Reid Mayne

Lost Lenore: The Adventures of a Rolling Stone

Томас Майн Рид

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Майн Рид Т.

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Содержание

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Volume One – Chapter One.
Family Affairs

The first important event of my life transpired on the 22nd May, 1831. On that day I was born.

Six weeks after, another event occurred which no doubt exerted an influence over my destiny: I was christened Rowland Stone.

From what I have read of ancient history – principally as given by the Jews – I have reason to think, that I am descended from an old and illustrious family. No one can refute the evidence I have for believing that some of my ancestors were in existence many hundred years ago.

The simple fact that I am in existence now is sufficient proof that my family is of a descent, ancient and noble, as that of any other on earth.

Perhaps there is no family, in its wanderings and struggles towards remotest posterity, that has not experienced every vicissitude of fortune; sometimes standing in the ranks of the great; and in the lapse of ages descending to the lower strata of the social scale, and there becoming historically lost.

I have not yet found it recorded, that any individual of the family to which I belong ever held a very high position – not, in fact, since one of them named Noah constructed a peculiar kind of sailing craft, of which he was full owner, and captain.

It was my misfortune to be brought into existence at a period of the world's history, when my father would be thought by many to be a man in "humble circumstances of life." He used to earn an honest living by hard work.

He was a saddle and harness-maker in an obscure street in the city of Dublin, and his name was William Stone.

When memory dwells on my father, pride swells up in my soul: for he was an honest, temperate, and industrious man, and was very kind to my mother and his children. I should be an unworthy son, not to feel pride at the remembrance of such a father!

There was nothing very remarkable in the character of my mother. I used to think different once, but that was before I had arrived at the age of reason. I used to think that she delighted to thwart my childish inclinations – more than was necessary for her own happiness or mine. But this was probably a fault of my wayward fancy. I am willing to think so now.

I was a little wilful, and no doubt caused her much trouble. I am inclined to believe, now that she treated me kindly enough – perhaps better than I deserved.

I remember, that, up to the time I was eight years of age, it was the work of two women to put a clean shirt on my back, and the operation was never performed by them without a long and violent struggle. This remembrance, along with several others of a like nature, produces upon me the impression, that my parents must have humoured my whims – too much, either for my good or their own.

When I was yet very young, they thought that I was distinguished from other children by a *penchant* for suddenly and secretly absenting myself from those, whose duty it was to be acquainted with my whereabouts. I often ran away from home to find playmates; and ran away from school to avoid the trouble of learning my lessons. At this time of life, so strong was my propensity for escaping from any scene I did not like, and betaking myself to such as I deemed more congenial to my tastes, that I obtained the soubriquet of *The Rolling Stone*.

Whenever I would be missing from home, the inquiry would be made, “Where is that Rolling Stone?” and this inquiry being often put in the school I attended, the phrase was also applied to me there. In short it became my “nickname.”

Perhaps I was a little vain of the appellation: for I certainly did not try to win another, but, on the contrary, did much to convince everybody, that the title thus extended to me was perfectly appropriate.

My father’s family consisted of my parents, a brother, one year and a half younger than myself, and a sister, about two years younger still.

We were not an unhappy family. The little domestic cares, such as all must share, only strengthened the desire for existence – in order that they might be overcome.

My father was a man without many friends, and with fewer enemies, for he was a person who attended to his own business, and said but little to any one. He had a talent for silence; and had the good sense not to neglect the exercise of it – as many do the best gifts Nature has bestowed upon them.

He died when I was about thirteen years old; and, as soon as he was gone from us, sorrow and misfortune began for the first time to show themselves in our house.

There are many families to whom the loss of a parent may be no great calamity; but ours was not one of them; and, young as I was at the time, I had the sense to know that thenceforward I should have to war with the world alone. I had no confidence in my mother’s ability to provide for her children, and saw that, by the death of my father, I was at once elevated from the condition of a child to that of a man.

After his decease, the work in the shop was carried on by a young man named Leary – a journeyman saddler, who had worked with my father for more than a year previous to his death.

I was taken from school, and put to work with Mr Leary who undertook to instruct me in the trade of a harness-maker. I may say that the man displayed considerable patience in trying to teach me.

He also assisted my mother with his counsel – which seemed guided by a genuine regard for our interests. He managed the business in the shop, in what appeared to be the best manner possible; and the profits of his labour were punctually handed over to my mother.

For several weeks after my father’s death, everything was conducted in a manner much more pleasant than we had any reason to expect; and the loss we had sustained seemed not so serious to our future existence, as I had at first anticipated.

All of our acquaintances thought we were exceedingly fortunate in having such a person as Mr Leary, to assist us in carrying on the business. Most of the neighbours used to speak of him in the highest terms of praise; and many times have I heard my mother affirm that she knew not what would become of us, if deprived of his assistance.

Up to this time Mr Leary had uniformly treated me with kindness. I knew of no cause for disliking him; and yet I did!

My conscience often rebuked me with this unexplained antipathy, for I believed it to be wrong; but for all that, I could not help it. I did not even like his appearance; but, on the contrary, thought him the most hideous person I had ever beheld. Other people had a different opinion; and I tried to believe that I was guided by prejudice in forming my judgment of him. I knew he was not to blame for his personal appearance, nor for any other of my fancies; but none of these considerations could prevent me from hating Matthew Leary, and in truth I *did* hate him.

I could not conceal my dislike – even from him; and I will do him the justice to state that he appeared to strive hard to overcome it with kindness. All his efforts to accomplish this were in vain; and only resulted in increasing my antipathy.

Time passed. Mr Leary daily acquired a greater control of the affairs of our family; and in proportion as his influence over my mother increased, so did my hostility towards him.

My mother strove to conquer it, by reminding me of his kindness to all the family – the interest he took in our common welfare – the trouble he underwent in teaching me the business my father had followed – and his undoubted morality and good habits.

I could not deny that there was reason in her arguments; but my dislike to Mr Leary was independent of reason: it had sprung from instinct.

It soon became evident to me that Mr Leary would, at no distant period, become one of the family. In the belief of my mother, younger brother, and sister, he seemed necessary to our existence.

My mother was about thirty-three years of age; and did not appear old for her years. She was not a bad looking woman – besides, she was mistress of a house and a business. Mr Leary possessed neither. He was but a journeyman saddler; but it was soon very evident that he intended to avail himself of the opportunity of marrying my mother and her business, and becoming the master of both.

It was equally evident that no efforts of mine could prevent him from doing so, for, in the opinion of my mother, he was every thing required for supplying the loss of her first husband.

I tried to reason with her, but must admit, that the only arguments I could adduce were my prejudices, and I was too young to use even them to the best advantage. But had they been ever so just, they would have been thrown away on my father's widow.

The many seeming good traits in the character of Mr Leary, and his ability for carrying on the work in the shop, were stronger arguments than any I could urge in answer to them.

My opposition to their marriage – now openly talked about – only engendered ill-will in the mind of my mother; and created a coldness, on her part, towards myself. When finally convinced of her intention to become Mrs Leary, I strove hard to overcome my prejudices against the man: for I was fully aware of the influence he would have over me as a step-father.

It was all to no purpose. I hated Mr Leary, and could not help it.

As soon as my mother had definitively made known to me her intention of marrying him, I felt a strong inclination to strengthen my reputation as a runaway, by running away from home. But such an exploit was then a little too grand for a boy of my age to undertake – with much hope of succeeding in its accomplishment. I did not like to leave home, and afterwards be compelled to return to it – when I might be worse off than ever.

I formed the resolution, therefore, to abide in my mother's – soon to be Mr Leary's – house, until circumstances should force me to leave it; and that such circumstances would ere long arise, I had a painful presentiment. As will be found in the sequel, my presentiment was too faithfully fulfilled.

Volume One – Chapter Two.
A Sudden Change of Character

Never have I witnessed a change so great and sudden as came over Mr Leary, after his marriage with my mother.

He was no longer the humble journeyman – with the deportment of a respectable young fellow striving to retain a situation, and gain friends by good conduct. The very day after the wedding, his behaviour was that of a vain selfish overbearing plebeian, suddenly raised from poverty to wealth. He no longer spoke to me in his former feigned tone of kindness, but with threats, in a commanding voice, and in accents far more authoritative, than my father had ever used to me.

Mr Leary had been hitherto industrious, but was so no longer. He commenced, by employing another man to work in the shop with me, and plainly expressed by his actions that his share in the business was to be the spending of the money we might earn.

Up to that time, he had passed among his acquaintances as a temperate man; but in less than three weeks after his marriage, he came home drunk on as many occasions; and each time spoke to my mother in an insulting and cruel manner.

I took no trouble to conceal from Mr Leary my opinion of him and his conduct; and it soon became evident to all, that he and I could not remain long as members of the same family.

Our difficulties and misunderstandings increased, until Mr Leary declared that I was an ungrateful wretch – unworthy of his care; that he could do nothing with me; and that I should remain no longer in his house!

He held a long consultation with my mother, about what was to be done with me – the result of which was, that I was to be sent to sea. I know not what arguments he used; but they were effectual with my mother, for she gave consent to his plans, and I was shortly after bound apprentice to Captain John Brannon, of the ship “Hope,” trading between Dublin and New Orleans.

“The sea is the place for you, my lad,” said Mr Leary, after the indenture had been signed, binding me to Captain Brannon. “Aboard of a ship, you will learn to conduct yourself in a proper manner, and treat your superiors with respect. You are going to a school, where you will be taught something – whether you are willing to learn it, or not.”

Mr Leary thought, by sending me to sea, he was obtaining some revenge for my ill-will towards him; but he was mistaken. Had he known what pleasure the arrangement gave me, he would, perhaps, have tried to retain me a little longer working in the shop. As I had already resolved to leave home, I was only too glad at being thus sent away – instead of having the responsibility of an indiscretion resting on myself. I had but one cause for regret, and that was leaving my mother, brother, and sister, to the tender mercies of a man like Mr Leary.

But what was I to do? I was not yet fourteen years of age, and could not have protected them from him by staying at home. The hatred between us was mutual; and, perhaps, when his spite was no longer provoked by my presence, he might treat the rest of the family better. This was the only thought that consoled me on parting with my relatives.

I could do nothing but yield to circumstances, leave them to their destiny, whatever that was to be, and go forth upon the world in search of my own.

My brother bore our father’s name, William Stone. He was a fair-haired, blue-eyed boy, with a mild, gentle disposition, and was liked by everyone who knew him. He never did an action contrary to the expressed wishes of those who had any authority over him; and, unlike myself, he was always to be found when wanted. He never tried to shirk his work, or absent himself from school.

My little sister, Martha, was a beautiful child, with curly flaxen hair, and I never gazed on anything more beautiful than her large deep blue eyes, which seemed to express all the mental attributes of an angel.

It pained me much to leave little Martha – more than parting either with my mother or brother.

My mother wished to furnish me with a good outfit, but was prevented from doing so by Mr Leary – who said that he could not afford the expense. He declared, moreover, that I did not deserve it.

After my box was sent aboard the ship, and I was ready to follow it, little Willie and Martha were loud in their grief, and I had to tear myself away from their presence.

When it came to parting with my mother, she threw her arms around me, and exclaimed, "My poor boy, you *shall* not leave me!"

Mr Leary gave her a glance out of his sinister eyes, which had the effect of suddenly subduing this expression of grief, and "we parted in silence and tears."

Often, and for hours, have I thought of that parting scene, and wondered why and how Mr Leary had obtained so great an influence over the mind of my poor mother.

I once believed that she had a will of her own, with the courage to show it – an opinion that had been formed from observations made during the life of my father, but since her marriage with Mr Leary, she seemed afraid of giving utterance to a word, that might express independence, and allowed him, not only to speak but think for her.

I knew that she had much affection for all of us, her children – and her regret at thus sending me, at so early an age to encounter the hardships of a long voyage must have been deep and sincere.

I know that her heart was nearly breaking at that moment. The expression of her features, and the manner in which she wrung my hand, told me so; and yet the passion of my grief was not equal in power to that of her fear for the frowns of Mr Leary.

My amiable step-father accompanied me to the ship, which was lying in Dublin Bay; and on our way thither, he became much excited with drink. He was so elated with whiskey, and with the idea that I was going away, that he did not speak to me in his usual unpleasant tone. On the contrary, he seemed all kindness, until we had got aboard the ship.

"Now my little 'Rolling Stone,'" said he, when about to take leave of me, "you are going to have plenty of rolling now, and may you roll so far away, as never to roll across my path again."

He appeared to think this was very witty, for he was much amused at what he had said, and laughed long and loudly.

I made no reply, until he was in the boat, which was about to shove off from the ship, when, looking over the bulwarks, I called after him.

"Mr Leary! if you ill-use my mother, brother, or sister, in my absence, *I will certainly kill you when I come back*."

Mr Leary made no reply, further than to answer me with a smile, that a hyena might have envied.

Volume One – Chapter Three.
Stormy Jack

There have been so many stories told of the sufferings of boys, when first sent to sea, that I shall not dwell long on those that befell myself.

What a world to me was that ship! I little knew, before it became my home, how many great men there were in the world. By great men, I mean those high in authority over their fellows.

I went aboard of the ship, with the idea that my position in it would be one which ordinary people might envy. I was guided to this opinion by something said by the captain, at the time the indentures of my apprenticeship were being signed. No sooner were we out to sea, than I learnt that there were at least a dozen individuals on board, who claimed the right of commanding my services, and that my situation on board was so humble, as to place me far beneath the notice of the captain in command. I had been told that we were to be *friends*, but before we were a week out, I saw that should it be my lot to be lost overboard, the captain might only accidentally learn that I was gone. The knowledge of this indifference to my fate was not pleasant to me. On the contrary, I felt disappointed and unhappy.

Aboard of the ship were four mates, two boatswains, a carpenter and *his* mate, and a steward, besides some others who took a little trouble to teach me my duty, by giving me orders which were frequently only given, to save themselves the trouble of doing what they commanded me to do.

Only one of these many masters ever spoke to me in a pleasant manner. This was the boatswain of the watch, in which I was placed, who was called by his companions, “Stormy Jack,” probably for the reason that there was generally a tempest in his mind, too often expressed in a storm of words.

For all this, Stormy Jack was every inch a sailor, a true British tar, and all know what that means.

Perhaps I should have said, that all know what it might have meant in times past, for Stormy Jack was not a fair specimen of English sailors of the present day. The majority of the men aboard of British ships are not now as they were thirty years ago. English sailors, in general, seem to have lost many of the peculiarities that once distinguished them from other people, and a foreign language is too often spoken in the forecastle of English ships.

To return to Stormy Jack.

One day the carpenter had ordered me to bring him a pannikin of water. Leaving a job on which I had been set to work by Stormy Jack, I started to obey. In doing so, I caught the eye of the latter, who was standing a little to one side, and had not been seen by the carpenter as he gave me the order.

Stormy shook his head at me, and pointed to the work he had himself ordered me to perform, in a manner that plainly said, “go at it again.”

I obeyed this interpretation of his signal, and resumed my task.

“Did you hear what I said?” angrily shouted the carpenter.

“Yes, sir,” I answered.

“Then why do you not start, and do what I told you?”

I stole a sly glance at Stormy Jack, and seeing upon his face a smile, approving of what I did, I made bold to answer, in a somewhat brusque manner, that I had other work on hand, and, moreover, it was not my business to wait upon him.

The carpenter dropped his adze, caught up his measuring rule, and advanced towards me.

He was suddenly stopped by the strong hand of Stormy placed firmly on his shoulder.

“Avast!” said the sailor, “don’t you molest that boy at his work. If you do, I am the one to teach you manners.”

The carpenter was a man who knew “how to choose an enemy,” and with such wisdom to guide him, he returned to his own work, without resenting in any way the check he had thus met with.

The fact that I had refused to obey the carpenter, and that Stormy Jack had interceded in my behalf, became known amongst the others who had been hitherto bullying me, and I was afterwards permitted to go about the ship, without being the slave of so many masters.

Some time after the incident above related, Stormy Jack chanced to be standing near me, and commenced a conversation which was as follows:

"You are a boy of the right sort," said he, "and I'll not see you mistreated. I heard what you said to the lubber as brought you aboard, and I always respects a boy as respects his mother. I hope that man in the boat was not your father."

"No," I answered, "he is my step-father."

"I thought as much," said Stormy, "by his appearing so pleased to get rid of you. It's my opinion no one ought to have more than one father; but you must brace up your spirits, my lad. Two or three voyages will make a man of you, and you will then be able to go back home, and teach the lubber manners, should he forget 'em. Do the best you can aboard here to larn your duty, and I'll keep an eye on you. If any one goes to boxing your compass, when you don't deserve it, I'll teach him manners."

I thanked Stormy for his kind advice, and promised to do all I could to merit his protection.

After having made a friend of Stormy, and an enemy of the carpenter, I began to be more at home on the ship, and took a stronger interest in its mysteries and miseries. Familiarity does not with all things breed contempt. That it should not is a wise provision of Nature, for the accommodation of the majority of mankind – whose necessity it is to become familiar with many cares, annoyances, and disagreeable circumstances.

Second nature, or habit, is only acquired by familiarity, and seamen become so familiar with all that is disagreeable in a life on the sea, that they are never satisfied long with any home, but a floating one. The mind of youth soon becomes reconciled to circumstances, however unpleasant, much sooner than that of an older person, and this was probably the reason why, although greatly dissatisfied at the beginning of the voyage, I soon became so contented with a life on the sea, that I preferred it to one on land – at least in a home with Mr Leary as my master.

Upon occasions, Stormy Jack permitted the storm in his soul to rage a little too wildly. One of these occasions occurred about two weeks, before we reached New Orleans. He had got into a dispute with the second mate about the setting of a sail, and both becoming intemperate in the use of the Queen's English, words were used which had to be resented with violence.

The first assault was made by the mate, who soon found that he was but a child in the hands of Stormy Jack.

The first mate happened to be on deck smoking his pipe, as also the carpenter, and, as in duty bound, both ran to the relief of their brother officer. Poor Stormy was knocked down with the carpenter's mallet, his hands were tied behind him, and he was dragged below.

The next day I was allowed to take him his dinner, and found him well pleased with his situation. I was expecting to see him in great grief over his misfortune – which to me appeared very serious – and was agreeably surprised to find him in better spirits than I had ever seen him before.

"It's all right, Rowley, my boy," said he. "If they can afford to keep me in idleness, and pay me wages for doing nothing, I'm not the one to complain. I'm glad this has happened, for I never liked the first breezer, nor yet Chips, and now I've got an opportunity for letting them know it. I'm going to leave the ship, and when I've done so, I'll teach them manners."

I expressed the opinion, that it could not be very pleasant to be kept so long in a dark place and alone.

"That's no punishment," said Stormy. "Can't I sleep? I've been served worse than this. On a voyage to India I refused duty on the second week out. I was put in a pen along with some turkeys and geese, and was told whenever I would go to my duty, I should be taken out. I never gave in, and finished the voyage in the turkey coop. That was far worse than this, for the noise on deck, with the

conversation between my companions, the turkeys and geese, often used to keep me from sleep. That was a queer plan for teaching a fellow manners, but I did not let it succeed.

"I was going to say one place was as good as another, but it a'nt. This ship is no place for me. After we reach New Orleans I shall leave it, and if ever I come across eyther the first breezer, or carpenter, ashore, they'll both larn what they never knew afore, and that's manners. When two men are fighting, another has no right to interrupt either of 'em with a blow of a mallet, and the man who does so has no manners, and wants teachin'."

I was pleased to hear Stormy say that he intended to leave the ship, for the idea of doing so myself had often entered my thoughts, and had been favourably entertained.

I had no great hopes of finding a better home than I had on board the ship, but I had been placed there by Leary, and that was sufficient reason for my wishing to leave her. He had driven me from my own home, and I would not live in one of his choosing.

I resolved, therefore, to take leave of the ship if Stormy would allow me to become his companion, and even if he should not, I had more than half determined upon running away.

Volume One – Chapter Four.
A Change of Calling

Two days before we reached New Orleans, Stormy Jack expressed some sham contrition for what he had done, with an inclination to return to his duty. He was liberated, and once more the deck was enlivened by the sound of his rough manly voice giving the necessary orders for working the ship.

I found a favourable opportunity of telling him, that I should like to go along with him. At first he objected to aid me, and urged me to remain, as a reason for my doing so, urging the argument: that a boy serving his apprenticeship was much better off than one wandering about without a home.

To me this argument was worth nothing. The idea of remaining for seven years in a situation chosen for me by Mr Leary, was too absurd to be seriously entertained for a moment. I told Stormy so; and he finally consented that I should go with him.

"My reason for objecting at first," said he, "was because I did not like to be troubled with you; but that's not exactly the right sort o' feeling for a Christian to steer by. One should expect to have some trouble with those as need a helping hand, and I don't know why I should try to shirk from my share of it."

I promised Stormy that I would try not to cause him any trouble, or as little as possible.

"Of course you will try," said he, "or if you don't, I'll teach you manners."

Stormy's threat did not alarm me; and our conversation at the time ended – leaving me well pleased with the prospect of getting clear of the ship, by his assistance.

Stormy's return to duty was only a pretence. It was done to deceive the officers – so that he might the more easily find an opportunity of escaping from the ship.

Two days after our arrival in the port of New Orleans, he was allowed liberty to go ashore; and I was permitted to accompany him. The Captain probably supposed that the wages due to Stormy would bring him back; and the suspicion, that a boy like myself should wish to leave the ship, had never entered into his mind.

Several of our shipmates went ashore along with us; and the first thing we all thought of was, what the reader will readily imagine, to find a place where strong drink was sold. This is usually a sailor's first thought on going ashore after a voyage.

After having taken two or three glasses with our shipmates, Stormy gave me a wink, and sidled towards the door. I followed him; and slipping unperceived into the street, we turned a corner, and kept on through several streets – until we had arrived at another part of the city. The little that Stormy had drunk had by this time only sharpened his appetite for more.

"Here I am," said he, "with clear twelve shillings in my pocket. What a spell of fun I could have, if 'twas not for you! Seven weeks without a spree, and now can't have it because I've you to take care of. Thought 'twould be so. Rowley, my boy! see what I'm suffering for you. You are teaching me manners, whether I'm willing to larn 'em or not."

I allowed the sailor to go on uninterrupted with his storm of complaints, although there was a reflection in my mind, that if I was keeping him from getting drunk, the obligation was not all on my side.

Stormy had but twelve shillings, and I half-a-crown, which the Captain had given to me before coming ashore.

It was necessary that something should be done, before this money should be all spent.

Under ordinary circumstances, the sailor need not have felt any apprehension, about being out of money. He could easily get employment in another vessel; but as matters stood, Stormy was afraid of being caught, should he attempt to join another ship – before that from which he had deserted had

taken her departure from the port. If caught, Stormy knew he would be punished; and this rendered him a trifle serious.

The next day we passed in wandering about the city – taking care to avoid all places where we would be likely to meet with any of the officers, or men of the ship "Hope."

Stormy's thoughts were all day in a fearful storm, commingled with anxiety as to what we should do to make a living.

"On your account, Rowley," said he, "I'm not misinclined for a spell on shore, if I could find anything to do, but that's the trouble. There's not much work ashore, that be proper for an honest man to bear a hand in. What little of such work there is here, is done by darkies, while white men do all the cheating and scheming. Howsomever, lad, we must try to get at something."

The next day Stormy did try; and obtained work at rigging a new ship, that had just been launched. The job would last for a month. The wages were good; and the storm in Stormy's mind had now subsided into an agreeable calm.

We sought a cheap lodging-house, not far from where his work was to be performed; and that evening the sailor indulged in a pipe and a glass, from which he had prudently refrained during all the day.

I was unwilling that the burden of supporting me should be borne by my generous protector; and being anxious to do something for myself, I asked him what I should go about.

"I've just been thinking of that," said he, "and I believe I've hit upon an idea. Suppose you sell newspapers? I see many lads about your age in that business here; and they must make something at it. It's not hard work, besides it appears to be very respectable. It is a lit'rary business, as no boy should be 'shamed of."

I approved of the plan, and joyfully agreed to give it a trial.

It was arranged that the next morning I should go to the office of a daily paper – buy a bundle of copies; and try to dispose of them at a profit.

Early the next morning, Stormy started off to his work on the ship, and I to a newspaper office.

I reached the place too early to get out the papers; but found several boys waiting like myself. I joined their company, listened to them, and was much interested in their conversation, without very clearly comprehending what they were talking about.

I could distinctly hear every word they said; but the meaning of the words I knew not, for the most of them were slang phrases – such as I had never heard before.

I could see that they were very fast boys – much faster than I was – although the "Rolling Stone" had not been for several years rolling through the streets of Dublin, without learning some city sharpness.

I entered into conversation with two of the boys, in order to find out something of the business of news-vending; and could see from their manner that they regarded me, as they would have said, "not all thar."

They pretended to give me such information as I required; but I afterwards learnt that they had not told me one word of truth.

When the papers were published, I went in with the others, put down a half dollar, and received in exchange the correct number of copies. I hurried out, walked some distance from the office, and commenced offering my wares for sale.

On turning down a wide street, I met three gentlemen, each of whom took a copy out of my hands and gave me a picayune in return.

I was doing business for myself – buying and selling; and in my soul arose a feeling of independence and pride that has never been so thoroughly awakened since.

I passed along the street, till I came to a large hotel, where I saw two other gentlemen under the verandah.

I went up to them, offered my goods as before, and each took a newspaper. As one of them offered me payment for his copy, I had hardly the strength to hand him the paper and take his money. I nearly dropped to the pavement. The man was Captain Brannon, of the ship "Hope," to whom I had been apprenticed!

I moved away from him as fast as my trembling limbs would carry me; and the glance which I could not help throwing over my shoulder, told me that I had not been recognised.

This was the man, who had promised to treat me as he would his own son; and yet during a long voyage had taken so little notice of me, that I could thus transact business with him, without being recognised!

By twelve o'clock my work for the day was finished; and I returned to the lodging-house with a dollar in picayune pieces – having made a hundred per cent on my capital.

I was at that hour the happiest boy in New Orleans.

I was happy, yet full of impatience, as I waited through the long afternoon for the return of Stormy Jack.

There was pride and pleasure in the anticipation of his approval of my exertions, when I should show him the money I had made. It was the first money I had ever earned – my only transactions with the circulating medium before that time, having been to spend it, as fast as it could be obtained from a fond father.

I entered into an elaborate calculation by an arithmetical rule I had learned under the name of "reduction," and found that I had made in one day, by my own exertions, over two shillings of English money.

I had pride – pride in my ability to make money at all, and pride in my scholastic acquirements, which enabled one so young to tell how much had been gained, for I was not able to comprehend fully the amount, until I had brought it into shillings and pence.

With burning impatience I waited for the return of Stormy. Being fatigued, however, I fell asleep, and dreamt of having made a fortune, and of having had a fight with Mr Leary, in which that gentleman – to make use of Stormy's favourite expression – had been "taught some manners."

When I awoke, I looked eagerly at a clock. It was past seven in the evening, and Stormy Jack had not returned!

He had been due more than an hour. The happiness I had been all day indulging in, suddenly forsook me; and a sickening sensation of loneliness came over my soul.

I sat up waiting and watching for him until a very late hour – in fact until I was driven to bed by the landlady; but Stormy did not return.

Volume One – Chapter Five.
God Help Us!

No week of my life ever seemed so long, as that night spent in waiting for the return of Stormy Jack. It was not until the sun beams were gushing through my window in the morning, that I was able to fall asleep.

By nine o'clock I was up, and out upon the streets in search of my companion and protector. My search was continued all day without success.

I did not know the name of the ship on which he had gone to work; and therefore I had no clue to his whereabouts. In fact I had such a slight clue to guide me, that my search was but little less than the pursuit of folly.

I did not like to believe that Stormy had wilfully deserted me.

In my lone and friendless condition, with the memory of the way in which I had left my mother, to have thought so, would have made me desirous of dying. I had rather think that some serious accident had happened him, than that he had abandoned me to my fate, to avoid any further trouble I might give him.

Another idea occurred to me. He might have been found by some of the officers of the "Hope," and either taken aboard, or imprisoned for deserting. This was so probable, that for awhile I was tempted to go back to the ship and resume my duties.

Reflection told me, that if he had fallen into the hands of the captain, he would not leave me alone in a city like New Orleans. He would tell the captain where I was staying, and have me sent for and brought aboard.

The only, or what seemed the best thing I could do, was to return to the lodging-house, and there await the event.

After a long weary day spent in vain search for my lost companion, I carried this idea into effect, and went back to the lodging-house. As I anticipated, Stormy had not returned to it.

The landlady was a woman of business; and fancied, or rather believed, that my responsible protector had deserted me, leaving her with a boy to keep, and a bill unpaid.

She asked me if I had any money. In reply, I produced all I had. All but one "picayune" of it was required, for the payment of the score we had already run up.

"Now, my lad," said she, "you had better try to find some employment, where you will earn a living. You are welcome to stay here to-night, and have your breakfast in the morning. You will then have all day to-morrow to find another home."

The next morning, after I had swallowed my breakfast, she came to me and bid me an affectionate "good bye." It was a broad hint that she neither expected, nor wished me to stay in her house any longer.

I took the hint, walked out into the street, and found myself in a crowd, but alone, with the great new world before me.

"What shall I do?" was the question set before a full committee of my mental faculties, assembled, or awakened, to deliberate on the emergency of the moment.

I could be a newsvendor no longer: for the want of capital to invest in the business.

I could return to the ship, and perhaps get flogged for having run away; but I was so disappointed in the treatment I had received at the hands of the captain, that nothing but extreme suffering could have induced me to seek protection from him.

The restraint to which I had been subjected on board the ship, seemed partly to have emanated from Mr Leary, and for that reason was to me all the more disagreeable.

I wandered about the streets, reflecting on what I should do until both my brain and legs became weary.

I sat down on some steps leading to the door of a restaurant. My young heart was still strong, but beating wildly.

Over the door of a grocer's shop in front of me, and on the opposite side of the street, I read the name "John Sullivan." At sight of this familiar name, a glimmering of hope entered into my despairing mind.

Four years previous to that time, the grocer with whom my parents used to deal had emigrated to America. His name was John Sullivan. Was it possible that the shop and the name before me belonged to this man?

I arose, and crossed the street. I entered the shop, and inquired of a young man behind the counter, if Mr Sullivan was at home.

"He's up stairs," said the youth. "Do you wish to see him in particular?"

I answered in the affirmative; and Mr Sullivan was called down.

The man I hoped to meet was, when I saw him last, a little man with red hair; but the individual who answered the summons of the shop boy, was a man about six feet in his stockings, with dark hair and a long black beard.

I saw at a glance, that the grocer who had emigrated from Dublin and the man before me were not identical, but entirely different individuals.

"Well, my lad, what do you want?" asked the tall proprietor of the shop, looking down on me with a glance of curious inquiry.

"Nothing," I stammered out, perhaps more confused than I had ever been before.

"Then what have you had me called for?" he asked, in a tone that did little to aid me in overcoming my embarrassment.

After much hesitation and stammering, I explained to him that from seeing his name over the door, I had hoped to find a man of the same name, with whom I had been acquainted in Ireland, and who had emigrated to America.

"Ah!" said he, smiling ironically. "My father's great-grandfather came over to America about two hundred and fifty years ago. His name was John Sullivan. Perhaps you mean him?"

I had nothing to say in answer to this last interrogation, and was turning to leave the shop.

"Stop my lad!" cried the grocer. "I don't want to be at the trouble of having come downstairs for nothing. Supposing I was the John Sullivan you knew – what then?"

"Then you would tell me what I should do," I answered, "for I have neither home, friends, nor money."

In reply to this, the tall shopkeeper commenced submitting me to a sharp examination – putting his queries in a tone that seemed to infer the right to know all I had to communicate.

After obtaining from me the particulars relative to my arrival in the country, he gave me his advice in exchange. It was, to return instanter to the ship from which I had deserted.

I told him that this advice could not be favourably received, until I had been about three days without food.

My rejoinder appeared to cause a change in his disposition towards me.

"William!" said he, calling out to his shop-assistant, "can't you find something for this lad to do for a few days?"

William "reckoned" that he could.

Mr Sullivan then returned upstairs; and I, taking it for granted that the thing was settled, hung up my hat.

The grocer had a family, living in rooms adjoining the shop. It consisted of his wife and two children – the eldest a girl about four years of age.

I was allowed to eat at the same table with themselves; and soon became well acquainted with, and I believe well liked by, them all. The little girl was an eccentric being, even for a child; and seldom said a word to anyone. Whenever she did speak, she was sure to make use of the phrase, "God help us!"

This expression she had learnt from an Irish servant wench, who was in the habit of making frequent use of it; and it was so often echoed by the little girl, in a parrot-like manner, that Mr Sullivan and his wife – at the time I joined the family were striving to break her from the habit of using it.

The servant girl, when forbidden by her mistress ever to use the expression in the child's presence, would cry out: "God help us, Mem! I can't help it."

Whenever the words were spoken by little Sarah – this was the child's name – Mrs Sullivan would say, "Sarah, don't you ever say that again. If you do, you shall be locked up in the cellar."

"God help us!" little Sarah would exclaim, in real alarm at the threat.

"There you go again. Take that, and that," Mrs Sullivan would cry, giving the child two or three slaps on the side of the head.

"Oh mother! mother! God help us!" little Sarah would cry out, altogether unconscious of the crime she was committing.

Every effort made, for inducing the child to refrain from the use of this expression, only caused its more frequent repetition; and often in a manner so ludicrous, as to conquer the anger of her parents, and turn it into laughter.

When I had been about five weeks with Mr Sullivan, I was engaged one morning in washing the shop windows, and accidentally broke a large and costly pane of plate glass. A sudden shock came over my spirits – one more painful than I had ever experienced. Mr Sullivan had been so kind to me, that to do him an injury, accidentally or otherwise, seemed the greatest misfortune that could happen to me.

He was upstairs at the time; and I had not the moral courage to face him. Had I waited for him to come down, and see what had been done, he might have said something that would have pained me to hear; but certainly nothing more serious would have happened, and all would have been well again.

I must have a disposition constitutionally inclined to absconding. To run away, as my mother had often told me, must be my *nature*. I would rather believe this than otherwise, since I do not wish to be charged with the voluntary indiscretion of deserting a good home. It was only an overwhelming sense of the kindness with which I had been treated, and the injury I had inflicted on my benefactor, that caused me to dread an encounter with Mr Sullivan.

Perhaps a boy with a smaller sense of gratitude and less sensitiveness of soul, would have acted differently; and yet would have acted right: for it is always better to meet a difficulty boldly, than to flee in a cowardly manner from the responsibilities attending it.

Little Sarah Sullivan happened to be in the shop at the time I broke the window. I heard her exclaim, "God help us!"

I did not stay to hear any more: for in six seconds after, I had turned the nearest corner; and was once more homeless in the streets of New Orleans.

Volume One – Chapter Six.
Once More upon the Ocean!

I did not dislike a sea life; and would not have been dissatisfied with any situation on a ship, providing it had not been procured for me by Mr Leary.

On running away from Mr Sullivan's shop, my inclination was to leave New Orleans in some ship; but, unfortunately, I knew not the proper manner of going to work to accomplish my desires.

I walked along the levee, till I reached a ship, that was just being hauled from the wharf – evidently for the purpose of standing down the river and out to sea.

I stepped aboard intending to apply for work; and after looking around for a while, I observed a man who, to all appearance, was the captain.

When asked to give me some situation in the ship, he appeared too busy to pay any attention to my request.

I was on a vessel proceeding to sea; and, knowing my ability to make myself useful, I determined not to go ashore without a hearing.

I walked forward; and amidst the confusion of getting the ship under way – where there was so much to be done – I found work enough to do; and took much care, while doing it, to keep out of the way of others – which, to a boy aboard of a ship, is a task of some difficulty.

No one seemed to take any notice of me that afternoon or evening; and about nine o'clock at night I laid down under the long boat, fell asleep, and slept till morning.

I turned out at the earliest hour, and lent a hand at washing the decks; but still no one seemed to know, that I was not one of the ship's company!

At eight o'clock the crew were mustered, and divided into watches. My name was not called: and the captain observing the circumstance, requested me to walk aft.

"Who are you?" asked he, as I drew near.

Something whispered me not to undervalue myself, but to speak up with confidence; and in answer to his demand, I told him that I was a *Rolling Stone*.

"A Rolling Stone, are you?" said the captain. "Well, what have you rolled here for?"

"Because I wanted to go somewhere," I answered.

He then asked me if I had ever been at sea; and, on learning the name of the ship I had deserted, he said that she had sailed the week before, or he would have sent me back to her.

He concluded his examination, by giving the steward orders to look after me – telling him that I could assist in the slop work to be done in the cabin.

To this arrangement I decidedly objected, declaring that I was a *sailor*, and would not be made a *cuddy servant*!

I have every reason to believe, that this declaration on my part elevated me several degrees in the captain's good opinion.

He replied by expressing a hope, that I would not aspire to the command of the ship; and if not, he would see what could be done for me.

The vessel was bound for Liverpool with cotton; and was owned by the captain himself, whose name was Hyland.

I was never better treated in my life, than on board that ship.

I was not assigned to any particular occupation, or watch; but no advantage was taken of this circumstance, on the captain's part, to make me do too much, or by me to do too little.

I was generally on deck all the day; and whenever I saw anything useful that I could do, it was done.

In this way, both watches had the aid of my valuable services – which, however, were not always sufficiently appreciated to prevent a few sharp words being applied to me. But a boy aboard of a ship soon learns to take no notice of such trifles.

I was ordered to mess with the sailmaker, who – as I afterwards learnt – was directed by the captain to look well after me.

On our arrival in Liverpool, the ship was docked, and the crew went ashore, with the exception of two men – both strangers to me – who with myself were left on board.

One of the men had something to do with the Custom House; and tried hard to induce me to go ashore, along with the rest of the crew. But the ship being my only home, I was not willing to leave her; and I resisted all the inducements held out by the Custom House officer to that effect. The captain had gone away from the ship, after seeing her safe into port; but I would not leave the vessel lest I should never meet him again: for something told me he was my truest friend.

The next day he came on board again; and seemed rather surprised at finding me there.

"Ah! little Rolling Stone," said he, "I've been inquiring for you; and am pleased to see you have not gone ashore. What do you intend to do with yourself?"

"Stay here," I answered, "until the ship sails again."

"No, you can't stop here," said the captain. "You must come ashore, and live somewhere – until the ship is made ready for sea."

He continued to talk with me for half-an-hour; and obtained from me a full account of the circumstances under which I had left my home.

"If I thought that you would stay with me, and do something for yourself," said Captain Hyland, after hearing my story, "I would endeavour to make a man of you."

My reply to this was, that I preferred a life on the sea to any other, and that I left Captain Brannon, for the simple reason that I did not like either him, or the man who had placed me under his control.

"Very well," said the captain, "I'll keep you awhile on trial; and if you prove ungrateful for what I shall do for you, you will injure yourself, more than you can me."

After this conversation, he took me ashore, bought me a suit of clothes; and then told me to accompany him to his own home.

I found that Captain Hyland had a wife and one child – a girl about ten years of age.

I thought there could be nothing in the universe more beautiful than that girl. Perhaps there was not. Why should not my opinion on such subjects be as correct as that of others? But no man living could have looked upon Lenore Hyland, without being convinced that she was very beautiful.

Six weeks passed before the ship was again ready for sea; and during that time I resided at the captain's house, and was the constant companion of his little daughter, Lenore.

In the interval, my kind protector asked me – whether I would not like to go to Dublin for a few days, and see my mother.

I told him that the "Hope" would then be in Dublin; and that I would certainly be handed over to Captain Brannon.

He reflected for a moment; and then allowed the subject to drop.

I did feel some anxiety concerning my relatives; but was too happy in Liverpool, to change my condition by going to visit them.

In order to satisfy my conscience, I thought of several reasons why I should not go home. They were easily found: for very idiotic, indeed, is that mind that cannot find arguments, in support of desires emanating from itself – whether they be right or wrong.

I knew that in whatever state I might find my relatives – or whatever might have been the conduct of Mr Leary towards them – I would be powerless either to aid them or punish him.

I strove my best to make as little trouble as possible in my new home, and to gain the good will of Mrs Hyland. I had every reason to believe that my efforts were successful.

In justice to her, I should state that my task was not so difficult, as it would have been with most women: for she was a kind-hearted lady, who had the discernment to perceive that I was anxious to deserve, as well as obtain her esteem.

Before the ship was ready to sail, Lenore had learnt to call me *brother*; and when parting with her to go on board, her sorrow was expressed in a manner that gave me much gratification.

Perhaps it is wrong for any one to feel pleasure at the demonstrations of another's grief; but there are circumstances when such will be the case, whether wrong or not. Unfortunate, indeed, is that lonely being, who has not in the wide world one acquaintance from whom he can part, with eyes dimmed by the bright drops of sorrow.

There are thousands of seamen, who have wandered long and far from every early tie of kindred and friendship. They form no others; but wander over the earth unloving, unloved and unknown – as wretched, reckless and lone, as the "last man," spoken of by the poet Campbell.

There is ever a bright spot in the soul of that man, who has reason to believe that there is some one, who thinks of him with kindness when far away; and that one bright spot will often point out the path of virtue – which otherwise might have been passed, undiscovered, or unheeded.

Volume One – Chapter Seven.
Choosing a Horse

The reader may justly say that I have dwelt too long on the incidents of my early years. As my excuse for having done so, I can only urge, that the first parts we play on the stage of life appear of more importance to us than what they really are; and are consequently remembered more distinctly and with greater interest than those of later occurrence.

I will try not to offend in the same way again; and, as some compensation for having been too tedious, I shall pass over nearly three years of my existence – without occupying much space in describing the incidents that transpired during this period. Circumstances aid me in doing so, for these three years were spent in a tranquil, happy manner. They produced no change in my situation: for I remained in the same employment – in the service of Captain Hyland.

The ship "Lenore," owned and commanded by him, was a regular trader between Liverpool and New Orleans.

In our voyages, the captain took as much trouble in trying to teach me navigation – and all other things connected with the profession of the sea – as he could have done had I been his own son.

I appreciated his kindness; and had the gratification to know that my efforts to deserve it met with his warmest approbation.

At every return to Liverpool, and during our sojourn there, his house was my home. At each visit, my friendship for Mrs Hyland, and her beautiful daughter Lenore, became stronger. It was mutual too; and I came to be regarded almost as one of the family.

When in Liverpool, I had frequent opportunities of going to Dublin to see my mother, and with shame I confess that I did not make use of them. The attractions of my home in Liverpool proved too great for me to leave it – even for a short interval.

I often thought of going to Dublin; and reflected with pride on the fact that I was getting to be a man, and would be able to protect my relatives from any ill-treatment they might have received at the hands of Mr Leary. With all this, I did not go.

Aboard of the ship, I had one enemy, who, for some reason not fully understood, seemed to hate me as heartily, as one man could hate another. This was the first mate, who had been with Captain Hyland for several years.

He had witnessed with much disfavour the interest the captain took in my welfare, from the time of my first joining the ship; and jealousy of my influence over the latter might have had much to do in causing the mate's antipathy towards myself.

The steward, sailmaker, and one or two others, who were permanently attached to the vessel, were all friends to the "Rolling Stone," the name by which I was generally known; but the hostility of the first mate could not be removed by any efforts I made towards that end.

After a time, I gradually lost the nickname of the "Rolling Stone," and was called by my proper name, Rowland. I suppose the reason was, that my actions having proved me willing and able to remain for some time in one situation, it was thought that I deserved to be called a "Rolling Stone" no longer.

I had been nearly three years with Captain Hyland, and we were in New Orleans – where the ship, lying at the wharf, was left under my charge. The captain himself had gone to stay at a hotel in the city; and I had not seen him for several days.

The first mate was at this time neglecting his duty, and frequently remained over twenty-four hours absent from the ship. On one occasion, just as the latter came aboard to resume his duties, I received intelligence, that the captain was very ill, and wished to see me ashore.

Notwithstanding this message from the captain himself – the mate, whose name was Edward Adkins – refused to allow me to leave the ship.

The season was summer; and I knew that many people were dying in the city – which was scourged at the time with yellow fever.

The captain had undoubtedly been taken ill of that disease; and, disregarding the commands of the mate, I went ashore with all haste to see him.

I found him, as I had anticipated, suffering from yellow fever. He had just sufficient consciousness to recognise, and bid me an eternal farewell, with a slight pressure of his hand.

He died a few minutes after; and a sensation came over me similar to that I had experienced a few years before – when bending over the cold inanimate form of my father.

Mr Adkins became the captain of the "Lenore," and at once gave me a discharge. My box was sent ashore; and I was not afterwards allowed to set foot on board of the ship!

I appealed to the English Consul; but could obtain no satisfaction from him. I could not blame the official: for the mate was entitled to the command, and consequently had the right of choosing his crew.

My wages were paid me – besides some trifling compensation, for being discharged in a foreign port.

Again the new world was before me; and the question once more came up: "What am I to do?"

I wished to return to Liverpool to see Mrs Hyland and Lenore. They were to me as a mother and sister. Who should carry to them the sad news of their great misfortune? Who but myself?

The beautiful Lenore, I must see her again. I had been fancying myself in love with her for some time; but, now that her father was dead I reflected more sensibly on the subject, and arrived at the conclusion that I was a fool. I was but seventeen, and she only thirteen years of age! Why should I return to Liverpool? I had a fortune to make; and why should I return to Liverpool?

I thought of my mother, brother, and sister. They were under the ill-treatment of a man I had every reason to hate. They might need my protection. It was my duty to return to them. Should I go?

This question troubled me for some time; but in the end it was settled. I did not go.

Many will say that I neglected a sacred duty; but perhaps they have never been placed in circumstances similar to mine. They have never been in a foreign country, at the age of seventeen, in a city like New Orleans.

There was at this time a great commotion in the place. The fife and drum were continually heard in the streets; and flags were flying from houses in different parts of the city – indicating the localities of "recruiting stations."

The United States had declared war against Mexico; and volunteers were invited to join the army.

Among other idlers, I enrolled myself.

It was probably a very unwise act; but many thousands have done the same thing; and I claim an equal right with others to act foolishly, if so inclined. We are all guilty of wise and foolish actions, or more properly speaking, of good and bad ones; and often, when desirous of doing the one, it ends by our committing the other.

After being "mustered into the service," we were sent into the country to a rendezvous, where the corps to which I belonged, which was to form part of a cavalry regiment, received its allotted number of horses.

To have pointed out a particular horse to a particular man, and have said "that is yours," would have given occasion for many to declare that partiality had been shown. For this reason, an arrangement was made by which each man was allowed to choose his own horse.

The animals were ranged in a line, by being tied to a rail fence; and then we were all mustered in rank, about two hundred and fifty yards to the rear. It was then made known, that on a signal being given, each one of us might take the horse that suited him best.

The word of command was at length given; and a more interesting foot race was perhaps never witnessed, than came off on that occasion.

I was good at running; but unfortunately but a poor judge of horse flesh.

Only three or four of the company reached the fence before me; and I had nearly all the horses from which to make my choice.

I selected one, with a short neck and long flowing tail. He was of coal-black colour; and, in my opinion, the best looking horse of the lot. It was an intellectual animal – a horse of character – if ever a horse had any mental peculiarities entitling him to such distinction.

It was the first steed I ever had the chance of bestriding; and the movement by which I established myself on his back must have been either very cleverly, or very awkwardly executed: since it greatly excited the mirth of my companions.

The horse had a knack of dispensing with any disagreeable encumbrance; and having been so long a "Rolling Stone," I had not yet acquired the skill of staying where I was not wanted.

When I placed the steed between my legs, he immediately gave me a hint to leave. I know not whether the hint was a strong one or not; but I do know that it produced the result the horse desired: since he and I instantly parted company.

I was informed that the animal came from Kentucky; and I have not the least doubt about this having been the case, for after dealing me a sommersault, it started off in the direction of the "dark and bloody ground," and was only stopped on its journey by a six foot fence.

Those who were dissatisfied with the result of their choice, had permission to exchange horses with any other with whom they could make an arrangement.

In the corps to which I belonged was a young man from the State of Ohio, named Dayton. When the scamper towards the horses took place, instead of running with the rest, Dayton walked leisurely along; and arrived where the horses were tied, after every other individual in the company had appropriated a steed. The only horse left for Dayton had also a character – one that can only be described by calling him a sedate and serious animal.

This horse had a sublime contempt for either whip or spurs; and generally exercised his own judgment, as to the pace at which he should move. That judgment equally forbade him to indulge in eccentric actions.

Dayton proposed that we should exchange steeds – an offer that I gladly accepted. When my absconding horse was brought back to the camp, I made him over to Dayton, by whom he was at once mounted.

The animal tried the same movements with Dayton that had proved so successful with me; but they failed. He was a good rider, and stuck to his horse, as one of the men declared, "like death to a dead nigger."

The creature was conquered, and afterwards turned out one of the best horses in the troop.

Volume One – Chapter Eight.
An Episode of Soldier-Life

American authors have written so much about the Mexican war, that I shall state nothing concerning it, except what is absolutely necessary in giving a brief account of my own adventures – which, considering the time and the place, were neither numerous nor in any way remarkable.

While in the service of the United States during that campaign, I was the constant companion of Dayton. On the march and in the field of strife, we rode side by side with each other.

We shared many hardships and dangers, and such circumstances usually produce firm friendships. It was so in our case.

Dayton was a young man who won many friends, and made almost as many enemies, for he took but little care to conceal his opinions of others, whether they were favourable or not. Although but a private, he had more influence among his comrades than any other man in the company. The respect of some, and the fear of others, gave him a power that no officer could command.

I did not see much of the war: as I was only in two actions – those of Buena Vista and Cerro Gordo.

I know that some of the people of Europe have but a very poor opinion of the fighting qualities of the Mexicans, and may not dignify the actions of Buena Vista and Cerro Gordo by the name of battles. These people are mistaken. The Mexicans fought well at Buena Vista, notwithstanding that they were defeated by men, said to be undisciplined.

It has been stated in a London paper that the Mexicans are more contemptible, as an enemy, than the same number of Chinamen. The author of that statement probably knew nothing of either of the people he wrote about; and he was thus undervaluing the Mexicans for no other reason, than that of disparaging the small but brave army to which I belonged.

The Mexicans are not cowards. An individual Mexican has as much moral and physical courage as a man of any other country. As a general thing they have as little fear of losing life or limb as any other people. “Why then,” some may ask, “were they beaten by a few thousand American volunteers?”

Without attempting to answer this question, I still claim that the Mexicans are not cowards.

In the battle of Buena Vista I lost the horse obtained by exchange from Dayton. The animal had been my constant care and companion, ever since I became possessed of him; and had exhibited so much character and intellect, that I thought almost as much of him, as I did of Dayton, my dearest friend.

In my opinion, it is not right to take horses on to the field of battle. I never thought this, until I had my steed shot under me – when the sight of the noble animal struggling in the agonies of death, caused me to make a mental vow never again to go on horseback into a battle.

This resolve, however, I was soon compelled to break. Another horse was furnished me the next day – on which I had to take my place in the ranks of my corps.

One day the company to which I belonged had a skirmish with a party of guerilleros.

We were charging them – our animals urged to their greatest speed – when Dayton’s horse received a shot, and fell. I could not stop to learn the fate of the rider, as I was obliged to keep on with the others.

We pursued the Mexicans for about five miles; and killed over half of their number.

On returning to camp, I traced back the trail over which we had pursued the enemy – in order to find Dayton. After much trouble I succeeded; and I believe no person ever saw me with more pleasure than did Dayton on that occasion.

The dead horse was lying on one of his legs, which had been broken. He had been in this situation for nearly three hours; and with all his exertions had been unable to extricate himself.

After getting him from under the terrible incubus, and making him as comfortable as possible, I sought the assistance of some of my companions. These I fortunately found without much trouble, and we conveyed our wounded comrade to the camp. Dayton was afterwards removed to a hospital; and this was the last I saw of him during the Mexican war.

I had but very little active service after this: for my company was left behind the main army; and formed a part of the force required for keeping open a communication between Vera Cruz, and the capital of Mexico.

The rest of the time I remained in the army, was only remarkable for its want of excitement and tediousness; and all in the company were much dissatisfied at not being allowed to go on to the Halls of Montezuma. The duty at which we were kept, was only exciting for its hardships; and American soldiers very soon become weary of excitement of this kind. We were only too delighted, on receiving orders to embark for New Orleans.

On the Sunday before sailing out of the port of Vera Cruz, I went in search of some amusement; and commenced strolling through town in hopes of finding it. In my walk, I came across a man seated under an awning, which he had erected in the street, where he was dealing "Faro." A number of people were betting against his "bank," and I lingered awhile to watch the game.

Amongst others who were betting, was a drunken mule-driver, who had been so far unfortunate as to lose all his money – amounting to about one hundred dollars.

The "MD" – as the mule-drivers were sometimes styled – either justly, or not, accused the gambler of having cheated him. He made so much disturbance, that he was at length forced away from the table by others standing around it – who, no doubt, were interested in the game.

The "MD" went into a public-house near by; and soon after came out again, carrying a loaded rifle.

Advancing within about twenty paces of the table where the gambler was engaged, he called out to the crowd to stand aside, and let him have a shot at the "skunk," who had cheated him.

"Yes," said the gambler, placing his hand on a revolver, "stand aside, gentlemen, if you please, and let him have a chance!"

Those between them, obeyed the injunction in double quick time; and, as soon as the space was clear enough to give a line for his bullet, the gambler fired – before the "MD" had raised the rifle to his shoulder.

The mule-driver was shot through the heart; and the game went on!

We had an interesting voyage from Vera Cruz to New Orleans. The hardships of the march and camp were over. Some were returning to home and friends; and all were noisy – some with high animal spirits, and some with strong ardent spirits, known under the name of *rum*.

There was much gambling on the ship, and many rows to enliven the passage; but I must not tarry to describe all the scenes I have met, or the narrative of the Life of a Rolling Stone will be drawn out too long for the patience of my readers.

We landed in New Orleans, were paid what money was due to us, and disbanded – each receiving a bounty warrant for one hundred and sixty acres of land.

In the company to which I belonged, were some of my countrymen, who had been in the English army; and I often conversed with them, as to the comparative treatment of the soldiers of the English and American armies. I shall give the conclusion we came to upon this subject.

A majority of English soldiers have relatives whom they visit and with whom they correspond. The reader will easily understand that when such is the case, thousands of families in the United Kingdom have more than a national interest in the welfare of the army, and the manner its soldiers are treated. The sympathies of the people are with them; and a soldier, who may be ill-used, has the whole nation to advocate his cause.

The majority of American regular soldiers are isolated beings – so far as home and friends are concerned – and about the only interest the nation at large takes in their welfare is, that they do their duty, and earn their pay.

This difference is understood by the soldiers of both armies; and it has its effect on their character.

In England, the army is regarded as an important part of the nation.

In the United States, it is not; but only as a certain assemblage of men, employed by the people to do a certain work – for which they receive good wages, and plenty of food: for in these respects, the American soldier has an advantage over the English, almost in the ratio of two to one!

Volume One – Chapter Nine.
A Fruitless Search

There were speculators in New Orleans, engaged in buying land warrants from the returning volunteers. I sold mine to one of them, for one hundred and ten dollars. Besides this amount, I had about fifty dollars saved from my pay.

I shall now have the pleasure of recording the fact that I made one move in the right direction. I set sail for my childhood's home.

Conscience had long troubled me, for having neglected to look after the welfare of my relatives; and I embarked for Dublin with a mind gratified by the reflection that I was once more on the path of duty.

So much pleasure did this give me, that I resolved ever after to follow the guiding of reason, as to my future course in life. The right course is seldom more difficult to pursue than the wrong one, while the wear and tear of spirit in pursuing it is much easier.

How many strange thoughts rushed into my brain – how many interrogations offered themselves to my mind, as we dropped anchor in Dublin Bay. Should I find my mother living? Should I know my brother William and my sister Martha? What had become of Mr Leary? Should I have to kill him?

Such questions, with many others of a similar nature, coursed through my soul while proceeding towards the city.

I hurried through the streets, without allowing anything to distract my thoughts from these themes. I reached the house that had been the home of my childhood.

At the door, I paused to recover from an unusual amount of excitement; but did not succeed in quelling the tumultuous emotions that thrilled my spirit with an intensity I had never experienced before.

I looked cautiously into the shop. It was no longer a saddle and harness-maker's, but a dingy depot for vending potatoes, cabbages, and coals!

I thought a great change must suddenly have taken place in the whole city of Dublin.

It did not occur to me, that six years was a sufficient period of time for turning a saddler's shop into a greengrocer's – without any reason for being surprised at the transformation.

I stepped inside; and inquired of a stout, red-haired woman the whereabouts of a Mrs Stone, who formerly occupied the premises. The woman had never heard of such a person!

It suddenly occurred to me – and I heaved a sigh at the recollection – that my mother's name was not *Stone*, but that she was *Mrs Leary*.

I renewed my inquiry, substituting the latter name.

"Mistress Leary?" said the vulgar-looking hag before me, "lift here five year ago."

The vendor of cabbages did not know where Mrs Leary had gone. Neither did I; and this knowledge, or rather absence of knowledge, produced within me a train of reflections that were new and peculiar.

I turned out of the house, and walked mechanically up the street. A familiar name met my half-vacant gaze. It was painted on a sign, over the door of a cheese-monger's shop – Michael Brady.

I remembered that Mrs Brady, the wife of the man whose name I saw, was the intimate acquaintance and friend of my mother. Perhaps, I might learn something from her; but what, I almost feared to ascertain.

I went into the shop, and found Mrs Brady seated among her cheeses. She did not look a day older than when I last saw her. When asked, if she remembered ever having seen me before, she gazed at me for some time, and made answer in the negative.

I was not astonished at her reply. I could easily understand her stupidity; my appearance must have greatly altered since she had seen me last.

"Do you remember the name of Rowland Stone?" I asked.

"What! the little Rolling Stone?" she exclaimed, gazing at me again. "I do believe you are," said she, "Now when I look at you, I can see it is. How you have changed!"

"What has become of my mother?" I cried out, too impatient to listen longer to her exclamatory reflections.

"Poor woman!" answered Mrs Brady, "that's what I have wished to know for many years."

I was called upon to exercise the virtue of patience – while trying to obtain from Mrs Brady what information she could give concerning my family. With much time spent and many questions put, I obtained from her the following particulars:

After my departure, Mr Leary became very dissipated, and used to get drunk every day. Whenever he sold anything out of the shop, he would go to a public-house, and stay there until the money obtained for the article was spent. He would then return, abuse my mother, beat the children, take something else out of the shop; and pawn it for more money to spend in drink or dissipation. This game he had continued, until there was nothing left in the establishment that Mr Leary could sell for a shilling.

The neighbours remonstrated with my mother for allowing him to proceed in this manner; but the deluded woman seemed to think that everything done by her husband was right; and was even offended with her friends for interfering. No arguments could persuade her that Mr Leary was conducting himself in an improper manner. She appeared to think that the drunken blackguard was one of the best men that ever lived; and that she had been exceedingly fortunate in obtaining him for a husband!

When Mr Leary had disposed of everything in the shop, and had spent the proceeds in drink, he absconded – leaving my mother, brother and sister to suffer for the necessaries of life.

Instead of being gratified at getting clear of the scoundrel, my mother was nearly heart-broken to think he had deserted her!

Her first thought was to find out where he had gone. He had served his apprenticeship in Liverpool; and my mother had reasons to believe that he had betaken himself thither. The house in which she resided, had been leased by my father for a long term. At the time Mr Leary deserted her, the lease had several years to run. Since the time when it had been taken, rents in the neighbourhood had greatly risen in value; and my mother was able to sell the lease for ninety pounds. Obtaining this sum in cash, she left Dublin with her children; and proceeded to Liverpool to find Mr Leary, as Mrs Brady said, that she might give him the money to spend in drink!

My mother's friends had advised her to remain in Dublin; and told her that she should be thankful her husband had deserted her; but their advice was either unheeded, or scornfully rejected. In spite of all remonstrance, she took her departure for Liverpool; and Mrs Brady had never heard of her again.

I was intensely interested in what was told me by Mrs Brady. For awhile, I believed that my poor beguiled parent deserved her fate, however bad it may have been; and I was half inclined to search for her no more. But when I came to reflect that nearly five years had elapsed since she left Dublin, I fancied that, if unfortunately successful in finding Mr Leary, she might by this time have recovered from her strange infatuation concerning him. Though for her folly, she deserved almost any fate Mr Leary might bring upon her, I believed it to be my duty to see her once more. Besides, I had a strong desire to renew the rudely broken links of affection, that had existed between myself and my sister and brother.

When a boy, I was very proud of having a sister like little Martha, she was so kind, affectionate, and beautiful. And William, too, I remembered him with a brother's fondness. Although my mother had acted ever so foolishly, it was not the less my duty to look after her. Perhaps, for her unaccountable

delusion, she had been by this time sufficiently punished. It was my desire to find her, if possible, and learn if such was the case. She was my mother, and I had no other wish than to act towards her as a son. I determined, therefore, to proceed to Liverpool.

I may confess that something more than duty summoned me thither – something even stronger than filial affection. It was the design of visiting Mrs Hyland – or, rather her daughter. I knew there would be danger to my happiness in again seeing Lenore; and I strove to strengthen my resolution by the belief that I was acting under a call of duty.

I had been with Captain Hyland when he died. I alone saw his eyes closed in death, and alone followed him to the grave. Why should I not visit his wife and child?

I could fancy that that pressure of the hand given me by the Captain in his dying struggle, was a silent command to me – to carry to them his last blessing.

Besides, Mrs Hyland had been very kind to myself; and during my sojourn in Liverpool, had made her home to me both welcome and pleasant. Why should I refrain from seeing her again – simply because her daughter was beautiful? I could think of no sufficient reason for denying myself the pleasure. The dread of its leading to pain was not enough to deter me; and I resolved to renew my acquaintance with Lenore.

Before leaving Dublin, I tried to get some information that would aid me in my search after Mr Leary and my relatives; but was unsuccessful. None of Mr Leary's former acquaintances could give me any intelligence as to what part of the city of Liverpool he might be found in. I could only learn that my mother, before leaving, had some knowledge to guide her, which had probably been obtained, sometime or other, from Mr Leary himself.

In my search, therefore, I should have no other traces than such as chance might throw in my way.

Volume One – Chapter Ten.
A Chilling Reception

I do not like Liverpool as a city; and less do I admire a majority of its citizens. Too many of them are striving to live on what they can obtain from transient sojourners. Being the greatest shipping port in the United Kingdom – and that from which most emigrants take their departure – it affords its inhabitants too easy opportunities for exercising their skill – in obtaining the greatest amount of money for the least amount of service – opportunities of which many of them are not slow to avail themselves.

My dislike to the people of Liverpool may perhaps, arise from the fact that I claim to be a sailor; and that thousands of people in that great seaport – from beggars, thieves, and the like who crowd its crooked, narrow, dirty streets in search of a living, up to merchants, agents, and ship-owners – imagine that there is no harm in taking advantage of a sailor, and, under this belief, seldom lose an opportunity of doing so.

The first thing I did after arriving in this precious seaport, was to possess myself of a city directory, and make a list of all the saddle and harness-makers in the place – putting down the address of each opposite his name.

I then wrote a note to each of them – requesting, that if they knew anything of a journeyman saddler named Matthew Leary, they would have the goodness to communicate with me; if not, no answer to my note would be required.

Having completed this interesting correspondence – which occupied me the whole of a day – I repaired to the residence of Mrs Hyland. There had been no change there. I found her still living in the same house, where years before, I had parted with her and her daughter.

I was conducted into the drawing-room; and the next instant one of the most beautiful creatures man ever beheld, stood before me.

Lenore was beautiful when a child; and time had only developed her young charms into the perfection of feminine loveliness. To me, her beauty transcended everything I had ever seen; although I had been in Dublin, New Orleans, and Mexico – three places which are not the least favoured with the light of woman's loveliness.

Lenore was now sixteen years of age, and looked neither more nor less. The only description I can give of her is that there was nothing remarkable about her, but her beauty. I can give no particulars of how she appeared. If asked the colour of her hair and eyes, I should have been unable to tell; I only knew that she was beautiful.

I was painfully disappointed at the reception she gave me. She did not meet me with those manifestations of friendship I had anticipated. It was true that I had been a long time away; and her friendship towards me might have become cooled by my protracted absence. But this was a painful consideration. I endeavoured to dismiss it – at the same time I strove to awaken within her the memories of our old companionship.

To my chagrin, I saw that I was unsuccessful. She seemed to labour under some exciting emotion; and I could not help fancying that it was of a painful character.

Her whole behaviour was a mystery to me, because so different from what it had formerly been, or what I had hoped to find it.

I had left Lenore when she was but little more than a child, and she was now a young lady.

In the three years that had intervened, there was reason for me to expect some change in her character. With her mother, no change I presumed could have taken place. I left Mrs Hyland a woman; and such I should find her, only three years older. In her I expected to meet a friend, as I had left her. She entered the room. I was again doomed to disappointment!

She received me with even more coldness than had been exhibited by Lenore. She did not even offer me her hand; but took a seat, and with a more unpleasant expression than I had ever before observed on her face, she waited apparently with impatience for what I might have to say.

The sensitive feelings of my soul had never been so cruelly wounded. I was in an agony of anger and disappointment; and unable any longer to endure the painful excitement of my emotions, I uttered a few common-place speeches, and hastily withdrew from their presence.

What could their conduct mean? In the excited state of my thoughts, I was unable to form even a conjecture, that seemed in any way consistent with my knowledge of their previous character.

It might be that when Lenore was a child, and I was a boy, they had seen no harm in befriending and being kind to me; but now that Lenore was a young lady, and I a man – a sailor, too – they might have reasons for not having any further acquaintance with me.

Could it be that they were endued with that selfishness – in this world possessed by so many? That they had been my friends only because Captain Hyland was my protector – to fall away from me now, that his protection could be no longer extended to me?

I could hardly think this possible: for it would be so much out of keeping with all that I had ever known of the character either of Mrs Hyland or her daughter.

I had long anticipated great pleasure in revisiting them; and had thought when again in their presence I should be with friends. Never had I been so cruelly disappointed; and for awhile I fancied that I should never care to meet with old acquaintances again.

I am capable of forming strong attachments. I had done so for Mrs Hyland and her daughter, and their chill reception had the effect of causing me to pass a sleepless night.

In the morning, I was able to reflect with a little more coolness, as well as clearness. A cause, perhaps *the* cause, of their strange conduct suddenly suggested itself to my mind.

Adkins, the first mate of the ship Lenore, had been, and, no doubt, still was – my enemy. He had turned me out of the ship in New Orleans; and had, in all likelihood, on his arrival in Liverpool, poisoned the mind of Mrs Hyland, by some falsehood, of which I was the victim. I knew the scoundrel to be capable of doing this, or any other base action.

There was a consolation in the thought that this explanation might be the real one, and for a while it restored the tranquillity of my spirit.

I would see them again, demand an explanation; and if my suspicions proved true, I could refute any change made against me – so as once more to make them my friends.

I did not desire their friendship from any personal motives. It might not now be worth the trouble of having it restored; but in memory of their past kindness, and out of regard for my own character, I could not leave them labouring under the impression that I had been ungrateful.

Alas! there was a deeper motive for my desiring an explanation. Their friendship was worth restoring. It was of no use my endeavouring to think otherwise. The friendship of a beautiful creature like Lenore was worth every thing. The world to me would be worthless without it. I was already wretched at the thought of having lost her good opinion. I must again establish myself in it, or failing, become more wretched still.

The next day, I returned to the residence of Mrs Hyland. I saw her seated near the window, as I approached the house. I saw her arise, and retire out of sight – evidently after recognising me!

I rang the bell. The door was opened by a servant – who, without waiting to be interrogated, informed me that neither Mrs nor Miss Hyland were at home!

I pushed the door open, passed the astonished domestic, entered the hall; and stepped unceremoniously into the apartment – in the window of which I had seen Mrs Hyland.

No one was inside – excepting the servant, who had officially followed me. I turned to her, and said in a tone savouring of command:

“Tell Mrs Hyland that Mr Rowland Stone is here, and will not leave until he has seen her.”

The girl retired, and soon after Mrs Hyland entered the room. She did not speak; but waited to hear what I had to say.

"Mrs Hyland," I began, "I am too well acquainted with you, and respect you too much, to believe that I am treated in the manner I have been, without a good cause. Conscious of having done nothing intentionally to injure you, or yours, I have returned to demand the reason why your conduct towards me has undergone such a change. You once used to receive me here as though I was your own son. What have I done to forfeit your friendship?"

"If your own conscience does not accuse you," she answered, "it is not necessary for me to give you any explanation, for you might not understand it. But there is one thing that I hope you *will* understand: and that is, that your visits here are no longer either welcome or desirable."

"I learnt that much yesterday," said I, imitating in a slight degree the air of sneering indifference, in which Mrs Hyland addressed me. "To-day I have called for an explanation. Your own words imply that I was once welcome; and I wish to know why such is no longer the case."

"The explanation is then, that you have proved unworthy of our friendship. There is no explanation that *you* can give, that will remove the impression from my mind that you have been guilty of ingratitude and dishonesty towards those who were your best friends; and I do not wish to be pained by listening to any attempt you may make at an apology."

I became excited. Had the speaker been a man, my excitement would have assumed the shape of anger.

"I only ask," I replied, endeavouring, as much as possible, to control my feelings, "I only ask, what justice to you, as well as myself, demands you to give. All I require is an explanation; and I will not leave the house, until I have had it. I insist upon knowing of what I am accused."

Mrs Hyland, apparently in high displeasure at the tone I had assumed, turned suddenly away from me, and glided out of the room.

To calm my excitement, I took up a paper, and read, or attempted to read.

For nearly half an hour I continued this half involuntary occupation. At the end of that time, I stepped up to the fire-place, caught hold of the bell pull, and rang the bell.

"Tell Miss Lenore," said I, when the servant made her appearance, "that I wish to see her; and that all the policemen in Liverpool cannot put me out of this house, until I have done so."

The girl flounced back through the door; and shortly after Lenore, with half of a smile on her beautiful face, entered the room.

She appeared less reserved than on the interview of the day before; and, if possible, more lovely. I was too happy to interpret from her deportment, that she had not yet entirely forgotten the past; and that what I now wished to know, she would not hesitate to reveal.

"Lenore," said I, as she entered, "in you I hope still to find a friend – notwithstanding the coldness with which you have treated me; and from you I demand an explanation."

"The only explanation I can give," said she, "is, that mamma and I have probably been deceived. There is one who has accused you of ingratitude, and other crimes as bad – perhaps worse."

"Adkins!" I exclaimed. "It is Adkins, the first mate of the 'Lenore!'"

"Yes, it is he who has brought the accusation; and, unfortunately, whether false or no, your conduct has been some evidence of the truth of the story he has told us. Oh! Rowland, it was hard to believe you guilty of ingratitude and crime; but your long absence, unexplained as it was, gave colour to what has been alleged against you. You have never written to us: and it will be nearly impossible for you to be again reinstated in the good opinion of my mother."

"In yours, Lenore?"

She blushingly held down her head, without making reply.

"Will you tell me of what I am accused?" I asked.

"I will," she answered. "And, Rowland, before I hear one word of explanation from you learn this; I cannot believe you guilty of any wrong. I have been too well acquainted with you to believe

that you could possibly act, under any circumstances, as you have been accused of doing. It is not in your nature."

"Thank you, Lenore!" said I, with a fervour I could not restrain myself from showing. "You are now as you have ever been, more beautiful than anything in the world, and wise as you are beautiful."

"Do not talk thus, Rowland! Nothing but your own words can ever change the opinion I had formed of your character – long ago, when we were both children. I will tell you why my mother is displeased with you. There are more reasons than one. First, when my father died in New Orleans, Mr Adkins brought back the ship; and you did not return in it. We were surprised at this; and called Mr Adkins to account for not bringing you home. He did not appear willing to give us any satisfaction concerning you; but we would insist on having it; and then, with apparent reluctance, he stated that he had not wished to say anything against you – fearing that from our known friendship for you, it might be unpleasant for us to hear it. He then told us, that you had not only neglected, and proved cruel to my father – when on his death-bed – but, that, as soon as it became certain there was no hope of his recovery, you behaved as though you thought it no longer worth while to trouble yourself with a man, who could not live to repay you. He said that you had previously deserted from the ship, and left my father – notwithstanding his earnest entreaties that you should remain with him. It cannot be true. I know it cannot be true; but so long as my mother thinks there is a particle of truth in Mr Adkins' statement, she will never forgive you. Your accuser has also stated that when you left the ship, you took with you what was not your own; but this he did not tell us until several months had elapsed, and there appeared no probability of your returning."

"What has become of Mr Adkins now?" I asked.

"He is on a voyage to New Orleans in the 'Lenore.' He obtained my mother's confidence, and is now in command of the ship. Lately he has been trying to make himself more disagreeable to myself – by professing for me – what he, perhaps, believes to be an affection. Oh! it is too unpleasant to dwell upon. My mother listens, I fear, too consentingly, to all he has to say: for she is grateful to him for his kindness to my father before he died – and for the interest he appears ever since to have taken in our welfare. His manner towards us has greatly changed of late. Indeed, he acts as if he were the head of our family, and the owner of the vessel. I believe he is expected to return to Liverpool at any time: as the time for the voyage has expired, and the ship has been due for some days."

"I wish he were in Liverpool *now*" said I. "When he does arrive, I will make him prove himself a liar. Lenore! I have ever been treated with the greatest kindness by your father and mother. It is not in my nature to be either ungrateful or dishonest. Your father's ship was my home, I did not leave that home without good reason. I was turned out of it by the very villain who has accused me. I shall stay in Liverpool until he returns; and when I have exposed him, and proved myself still worthy of your friendship, I shall again go forth upon the world with a light heart, as I can with a clear conscience."

Requesting Lenore to tell her mother that she had been deceived – and that I should stay in Liverpool till I proved that such was the case – I arose to take my departure. I lingered only to add: that I would not again annoy them with my presence until the return of the ship – when I should challenge Adkins to appear before them, and prove him guilty of the very crimes he had charged against myself – ingratitude and dishonesty.

With this promise did I close my interview with Lenore.

Volume One – Chapter Eleven.
On the Track of Mr Leary

After leaving Mrs Hyland's house, I had much to occupy my thoughts. The principal subject that engaged their attention was the wonderful beauty of Lenore.

She was beautiful; and she professed to be my friend. But while I felt a consoling pride in possessing the friendship of one so lovely, there was much that was unpleasant in the thought that her mother could, even for an instant, have believed me guilty of the grave charges brought against me by Adkins.

To be thought ungrateful by one who had treated me with so much kindness, and more especially one who was the mother of Lenore, was a reflection full of bitterness.

Adkins had now done enough to make me his deadly enemy. He had never used me well aboard ship; and would have caused me still more trouble there had he not been restrained by his fear of Captain Hyland. He had turned me out of the ship in New Orleans. He had returned to Liverpool, and accused me of the basest of crimes.

But what was still more unpleasant to dwell upon; he was endeavouring to deprive me of what was of almost equal consequence with my character – of her whom I had hoped might one day become my wife. Yes, there could be no doubt of the fact. He was trying to win Lenore.

This last I could scarce look upon as a crime on his part. To aspire to win one so lovely was no crime; and one who should do so would only be acting as Nature commanded.

But at that time, I did not view it in this light; and the idea of Edward Adkins aspiring to the hand of Lenore Hyland was proof to me that he was the vilest wretch that ever encumbered the earth.

For a while, I forgot my hatred for Mr Leary in my dislike to Mr Adkins.

Hatred with me had never before reached a thirst for revenge; but to this degree of hostility had it attained, within an hour after leaving Lenore.

But what could I do? When my enemy returned, I could confront him in presence of Lenore and her mother. I could make one statement, which he would certainly contradict by making another. I was in a country where the laws do not allow a man any chance of obtaining redress for the cruellest wrong, or insult, he may suffer.

I passed that night, as the preceding one, without sleep.

The day after that on which I had addressed my letters to the saddle and harness-makers of Liverpool, I received answers from two of them – both men who had been acquainted with Mr Leary.

I lost no time in calling upon these correspondents.

One of them frankly informed me that Mr Leary's time, as an apprentice, had been served in his shop, that he did not think him exactly honest; and had been only too glad to get rid of him. He had not seen or heard anything of Mr Leary for seven years; and hoped never to behold that individual again. He had taken Leary, when a boy, from the work-house; and believed he had no relatives, who would know where he was to be found.

I called on the other saddler, and learnt from him that Mr Leary, after having served his time, had worked in his establishment as a journeyman, though only for a very short while. Leary had left him to go to Dublin; but had returned three or four years afterwards, and had again been employed by him for a few days. On leaving the second time, Mr Leary had engaged to go out to New South Wales, with a saddle and harness-maker from that colony, who, as the Liverpool tradesman laughingly stated, had been so foolish as to pay for Leary's passage, in the hope of being repaid by his services after he got there.

With painful interest, I inquired, whether Mr Leary had taken along with him to Australia a wife and family.

"No," said the saddler, "nothing of the kind. He was not able to do that: since he had to tell a thousand lies to induce the saddler to take himself. But I remember, there was a woman from Dublin inquiring for him after he had sailed; and she, poor creature, appeared well nigh heart-broken, when she learnt that he had gone without her. I suppose she must have been his wife."

The saddler had heard nothing since from either Leary or the woman.

A part of this intelligence was very satisfactory. My mother had *not* found Mr Leary in Liverpool, and that wretch was now far away.

But where was my mother? Where had she and her youngest children been for the last five years? How should I learn their fate?

Surely I had plenty of work before me. My relatives were to be found; and this would be no easy task: since I had not the slightest clue to guide me in the search. I had to convince Mrs Hyland that I was still worthy of her friendship. I had to obtain revenge on my enemy Adkins; and a greater task than all would still remain. I had to win, or forget Lenore.

My last interview with her, had revived within my mind the sweet remembrances of the past, along with thoughts of the present, and dreams of the future – thoughts and dreams that would not again sleep. A mental vision of her loveliness was constantly before me.

What was I to do first? I had but little money in my pockets; and could not leave Liverpool at present to obtain more. I must stay until the return of Adkins; and it would not do to spend my last shilling in idly waiting.

Without friends I could only get such occupation, as required the severest labour to perform; but, fortunately for that, I had the will, health, and strength I feel a pride in stating, that I acted, as a man should under the circumstances. Instead of strolling about in hopeless idleness, I went to the docks, and obtained labourer's work.

For two weeks I worked at handling cotton bales, and bags of sugar. The toil was humble, and the pay for it was proportionately small; but duty commanded me, and I worked on, cheered by hope, and without repining at my fate.

Sometimes in the evening, I would walk up and down the street in front of the residence of Mrs Hyland – with the hope of seeing Lenore, or with the knowledge of being near her, whether she might be seen or not. I found pleasure even in this.

I did not like to call on her again – until I had given her mother some proof of my innocence.

Sometimes it occurred to me to ask myself the question, why should I see her more, even after I had cleared myself? She was beautiful, dangerously beautiful; and I was friendless, homeless, and without fortune. Why should I endanger my future peace of mind, by becoming more and more infatuated with one whose heart I could scarce hope ever to possess?

Duty as well as reason told me to pursue the search for my relatives, and see Lenore Hyland no more. But where is the heart love-stricken that will listen to the call, either of reason, or duty?

Mine did not, and could not. It was deaf to such an appeal. I could think only of Lenore, yearn to see her again – to speak with her – to listen to her – to love her!

Volume One – Chapter Twelve.
An Encounter with a Coward

About a week after my interview with Mrs Hyland and her daughter, I saw what I had been daily looking for – a notice in one of the Liverpool papers, under the head of "Shipping Intelligence," announcing the arrival of the ship "Lenore," Captain Adkins, from New Orleans.

After reading the notice, I hastily flung aside the paper; and proceeded direct to the docks – where I found the vessel had already arrived.

As I might have expected, Adkins was not aboard. He had landed several hours before, while the ship was still in the river. Having ascertained the name of the hotel where he was in the habit of staying, while in Liverpool, I lost no time loitering on board the ship, but went in search of him. On reaching the hotel, I found that he had slept there the night before, but had gone out after breakfast in the morning.

My conjecture was, that he would be found at the house of Mrs Hyland; and it now occurred to me that I had been wonderfully stupid in not looking for him there in the first instance.

From the hotel, I proceeded direct to Mrs Hyland's residence, as I walked along, anticipating much pleasure in the task of compelling Adkins to refute his own falsehoods. I feared, however, that shame would hinder him telling the truth; and that even in my presence he would stick to his infamous story. I feared it, because I did not wish to kill him.

As I had conjectured, he was visiting at Mrs Hyland's. Just as I reached the door, Adkins was coming out.

I controlled my temper as well as I could. I did not wish to defeat my purpose by an exhibition of idle anger.

"Good morning Mr Adkins!" said I. "We meet again; and I assure you, on my part, with profound pleasure."

He would have passed without speaking, had I not placed my body so as to block the way.

"Who the devil are you; and what do you want?" he asked, with a bullying tone and air that I had often known him assume before.

"I am Rowland Stone," I answered, "and I wish to see you on a matter of considerable importance."

"You see me then! what the important business?"

"It can only be made known in the presence of Mrs Hyland and her daughter."

"Mrs Hyland does not wish to see you," said Adkins, "and much less her daughter, I should think. As for myself, I want nothing to do with you."

"I can believe the latter part of your assertions," I answered, "but it is necessary that we should sometimes do what may not be exactly agreeable to us. If there is a spark of manhood in you, walk back into the house, and repeat to Mrs Hyland in my presence, what you have said behind my back."

"I shall not take the trouble to do any thing of the kind. I tell you again, I want nothing to say to you. Give me the way!"

As Adkins said this, he made a gesture as if he intended to pass me.

"I'll give you the way to hell," said I, "unless you do as I bid you," and I caught him by the collar to drag him into the house.

He resisted this attempt by aiming a blow at me, which I returned with such interest, that while I still kept my legs, the captain of the "Lenore" missed his; and, staggering backward, he fell heavily on the door-step.

I had now lost all command of myself; and, after ringing the bell, to have the door re-opened, I seized him by the hair of the head – for the purpose of hauling him inside.

My purpose would have been accomplished. I would have broken down the door, dragged him into the house, confronted him with Mrs Hyland, and made him swallow his false words, but for the arrival of a trio of policemen.

I was not overcome until after a long struggle, in which the exertions of the three policemen, Adkins himself, and another man, who was passing at the time, were united against me. It ended in their putting me in irons.

As I was led away from the house, I noticed that Mrs Hyland and Lenore were both at the window – where, I had no doubt, they had been witnesses of the affray.

I was at once taken to a police station, and locked up in one of its cells.

Next morning I was brought before a magistrate. Adkins was there to prosecute. The three policemen were present as witnesses, as also the Liverpool citizen, who had aided in putting me in irons.

After evidence was heard against me, I was called upon for my defence. I had nothing to say to the charge.

The magistrate emphatically declared that a case of a more unprovoked assault had never been brought before him; and that he did not think the ends of justice would be met by the infliction of a fine. He therefore sentenced me to fourteen days' imprisonment.

I thought none the less of myself for that; and, under other circumstances, two weeks in a prison might not have been passed unpleasantly. But it was bitterness to reflect, that while I was passing my time in the companionship of petty thieves, Edward Adkins was daily visiting Lenore.

Fourteen days must I pass as a prisoner, while my vile enemy would be enjoying the society of Mrs Hyland and her daughter – no doubt doing all he could to blacken my character, and lower me still further in their estimation!

The reflection was anything but pleasant, though I might have partly consoled myself by another: that I was much better off inside the gaol, than millions of my fellow countrymen outside of it. Had I committed some crime, that really deserved this confinement, then would I, indeed, have felt really wretched; but conscience accused me of no wrong; and I was not without those tranquillising emotions ever springing from a sense of rectitude and innocence.

I was not afraid that Adkins would gain any great advantage over me in winning the affections of Lenore – even though aided by the influence of her mother. It was not that which troubled me during my sojourn within the walls of a prison. If Lenore should prove capable of choosing such a man for her husband, I need not regret her loss. My spirit was more harassed by the thought: that wrong should have thus triumphed – that Adkins should be in the society of Lenore, when he should have been in my place in the prison, and I in his.

After I had passed eight days of my confinement, I was surprised one morning by the announcement that I was to receive visitors.

Two persons had called, and inquired for Rowland Stone. They were outside – waiting to be admitted to my cell.

Both proved to be old acquaintances. One was a man named Wilton, who had been the second mate of the ship "Lenore," under Captain Hyland. The other was Mason, the steward of the same ship.

As both these men had been very kind to me when I was in the ship, I was pleased to see them; but much more so, when I learnt to whom I was indebted for their visit. Mason told me that he was still steward of the "Lenore," and that Miss Hyland had come to him on board: for the purpose of obtaining a true account of the circumstances that stood between me and Adkins.

"I was glad to learn, Rowley, that you had turned up again," said Mason, "but at the same time, sorry to hear of your present trouble. I at once resolved to try and get you out of at least a part of it, although I may lose my situation by doing so. I told Miss Hyland, plainly enough, that Adkins was a villain, and that I could prove it. I promised her that I would come and see you. Wilton here, is

now the skipper of a tug-boat on the river, and I brought him along – knowing that he can lend a hand to help us."

"Nothing can please me more than to see Adkins lose the command of the 'Lenore,'" interposed Wilton, "for I know that he is not an honest man; and that he has been all along robbing the widow. We must decide on some plan to convince Mrs Hyland, that she is placing confidence in a scoundrel."

Wilton and Mason remained with me nearly an hour; and it was decided that nothing should be done openly, until my term of imprisonment should expire. We were then to ascertain when Adkins would be on a visit to Mrs Hyland's house, when we should all three go together, meet him there, and tell Mrs Hyland the whole story of his falsehood and dishonesty.

"Should she not believe us, and still continue to trust him," said Wilton, "then she deserves to be robbed, that's my way of thinking."

I thought the same, so far as robbing her of her worldly wealth; but it was bitter to believe that the rascal might also rob her of a jewel more priceless than all else – of Lenore. But I could not believe that the most insane folly on her part would deserve so extreme a punishment, as that of having Adkins for a son-in-law!

Mason gave me his address, so did Wilton, and I promised to call on them, as soon as I should be set at liberty.

They left me happy, and hopeful. I was happy, not because I was young, and in good health – not because I had found friends who would aid me in subduing an enemy; but because the beautiful Lenore had interested herself in my misfortunes, and was trying to remove them.

That was a theme for many long and pleasant reveries, which while they rendered me impatient to be free, at the same time enabled me to pass the remainder of my term of imprisonment, with but slight regard for the many petty annoyances and discomforts of the situation.

I accepted my liberty when it was at length given me; and on the same day went to visit Mason and Wilton.

What had been done already by Lenore, left me under the impression that she would still further aid me in establishing the truth. I felt confident, that she would not object to letting us know on what day and hour we might meet Adkins at her mother's house; and with this confidence, I wrote a note to her, containing the request that she would do so. Then, in pleasant expectation of soon having an opportunity of clearing my character, I awaited the answer.

Volume One – Chapter Thirteen.
A Reckoning Up

Lenore did not disappoint me. Two days after getting out of the prison, I received her reply – informing me that Adkins would be at her mother's house the next day, and advising me to call with my friends, about half-past ten. I had made known to her the object of my desire to meet him.

After receiving her note, I went immediately to Mason and Wilton; and we appointed a place of rendezvous for the next morning.

That evening, I was as uneasy as the commander-in-chief of an army on the eve of a great battle. I had an enemy to confront and conquer – a reputation already sullied to restore to its former brightness.

I could not help some anxiety as to the result.

In the morning, I met my friends at the appointed place; and as the clock struck ten, we started for the residence of Mrs Hyland.

As we came within sight of the house, I perceived Lenore at the window. She recognised us, rose from her seat, and disappeared towards the back of the room. When I rang the bell, the door was opened by herself.

Without hesitating, she conducted us all three into the parlour, where we found Adkins and Mrs Hyland.

The latter appeared to be no little astonished by our unexpected entrance; but as for Adkins himself, he looked more like a frightened maniac than a man.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Mrs Hyland, in a voice that expressed more alarm than indignation.

"These gentlemen have called to see you on business, mother," said her daughter. "There is nothing to fear from them. They are our friends."

Having said this, Lenore requested us to be seated; and we complied.

Adkins did not speak; but I could read from the play of his features, that he knew the game was up, and that he had lost.

"Mrs Hyland," said Wilton, after a short interval of silence, "I have called here to do what I believe to be a duty, and which I ought to have done long ago. If I am doing any wrong, it is only through my ignorance of what's right. I was your husband's friend, and we sailed together, for nine years or thereabouts. I was on the ship 'Lenore' when Captain Hyland died, in New Orleans; and I have heard the stories that Mr Adkins here has told about this young man. Those stories are false. When in New Orleans, at the time of your husband's death, Adkins was most of the time drunk, and neglecting his duty. Rowley did not desert from the ship, neither did he neglect the captain, but was the only one of the ship's company with him, or taking care of him, when he died. Mr Adkins never liked Rowley; and the only reason I can think of for his not doing so, is just because it is natural for a bad man to dislike a good one. When Mr Adkins obtained the command of the ship, he would not let Rowley come aboard again – much less return in her to Liverpool. I made one voyage with Adkins as first mate after Captain Hyland's death, and learnt, while making it, that I could not continue with him any longer – unless I should become nearly as bad as himself. For that reason I left the ship.

"Mrs Hyland!" continued Wilton, fixing his eye upon Adkins, and speaking with determined emphasis, "I have no hesitation in pronouncing Mr Adkins to be a wicked, deceitful man, who has been robbing you under the cloak of friendship; and still continues to rob you."

"These men have formed a conspiracy to ruin me!" cried Adkins, springing to his feet. "I suppose they will succeed in doing it. Three men and one woman are more than I can contend against!"

Mrs Hyland paid no attention to this remark; but, turning to Mason, said, “I believe that you are Mr Mason, the steward of the ‘Lenore.’ What have you to say?”

“I have to state that all Mr Wilton has told you, is true,” said Mason. “Rowley, to my knowledge, has never done anything to forfeit your friendship. I have long known that Captain Adkins was a scoundrel; and my desire to expose him – overcome by the fact that I have a large family to support, and was afraid of losing my situation – has caused me to pass many a sleepless hour. I had made up my mind not to go another voyage along with him – before learning that my testimony was wanted in aid of Rowley here. On hearing that he had robbed the young man – not only of his old friends, but of his liberty – I no longer hesitated about exposing him. He is a dishonest villain; and I can prove it by having the ship’s accounts overhauled.”

“Go on! go on!” cried Adkins. “You have it all your own way now. Of course, my word is nothing.”

“He is telling the truth for once in his life,” said Mason to Mrs Hyland. “For his word *is* just worth nothing, to any one who knows him.”

“Now, Rowland,” said Mrs Hyland, “what have you to say?”

“Very little,” I answered. “I did not wish you to think ill of me. There is nothing that can wound the feelings more than ingratitude; and the kindness with which you once treated me, was the reason why I have been so desirous of proving to you that I have not been ungrateful. You have now evidence that will enable you to judge between Adkins and myself; and after this interview, I will trouble you no more, for I do not desire to insist upon a renewal of the friendship you have suspected. I only wished you to know that I had given you no cause for discontinuing it.”

“Now, gentlemen!” said Adkins, “having been amused by all each of you has to say, I suppose I may be allowed to take my leave of you; and,” said he, turning to Mrs Hyland, “I’ll see you again, madam, when you have not quite so much interesting company to engage your attention.”

He arose, and was moving towards the door.

“Stop!” shouted Mason, stepping before him. “Mrs Hyland,” continued the steward, “I know enough about this man, and his management of your business, to justify you in giving him in charge to a policeman. Shall I call one?”

For a minute Mrs Hyland was silent.

I looked at Adkins, and saw that my triumph over him was complete. His own appearance condemned him; and anyone to have seen him at that moment – humiliated, cowed, and guilty – would ever after have dreaded doing wrong; through very fear of looking as he did.

In truth, he presented a melancholy spectacle: for he had not the courage to assume even a show of manliness.

To complete my triumph, and his discomposure, Lenore, who had been all the while listening with eager interest, and apparent pleasure to what had been said, cried out, “Let him go, mother, if he will promise never to come near us again!”

“Yes, let him go!” repeated Mrs Hyland. “I must think before I can act.”

Mason opened the door; and Adkins sneaked out in a fashion that was painful, even for me – his enemy – to behold. After his departure, each waited for the other to speak.

The silence was broken by Mrs Hyland, who said:

“Of you, Mr Wilton, and you, Mr Mason, I have often heard my late husband speak in the highest terms; and I know of no reason, why I should not believe what you have told me.”

“With you, Rowland,” she continued, turning her eyes upon me, with something of the old friendly look, “with you, I have been acquainted many years; and the principal reason I had for doubting your integrity and truthfulness, was because I thought that, had you possessed the regard for us, you should have had, you would certainly have come back after the death of my husband.

“You did not; and the circumstance, as you will admit, was strong against you. I have now much reason to believe that I have been deceived in Adkins; and I do not know whom to trust. I must

suppose that all of you have come here without any ill feeling towards me: for I know not why you should wish to do me an injury.

"I have a respect for those in whom Mr Hyland placed confidence. I have heard him speak well of all of you; and I do not remember now of anything he ever said that should give me a favourable opinion of Adkins. Indeed, I never heard Mr Hyland speak much concerning him. It is my duty to think of the past as well as the present, before I can say anything more."

Wilton and Mason both assured Mrs Hyland that they had only acted under the influence of a sense of duty – inspired by the respect they had for the memory of her husband.

We left the house; but not till Mrs Hyland had shaken hands with me, and at the same time extended to me an invitation to call the next day; and not till Mrs Hyland's daughter had given me reason to believe that my visit would be welcome.

Volume One – Chapter Fourteen.
Once More Friends

I did call the next day, and had no particular reason to be dissatisfied with my reception.

Mrs Hyland did not meet me in the same motherly manner, she once used to exhibit; but I did not expect it; and I could not feel displeased at being admitted on any terms, into the presence of a being so beautiful as Lenore.

Neither did *she* receive me in the same manner she used to do in the past; but neither was I annoyed by that circumstance. It was necessary that the child-like innocence and familiarity, once existing between us, should cease; and it was no chagrin to me to perceive that it had done so.

I confessed to Mrs Hyland, that I had acted wrong in not returning to Liverpool after her husband's death; but I also explained to her how, on being discharged from the ship, I had felt myself sorely aggrieved; and, having no longer a home, I had to wander about as circumstances dictated. I added, of course, that could I have had the least suspicion that my absence would have been construed into any evidence of crime or ingratitude, I would have returned long before to refute the calumny.

Lenore did not try to conceal her pleasure, at seeing her mother and myself conversing once more as friends.

"You must not leave us again, Rowland," said she, "for we have not many friends, and can ill-afford to lose one. See how near we have been to losing you – all through your being absent."

"Yes, Rowland," said Mrs Hyland. "My house was once your home; and you are welcome to make it so again. I shall only be fulfilling the wishes of my husband, by renewing the intimate friendship that once existed between us."

Her invitation to make her house once more my home, I reluctantly declined. Lenore seemed no longer my sister; and with some sorrow the conviction forced itself on my mind – that my fate was to love – to love, yet wander far from the one I loved.

Lenore was now a young lady. I thought myself a man. As children, we could no longer live together – no longer dwell under the same roof. Lenore was too beautiful; and I was too much afflicted with poverty. Any further acquaintance between us might not contribute to my future happiness but the contrary.

I left the house with mingled feelings of pleasure and despair, pleased to find myself once more restored to the good opinion of Mrs Hyland – despairing of being able to resist the fascinations of her daughter's beauty.

Every time I gazed upon her fair face, could only add to my misery. I was young; and as I had been told, good-looking. Lenore and I had been old friends and playmates. It was possible for me to win her love; but would it be honourable?

Would it be a proper return for the kindness of Captain Hyland and his widow, for me, a penniless "rolling stone," to try to win the affections of their only child, and subject her to the misery of my own unfortunate lot? No! I could love Lenore; but I could not act in such an unworthy manner.

Then followed the reflection, that Mrs Hyland had some property. Her home would be mine. She needed a son-in-law to look after the ship; and I was a seaman.

These thoughts only stirred within me a feeling of pride, that would not allow me to receive any advantage of fortune from one I could choose for a wife. I knew that with all the exertions a man may make – and however correct his habits may be – he cannot live happily with a wife who brings into the firm of husband and wife more money than himself.

Another unpleasant consideration came before me. Why should I be seeking for reasons against marrying Lenore, when perhaps she might not consent to marry *me*? Because we were old friends,

was no reason why she should ever think of me as a husband. By trying to make her love me, I might, as she had said of Mr Adkins, cause her only to hate me.

The day after my visit to Mrs Hyland and Lenore, I went to see Mason, the steward, in order that I might thank him for the good word he had spoken for me – as well as for much kindness he had shown towards me, when we were shipmates in the 'Lenore.' He received me in a cordial manner, that caused me to think better of mankind, than I had lately done. In a long conversation I held with him, he told me of many acts of dishonesty, in the committal of which he had detected Adkins, who, he said, had been robbing Mrs Hyland in every way he could.

"Captain Hyland took much trouble in giving you some education," said he; "why don't you marry the daughter, and take command of the ship?"

"I am a poor penniless adventurer," I replied, "and dare not aspire to so much happiness as would be mine, were I to become the husband, as well as captain, of 'Lenore.' I am neither so vain nor ambitious."

"That's a fact," said Mason. "You have not enough of either. No man ever did any thing for himself, or any one else, without thinking something of himself, and making such a trial as you decline to undertake. He is a lucky man who wins without trying."

There was truth in what the steward said; but the Hylands had been my friends, and were so again; and I could not bring myself to abuse the confidence they had placed in me. I could not speak of love to Lenore, and so I told the steward.

In this interview with Mason, I learnt from him that Adkins had disappeared, and could no more be found!

"His flight," said Mason, "will be positive proof to Mrs Hyland that he was unworthy of the confidence she had placed in him. She cannot be too thankful, that your return has been the means of her discovering his true character. I would have exposed him long ago, but I did not think that I could succeed; and that I would only be doing myself an injury – in short, ruining my poor family, without the consolation of knowing that I had also ruined a scoundrel. Thank the Lord for all his mercies! The villain has been uncloaked at last."

With this pious thanksgiving ended the interview, between the honest steward and myself.

Volume One – Chapter Fifteen.
Love and Poverty

From that time I called every day to see Lenore and her mother; and each time came away more hopelessly infatuated.

My money was gradually growing easier to count – until I found that I had but a few shillings left, and necessity must soon force me to seek employment. Of course I contemplated going to sea, and making my living on board some ship; but I found it impossible to come to a determination.

How was I to leave Liverpool, where I could gaze each day on the beauty that adorned Lenore?

I could not take my departure until circumstances should compel me. In order to protract my stay as long as possible, I lived on but one meal per diem; and as I had also to keep a little money for my lodgings, I made that meal upon a penny roll.

Mrs Hyland had determined on giving up the ship – a resolution no doubt due to the mismanagement, or rather dishonesty, of him who had lately commanded her. I assisted her in finding a purchaser; and she was very fortunate in disposing of the vessel at a good price.

She had plenty of money, and was willing to aid me. But pride prevented me from accepting of anything but her friendship; and ofttimes did I appear in the presence of Lenore while suffering the pangs of hunger! Was that love?

I thought it was; and on this fancy, and a single roll of bread, I lived from day to day. Never had I been so happy, and, at the same time, so wretched. I could look upon her I loved, and converse with her for hours at a time. That was happiness. But I loved Lenore, and must leave her. That was misery.

Lenore seemed to meet me with so much cheerfulness, that my resolution to leave her – without being absolutely compelled to it – was often nearly broken; and I believe there are but few who would have resisted the temptation to stay. But pride, a sense of justice, and a love of independence, prompted me to go forth again upon the world, and seek fortune afresh. Perhaps, too, the fact that I was naturally a "rolling stone," might have had much to do in my determination, at length arrived at, of bidding adieu to Lenore. There was yet another motive urging my departure – one which had been too long allowed to lie dormant within my bosom; my relatives were lost, and I knew not where to find them. This thought often arose, causing me much regret. I had as yet no reason to believe that they had left Liverpool; but if such should prove to be the case, the sooner I started in search of them, the sooner would my conscience be satisfied.

I waited till my last shilling was spent; and then sold a signet ring – which I had taken from the finger of a dead Mexican, on the field of battle – obtaining thirty shillings for it. With this trifling sum I had a great deal to accomplish. It constituted the sole fund with which my relatives were to be sought and found. It was the capital I had to invest, in the business of making a fortune worthy of Lenore!

I advertised for my mother in some of the Liverpool papers; but the only result was the loss of the greater part of my cash. She had probably gone after Mr Leary to Australia. Having followed him from Dublin to Liverpool, was proof that she was foolish enough to follow him to the Antipodes; and the money she had received for the lease of her house, would enable her to go there.

Had I been certain that she had sailed to Australia, I should have gone after her; but I could scarce believe that she had been guilty of an act of folly; which even the absence of common sense would neither excuse nor explain. Because she had once acted foolishly, was not positive proof that she still continued the victim of her unfortunate infatuation.

The mere conjecture that my mother had emigrated to Australia, would not have been a sufficient reason for my going so far in search of her – so far away from Lenore. Still it was certain I must go somewhere. I had a fortune to make; and, in my belief, Liverpool was the last place where an *honest* man would have stood any chance in making it.

My clothing had become threadbare, and my hat and boots were worn to such a dilapidated condition, that I became every day more ashamed to pay my visits to Lenore. I at length resolved upon discontinuing them.

I arose one morning, with the determination of making a move of some kind during the day: for the life that I had been leading for the past six weeks could be endured no longer.

I made an excursion to the docks, where I soon succeeded in finding a berth; and shipped for the "run" in a large vessel – a "liner" – bound to New York. This business being settled, I proceeded to the house of Mrs Hyland – to bid her and her daughter "good-bye."

They showed every evidence of regret at my departure; and yet they did not urge me very strenuously to remain: for they knew something of my disposition.

I had a long conversation with Lenore alone.

"Miss Hyland," said I, "I am going in search of a fortune – a fortune that must be obtained by hard toil; but that toil shall be sweetened by hope – the hope of seeing *you* again. We are both young; and the knowledge of that gives me encouragement to hope. I shall not now speak to you of love; but I shall do so on my return. I believe that we are friends; but I wish to make myself worthy of something more than your friendship."

I fancied that Lenore understood me. I cannot describe the exquisite pleasure that thrilled me, as I noted the expression of her features while she stood listening. It did not forbid me to hope.

"I will not try to detain you, Rowland," she answered, "but if you are unsuccessful abroad, do not remain long away. Return to us; and you will find those who can sympathise with your disappointments. I shall pray that no harm may befall you; and that we may soon meet again."

I could perceive her bosom trembling with some strong emotion, as she uttered these parting words.

As I took her hand to bid the final "good bye," we were both unable to speak; and we parted in silence.

The memory of that parting cheered me through many a dark and stormy hour of my after life.

Volume One – Chapter Sixteen.
Atlantic Liners

Perhaps the most worthless characters, who follow the sea as a profession, are to be found among the crews of Atlantic liners – especially those trafficking between Liverpool and New York.

These men seldom make voyages to any other ports, than the two above mentioned; and their custom is to "ship for the run" in one vessel, and return in another. They do not affect long voyages; and prefer that between Liverpool and New York to any other.

There are several reasons for this preference on their part.

One is the facility with which – on an Atlantic liner – they can rob each other, and steal from the passengers.

Another is, that being, even for seamen, a profligate, dissipated set, these short voyages give them more frequent opportunities of being in port – where they can indulge in the vices and habits so congenial to their vulgar tastes.

A third reason is, the great number of emigrant-passengers carried between those ports, along with the loose observance of the Passenger Act – the rules of which are less strictly enforced upon Atlantic liners, than aboard ships going on longer voyages.

It may be inferred from this, that the ruffians comprising the crews of the Atlantic liners, have a better opportunity of plundering the passengers than in any other ships.

When embarking on one of these vessels to recommence my duties as a seaman, I was not encumbered with much luggage; and I was not very long in her forecastle, before discovering that this was rather an advantage than a misfortune!

I had spent so much of my money, that I should have been absolutely unable to buy an outfit for any other "trip" than that between Liverpool and New York.

The less a sailor takes aboard with him on such a voyage, the less will he lose before it is terminated.

One of the crew of the ship in which I sailed, was a young seaman, who had never made the voyage from Liverpool to New York; and therefore lacked experience of the evil doings incidental to such a trip. He had been foolish enough to bring on board a large "kit" of good clothing. The first night out of port, when this young man was keeping his watch on deck, one of his comrades below took notice of his chest.

"It's locked," said the man, stretching out his hand to try the lid.

"Blast him!" cried another, "I suppose he thinks we are all thieves here!"

"Sarve him right if he were to lose every-things that's in it," significantly remarked a third.

"So say I," chimed in a fourth speaker, drawing nearer to the kit, in order to be at hand in case of a scramble – which the moment after was commenced.

The chest was turned over, all hands taking share in the act; and without further ado, its bottom was knocked in. Most of the sailor's effects were pulled out, and scattered about – each of the ruffians appropriating to himself some article which he fancied.

Amongst other things, was a new pair of heavy horseskin boots, which were obtained by a fellow, who chanced to stand in need of them; and who pulled them on upon the spot.

The next day, the young sailor having missed his property, of course created a disturbance about it. For this, he was only laughed at by the rest of the crew.

He complained to the officers.

"Had your clothes stole, have you?" carelessly inquired the first mate. "Well, that's what you might have expected. Some of the boys are queer fellows, I dare say. You should have taken better care of your togs – if you cared anything about them."

The next day, the young sailor saw one of the men with the stolen boots upon his feet, and at once accused the wearer of the theft. But the only satisfaction he obtained, was that of getting kicked with his own boots!

We had on board between three and four hundred passengers – most of them Irish and German emigrants.

Several deaths occurred amongst these poor people. Whenever one of them died, the fact would be reported to the officers; and then the first mate would order the sailmaker to enclose the body in a sack – for the purpose of its being thrown overboard. This command to the sailmaker was generally given as follows:

"Sails! there's a dead 'un below. Go down, and sack 'im."

As these words were heard by the passengers – alas! too often repeated – the sailmaker was known during the remainder of the voyage by the name of Mr Sackem; and this unfortunate functionary became an object of mysterious dread to many of the passengers – especially the women and children.

Women generally have a great horror of seeing the dead body of any of their relatives thrown into the sea; and Mr Sackem incurred the ill-will of many of the female emigrants, who were simple enough to think that he was someway or other to blame for the bodies being disposed of in this off-hand, and apparently unfeeling fashion!

A young child – one of a large family of Irish people – had died one night; and the next morning the sailmaker went into the steerage where the body lay – to prepare it for interment in the usual way.

The first attempt made by Mr Sackem, towards the performance of his duty, brought upon him an assault from the relatives of the deceased child, backed by several others who had been similarly bereaved!

Poor Sails was fortunate in getting back upon deck with his life; and he came up from the hatchway below with his clothing torn to rags! He had lost the greater part of a thick head of hair, while his countenance looked like a map of North America, with the lakes and rivers indicated in red ink.

It was not until the captain had gone down – and given the passengers a fine specimen of the language and manners of the skipper of an Atlantic liner in a rage – that the body was allowed to be brought up, and consigned to its last resting place in the sea.

I landed in New York, with the determination of trying to do something on shore, for I was by this time convinced, that a fortune was not to be made by following the occupation of a common sailor.

I did not remain long in New York. Too many emigrants from Europe were constantly arriving there; and continuing that same struggle for existence, which had forced them into exile.

I had every reason to believe, that a young man like myself was not likely to command his full value, where there were so many competitors; and I determined to go on to visit the West.

Is it true, a life on the sea might have been preferable to the hardships, that were likely to be encountered beyond the borders of civilisation; but Lenore was not to be won by my remaining a common sailor, nor would such a profession be likely to afford me either time or opportunity for prosecuting the search after my lost relations. I knew not whether I was acting prudently or not; but I directed my course westward; and did not bring to, until I had reached Saint Louis, in the State of Missouri. There I stopped for a time to look about me.

On acquaintance with it I did not discover much in this western city to admire. A person of sanguine hopes, and anxious to accomplish great things in a very little time, is, perhaps, not in a fit frame of mind to form correct conclusions; and this may account for my being discontented with Saint Louis.

I could not obtain a situation in a city where there was but little to be done, and no great wages for doing it. I was told that I might find employment in the country – at splitting rails, cutting wood,

and other such laborious work; but in truth, I was not in the vein to submit myself to this kind of toil. I was disappointed at finding, that in the great West I should have much more work to do than I had previously imagined.

It chanced that at this time there was a grand commotion in Saint Louis. Gold had been discovered in California – lying in great quantities in "placers," or gold washings; and hundreds were departing – or preparing to depart – for the land where fortunes were to be made in a single day.

This was precisely the sort of place I was looking for; but to reach it required a sum of money, which I had not got. I had only the poor satisfaction of knowing that there were many others in a similar situation – thousands of them, who wished to go to California, but were prevented by the same unfortunate circumstances that obstructed me.

Many were going overland – across the prairies and mountains; but even this manner of reaching the golden land required more cash than I could command. A horse, and an outfit were necessary, as well as provisions for the journey, which had to be taken along, or purchased by the way.

I regretted that I had not shipped in New York, and worked my passage to California round the Horn. It was too late now. To get back to any seaport on the Atlantic, would have required fifteen or twenty dollars; and I had only five left, of all that I had earned upon the liner. I spent these five dollars, before I had succeeded in discovering any plan by which I might reach California. I felt convinced that my only chance of finding my relatives, and making myself worthy of Lenore, lay in my getting across, to the Pacific side of America.

While thus cogitating, I was further tantalised by reading in a newspaper some later accounts from the diggings. These imparted the information that each of the diggers was making a fortune in a week, and spending it in a day. One week in California, was worth ten years in any other part of the world. Any one could get an ounce of gold per diem – merely for helping the giver to spend the money he had made!

Should I – the Rolling Stone – stay where I could find employment at nothing better than splitting rails, while Earth contained a country like California?

There was but one answer to the interrogation: No.

I resolved to reach this land of gold, or perish in the attempt.

Volume One – Chapter Seventeen.
On Horseback Once More

The same newspaper that had imparted the pleasing intelligence, supplied me with information of another kind – which also produced a cheering effect upon my spirits.

The emigrants proceeding overland to California, required protection from the Indians – many hostile tribes of whom lived along the route. Military stations, or "forts" as they were called, had to be established at different points upon the great prairie wilderness; and, just then, the United States' Government was enlisting men to be forwarded to these stations.

Most of the men enrolled for this service, were for its cavalry arm; and after my last quarter of a dollar had been spent, I became one of their number. My former experience in a dragoon saddle – of which I could give the proofs – made it no very difficult matter for me to get mounted once more.

Enlisting in the army, was rather a strange proceeding for a man who was anxious to make a fortune in the shortest possible time; but I saw that something must be done, to enable me to live; and I could neither hold a plough, nor wield an axe.

At first, I was not altogether satisfied with what I had done, for I knew that my mother was not to be found in the wilds of America; and that, after remaining five years in the ranks of the American army, I would be as far as ever from Lenore.

There was one thought, however, that did much to reconcile me to my new situation; and that was, that our line of march would be *towards California*!

Three weeks after joining the cavalry corps, we started for a station lying beyond Fort Leavenworth.

Our march was not an uninteresting one: for most of my comrades were young men of a cheerful disposition; and around our camp-fires at night, the statesman, philosopher, or divine, who could not have found either amusement or instruction, would have been a wonderful man.

Our company was composed of men of several nations. All, or nearly all, of them were intelligent; and all unfortunate: as, of course, every man must be, who enters the ranks as a common soldier.

Man is the creature of circumstances, over which he has no control. The circumstances that had brought together the regiment to which I belonged, would probably make a volume much more instructive and interesting than any "lady novel," and this, judging from the taste displayed by the majority of readers of the present day, is saying more than could be easily proved.

Many European officers would have thought there was but slight discipline in the corps to which I was attached; but in this opinion, they would be greatly in error.

The efficiency of our discipline consisted in the absence of that pretty order, which some French and English martinets would have striven to establish; and which would have been ill-suited for a march over the sterile plains, and through the dense forests encountered in the line of our route. This absence of strict discipline did not prevent us from doing a good day's march; and yet enabled us to have plenty of game to cook over our camp-fires by night.

We had no duty to trouble ourselves with, but what the common sense of each taught him to be necessary to our safety and welfare; and we were more like a hunting party seeking amusement, than like soldiers on a toilsome march.

For all this, we were proceeding towards our destination, with as much speed as could reasonably be required.

We had one man in the company, known by the name of "Runaway Dick" – a name given to him after he had one evening, by the camp-fire, entertained us with a narration of some of the experiences of his life.

He had run away from home, and gone to sea. He had run away from every ship in which he had sailed. He had started in business several times, and had run away each time in debt. He had married two wives, and had run away from both; and, before joining our corps, he had run away from the landlord of a tavern – leaving Boniface an empty trunk as payment for a large bill.

"Runaway Dick" was one of the best marksman with a rifle we had in the company; and it was the knowledge of this, that on one occasion caused me perhaps the greatest fright I ever experienced.

I had risen at an early hour one morning, which being very cold, I had lighted a fire. I was squatted, and shivering over the half kindled faggots, with a buffalo robe wrapped around my shoulders, when I saw "Runaway Dick" steal out from his sleeping place under a waggon. On seeing me, he turned suddenly round, and laid hold of his rifle.

I had just time to throw off the hairy covering, and spring to my feet, as the rifle was brought to his shoulder. Three seconds more, and I should have had a bullet through my body!

"Darn it! I thought you was a bar," said Dick coolly, putting down his rifle, as I fancied, with a show of some chagrin at having been undeceived, and "choused" out of his shot.

I afterwards heard that he was only trying to frighten me. If so, the experiment proved entirely successful.

After reaching the post we were to occupy, I was not so well satisfied with my situation, as when on the march.

The discipline became more strict, and we had a good deal of fatigue-work to do – in building huts, stables, and fortifications.

Besides this unsoldierly duty by day, we had at night to take our turn as sentinels around the station.

Emigrants on the way to California passed us daily. How I envied them their freedom of action, and the bright hopes that were luring them on!

One morning, "Runaway Dick" was not to be found. He had run away once more. It was not difficult to divine whither – to California.

In this, his latest flight, he appeared to give some proof that he had still a little honesty left: for he did not take along with him either his horse, or his rifle.

I overheard some of the officers speaking of him after he was gone, one of them pronounced him "a damned fool" for not taking the horse – so necessary to him upon the long journey he would have to perform, before reaching his destination.

On hearing this remark, I registered a resolve, that, when my turn came to desert, they should not have occasion to apply the epithet to me, at all events, not for the same reason that Runaway Dick had deserved it.

Whether Dick's example had any influence on me, I do not now remember. I only know that I soon after determined to desert, and take my horse with me.

I had served the Government of the United States once before; and did not think myself any too well rewarded for my services. I might probably have believed that "Uncle Sam" was indebted to me; and that by dismissing myself from his employ, and taking with me some of his property, it would be only squaring accounts with him; but I did not then take the trouble to trifle with my conscience – as I do not now – to justify my conduct by any such excuse. To carry off the horse would be stealing; but I required the animal for the journey; and I did not like to leave my officers under the impression that I was a "damned fool."

"Every one who robs a government is not called a thief," thought I, "and why should I win that appellation when only trying to win Lenore?"

I could not afford to squander the best part of my life in a wilderness – standing sentry all the night, and working on fortifications all the day.

It was absurd for any one to have enlisted an intelligent-looking young fellow like myself, for any such occupation. Was I not expected to take French leave on the first favourable opportunity? And would I not be thought a “fool” for not doing so?

These considerations did not influence me much, I admit, for the true cause of my desertion, was the knowledge that neither my relatives nor Lenore would ever be encountered in the middle of the great American prairie, and that to find either I must “move on.”

One night I was dispatched on patrol duty, to a place some two miles distant from the fort. The sky was dark at the time; but I knew the moon would be shining brightly in an hour.

A better opportunity would perhaps never occur again; and I resolved to take advantage of it and desert.

By going through the wilderness alone, I knew that I should have many dangers and hardships to encounter; but the curiosity, of learning how these were to be overcome, only added to my desire for entering upon them.

My patrol duty led me along the trail of the emigrants proceeding westward; and even in the darkness, I was able to follow it without difficulty, riding most of the way at a trot. When the moon rose, I increased my pace to a gallop, and scarce halted until daybreak, when, perceiving a small stream that ran through the bottom of a narrow valley, I rode toward it. There dismounting, I gave my horse to the grass – which was growing so luxuriantly as to reach up to his knees.

The horse was more fortunate than I: for the long night’s ride had given me an appetite, which I had no means of satisfying. I was hungry and happy – happy, because I was free; and hungry for the same reason! A paradox, though a truth.

There were birds warbling among the trees by the side of the stream. I could have shot some of them with my rifle, or revolver, and cooked them over a fire – for I had the means of making one. But I was not hungry enough to risk the report of a shot being heard; and after tethering my horse, to make secure against *his deserting me*, I lay down upon the long grass and fell fast asleep.

I dreamt no end of dreams, though they might all have been reduced to one; and that was: that the world was my inheritance, and I was on my way to take possession of it.

When I awoke, the sun was in the centre of the sky. My horse had satisfied his hunger; and, following the example of his master, had laid down to sleep.

I did not hesitate to disturb his repose; and, having saddled and remounted him, I once more took to the emigrant trail, and continued on towards fortune and Lenore!

Volume One – Chapter Eighteen.
Old Johnson

I travelled along the trail all that afternoon and evening, until, just as twilight was darkening into night, I came in sight of some camp-fires. On seeing them, I paused to consider what was best to be done.

To halt at the camp – if, as I supposed, it was a party of emigrants – might lead to my being taken, in case of being pursued from the fort, for my dress, the U.S. brand on the horse, and the military saddle, all proved them the property of "Uncle Sam."

This determined me to avoid showing myself – until I should have put a greater distance between myself and the fort.

I dismounted on the spot where I had halted, tethered my horse, and tried to take some rest. I soon found that I could not sleep: hunger would not admit of it.

Within sight of me were the camp-fires, surrounded by people, who would probably have relieved my wants; and yet I feared to go near them.

Conscience, or common sense, told me, that emigrants in a wilderness might not look very favourably upon one, employed to protect them, deserting from his duty, and taking property along with him – of which every citizen of the United States believes himself to be the owner of a share. They might not actually repel me. In all probability they would give me something to eat; but they might also give information concerning me – should I be pursued – that would enable my pursuers to make a prisoner of me.

Before daybreak I awoke, having enjoyed a brief slumber; and, silently mounting my horse, I rode beyond the emigrants' camp – deviating widely from the trail to get around them.

I soon recovered the track; and pursued it as fast as my steed was willing to carry me. When, looking out for a place where water could be obtained – with the intention of stopping awhile and killing some bird or animal for food – I came in sight of another party of emigrants, who were just taking their departure from the spot where they had encamped for the night.

I had put one train of these travellers between me and the fort; and now fancied myself tolerably safe from pursuit. Riding boldly up to the waggons, I told the first man I encountered, and in very plain terms that I must have something to eat.

"Now, I like that way of talking," said he. "Had you asked for something in the humble manner many would have done, perhaps you would not have got it. People don't like to carry victuals five hundred miles, to give away for nothing; but when you say you *must* have something to eat, then, of course, I can do nothing but give it to you. Sally!" he continued, calling out to a young woman who stood by one of the waggons, "get this stranger something to eat."

Looking around me, I saw a number of people – men, women, and children of every age. There appeared to be three families forming the "caravan" no doubt emigrating together, for the purpose of mutual protection and assistance. There were five or six young men – who appeared to be the sons of the elder ones – and a like number of young women, who were evidently the daughters of three others of middle age, while a large flock of miscellaneous children, a small flock of sheep, a smaller number of cattle, several horses, and half-a-dozen half-famished dogs completed the live-stock of the train.

"I guess you're a deserter?" said the man, to whom I had first addressed myself, after he had finished his survey of myself and horse.

"No," I answered. "I'm on my route to Fort Wool. I have lost my way, and gone without eating for two days."

"Now, I like that way of talking," responded the emigrant, who appeared to be the head man of the party. "When a man tells me a story, I like it to be a good one, and well told – whether I believe it, or not."

"What reason have you to disbelieve me?" I asked, pretending to be offended at having my word doubted.

"Because I think, from your looks, that you are not a damned fool," answered the man, "and no other but a fool would think of staying in a military fort, in this part of the world, any longer than he had a chance to get away from it."

I immediately formed the opinion, that the person speaking to me was the most sensible man I had ever met – myself not excepted: for it was not necessary for him to have seen Lenore, to know that I had done well in deserting.

After my hunger had been appeased, I moved on with the emigrant train, which I found to consist of three Missouri farmers and their families, on their way to the "Land of Promise." The man with whom I had conversed, was named Johnson, or "old Johnson," as some of his juniors called him. He was a sharp, brisk sort of an old fellow; and I could perceive, at a glance there was no chance of his being humbugged by any made-up story. I, therefore, changed my tactics; and frankly acknowledged myself to be a deserter from the United States' troops, occupying the last fort he had passed. It was scarce necessary to add, that my destination was California. I finished by proposing: that he would have my services in whatever capacity he might require them, in consideration of furnishing me with food upon the journey.

"Now, I like that way of talking," said old Johnson, when I had concluded, "we just chance to need your help, and that of your horse, too; and we'll try to do the best we can for you. You must expect to see some hard times, before we get through – plenty of work and no great feeding – but do your share of the work, and you shall fare like the rest of us."

I could ask nothing fairer than this; and the next day, found me dressed in a suit of "linsey wolsey," working my passage to California, by taking my share with the others, in clearing the track of obstructions, driving the cattle, and such other duties as fall to the lot of the overland emigrant.

The journey proved long, fatiguing, and irksome – much more so than I had expected; and many times a day did I swear, that, if I ever worked a passage to California again, it should be by water. I was impatient to get on; and chafed at the slow pace at which we crawled forward. Horses and cattle would stray, or make a stampede; and then much time would be lost in recovering them.

Sometimes we would reach a stream, where a bridge had to be built or repaired; and two or three days would be spent at the work. The draught horses and oxen would die, or, becoming unable to proceed farther, would have to be left behind. The strength of our teams was being constantly weakened – until they were unable to draw the heavily loaded waggons; and it became necessary to abandon a portion of their contents – which were thrown away upon the prairies. The first articles thus abandoned, were carpets and other useless things, not required on the journey, but which to please the women, or at their instigation, had been put into the waggons at starting, and dragged for six or seven hundred miles!

The dogs, that, at the commencement of the journey, had for each mile of the road, travelled about three times that distance, having worn the skin from the soles of their feet, now crawled along after the waggons without taking one unnecessary step. They seemed at length to have reached the comprehension: that the journey was to be a protracted one; and that while undertaking it, the idle amusement of chasing birds was not true canine wisdom.

I shall not startle my leaders with a recital of any remarkable adventures we had with the hostile Indians: for the simple reason that we had none. They gave us much trouble for all that: since our fear of encountering them, kept us constantly on the alert – one of our party, and some times more, standing sentry over the camp throughout the whole of every night.

If my readers reason aright, they will give me credit for not drawing on my imagination for any part of this narrative. They may easily perceive that, by thus eschewing the subject of an encounter with Indians, I lose an excellent opportunity for embellishing my true tale with an introduction of fiction.

As we approached the termination of our journey, the teams became weaker – until it took all of them united in one yoke to draw a single waggon, containing only the youngest of the children, and a few pounds of necessary provisions!

The old ladies, along with their daughters, performed the last hundred miles of the journey on foot; and when we at length reached the first settlement – on the other side of the mountains – a band of more wretched looking individuals could scarce have been seen elsewhere. My own appearance was no exception to that of my companions. My hat was a dirty rag wrapped around my head like a turbann while my boots were nothing more than pieces of buffalo hide, tied around my feet with strings. For all this, I was as well dressed as any of the party.

My agreement with old Johnson was now fulfilled; and I was at liberty to leave him. I was anxious to be off to the diggings, where his eldest son, James, a young man about twenty years old, proposed accompanying me. Old Johnson declined going to the diggings himself – his object in coming to California being to “locate” a farm, while the country was still “young.”

He furnished us with money to buy clothing and tools, as well as to keep us in food for awhile – until we should get fairly under weigh in the profession we were about to adopt.

I promised to repay my share of this money to his son – as soon as I should earn its equivalent out of the auriferous earth of California.

“Now, I like that way of talking,” said old Johnson, “for I’m a poor man; and as I have just come here to make a fortune, I can’t afford to lose a cent.”

I parted with Mr Johnson and his party of emigrants with some regret, for they all had been more kind to me than I had any reason to expect.

I have never found the people of this world quite so bad as they are often represented; and it is my opinion, that any man who endeavours to deserve true friendship, will always succeed in obtaining it.

I have never met a man whose habit was to rail against mankind in general, and his own acquaintances in particular, whose friendship was worth cultivation. Such a man has either proved unworthy of friendship, and has never obtained it; or he has obtained, and therefore possesses that, for which he is ungrateful.

Volume One – Chapter Nineteen.
A "Prospecting Expedition."

On parting with the Californian colonists, young Johnson and I proceeded direct to the diggings on the Yuba, where, after looking about for a day or so, we joined partnership with two others, and set to work on a "claim" close by the banks of the river.

We had arrived at an opportune season – the summer of 1849 – when every miner was doing well. There was a good deal of generosity among the miners at this time; and those who could not discover a good claim by their own exertions, would have one pointed out with directions how to work it!

Our party toiled four weeks at the claim we had chosen, and was very successful in obtaining gold. Never did my hopes of the future appear so bright. Never did Lenore seem so near.

No gold washing could be done on the Yuba during the winter – the water in the river being then too high – and, as we had not much longer to work, it was proposed by three men, who held the claim adjoining ours, that we should join them in prospecting for some new diggings – where we might be able to continue at work all the winter, unembarrassed by too much water and too many miners.

One of our neighbours who made this proposal, had visited a place about forty miles farther up the country – where he believed we might find a "placer" such as we required. He had been upon a hunting expedition to the place spoken of; and while there did not look for gold – having no mining tools along with him; but from the general appearance of the country, and the nature of the soil, he was convinced we might find in it some rich dry diggings, that would be suitable for working in the winter.

It was proposed that one of us should accompany the man on a prospecting expedition, that we should take plenty of provisions with us, and search until we should discover such diggings as we desired.

To this proposal, both parties agreed; and I was the one chosen, by Johnson and my other two companions, to represent them in the expedition – the expenses of which were to be equally shared by all.

Before starting, I left with young James Johnson my share of the gold we had already obtained – which amounted to about sixty ounces.

The hunter and I started – taking with us three mules. Each of us rode one – having our roll of blankets lashed to the croup of the saddle. A sixty pound bag of flour, some other articles of food, a tent, and the necessary "prospecting" tools formed "the cargo" of the third mule, which, in the language of California, was what is called a "pack-mule."

My fellow prospecter was only known to me by the name of Hiram. I soon discovered that he was not an agreeable companion – at least, on such an expedition as that we had undertaken. He was not sociable; but, on the contrary, would remain for hours without speaking a word; and then, when called upon to say something, he would do so in a voice, the tones of which were anything but musical.

The animal I bestrode had been christened "Monte," that of Hiram was called "Poker," and the mule carrying "the cargo" was "Uker." With such a nomenclature for our beasts, we might easily have been mistaken for a pair of card-sharpers.

Our progress over the hills was not very rapid. We were unable to go in a direct line; and were continually wandering around steep ridges, or forced out of our way by tributaries of the main river – which last we were frequently compelled to ascend for miles before we could find a crossing place.

Although fortunate in having good mules, I do not think that our travel averaged more than fifteen miles a day, in a direct line from where we started, though the actual distance travelled would be over thirty!

Late in the evening of our third day out, our pack-mule, in fording a stream, got entangled among the branches of a fallen tree; and, while trying to extricate the animal out of its dilemma, Hiram was pulled into the water, and jammed against a limb – so as to suffer a serious injury.

That night we encamped by the stream – near the place where the accident had happened; and, about midnight, when I was changing my mule – Monte – to a fresh feeding place, the animal became suddenly alarmed at something, and broke away from me – pulling the lazo through my hands, till not only was the skin peeled clean off my fingers, but one or two of them were cut clean to the bone. I reproached myself for not sooner having had the sense to let go; but, as usual, the reproach came after the damage had been done.

The mule, on getting free, started over the ridge as though she had been fired from a cannon – while Poker and Uker, taking the hint from their companion, broke their tethers at the same instant, and followed at a like rate of speed.

I returned to Hiram, and communicated the unpleasant intelligence: that the mules had stampeded.

"That's a very foolish remark," said he, "for you know I'm not deaf."

This answer did not fall very graciously on my ear; but having made up my mind, to remain in good humour with my companion as long as possible, I pretended not to notice it. I simply said in reply, that I thought there must either be a grizzly bear, or Indians, near us – to have stampeded the mules.

"Of course thar is," said Hiram, in a tone more harsh than I had ever before heard him use.

I fancied that he was foolish enough to blame me for the loss of the mules; and was a little vexed with him, for the way in which he had answered me.

I said nothing more; but, stepping aside I bandaged up my fingers, and tried to obtain a little sleep. At sunrise I got up; and, having first dressed my wounded fingers, I kindled a fire, and made some coffee.

"Come, Hiram!" said I, in an encouraging tone, "turn out, mate! We may have a hard day's work in looking for the mules; but no doubt we'll find them all right."

"Find them yourself," he answered. "I shan't look for them."

I had much difficulty in controlling my temper, and restraining myself from giving Hiram an uncourteous reply.

To avoid subjecting myself to any more of his ill-natured speeches, I returned to the fire, and ate my breakfast alone.

While engaged in this operation, I pondered in my own mind what was best to be done. It ended by my coming to the determination to go in search of my mule Monte; and, having found her, to return to my partners on the Yuba. I felt certain, that should I attempt farther to prosecute the expedition along with Hiram, and he continue to make the disagreeable observations of which he had already given me a sample, there would certainly be a row between us. In some parts of the world, where people think themselves highly enlightened, two men getting angry with one another, and using strong language, is not an unusual occurrence; and very seldom results in anything, more than both proving themselves snarling curs. But it is not so in California, where men become seriously in earnest – often over trifling affairs; and had a row taken place between my comrade and myself, I knew that only one story would have been told concerning it.

I finished my breakfast; and, leaving Hiram in his blankets, I started off over the ridge to find Monte. I searched for the mules about six hours; and having been unsuccessful in my search, I returned to the camp without them.

Hiram was still wrapped up in his blanket, just as I had left him; and then the truth suddenly flashed into my dark mind, like lightning over a starless sky.

Hiram was ill, and I had neglected him!

The bruise on his side, received against the fallen tree, was more serious than I had supposed; and this had misled me. He had made no complaint.

The moment I became aware of my mistake, I hastened to his side.

"Hiram," said I, "you are ill? Forgive me, if you can. I fear that my thoughtlessness, and passionate temper, have caused you much suffering."

He made no reply to my conciliatory speech. He was in a very high fever; and asked faintly for water.

I took the tin vessel, in which I had made the coffee; and having filled it at the stream, gave him a pint cup full.

He drank the water eagerly; and then found voice to talk to me. He said that he was glad that I had returned, for he wished to tell me where he had buried some gold, and where his wife and child were living, and could be written to.

He spoke with great difficulty; and soon called for more water.

I again filled the cup nearly full, and handed it to him. After drinking every drop that was in it, he requested me to give him the coffee-can; but, thinking that he had drunk enough water, I declined acceding to his request; and tried to persuade him, that too much water would do him a serious injury. He only answered me by clamouring for more water.

"Wait but a little while," said I. "In a few minutes you shall have some more."

"Give it me now! Give it me now! Will you not give me some now?"

Knowing that the quantity he had already drunk, could not fail to be injurious to him, I refused to let him have any more.

"Give me some water!" he exclaimed, with more energy of voice and manner, than I had ever known him to exhibit.

I replied by a negative shake of the head.

"Inhuman wretch!" he angrily cried out. "Do you refuse? Refuse to give a dying man a drop of water!"

I once more endeavoured to convince him, that there would be danger in his drinking any more water – that there was yet a chance for him to live; but, while talking to him, I perceived a change suddenly stealing over his features. He partly raised himself into a sitting position; and then commenced cursing me, in the most horrible language I had ever heard from the lips of a dying man!

After continuing at this for several minutes he sank back upon the grass, and lay silent and motionless.

Allowing a short interval to elapse, I approached the prostrate form, and gently laid my hand upon his forehead. I shall never forget the sensation that thrilled through me, as I touched his skin. It was already cold and clammy – convincing me that my prospecting companion had ceased to live!

I passed the whole of the following day in trying to recover the mules. Had I succeeded, I would have taken the body to some camp of diggers, and buried it in a Christian manner.

As this was not possible, with my lame hands, I scooped out a shallow grave; and buried the body as I best could.

Having completed my melancholy task, I started afoot to rejoin my partners on the Yuba – where I arrived – after several days spent in toilsome wandering – footsore and dispirited.

The adventure had taught me two lessons. Never to refuse any one a drink of water when I could give it; and to be ever after careful in interpreting the language of others – lest some wrong might be fancied, where none was intended.

Volume One – Chapter Twenty.
Richard Guinane

On my return to the Yuba, with the sad tale of my comrade's death – and the consequent unfortunate termination of our prospecting scheme – Hiram's partners made search for his gold, in every place where it was likely to have been buried.

Their search proved fruitless. The precious treasure could not be found. Unfortunately, none of us knew where his family resided. He had been incidentally heard to say, that he came from the state of Delaware; but this was not sufficient clue, to enable any of us to communicate with his relatives.

His wife has probably watched long for his return; and may yet believe him guilty of that faithlessness – too common to men who have left their homes on a similar errand.

As our claim on the Yuba was well nigh exhausted, we dissolved partnership – each intending to proceed somewhere else on his own account. Young Johnson – who had been my companion across the plains – never before having been so long away from his parents, determined upon going home to them, and there remaining all the winter.

I had heard good accounts of the southern "placers," which, being of the sort known as "dry diggings," were best worked during the rainy season. Three or four men, from the same "bar" where we had been engaged, were about starting for the Mocolumne; and, after bidding James Johnson and my other mates a friendly farewell, I set out along with this party.

After reaching our destination, I joined partnership with two of my travelling companions; and, during the greater part of the winter, we worked upon Red Gulch – all three of us doing well.

Having exhausted our claim, my two partners left me both to return home to New York. Being thus left once more alone, I determined upon proceeding still farther south – to the Tuolumne river, there to try my fortune during the summer.

On my way to the Tuolumne, I fell in with a man named Richard Guinane, who had just come up from San Francisco City. He was also *en route* for the diggings at Tuolumne; and we arranged to travel together.

He was going to try his luck in gold seeking for the second time; and, finding him an agreeable companion, I proposed that we should become partners. My proposal was accepted – on the condition that we should stop awhile on the Stanislaus – a river of whose auriferous deposits my new partner had formed a very high opinion.

To this I made no objection; and, on reaching the Stanislaus, we pitched our tents upon its northern bank.

When I became a little acquainted with the past history of my companion, I might reasonably have been expected to object to the partnership. From his own account, he was born to ill-luck: and, such being the case, I could scarce hope that fortune would favour me – so long as I was in his company. Assuredly was Richard Guinane the victim of unfortunate circumstances. There are many such in the world, though few whom Fortune will not sometimes favour with her smiles – when they are deserved; and, ofttimes, when they are not.

Richard Guinane, according to his own account of himself, was one of these few. Circumstances seemed to have been always against him. Each benevolent, or praiseworthy action he might perform, appeared to the world as dictated by some base and selfish feeling! Whenever he attempted to confer a favour, the effort resulted in an injury, to those whom he meant to benefit. Whenever he tried to win a friend, it ended by his making an enemy!

His hopes of happiness had ever proved delusive – his anticipations of misery were always realised!

Pride, honour, in short, every noble feeling that man should possess, appeared to be his; and yet fate so controlled those sentiments, that each manifestation of them seemed, to the world, the reverse of the true motive that inspired it. Such was Guinane's character – partly drawn from statements furnished by himself, and partly from facts that came under my own observation.

Certain circumstances of his life, which he made known to me, had produced an impression on my memory; but more especially those of which I was myself a spectator, and which brought his unhappy existence to an abrupt and tragical termination. The history of his life is too strange to be left unrecorded.

Richard Guinane was a native of New York State, where his father died before he was quite five years of age – leaving a wife and three children, of whom Dick was the eldest.

So early had Dick's ill-fortune made its appearance, that before he had reached his fourteenth year, he had established the reputation of being the greatest thief and liar in his native village!

When once this character became attached to him, no church window could be broken, nor any other mischief occur, that was not attributed to Dick Guinane, although, according to his own account, he was really the best behaved boy in the place!

Near the residence of his mother, lived the widow of a merchant, who had left a small fortune to his only child, a daughter – the widow having the sole charge both of the fortune and the heiress – already a half grown girl.

With a charming voice, this young lady would answer to the name of Amanda Milne. She had seen Dick every day, since her earliest childhood; and she had formed a better opinion of him than of any other lad in the village. She was the only one in the place, except his own mother, who felt any regard for Dick Guinane. All his other neighbours looked upon him, as a living evidence of God's amazing mercy!

Like most young ladies, Amanda was learning some accomplishments – to enable her to kill time in a genteel, and useless manner.

The first great work achieved by her fingers, and to her own entire satisfaction, was a silk purse – which it had not taken her quite two months to knit. This purse, on a favourable opportunity having offered itself, was presented to Dick.

Not long after, her mother wished to exhibit her needle-work to some friends – as a proof of the skill and industry of her daughter, who was requested to produce the purse.

Amanda knew that Dick was not liked by the inhabitants of the village; and that her own mother had an especially bad opinion of him. Moreover, the Guinane family was not so wealthy as the widow Milne; and in the opinion of many, there was no equality whatever between the young people representing each.

Though Amanda was well aware of all this, had she been alone with her mother, in all likelihood she would have told the truth; but, in the presence of strangers, she acted as most other girls would have done under similar circumstances. She said she had lost the purse; and had searched for it everywhere without finding it. About that time, Dick was seen in possession of a purse; and would give no account, of how he came by it. The two facts that Amanda Milne had lost a purse, and that Dick Guinane had one in his possession, soon became the subject of a comparison; and the acquaintances of both arrived at the conclusion: that Amanda, as she had stated, must have lost her purse, and that Dick must have stolen it!

Time passed on – each month producing some additional evidence to condemn poor Dick in the estimation of his acquaintances.

Mrs Guinane was a member of the Methodist Church, over which presided the Reverend Joseph Grievous. This gentleman was in the habit of holding frequent conversations with Mrs Guinane, on the growing sinfulness of her son. Notwithstanding her great reverence for her spiritual instructor, she could not perceive Dick's terrible faults. Withal, the complaints made to her – of his killing cats,

dogs, and geese, stealing fruit, and breaking windows – were so frequent, and apparently so true, that she used to take Dick to task, and in a kindly way read long maternal lectures to him.

Dick always avowed his innocence – even in the presence of Mr Grievous – and would use the best of arguments to prove himself as "not guilty." This pretence of innocence, in the opinion of the Reverend Grievous, was a wickedness exceeding all his other misdeeds; and the sanctimonious gentleman suggested the remedy, of having Dick beaten into confession and repentance! To this course of treatment, however, Mrs Guinane firmly refused to give her consent.

One day, Dick had been to a neighbouring town; and when returning, had passed a house – to the gate of which the old and well known horse of the Reverend Grievous stood tied. Simply noticing the horse, and reflecting that his reverend owner must be inside the house, Dick continued on.

When near his mother's house, he was overtaken by the horse, that bad come trotting along the road after him. The horse was without a rider, which proved that not being properly secured, he had got loose.

Dick caught the horse, mounted him, and commenced riding back – for the purpose of delivering him to the minister, for he could not permit, that so pious a person should have to walk home through the mud.

The road was bad – like most of the country roads in the United States – and Dick was already fatigued with a long walk. To take the horse to the house where his owner was visiting, would give him more than a mile to walk back; but no personal consideration could deter the lad from doing what he thought to be his duty.

On coming out of the house – where he had been visiting one of the members of his church – Mr Grievous was surprised not to find his horse; but the mystery was fully explained when, after proceeding a short distance, he saw Dick Guinane on the horse's back.

Here was evidence welcome to Mr Grievous. Dick was at one of his old games – caught in the very act – riding another man's horse – and that horse the property of his own minister!

The Reverend Joseph was rejoiced, as he had long been looking for an opportunity like this. He attributed all Dick's misdeeds to the want of proper chastisement; and here was a good reason for administering it to him. Dick had no father to correct his faults; and, in the opinion of Mr Grievous, his mother was too lenient with the lad.

He had long promised, that if ever he caught Dick in any misdemeanour, he would himself administer a lesson that would not only benefit the boy, but the community in which he dwelt. He would be only fulfilling a duty, which his sacred office imposed upon him; and the present opportunity was too good a one to be lost.

Dick rode up to the minister, dismounted, and accosted him in a manner that should have been proof of innocence. Perhaps it would have been, by any other person; but to the Reverend Grievous, Dick's confident deportment – inspired by the consciousness of having acted rightly – only aggravated the offence of which he was supposed to be guilty. His bold effrontery was but the bearing of a person long accustomed to crime. So reasoned Mr Grievous!

Without giving Dick time to finish his explanation, the minister seized him by the collar; and, with his riding whip, commenced administering to him a vigorous chastisement.

Dick was at the time over sixteen years of age; and was, moreover, a strong, active youth for his years.

So great was his respect, for all persons, whom he thought superior to himself, that for some time he bore the chastisement – unresistingly permitting the minister to proceed in the execution of his fancied duty.

Human nature could not stand such treatment long; and Dick's temper at length giving way, he picked up a stone, hurled it at the head of the reverend horsewhipper – who, on receiving the blow, fell heavily to the earth.

He rose again; and in all probability would have returned to a more vigorous use of his horsewhip, had his victim been still within reach; but Dick had secured himself against farther punishment, by taking to his heels, and placing a wide distance between himself and his irate pastor.

Next day, Dick was brought before a magistrate, the Reverend Grievous, upon oath, being compelled to make a somewhat true statement of the affair. The justice had no other course than to discharge the prisoner, which he did with reluctance – expressing regret that the strict letter of the law did not allow him to deal with the offence in the manner it so justly merited!

His native village no longer afforded a peaceful home for Dick Guinane.

He was pointed at in the streets. Other boys of his age were forbidden by their parents to play with him; and the little school girls crossed the road in terror, as they saw him approach. In the opinion of the villagers, he had reached the climax of earthly iniquity.

He was sent to reside with an uncle – his mother's brother – who lived in the city of New York. Before leaving his native place, he attempted to make a call on Amanda Milne; but was met at the door by her mother, who refused either to admit him within the house, or allow her daughter to see him.

Shortly after reaching his new home in the great city, he received a letter from his mother – enclosing a note from Amanda, the contents of which partly repaid him for all the injuries he had suffered.

During a residence of five years in New York, he was unsuccessful in everything he undertook; and, unfortunately, though from no fault of his own, lost the confidence of his uncle, as also his protection.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.