

Anna Katharine Green



*Marked
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PART 1
A DRAMA WITHIN A DRAMA

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Chapter 1

The Statesman And The Student

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Each had received a letter in the morning mail, which he had quickly destroyed. Each had given evidence of strong and increasing agitation during the rest of the day, and each had taken leave of his family with tokens of increased inward excitement, which the mere fact of his being summoned to New York on some unknown business did not seem to warrant, notwithstanding the fact that a dangerous riot was just at that time making a battle-ground of the metropolis, and threatening the safety of citizen and stranger.

Samuel White was at once a retired broker and an incipient statesman. His means were large—or so those who knew him best were wont to say—but he made no display of wealth, and lived in a quiet, unostentatious way which seemed contrary to an evidently ambitious and luxury-loving nature. But the times were troublous, and for one living in Washington, and involved more or less in the affairs of the nation, it was certainly more seemly to curb tastes which in a brighter era of our history might have merited a proper indulgence. Still his manner of life had invited gossip, and many frequenters of his home had been heard to say at this time, that they were sure that there was some hidden and imperative reason for the restraint he placed upon himself, other than the public one just alluded to.

He had an invalid wife, but she did not like seclusion or meagre and inadequate apartments any more than he did,

nor was the character of his only child one which would develop best under cramped conditions. Why, then, did he allow his money to gather interest in a bank, (he who was no miser,) while those he loved lacked luxuries, and he himself that wide and public exercise of power which seemed native to his talents and disposition?

It was a question often mooted and never answered. It was a question which his wife once ventured to put to him, but was so met by a look of profound emotion on his part, that she recalled her words as soon as they were spoken, and, with a wife's loving anxiety to appear always trustful, covered up her confusion and his by a kiss, in which he felt no diminution of the perfect confidence she had always reposed in him. Yet there was a faint wavering in her wifely trust, though no one ever knew it, and when on the 12th of July she perceived this same look reappear in his face, and remain there all day, she was conscious of a great and unreasoning premonition of coming disaster, which was quite different from the feeling with which she had contemplated from time to time the possibility of his raising a regiment and entering the war in an active capacity. The dread which she had suffered then was the common shrinking of an affectionate heart from a separation which might end in death; but the terror which influenced her now was a nameless one, growing out of the discovery of something unknown in one she had hitherto thought she knew well—a something so unknown that she found herself unable to define her very fears, and so disturbing and suggestive in its character, that against her own will it

caused her to take up the past and survey it again with changed heart and questioning eyes.

She had always known Samuel White. They had been reared in the same country town, and were playmates before they were lovers. When he went West to make his fortune, she had remained at home to plan for their union, and dream of their future happiness together; and when he returned (ah, how the old days came back as she thought of them!) she had not waited to hear whether the fortune had been made, before holding out her arms in a glad welcome to the wanderer. The fortune had been made, and she soon heard of it. But now that she forced her mind to dwell upon those hours, she remembered that there was something strange in their meeting, after all; that although he had manifested love for her, he had also manifested a reluctance to accept her affection, and that what to her inexperienced mind had seemed timidity, now showed to her riper judgment to have been a distinct shrinking from the solemn responsibilities of wedded life. Yet had he married her, and made her a good—nay, more, a devoted husband. No jealousy had ever found footing in her breast, though he possessed that species of good looks which irresistibly attract women and provoke their attention. She had been conscious of but one keen disappointment in the years that had since passed., In vain had she hoped that he would give his ambition wing, and let his talents have more scope. She would have so enjoyed his success. She would have found such solace for her own physical sufferings and disabilities in the excitement of watching him rise step by step up the political ladder. She was so sure he merited a

lofty place in the nation's councils, even at this time of great men and tremendous issues. He had the breadth of character which fits large places. And he loved power, loved work. Why, then, had he shrunk from both, doing what he did in a secret and shame-faced way, utterly inconsistent with his general character? She had wondered often, and, as I have said before, had even questioned him once about it; but she had never weighed the matter as she did now, or sought as she did on this day of secret agitations, for a solution of the mystery which involved her peace of mind if it did not his.

They had been married eleven years, five of which had been spent in New York, and the remainder in Washington. In the former place he had been actively engaged in the brokerage business; but on removing to Washington he had given this up and gone into politics, but in such a quiet, almost clandestine way, that, while his influence was felt, his name was rarely heard, and his person seldom if ever seen outside of his own home or the private committee room. Lately, this shrinking from the public eye had grown upon him, and was the reason, doubtless, why he dallied with his opportunities of obtaining distinction as a soldier. She found it impossible to fix the time when she first saw a look of dread on his face; but the effects of the letter he received on the 13th of July were so great that she knew, from the moment of his receiving it, that the climax of his unknown trouble had been reached, and that she had but to stretch out her hand and take from him the slip of white paper which he held, to learn the cause of the many inconsistencies that had so long baffled her.

But she did not make a move toward him, though if she had been asked if she had done so, she would have said *yes*; and the next moment it was too late, for he had torn the letter into shreds and had walked away to the other end of the room. There he stood gazing helplessly into space till she came within sight of his dull eyes, when he stretched out his hand as if to beg her not to speak, and staggered quickly from the room. When she saw him an hour or so later, he had become more composed, and told her that he had received a letter necessitating an immediate departure to New York, and begged her to send for Stanhope, their son, as he wished to see him before he went. This demand staggered her, for Stanhope was several miles away, at a school in Georgetown; but presently remembering that there were great disturbances in New York, she endeavored to attribute his wish to say good-bye to the lad, to a natural anxiety as to the result of his visit in a city so mob-ridden. But her heart told her that no fear of this kind would affect a man of so much nerve as he possessed; and moved to speak, if only to hide her own doubts of his intentions, she asked him if his business would detain him long.

His answer should have reassured her, but it did not, nor did his manner through the remainder of the day. Though she saw him but a few minutes at a time, he being for the most part busy at his desk, she perceived, through all his efforts at naturalness, a strained anxiety and an almost unbearable grief, that at last drove her to fall at his feet and cry out in anguish:

“What is the matter, Samuel? What is taking you away so suddenly? Public business, or some personal affair that

should be known to me as well as to you?"

For a moment he did not answer; then he said in a way to prevent further questions on her part:

"My business in New York is personal. If it were well for you to know its nature, I should not withhold my confidence from you." Then, as he encountered her hurt look, he sweetened his words with an embrace that was so clinging and passionate she was startled. "Remember," he added impressively, "that I have always loved you;" and walked away before she could recover herself.

"I will wait till Stanhope comes," thought she. "He will find out what troubles his father, or at least why he takes a journey to New York just at this time."

But the coming of Stanhope only complicated matters. Instead of summoning the boy to his presence, Mr. White seemed to shrink from seeing his child, and remained at his desk till it was almost time to take the train. Then he came down to where he was, and placing the lad between his knees tried to talk, but failed, and recognizing his failure, bowed his head for a moment over the child, and then, putting him aside, rose hurriedly and grasped his hat to depart.

"I shall do what I have to do, to-morrow night," said he, in an odd, unnatural voice, to the mother who stood waiting with one hand held out as if to stay him. "The next day you will hear from me, and on the following I shall probably be home again,"

And so he was, but not in the way he had evidently expected.

Lemuel Phillips of Buffalo, who also on this day received a letter summoning him to New York, which he as instantly destroyed, and as instantly acted upon, was a very different man from the one whom we have just attempted to present to our reader. In place of being large and imposing, he was slight and meagre; yet there was an individuality in his finely cut features, that made him an interesting spectacle to thoughtful eyes, though whether the charm was that of heaven or hell it would have been difficult to decide even after much consideration. In age he was about forty; but, from a certain stoop his shoulders had acquired, he looked to those who followed him in the street like a man twenty years older. His alert eye, and sensitive, ever-working mouth never deceived those, however, who met him full in the face; nor were there any signs of failing strength in his quick, sliding walk—the walk some said of a man who felt himself followed and was always trying to escape. The looks he cast behind him at intervals favored this notion; and had he not been well known as a respectable citizen and honest man, he might have had some disagreeable experiences just from this very cause. As it was, he was simply denominated eccentric by his equals, and “queer” by the boys, who often imitated him behind his back.

He lived in an unpretentious house on the west side, and employed himself in study, though upon what topic few knew and fewer cared. For he too eschewed publicity, and cherished in his own bosom whatever ambitions he may have possessed. Though not without means, as his comfortable way of living plainly showed, and not without public spirit, as was evinced by certain charities secretly

bestowed, he, like Mr. White of Washington, was never to be found in public places or where large numbers of men were to be seen together. He kept to his own fireside; and, to those persons who caught a glimpse of him there, was always something of a mystery; for even in his own house his restless eyes were ever flashing over his shoulder, as if he feared the intrusion of some unwelcome step across the door-sill. Was it a habit, this constant watchfulness? It might have been, and one of which he himself was unaware. Yet, from the fact that his little child, a tiny, fairy-like girl, had learned the trick of saying before she entered a room, "It is I, father!" I judge that his peculiarity was known and recognized both by himself and the members of his family. If so, this greeting of hers was a touching tribute to his weakness, the tone of the little one being ever one of reassurance.

He had lived in Buffalo three years. When he came there he was alone; afterward he sent to some unknown place for his child, who was then an infant in arms. He said that he had been a widower five months. Of his wife herself, or of the life he had led previous to coming to this city, he never spoke. Yet he always had the confidence of people, perhaps because his tastes were so studious, and his love for his child so manifestly sincere and engrossing.

Had people seen yet a little closer into his life, I doubt, however, if this confidence would have held good. A man who starts at every sound, and visibly shrinks from turning a corner, must harbor some secret terror in his soul; and when, as in this case, the terror grows to culmination in the

hours of a single day, there is evidence certainly of some mystery in his past worthy of investigation.

The day that saw this feeling at its height was the 12th of July, 1863. For a month he had not been even his usual anxious and nervous self. His idiosyncrasies had become more pronounced, and if there had been any one near him who loved him well enough to note his manner there would have been found evidences of dread in it over and above those which had been habitual to him. On the night of the 12th he did not even retire, but sat up in his study sorting papers with a very trembling hand. When morning came, and with it the postman, he was so agitated he could hardly take the letter brought to him by the one faithful woman who cared for his wants; and when, having opened this letter, he read the solitary line it contained, the suppressed cry he gave would have frightened his little girl, had she been so unhappy as to have been awake at that hour.

As it was, the little thing saw that something was very wrong when she came bounding down to breakfast an hour later; and, being as yet too young to reason, she clambered up into her father's lap and commenced to give him a series of kisses which seemed absolutely to paralyze him.

Putting her down, he rushed into the kitchen where Abigail Simmons was at work, and taking the good woman by the arm he gasped forth:

"You have promised to be always kind to the child, you remember."

Startled, the woman turned about and looked at him.

"How you do flurry one!" she cried. "Of course I shall always be kind to the little pet."

“But if she should be left alone! If anything happened to me—”

“Are you sick?” she broke in. “Is anything the matter?”

“No; but I am going to New York,” he returned, dropping his eyes. “I have never left her for a night alone since she came to me three years ago, and I dread some evil. May I rely on you to be a—a mother to her if I do not come back?”

“She is all I have to love in the world,” said the good woman, simply, but with a very sharp look at him which happily he did not see.

“You relieve me,” he rejoined, and was about going away when she stopped him.

“Is it the riots you are afraid of?” she asked.

He looked blankly at her. I doubt if he heard what she said.

“I should be afraid of them myself,” she remarked; but she kept her eye on him, for all that, and continued to look in his direction long after he had left the room.

Could she have seen what went on in his study after his return to it, she would not have contented herself by gazing after him: she would have followed him back into the child’s presence.

The little one was sitting at the breakfast-table when he went in, and was as merry as a healthy, happy-hearted child could be. Her blonde curls danced with the tossing of her little head, and her silvery voice filled the room with musical chatter. As he saw her sweet face, and caught the gleeful accents he so dearly loved, he seemed to shrink into himself, and, looking and listening, grew visibly older from moment to moment, till the child herself might have been

startled had she turned her gay little head in his direction. But she was used to silence on her father's part, and never thought to look around: so the blithesome chatter went on at the table, while over the face of the old young man behind her, the gray shadow deepened as some fearful purpose formed itself in his mind, and lent its horror to the glance of his eye and the movements of his ever restless hands.

"Papa, deary, how do you spell 'fortunate'?" piped out the little one, holding up a big ripe pear which had been laid at her plate.

"F-o-r," he began, seeming to feel himself forced to speak, "t-u-" (he was crossing the room to his desk) "n-a-t-e," he finished, laying his hand on a little drawer at one side of the desk with a look such as may it never be our lot to see on a human face.

His tone, which he had tried to make natural, was so far from it that instinctively she looked around.

"Why don't you come to breakfast?" she asked, half petulantly. "I can't keep the pear much longer. Something in me makes me eat it up."

Instantly his hand fell from the drawer, and he stood still, trembling and not daring to meet her innocent brown eyes.

"Come!" she cried imperatively, and pointed to his chair like a little queen giving commands. "I want company. I don't like sitting all alone."

His lips, which had been shaking like one smitten with a chill, began to part again in a repetition of his former speech. "F-o-r," he muttered blankly, and reached out to the

drawer again, this time opening it and taking out a small phial.

“I know how to spell that word now,” she responded with superior calmness. “F-o-r-t-u—”

He was standing behind her now. His lips were of the color of clay, and his forehead was dripping with sweat

“Let me have your cup of milk,” he whispered hoarsely.

She tossed back her head and looked at him wonderingly. He took the cup, held the phial over it, then gave a great shriek and tossed it far away from him to the other side of the room.

“I cannot,” he cried out aloud, and staggered back to his desk, where he fell into his seat, giving vent to sobs he made no effort to restrain.

She was really frightened now, and got down from her own chair and stood gazing at him for a minute with big eyes and blanching cheeks, then she ran out to Abigail. Did she know how near the death-angel had been to her in those last few minutes? I think not, for in five minutes her listening father heard her voice laughing again in a merriment from which all trace of fear had departed.

Chapter 2

31 Amity Street, July 14, 1863

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It was seven o'clock in the evening. Though it was by no means dark, New York City had been subject on this day to so many outrages, that more than one house was already closed for the night. In the old street called Amity, this was especially noticeable. Wherever there were negroes there was alarm, and in this quarter there were at this time many negroes employed in the various old dwellings stretching between Sixth Avenue and Broadway.

There was one house, however, which if closed was brilliantly lighted. This was the occasion of much remark in the neighborhood, for till within a day or two the place had been empty, and, beyond the fact that a large negro had been seen fastening the shutters and lighting the gas, nothing was known of its occupants. It was one of those old houses common in this district, with low stoop, flanked by wrought-iron posts of quaintly forged work. A balcony ran along the front of the parlor windows, and over the door was a half-oval glazing, through which the hall light shone invitingly. Two dormer windows at the top completed the picture, which was common enough at that time, but which is fast disappearing from our ever changing and constantly remodeled streets.

But the curiosity which had been raised by this sudden occupancy of an empty house soon gave way to an alarm which made this and many other things forgotten. For the rumor had entered the street of a coming mob, and already

in the far distance the ominous sound was heard of treading feet and clamoring voices, which, to those who have ever listened to the roar of maddened men, is so much worse than that of beasts, or of that element to which it is sometimes likened—an angry sea. But as yet the noise was distant, and the street quiet, almost unoccupied. So much the more distinctly were two men to be observed who at this moment appeared at the two ends of the block on which this house was situated. One was finely formed and handsome, with a blond mustache and melancholy eyes, which seemed fixed in an anxious stare, as he hurriedly walked along. The other was spare, and bent about the shoulders, but with an expression so baffling that it would have made his face remembered if any one had been there to see it. Both were unencumbered, and walked like persons driven by some other will than their own. In front of the house I have already mentioned, they stopped. Both had advanced with lifted eyes gazing straight before them, but not till they thus paused did they appear to see each other. Then the shock which passed through both was instantaneous. Each opened his lips to speak, and each closed them again without uttering a word. But they bowed like persons moved by some strong, sympathetic impulse, and, glancing hurriedly at the number of the house before which they stood, moved mechanically toward the door, the larger man giving place to the slighter.

Once on the stoop, they looked again at each other, and both stretched out their hands to the bell. But there was hesitancy in the mutual action, and both hands fell again.

“You have changed,” ventured the younger man in a low tone to his companion.

The other did not answer. He was trembling visibly. “I have not your courage,” came finally from his lips.

His companion started and nervously jerked at the bell. “Let us have it over,” said he; then, as he heard an advancing step within, whispered rapidly, “Have you made arrangements for secrecy? Have you a family?”

“Come in, sirs,” invited an unctuous voice from behind. “You are from Washington, are you not, and you from Buffalo? All right, sirs, the gentleman is expecting you.”

The door had opened, and in the gap stood the large, smiling, and excessively courteous negro, over whose identity the neighborhood had been speculating for the last twenty-four hours.

The two gentlemen, different as they were in both personal and mental characteristics, gave a similar start as they were thus addressed; and each, without paying further heed to the other, cast a peculiar and not easily explainable look at the sky, and at the street below them, like men who felt themselves parting forever with the world and all that there is in it.

If they heard the low rumbling of the approaching mob, they did not show it. Other fears were at work in their breasts; and not from without this house, but from within, sprang the cause of dread under which both seemed laboring.

After that one look—to all appearance one of farewell—they passed in, and the negro closed the door behind them.

He was a very affable, well-bred servant. Taking their hats from their unresisting hands, he ushered them into the large front room at the right.

“The gentleman will be here soon,” he assured them, and softly withdrew.

The two men paused in the doorway and looked anxiously about them. Evidently the well-spread table upon which their eyes first fell was a surprise to them. Advancing involuntarily toward it, the larger man, whom we have already recognized as Mr. White, pointed to the chairs about it, and uttered in significant tones the one word:

“Three!”

The other, who was strangely like the Mr. Phillips of Buffalo, whom we know, gave a slight shudder and advanced in turn to the table, about which he began slowly to pace, eying as he did so the various articles of service with which it was loaded, with a fascinated gaze, that was not without its element of wonder.

“He intends that we shall eat with him,” he finally observed.

“A course dinner,” continued the other, with a significant gesture toward the cluster of glasses standing beside each plate.

“I am not hungry,” protested the student, shrinking back. “This farce unnerves me. I had rather have found nothing in the room but two—”

He stopped, glanced again at the table, and darting forward, lifted the cover from a dish which stood directly in front of one of the plates. “I thought so,” he continued, staggering back.

Mr. White, paling a trifle, lifted in his turn the cover from a similar dish standing in front of another plate, and after a short look gently replaced it.

“The man has been studying comedy in Paris,” he remarked. Then, after a moment, “You see, there are but two covered dishes.”

The other, with a wild look, stretched out his hand to the dish he had so boldly uncovered. A small pistol was lying on the bottom, cocked and ready for use.

“Let us have it over,” he cried, clutching his weapon in frantic haste.

But his companion protested. “No,” said he, “the line I received said eight o’clock. It yet lacks fifteen minutes to that hour.” And he pointed to the clock which stood beating out the moments on the mantelshelf.

“Fifteen minutes? Fifteen eternities!” gasped the other. But he let the pistol fall back into the dish and moved back, while Mr. White quietly replaced the cover.

“We are certainly expected to dine,” observed the latter, “but we can decline the honor.” And a silence came over them which was both solemn and pregnant.

It was broken by the reentrance of the negro bearing some bottles of champagne. His imperturbable face and deferential manner seemed to irritate Mr. White beyond endurance.

“Did you set this table?” he asked, with harsh demand.

“I did, sir.”

“All of it?”

“Certainly, sir.”

Mr. White interrogated him no further. There was nothing but respect in the even tones of the negro, nothing but the mild surprise of the disciplined servant in the eyes that were neither withdrawn nor dropped before Mr. White's searching gaze.

"My master must be here very soon now," the man added, with a short glance at the clock, and again bowed himself out.

Mr. Phillips started from the fireplace where he had been standing during this short colloquy.

"You asked me," he said, addressing Mr. White in eager hurry, "if I had a family. I have one child—a daughter—young—merry—motherless . . . For her sake—"

The other's hand went up in protest. There could not be much speech between these men. But the next moment he was holding out a *carte de visite* which he had taken from his breast-pocket. "I have an invalid wife, and—this," he faltered, in an odd, muffled tone.

Mr. Phillips took the card from the other's hand and glanced at it.

"A boy!" he cried, almost as if startled. A lightning flash seemed to pass between the two; then Mr. White said, almost in a whisper:

"He is only ten, but I understand now: that is why I am so submissive."

Mr. Phillips's slight form shook, but he did not offer to return the picture. It seemed to charm him and hold his thoughts in check through all the excitement under which he was laboring.

“Noble! Beautiful!” he exclaimed, devouring the photograph in his hand with a growing wistfulness.

The father gave a sigh which seemed to rend his heart. “I do not know his equal,” cried he, and took the picture from his companion’s reluctant hand.

He did not venture to look at it himself, but put it back carefully over his heart. Mr. Phillips, watching him, seemed about to speak, when the noises, which had been rapidly increasing in the street without, rose to such a violent pitch that they were obliged at last to hear them, despite their absorption.

“What is that?” demanded Mr. Phillips, wonderingly, but with no especial interest.

He was answered by the negro, who at that moment entered.

“Do not be alarmed, gentlemen,” he anxiously entreated. “There is a slight disturbance in the street, outside. Colored people are at a discount just now, and I think the mob has heard of me.”

Amazed, in spite of his own profound preoccupation, at the ease and quiet assurance of the man who thus announced his own danger in the most correct and mellifluous English, Mr. White was about to ask if the mob did not mean mischief, when Mr. Phillips’s voice rose in ringing tones:

“The mob! The rioters! Are they coming here?” And he glanced at the table in sudden hopefulness.

“They are in the street,” answered the negro, with unwavering calmness. “But there are two dwelling-houses employing negroes between us and the corner, which

means two short fights, or, if the police come up in time, two sufficiently long ones to enable you gentlemen—to—to finish your dinner.”

The significance and suavity with which this latter clause was uttered brought the hue of anger to Mr. White’s cheek, but it seemed to awake different emotions in the breast of Mr. Phillips, as was shown by the wondering question he put to the negro.

“Are you not afraid?” he asked. “These rioters, I hear, stop at nothing.”

“I am only concerned about one thing,” returned the man. “My master expected to come by the way of Sixth Avenue. If he does, he may fall into the crowd, and so not be able to keep his appointment.”

The start given by Mr. Phillips at this, and the no less eloquent change of color on Mr. White’s part, may have been observed by the speaker; but, if so, he gave no evidence of it in his manner.

“These windows had better remain barred,” he suggested, pointing to the front of the house. “But, if you please, I will go up another flight and look out.” And seeming to take it for granted that their agitated silence meant consent, he left the room and proceeded softly to the floor above.

Left alone, the two men stood for a moment without movement. Then Mr. White observed in a constrained tone:

“The tool is as much to be feared as the hand wielding it. This is no common serving-man. If he whom we dread fails to appear, there will still be a witness left.”

“But the mob is shouting, ‘Death to the negroes!’ If a diversion occurs—we still have five minutes left—who knows what may happen to release us?”

There was the quick, ringing tone of hope in his voice. For the last minute he had been a different man.

Mr. White, who had shown but little change in manner, quietly shook his head.

“Would we not still be bound by our oath?”

The other, startled and shocked, drew slowly back with dilating eyes.

“Is that the way you look at it?” he asked. “If yonder man should be hurt—killed, say,—would you still—”

He stopped, trembling; the negro had slid again with velvety tread into the room.

“It looks bad,” he gravely remarked. “Though it is too dark for me to see plainly, I can hear stones flying in all directions, and not a few groans and cries. Somebody is being hurt.”

“And where are the rioters now?”

“In front of a gentleman’s house lower down the block.”

Here an unusually loud yell came through the uproar.

“They have battered in the door,” commented the negro, imperturbably. “That will delay them a few minutes.”

Neither of the gentlemen spoke; they were looking at the clock, it was on the verge of eight. Suddenly Mr. Phillips moved and excitedly remarked, with a side glance at the negro:

“If your master is not here at the hour he appointed I shall consider myself at liberty to leave the house.”

“He will be here,” was the quiet response, with the simple qualification added, “if he is alive.”

“But,” triumphantly began the other as the first stroke of the clock sounded, “it is already eight, and—”

His voice ceased, his forehead fell, and his whole frame suddenly collapsed. A short, sharp ringing at the door-bell had proclaimed that some one stood on the stoop outside.

“You see,” observed the negro, with a deferential bow, “my master is a man of his word.”

He went to open the door, and while he was gone the two men, without a glance at each other, mechanically approached the table and took their places behind the chairs evidently intended for them. To see them standing there, pale, absorbed, statue-like, the one with lifted head and determined aspect, the other with chin fallen on his breast in a gloomy despair he made no attempt to hide, one would not have dreamed that within a few rods of them a work of demolition was going on amid a rattling of musket shots, crashing stones, and demoniac yells.

And for them there was at this moment no outside tumult or overthrow. All the disturbance present was within their own breasts, and if death were near, its breath came not to them from the midst of the mob.

Had the rafters cracked over their heads they would scarcely have looked up.

The opening of the door behind them they did hear, however; at the sound, both men stretched out their hands to the covered dishes before them, but neither spoke and neither turned. A minute of silence followed, then a voice

spoke in tones so unexpected that they both wheeled suddenly about, only to again confront the negro.

“I am sorry, gentlemen,” said he, “but my master cannot get here. He has just sent a street urchin to say he is detained by the mob in which he has become entangled, and begs you to wait a few minutes till he can free himself. The dinner shall not suffer, gentlemen. I shall see to that myself.”

“No doubt,” screamed Phillips, angrily, “but one loses appetite after the hour is passed. I shall have to beg to be excused.”

“It would not be safe for you to leave the house,” remarked the negro, calmly. “Bullets fly about freely at such a time.”

“Have you a weapon yourself?” asked Mr. White, suddenly, stepping up quickly to the table.

“Two,” answered the negro, drawing his hands from behind his back.

“I see,” remarked the other, quietly retreating again. “We had better wait for our host,” he suggested to Mr. Phillips with a sigh.

The negro smiled; neither noted it. It might have been better if they had.

Chapter 3

Passions Manifold

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And now there arose from without such an infernal din, that if these three men had wished to talk they would have found it difficult. Drunk with success, the mob was on its way down the street, hooting and yelling, while crashing panes and women's shrieks marked its progress. In a few minutes more they would be in front. Suddenly there came a second ring at the door-bell. This time the negro paused before opening it.

"That is not my master's ring," he declared, and laid his ear against the panels of the door.

In an instant he started back. Thundering knocks were shaking the wood against which he leaned.

"Open!" came in harsh demand from without. "We see your lights! Let us have the negro and we won't stop."

A hundred voices took up the echo. "The nigger! The nigger! Let us have the nigger!"

The rioters were upon them. Mr. White and Mr. Phillips, standing side by side in the adjoining parlor, mingled their glances, and Mr. White reached up his hand toward the chandelier. But the negro, entering hurriedly, made him a motion and his hand fell back.

"Don't, gentlemen," he pleaded, coming very near and shouting to them, for the noise was deafening. "You are not afraid of the mob, nor am I. Wait a moment longer for my master, and if he does not come—" He paused, listened, and suddenly raised his hand again. "Hush!" he seemed to

say and quickly passed again into the hall, this time toward the back of the house.

“What shall we do?” said Mr. Phillips appealingly to Mr. White, as they were left alone. “I had rather face those demons,” he declared, pointing toward the front of the house which was already being assailed by stones and bullets, “than meet the man.”

“We have no choice,” shouted back Mr. White. “To be sure, if the mob forces its way in, we cannot help ourselves. But the house is strong, and I think I heard a volley just then, as if the militia were coming.”

Mr. Phillips shook his head and looked eagerly at the door. The key was gone from the lock. “We might unbar the windows,” he appeared to signify by the gesture he made.

Mr. White frowned. Mr. Phillips, dropping his head, moved timidly toward the front of the house. A splinter of wood flew to meet him; it came from one of the shutters that had just been crushed in.

“The nigger! the nigger!” rang through the gap, in startling distinctness.

Mr. Phillips, dizzy, maddened almost by conflicting fears, shrank back and peered wildly about. Suddenly he darted toward the table, and dashing aside the cover from the dish he had previously opened, he reached for the pistol within, hoarsely shrieking, “I will sell my life; I will not throw it away! Come, White, let us fight them with their own weapons!”

But a grasp of iron falling on his wrist made him look around. It was the negro who stood calmly over him, shaking his head, and holding before his eyes a slip of soiled