no one will oppose him!"

It was Susan who went to New York to meet Jerome. Betsy, almost bedridden, waited feverishly their coming to her door.

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Susan returned alone.

Her mother-in-law glared at her. "Where is my grandson—Prince Bonaparte!"

Susan's quiet answer was devastating.

"Jerome," she said slowly, "is engaged, and is tarrying in New York with his sweetheart!"

"Engaged? . . . Engaged?"

Betsy's hawk-like eyes probed Susan's soul. Misconstruing the gloom of this woman who was her opposite in all things, she imagined that she refused to talk because the prospect of a titled daughter-in-law had awed her.

The old woman's sere cheeks burned. Her eyes glowed with unnatural brilliancy. She reached out trembling withered fingers, as if to receive a gift long desired.

"Who is she? There were no newspaper reports of a princess sailing for America. What is her title and fortune? Why did he not write us from London about it?"

"He was not willing then to acknowledge it—he was forced to admit it when he reached New York."

The flame flickered in Betsy's eyes. The vitality seemed to go out of her frame.

"Not willing to acknowledge it? You can't mean he has been a fool like—" she stopped, and began again. "You can't mean, with a throne in his grasp, he has made a match of which he is ashamed?"

"Judge for yourself," said Susan, too sorrowful to be malicious. "Jerome was met in New York by two brothers of Mrs. Newbolt Edgar, a rich young American widow who lived in Paris while he was there. Her brothers, at her urging, chose to consider her entitled to become the Princess Jerome Bonaparte. My son, confronted by their demands and evidence, admitted that he had paid her attention—and that, during the war, through the medium of a Prussian officer, certain fervent letters had passed between them. He must feel that he has a responsibility, because the talk ended in his announcing his engagement."

Castles were toppling and thrones were crashing around Betsy. A lifelong dream of splendor was quenched in an instant.

When she spoke it was with a pathetic quaver that made Susan's heart ache for her.

"God, am I thwarted again—with so little time left? Will the curse of America never cease to shadow my life? Who would have imagined that Jerome—a potential Napoleon—should have permitted himself—with a throne and an empire in sight—to be trapped by an impudent, designing American woman?

"I have failed in my teaching. I must have dwelt too much on Napoleon's military genius and neglected to show how craftily he dealt with women. When did he ever permit a lovely toy to become his master? The Emperor's treatment of me—ruthless as I thought it at the time—showed that he knew how to keep woman from interfering with his destiny. Well did he say 'a ruler's heart should be in his head.'"

Susan, moved by Betsy's agony, embraced the hard old woman.

"It is all over," Betsy sobbed on her shoulder. "What will the French people say of the man who in war showed the qualities of the first Napoleon, and, in his hours of dalliance, became the dupe and victim of an ambitious woman of no rank? It is not the French way—they will have none of him! All my life I have tried to live down the fact that I am an American, all my life I have cherished a noble name so that my son or grandson might be chosen by the French for high stations, and here this fool in one rash moment undoes my life's work, and sells for second-hand caresses his chances for a crown!"

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Despite the vehement protests of his grandmother, Colonel Jerome Bonaparte married and brought home Mrs. Newbolt Edgar. The reporter of the Baltimore *Sun* who covered the affair of Baltimore Society described her as a "remarkably prepossessing lady." While old Madame Bonaparte remained aloof from the pair, brooding upon her tragedy in her plain rooms on the fourth story of a boarding-house on the corner of St. Paul and Lexington Streets, the captured Colonel established his wife—let us hope that her brothers had faded from the background—in an elegant residence on North Charles Street. There, among lackeys attired in drab cloth togs with scarlet waistcoats, she reigned in an atmosphere of quiet royalty, not offended when addressed as "Princess Bonaparte," and taking satisfaction in driving about town—past the boarding-house of her husband's grandmother—in a shining carriage that bore on its doors in silver the Bonaparte coat-of-arms.

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The deposed Emperor, Louis Napoleon had died. The Prince Imperial was not yet of age. Dispatches appeared in the New York *Herald* and Baltimore *Sun* indicating that there might be a restoration of the empire by making the Empress Eugénie regent. It was also said that the French were distrustful of the alien-born Eugénie, and would demand as co-regent, one of their own race—probably a Bonaparte.

"Jerome hears regularly from the Princess Mathilde," Susan told the lonely alert old woman in the Charles Street boarding-house. "She thinks Jerome will be called back to France—despite his American encumbrance!"

Betsy permitted her hope to revive.

"For all Jerome has done to prevent," she breathed, "I may yet live to see him on the throne of France! I hope he leaves that woman in America. Tell him that when that day comes, my fortune will be at his disposal. Neither ingratitude nor foolish conduct on his part can make me swerve from my duty to back him whom France calls."

* * * * *

Thus everlastingly tantalized by ambition, Elizabeth Patterson died, with her unfulfilled career lacking seven years of the century-mark.

Death, reaping a century, had swept from the field of human affairs emperors, marshals and kingdoms. Yet he had delayed to the last in claiming this proud, persistent woman.

It was as if the Extinguisher, watching with sympathy her defiant soul struggling to achieve her magnificent ambitions, had willed to allow her the utmost span in which to conquer tantalizing yet obdurate Fate.

As she lay amazingly at rest among her trunks and carpet-bags filled with jewels and ancient finery—as if her journey

through the corridors of death was to bring her to a splendid kingdom where she would again flutter radiantly in her cherished dresses and gems—it seemed to the watchers that their memories of her grew vital and audible. It was as if a haughty, bright phantom darted among the treasure-chests; as if the unconquerable Betsy was thus exhibiting her trophies:

"This is my husband's wedding-coat; here is the dress given me by the Princess Borghese on my first visit to Rome; this gown I wore when I was presented at the court of Tuscany, and this one I wore at the Pitti Palace the day I met Jerome walking with his German wife; in this one I met Napoleon's mother. Here is a cabinet portrait of myself painted by Massot at Geneva, and this is the portrait of me made by Rinson. These are letters my husband wrote me, and this is a portrait of King Jerome I will leave to one of my grandsons. Here is a picture of Napoleon—given me by Madame Mère.

"Yes, the Emperor dealt hardly with me, but I long ago forgave him. Did he not say of me to Marshal Bertrand at St. Helena: 'Those whom I have wronged have forgiven me; those I have loaded with kindness have forsaken me.' Ah, Napoleon, I have not let my grandsons forget that their grand-uncle was 'the Emperor.'"

THE END

Transcriber's Note

- Obvious spelling errors repaired.
- "candlelight", "candle-lights", "candle-lighted", "candle-lighting" left as printed.
- "granduncle", "grand-uncle" left as printed.
- "heartbroken", "heart-broken" left as printed.
- "heartfelt", "heart-felt" left as printed.
- Pg [104](#) "quaratine" changed to "quarantine".
- Pg [280](#) "ontrast" changed to "contrast" located in "ontrast to cosmopolitan".
- Removed extraneous book title "THE GOLDEN BEES".

[The end of *The Golden Bees* by Daniel Henderson]