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# ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE

By the Author of ‘Redwood’

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‘La Nature fait le mérite,

La Fortune le met en preuve.’

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Many fortunate travellers on the western border of Massachusetts, and not many miles from the Hudson, have been refreshed at the inn of Reliance Reynolds. Reliance, as his name indicates, was born in the good old times. We are aware that the enthusiasts about the ‘progress of the age,’ deny this golden period any but a retrospective existence, and maintain that, retrace the steps of the human family far as you will, it is like the age of chivalry, always a little behind you. But we adhere to the popular phraseology and call those, ‘good old times,’ when the Puritanical nomenclature prevailed; when such modest graces as faith and temperance had not been expelled from our taverns, kitchens, and workshops, by the heroes and heroines of romance – the Orlandos and Lorenzos, Rosamonds and Anna Matildas.

Reliance belonged to the ‘good old times,’ too, in the more essential matter of downright honesty, simplicity, and respectful courtesy. His was a rare character in New England – a passive spirit, content to fill and fit the niche nature had prepared for him. It was not very high,

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but he never aspired above it; nor very low, but he never sank below it. He was the marvel of his neighbours, for he could never be persuaded into an enterprise or speculation. He never bought a water privilege, nor an oar bed; subscribed to a county bank, or ‘moved to the West;’ or in any mode indicated that principle in man, which, in its humble operations, its restlessness, in its lofty aspirations, a longing after immortality. Reliance’s desires never passed the bounds of his premises, and were satisfied, even within them, with a very moderate share of power. He stood at his door, his hat in his hand, to receive his guests; he strictly performed the promise of his sign, and gave ‘good entertainment to man and horse;’ he rendered a moderate bill and received his dues with a complacent smile, in which gratitude was properly tempered with a just sense of his own rights. In short, as must be already quite manifest, Reliance, though a pattern landlord, is a very poor subject for a storyteller; his qualities, like the color in a ray of light, all bending and forming one hue, and his life, presenting the same monotonous harmony.

We should not have forced him from his happy obscurity into the small degree of notoriety he may incur on our humble page, but for his being the adjunct of his wife, an

important personage in our narrative.

Mrs Reynolds, too, like her husband, performed exactly the duties of her station. She never perhaps read a line of poetry, save such as might lurk in the 'Poet's Corner' of a village paper, but her whole life was an illustration of the oldfashioned couplet –

'Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.'

She never was presidentess of a 'society for ameliorating the conditions of the Jews,' or secretary or treasurer

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of any of those beneficent associations that rescue the latent talents of women from obscurity and *mettrent en scéne* gems and flowers that might otherwise shine and exhale unnoticed and unknown; but though humble was her name and destiny, her memory is dear to the wayfaring. Quiet, order, and neatness, reigned at her bed and board. No pirates harbored in her bedsteads, no bad luck, that evil genius of housewives, curdled her cream, spoiled her butter or her bread, but her table was spread with such simple, wholesome fare as might have lit a smile on the wan visage of an old dispeptic; and this we take to be the greatest achievement of the gastronomic art.

Jenifer Elmore 4/26/2018 11:06 AM
**Comment [1]:** This may be sufficiently well known, but you could consider a note to translate it.

With the duties of life so peacefully and so well performed, our good hostess ought, according to all the rules of happiness, to have been happy; but it is our melancholy duty to confess she was not, and to explain the cause. She had been married many years without having any children; that blessed possession that in transmitting, the parents' existence, seems to extend its bounds, and to render even here, the mortal immortal. In addition to the feeling, common to all women, who naturally crave the sweetest objects for their tenderest and strongest affections, Mrs Reynolds lamented her childless state with a bitterness of repining approaching to that of the Hebrew wives. With everything else in her possession that could inspire contentment, her mind was fixed on this one desired good, and, like Hannah of old, she was still a 'woman of a sorrowful spirit.' She had endeavoured to solace herself with the children of her kindred, and several, from time to time, had been adopted into her family; but some proved disagreeable, and others homesick, and there was always a paramount duty or affection that interfered with her's, till finally her

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almost extinguished hopes were gratified, and Providence gave her a child worthy all her care and love.*[1]

In the autumn of 1777, two travellers arrived just at nightfall at Reynold's inn. Its aspect was inviting; situated in the heart of a fertile valley that had lately been refreshed by the early rains of autumn, and in its bright garb resembling a mature beauty that had happily harmonized some youthful tints with her soberer graces. A sprightly, winding stream gave life and music to the meadows. On every side the landscape was undulating and fertile, but not then as

extensively cultivated as now, when, to the Tauconnuc on the south, and the lofty blue outline of the Catskills on the west, the eye ranges over a rich and enjoyed country. Beside the accidental charm of a pretty landscape, the inn had advantages peculiar to itself. Instead of being placed on the roadside, as most of our taverns are – for what reason we know not, unless a cloud of travellers' dust be typical of a shower of gold to the vision of mine host – Reynold's inn was separated from the highway by a court yard, shaded by two wide spreading elms, and enlivened with a profusion of autumnal flowers, marigolds, cockscombs, and china asters.

There was nothing that indicated any claims to particular civility in the appearance of our travellers. They were well looking and respectably appareled; and, accordingly, having announced their determination to re-

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main for the night, they were shown to an inner room, the parlour, *par excellence*, where Mrs Reynolds appeared, and having opened a door which admitted the balmy air and a view of the western sky, just then brightened by the tints of the setting sun, she received their orders for their supper, and retired without one of those remarks or inquiries by which it is usual, on such occasions to give vent to curiosity. Nothing passed between our travellers in the dull interval that elapsed before their meal was ready, to give to our readers the least clue to their origin or destiny. One of them lulled himself into a doze in the rocking chair, while the other, younger and more active and vivacious, amused himself out of doors, plucking flowers, enraging an old petulant cock turkey, and mocking the scolding of some Guinea hens, the Xantippes of the feathered race.

The interval was not long. The door opened and the tea table was brought in, already spread (a mode we wish others would adopt from our pattern landlady), and spread in a manner to characterize our bountiful country.

What a contrast does the evening meal of our humblest inn present to the leanness of an English tea table! A cornucopia would have been the appropriate symbol for Mrs Reynolds's table. There were beef steaks, and ham and eggs; hot cakes and toast; bread and gingerbread; all the *indigenous* cakes, such as crullers and nutcakes, &c.; honey, sweetmeats, apple sauce, cheese, pickles, and an afterpiece of pies. Kind reader do not condemn our bill of fare as impertinent and vulgar. We put it down to show the sacred political economists, that, with us, instead of the population pressing on the means of subsistence, the means of subsistence presses on the population.

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Our travellers fell to their repast with appetites whetted by a long fast and day's ride. Not a word was spoken, till a little girl, who was sitting on the doorstep caressing a tame pigeon, perceiving that one of the guests had garnished his buttonhole with a bunch of marigolds, plucked a rose from a monthly rose bush, trained over a trellis at the door, and laid it beside his plate. He seemed struck with the modest offering, and, turning with a look of gratitude to the child, he patted her on her head, and exclaimed instinctively, '*Merci, merci, ma petite!*' and then

correcting himself, he said, in very imperfect English, 'I thank you, my little girl.'

The child's attention was fixed by the first word he uttered, and as he addressed his companion in French, her countenance indicated more emotion than would naturally have been excited by the simple circumstance of hearing, for the first time, a foreign language. '*Qu'elle est belle, cette petite,*' he continued, turning to his companion; '*c'est la beauté de mon pays – voilá, brunette, et les yeux, si grands, si noirs, et la tournure aussi – quelle grâce, quelle vivacité! Ah! Monsieur, Monsieur, c'est tout-á-fait Françoise.*' As he proceeded the child advanced nearer to him. She shook back the rich, dark curls that shaded her face, bent her head forward, half parted her bright lips, and listened with the uncertain and eager expression of one who is catching a half remembered tune, the key to a thousand awakening recollections. It was evident that she did not comprehend the purport of the words, and that it was the sound alone to which her delighted ear was stretched.

A smile played about her lips, and tears gathered in her eyes, and there seemed to be a contrariety of emotions, confounding even to herself; but that which finally prevailed was indicated by her throwing her apron over

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her head, and retreating to the doorstep, where she sat down, and for some moments, vainly attempted to stifle her sobs. She had just become tranquil, when Mrs Reynolds entered.

The elder traveller said, in an interrogating tone, 'That is your child, ma'am?'

'I call her mine,' was the brief and not very satisfactory reply.

'She resembles neither you nor your husband,' resumed the traveller.

'No; she does not favor us.'

'I fancied she had a French look.'

'I can't say as to that,' replied the landlady; 'I never saw any French people.'

'My friend here is a Frenchman,' pursued the traveller, 'and the little girl listened to him so intently, that I thought it possible she might understand him.'

'No, I guess she did not sense him,' replied Mrs Reynolds, with an air of indifference; and the turning hastily to the child, 'Mary,' she said, 'there is more company; go and see if our father does not want you.'

She went and did not return. Mrs Reynolds herself removed the table. The elder gentleman sat down to write a letter; while the Frenchman walked to and fro, opened the doors, and peeped in every direction to get a glimpse of the little girl, who seemed to have taken complete possession of his imagination. Once, as she ran through the passage, he called to her,

'*Doucement! doucement! mon petit ange*' – she stopped as if she were glued to the floor. 'How call you your name, my dear?'

'Mary Reynolds, sir.'

'Then *Madame* there, Mistress Reynolds, is your *maman*?'

'She is –

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'Mary, what are you staying for? Here – this instant!' screamed Mrs Reynolds from the kitchen door, in a tone that admitted no delay, and the child ran off without finishing her sentence.

'*C'est bien singulier!*' muttered the Frenchman.

'What do you find so singular, Jaubert?' asked his companion, who had just finished his letter, and thrown down his pen.

'Oh! it is nothing – perhaps – but – '

'"But" what, my friend?'

'Why, there seems to me some mystery about this child; something in her manner, I know not what, that stirs up strange thoughts and hopes in my mind. She is not one of the pale, blond beauties of your climate.'

'Ah! my good friend, we have all sorts of beauties in our clime. All nations, you know, have sent us their contributions. The blue eye and fair skin, the Saxon traits, certainly prevail in our Eastern States; but you know we border on New York, the asylum of the dark eyed Huguenots, and it is not impossible that to this child may have been transmitted the peculiarities of some French ancestor. Nothing is more common than a resemblance between a descendant and a far off progenitor.'

'Ah! it is not only the French, the Norman aspect, the – do not ridicule me – the Angely traits that attract me; but you yourself noticed how she listened to my language, and then this Mistress Reynolds does not say she is her child, but only she *calls* her so.'

'Pshaw! Is that all? It is the way of my country people, Jaubert; their indirectness is proverbial. If one of them were to say "yes" or "no," you might suspect some deep mystery. I confess I was at first startled with the little girl's emotion, but I soon perceived it was nothing but shame and embarrassment at

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the curiosity she had betrayed. I see how it is Jaubert; fruitless and hopeless as is our search, you

cannot bear to relinquish it, and are looking for some *coup de théâtre* – some sudden transition from disappointment to success.'

We have put into plain English a conversation that was supported in French, and was now broken off by the approach of Mrs Reynolds, who came to tell the travellers their bedrooms were ready. By the light of the candle she brought, discovered Mary, concealed in a corner of the passage close to the door, where, in breathless stillness, she had been listening. 'You here, Mary!' exclaimed the good woman; 'I thought you had been in bed this half hour. You will make me angry with you, Mary, if you do not mind me better that this,' she added in an under tone, and the child stole away, but without looking either very penitent or very fearful; and in truth she had cause for neither penitence nor fear, for she had only gratified an innocent and almost irrepressible inclination, and as to Dame Reynolds's anger, it was never formidable.

The travellers retired to their respective apartments, and while the landlady lingered to adjust her parlour, the letter that had been left on the table caught her eye. Nothing could be more natural than for her to look at the superscription. Painfully she spelt out the first line. '*A Monsieur, Monsieur*' – but when she came to the next, her eye was rivetted, '*St Jean Angely de Crève-Coeur*.' After gazing on it till she had made assurance doubly sure, she was hastening to her husband to participate the discovery with him, when, apparently changing her intentions, she retreated, bolted the door, and returned to the examination of the letter. It was unsealed. Reluctant to open it, she compromised with her conscience, and peeped in at both ends, but the writing was not perceptible, and her interest overcoming

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her scruples, she unfolded the letter. Alas! it was in French. In vain her eye ran over the manuscript to catch some words that might serve as clues to the rest. There was nothing in all three pages she could comprehend, but '*arrivé á New York*' – '*la rivière d'Hudson*' – '*le manoir de Livingston*.'

She was refolding the letter, when the following postscript, inadvertently written in English, caught her eye; 'As we have no encouragement to proceed farther in our search, and Jean and Avenel are all impatience, Jaubert will embark in the Neptune, which is to sail on the first.'

A gleam of pleasure shot across Mrs Reynolds's face, but it soon darkened again with anxiety and perplexity. 'Why did I open the letter?' she asked herself. 'Why did I look at it at all? But nobody will ever know that I have seen it unless I tell it myself; and why should I tell?' A burst of tears concluded this mental interrogation, and proved that, however earnestly her heart might plead before the tribunal of conscience, yet the stern decision of that unerring judge was heard. Self-interest has a hard task when it would mystify the path of one who habitually walks by the clear light of truth straight onward in the path of duty.

It may seem unnatural to the inexperienced, that Mrs Reynolds did not communicate her embarrassment and irresolution, from whatever cause they proceeded, to her husband; but she knew well what would be the result of a consultation; for he, good man, never viewed a subject

but from one position, and we are all slow to ask advice that we foresee will be counter to our wishes.

Mrs Reynolds, so far then from appealing to the constituted authority of her household, locked her discovery within her own bosom, and to avoid all suspicion and inquiry, she composed herself as soon as possible, and

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retired to her bed, but not to sleep; and at peep of dawn, she was up and prepared to obtain all the satisfaction that indirect interrogation could procure from the travellers, and her mental resolution, invigorated by a night's solitary reflection, was to 'act up to her light.'

They had ordered breakfast at a very early hour, and she took care to be the only person in attendance on them. When they were seated at table, she placed herself in a rocking chair behind them, a position that happily reconciles the necessity of service with the dignity of independence, and began her meditated approaches, by saying to her own countryman, 'I believe you left a letter here last night, sir; I laid it in the cupboard for fear of accidents.'

'Thank you, ma'am; I ought to have been more careful. It was a letter of some consequence.'

'Indeed! Well, I was thinking it might be.'

'Ah! what made you think so?'

Now we must premise, that neither of the parties speaking, knew anything of that sensitiveness that starts from a question as if an attack were made on private property; but they possessed, in common, the good-natured communicativeness that is said to characterize the New England people, who, in their colloquial traffic, as in other barter, hold exchange to be no robbery.

Most women are born diplomatists, and Mrs Reynolds took care to reply to the last interrogatory so carefully as not to commit herself. 'It stands to reason,' she said, 'a letter that is to go all the way over the wide sea to the old countries, should be of consequence.'

'Yes – it is a long voyage.'

'You have taken it yourself, perhaps, sir?'

'I have. I went out an officer on board one of our cruisers, and was wrecked on the coast of France.'

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'Of France! Well, we are hand and glove with the French now; but I tell my husband it

seems to me like joining with our enemies against those of our own household.'

'Ah! Mrs Reynolds, "friends are sometimes better than kindred." I am sure my own father's son could not have been kinder to me than was Monsieur Angely de Crève-Coeur – hey, Jaubert?'

'*Ah! vraiment, Monsieur! c'est un bien brave homme, Monsieur St Jean Angely.*'

Jenifer Elmore 4/26/2018 11:06 AM
**Comment [2]:** Anyone who has had any French could probably figure this one out, but people who have had none might not be able to. I think you should add a note to translate it.

'Angely!' said Mrs Reynolds, as if recalling some faded recollection, 'Angely – I think I have heard that name before.'

'It may be. The gentleman I speak of resided some time in this country.'

'But it can't be the same,' replied Mrs Reynolds; 'for the person I speak of lived over in Livingston's *manner*; and kind to strangers he could not be, for he deserted his own flesh and blood, and went off early in the war.'

'It may be the same for all that, and must be. As to deserting his children, "thereby hangs a tale;" but it is a long one.'

'Well, sir, if you have anything to say in his favor, I am bold to say I think you ought to speak it; especially as the gentleman seems to have stood your friend in a cloudy day. The story certainly went sadly against him here.'

'I have not the slightest objection, ma'am, to telling the story, if you have the patience to hear it; especially as I see I must wait till Jaubert has finished two more of your nice fresh eggs – "eggs of an hour," Mrs Reynolds.'

'We always calculate to have fresh eggs, sir. But what was you going to say of Mr Angely?' she added,

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betraying in the tremulous tones of her voice, some emotion more heart stirring than curiosity. Jaubert turned a glance of inquiry on her that was unanswered by the sudden rush of blood to her cheeks; but the narrator proceeded without noticing anything extraordinary. 'It was my good, or ill luck,' he said, – 'and it is the only in the long run we can tell whether luck be good or ill – but it was my luck to be shipwrecked on the coast of Normandy, and good luck it certainly was, Jaubert, in my distress, to make such a port as the Château de Crève-Coeur – the castle, or as we should call should call it here, Mrs Reynolds, the estate of the Angely's. A fine family they are. You may think what a pleasure it was to me to find a gentleman acquainted with my country, and speaking my language as did Mr St Jean Angely. He was kind and affable to me, and always doing something for my pleasure, but I could see he had a heaviness at his heart – that he was often talking of one thing and thinking of another – nothing like so gay as the old gentleman, his father; who was like a fall flower – one of your marigolds, Mrs Reynolds, spreading itself open to every ray of sunshine, as if there were no frosts and winter and death at hand. I felt a pity for

the young man. With everything that heart could desire, and without a heart to enjoy, he seemed to me like a sick man seated at a feast of which he could not taste. The day before I was to have come away, he took me aside, and, after saying that I had won his entire confidence, he disclosed to me the following particulars: –

'He entered the French army early in life, and while yet a hotblooded, inconsiderate youth, he killed a brother officer in a duel, and was obliged to fly to his country. He took refuge in Lisbon. Judgment, I may say mercy, too – in the dealings of Providence, Mrs Reynolds, one is always close on the track of the other – followed

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him thither. Mr Angely found employment in a mercantile house, and was standing writing at his desk at the moment of the terrible earthquake that laid Lisbon in ruins. The timbers of the house in which he was, were pitched in such a manner as to form a sort of arch over his head, on which the falling roof was sustained, and thus he was, as it were, miraculously delivered from danger. From Lisbon he came to this country. "Mechanics," says a Spanish proverb, "make the best pilgrims," but, I am sure, not better than Frenchmen; for cast them where you will, they will get an honest living. Mr Angely came up into Livingston's Manor, and there he took a fancy to a pretty Yankee girl, the only child of a widow, and married her. He earned a subsistence for his family by surveying. The country was new, and skillful surveyors scarce. After a few years his wife died and left him three children.'

'Three!' repeated Mrs Reynolds, involuntarily sighing.

'Yes, poor things! there *were* three of them; too many to be left in these hard times fatherless and motherless.'

'Ah sir! and what must we think of the father that could forsake his little children at such a time?'

'Think no evil, my friend; for Mr Angely did not deserve it. He was employed by Mrs Livingston, early in the war, to go down the river to survey some land near New York. There he was taken by the British as a spy, and, in spite of his remonstrances, sent to England. This was before the French had taken part with us, and he obtained leave to go to France, on giving his parole that he would not return to America. He received a parent's welcome, and affair of the duel being nearly forgotten, a pardon was obtained for him without difficulty. If he could have forgotten his children, he would have been as happy as man could

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be; but his anxiety for them preyed on his health and spirits; and when I arrived at the château, his friends imagined he was sinking under some unknown disease. He had not communicated to his father the fact of his marriage and the existence of his children when I arrived there. The old gentleman, kind hearted and reasonable in the main, has all the prejudices of the nobility in the old countries about birth, and his son was afraid to confess, that he had smuggled an ignoble

little Yankee into the ancient family of the Crève-Coeurs. So good an opportunity as I afforded of communicating with his children, could not be passed by, and he at length summoned courage to tell the truth to his father. At first he was wroth enough, and stormed and vapored; but after a little while his kind nature got the mastery of the blood of the Crève-Coeurs, and he consented to the children being sent for – the boys, at least.'

'Only the boys!' exclaimed Mrs Reynolds, feeling relieved from an insupportable weight.

'Only the boys. But the old gentleman might have as well saved all his credit and sent for the girl too; but that was not his pleasure. Well, Monsieur Jaubert here, a relative and particular friend of the family, came out with me to take charge of the children. We found the boys without much difficulty; two noble little fellows that a king might be proud of. After waiting for some time for Monsieur Angely's return, the overseers of the poor, believing he had abandoned his children, bound them out. The little girl had been removed to some distance from her brothers. We found the place where she had been, but not the family. The husband and wife had quarrelled, and separated, and disappeared; and all the information we could obtain, was a vague story such a child had lived there and had run away; and as nobody in these troublesome times

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can do no more than look after their own children, this poor thing was left to her fate. Hopeless as it appears, Jaubert is not willing to give up our search. He fancies every brunette he sees is the lost Marie, and only last evening he would have persuaded me, that your black eyed little girl might be this stray scion of the Crève-Cœurs.'

Mrs Reynolds rose and left the room, and did not return till she was sufficiently composed to ask, in an assured voice, 'What was their object in looking for the girl, if a father did not mean to reclaim her?'

'He did mean to reclaim and provide for her,' replied the traveller, 'and for that purpose I have ample funds in my hands. He only conceded to the old gentleman her remaining in the country for the present.'

'Had you any direction as to how you were to dispose of her?'

'Yes, positive orders to convey her to Boston, and place her under the guardianship of a French lady who resides there, a friend of Mr Angely—one Madame Adelon.'

'But could you find no trace of the child?'

'Not the slightest.'

'And you have determined to make no further inquiry?'

'Why should we? Inquiry is useless, and would but delay to a tempestuous season, Jaubert's return with the boys.'

Our readers are doubtless sufficiently aware, that the adopted child of our good landlady was the missing child of Monsieur Angely. A few words will be necessary to explain how she

became possessed of her.

Mrs Reynolds and her husband were, two years prior to this period, approaching the close of a winter day's ride. Their sleigh was gliding noiselessly through a dry, new fallen snow, when their attention was arrested by

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the moanings of a child. To stop the horses and search the sufferer from whom the sounds proceeded, was the instinctive impulse of benevolence. They had not gone many yards from the road, when, nestled close to a clump of laurels, they found a little girl, her hands and feet frozen, and nearly insensible. They immediately carried her to the sleigh, and put their horses to their utmost speed; but, as they were none of the fleetest, and the nearest habitation was at several miles distance, a considerable time elapsed before they could obtain the means of restoration, and in consequence of this delay, and of severe previous suffering, it was many weeks before the child recovered. In the mean time, though Mrs Reynold's residence was not more than thirty miles from the place where she had found the child, no inquiry was made for her. The account she gave of herself sufficiently explained this neglect. She said she had no mother; that her father had left home just after the snows melted and the birds came back; that he had left her and her two brothers, Jean and Avenel, with a woman to take care of them; that when this woman had waited a great while for their father, she grew tired and was cross to them, and then she too went away, and left them quite alone. Then she said they had nothing to eat, and she supposed they were the poor, for the men they called the overseers of the poor took her and her brothers, and separated them, and she was carried a great way off to a woman who was very cross to her, and cross to her own children, and her husband was cross too. One night he came home in a great passion, and he began to whip his wife with his big whip, and his wife beat him with the hot shovel, and she, the child, was scared, ran out of the house, and far up into a wood, to get beyond their cries; and when she would have

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returned, the snow was falling, and she could not find the path, and she had wandered about till she was so cold and tired she could go no farther. Her name, she said, was Angely, and she believed her father was called a Frenchman. The only parental relic she possessed confirmed this statement. It was a locket which she wore suspended at her neck. It contained a lock of hair; an armorial crest was engraven on the back, and under it was inscribed, 'St Jean Angely de Crève-Cœur.' This simple story established the conviction, that had been gaining strength in Mrs Reynold's mind, with every day's attendance on the interesting child, that they had been brought together by the special providence of God; and most faithfully did she discharge the maternal duties that she believed had been this miraculously imposed on her. The little girl was on her part happy and delighted, and though she sometimes bitterly lamented her father and brothers, yet, as the impressions of childhood are slight, the recollection of them was almost effaced when the mysterious energies of memory were awakened by the sound of a language that seemed to have been utterly forgotten. These events occurred during the revolutionary war, a period of disaster and distress, when a very diligent search for a friendless child was not likely to be made, and as no inquiry ever reached Mrs Reynold's ear, and as she deemed the foundling an orphan, she had not hesitated to appropriate her. Her name was changed from Marie Angely to Marie Reynolds; and the good woman seemed as secure and happy as any mother, save when she was reminded of the imperfection of her title by the too curious inquiries of the travellers. On these occasions, she

was apt to betray a little irritability, and to veil the truth with a slight evasion, as in the instance which excited the suspicion of our sagacious Frenchman.

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Her condition was now a pitiable one. She had the tenderness, but not the rights of a parent. She was habitually pure and upright; but now she was strongly swayed by her affections. She would have persuaded herself, that the abandonment in which she first found the child, invested her with a paramount claim; but the stranger's story had proved that her father had not voluntarily abandoned her. Then she thought, 'It cannot be for Mary's interest, that I should give her up;' and her mind took a rapid survey of the growing property of which the child was the heir apparent. But she would ask herself, 'What do I know of the fortune of her father?' 'But surely he cannot, he cannot love her as I do.' 'Ah I do not know the feeling of a real parent;' and a burst of tears expressed the sadness of this conviction, and obliged her abruptly to withdraw from the presence of her guests, and leave them amazed at her sudden and violent emotion, while she retired to her own apartment, to implore guidance and support from Heaven. Those who honestly ask for light to point out a way which they would fain to see, and for power to endure a burden from which their nature shrinks, are often themselves astonished at the illumination vouchsafed, and the strength imparted. This was the experience of Mrs Reynolds. She rose from her devotions with the conviction, that but one course remained to her, and with a degree of tranquility, hastened to Mary's bedroom.

Jenifer Elmore 4/26/2018 11:06 AM
**Comment [3]:** Let's check to make sure that comma is in the original.

The child was just risen and dressed. Without any explanation to her—she was at the moment incapable of making any—she tied her locket, her sole credential, around her neck, led her down stairs, and placing her hand in Jaubert's, she said, 'You have found the child!' and then retreated to hide the emotion she could not subdue.

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It was fortunate for her, that she was not compelled to witness the gay demonstration of Jaubert's ecstasies. the graver, but not more equivocal manifestations of his companion's satisfaction, and the amazement and curiosity of the little girl, who was listening to the explanation of the strangers, with childlike animation, without adverting to her approaching separation from her who had given her the affection and cares of a parent.

But when she came to be severed from this kind friend, she made amends for her thoughtlessness. She clung to her as if nature had knit the bonds that united them, and, amid her cries and sobs, she promised always to remember and love her as a mother. Many have made such promises. Marie Angely kept them.

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Ten years subsequent to the events above narrated, a letter, of which the following is a translation, was addressed by a foreigner in a high official station in this country, to his friend.

'DEAR BERVILLE—

'It is, I believe, or should be, a maxim of the true church, that confession of a sin is the first step towards its expiation.

'Let me, then, invest you with a priest's cassock, and relieve my conscience by the

relation of an odd episode in my history. When I parted from you, I was going with my friend, Robert Ellison, to visit his father, who has a beautiful place on the banks of the Hudson. Young Ellison, as you know, is a thorough republican, and does not conceal his contempt for those of his compatriots, who, professing the same principles, are really aristocrats in their prejudices and manners; who, having parted, and as they pretend voluntarily, with the substances, still grasp at the shadow. To test these false pretensions, and to mortify an absurd pride, he joyfully acquiesced in a proposition I made to him, to lay aside the pomp and circumstances of my official character, and to be presented to his friends without any of the accidental advantages with which fortune has invested me. You will inquire my motive, for you will not suspect me of the absurdity of crusading against the follies of society, the most hopeless of all crusades. No, as our own Moliére says,

C'est une folie, à nulle autre seconde,

De vouloir se méler de corriger le monde.

My motives were then, in the first place, a love of ease, of dishabille; an impatience of the irksomeness of having the dignity of a nation to sustain; and, in the second place, I wished to ascertain how much of the favor lavished on me I should place to the account of the ambassador, and how much I might reserve to my own proper self.

'You may call this latent vanity. I will not quarrel with you. I will not pretend that I was moved solely by a love of truth, by a pure desire to find out the realities of things; but alas! my dear Berville, if we were to abstract from the web of our motives, every thread tinged with self, would not warp and woof too disappear? Let, then, my motive be what it might, you will allow the experiment required courage.

'We had some difficulty in settling the precise point at which to gage my pretensions. "Do not claim a drop of noble blood," said my friend, "it would defeat your purpose. There is something cabalistic in that word 'noble.' The young ladies at ____ would at once invest you with the attributes of romance; and the old dowagers would persecute you with histories of their titled ances-



tors, and anecdotes of lords and ladies that figured in the drawing rooms of the colony. Neither must you be a plain gentleman of the fortune, though that may seem to you a sufficient descent from your high station; but fortune has everywhere her shrines and her devotees. You must be the artificer of your own fortune, a talented young man who has no rank or fortune to be spoken of. What say you to the profession of a painter, a portrait painter, since that is the only branch of the art that gets a man bread in this country." I acceded without shrinking, secretly flattering myself that my friend either underrated my intrinsic merit, or did the world rank injustice.

'When we arrived we found a large party of the neighbouring gentry assembled to dine at _____. I was received with great courtesy by the elder Ellison, and with kindness by Madame, on the ground, simply, of being an acquaintance of their son's. My friend took care to prevent any elation from my reception by saying to me in a low voice, "My father, God bless him, has good sense, good feeling, and experience, and he well knows that the value of gold does not depend on the circulation it has obtained;" and truly if he had known that I bore the impress of the king's countenance he could not have received me more graciously. There might have been

more formality in his reception of the public functionary, but there could not have been more genuine hospitality. He presented me to his guests, and here I was first reminded of my disguise. Instead of the sensation I have been accustomed to see manifested in the lighting up of the face, in the deferential bow, or the blush of modesty, no emotion was visible. No eye rested on me, not a link of conversation was broken, and I was suffered, after rather an awkward passage through the ceremony, to retire to my seat, where I remained, observing, but not

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observed, till dinner was announced. From the habit of precedence, I was advancing to lead Madame to the dining room, when I encountered my friend's glance, and shrunk back in time to avoid what must have appeared an unpardonable impertinence. I now fell into my modest station in the rear, and offered my arm to an awkward, bashful girl, who I am sure had two left hands by the manner in which she received my courtesy, and who did not honor me so far as to look up to see who it was that had saved her from the mortifying dilemma of leaving the drawingroom alone. I helped my companion from the dish nearest to me, and waited myself till Madame, reminded by her son of her oversight, sent me a plate of soup. I was swallowing this, unmolested by any conversation addressed to me, when my friend's father said to him, "When have you seen the French ambassador, Robert? I hoped you would have persuaded him to pay us a visit."

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**Comment [4]:** Double-check original

'"Perhaps he may," replied my friend, "before the summer is over. He is at present out of the city on some excursion."

'"A prodigious favorite is your son with the French ambassador, as I hear from all quarters," said a gentleman who sat next Mr Ellison.

'"Ah! is that so, Robert? Are you intimate with Monsieur—?"

'"He does me the honor to permit my society, sir." Every mouth was now opened in praise of the ambassador. None of the company had seen him, but all had heard of his abilities, the charms of his conversation, his urbanity, his *savoir plaire*. "You must be proud of your countryman, M. Dufau?" (this was my assumed name) said my host, with that courtesy that finds a word for the humblest guest.

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'I said it was certainly gratifying to my national feeling to find him approved in America, but that, perhaps it was not his merit alone that obtained him such distinguished favor; that I had understood he was a great admirer of this country, and though I should do him injustice to say "he praised, only to be praised," yet I believed there was always a pretty accurately measured exchange in this traffic.

'"The gentleman is right," said an old Englishman who sat opposite to me, and who had not before vouchsafed to manifest a consciousness of my existence; "this is all French palaver in Monsieur —. He cannot be such a warm admirer of this country. The man knows better; he has been in England."

'I was too well acquainted with English manners to be startled by any manifestation of that conviction which an Englishman demonstrates in every part of the world, that his nation has no equal; but I instinctively defended my countryman, and eager for an opportunity to test the colloquial powers so much admired in the ambassador, I entered the lists with my English

opponent, and thus stimulated, I was certainly far more eloquent than I ever had been before, on the history, the present condition, and the prospects of this country. But alas for the vanity of M. Dufau! my host, it is true, gave me all the attention he could spare from the courtesies of the table, but save his ear, I gained none but that half accorded by my contemptuous, testy, and impatient antagonist, who after barking out a few sentences at me, relapsed into a moody silence.

'I next addressed some trifling gallantries to my bashful neighbour, fancying that she who was neglected by everybody else, would know how to appreciate my attentions; but her eyes were riveted to a fashionable beauty at the upper extremity of the table, and a half a

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dozen "no, sirs" and "yes, sirs," misplaced, were all the return I could obtain from her. To remain silent and passive, you know, to me, was impossible; so I next made an essay on a vinegar faced dame on my left, far in the wane of life. "If my civilities have been lead elsewhere, in this market," thought I, "they will at least prove silver or gold." But here I received my cruelest rebuff; for the lady, after apparently listening to me, said, "I do not understand you." I raised my voice, but she, determining to shelter the infirmity of age at my expense, replied, "I am not so deaf, sir, but really you speak such broken English, that I cannot understand you." This was too much, and I might have betrayed my vexation, if an intelligent and laughing glance from my friend had not restored my good humor, and a second reflection, suggesting that it was far more important to the old woman's happiness that her vanity should remain unimpaired, than it could be to me to have mine reduced, even to fragments, I humbly begged her pardon, and relapsed into a contented silence, solacing myself with the thought, that our encounter was but an illustration of that of the china earthen jars. But I will not weary you with detailing all the trials of my philosophy, but only confess that the negligence of the servants was not the least of them—the grinning self-complacency with which these apes of their superiors signified to me that my wants might be deferred.

'After all, my humble position would not have been so disagreeable, if I had been accustomed to it. The world's admiration, like all other luxuries, in the end becomes necessary, and then, too, like other luxuries, ceases to be enjoyed, or even felt, till it is withdrawn and leaves an aching void. If this is Irish, set it down to my broken English.

'After dinner, I followed the ladies to the drawingroom, and was presented by my friend to Miss —, a reigning beauty. She received me with one of those gracious smiles, that a hacknied belle always bestows on a new worshipper at her shrine. These popular favorites, be it a clergyman, politician, or beauty, are as covetous of the flatteries they receive, as a miser is of gold. No matter how unclean the vessel from which the incense rises; no matter what base alloy may mingle with the precious metal. Have you ever encountered one of those spoiled favorites in the thronged street, and tried to arrest the attention for a moment; to fix the eye that was roving for every tributary glance? If you have, you will understand without my describing it, the *distrait* manner with which the belle received my first compliments. Even this was not long accorded me, for a better accredited and more zealous admirer than myself appearing, she left me to my meditations, which were not rendered the more agreeable by my overhearing an old lady say, in a voice, which, though slightly depressed, she evidently made no effort to subdue to an inaudible key, "I wonder what possessed Robert Ellison to bring that French portrait painter here! How the world has changed since the Revolution! There is no longer any house where you don't meet mixed society." My friend had approached in time to overhear her as well as myself. "The

ignorant old fool!" he exclaimed, "shall I tell her that artists are the nobility of every country?"

'"No," said I, "do not waste your rhetoric; there is no enlightening the ignorance of stupidity; a black substance will not reflect even the sun's rays."

'Ellison then proposed that I should join a party at whist; but I complained of the heated air of the drawingroom, and, availing myself of an insignificance, I fol-

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lowed the bent of my inclinations, a privilege the humble should not undervalue, and sauntered abroad. The evening was beautiful enough to have soothed a misanthrope, or warmed the heart of a stoic. Its peace, its salutary, sacred voice restored me to myself, and I was ashamed that 'my tranquility had been disturbed. I contemned the folly of the artificial distinctions of life, and felt quite indifferent to them—when alone.

'The ground in front of my friend's house slopes to the Hudson, and is still embellished with trees of the majestic native growth. Where nature has left anything to be supplied by art, walks have been arranged and planted; but carefully, so as not to impede the view of the river, which was now in perfect repose. A sloop lay in the channel, its sails all furled, idly floating on the slumbering surface. While I was wishing my friend were with me, for I am too much of a Frenchman to relish fully even nature, the favorite companion of sentimentalists, in solitude, I saw a boat put off from the little vessel, and row slowly towards the shore. Presently a sweet female voice swelled on the stillness of the night, accompanied by the notes of a guitar, struck by a practised hand. Could any young man's mercury resist moonlight and such music? Mine could not, and I very soon left behind me all of *terra firma* that intervened between me and the siren, and ensconced myself in a deeply shaded nook at the very water's edge, where I could see and hear without being observed. The boat approached the spot where I stood, and was moored at half a dozen yards from my feet; but as my figure was in shadow, and sheltered by a thick copse of hazel bushes, I was perfectly concealed, while, by a flood of moonbeams, that poured on my unsuspicious neighbours, I saw them as plainly as if it were daylight. These were two men, whom I soon ascertained to be the captain

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of the sloop and an attendant, and that they were going to a farm house in the neighbourhood for eggs, milk, &c. The two females were to remain in the boat till their return. The lady of the guitar was inclined to go with them as far as the oak wood on the brow of the hill; but the captain persuaded her to remain in the boat, by telling her there was a formidable dog on the place, which she might encounter. As soon as the captain was gone, her companion, an elderly, staid looking country woman, said to her, "Now, child, as I came here for your pleasure, you must sing for mine. None of your newfangled fancies, but good Old Robin Grey."

'"Oh, Robin Grey is a doleful ditty; but anything to reward you for indulging me in coming on shore."

'She then sung that touching ballad. The English, certainly the Scotch, excel us as much in the pathos of unembellished nature and truth, as we do them in all literary refinement, ingenuity, and grace. I know not how much of the tribute that gushed from my heart was paid to the poetry and music, and how much to the beautiful organ by which they were expressed, for

the fair musician looked herself like one of the bright creations of poetry. I would describe her, but description is cold and quite inadequate to convey an idea of her, and of the scene with which she harmonized. It was one of nature's sweetest accords; the balmy air, the cloudless sky, the river, reflecting like a spotless mirror the blue arch, the moon and her bright train; my enchantress, the embodied spirit of the evening, and her music the voice of nature. I might have forgotten that I was in human mould, but I had one effectual curb to my imagination; one mortal annoyance. Argus, confound him! had followed me from the house, and it was only by dint of continued coaxing and caressing that I could keep him quiet. Before the ballad was

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finished, however, he was soothed by its monotonous sadness, and crouching at my feet, he fell asleep, I believe. I forgot him. Suddenly "the dainty spirit" changed from the low breathings of melancholy to a gay French air – the very air, Berville, that Claudine, in her mirthful moments, used to sing to us. The transition was so abrupt that it seemed as if the wing of joy had swept over the strings of her instrument. I started forth from my concealment. That was not all. Argus sprang out, too, and barking furiously, bounded towards the boat. The old woman screamed, "There is the dog!" and the young lady, not less terrified. Dropped her guitar, and, unhooking the boat, she seized an oar and pushed it off without listening to my apologies and assurances. In her agitation she dropped the oar, and her companion, still more tremulous than herself, in her attempt to regain it, lost the other, which she had instinctively grasped. As soon as the first impulse imparted to the boat was expended, it scarcely moved at all, and I had leisure to explain my sudden appearance and to say that my dog, far from being the formidable animal they imagined, was a harmless spaniel, who should immediately make all the amends in his power for the terror he had caused. I then directed him to the floating oars. He plunged into the water and brought them to me, but he either did not, or would not understand my wish that he should convey them to the boat, which, though very slowly, was evidently receding from the shore. I then, without farther hesitation, threw off my coat, swam to the boat, and receiving there the oars from Argus's mouth, I soon reconducted the boat to its haven. There was something enchanting to me in the frankness with which my fair musician expressed her pleasure at the homage I had involuntarily paid to her art, and the grace with which she re-

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ceived the slight service I rendered her. Perhaps I felt it the more for the mortifying experience of the day. I do not care very nicely to analyze my feelings, not to ascertain how much there was of restored self complacency in the delicious excitement of that hour.'

'The elderly lady, for lady she must needs be since my fair *incognita* called her mother, expressed a matronly solicitude about the effect of my wet garments, but I assured her that I apprehended no inconvenience from them, and I begged to be allowed to remain at my station till the return of their attendants. The circumstances of out introduction had been such as to dissipate all ceremony. Indeed, this characteristic of English manners would have as ill fitted the trustful, ingenuous, and gay disposition of my new acquaintance, as a coat of mail her light, graceful person. She sung, at my request, our popular opera airs, with more effect, because with far more feeling, than our best professed artists. She talked of music, and of the poetry of nature, with genius and taste; and she listened with that eager and pleased attention, which is the second best gift of conversation. I should have taken no note of the passage of time but for the fidgeting of the old lady, who often interrupted us with expressions of her concern at the captain's delay, for

which he, quite too soon, appeared to render an account himself. As I was compelled to take my leave, I asked my fair unknown if I might not be allowed to think of her by some more accurate designation than the "Lady of the Guitar."

'"My name is"—she replied promptly, and then, after a moment's hesitation, added, "No—pardon me, your romantic designation better suits the adventure of the night." I was vexed at my disappointment, but she chased away the shade of displeasure by the graceful playfulness with which she kissed her hand to me as the

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boat pushed off. I lingered on the shore till she had reached the vessel, and then slowly retraced my steps towards the house. I was startled by meeting my friend, for my mind was so absorbed that I had not heard his approaching footstep. "Ah!" he exclaimed, 'is this your philosophy? turned misanthrope at the first frown from the world?"

'"My philosophy," I replied, "has neither been vanquished, nor has it conquered, for I had forgotten all its trials."

'My friend evidently believed, notwithstanding my disclaimer, that my vanity required some indemnity for the humiliations it had sustained, and he repeated to me some assuaging compliments from his father, "But," he concluded, "tell me, have you really turned sentimentalist, and been holding high converse with the stars?"

'With a most brilliant star,' I replied, and related my adventure.

'Ellison's curiosity was excited, and he proposed we should take our flutes, go out in the barge, and serenade the "Lady of the Guitar." I, of course, assented, and the next half hour found us floating around the little vessel like humble satellites. We played an accompaniment and sung alternately, he in English, and I in French; but there was no token given that the offered incense was accepted; no salutation, save a coarse one from the captain, who invited us to go "on board and take some *grog*." We of course declined his professional courtesy. "Then, for the Lord's sake, lads," he said, "stop your piping, and give us a good birth. Sleep, at this time o' night, is better music than the jolliest tune that ever was played."

'Thus dismissed, and discomfited by the lady's neglect, we resumed our oars and were preparing to return to the shore, when the cabin window was gently rais-

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ed, and our fair *incognita* sung a sweet little French air, beginning "*Adieu, adieu !* " We remained, sound, motion, almost breath suspended till the song was finished.'

"So sweetly she bids us adieu,

I think that she bids us return,"

said my friend, and we instantly rowed our boat towards the stern of the vessel. At this moment the sash was suddenly dropped, and taking this for a definitive "Good night," we retired.

'Now, dear Berville, I have faithfully related the adventures of my masquerade—my boyish pastime, you may call it. Be it so. This day has been worth a year of care and dignity. I

shall return to New York in a few days. Till then farewell. Yours,

CONSTANT.'

But though M. Constant professed himself satisfied with his day, there was a lurking disquietude at his heart. He had written to assure himself there was nothing there he dare not express, and yet he had concluded without one alluding to the cause of his self-reproach. He had folded the letter, but he opened it, and added ;—

'P. S. I did not describe to you my friend's vexation that the responded song was in French. "Ah!" said he, "I see there is no chance for such poor devils as I, so long as you are neither married nor *betrothed*."'

He again closed the letter, and was for a moment satisfied that there could be nothing in the nature of that which he had so frankly communicated that required concealment. He walked to the window and eyed the little vessel as a miser looks at the casket that contains

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his treasure ; then starting from his reverie, he took from his bosom a miniature, and contemplated it steadfastly for a few moments; 'It is my conscience that reproaches me,' he said, 'and not this serene, benign countenance. O Emma ! thou art equally incapable of inflicting and resenting wrong, and shall thy trust and gentleness be returned by even a transient treachery ? Am I so sure of faithfully keeping the citadel that I may parley with an enemy? '

The result of this self-examination was a determination to burn the letter, and to dismiss forever from his mind the enchantress whose power had so swayed him from his loyalty. But though he turned from the window, resolutely closed the blind, and excluded the moonlight, which he fancied influenced his imagination as if he were a lunatic; though he went to bed and sunk into the oblivious sleep, the spirit was not laid. Imagination revelled in its triumph over the will. He was in France, in beautiful France—more beautiful now than in the visions of memory and affection. He was at his remembered haunts in his father's grounds ; the 'Lady of the Guitar' was with him ; she sang his favorite songs ; he saw her sparkling glance, her glowing cheek, her rich, dark tints,

'The embrowning of the fruit that tells

How rich within, the soul of sweetness dwells;'

He heard the innocent childlike laugh, that,

—'without any control,

Save the sweet one of gracefulness rung from her soul.'

Then there was interposed between him and this embodied spirit of his joyous clime a slowly moving figure; a cold, fail, pensive countenance, that had more of sorrow than resentment, but still, though its reproach was gentle, it was the reproach of the stern spectre of con-

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science. He cast down his eyes, and they fell in the word 'BETROTHED,' traced in the sand at his feet. The 'Lady of the Guitar' was gaily advancing towards him. Another step and her

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**Comment [5]:** Here's my comment from the first draft:
I am just going to make an editorial judgment that we don't need to be so ultra-faithful to the source text as to put extra spaces between a word and a question mark (or any other type of punctuation for which we would not add a space ourselves). I won't go back and mark every instance in the whole story, but I did highlight the instances that I noticed on this one page.

flowing mantle would have swept over the word, and effaced it forever. He raised his hand to deprecate her approach, and awoke ; and while the visions of sleep still confusedly mingled with the recollections and resolutions of the preceding day, he was up and at the window ; had thrown open the blind and ascertained that the vessel still lay becalmed in the stream. That virtue is certainly to be envied, that does not need to be shielded and fortified by opportunity and circumstance. If the vessel had disappeared, the recollections of the evening might have been as evanescent and ineffectual as the dreams of the night; but there it was, in fine relief, and as motionless as if it were encased in the blue waters. In spite of M. Constant's excellent resolutions, he lingered at the window, and returned there as if he were spellbound. Strange power that could rivet his eyes to an ill shapen little Dutch skipper! But that body did contain a spirit, and that spirit, seemingly as perturbed as his own, soon appeared, moving with a light step to and fro on the deck.

The apartment M. Constant occupied, was furnished, among other luxuries, with a fine spyglass. To resist using this facility for closer communion was impossible; and by its aid he could perceive every motion of the 'lady of his thoughts,' almost the changes of her countenance. He saw she was gazing on the shore, and that she turned eagerly to her companion to point her attention to some object that had caught her eye, and at the same moment he perceived it was his friend, who was strolling on the shore. Ellison saw him too, and waved his handkerchief in salutation. M. Constant returned the greeting, threw down the glass, and with-

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drew from the window with a feeling of compunction at his indulgence, as if he had again heard that word *betrothed* spoken. Why is it that external agents have so much influence over the mysterious operations of conscience? Why is it that its energy so often sleeps while there is no witness to the wrong we commit? 'Keep thy heart, for out of it are the issues of life.'

After breakfast, Ellison said to M. Constant, 'I am afraid you find your masquerade dull. Let us beguile the morning by a visit your "Lady of the Guitar." There is nothing lends such wings to time as a pretty girl. Our guests are a dull concern.'

'A dull concern, when there is a beauty and a fortune among them!'

'Yes, a sated belle is to me as disagreeable as a pampered child; as my grandmother's little pet Rosy, whom I saw the other day, tossing away her sugar plums, and crying "'T is not sweet enough;" and as fortune, though I am neither a philosopher not a sentimentalist, I shall never take the temple of Hymen in my way to wealth; for of all speculations, a matrimonial speculation seems to me the most hazardous, and the most disgraceful. But we loiter. Will you pay your devoirs to our unknown?'

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**Comment [6]:** Check original for apostrophe.

'I believe not; I have letters to write this morning,'

'To Emma? Pardon me—I do not mean to pry into your cabinet, but if the letters are to her they may be deferred. She is a dear good soul and will find twenty apologies for every fault you commit.'

'If they are to her, such generosity should not be abused. No, I will not go. But on what pretext will you?'

'Pretext indeed! does a pilgrim seek for a pretext to visit my Lady of Loretto, or the

shrine of any other saint ? Here comes the gardener with a basket of fine fruit which I have ordered to be prepared, and of which

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I shall be the bearer to the sufferers pent in that dirty sloop this breathless August morning—from mere philanthropy you know. Commend me to Emma, ' he added gaily; 'I will bear witness for you that your enthusiasm for this unknown was a mere *coup de la lune*, and that when daylight appeared you were as loyal, and—as dull as a married man.'

Ellison's raillery did not render the bitter pill of self-denial more palatable to M. Constant. He turned away without reply, but instead of returning to his apartment he obtained a gun, and inquiring the best direction to pursue in quest of game, he sauntered into a wooded defile that wound among the hills, and was so enclosed by them as not to afford even a glimpse of the river. Here he threw himself on the grass, took a blank leaf from his pocketbook and began a sonnet to constancy, but broke off in the middle; scribbled half a dozen odd lines from the different songs that had entranced him on the preceding evening; sketched a guitar, then rose, and still musing, pursued his way up the defile. The path he had taken led him around the base of an eminence to a rivulet that came frolicking down a hill now leaning and now loitering with the capricious humor of childhood. He traced it to its source, a clear fountain bubbling up from the earth at the foot of a high, precipitous rock. Clusters of purple and pink wild flowers hung from the clefts of the rock, wreathing its bare old front, and presenting a beautiful harmony in contrast, like infancy and old age. The rock and the sides of the fountain formed a little amphitheatre, enclosed and deeply shaded by the mountain ash, the aromatic hemlock and the lofty basswood. This sequestered retreat, with its fresh aspect and sweet exhalations, afforded a delicious refuge from the fierce heat and overpowering light of an August day. M. Constant

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was lingering to enjoy it when his ear caught the sound of distant and animated voices. He started, and for a moment thought himself cheated by the illusions of a distempered fancy ; but, as the sounds approached nearer, he was assured of their reality, and they affected him like the most painful discord, though they were produced by the sweet, clear, penetrating voice of the unknown and the hitherto welcome tones of his friend.

The impropriety of a young girl straying off into such a solitude with an acquaintance of an hour was obvious, but was perhaps more shocking to M. Constant than it would have been to a perfectly disinterested observer. It gave a dreadful jar to his preconceived notions, and contrasted, rudely enough, with the conduct of the preceding night, when the lady had, with such scrupulous delicacy, forborne to show herself on the deck of the sloop. As they drew nearer he thought there was something in the gay, familiar tones of Ellison, disgusting; and the laugh of the lady, which before had seemed the sweetest music of a youthful and innocent spirit, was now harsh and hoydenish. The strain of their conversation, too, for they were near enough to be heard distinctly, while the windings of the path prevented his being seen, though it was graceful chitchat enough, appeared to him trifling and flippant in the extreme. As they came still nearer he listened more intently, for he had a personal interest in the subject.

'And so, my "Lady of the Guitar,"' said Ellison, 'you persist in preserving that scrap of paper, merely, I presume, as a specimen of the sister arts of design and poetry. You are sure

those scratches are meant for a guitar, and not a jewsharp, and that the fragment is a sonnet and not a monody?'

'Certainly it is a sonnet; the poet says so himself. See here—"*Sonnet à la Constance*."'

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'Well, it is certainly in the strain of a "lament." My friend was in a strait ; what he would do he could not. Constancy is a very pretty theme for a boarding-school letter, but I am afraid the poor fellow will not find his inspiration in this tame virtue ?'

'Ah ! these tame virtues, as you call them,' replied the lady, ' are the salutary food of life, while your themes of inspiration are intoxicating draughts, violent and transient in their effects.'

'A very sage lesson, and very well conned. Did your grandmother teach it to you ?'

'No matter—I have got it by *heart*.'

'O those moral New Englanders, they change all the poetry of life to wise saws. Thank heaven you have escaped from them in time to retain some portion of your mercurial nature. But now let me tell you, my sage young friend, that same paper may prove as dangerous where you are going as a match to a magazine. So let me advise you, either keep it quite to yourself, or give it to the winds.'

'You talk riddles, Mr Ellison; but I will not be quizzed into believing this little castaway scrap of paper can be of any import.'

'Let me label it for you then, if, as I see, it is to be filed among the precious stores of your pocketbook.'

There was a short pause when the lady, as M. Constant supposed, looking over Ellison's superscription, read aloud, 'Love's Labor Lost,' and then exclaimed, 'Pshaw, Robert, how absurd !' and tore off the offensive label, while he laughed at her vexation.

M. Constant felt that it would be very embarrassing for him to be discovered as a passive listener to this coversation. He had been chained to the spot by an interest that he would gladly not have felt, but which he could not suppress.

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Another turn would bring them directly before him. To delay longer without being seen was therefore impossible. As he put aside the rustling branches, he heard Ellison exclaim, "Ha! there are some startled quail ;' but before his friend could take a more accurate observation, he had sprung around an angle of the rock, and was beyond sight and hearing.

The gentlemen met before dinner. M. Constant was walking on the piazza, apparently moody and little disposed to sympathize with Ellison's extravagant expressions of admiration of the unknown, or of regret that the fresh breeze was now wafting the vessel and its precious cargo far away.

'In the name of Heaven, Constant,' he said, 'what has so suddenly turned you to ice? Last night you seemed to think it necessary to invent—pardon me—allege some apology for your prompt sensibility, and you said it was not the beauty, the voice, the grace, or any of the obvious

and sufficient charms of this young enchantress—that was your word—that fascinated you, but it was a resemblance to the glowing beauties of your own clime ; and now, if you had been born at the north pole and she at the equator, you could not manifest less affinity.'

'There are certain principles,' replied M. Constant, coldly, 'that overcome natural affinities. I hope you have passed your morning agreeably.'

'Agreeably ? Delightfully ! Our *incognita* is more beautiful than you describe her.'

'Is she then still *incognita* to you?' asked M. Constant with a penetrating glance.

'Not exactly ; she favored me with her name.'

'Her name ! what is it ?'

' Pardon me, I am under a prohibition not to tell.'

'The lady certainly makes marked distinctions. She is as reserved towards others, as frank to you.'

'She had her reasons.'

'Doubtless; but what were they?'

'Why, one was that I refused to tell her your name.'

'And why did you that ?'

'I had my reasons, too.'

M. Constant was vexed at the mystery his friend affected. H was annoyed, too, at his perfect self complacency and imperturbable good nature, and more than all, ashamed of his own irritability. He made an effort to overcome it, and to put himself on a level with Ellison. He succeeded so far in his efforts as to continue to talk of the lady with apparent *nonchalance* till he was summoned to dinner ; but though he tried every mode his ingenuity could devise, he could not draw from his friend the slightest allusion to the lady's extraordinary visit to the shore, or any particular of their interview, which explained the perfect familiarity that seemed to exist between them ; and what made this mystery more inscrutable, was the tone of enthusiasm which Ellison maintained in speaking of the lady, and which no young man sincerely feels without a sentiment of respect.

In spite of M. Constant's virtuous resolutions and efforts, the 'Lady of the Guitar' continued to occupy his imagination, and he determined to take the surest measures to dispel an influence which he had in vain resisted. As he parted from his friend at night, he announced his intention of taking his departure the following morning. After expressing his sincere regret, Ellison said, 'You go immediately to town ?'

'No, I go to Mr. Liston's.'

'Ah! Is it so ?'

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'Even so. Ellison ; but no more till we meet again. I have supported my masquerade with

little spirit ; but do not betray me, and we, neither of us, shall lose reputation.'

M. Constant had for a long time been on terms of intimacy and friendship with Miss Liston. This lady belonged to one of the most distinguished families in our country. She was agreeable in her person, had a fund of good sense, was well informed and perfectly amiable. Such characters are admirable in the conduct of life, if not exciting to the imagination ; that precious faculty, which, like the element of fire, the most powerful and dangerous agent, may warm, or may consume us. Long and intimate friendship between unfettered persons of different sexes is very likely to terminate, as that of M. Constant and Miss Liston terminated, in an engagement.

He had a sentiment of deep and fixed affection for her, which, probably, no influence could have materially affected; but when that being crossed his path who seemed to him to realize the brightest visions of his youth, he felt a secret consciousness that the fidelity of his affection was endangered. The little mystery in which the unknown was shrouded, the very circumstance of calling her 'the unknown,' magnified the affair, as objects are enlarged, seen through a mist. He very wisely and prudently concluded that the surest way of dispelling all illusion, would be frankly to relate the particulars to Miss Liston, only reserving to himself certain feelings which would not be to her edification, and which he believed would be dispelled by participating their cause with her. Accordingly, at their first meeting he was meditating how he should get over the embarrassment of introducing the subject, when Miss Liston said, 'I have a great pleasure in reserve for

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you,' and left him without any farther explanation, and in a few moments returned, followed by a lady, and saying as she reentered, 'Marie Angely, you and Constant, my best friends, must not meet as strangers.' A half suppressed exclamation burst from the lips of both. All M. Constant's habitual grace forsook him. He overturned Miss Liston's workstand, workbox, and working paraphernalia, in advancing to make his bow. Miss Angely's naturally high color was heightened to a painful excess; she made an effort to reciprocate the common courtesies of an introduction, but in vain; the words faltered on her lips, and after struggling a moment with opposing feelings, the truth and simplicity of her heart triumphed and turning to Miss Liston, she said, 'Your friend, Emma, is the gentleman I met on the river.'

Miss Liston had been the confidant of all her romantic young friend's impressions from her moonlight interview with the stranger, and it was now her turn to suffer a full share of the embarrassment of the other parties. She looked to M. Constant for an explanation. Never had he, in the whole course of his diplomatic career, been more puzzled; but after a moment's hesitation he followed Miss Angely in the safe path of ingenuousness and truly told all the particulars of his late adventures, concluding with a goodhumored censure of his friend Ellison, who had long and intimately known Miss Angely, and who, to gratify his mischief loving temper, had contrived the mystery which led to the rather awkward *dénouement*.

Thus these circumstances, which might have been woven into an intricate web of delicate embarrassment and romantic distress, that might have ended in the misery of one, perhaps of all parties, were divested of their interest and their danger by being promptly and frankly disclosed.

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Miss Angely, whom our readers have already recognised as the little girl of the inn, had met with Miss Liston at a boarding school in Boston, where, though Miss Liston was her elder by several years, they formed an enthusiastic, and rare in the annals of boarding schools, an enduring friendship. Marie Angely had faithfully discharged the debt of gratitude to Mrs Reynolds, and though acquiring, as may be supposed, somewhat of the fastidiousness that accompanies refined education and intercourse, no one could perceive any abatement of her respect or affection for her kind protectress, or the slightest diminution of her familiarity with her. She passed a part of every summer with her, always called her mother, and, by the fidelity of her kindness and the charm of her manner, she diffused light and warmth over the whole tract of Mrs Reynolds's existence. She linked expectations, that might have been blasted, to a happy futurity, and cherished and elevated affections, which, but for her sunny influence, would have been left to wither and perish. Oh that the fortunate and happy could know how much they have in their gift!

Miss Angely had been on one of her annual visits to her humble friend, and was on her way, accompanied by her, to New York, where she was to join Miss Liston, when the incidents occurred which we have related.

There is nothing in the termination of our tale to indemnify the lover of romance for its previous dullness; but it is a true story, and its materials must be received from tradition, and not supplied by imagination.

M. Constant was, in the course of a few weeks, united to Miss Liston. This lady had long cherished a hope that her friend would be a permanent member of her family, and she used every art of affection to persuade her to remain with her at least so long as she should decline the suits of all the lovers who were now

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thronging around her, attracted by her beauty, or loveliness, or the *eclat* she derived from her intimacy with the wife of the ambassador. M. Constant did not very warmly second his wife's entreaties. He perhaps had a poignant recollection of certan *elective affinities*, and his experience taught him the truth, if indeed he had not derived it from a higher source, that, in the present infirm condition of human virtue, it is always safest and best not voluntarily to 'enter into temptation.'

Miss Angely returned to Boston. M. Constant's union with Miss Liston was one of uninterrupted confidence and conjugal happiness; but it was not destined to be of long duration. His wife died in about a year after their marriage. Among her papers was found a letter addressed to her husband, written in expectation of the fatal issue of the event that had terminated her life, in which she earnestly recommended her friend as her successor. In due time her request was honored. M. Constant married Miss Angely. After residing for some time in America, they went to France, where she was received as an ornament to her noble family, and acknowledged to be, 'the brightest jewel in its coronet.'

Far from the mean pride of those who shrink from recurring to the humble stages in their progress to the heights of fortune, Madame Constant delighted in relating the vicissitudes of her life, and dwelt particularly on that period, when, as Mrs Reynolds's handmaid, she considered herself honored in standing behind the chair of the wife of the great General Knox.

‘The longest day comes to the vesper hour.’ Madame Constant closed at Paris a life of virtue, prosperity, and happiness, in July 1827.

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[1] *We would gladly have had it in our power to be exact in dates, as our story in good faith is true in all, even the least important particulars. Some few circumstances, and the ‘spoken words,’ had escaped tradition, and of course were necessarily supplied, as the proper statue receives a foot or finger from the ruder hand of modern art. The name of the heroine having been subsequently merged and forgotten in that of her husband, we have ventured to retain it. The rest we have respectfully veiled under assumed appellations.