

ГОВАРД ПАЙЛ

WITHIN THE
CAPE

Говард Пайл
Within the Capes

«Public Domain»

Пайл Г.

Within the Capes / Г. Пайл — «Public Domain»,

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Howard Pyle

Within the Capes

PART I

CHAPTER I

CERTAIN members of Captain Tom Granger's family have asked him, time and time again, why he did not sit down and write an account of those things which happened to him during a certain period of his life.

These happenings, all agree, are of a nature such as rarely fall to the lot of any man, crowding, as they did, one upon the heels of another, so that in two years' time more happened to Tom Granger than happens to most men in a lifetime.

But Captain Granger has always shaken his head, and has answered that he was no writer and that a pen never did fit nicely betwixt his stiff fingers, as Mrs. Granger can tell them if they will ask her.

Beside this, he has hitherto had his affairs to look after, so that he may be able to leave behind him enough of the world's goods to help his children and his children's children easily along the road that he himself found not over smooth.

Now, however, he has given up much of his business to the care of his sons, who are mostly men well on in years, with families of their own, and who are discreet in the management of things. Therefore, having much more leisure time upon his hands than he has ever had in his life before, he will undertake to do as he has been asked, and to write a plain, straightforward story of his adventures. This he does with much diffidence, for, as I have said, he is no very good hand with the pen and the ink-horn. The story may be told in a rough way; nevertheless, I believe that many of those that read it will think well of it, having a certain tenderness for the writer thereof.

I am furthermore inclined to thus take upon myself the transcribing of the history of these things, because that Captain Tom Granger is coming fast to the ending of his life; and, though his latter days may be warm and sunny, like a late Indian summer, there are those yet to come in a few years who will not have the chance to hear of these things from his own lips. Therefore, as there has been much gossip about certain adventures that befell him, I would rather that they should learn of them under mine own hand than from hearsay. Truly, things get monstrously twisted in passing from mouth to mouth, and by the time that the story of these doings has passed down through three or four generations, the old gentleman might be turned into a pirate and a murderer, for all that I know, which would be a pretty state of affairs.

I do not know how it was that Tom Granger got the title of captain, for the highest grade that he ever reached was that of second mate of the Privateersman *Nancy Hazlewood*. However, as no one in Eastcaster ever had held so high a grade of the like nature up to that time, I suppose that the wonder really is that he was not called commodore, or even admiral.

Any one in Eastcaster can tell you where he lives; it is the large white house, with the porch in front, that stands well back from the road under the shadow of three broad maple trees. It is just across the way from the Hicksite Meeting-house. You can easily tell it as you go along the street, because there is a ship in full sail chiseled in relief on the stone gate-post, which is very well done indeed, and was carved by William Johnson, the stone-cutter, under mine own direction and supervision.

I will say here, that Captain Granger will be always glad to see you if, at any time, you should chance to come to Eastcaster. If he is not at home, you will be likely to find him playing chequers or

backgammon at the Black Horse Tavern, just around the corner of Market street, and nearly opposite to the court-house.

However, that is neither here nor there, and I find that I am wandering from the point. But you must excuse and overlook that, bearing in mind that it is the way of an old man, who has done a great deal of talking in his day. I thank goodness that I am old enough now to know better than to gossip and talk as much as I used to do, and am rather silent than otherwise.

Nevertheless, I promise now that I will heave ahead with my yarn, though it may be that I will leave some things untold that you would like to hear, being, as I said, no great talker, in which case you must come to Eastcaster, and then I will tell you anything that you may want to know.

I will not enter into a long yarn concerning what happened in Tom Granger's life before the year 1812, for though such a yarn would hold within it many concerns of interest, it is not for the sake of relating them that I have thus taken my pen betwixt my fingers. It was late in the spring of that year (1812) when he returned home after a three years' cruise to the East Indies.

I think that there is no joy in all the world like that of getting home again after a long voyage, such as this had been. I do not know but that it repays one for all the sorrow and pain of leave-taking, and for the home-sickness that follows thereon. Even such changes as have happened betwixt the going and returning do not seem amiss, provided that they have not brought grief and trouble with them.

The changes that had occurred since Tom's departure in the summer of 1809 had brought no sadness with them. When he had gone away, he had left his sisters, Susan and Mary, as young girls; the former sixteen and the latter fifteen years old. They had now grown into a pair of fine young women and were chits no longer. This was the first and greatest change that struck Tom, so you may see how little had happened. The folks were already beginning to tease Susan about Will Gaines, who had just returned from Philadelphia, where he had been studying law, and had set up an office for himself in Eastcaster.

The next day was Sunday, or First-day, as we call it in Quaker neighborhoods, and as all of the family were going to meeting, Tom put on his best toggery to go with them.

It was a beautiful, bright clear day, and as Tom stood on the porch waiting for Henry, who was to go with him, his heart swelled within him with the love of home. It seemed sweet to him to look on the young leaves of the trees, the green meadowlands and the richness of growing wheat, after seeing nothing for months but a wide stretch of troubled waters; it was good to feel the balmy blowing of a breeze that was not salt; to hear the singing of the robin and the chattering of the wren; the crowing of the cocks and the lowing of the cattle, and not to have in his ears the everlasting washing and gurgling of the water alongside.

The folks use to ride to meeting on horseback in the old times, the women behind the men on pillion saddles. But Tom was a sailor, and consequently no good figure on horseback, so he and Henry, the youngest, set off ahead of the rest to foot it, for the homestead farm was only a mile and a half from Eastcaster meeting.

The meeting-house looked very pleasant where it stood, back from the street under the shadow of the two great elms in front of it. The old meeting-house was standing then, for they did not tear it down to make room for the new building until '32. The present building is larger than the old one was, and is, no doubt, lighter and better, and more comfortable in many ways; but for all that, I have never liked it as well as the old black and red brick meeting-house, with its high roof running up to a point from all four corners and topped with something that looked like a belfry, though it had no bell in it, of course.

In the old days, as now, when the weather was warm and bright and pleasant, the men used to stand for a while around the door of their side of the meeting, talking and chatting together before they went into the building. Such a group was standing on the grass under the shadow of the elm trees as Tom and his brother Henry came up the steps that led into the meeting-house yard.

Tom knew all of them, and they came forward and shook hands with him and welcomed him heartily. Will Gaines was amongst them, for, though he was not a member of the Society of Friends, he went to meeting as often as he went anywhere else. It might have been that he came on Susan's account, though I do not say that he did.

He was the first to recognize Tom, and he came forward and shook hands with him and seemed very glad to see him. A young man usually is glad to see the brother of the young woman that he wants to marry, but I think that Will really was pleased to see Tom, for he and Tom had been dear friends from the time that they were children together. There were other young men of Tom's age amongst the group: John Black, Joseph Sparks, Henry Jackson and others. They too came forward and shook hands with him and seemed glad to see him, though not so glad as Will Gaines had been.

Two men were standing by the open door of the meeting-house, talking earnestly together. One of them was Isaac Naylor, and the other was Mr. Edmund Moor, the real estate agent. As these two men had very much to do with Tom's life at a later time, it may be well that I should give you a notion of them now.

Isaac Naylor was a young man – not over thirty at that time, I should think. He dressed very plainly, and was so serious of deportment that I do not know that any one ever saw him smile. He never jested himself, and never enjoyed a jest, for he was too practical for such trivial things. It was as though the man of him had been dried into parchment by his continued self-repression. He was well off in the world, for his father had died the year before, and, as Isaac was the only son, he had inherited all the property, which was very large. Although such a young man, he was high in the meeting, sitting in the gallery with men old enough, in some cases, to be his grandfather.

Mr. Moor was not a member of meeting, though he attended pretty regularly. He was a large, fleshy man, not exactly fat, but full looking. He had a smooth, goodly face and straight iron-grey hair, brushed straight back from his forehead and behind his ears. I never heard him say an unkind word or saw him in anything but a cordial mood. He was always full of jests and quaint turns of speech, and never failed to shake Tom heartily by the hand whenever he met him; yet for all that Tom did not like him. He had an oily, unctuous way, that was not pleasing to him; he was always so goodly that he did not seem sincere, and always so cordial that it did not seem as though he meant his cordiality.

Such were the two men that were talking together by the meeting-house door, and each welcomed him in his own manner.

“How is thee, Thomas?” said Isaac, dryly.

“Why! It's Thomas Granger! Bless my soul! Back again like a bad penny, eh?” said Mr. Moor, and he shook Tom by the hand with great warmth.

In the meantime, Tom's father and his two brothers, John and William, came over from the horse shed, where they had been hitching their horses, and joined the group, and then they all went into the meeting-house together, taking their seats on the hard wooden benches within.

That morning they held a silent meeting, no one speaking for all the hour between ten and eleven o'clock. Now and then the wind would rush in little puffs through the open window and across the gloom of the building. A fly buzzed against a window pane, and once a robin outside burst into a sudden gush of song.

No other sound broke the silence, saving for the rustling of a dress, as one of the women Friends would move in her seat, or the restless sighing of some poor boy in the back part of the building. The overseers sat ranged along on the raised bench facing the meeting, and amongst them was Isaac Naylor. All of them sat with their hats on, motionless, with downcast eyes, buried in serious thought: but no one spoke.

At such a time every one is supposed to address a sermon to his own heart, but I am very much afraid that Tom Granger addressed none to himself, for his thoughts flew here and there and everywhere, and his mind was never still a moment in the chase of them. Now and then he shifted himself uneasily on the hard wooden bench, trying to find a more comfortable position than the one

in which he was sitting, but the seats in Friends' meeting were not made with a thought to comfort in those days. There was a long partition that ran down the length of the meeting, separating the men's from the women's side.

After a while Tom's eyes wandered over this partition in a way that they had no business to do. It was toward the place where his mother and his sisters sat that his eyes rested the most, but it was not at them that he was looking, for Patty Penrose sat between his mother and him.

After a man has reached the age of four and twenty, it becomes a continued source of wonder to him how the little girls about him grow up into young women. You leave a poor lean little chit of a thing; a few years pass, you meet her and, lo! she is transmogrified into a young woman, going her sedate way with very different thoughts in her head than when you saw her last. It seems as though it were only a week or two since you patted her upon the head and said kind things to encourage her; now your heart shrinks at the thought of such boldness, and you feel that she needs encouragement no longer.

When Tom had last seen Patty Penrose, three years before, he left her just such a little chit as I have spoken to you of, – lean and not graceful. She used to come over now and then to play with his sister Mary, but he had not noticed her excepting when she stayed to dinner or to supper. Even then he had not observed her very closely, and had not had much to say to her, for she was too shy to make it a pleasure to him to talk to her, and too young for it to be worth while for him to put himself out to amuse her. He would give her a nod with a “How is thee, Patty?” and then would turn his mind to other things.

Now, when he first looked at her sitting across the meeting beside his mother, he did not know her; then he saw first one little thing and then another, until it slowly dawned upon him that it was Patty Penrose, though not the Patty Penrose that he had known in times past. At first he looked with wonder and interest at the change that had come in three years; but, after a while, his interest took a very different shape with no wonder about it, and he thought that his sister Mary's friend was a great deal better worth looking at than when he had last seen her, for Patty had grown into a very pretty girl, – a very pretty girl, indeed.

She sat looking calmly before her; but, though she seemed sedately unaware of his presence, as is becoming in a modest girl, I have not a grain of doubt that she knew that Tom Granger was at meeting that day, and, maybe, she even knew that he was looking at her at that moment.

Her head was uncovered, for she had worn a broad beaver hat, such as they used in those days, and she held the hat in her lap. She sat with her side turned to Tom, and it made his heart feel very warm as he looked at her pale, delicate face, the long lashes of her eyes, the smooth roundness of her chin and throat, and the soft curling of the brown hair at her forehead and temples. So, as I said, he was preaching no sermon to himself as he sat in silent meeting that day.

At length, the court-house clock around the corner of Market street struck eleven. They all sat in silence for a minute or two longer, and then old Thomas Winterapple shook John Stidham by the hand, and meeting was broken. After that they all went out into the sunlight and the open air again.

Will Gaines went over to where the young women were standing talking together, and said a few words to Susan, and Tom followed after him.

Patty was standing beside his mother.

“Thomas, this is Patty Penrose,” said she, turning to him; “don't thee remember Patty?”

Tom knew that the color was rising in his face; knowing it, he felt very uncomfortable, and that made his cheeks burn all the hotter. It was a different matter talking to Patty now from what it had been three years ago. Oh, yes, he remembered Patty; “How is thee, Patty?” said he, holding out his hand to her. Her little fingers rested in his only for a moment, and then were quickly withdrawn.

“I'm pretty well, thank thee, Thomas,” said she.

Then there was a space of silence, during which Tom was thinking of something to say. This was no easy thing for him to do on the spur of the moment, considering how little he knew of Patty and

her ways. He stood with his hands clasped behind him, looking at her and waiting for a thought, and she stood looking down at the toe of her shoe. Presently she raised her eyes to his face for a moment.

“Has thee just come back, Thomas?” said she.

“Yes; I came back yesterday afternoon.”

“Thee’s been gone a long while this time, hasn’t thee?”

“About three years.”

And then they were silent again.

Just then Isaac Naylor came up and spoke to Patty, and she turned partly away from Tom to answer him. It seemed to Tom that it was a relief to her to talk to some one else beside him, and no doubt it was, for she must have felt easier with Isaac than she did with Tom, knowing him so much better. After this, several of the young men came up, and in a little while Patty and his sister were quite surrounded by them, and were presently talking and laughing at a great rate, about people and things of which Tom knew little or nothing. Isaac Naylor stood amongst the other young men; he did not talk to Patty and Mary as they did, but he seemed contented to remain where he was.

At last Tom’s brother Henry plucked him by the sleeve of his coat, “Is thee ready to go now, Thomas?” said he. “Father and mother have gone and I’m ready to go if thee is.” Henry was too young yet to talk to the girls with any ease, and so the waiting was no pleasure to him.

“Yes; I guess I’m about ready,” said Tom. He felt that he had been awkward and ungainly before Patty, and he would have liked to say a word or two more to her before he left her to set himself straight in her opinion. But he saw no chance for this in all the talk and laughter that was going on around Mary and her, so there was nothing left for him to do but to go.

As Henry and he walked along the turn-pike road, numbers of Friends passed them on their way homeward from meeting.

There was a clatter of hoofs behind them, and old Elihu Penrose came riding by with Patty back of him on the pillion saddle.

“Woah!” cried he, reigning in his horse when he had come up to Tom and Henry. “How is thee, Thomas? I’m glad to see thee back again.”

“I’m glad to get back again,” said Tom.

“That’s right! I like to hear a young man say he’s glad to get back home again, – it sounds well. Come over and see us some time.”

“I will,” said Tom; “I’d like to come over very much.”

“Very well; do. Come over soon. Farewell.”

Then he clicked to the horse and rode on, turning down the road that led through the shady woods to the old mill.

“Patty Penrose’s a mighty pretty girl; ain’t she, Thomas?” said Henry.

Tom made no answer, and they walked on in silence.

At dinner time, Patty was brought up as a subject of talk.

“Don’t thee think she’s very pretty, Thomas?” said Susan.

“Well – I don’t know,” said Tom, hesitatingly; “n – not so very.” I do not know why he should have answered as he did, but, somehow, he did not feel like saying that he thought Patty was pretty.

“Well, I can’t help thinking as thee does about it, Thomas,” said Mary; “I love Patty Penrose very dearly, but, I must say, I never could see her beauty.”

“She’s the prettiest girl in the neighborhood,” said William.

“I know some people think she’s pretty,” said Mary, “but, I must say, I don’t see where her beauty lies. Her nose isn’t good, and she has hardly a bit of color in her face. She’s a dear good girl, but I don’t think she’s what one would call handsome.”

“Thee isn’t of the same way of thinking as the young men,” said John. “There isn’t one within ten miles of Eastcaster who doesn’t think that she’s the prettiest girl in the township. There isn’t a girl in the neighborhood who has as much company as she.”

“Nonsense,” said Susan; “what does thee know about it, John? Leave out Isaac Naylor and John Black and the two Sharpleys and she doesn’t have any more company than other people.”

“All right,” said John, who had an ill way of holding to an opinion and never arguing about it, “all right, have thy own way; it doesn’t make any difference to me; I only know what I hear the young men say about her.”

Then Tom’s father broke into the talk and nothing more was said about Patty. “I bought a new short-horn bull last fall, Thomas,” said he. “We’ll go over to the cattle-yard after dinner and take a look at it, if thee likes.”

So presently they all got up from their chairs, and the men-folks went over to the barn-yard to take a look at the short-horn bull.

But the talk at the dinner table had not pleased Tom, though I do not know why he should have disliked to have heard that Patty had a great deal of attention paid her; for how could it make any difference to him?

CHAPTER II

AS time wore along, Tom got into the habit of dropping in at Penrose's and of spending an evening now and then. At first he would find himself there once in every ten days or two weeks; in time his visits became more and more frequent. Elihu was always very glad to see him and Patty herself seemed pleased at his coming. I think that some of the happiest evenings of his life were those spent in sitting on the porch of the old mill-house in the long summer twilights – Elihu and he smoking their pipes, he telling his adventures at sea and Patty sitting listening to him. Often some one of the young men of the neighborhood would be at the house, and then it was not so pleasant for Tom; his talk would cease, and after a little while, perhaps, he would arise and bid them farewell. Patty and her visitor would usually sit apart talking and laughing together, and it would strike Tom how much more easy she seemed in the company of others than she did with him. More than once when he called he found that she had gone out riding with one of these young men, and then he and Elihu would spend the evening together, and the old man would seem quite contented, for neither Patty nor he seemed to think that Tom's visits were meant for any one else than him.

One First-day evening Tom mustered up courage to ask Patty to take a walk with him. That evening is impressed upon his mind even yet, for he was very happy. There was a dim glow in the sky to the westward, and the road stretched away grey and glimmering between the blackness of the banks and bushes alongside of it. So, walking slowly and talking but little, they came to the bridge just below Whiteley's barn, and there they stood leaning on the parapet, looking up the stream into the black woods beyond, from which came the many murmuring whispers of the summer's night. All the air was laden with the spicy odor of the night woods, and through the silence the sound of the rushing and gurgling of the water of the brook came to them clearly and distinctly. There was a bit of marshy land beyond, over which flew fireflies in thousands, here gleaming a brilliant spark and there leaving a long trail of light against the black woodlands behind. For some time they both leaned upon the bridge without saying a word; it was Patty that broke the silence at last.

"Does thee know, Thomas," said she, "that when thee first came home I was dreadfully afraid of thee? Thee seemed to me to be so much older than I was, and then thee'd seen so much on thy travels."

"Thee ain't afraid of me now, is thee, Patty?"

"No, indeed; it seems as though thee might almost be a cousin of mine, I know thee so well. It does father so much good to see thee; he's never been the same since mother died till now."

There was a moment or two before Tom spoke.

"Perhaps it isn't thy father I come to see, Patty," said he, in a low voice. He leaned over the edge of the bridge as he spoke and looked fixedly into the dark rushing water beneath.

Patty made no answer, and Tom was not sure that she heard him. Neither of them said another word until Patty said, in a low voice, "I guess we'd better go home now, Thomas."

Then they turned and walked back again to the old mill. Tom opened the gate for Patty. "Farewell, Patty," said he.

"Won't thee come up and see father, Thomas?" said she.

"Not to-night."

"Farewell, then."

Tom watched her until she had gone up the porch steps and was hidden by the vines that were clustered about it. He heard Elihu say, "Where's Thomas?" but he did not hear Patty's answer; then he turned and walked slowly homeward.

The summer passed, the fall passed, the winter passed, and the spring time had come again.

Tom's walk with Patty seemed to have broken through the smoothness of the acquaintance betwixt the three.

Elihu had never been the same to him since that night; he had never been as cordial or as friendly as he had been before.

Sometimes it seemed to Tom as though Patty herself was growing tired of seeing so much of him. At such times he would vow within himself as he walked homeward that he would never call there again, and yet he always went back after a while.

So things moved along without that pleasant friendliness in their acquaintanceship until that occurred which altered the face of everything.

One First-day afternoon, Tom found himself standing on the porch of the mill-house. It was in the early part of April, but the day was very mild and soft, and Elihu and Patty were sitting on the porch.

“How is thee, Thomas?” said Elihu. He did not take the pipe from his lips as he spoke, neither did he ask the other to be seated. Tom stood leaning against the post and no one spoke for a while.

“Isn’t it a lovely day?” said Patty.

“Yes, it is,” said Tom; “would thee like to take a walk up the road as far as Whiteley’s?”

“Yes, I would,” said Patty; “I haven’t been away from the house all day.”

“It’s very damp; it’s too damp to walk,” said Elihu; “besides, thee’s got thy thin shoes on.”

“But we’ll walk in the road, father; I’ll promise not to go off of the road. I’ll put on heavier shoes if thee thinks that these are too thin.”

“Very well, do as thee pleases,” said Elihu, sharply; “I think it’s too damp, but I suppose thee’ll do as thee chooses.” Then he knocked the ashes out of his pipe and went into the house without another word, shutting the door carefully behind him.

“I don’t know why he doesn’t want me to go,” said Patty; “it’s a lovely day for a walk. Wait till I go in and speak to him, maybe he’ll change his mind;” and she followed her father into the house.

“I can’t bear this any longer;” said Tom to himself. “I’ll have it over this afternoon, or I’ll never come here again. I’ll ask her to be my wife, and if the worst comes to the worst I’ll ship for another cruise.”

Presently Patty came out of the house again. She had thrown a scarf over her shoulders. “Is thee ready to go, Thomas?” said she.

“Yes; I’m ready.”

There was very little talk between them as they walked on side by side, for Tom’s heart was too full of that which was upon his mind to say much with his lips; so they went down the road into the hollow, past the old mill, over the bridge that crossed Stony Brook just beyond, up the hill on the other side, past Whiteley’s farm-house, and so to the further crest of the hill that overlooked Rocky Creek Valley beyond. There they stopped and stood beside the fence at the roadside, looking down into the valley beneath them. It was a fair sight that lay spread out before their eyes – field beyond field, farm-house, barn and orchard, all bathed in the soft yellow sunshine, saving here and there where a cloud cast a purple shadow that moved slowly across the hills and down into the valleys.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” said Patty, as she leaned against the rough fence, looking out across the valley, while the wind stirred the hair at her cheeks and temples.

“Yes; it is;” said Tom, “it’s a goodly world to live in, Patty.”

Then silence fell between them.

“There’s the old Naylor homestead,” said Patty at last.

“Yes; I see it,” said Tom, shortly, glancing as he spoke in the direction which she pointed. Then, after a while, he continued, “What a queer man Isaac Naylor is!”

“I don’t see anything queer about him,” said Patty, looking down at the toe of her shoe.

“Well, I never saw a man like him.”

“He is a very good worthy man, and everybody respects him,” said Patty, warmly.

“Oh! I don’t deny that,” said Tom, with a pang at his heart.

“Thee couldn’t truthfully deny it if thee would, Thomas,” said Patty.

“I’m only a rough sea-faring man,” said Tom. “I don’t know that any one respects me very much.” He waited a moment, but Patty said nothing; then he went on again:

“For all that, I’d rather be a man of thirty at thirty, and not as dead to all things as though I was a man of eighty. Isaac Naylor is more like a man of eighty than he is like one of thirty. No one would take him to be only five years older than I am.”

“I don’t know any man that I respect as much as I do Isaac Naylor,” said Patty. “I don’t like to hear thee talk against him as thee does. He has never spoken ill of thee.”

“Thee need never be afraid of my saying anything more against him,” said Tom, bitterly; “I see that thee likes him more than I thought thee did. I might have known it too, from the way that he has been visiting thee during this last month or two.”

“Why shouldn’t he visit me, Thomas?”

“The Lord knows!”

She made no answer to this, and presently Tom spoke again.

“I’m going off to sea before long, Patty,” said he, for it seemed to him just then that the sea was a fit place for him to be. Patty made no answer to this; she was picking busily at the fringe of the scarf that hung about her shoulders.

“How soon is thee going, Thomas?” said she at last.

“Oh! I don’t know; in three or four weeks, I guess. It doesn’t matter, does it?”

Patty made no reply.

Tom was leaning on the fence, looking out across the valley, but seeing nothing. His mind was in a whirl, for he was saying unto himself, “Now is the time, be a man, speak your heart boldly, for this is the opportunity!”

Twice he tried to bring himself to speak, and twice his heart failed him. The third time that he strove, he broke the silence.

“Patty,” said he. His heart was beating thickly, but there was no turning back now, for the first word had been spoken.

Patty must have had an inkling of what was in Tom’s mind, for her bosom was rising and falling quickly.

“Patty,” said Tom again.

“What is it, Thomas?” said she, in a trembling voice, and without raising her head.

Tom was picking nervously at the rough bark upon the fence-rail near to him, but he was looking at Patty.

“Thee knows why I have been coming to see thee all this time, doesn’t thee, Patty?”

“No,” whispered Patty.

“Thee doesn’t know?”

“No.”

It seemed to Tom as though the beating of his heart would smother him: “Because, – because I love thee, Patty,” said he.

Patty’s head sunk lower and lower, but she neither moved nor spoke.

Then Tom said again, “I love thee, Patty.”

He waited for a while and then he said: “Won’t thee speak to me, Patty?”

“What does thee want me to say?” whispered she.

“Does thee love me?”

Silence.

“Does thee love me?”

Tom was standing very close to her as he spoke; when she answered it was hardly above her breath, but low as the whisper was he caught it —

“Yes.”

Ah me! those days have gone by now, and I am an old man of four score years and more, but even yet my old heart thrills at the remembrance of this that I here write. Manifold troubles and griefs have fallen upon me betwixt then and now; yet, I can say, when one speaks to me of the weariness of this world and of the emptiness of things within it, “Surely, life is a pleasant thing, when it holds such joys in store for us as this, – the bliss of loving and of being loved.”

Half an hour afterward, Tom was walking down the road toward the old mill-house, and in his hand he held the hand of his darling – his first love – and life was very beautiful to him.

CHAPTER III

NOW, although the good people of Eastcaster were very glad to welcome Tom Granger home again whenever he returned from a cruise, at the same time they looked upon him with a certain wariness, or shyness, for they could not but feel that he was not quite one of themselves.

Now-a-days one sees all kinds of strange people; the railroad brings them, – young men who sell dry-goods, books and what not. They have traveled all over the country and have, or think that they have, a world more of knowledge about things in general than other people who are old enough to be their father's father. Such an one I saw this morning, who beat me three games of chequers, which, I own, did vex me; though any one might have done the same, for I was thinking of other things at the time, and my mind was not fixed upon the run of the game. One sees plenty of such people now-a-days, I say, but in the old times it was different, and few strangers came to Eastcaster, so that but little was known of the outside world. The good people liked well enough to hear Tom tell of the many out-of-the-way things that had happened to him during his knocking about in the world; at the same time there was always a feeling amongst them that he was different from themselves. Tom knew that they felt this way, and it made him more shy of going amongst his father's neighbors than he would otherwise have been. Nothing makes a man withdraw within himself as much as the thought that those about him neither understand him nor care to understand him. So it came about that Elihu Penrose was not very much pleased with that which had passed between Tom Granger and his daughter.

As Tom and Patty walked home hand in hand, hardly a word was said betwixt them. When they came to the gate in front of the mill-house they saw that Elihu was not on the porch.

"I'll go in and speak to thy father now, Patty," said Tom.

"Oh, Tom! Will it have to be so soon?" said Patty, in a half-frightened voice.

"The sooner spoken, the sooner over," said Tom, somewhat grimly, for the task was not a pleasant one to do, as those who have passed through the same can tell if they choose.

So Tom went into the house, and Patty sat down on a chair on the porch to wait for his coming out again.

Tom looked in through the half-open door of the dining-room and saw Elihu sitting in his cushioned rocking-chair in front of the smouldering fire, rocking and smoking the while.

"May I come in?" said Tom, standing uncertainly at the door.

"Yes; come in," said Elihu, without moving.

"I have something to tell thee," said Tom.

"Sit down," said Elihu.

Tom would rather have stood up, for he felt easier upon his feet; nevertheless, he sat down as he was bidden, leaning his elbows on his knees and gazing into the crown of his hat, which he held in his hand and turned about this way and that.

Old Elihu Penrose's eyebrows were bushy and thick, and, like his hair, were as white as though he had been in the mill of time, and a part of the flour had fallen upon him. When he was arguing upon religion or politics, and was about to ask some keen question that was likely to trip up the wits of the one with whom he was talking, he had a way of drawing these thick eyebrows together, until he had hidden all of his eyes but the grey twinkle within them. Though Tom did not raise his head, he felt that the old man drew his eyebrows together just in this manner, as he looked upon him where he sat.

Not a word was spoken for some time, and the only sounds that broke the stillness of the room was the regular "creak, creak" of the rocker of the chair on which Elihu sat, and the sharp and deliberate "tick, tack" of the tall, old eight-day clock in the entry.

Old Elihu broke the silence; he blew a thin thread of smoke toward the chimney, and then he said: "What is it thee wants to say to me Thomas?" And yet, I have a notion that he knew very well what it was that Tom was going to tell him.

Then Tom looked up and gazed straight into the grey twinkle of Elihu's eyes, hidden beneath their overhanging brows. "I – I love thy daughter," said he, "and she's promised to be my wife."

Elihu looked at Tom as though he would bore him through and through with the keenness of his gaze, and Tom looked steadfastly back again at him. He felt that Elihu was trying to look him down, and he drew upon all of his strength of spirit not to let his eyes waver for a moment. At last Elihu arose from his chair and knocked the ashes out his pipe into the fire-place.

Then Tom stood up too, for he was not going to give the other the advantage that a standing man has in a talk over one that is seated.

"Thomas," began Elihu, breaking the silence again, and he thrust his hand into his breeches pocket, and began rattling the coppers therein.

"Well?" said Tom.

"I take it thee's a reasonable man; – at least, thee ought to be, after all the knocking around that thee's done."

This did not sound very promising for the talk that was to come. "I hope I'm a reasonable man," said Tom.

"Then I'll speak to thee plainly, and without any beating about the bush; – I'm sorry to hear of this, and I wish that it might have been otherwise."

"Why?"

"I should think that thee might know why, without putting me to the pains of telling thee. We're a plain folk hereabouts, and the son's followed in his father's steps for a hundred and fifty years and more. I suppose that it's an old-fashioned way that we have, but I like it. I'd rather that my daughter had chosen a man that had been contented with the ways of his father, and one that I had seen grow up under my eye, and that I might know that I could rely upon. I've seen little or nothing of thee, since thee ran away to sea, ten or twelve years ago."

"I don't see why that should weigh against me."

"Don't thee?"

"No. My trade isn't farming, to be sure, but such as it is, I work steadily at it. I'm sober; I don't drink, and I trust that I'm no worse than most men of my age."

"That may all be true; I know nothing of thy habits, but this I do know, – that thee ran away from home once; what surety have I that thee won't do it again?" Tom made a motion as though to interrupt him, but Elihu held up his hand; "I know! I know!" said he; "thee don't feel, just now, as though such a thing could happen; but my observation has led me to find that what a man will do once, he may do again. Besides all this, thy trade must unsettle thy life more or less; thee knows the old saying, – 'a rolling stone gathers no moss.'"

"I don't know why a man should want to stay long enough in one place to get moss-grown," said Tom.

"That is all very well," said Elihu Penrose, "but we hereabouts have been content to grow green in the same place that our fathers grew green before us. So, I tell thee plainly, I wish that Patty had chosen some one that I know better than I do thee. Of course, I shan't bridle her choice, but I wish that it had been Isaac Naylor. I believe that she would have chosen him if thee hadn't come home amongst us."

There was a time of silence between them in which both were sunk deeply in thought; then Tom spoke very bitterly: "I see thee don't like me."

"Thee's wrong to say that, Thomas," said Elihu; "I have no dislike for thee at all."

"It looks very much as though thee had."

"I don't see that at all. I want to see my daughter well settled in the world, – that's all."

“I should think that thy daughter’s happiness would weigh more with thee than anything else.”

“It does,” said Elihu, somewhat sternly, “and I hope that I shall know what is best for her happiness without being taught by any man, young or old.”

“I had no thought to teach thee.”

Silence followed this, till, after a while, Elihu spoke again. “However,” said he, “all this is neither here nor there; Patty’s chosen thee from amongst the rest, and she must lie upon the bed that she’s made for herself, for I don’t see that I can justly interfere. I can only make myself sure that thee is able to support a wife, before thee marries her. How much does thee make a year?”

“About five hundred for pay. Maybe I could make a couple of hundred more in the way of trade here and there, if I keep my wits about me.”

“Does thy trade bring thee in forty dollars a month now?”

“About that.”

Elihu, sunk in thought, looked at Tom for a while, without speaking. Tom stood looking at his finger-tips, very unhappy and troubled in his mind. After a while the absent look left Elihu’s eyes, and he spoke again.

“Thomas,” said he, “I have no wish to be hard on thee, or any man in the world. It’s not thee, but thy trade, that don’t please me. If thee was living quietly at home, like thy brothers John and William, I’d be glad to give my daughter to thy father’s son, for he and I have been old friends, and have known each other since we were boys together. However, I’m not prepared to say that thee shall not marry Patty, so I’ll make a proposition to thee. If thee’ll show me seven hundred and fifty dollars of thy own earning at the end of a year’s time, I am willing that thee shall have her. Is that fair?”

“Yes; I suppose it is,” said Tom.

“Very well. Show me seven hundred and fifty dollars at the end of a year’s time from to-day, and I’ll give thee leave to marry Patty. Farewell.”

“May I see Patty now?”

“I reckon so. There’s no reason that thee shouldn’t see her that I know of.”

Then Tom left the room. He found Patty sitting on the porch when he went out. He was feeling very bitter, for his talk with Elihu had not been of the pleasantest kind. It seemed to have taken much of the joy out of his new happiness, for the grudging words of Elihu’s consent had stung his pride very sharply. Therefore there was a smack of bitterness in his joy that spoilt the savor of the whole. He sat down by Patty without a word, and began rubbing his palm slowly over the end of the arm of the chair on which he was sitting, looking down at it moodily the while. It was both weak and selfish in him to give way to such feelings at such a time, but love is a subtle joy that only one false chord will jar the whole out of tune, and, for the time, there will be discord in the heart.

Patty sat looking at him, as though waiting for him to speak.

“Thy father don’t seem much pleased with this, Patty,” said he, at last.

“Never mind, Tom,” said Patty, and her little hand slid over and rested softly upon his own; “he’ll like it when he is more used to the thought of it. Father’s queer, and sometimes harsh in his ways, but his heart is all right. No one could be more kind and loving than he is to me. When he finds how dear thee is to me, he’ll like thee for my sake, if for nothing else. After a while he will be as proud of thee as though thee were his own son.”

“I hope that he will like me better, as time goes on,” said Tom, but the tone of his voice said, “I don’t believe he will.”

“Yes; his liking will come all in good time, Tom;” then, very softly, “Isn’t thee happy, Tom?”

“Yes; I’m happy,” said Tom, but in truth, his words belied his thoughts a little, and his voice, I think, must have somewhat belied his words.

“Tom,” said Patty, and he looked up. She looked bravely and lovingly into his eyes; “I am very happy,” said she, in a low voice.

“God bless thee, Patty!” said Tom, in a voice that trembled a little; “thee’s a good girl, – too good a girl for me. I’m afraid I’m not worthy of thee.”

“I’m satisfied,” said Patty, quietly. “Tell me; what did father say to thee, Thomas?”

Then Tom told all that had passed, and the telling of it seemed to blow away the dark clouds of his moodiness; for, as he talked, it did not seem to him that the old man’s words had been as bitter as he had felt them to be at the time. After all, he had said nothing but what he should have said, considering that it behooved him to see his daughter well settled in the world.

“Thee *can* earn seven hundred and fifty dollars in a year’s time, can’t thee, Thomas?”

“I hope so.”

“Then it’ll only be waiting a year, and that isn’t a long time, Tom, is it? Thee’ll find me just the same when thee comes back again.” Patty talked very bravely; – I believe that she talked more bravely than she felt, for her eyes were bright with tears, beneath the lids.

“It’s pretty hard to have to leave thee so soon,” said Tom. “I’ll have to leave thee soon if I’m to earn all that money in a year’s time.”

Both were sunk in thought for a while. “How long will it be before thee starts, Tom?” said Patty, presently.

“Not longer than a week, I guess.”

Patty looked at him long and earnestly, and then the tears brimmed in her eyes. Poor girl! What happiness it would have been to her, if she could have had Tom with her for a while, while their joy was still fresh and new. The sight of her tears melted away all the little bitterness that was still in Tom’s heart; he drew her to him, and she hid her face in his breast and cried. As he held her silently, in his arms, it seemed to him that their love had not brought them much happiness, so far.

After a while, she stopped crying, but she still lay with her face on his shoulder.

As Tom walked home that afternoon, he met Isaac Naylor coming down the mill-road from the turnpike. He knew that Isaac was going straight to Penrose’s house.

“How is thee, Thomas?” said he, as they passed one another.

Tom stared at him, but said never a word. He turned and looked after Isaac as the Friend walked briskly down the road that led through the woods to the mill.

“Never mind, friend Isaac,” said he, half-aloud, “the father may like thee better than he does me, but the daughter’s mine.” A thrill darted through his heart as he said this, for it made him realize that she was indeed his, and his alone. It was the last time that he saw Isaac for a year and a half.

Tom went straight to his mother and told her everything. A mother is nearer to her son in such matters than a father, for there is more in a woman’s sympathy than there is in a man’s. If he had had any trouble in regard to money matters, he would, no doubt, have gone to his father; but troubles like these that were upon him were more fitted for his mother’s ears.

“I wish thee’d never run away to sea,” said Tom’s mother.

“I wish so too,” said Tom; “but it can’t be helped now. I did run away to sea, and there’s an end of it.”

“Can’t thee find some way of making a living at home? Maybe Elihu Penrose would like thee better than he does if thee could stay at home, as other young men do.”

“How can I make a living at home?” said Tom, bitterly. “Can thee tell me of any way to make it?”

“No; but something might turn up.”

“I can’t wait for the chance of something turning up. I have seven hundred and fifty dollars to make in twelve months’ time.”

Neither of them spoke for a while. Tom sat beside his mother, and she was holding his hand and softly stroking it the while.

“Mother,” said Tom, at last.

“Well, son?”

“Does thee know what I’ve pretty well made up my mind to do?”

“What?”

“To go to Philadelphia on the stage to-morrow morning, and to take the first berth that I can get.”

“Oh, Thomas! thee wouldn’t go so soon, surely! What would Patty do?”

“Patty would have to bear it, mother. She’ll have to bear it, anyhow. It’ll be just as hard to leave to-morrow week as it will to-morrow. The sooner I leave the sooner I’ll be back, thee knows.”

All this was very reasonable, but, nevertheless, his heart failed him at the thought of leaving. “Of course,” he burst out, after a while, “of course, it’s as hard for me to go as it is for her to have me go.”

“I don’t know that, Thomas,” said his mother, in a trembling voice. “Thy life will be full of work and change. Patty will have nothing to do but to think of thee.”

“Well, all the same, its hard to leave her, and the knowledge that she will suffer don’t make it any the easier for me.”

He got up and began walking restlessly up and down the room. Presently he stopped in front of his mother.

“Yes, mother,” said he, “I’ll go on the stage to-morrow morning. There’s no use putting it off any longer, and I’d be a coward to do so.”

Then his mother put her handkerchief to her face, and the tears that she was keeping back came very freely.

The next morning at half-past seven o’clock Tom knocked at the door of Elihu Penrose’s house. The mill-house was about three-quarters of a mile from the turnpike, and as he had to meet the stage there about eight o’clock, he had only a few minutes in which to say farewell.

He walked straight into the dining-room. Patty was busy putting away the breakfast dishes, and Elihu sat at his old brass-handled desk, footing up his accounts. He looked up as Tom came in, and the color flew into Patty’s cheeks.

“Thee’s beginning thy courting early in the morning, Thomas,” said Elihu, dryly.

Tom vouchsafed no answer to this. He stood leaning against the door-frame, and his eyes were fixed upon Patty.

“I’m going to leave home this morning,” said he.

Neither of the three spoke for a moment or two. Tom stood looking at Patty, his hands clasped in front of him, feeling unutterably miserable. Elihu had arisen from his chair, and he and Patty were gazing at Tom, surprised at the suddenness of what he had told them. Then Elihu came forward and laid his hand on Tom’s shoulder.

“Thomas,” said he, “does thee mean that thee is going – ”

“I mean that I’m going to leave Eastcaster for a year,” said Tom.

“This is – this is very sudden, Thomas,” said he.

Tom nodded his head.

“Come, Thomas; I had no wish to be harsh with thee yesterday,” said the old man. “I don’t want to push thee to the wall. This is very sudden. Put off thy going for a week or two. Look here – even if thee don’t bring me the seven hundred and fifty dollars just at the end of the year, I won’t count it against thee.”

“It’s too late now,” said Tom. “My chest’s packed, and father’s going to put it on the stage for me. I’ll not be unmanly and put off the going, now that everything is fixed for it. If I’d have known how thee felt yesterday, I don’t deny that I might have stayed a little while longer. But it won’t do to stop now that I’ve started.”

All this he spoke without looking at Elihu. Elihu took his hand from Tom’s shoulder. He stood for a moment as though he were about to say something farther; then he slowly picked up his hat and left the room, and Tom and Patty were alone.

In about a quarter of an hour the old man came back again. Tom looked up at the clock. It was a quarter to eight, and he knew that the time was come for him to go. Patty and he had been sitting on the sofa, holding one another's hand. They had been silent for some time, and they both arose without a word.

Tom stood looking long and earnestly at Patty. Her face was bowed upon her breast. "Patty, my darling," whispered he, and then she looked up.

Her eyes were brimming with the tears that she had kept so bravely hidden until now, and then two bright drops ran slowly down her cheeks.

"Farewell, my darling," murmured he, in a low, broken voice. He drew her to him, and their lips met in one long kiss. Then he turned, and ran out of the house. He did not say farewell to Elihu, for he could not have spoken the words, if he had tried to do so.

Ah, me! The searching pain of such a parting! Surely, the Good Father would never have put us on this world to live the life here, were it not that there is a world and a life to come wherein such partings shall never be. He hath given that the birds of the air and the beasts of the field shall not suffer dread of grief to come, and but little sorrow for things gone by. Why, then, should He give it to us, His goodliest creatures, to bear these things, if nothing of good or evil was to come of such suffering hereafter?

CHAPTER IV

THESE things happened in the spring of '13, and the war with England was in full swing. We thought that we knew a great deal about the war at Eastcaster, but we really knew little or nothing of it.

The Philadelphia stage brought down the *Ledger* from that town three times a week, and Joseph Anderson, the teacher at the Friends' school, would read it aloud at the "Black Horse" tavern (it was the "Crown and Angel" then) in the evening. A great many came to hear the news, and it was said that the tavern did a driving business at the time; for, of course, no one could come and sit there all evening and drink nothing.

The folks talked with great knowledge about the war; some of them so wisely that it was a pity that poor President Madison did not have the chance to hear them.

The truth of the matter was that Eastcaster was too far away from deep water to feel the full heat and excitement of the trouble.

The part that interested Tom the most was the news that came now and then of the great sea battles; that being the year that the noble old *Constitution* did her best fighting.

When Tom Granger came to Philadelphia, he found matters at a very different pass from what they were in Eastcaster, for there was talk just at that time of Commodore Beresford sailing up the river to bombard the town; so Tom found the streets full of people and everything in great ferment, as it had been for some time past.

Just outside of the town, the stage passed near to where two regiments of militia were encamped – one of them not far from Grey's Ferry.

The next morning after Tom came to Philadelphia, he called at the office of old Mr. Nicholas Lovejoy, who was the owner of the ship in which he had last sailed. It was the *Quaker City*, and Tom had had the berth of third mate aboard her, which was a higher grade than he had ever held up to that time.

Mr. Lovejoy, beside being the owner of two good ships himself, one of which, Tom had reason to think, was then lying at the docks, had a great deal of influence with other merchants and ship owners. He had always been very friendly to Tom, and had said pleasant things of him and to him more than once, so Tom had great hopes of getting a berth through him without much loss of time.

His wish was to ship to the West Indies, if he could, as that did not seem so far away from home.

Mr. Lovejoy was at his desk when Tom came into the office; a great pile of letters and papers were in front of him, which he was busy in looking over. He shook hands cordially with the young man and bade him be seated. Tom told him what he wanted, and Mr. Lovejoy listened to him very pleasantly. When he was done, the old gentleman said frankly that there was a poor chance of his getting any berth just then, for that no shipping was being done, the Delaware having been blockaded since the first of the year.

Mr. Lovejoy did not know at that time that the blockade had been raised, for it was not until a week or so afterward that the despatch came to Philadelphia telling how Beresford had tried to land for water at Lewestown, in Delaware, and not being able to do so, had given up the whole business as an ill piece of work and had sailed away to the Bermudas.

Mr. Lovejoy furthermore told Tom that there were three privateers being fitted up at the docks, one of which was about ready to sail.

In those days there was a great deal of feeling against privateering, and I cannot say that it was altogether ill-grounded, for some very cloudy things were done by certain vessels that sailed under letters of marque.

Mr. Lovejoy was a fine looking old gentleman, with a very red face and very white hair, which was tied behind into a queue with a black silk ribbon. He was never seen dressed in anything but

plain black clothes with bright silver buttons, black silk stockings and pumps. His frilled shirt front stood out like a half moon and was stiffly starched and as white as snow.

After Tom and he had talked a little while together, he arose, and going to a closet in the side of the chimney place, brought out a decanter of fine old sherry and two glasses, both of which he filled. Tom Granger was not fond of wine, not from any conscientious feeling, but because that the taste was not pleasant to him. Still, he took his glass of wine and drank it too, for it is never well to decline favors from men in power, like Mr. Nicholas Lovejoy.

After the old gentleman had finished his glass of wine, he drew out his fine cambric handkerchief and wiped his lips.

“Tom,” said he.

“Sir,” said Tom.

“Why don’t you ship on board of a privateersman?”

“I couldn’t do it, sir,” said Tom.

“Why not?”

“Well, sir; it may sound very foolish of me to say so, but the truth is that I don’t like the fighting.”

“Don’t like the fighting!” said Mr. Lovejoy, raising his eyebrows. “Come, Tom, that won’t do. Why, when that junk attacked the *Quaker City* off Ceylon, there was not a man aboard that fought like you. Captain Austin told me all about it, though you would never do so, and I haven’t forgotten it. And now you pretend to tell me that you are afraid.”

“No, sir,” said Tom Granger, very hot about the ears; “it ain’t that; it’s the *kind* of fighting that I don’t like. When such a junkfull of coolies as that was came down on us, a man was bound to fight for his own life and the lives (and more beside) of the women aboard, and there was no great credit to him in doing it. If the worst came to the worst, I wouldn’t so much mind entering the navy, but I don’t like the notion of going out to run foul of some poor devil of a merchant captain, who, maybe, has all of his fortune in his ship, – and that’s the truth sir.”

“But, Tom, the navy does the same thing.”

“Yes, sir,” said Tom, “but they do it for the sake of war, while privateers go out for their own gain alone. I don’t see, sir, that they are so very much better than pirates, except that they don’t do so much murder and that the law allows them.”

At this, Mr. Lovejoy’s face began to grow a little bit redder than usual. “Very well,” said he, getting up and standing with his back to the fire, “suit yourself.”

By this Tom knew that it was intended for him to go, which he accordingly did.

Just as he got to the door, Mr. Lovejoy spoke again: “Look’ee, Tom, you are an able seaman, – none better. Think this matter over a little more, and if you are inclined to go on a privateering cruise, after all, I think that I may, perhaps, be able to get you a place aboard of as tight a craft as ever floated on salt water, and, maybe, a better berth than you ever had in your life before. There are some fat pickings down toward the West Indies just now; I shouldn’t wonder at all if, with the berth that I think I can get you, you would clear a thousand or twelve hundred dollars in the first twelve months. Good morning; come to-morrow and let me know what you decide on.” Then the old gentleman seated himself at the desk and began to look over his papers again, and Tom left him.

He went straight to his lodging-house (it was the old “Ship and Anchor,” a great place for sailors in those days), and his mind was all of a swirl and eddy like the waters astern.

It was a nasty, drizzly, muggy day, and Tom stood leaning on the window-sill in the bar-room, trying to look out into the street through the dirty, fly-specked window. The room was full of sailors, many of them, no doubt, belonging to the privateers that were fitting out at the docks, of which Mr. Lovejoy had spoken. There was a party of them playing cards at a sloppy table that stood beside the bar. The day was so dark with the rainy drizzle that they had a lighted candle amongst them, so that they might be able to see the game. The room, hazy with tobacco smoke, was full of the noise of loud talking and the air was reeking with the heavy smell of hot liquors. But, Tom stood looking out

of the window, with his mind all of a toss and a tumble; for the last words of old Nicholas Lovejoy sounded in his ears through all the loud talking and foul words: – “I shouldn’t wonder if you would clear a thousand or twelve hundred dollars in the first twelve months.”

At times they sounded so clearly that he could almost believe that they were spoken by some one standing beside him. The more that the words rang in his ears, the more he thought what a fool he had been in not taking up with Mr. Lovejoy’s half offer. Why should he be squeamish? If every one were so, things would come to a pretty pass, for the navy was weak – in numbers – and the British were sending out their privateers all over the ocean; and who was to fight them and protect our own shipping if no one helped the navy?

So Tom argued within himself in the most reasonable way in the world, for the temptation was very great.

As he stood thus, looking out of the window and seeing nothing, for his eyes were turned within himself, some one suddenly smote him upon the shoulder, and a voice roared in his ear, “Helloa, Tom Granger! where are you bound?”

It was a voice that Tom Granger knew very well, for there could be no other such in all of the world; it made one’s ears quiver, even when it was softened somewhat to talking. So, even before Tom turned his head, he knew that Jack Baldwin was standing behind him.

Jack Baldwin had been second mate of the *Quaker City* on the voyage to the East Indies.

Tom Granger never saw in all his life such another man as Jack Baldwin. He stood nearly six feet and two inches in his stockings. His hair and beard were black and curly, and his eyes were as black as two beads. Tom once saw him pick up a mutinous sailor – a large and powerful man – and shake him as you might shake a kitten. To be sure, he was in a rage at the time. He was better dressed than Tom had ever seen him before. There was something of a half naval smack about his toggery, and, altogether, he looked sleek and prosperous, – very different from what Jack ashore does as a rule.

Jack Baldwin saw that Tom Granger was looking him over. “I’m on the crest of the wave now,” said he, in his great, deep voice, grinning as he spoke. “Look’ee, Tom,” and he fetched up a gold eagle from out of his breeches pocket. He spun it up into the air, and caught it in his palm again as it fell. “There’s plenty more of the same kind where this came from, Tom.”

“I wish that I only knew where the tree that they grow on is to be found,” said Tom, ruefully.

“So you shall, my hearty. And do you want me to tell you where it is?”

“Yes.”

“Tom, you’re a loon!”

“Why so? Because I want to know where the tree grows where gold eagles may be had for the picking?”

“You were at the place this very blessed morning, and might have gathered a pocketful of the bright boys if you hadn’t run before a little wind as though it was a hurricane.”

“What do you mean?” said Tom, though he half knew without the asking.

“That I’ll tell you – here, you, bring me a glass of hot brandy and water; will you splice, Tom?”

“Not I.”

“I bring to mind that you were always called the Quaker aboard ship, and the name fits you well. You will neither fight nor drink, without you have to.”

So the grog was brought, and Jack Baldwin and Tom Granger sat down, opposite to one another, at a rickety deal table.

Presently Jack leaned over and laid his hand on Tom’s arm. “Where do you think I hail from, Tom?” said he.

“I don’t know.”

“Well, I’ll tell you: from old Nick, or old Lovejoy, or Davy Jones, – whichever you choose to call him. I was with him not ten minutes after you left. He sent me after you, to hunt you up; so I

came straight here, like a hot shot, for I knew I'd find you in the old place. Sure enough, I've found you, and here we are, – shipmates both.”

“And what did you want of me?”

“That I'll tell you. Tom,” – here he lowered his voice to a deep rumble – “have you seen the *Nancy Hazlewood*?”

“No.”

“Well I'll show her to you after a bit. She is lying in the river, just below Smith's Island. She's the new privateer.”

Tom's heart beat more quickly, but he only said, “Is she?”

“Who do you think's the owner, Tom?”

“How should I know?”

“Old Lovejoy!” Here Jack raised his glass of grog, and took a long pull at it, looking over the rim at Tom all the while. Tom was looking down, picking hard at the corner of the table.

“I don't see that this is any concern of mine,” he said, in a low voice.

“Don't you? Well, I'll tell you what concern it is of yours; I'm to be first mate, and I want you to be second, – and now the murder's out!”

Tom shook his head, but he said nothing.

Jack Baldwin slid his palm down, until it rested on the back of Tom's hand. “Look'ee, Tom Granger,” said he, roughly; “I like you. We've been messmates more than once, and I don't forget how you kept that yellow coolie devil from jabbing his d – d snickershee into my back, over off Ceylon. There's no man in all the world that I'd as soon have for a shipmate as you. Old Lovejoy, too; – he says that he must have you. He knows very well that there isn't a better seaman living than the one that stands in Tom Granger's shoes. Don't be a fool! Go to the old man, name your own figure, for he'll close with you at any reasonable terms.”

So Jack talked and talked, and Tom listened and listened, and the upshot of it was that he promised to go and see old Mr. Lovejoy again the next morning.

You may easily guess how it all turned out, for when a man not only finds that he is in temptation, but is willing to be there, he is pretty sure to end by doing that which he knows is not right.

So Tom drank another glass of Mr. Lovejoy's fine old sherry, the old gentleman offered liberal terms, and the end of the matter was that Tom promised to enter as second mate of the *Nancy Hazlewood*, privateersman.

Tom Granger has always felt heartily ashamed of himself because of the way that he acted in this matter. It is not that privateering was so bad; I pass no judgment on that, and I know that there were many good men in that branch of the service.

I have always held that a man is not necessarily wicked because he does a bad action; he may not know that it is bad, and then, surely, no blame can be laid to his account. But when he feels that a thing is evil, he is wrong in doing it, whether it is evil or not.

Jack Baldwin did nothing wrong in going on this privateering cruise, for he saw nothing wrong in it, but Tom Granger thought that it was wrong, and yet did it; therefore he has always felt ashamed of himself.

In looking back, after all these years, it is hard to guess what he expected would be the end of the matter. If he had come back in a year's time, – which he did not do, – and if he had brought home a thousand dollars of prize money from a privateering cruise, I am very much inclined to think that Elihu Penrose would hardly have judged that it had been fairly earned.

Friends were very much more strict in their testimony against war then than they are now. Numbers of young men went from here during the rebellion, and nothing was thought of it. I myself had a grandson in the navy; – he is a captain now.

As I said, Elihu Penrose would hardly have fancied Tom Granger's way of earning money, if it had been won in that way; as for what Patty would have said and done, – I do not like to think of it.

However, it is no use trying to guess at the color of the chicks that addled eggs might have hatched out, so I will push on with my story, and tell how the *Nancy Hazlewood* put to sea, and what befell her there.

CHAPTER V

THE *Nancy Hazlewood* put to sea on a Friday. Tom Granger was not over fanciful in the matter of signs and omens; nevertheless, he always had a nasty feeling about sailing on that day; he might reason with himself that it was foolish, but the feeling was there, and was not to be done away with. The only other time that he had sailed on a Friday, was in the barque *Manhattan* (Captain Nathan J. Wild), bound for Nassau, with a cargo of wheat. About a week afterward, she put back into New York harbor again, and not a day too soon, either. Captain Granger has often told the tale of this short cruise, so I will not tell it over again, as it has nothing to do with this story, except to show why it was that Tom Granger always had an ill-feeling about sailing on Friday.

As a matter of fact, there was a greater and a better reason to feel worried than on account of this, for the truth was, that the *Nancy Hazlewood* put to sea fully ten days before she should have done so, and from that arose most of the trouble.

The blame in the matter belonged no more to one than to another, for all thought that it was for the best to weigh anchor when they did; nevertheless, it was a mistake, and a very sad mistake.

There never was any wish to cast a slur on the memory of Captain Knight, in the account of the matter that was afterward published, for no one ever said, to my knowledge, that he was anything else than a good seaman, and knew his business. But certainly, his headstrong wilfulness in the matter of the troubles that befell the ship was, to say the least, very blameworthy.

Tom saw nothing of Captain Knight until the day before the ship sailed. Indeed, the captain had not been in town, so far as he knew. This had troubled him. He had said nothing about it, but it had troubled him.

About noon on Thursday, the day before the ship sailed, Tom came to Lovejoy's dock, where he was overseeing the lading of some stores. One of the clerks at the dock told him that Captain Knight had been aboard of the ship, and also that he had wanted to see him, and had waited for him some time, but had gone about fifteen minutes before. A little while afterward Mr. Whimple, Mr. Lovejoy's head-clerk, came to him and asked him to step up to the office, as Captain Knight and Mr. Lovejoy were there, and wanted to speak to him.

Captain Knight was standing in front of the fire, talking with Mr. Lovejoy, when Tom came into the office. He shook hands very heartily when Mr. Lovejoy made them acquainted, and said some kind things to Tom – that he had no doubt but that their intercourse would be pleasant; at least, he hoped so (smiling), for, from that which he had heard of Tom, he felt that it would be his own fault if it were not. He said that he was sorry that he had not been on hand to oversee matters, as he should have done, although he knew that these things could be in no better hands; that his mother had been so sick that she had not been expected to live, and that it had not been possible for him to come on from Connecticut sooner.

Tom felt relieved to find that Captain Knight had such a good reason for not having been on hand to see to the proper lading of his vessel. He also gathered from this speech that the captain was a Yankee, which he had not known before. Jack Baldwin told him afterward that he hailed from New London, and had the name of being a very good sailor and a great fighter.

He was quite a young man, a little older than Tom, perhaps, but hardly as old as Jack Baldwin. He was a fine gentlemanly fellow, and looked not unlike a picture of Commodore Decatur that Tom had seen in the window of a print shop in Walnut street, though Knight was the younger man.

After a short time Jack Baldwin came into the office; Captain Knight and he spoke to one another, for they had met before.

Presently, as they all stood talking together, Mr. Lovejoy asked of a sudden whether it would be possible, at a pinch, to weigh anchor the next day.

Tom was struck all aback at this, and could hardly believe that he heard aright.

“I should think,” said Captain Knight, “that it might be done;” and, from the way in which he spoke, Tom could see that he and Mr. Lovejoy had already talked the matter over and had pretty well settled it between themselves.

“What do you think, Mr. Baldwin,” said old Mr. Lovejoy, and all looked at Jack for an answer.

“I think, sir,” said Jack, in his rough way, “I think, sir, as Captain Knight says, that it *might* be done. A man might cruise from here to Cochin China, in a dory, provided that he had enough hard-tack and water aboard. If he met a gale, though, he would be pretty sure to go to the bottom, – and so should we.”

Tom could easily see that Captain Knight was touched at the way in which Jack had spoken, as well he might be. It was, however, Jack’s usual way of speaking, and it is not likely that he meant anything by it.

“What do *you* think, Mr. Granger?” said Captain Knight, turning quickly to Tom, with a little red spot burning in each cheek.

Tom was sorry that he was brought into the matter, for he saw, as has been said, that Captain Knight was touched, and he did not want to say anything to gall him further. However, he answered, as he was asked: “I am afraid, sir,” said he, smiling, “that it may perhaps be a little risky to weigh anchor just yet.” Of course, he could not explain when it was not asked of him to do so, but he knew that it would take fully ten days, if not two weeks, to get the *Nancy Hazlewood* into anything like fit sailing trim. Not only were the decks hampered up with a mass of stores of all kinds (for it had been necessary to crowd them aboard in a great hurry), but no start had been made at drawing out watch, quarter and station bills. Tom could not help thinking that if Captain Knight had been on hand during the past week, he never would have given it as his opinion that the vessel was fit to sail, – even on a pinch.

When Tom gave his answer, Captain Knight turned hastily away to the fire-place, and began in a nervous sort of a way to finger a letter-stamp that lay on the mantle-shelf. Any one could see that he was very much irritated; but in a few moments he turned around again, and seemed quiet enough, only that the red still burned in his cheeks. Mr. Lovejoy tried to throw oil on the troubled water.

“Mr. Granger,” said he, resting his hand ever so lightly on Tom’s arm for a moment, “Mr. Granger has had a great deal to do this past week, and maybe (smiling) the overpress of work makes him think that there is more yet to be done than there really is. I wouldn’t,” said he, taking up a letter from his desk, “I wouldn’t think for a moment, and neither would Captain Knight, of letting the *Hazlewood* leave her anchorage just now, if it were not for this packet, which was sent to me this morning, about half-past ten o’clock.”

Here he handed the packet to Jack Baldwin, who read it, and then passed it to Tom without a word. It was the news that Beresford had lifted the blockade of the Delaware.

“You see,” said Mr. Lovejoy, “here is a good chance of getting away. There is no knowing how soon John Bull will shut the door again, and then, here we’ll be penned up for six months, or more, perhaps.”

Then Captain Knight spoke again. He said that while the ship might not be in fit trim for sailing in an ordinary case, some risks must be run with her, for risks, greater or less, must always be taken in this sort of service. He said that he proposed to run for the Capes, and put into Lewes Harbor if the weather seemed likely to be heavy. They could get in proper trim there just as easily as they could in Philadelphia. He also said that, being just inside of the Capes, they would not only have good harborage, but could either slip out to sea or run up the bay, in case that any of the enemy’s cruisers should appear in the offing. Another great advantage was that they would be this much further on their cruise, and, if the weather turned out well, could take their chances and run for Key West, even if the ship were not in the best of order.

“I know,” said he, “that both Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Granger have been bred to caution in the merchant service, where cargoes and storage are almost the first things to consider, but” (here he

looked straight at Jack), “one must have some courage in the sort of service that we are about to enter upon, for a lack of that is almost as great a fault as poor seamanship.”

There was a great deal of reason in the first part of this speech, and Tom could not help seeing it, though for all that he was troubled at the step which they seemed about to take. As for what was last said, he felt that it was most uncalled for, for he knew that Jack Baldwin was as brave as any man living; nor was he, I think, a coward.

Jack was very angry. He said that if any occasion should arise, he hoped to show Captain Knight that he would dare to do as much as any man that ever walked a deck-plank, no matter whom he might be; that he would say no more about lying in port, and was now willing to sail at any time – the sooner the better.

Poor old Mr. Lovejoy was very much troubled at the ill feeling between the two men. He talked to both very kindly until, after a while, the trouble seemed to clear away somewhat, and things went more smoothly.

At last it was settled that if the wind held to the northward (it had been blowing from that quarter for the last two days) they should weigh anchor at three o'clock in the afternoon, so as to take advantage of the ebb tide, and run down as far as Lewestown harbor at least.

“What do you say to all this, Tom?” said Jack, as the two walked down to the dock together.

“I say nothing, Jack.”

“It seems to me that you never do say anything,” said Jack, “but *I* say something; I say that we are all a pack of lubberly fools, and that the worst one amongst us is that walking sea dandy, for he ought to know better.”

Tom could not but agree with a part of this speech, but he made no answer, for it could do no good.

The anchor was weighed at three o'clock the next day as had been fixed upon, and they ran down the river with the wind E. N. E. and an ebb tide to help them along; and so began the cruise of the *Nancy Hazlewood*.

All this may seem to be spun out somewhat over long, but I tell it to you that you may see just why the *Nancy Hazlewood* sailed when she did, which was ten days before she should have done. The day of sailing was Friday, the 20th of April, 1813.

Tom wrote a letter to Patty Penrose on the evening before he sailed. It was a long letter and he told her many things, but he did not tell her that the vessel in which he had sailed as second mate was a privateersman.

It may be well that the *Nancy Hazlewood* should be described, that you may have a notion of the craft in which Tom Granger went upon his first and last privateering cruise. She was a full-rigged ship of five hundred and fifty tons, and, though so small, had a poop and a top-gallant fore-castle.

Tom had rarely seen a vessel with handsomer lines.

She was evidently intended for great speed, though, in his judgment, she was rather heavily sparred for a vessel of her size. It afterward proved that she was so. She carried eight thirty-two pound carronades on the main deck, and two long twelves, one on the fore-castle and one on the poop; and about one hundred men. Altogether, though not so heavily armed as the *Dolphin* or *Comet* of Baltimore, she was one of the most substantial as well as one of the swiftest privateersmen that ever left any port of the country during the war.

As a rule, privateersmen were swift-sailing brigs or schooners, heavily armed and manned, and depending largely upon their prizes for provisions; but the *Nancy Hazlewood* was fitted out almost as completely as though she were in the regular service.

All that night and during Saturday the 21st it blew heavily from the N. E. On Saturday evening, however, the weather broke and there seemed a prospect of its being clear the next day. On Sunday forenoon at two bells the *Nancy Hazlewood* was nearly abreast of Lewestown harbor. Captain Knight

was on the poop at the time, and he gave orders to Tom, who was the officer of the deck, that a craft should be signaled to take off the pilot.

Tom was struck all aback at this; it was the first hint that he had had that Captain Knight did not intend to put into Lewestown harbor after all. It was in rather an uncomfortable state of mind that he gave the needful orders, had the jack run up at the fore and the vessel hove to.

Captain Knight stood beside Tom, his hands clasped behind him, watching the pilot boat as it presently hoisted sail and bore down under the lee quarter. What his feelings were cannot be told; Tom's were uncomfortable enough, as has been said. He knew that Captain Knight must have had good and sufficient reason for that which he was about to do; nevertheless, his heart sank as he cast his eyes around and saw the confusion everywhere; the deck littered with all sort of gear and hamper. There is an old saying that a vessel is never ready for sea until a week after leaving port. Tom thought that the *Nancy Hazlewood* was at least three weeks behind time.

Presently Jack Baldwin came up from below. He cast his eyes quickly aloft, and then he looked at the pilot boat, which was now close under the lee quarter.

Tom could see that he took it all in in a moment.

He came straight across the deck to where Captain Knight and Tom Granger were standing, and touched his hat to the captain.

"Captain Knight," said he.

"Sir?" said the captain, turning quickly upon him.

"The understanding was that we were to put into Lewes Harbor, for a time; at least, so I understood it. May I ask if you intend to put to sea, after all?"

Tom stood aghast. He had never heard an officer speak to his captain in such a way in all his life before. There was no better seaman afloat than Jack Baldwin, and it must have been a serious case, in his opinion, that would excuse him in so addressing his commanding officer.

As for Captain Knight, he grew white to the lips.

He spoke in a low tone, and very slowly, but his voice trembled with the weight of his anger. "Mr. Baldwin," said he, "I don't know where you have sailed, or what discipline you have seen, that has taught you to allow yourself to question your captain's intentions to your captain's self. Understand me, sir, once and for all: I am the chief officer of this ship, and I will not have you, nor any man aboard, question me. You hear me? That will do, sir; go to your room."

The two men looked at one another for a moment. Tom held his breath, expecting to hear Jack blaze out with something that would get him into more trouble than ever. However, he said nothing, but swung on his heel and went below.

Captain Knight stood beside Tom, in silence, his breath coming and going quickly; suddenly, he too turned and walked hastily to the cabin, banging the door behind him.

Tom leaned on the rail, sick at heart; he felt miserable about the whole matter. Here he was, embarked on a cruise for which he had no liking, in the stormy season of the year, in a ship which he believed to be unfit for sailing, with a crew that had no discipline, and the captain and the first mate at loggerheads before they were out of harbor. He would have given an eye to be safe ashore again.

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