

## Chapter 68

This was the substance of our first day's conversation, the pleasantest day that ever passed over my head in my life, and which gave me the truest satisfaction. He came every day after this, and spent great part of his time with me, and carried me about to several of his friends' houses, where I was entertained with great respect. Also I dined several times at his own house, when he took care always to see his half-dead father so out of the way that I never saw him, or he me. I made him one present, and it was all I had of value, and that was one of the gold watches, of which I mentioned above, that I had two in my chest, and this I happened to have with me, and I gave it him at his third visit. I told him I had nothing of any value to bestow but that, and I desired he would now and then kiss it for my sake. I did not indeed tell him that I had stole it from a gentlewoman's side, at a meeting-house in London. That's by the way.

He stood a little while hesitating, as if doubtful whether to take it or no; but I pressed it on him, and made him accept it, and it was not much less worth than his leather pouch full of Spanish gold; no, though it were to be reckoned as if at London, whereas it was worth twice as much there, where I gave it him. At length he took it, kissed it, told me the watch should be a debt upon him that he would be paying as long as I lived.

A few days after he brought the writings of gift, and the scrivener with them, and I signed them very freely, and delivered them to him with a hundred

kisses; for sure nothing ever passed between a mother and a tender, dutiful child with more affection. The next day he brings me an obligation under his hand and seal, whereby he engaged himself to manage and improve the plantation for my account, and with his utmost skill, and to remit the produce to my order wherever I should be; and withal, to be obliged himself to make up the produce #100 a year to me. When he had done so, he told me that as I came to demand it before the crop was off, I had a right to produce of the current year, and so he paid me #100 in Spanish pieces of eight, and desired me to give him a receipt for it as in full for that year, ending at Christmas following; this being about the latter end of August.

I stayed here about five weeks, and indeed had much ado to get away then. Nay, he would have come over the bay with me, but I would by no means allow him to it. However, he would send me over in a sloop of his own, which was built like a yacht, and served him as well for pleasure as business. This I accepted of, and so, after the utmost expressions both of duty and affection, he let me come away, and I arrived safe in two days at my friend's the Quaker's.

I brought over with me for the use of our plantation, three horses, with harness and saddles, some hogs, two cows, and a thousand other things, the gift of the kindest and tenderest child that ever woman had. I related to my husband all the particulars of this voyage, except that I called my son my cousin; and first I told him that I had lost my watch, which he seemed to

take as a misfortune; but then I told him how kind my cousin had been, that my mother had left me such a plantation, and that he had preserved it for me, in hopes some time or other he should hear from me; then I told him that I had left it to his management, that he would render me a faithful account of its produce; and then I pulled him out the #100 in silver, as the first year's produce; and then pulling out the deerskin purse with the pistoles, 'And here, my dear,' says I, 'is the gold watch.' My husband--so is Heaven's goodness sure to work the same effects in all sensible minds where mercies touch the heart--lifted up both hands, and with an ecstasy of joy, 'What is God a-doing,' says he, 'for such an ungrateful dog as I am!' Then I let him know what I had brought over in the sloop, besides all this; I mean the horses, hogs, and cows, and other stores for our plantation; all which added to his surprise, and filled his heart with thankfulness; and from this time forward I believe he was as sincere a penitent, and as thoroughly a reformed man, as ever God's goodness brought back from a profligate, a highwayman, and a robber. I could fill a larger history than this with the evidence of this truth, and but that I doubt that part of the story will not be equally diverting as the wicked part, I have had thoughts of making a volume of it by itself.

As for myself, as this is to be my own story, not my husband's, I return to that part which related to myself. We went on with our plantation, and managed it with the help and diversion of such friends as we got there by our obliging behaviour, and especially the honest Quaker, who proved a

faithful, generous, and steady friend to us; and we had very good success, for having a flourishing stock to begin with, as I have said, and this being now increased by the addition of #150 sterling in money, we enlarged our number of servants, built us a very good house, and cured every year a great deal of land. The second year I wrote to my old governess, giving her part with us of the joy of our success, and order her how to lay out the money I had left with her, which was #250 as above, and to send it to us in goods, which she performed with her usual kindness and fidelity, and this arrived safe to us.

Here we had a supply of all sorts of clothes, as well for my husband as for myself; and I took especial care to buy for him all those things that I knew he delighted to have; as two good long wigs, two silver-hilted swords, three or four fine fowling-pieces, a fine saddle with holsters and pistols very handsome, with a scarlet cloak; and, in a word, everything I could think of to oblige him, and to make him appear, as he really was, a very fine gentleman. I ordered a good quantity of such household stuff as we yet wanted, with linen of all sorts for us both. As for myself, I wanted very little of clothes or linen, being very well furnished before. The rest of my cargo consisted in iron-work of all sorts, harness for horses, tools, clothes for servants, and woollen cloth, stuffs, serges, stockings, shoes, hats, and the like, such as servants wear; and whole pieces also to make up for servants, all by direction of the Quaker; and all this cargo arrived safe, and in good condition, with three woman-servants, lusty wenches, which my old

governess had picked for me, suitable enough to the place, and to the work we had for them to do; one of which happened to come double, having been got with child by one of the seamen in the ship, as she owned afterwards, before the ship got so far as Gravesend; so she brought us a stout boy, about seven months after her landing.

My husband, you may suppose, was a little surprised at the arriving of all this cargo from England; and talking with me after he saw the account of this particular, 'My dear,' says he, 'what is the meaning of all this? I fear you will run us too deep in debt: when shall we be able to make return for it all?' I smiled, and told him that it was all paid for; and then I told him, that what our circumstances might expose us to, I had not taken my whole stock with me, that I had reserved so much in my friend's hands, which now we were come over safe, and was settled in a way to live, I had sent for, as he might see.

He was amazed, and stood a while telling upon his fingers, but said nothing. At last he began thus: 'Hold, let's see,' says he, telling upon his fingers still, and first on his thumb; 'there's #246 in money at first, then two gold watches, diamond rings, and plate,' says he, upon the forefinger. Then upon the next finger, 'Here's a plantation on York River, #100 a year, then #150 in money, then a sloop load of horses, cows, hogs, and stores'; and so on to the thumb again. 'And now,' says he, 'a cargo cost #250 in England, and worth here twice the money.' 'Well,' says I, 'what do you make of all that?' 'Make of

it?' says he; 'why, who says I was deceived when I married a wife in Lancashire? I think I have married a fortune, and a very good fortune too,' says he.

In a word, we were now in very considerable circumstances, and every year increasing; for our new plantation grew upon our hands insensibly, and in eight years which we lived upon it, we brought it to such pitch, that the produce was at least #300 sterling a year; I mean, worth so much in England.

After I had been a year at home again, I went over the bay to see my son, and to receive another year's income of my plantation; and I was surprised to hear, just at my landing there, that my old husband was dead, and had not been buried above a fortnight. This, I confess, was not disagreeable news, because now I could appear as I was, in a married condition; so I told my son before I came from him, that I believed I should marry a gentleman who had a plantation near mine; and though I was legally free to marry, as to any obligation that was on me before, yet that I was shy of it, lest the blot should some time or other be revived, and it might make a husband uneasy. My son, the same kind, dutiful, and obliging creature as ever, treated me now at his own house, paid me my hundred pounds, and sent me home again loaded with presents.

Some time after this, I let my son know I was married, and invited him over

to see us, and my husband wrote a very obliging letter to him also, inviting him to come and see him; and he came accordingly some months after, and happened to be there just when my cargo from England came in, which I let him believe belonged all to my husband's estate, not to me.

It must be observed that when the old wretch my brother (husband) was dead, I then freely gave my husband an account of all that affair, and of this cousin, as I had called him before, being my own son by that mistaken unhappy match. He was perfectly easy in the account, and told me he should have been as easy if the old man, as we called him, had been alive. 'For,' said he, 'it was no fault of yours, nor of his; it was a mistake impossible to be prevented.' He only reproached him with desiring me to conceal it, and to live with him as a wife, after I knew that he was my brother; that, he said, was a vile part. Thus all these difficulties were made easy, and we lived together with the greatest kindness and comfort imaginable.

We are grown old; I am come back to England, being almost seventy years of age, husband sixty-eight, having performed much more than the limited terms of my transportation; and now, notwithstanding all the fatigues and all the miseries we have both gone through, we have both gone through, we are both of us in good heart and health. My husband remained there some time after me to settle our affairs, and at first I had intended to go back to him, but at his desire I altered that resolution, and he is come over to

England also, where we resolve to spend the remainder of our years in sincere penitence for the wicked lives we have lived.

1 -- The bell at St. Sepulchre's, which tolls upon execution day.

The End