

## Chapter 63

stolen goods. The plate, rings, and watches were put in my chest with the money, and with this fortune, and in the sixty-first year of my age, I launched out into a new world, as I may call it, in the condition (as to what appeared) only of a poor, naked convict, ordered to be transported in respite from the gallows. My clothes were poor and mean, but not ragged or dirty, and none knew in the whole ship that I had anything of value about me. However, as I had a great many very good clothes and linen in abundance, which I had ordered to be packed up in two great boxes, I had them shipped on board, not as my goods, but as consigned to my real name in Virginia; and had the bills of loading signed by a captain in my pocket; and in these boxes was my plate and watches, and everything of value except my money, which I kept by itself in a private drawer in my chest, which could not be found, or opened, if found, with splitting the chest to pieces.

In this condition I lay for three weeks in the ship, not knowing whether I should have my husband with me or no, and therefore not resolving how or in what manner to receive the honest boatswain's proposal, which indeed he thought a little strange at first.

At the end of this time, behold my husband came on board. He looked with a dejected, angry countenance, his great heart was swelled with rage and disdain; to be dragged along with three keepers of Newgate, and put on

board like a convict, when he had not so much as been brought to a trial. He made loud complaints of it by his friends, for it seems he had some interest; but his friends got some check in their application, and were told he had had favour enough, and that they had received such an account of him, since the last grant of his transportation, that he ought to think himself very well treated that he was not prosecuted anew. This answer quieted him at once, for he knew too much what might have happened, and what he had room to expect; and now he saw the goodness of the advice to him, which prevailed with him to accept of the offer of a voluntary transportation. And after this his chagrin at these hell-hounds, as he called them, was a little over, he looked a little composed, began to be cheerful, and as I was telling him how glad I was to have him once more out of their hands, he took me in his arms, and acknowledged with great tenderness that I had given him the best advice possible. 'My dear,' says he, 'thou has twice saved my life; from henceforward it shall be all employed for you, and I'll always take your advice.'

The ship began now to fill; several passengers came on board, who were embarked on no criminal account, and these had accommodations assigned them in the great cabin, and other parts of the ship, whereas we, as convicts, were thrust down below, I know not where. But when my husband came on board, I spoke to the boatswain, who had so early given me hints of his friendship in carrying my letter. I told him he had befriended me in many things, and I had not made any suitable return to him, and with that I

put a guinea into his hand. I told him that my husband was now come on board; that though we were both under the present misfortune, yet we had been persons of a different character from the wretched crew that we came with, and desired to know of him, whether the captain might not be moved to admit us to some conveniences in the ship, for which we would make him what satisfaction he pleased, and that we would gratify him for his pains in procuring this for us. He took the guinea, as I could see, with great satisfaction, and assured me of his assistance.

Then he told us he did not doubt but that the captain, who was one of the best-humoured gentlemen in the world, would be easily brought to accommodate us as well as we could desire, and, to make me easy, told me he would go up the next tide on purpose to speak to the captain about it. The next morning, happening to sleep a little longer than ordinary, when I got up, and began to look abroad, I saw the boatswain among the men in his ordinary business. I was a little melancholy at seeing him there, and going forward to speak to him, he saw me, and came towards me, but not giving him time to speak first, I said, smiling, 'I doubt, sir, you have forgot us, for I see you are very busy.' He returned presently, 'Come along with me, and you shall see.' So he took me into the great cabin, and there sat a good sort of a gentlemanly man for a seaman, writing, and with a great many papers before him.

'Here,' says the boatswain to him that was a-writing, 'is the gentlewoman

that the captain spoke to you of'; and turning to me, he said, 'I have been so far from forgetting your business, that I have been up at the captain's house, and have represented faithfully to the captain what you said, relating to you being furnished with better conveniences for yourself and your husband; and the captain has sent this gentleman, who is made of the ship, down with me, on purpose to show you everything, and to accommodate you fully to your content, and bid me assure you that you shall not be treated like what you were at first expected to be, but with the same respect as other passengers are treated.'

The mate then spoke to me, and, not giving me time to thank the boatswain for his kindness, confirmed what the boatswain had said, and added that it was the captain's delight to show himself kind and charitable, especially to those that were under any misfortunes, and with that he showed me several cabins built up, some in the great cabin, and some partitioned off, out of the steerage, but opening into the great cabin on purpose for the accommodation of passengers, and gave me leave to choose where I would. However, I chose a cabin which opened into the steerage, in which was very good conveniences to set our chest and boxes, and a table to eat on.

The mate then told me that the boatswain had given so good a character of me and my husband, as to our civil behaviour, that he had orders to tell me we should eat with him, if we thought fit, during the whole voyage, on the common terms of passengers; that we might lay in some fresh provisions, if

we pleased; or if not, he should lay in his usual store, and we should have share with him. This was very reviving news to me, after so many hardships and afflictions as I had gone through of late. I thanked him, and told him the captain should make his own terms with us, and asked him leave to go and tell my husband of it, who was not very well, and was not yet out of his cabin. Accordingly I went, and my husband, whose spirits were still so much sunk with the indignity (as he understood it) offered him, that he was scare yet himself, was so revived with the account that I gave him of the reception we were like to have in the ship, that he was quite another man, and new vigour and courage appeared in his very countenance. So true is it, that the greatest of spirits, when overwhelmed by their afflictions, are subject to the greatest dejections, and are the most apt to despair and give themselves up.

After some little pause to recover himself, my husband came up with me, and gave the mate thanks for the kindness, which he had expressed to us, and sent suitable acknowledgment by him to the captain, offering to pay him by advance, whatever he demanded for our passage, and for the conveniences he had helped us to. The mate told him that the captain would be on board in the afternoon, and that he would leave all that till he came. Accordingly, in the afternoon the captain came, and we found him the same courteous, obliging man that the boatswain had represented him to be; and he was so well pleased with my husband's conversation, that, in short, he would not let us keep the cabin we had chosen, but gave us one that, as I said before, opened into the great cabin.

Nor were his conditions exorbitant, or the man craving and eager to make a prey of us, but for fifteen guineas we had our whole passage and provisions and cabin, ate at the captain's table, and were very handsomely entertained.

The captain lay himself in the other part of the great cabin, having let his round house, as they call it, to a rich planter who went over with his wife and three children, who ate by themselves. He had some other ordinary passengers, who quartered in the steerage, and as for our old fraternity, they were kept under the hatches while the ship lay there, and came very little on the deck.

I could not refrain acquainting my governess with what had happened; it was but just that she, who was so really concerned for me, should have part in my good fortune. Besides, I wanted her assistance to supply me with several necessaries, which before I was shy of letting anybody see me have, that it might not be public; but now I had a cabin and room to set things in, I ordered abundance of good things for our comfort in the voyage, as brandy, sugar, lemons, etc., to make punch, and treat our benefactor, the captain; and abundance of things for eating and drinking in the voyage; also a larger bed, and bedding proportioned to it; so that, in a word, we resolved to want for nothing in the voyage.

All this while I had provided nothing for our assistance when we should

come to the place and begin to call ourselves planters; and I was far from being ignorant of what was needful on that occasion; particularly all sorts of tools for the planter's work, and for building; and all kinds of furniture for our dwelling, which, if to be bought in the country, must necessarily cost double the price.

So I discoursed that point with my governess, and she went and waited upon the captain, and told him that she hoped ways might be found out for her two unfortunate cousins, as she called us, to obtain our freedom when we came into the country, and so entered into a discourse with him about the means and terms also, of which I shall say more in its place; and after thus sounding the captain, she let him know, though we were unhappy in the circumstances that occasioned our going, yet that we were not unfurnished to set ourselves to work in the country, and we resolved to settle and live there as planters, if we might be put in a way how to do it. The captain readily offered his assistance, told her the method of entering upon such business, and how easy, nay, how certain it was for industrious people to recover their fortunes in such a manner. 'Madam,' says he, 'tis no reproach to any many in that country to have been sent over in worse circumstances than I perceive your cousins are in, provided they do but apply with diligence and good judgment to the business of that place when they come there.'