

remained unquenchable, set above its mean surroundings, — ay, and untouched by them. I was filled with a painful curiosity to know what had become of her, which I repressed. Auguste's voice aroused me.

"Ah, Monsieur, is it not a face to love, to adore?"

"It is a face to obey," I answered, with some heat, and with more truth than I knew.

"*Mon Dieu*, Monsieur, it is so. It is that mek me love — you know not how. You know not what love is, Monsieur Reetchie, you never love laik me. You have not sem risson. Monsieur," he continued, leaning forward and putting his hand on my knee, "I think she love me — I am not sure. I should not be surprise'. But Monsieur le Marquis, her father, he trit me ver' bad. Monsieur le Marquis is guillotine' now, I mus' not spik evil of him, but he marry her to one ol' *garçon*, Le Vicomte d'Ivry-le-Tour."

"So Mademoiselle is married," I said after a pause.

"*Oui*, she is Madame la Vicomtesse now; I fall at her feet jus' the sem. I hear of her once at Bel Oeil, the château of Monsieur le Prince de Ligne in Flander'. After that they go I know not where. They are exile', — los' to me." He sighed, and held out the miniature to me. "Monsieur, I esk you favor. Will you be as kin' and keep it for me again?"

I have wondered many times since why I did not refuse. Suffice it to say that I took it. And Auguste's face lighted up.

"I am a thousan' times gret'ful," he cried; and added, as though with an afterthought, "Monsieur, would you be so kin' as to borrow me fif' dollars?"

CHAPTER IV

OF A SUDDEN RESOLUTION

It was nearly morning when I fell asleep in my chair, from sheer exhaustion, for the day before had been a hard one, even for me. I awoke with a start, and sat for some minutes trying to collect my scattered senses. The sun streamed in at my open door, the birds hopped on the lawn, and the various sounds of the bustling life of the little town came to me from beyond. Suddenly, with a glimmering of the mad events of the night, I stood up, walked uncertainly into the back room, and stared at the bed.

It was empty. I went back into the outer room; my eye wandered from the shattered whiskey bottle, which was still on the floor, to the table littered with Mrs. Temple's letters. And there, in the midst of them, lay a note addressed with my name in a big, unformed hand. I opened it mechanically.

"Dear Davy," — so it ran, — "I have gone away, I cannot tell you where. Some day I will come back and you will forgive me. God bless you! NICK."

He had gone away! To New Orleans? I had long ceased trying to account for Nick's actions, but the more I reflected, the more incredible it seemed to me that he should have gone there, of all places. And yet I had had it from Clark's own lips (indiscreet enough now!) that Nick and St. Gré were to prepare the way for an insurrection there. My thoughts ran on to other possibilities; would he see his mother? But he had no reason to know that Mrs. Temple was still in New Orleans. Then my glance fell on her letters, lying open on the table. Had he

read them? I put this down as improbable, for he was a man who held strictly to a point of honor.

And then there was Antoinette de St. Gré! I ceased to conjecture here, dashed some water in my eyes, pulled myself together, and, seizing my hat, hurried out into the street. I made a sufficiently indecorous figure as I ran towards the water-side, barely nodding to my acquaintances on the way. It was a fresh morning, a river breeze stirred the waters of the Bear Grass, and as I stood, scanning the line of boats there, I heard footsteps behind me. I turned to confront a little man with grizzled, chestnut eyebrows. He was none other than the Citizen Gignoux.

"You tek ze air, Monsieur Reetchie?" said he. "You look for some one, yes? You git up too late see him off."

I made a swift resolve never to quibble with this man.

"So Mr. Temple has gone to New Orleans with the Sieur de St. Gré," I said.

Citizen Gignoux laid a fat finger on one side of his great nose. The nose was red and shiny, I remember, and glistened in the sunlight.

"Ah," said he, "'tis no use tryin' hide from you. However, Monsieur Reetchie, you are the ver' soul of honor. And then your frien'! I know you not betray the Sieur de St. Gré. He is ver' fon' of you."

"Betray!" I exclaimed; "there is no question of betrayal. As far as I can see, your plans are carried on openly, with a fine contempt for the Federal government."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"'Tis not my doin'," he said, "but I am—what you call it?—a cipher. Sierecy is what I believe. But drink too much, talk too much—is it not so, Monsieur? And if Monsieur le Baron de Carondelet, ze governor, hear they are in New Orleans, I think they go to Havana or Brazil." He smiled, but perhaps the expression of my face caused him to sober abruptly. "It is necessair for the cause. We must have good Revolution in Louisiane."

A suspicion of this man came over me, for a childlike simplicity characterized the other ringleaders in this expedition. Clark had had acumen once, and lost it; St. Gré

was a fool; Nick Temple was leading purposely a reckless life; the Citizens Sullivan and Depeau had, to say the least, a limited knowledge of affairs. All of these were responding more or less sincerely to the cry of the people of Kentucky (every day more passionate) that something be done about Louisiana. But Gignoux seemed of a different feather. Moreover, he had been too shrewd to deny what Colonel Clark would have denied in a soberer moment,—that St. Gré and Nick had gone to New Orleans.

"You not spik, Monsieur. You not think they have success. You are not Federalist, no, for I hear you march las' night with your frien',—I hear you wave torch."

"You make it your business to hear a great deal, Monsieur Gignoux," I retorted, my temper slipping a little.

He hastened to apologize.

"*Mille pardons*, Monsieur," he said; "I see you are Federalist—but drunk. Is it not so? Monsieur, you tink this ver' silly thing—this expedition."

"Whatever I think, Monsieur," I answered, "I am a friend of General Clark's."

"An enemy of ze cause?" he put in.

"Monsieur," I said, "if President Washington and General Wayne do not think it worth while to interfere with your plans, neither do I."

I left him abruptly, and went back to my long-delayed affairs with a heavy heart. The more I thought, the more criminally foolish Nick's journey seemed to me. However puerile the undertaking, De Lemos at Natchez and Carondelet at New Orleans had not the reputation of sleeping at their posts, and their hatred for Americans was well known. I sought General Clark, but he had gone to Knob Licks, and in my anxiety I lay awake at night, tossing in my bed.

One evening, perhaps four days after Nick's departure, I went into the common room of the tavern, and there I was surprised to see an old friend. His square, saffron face was just the same, his little jet eyes snapped as brightly as ever, his hair—which was swept high above his forehead and tied in an eelskin behind—was as black as when I had seen it at Kaskaskia. I had met Monsieur

Vigo many times since, for he was a familiar figure amongst the towns of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and from Vincennes to Anse à la Graisse, and even to New Orleans. His reputation as a financier was greater than ever. He was talking to my friend, Mr. Marshall, but he rose when he saw me, with a beaming smile.

"Ha, it is Davy," he cried, "but not the sem lil drummer boy who would not come into my store. Reech lawyer now, — I hear you make much money now, Davy."

"Congress money?" I said.

Monsieur Vigo threw out his hands, and laughed exactly as he had done in his log store at Kaskaskia.

"Congress have never repay me one sou," said Monsieur Vigo, making a face. "I have try — I have talk — I have represent — it is no good. Davy, it is your fault. You tell me tek dat money. You call dat finance?"

"David," said Mr. Marshall, sharply, "what the devil is this I hear of your carrying a torch in a Jacobin procession?"

"You may put it down to liquor, Mr. Marshall," I answered.

"Then you must have had a cask, egad," said Mr. Marshall, "for I never saw you drunk."

I laughed.

"I shall not attempt to explain it, sir," I answered.

"You must not allow your drum to drag you into bad company again," said he, and resumed his conversation. As I suspected, it was a vigorous condemnation of General Clark and his new expedition. I expressed my belief that the government did not regard it seriously, and would forbid the enterprise at the proper time.

"You are right, sir," said Mr. Marshall, bringing down his fist on the table. "I have private advices from Philadelphia that the President's consideration for Governor Shelby is worn out, and that he will issue a proclamation within the next few days warning all citizens at their peril from any connection with the pirates."

I laughed.

"As a matter of fact, Mr. Marshall," said I, "Citizen

Genêt has been liberal with nothing except commissions, and they have neither money nor men."

"The rascals have all left town," said Mr. Marshall. "Citizen Quartermaster Depeau, their local financier, has gone back to his store at Knob Licks. The Sieur de St. Gré and a Mr. Temple, as doubtless you know, have gone to New Orleans. And the most mysterious and therefore the most dangerous of the lot, Citizen Gignoux, has vanished like an evil spirit. It is commonly supposed that he, too, has gone down the river. You may see him, Vigo," said Mr. Marshall, turning to the trader; "he is a little man with a big nose and grizzled chestnut eyebrows."

"Ah, I know a lil 'bout him," said Monsieur Vigo; "he was on my boat two days ago, asking me questions."

"The devil he was!" said Mr. Marshall.

I had another disquieting night, and by the morning I had made up my mind. The sun was glinting on the placid waters of the river when I made my way down to the bank, to a great ten-oared keel boat that lay on the Bear Grass, with its square sail furled. An awning was stretched over the deck, and at a walnut table covered with papers sat Monsieur Vigo, smoking his morning pipe.

"Davy," said he, "you have come *à la bonne heure*. At ten I depart for New Orleans." He sighed. "It is so long voyage," he added, "and so lonely one. Sometime I have the good fortune to pick up a companion, but not to-day."

"Do you want me to go with you?" I said.

He looked at me incredulously.

"I should be delighted," he said, "but you mek a jest."

"I was never more serious in my life," I answered, "for I have business in New Orleans. I shall be ready."

"Ha," cried Monsieur Vigo, hospitably, "I shall be enchant. We will talk philosophe, Beaumarchais, Voltaire, Rousseau."

For Monsieur Vigo was a great reader, and we had often indulged in conversation which (we flattered ourselves) had a literary turn.

I spent the remaining hours arranging with a young lawyer of my acquaintance to look after my business, and at

ten o'clock I was aboard the keel boat with my small baggage. At eleven, Monsieur Vigo and I were talking "*philosophe*" over a wonderful breakfast under the awning, as we dropped down between the forest-lined shores of the Ohio. My host travelled in luxury, and we ate the Creole dishes, which his cook prepared, with silver forks which he kept in a great chest in the cabin.

You who read this may feel something of my impatience to get to New Orleans, and hence I shall not give a long account of the journey. What a contrast it was to that which Nick and I had taken five years before in Monsieur Gratiot's fur boat! Like all successful Creole traders, Monsieur Vigo had a wonderful knack of getting on with the Indians, and often when we tied up of a night the chief men of a tribe would come down to greet him. We slipped southward on the great, yellow river which parted the wilderness, with its sucks and eddies and green islands, every one of which Monsieur knew, and I saw again the flocks of water-fowl and herons in procession, and hawks and vultures wheeling in their search. Sometimes a favorable wind sprang up, and we hoisted the sail. We passed the Walnut Hills, the *Nogales*, the moans of the alligators broke our sleep by night, and at length we came to Natchez, ruled over now by that watch-dog of the Spanish King, Gayoso de Lemos. Thanks to Monsieur Vigo, his manners were charming and his hospitality gracious, and there was no trouble whatever about my passport.

Our progress was slow when we came at last to the belvedere plantation houses amongst the orange groves; and as we sat on the wide galleries in the summer nights, we heard all the latest gossip of the capital of Louisiana. The river was low; there was an ominous quality in the heat which had its effect, indeed, upon me, and made the old Creoles shake their heads and mutter a word with a terrible meaning. New Orleans was a cesspool, said the enlightened. The Baron de Carondelet, indefatigable man, aimed at digging a canal to relieve the city of its filth, but this would be the year when it was most needed, and it was not dug. Yes, Monsieur le Baron was energy

itself. That other fever — the political one — he had scotched. "*Ça Ira*" and "*La Marseillaise*" had been sung in the theatres, but not often, for the Baron had sent the alcaldes to shut them up. Certain gentlemen of French ancestry had gone to languish in the Morro at Havana. Yes, Monsieur de Carondelet, though fat, was on horseback before dawn, New Orleans was fortified as it never had been before, the militia organized, real cannon were on the ramparts which could shoot at a pinch.

Sub rosa, I found much sympathy among the planters with the Rights of Man. What had become, they asked, of the expedition of Citizen General Clark preparing in the North? They may have sighed secretly when I painted it in its true colors, but they loved peace, these planters. Strangely enough, the name of Auguste de St. Gré never crossed their lips, and I got no trace of him or Nick at any of these places. Was it possible that they might not have come to New Orleans after all?

Through the days, when the sun beat upon the awning with a tropical fierceness, when Monsieur Vigo abandoned himself to his siestas, I thought. It was perhaps characteristic of me that I waited nearly three weeks to confide in my old friend the purpose of my journey to New Orleans. It was not because I could not trust him that I held my tongue, but because I sought some way of separating the more intimate story of Nick's mother and his affair with Antoinette de St. Gré from the rest of the story. But Monsieur Vigo was a man of importance in Louisiana, and I reflected that a time might come when I should need his help. One evening, when we were tied up under the oaks of a bayou, I told him. There emanated from Monsieur Vigo a sympathy which few men possess, and this I felt strongly as he listened, breaking his silence only at long intervals to ask a question. It was a still night, I remember, of great beauty, with a wisp of a moon hanging over the forest line, the air heavy with odors and vibrant with a thousand insect tones.

"And what you do, Davy?" he said at length.

"I must find my cousin and St. Gré before they have a

chance to get into much mischief," I answered. "If they have already made a noise, I thought of going to the Baron de Carondelet and telling him what I know of the expedition. He will understand what St. Gré is, and I will explain that Mr. Temple's reckless love of adventure is at the bottom of his share in the matter."

"*Bon, Davy,*" said my host, "if you go, I go with you. But I believe ze Baron think Morro good place for them jus' the sem. Ze Baron has been make *misérable* with Jacobins. But I go with you if you go."

He discoursed for some time upon the quality of the St. Grés, their public services, and before he went to sleep he made the very just remark that there was a flaw in every string of beads. As for me, I went down into the cabin, surreptitiously lighted a candle, and drew from my pocket that piece of ivory which had so strangely come into my possession once more. The face upon it had haunted me since I had first beheld it. The miniature was wrapped now in a silk handkerchief which Polly Ann had bought for me in Lexington. Shall I confess it? — I had carefully rubbed off the discolorations on the ivory at the back, and the picture lacked now only the gold setting. As for the face, I had a kind of consolation from it. I seemed to draw of its strength when I was tired, of its courage when I faltered. And, during those four days of indecision in Louisville, it seemed to say to me in words that I could not evade or forget, "Go to New Orleans." It was a sentiment — foolish, if you please — which I could not resist. Nay, which I did not try to resist, for I had little enough of it in my life. What did it matter? I should never see Madame la Vicomtesse d'Ivry-le-Tour.

She was Hélène to me; and the artist had caught the strength of her soul in her clear-cut face, in the eyes that flashed with wit and courage, — eyes that seemed to look with scorn upon what was mean in the world and untrue, with pity on the weak. Here was one who might have governed a province and still have been a woman, one who had taken into exile the best of safeguards against misfortune, — humor and an indomitable spirit.

CHAPTER V

THE HOUSE OF THE HONEYCOMBED TILES

As long as I live I shall never forget that Sunday morning of my second arrival at New Orleans. A saffron heat-haze hung over the river and the city, robbed alike from the yellow waters of the one and the pestilent moisture of the other. It would have been strange indeed if this capital of Louisiana, brought hither to a swamp from the sands of Biloxi many years ago by the energetic Bienville, were not visited from time to time by the scourge!

Again I saw the green villas on the outskirts, the verdure-dotted expanse of roofs of the city behind the levee bank, the line of Kentucky boats, keel boats and barges which brought our own resistless commerce hither in the teeth of royal mandates. Farther out, and tugging fretfully in the yellow current, were the aliens of the blue seas, high-hulled, their tracery of masts and spars shimmering in the heat: a full-rigged ocean packet from Spain, a barque and brigantine from the West Indies, a rakish slaver from Africa with her water-line dry, discharged but yesterday of a teeming horror of freight. I looked again upon the familiar rows of trees which shaded the gravelled promenades where Nick had first seen Antoinette. Then we were under it, for the river was low, and the dingy-uniformed officer was bowing over our passports beneath the awning. We walked ashore, Monsieur Vigo and I, and we joined a staring group of keel boatmen and rivermen under the willows.

Below us, the white shell walks of the Place d'Armes were thronged with gayly dressed people. Over their heads rose the fine new Cathedral, built by the munificence of Don Andreas Almonaster, and beside that the many-