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"So the letter is from Major André"

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POWDER, PATCHES AND PATTY

BY

EMILIE BENSON KNIPE

AND

ALDEN ARTHUR KNIPE

Author of "The Luck of Denewood," "Beatrice of Denewood," "Peg o' the Ring," "A Continental Dollar," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

EMILIE BENSON KNIPE

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POWDER, PATCHES AND PATTY

CHAPTER I

"IN sooth, you treat me as if I still wore pinafores!" I pouted. "I hear of your fine friends, but you never take me with you when you visit them."

"There 's a grain of truth in that," Rosalie acknowledged. "I like not to push you forward, Patty, and see you old before your time."

At her solemn words my ill humor vanished and I burst out laughing.

"Have I not heard it said that 'a woman is as old as she looks'?" I giggled. "Faith, then, I 'm as old as thee; for when my hair is floured, there are few can tell one of us from t 'other."

"'T is my knowledge of that which makes me loath to throw you too much into society." Rosalie sighed like a care-worn matron though she

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was but a girl, not so many years older than I. "You are such a child, Patty, and in your father's absence I feel responsible—"

My cousin Rosalie Roberts and I were visiting our bachelor uncle, John Abbott, in Philadelphia. I, because my father was gone on one of his journeys to Europe in the interests of our needy Congress; and Rosalie, because she had had no other home since her Tory family abandoned their country for England shortly after they accompanied the British in their flight to New York.

We were more devoted to each other than most sisters; yet it irked me a trifle that Rosalie could not be brought to treat me as an equal in experience but rather insisted on her right as the elder to decide what I should or should not do. So this time I was bent upon getting my way, for Rosalie was going to pay a call on her dear friend Margaret Shippen, now the wife of General Benedict Arnold and living at Mount Pleasant, the fine place he had bought her on the Schuylkill River; and I was intent upon accompanying her, to see the beautiful Peggy and be a witness to the grandeur of her state, on which the gossips of the town were never tired of enlarging.

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"I can assure you that Father would have no objection to my going to General Arnold's," I said quickly. "He hath a vast admiration for the general; and now that Peggy is safe married to a patriot, she 'll be cured of her Toryish notions."

" 'T is not Peggy's politics that worry me," Rosalie returned. "Her convictions were ever like to be on the side of the coat that bore the richest lace."

"Now, what mean you by that?" I demanded. "That Peggy would not have been caught by General Arnold had he not lived in the style so many condemn him for?"

"If I meant aught," Rosalie replied thoughtfully, "it was that Peggy is a child, even as you are, and like to be attracted by externals."

"Then, if she is a child too," I cried, firm in my purpose, "take *this* child to see *that* one. We should be well met."

My cousin laughed at this sally.

"Persistency, thy name is Patty Abbott!" she exclaimed. "I 'll take thee, then, but on one condition. Thou 'lt wear thy curls, and no powder nor patches, and wilt behave exactly as if thou wert gone a-visiting with my mother."

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Now, this last was a hard condition indeed; for Aunt Augusta, although own sister to my dear father and Uncle John, was a very fearsome lady, well calculated to take the joy out of the most promising adventure. But I could scarce tell Rosalie my thoughts on this point; and I skipped off to make my simple toilet, well pleased at the prospect, even though I was pledged to the most missish behavior.

Not that I would have you think that I was a wild or wayward maid; but I will leave it to any girl in her young teens, if it is not hard to bow to the wisdom of one who can boast of few more years.

So it came about that Rosalie and I sat side by side, my muslin crushed against her silks, in a chaise that rolled out of the city to the Northern Liberties, where was situated Mount Pleasant, the beautiful mansion bestowed on his bride by General Benedict Arnold.

I was all a-twitter to reach our destination; hence I grudged the momentary delay when we met Nicholas Waln's yellow chariot, and that gentleman held up a hand to stay us.

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"Art off to Harrogate, Rosalie?" he asked; then, observing her gay attire: "Nay, I see thou art not for the farm. Satan within and satin without."

"But there you are mistaken. 'T is old Nick is without," Rosalie replied promptly, which pun on his name drew a cackle of dry laughter from the Quaker. "I 'm going to see Peggy Shippen."

"That 's right," Friend Waln said. "She 'll have need of all her friends. But if another day thee rides to Frankford, ride with a light purse, as I do. 'T is said there is a most bold highwayman who hath a special charge over the Frankford Road."

And, having given the news for which he had stopped us, he waved us on our way.

"Now, what meant he by saying Mistress Arnold would have need of her friends?" I asked. "Surely, she seems to me to be Fortune's favorite child!"

"Perchance he is one of those who believe Mr. Joseph Reed's charges against her husband to be well founded," Rosalie suggested gravely. "You know such lavish expenditure as theirs is bound

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to cause remark, when it is coupled with General Arnold's loud complaints that money from Congress is long overdue him."

"Don't you like General Arnold, Rosalie?" I questioned in sudden surprise. "I thought he was such a great soldier."

"He is! He is!" Rosalie cried. "And I am sure Peggy is quite, quite happy." At once she shifted the conversation to talk of my brother Val, who is an officer with Washington's army, and did not let it wander again till we came in sight of Mount Pleasant.

Of all the stately mansions near to Philadelphia, I know of none that better deserves its name. Mount Pleasant is indeed a pleasant spot. The house stands well above the Schuylkill River, with a fine view both up stream and down. Its exterior is very dignified, giving promise of the spacious interior, an effect which is greatly enhanced by the two out-buildings for servants' rooms and offices which are set one on each side, at a distance where they do not crowd and yet seem to support the main house.

When we drew up at the door, I was surprised

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to see it standing open, and as we mounted the steps we caught a vista of the wide hall, a doorway at its far end framing a view of the river and distant shore.

Two men-servants sprang up from seats without the entrance and stood rigid to receive us as we reached the top and announced our errand. Two more lackeys opened the parlor door and flanked it until we had entered the room, when it was closed noiselessly behind us.

I turned with almost a gasp and looked at Rosalie, who had sailed serenely past the gorgeous liveries as if they were not there.

"*Four* men-servants!" I ejaculated. "Saw you ever the like? I wonder doth King George have more attendants or more gaily clad!"

"'T is not mannerly, my child, to speak aught but praise of the hospitality you are enjoying," my cousin said chidingly.

Whereat I could not refrain from crossing my hands and replying with greatly overdone meekness:

"Yes, *Aunt Augusta;* 't will be my endeavor to bear it in mind, ma'am."

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At that moment the door was thrown open and the mistress of the house burst in like an excited child, to cast herself upon Rosalie's neck.

"'T is angelical of you to come this dusty way in all the heat!" she cried. "Rosalie, thou art a true friend. I have been dying for a dish of gossip, well spiced and seasoned."

"This is my little cousin, Patty Abbott," Rosalie said, by way of introduction, and Mrs. Arnold greeted me sweetly, if without enthusiasm. I was too much of a bread-and-butter miss to interest this woman of the world, and she turned again to Rosalie.

"Cry me the news. Hast seen any of my family—or the Willings—or any other friends? There 's naught too small to be of interest."

Rosalie and she gossiped happily of this and that, leaving me at liberty to admire the lofty room and its luxurious fittings.

When my ears awoke again to their converse, it was to hear Mrs. Arnold ask if Rosalie had any word of their gay beaux of the year before, when the British had ruled in Philadelphia.

"There was more than one of our visitors was hard hit," she hinted slyly. "Faith, Rosalie, I

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could have sworn you would be 'My Lady' ere this!"

"Nonsense!" said Rosalie. "No true Englishman would look my way, once my politics were known. I assure you I have had no word from the most fervid of my vastly deceived admirers."

"'T is a fact men prefer to be the deceivers," Mrs. Arnold said dryly. "But listen: if you have not heard from our friends the enemy, *I* have!" And in triumph she drew from her pocket a letter the seals of which were already broken.

"Oh! whom is it from?" asked Rosalie, with considerable excitement.

"'T is not from Fairbrook," her hostess replied, with a teasing smile, "but from another admirer well nigh as ardent. In sooth, it is somewhat of a mystery to me why he singled *me* out, after all these months of forgetfulness."

"Doth not the missive disclose that?"

"To me, this letter is more remarkable for what it does not say than for what it does." Mrs. Arnold waved it in the air tantalizingly. "'T is a vastly well-writ epistle; but since André's pen was ever as ready as his sword, 't is a marvel to me that he hath so long forborne from using it."

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"So the letter is from Major André?" Rosalie exclaimed.

"Now, how did you guess it?" Peggy's tone was chagrined. "I had planned to hold you in doubt till I reached the very signature."

"Why, you told her yourself!" I could not refrain from saying, and Mrs. Arnold was forced to laugh at her own heedless tongue.

"The general declares I am incapable of keeping a secret," she acknowledged; "but, as the mystery is out, let 's to the letter.

She spread it flat, smoothing the creases with a pretty, dimpled hand, and then began to read:

"Headquarters New York the 16 Aug., 1779

"MADAME,

"Major Giles is so good as to take charge of this letter, which is meant to solicit your remembrance, and to assure you that my respect for you and the fair circle in which I had the honor of becoming acquainted with you, remains unimpaired by distance or political broils. It would make me very happy to become useful to you here. You know the Mesquianza made me a complete milliner. Should you not have rec'd supplies for your fullest equipment from that department, I shall be glad to enter into the whole detail of cap-

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wire, needles, gauze &c., and to the best of my abilities render you in these trifles services from which I hope you would infer a zeal to be further employed. I beg you would present my best respects to your sisters, to the Miss Chews, and to Mrs. Shippen and Mrs. Chew.

"With the greatest regard, I have the honor to be, Madame, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"JOHN ANDRÉ."

Mrs. Arnold looked up at Rosalie sharply.

"And that 's every line of it," she said. "Not one word about 'the American Rose.' "

"Peggy," Rosalie told her, "you are too bad! Because you have married from the cradle does not mean that every one hath your romantic disposition. Jack André and I were playfellows,—naught more, I give you my word,—and if he doth not ask for me, 't is because that friendship is a thing of the past. In truth, I know no other man who would be so slow to forgive me for the double part I played."

This was a reference to a time when Rosalie, who passed for a Tory because her family were the king's adherents, had used her position to aid the American cause.

"No man takes a female's politics seriously."

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Mrs. Arnold assumed a matronly air of wisdom which sat strangely on her fair young face. "My husband—"

"Is here to speak for himself, my love."

We all turned at sound of his voice, to see General Arnold limp into the room. He was a large man and not handsome, to my eyes, yet it was evident his pretty Peggy thought him wonderful in every way. His face was red, his tones were gruff, and I soon saw reason to think his manner overbearing, albeit he greeted Rosalie cordially and had a polite word for me upon our introduction. But he had not seated himself ere his glance lit on the letter his wife held in her hand and he addressed her abruptly:

"What 's that I see? A letter?"

"That it is," said Rosalie, quizzingly, "from a most sincere admirer of Peggy's, though she hath tried to convince me for the past half-hour that he adores me—for the good reason, forsooth, that he never mentions my name!"

"Indeed," cried Mrs. Arnold, gaily, "I have no wish to hide that he and I were sworn allies. In truth, I know no female of his acquaintance who would deny his charm."

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At her light and jesting accents Arnold's face darkened perceptibly. He made an effort to keep the tone the girls had set, but his words came forth harshly:

"Who is this anonymous charmer, if I may make bold to ask, who holds so high a place in your esteem?"

To me it seemed that Peggy looked a trifle frighted. She put out a hand toward her husband and spoke hurriedly:

" 'T is one of the British officers I knew before —before we met. See, here 's his letter. 'T is a most indifferent piece of politeness."

Arnold took it from her hand, yet made no attempt to read it.

"I gave orders that all letters were to be brought first to me," he said.

"I—I met Martin bearing this and other despatches, to your office; and seeing that this was for me, I asked him for it," his wife faltered.

"And you did well," Rosalie cried, trying to give the affair a lighter turn. "Faith, you must not take the toast of two armies and put her under martial law! Still, in the matter of the letter, I 'll whisper for your ear alone that Peggy

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and I have small need to quarrel over André; for 't is another Peggy—Peggy Chew, in fact—who holdeth his regard or I am badly mistook."

Her well-meant intervention was wasted on Arnold, whose ear sifted out the only word that might give offense.

"André!" he exclaimed, and started from the room, the letter still in his hand. At the threshold he turned, as if in sudden recollection of the fact that some reply was due to Rosalie.

"Marital law also calls for obedience, as you will learn some day, ma'am," he said with a rather sour smile, and closed the door behind him.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! Now he will blame Martin, when the fault is clearly mine!" Mrs. Arnold was twisting her handkerchief miserably and looking with large eyes at the door which had shut behind her husband.

"Run after him and make Martin's peace," Rosalie suggested, rising. "We must go, in any event. We have the ride back to town before us, and Uncle John will fret if nightfall overtakes us on the road."

"Indeed must you go? But I would not have

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you delayed so that you would not be let to come again—"

"Peggy," said Rosalie, "waste not time and politeness on us. Be off after General Arnold!"

But Peggy shook her head.

"No," she said, "he likes me to maintain his dignity—and I am so heedless. I might have known how sensitive he would be about a communication from the British camp to any of his household while his detractors are busy and this matter of the court martial is unsettled. . . . If you would do me a kindness, Rosalie, as you go to your chaise, will you tell one of the footmen to inform his master that Mrs. Arnold begs him to favor her in the parlor?"

We parted from our hostess then and there, but before the footman had delivered his mistress's message and while we waited in the hall for our chaise, which was standing at some distance in the shade of a great plane-tree, we could not help overhearing General Arnold's gruff voice, even through the closed door of a room at the far end of the hall.

"You thought!" it said in tones of scathing

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contempt. "In the future, think only that I am to be obeyed. Every letter, be it to a scullion in the kitchens, is to be put into my hands before it is opened. If not,—by Heavens!—it will be the worse for—somebody!" And a sound reached us as if he had struck his writing-table a heavy blow with his fist.

It was with a sense of relief that we left Mount Pleasant, beautiful though it was, and as we descended the slope I turned to Rosalie with a smile.

"I shall not tease you again to take me to see your fashionable friends," I told her. "I like not so much pomp where there is so little pleasure."

Rosalie hesitated for a moment before replying.

"I grant you that the scene we witnessed to-day was unfortunate," she said, "but I do not think Peggy is unhappy in her marriage. The only explanation that occurs to me, offhand, of the great to-do General Arnold made over that most innocent letter, is that he feels himself too old for the child he has won and therefore is jealous of her comrades who are nearer to her age."

"That may be an explanation," I retorted, "but he knew her age ere he married her, and therefore should not blame her for it now. I know

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naught our elders are so prone to throw in our faces as our youth."

Which last was a slap at Rosalie, and she relished it without retort.

NOTE: This letter from André was found among Arnold's papers after his perfidy was discovered.

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CHAPTER II

AFTER Rosalie's father and mother had fled from Philadelphia, in company with other Tory refugees, at the time of its evacuation by the British, their property was saved from confiscation by virtue of their daughter's services to the Colonial cause, and she had done her uttermost to increase its productiveness in order to have money to send to her parents, who had betaken themselves to England, where neither of them could be happy without the means to make somewhat of a display.

But times were hard in America, coin was scarce, and the Continental currency was sadly depreciated, so that it had become increasingly difficult to comply with the demands from across the sea, and Rosalie had grown almost to dread the sight of her mother's spidery handwriting on the letters which found their way to her, sometimes through one channel, sometimes through another.

Coming down betimes one morning, I descried

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one of these epistles propped against my cousin's glass, and heaved an involuntary sigh at sight of it, feeling sure it would bring her no good news.

Mrs. Brisket, the housekeeper, bustling in with a supply of hot buttered toast, shook her head at it also, and then hid it beneath the plate.

"There 's trouble for Miss Rosalie, but we 'll let her eat first," she said commiseratingly. "Drat that Jimmy! I asked him why he had n't made shift to lose it on the road here."

"Did it come from the office?" I inquired in some surprise.

"Aye. The old crow hath hit upon a way of sending letters to meet the master's ships in Holland. 'T is little peace we can hope for, from now on," Mrs. Brisket murmured disrespectfully. "But soft! Here comes Miss Rosalie." She busied herself straightening things on the sideboard, while I turned my attention to my neglected breakfast as my cousin came into the room, humming a gay tune.

"Good morning, Grandma Brisket," she said cheerfully. "Why did n't Jane wake me? I 'm late again."

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"Your uncle would not have it," Mrs. Brisket replied. "He was off at daylight, not to be back till to-morrow night at earliest. He said there was no reason you two should lose your beauty sleep on his account."

"Uncle John spoils us," Rosalie rejoined. "I am not used to be so cosseted—are you, Pat?" As she spoke she had shifted her plate a trifle and so discovered the letter, sparing me the necessity of an answer which, if truthful, must have marked the difference between her upbringing and my own, for my father had ever been too indulgent.

"A letter—from my mother—" she said, and broke the seals which closed it. It was sad to see the color drain out of her face as she read it.

"Bad news?" I ventured to ask.

"Nay, naught but the same old story," she replied. "They cannot believe that I send them every penny-piece that comes my way. Their idea is that I am crazed—a fanatic—and that I rob them for my chimera of a Land of Liberty."

"They do not really think that," I assured her. "'T is but your mother's way of spurring you on

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to greater efforts in their behalf. What else says she?"

"Oh, the usual thing! British victory is assured; and this time she believes it, for she bids me to seek out the Letters of Protection given to us all by Sir William Howe and forward them to her. They are a danger, Patty, which I had not dreamed of. It seems she did not take them with her as we reasoned, but thinks she left them at Harrogate, and if they are at Harrogate and were to be found by our Continental troops, or any one illy disposed toward the Roberts family, they might be used to secure the sequestration of our properties, in which case I could send my father and mother naught." She pushed back her chair as she spoke. "So I am off to Frankford."

"Not without your breakfast, Miss Rosalie. Indeed, you have n't eaten enough to keep a bird alive!" Mrs. Brisket spoke in quick alarm, for to go unfortified by an abundance of food, was, in her code, to court disaster.

"Mrs. Brisket 's right, Rosalie. You can't exist without eating, and while she packs us a lunch and the chaise is got ready, you 've time enough."

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Thus urged, Rosalie again seated herself and consented to pick at the tidbits Mrs. Brisket hastened to pile upon her plate; but her mind was still engaged upon her letter, which must have been couched in bitter terms, for she did not offer to let me see it.

However, when the time came to set out, she did not combat, as I had expected she might, my intention of accompanying her; yet I made myself very small and said very little till we were well under way, so fearful was I that she would insist on going alone.

At last, when it was too late to send me back, I could restrain myself no longer.

"Rosalie," I said, "didst recall what Friend Waln warned us of the other day—that there is a highwayman at work on the Frankford road?"

"Nay," was her reply, "that I did not, or Jimmy would be where you are now."

"So I thought," I confessed, "and so I said naught to you; but I left behind my own gewgaws and bade Mrs. Brisket furnish the basket with kitchen ware instead of the dining-room silver."

"That was well thought of," said Rosalie, with

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the ghost of a laugh, "but I am wearing my one ornament of value." This was a pendant of fine design, swinging from her neck on a chain.

"Then must we hide it before we reach the Northern Liberties," I suggested. "Under the seat? He would look there. Within your headdress?"

"I 've heard 't is the first place searched," Rosalie replied.

"Inside your shoe?"

"And it on my foot? No, thank you. I prize my comfort too highly. Moreover, if he bade us step from the chaise, how could I help but limp?"

"Where, then, think you we could put it?" I was at the end of my resources.

Rosalie stopped the horse in the shade and gave herself up to serious thought, then she jumped out of the chaise and unclasped her chain.

The horse was wearing a high ornament of dyed horsehair, designed to wave in the air and scare away the flies. Into this Rosalie wove her chain, clasping it tightly, and the strands of scarlet hair fell over it, shutting it from view.

" 'T is a wonderful hiding-place," I said, "but

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think you 't is a safe one? It would be no better to lose your pendant on the highway than by the hand of a robber."

" 'T is as safe as upon my neck!" Rosalie replied. "Short of losing the whole fly-broom, it cannot go." So saying, she clucked to the horse and we went on our way to reach the Roberts place at Harrogate without mishap.

Rosalie sought out the overseer for the usual consultation on ways and means; then we lunched in the cool shade of the veranda, after which she went within to find the papers, anticipating a search for them but being fortunate enough to put her hand on them at once, in a drawer of her father's secretary.

The day was hot, and, knowing that Uncle John was not at home to worry over us, we were in no haste to set out for town, loitering in comfort till the afternoon was well advanced; then, reluctantly enough, we made our preparations for departure.

"I may as well wear my pendant," Rosalie suggested, but I stopped her when she would have taken it from its hiding-place.

"I would n't," I said positively. " 'T is safer

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where it is. But how about those papers? Shall we not burn them ere we go?"

To my surprise, Rosalie negatived this suggestion.

"That was my first thought," she confessed, "but I should prefer to consult Uncle John before I take such a step against my mother's express command. Indeed, I should like best to send the papers out of the country, and could I be sure they would not be intercepted, they should go to England without a moment's delay; but it is the chance of their seizure by some of our patriots that I dare not risk. Bitterness against Tories seems to grow, rather than to abate."

"Then why not destroy them?" I asked, completely puzzled.

"Patty," Rosalie replied seriously, "hast thou ever counted the chances against us in this enterprise? At home here, a divided country, for 't is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that the Tories are many and richer by far than the Patriots. In Europe we have won the help of France; but in previous wars who has conquered, France or England?"

"Rosalie!" I cried indignantly. "Never did I

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think to find *thee* faint-hearted to our cause."

"Nor am I now," Rosalie averred stoutly. "I believe that were the odds against us even greater than they are,—did they put in the field one hundred men to our one,—yet in the end must we win because we ask only justice. We are pitted in our poverty against the richest nation in the world, yet we will humble it."

"Then why this to-do over the papers? Get flint and steel and let 's destroy them."

"No!" Rosalie spoke positively. "If Uncle John will put them in safekeeping for me, I will beg him to hold them against the chance that might may conquer right. My mother and father are too old to learn a new way of life, and it is true that if the British return here, even temporarily, these papers may prove of inestimable value."

So we tucked them under the cushions, to keep them from blowing away, and started for home.

We drove along happily for a mile or more, chattering, as girls will, of merry trifles; when Rosalie suddenly drew rein.

"An I mistake not," she said, calmly, "our highwayman awaits us at the next corner. Now,

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what's to do? Shall I try to turn and gallop back to the farm?"

"What makes you think any one's there?" I asked, craning my neck in an effort to see.

"A man whipped into the bushes at sight of us. If you look to the left side, not the right, you will glimpse a sorrel horse as well."

"Then 't is useless to run away, for on horseback 't will be easy to overtake us."

"That is my own conclusion," Rosalie declared. "We must stand and deliver. Moreover, as you know, we afford but poor pickings."

So we drove on slowly, ready for the order to stop; but when it met our ears it was not couched as we had expected.

"Halt!" came the stern command. "In the name of General George Washington and the Continental Congress!"

"Now, that we will do with a right good will," Rosalie said heartily, as she stopped our horse.

The man she had observed stepped forth from the concealment of the shrubbery and looked us over scornfully. He was not masked, but above his eyebrows and across his nose and cheeks were painted two broad bands of purple that curved

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to meet on his temples. The effect was strange and sinister, and to me it seemed more disguising than any mask.

"'T is amusing," he said bitterly, "yet I find that it is the Tories who are ever readiest to cry, 'God save our army and our Government!' in the hope that I shall be moved to spare their money-bags."

"That may be," Rosalie replied. "In fact, I doubt it not. But I am no Tory; nor have I—alas!—any money-bags."

"I hear you talk," the highwayman rejoined, "but I have eyes in my head, and I know a lady of fashion when I see one. Such ever have unconsidered trifles of value which I levy upon in the name of the cause."

"For which you should think shame of yourself," I heard my voice saying indignantly, as it seemed without my volition. "We patriots are not robbers, poor though we be. Wherefore, an you must steal, let it be in your own name, not in your country's."

"Heyday!" exclaimed our strange assailant, "'We patriots' indeed! Whom have we here?"

"I am Patty Abbott, of Haddonfield in the

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Jerseys," I replied. "I 've a brother in our army, and my father is overseas on an errand for General Washington."

"For their sakes, then, will I tell thee that I am a good Whig—a most respectable character and no robber. I but levy a tax on the disloyal; who, else, would contribute naught to our great cause. I have no quarrel with patriots and would gladly say 'Pass, Patty Abbott!' did I not find thee in bad company. Wherefore I ask thee, why dost thou, a maid of a family so well disposed, consort with one of the Meschianza rabble? 'Who touches pitch will be defiled.' A Whig should keep Whiggish company."

"I was not at the Meschianza," Rosalie said haughtily. To me she whispered in haste: "This man is mad. I know not what to do."

"My cousin, whom you are so misjudging, was not a Meschianza miss," I told the highwayman as quietly as I could. "She was not even in Philadelphia then. In fact, she had left in haste, in company with my brother, to carry certain valuable information to General Washington's army—" I stopped, despairing of making him believe the story of which Rosalie was the heroine.

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"In-deed!" drawled the highwayman incredulously. "In very deed! You interest me strangely. I make no doubt she must have been the mysterious E. P. U. of whom there was so much talk. 'T is not remarkable that she was never suspect an she wore her present disguise."

"Patty," interposed Rosalie, "'t is useless to try to convince this gentleman here that we are not Tories. He but mocks at the truths you tell him; therefore let him search our pockets, if that is his will, and permit us to go our way."

"Nay, there 's naught in your pockets, else you would not offer them," the man said slyly. "Instead, there 's a basket there I 'll have, an it pleaseth your high mightiness."

"'T is empty, save for some kitchen ware," I said, as I handed it to him. "Believe me or not, we are both patriots and have naught of value on us. There are a few vegetables in the back of the chaise which we are taking to town for our table. I give you my word there is naught concealed beneath them, but they are yours as a free gift, if you covet them."

"I 've turnips and onions a-plenty without being in debt to your bounty," the man retorted.

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"I but levy a tax on the disloyal"

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"Out with you both, into the road! I'll search your rig to my own satisfaction."

Then, and then only, did I remember the British Letters of Protection and realize why Rosalie had been so quiet since the strange character of the robber had been disclosed.

I saw her cast one despairing look around as she descended from the chaise, and I guessed her thought to seize the papers, jump on the sorrel horse and so escape with them; but the thief, pistol in hand, was between us and his animal and such an attempt was doomed to failure. . . . We both stood in the dust of the road and watched him lift the papers from beneath the cushion.

He said naught at sight of them and their portentous seals, continuing his search till he was satisfied that no money nor valuables were to fall his prey; then he got out of the chaise and looked us over contemptuously.

"So, my gentle patriots," he said, "I find you armed with romances attesting your honesty and Papers of Protection from the enemy, as well! Were ye men, neither of you should stir from this spot alive. I should feel it a privilege to rid the land of two such traitors. As ye are females—"

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he drew a knife and cut the harness through here and there—"you shall trail your pride in the mud of your King's Highway and find your way back to town on Shanks' mare."

Whereupon he gave our horse a smart slap on its flank that sent it careering down the road, mounted his own steed,—taking the papers with him,—and made off, leaving us well nigh smothered in his dust.

"At all events, he did n't get the pendant," I said, with a sigh. "But—oh, Rosalie!—shall we ever be able to catch that horse? 'T is a long trudge to town!"

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CHAPTER III

WHEN first I started to jot down in my diary notes of what happened day by day on our estate, known as "Springhill," at Haddonfield in the Jerseys, it grew to be but a record of the number of pots of currant jelly and fruit preserves I had had put up during the summer, and the amount of homespun, both in linen and in wool, that had come from our looms in winter. Until one eventful night, when General Washington had visited my father to engage him as a messenger for the cause, there had been little of deeper interest to note, save when my brother Val had gone off to join our patriot army. We were good Whigs, one and all, but the war had passed us by; and even the Hessians, who had rioted elsewhere through our State, had not molested us.

Such being the case, it is easy to understand that my diary ceased to be faithfully kept; and, as I flick over the pages, I find many dates blank,

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and on others notes such as this: "The bees swarmed from the large straw hive to-day, and we were like to have lost the swarm; but all the maids turned out to beat upon tin pails, whereupon they came down and went so fast into their new hive as to look like a flood of molasses. I am rejoiced that we did not lose them, as we cannot have too much honey for our needs." . . . "Williamson asks may he have second choice of Queenie's pups when Master Val hath had his pick." . . . "The hawks got two of the red hen's chicks this day."

Interest revived after Father started on his first errand for General Washington. I went to Philadelphia then, lived there while it was in the hands of the enemy; and, with the idea that my doings were of moment in Father's eyes, I kept a true record of all I saw, a habit which I have never discontinued. Thus it is that I can now set down exactly the account that follows of what befell Rosalie and me.

Having explained this, I will waste no more time, but will go on to the day when a strange young man first presented himself at my uncle

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John Abbott's door, asking to see Mistress Rosalie Roberts.

This was months after our trip to Harrogate, where our fellow-Whig had left us deep in dust and many miles from home. Fortunately, finding no silver in it, he had spared our luncheon-basket, and the salt left from our meal, sprinkled on some bread, had finally tempted our steed to return to us. We had repaired his harness as best we might, with our ribbands and garters, and had at last made our way into town in time to relieve Mrs. Brisket's anxiety, who was fast working herself into quite a taking over our non-return. We haled her out to show her our steed adorned with bows and streamers in unexpected places, and she had laughed till her plump sides ached at the figure we must have made had we driven through the city in broad day.

"'T is as well you were belated," she acknowledged, wiping her eyes, which had filled with tears of mirth. "That solemn Dobbin so tricked out must have brought a crowd to follow you." Then a memory came to her, and she held up her hands in horror. "Good lack, Miss Rosalie!"

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she said. "The creature got your pendant! That is a sad loss indeed."

"But he did not get it," Rosalie told her, as she retrieved it from its hiding-place. "Patty's remembrance of Friend Waln's warning saved me that. I would that it had also saved the papers," she sighed. "I blame myself greatly that I gave no care to their protection till too late."

"Waste not a thought on the papers, my pretty," Mrs. Brisket said. "Thy uncle's niece is scarce like to be meddled with."

But Rosalie shook her head and refused to be comforted.

"I had no right to touch them an I did not mean to safeguard them," she affirmed moodily. "I know only too well what interpretation my mother will put upon such negligence; but how could I think a highwayman would plunder what was of no worth?"

In truth, we all felt anxious now about the stand which would be taken by the Continental authorities; but, as time passed without our hearing aught of the matter, we jumped to the conclusion that our highwayman was not the Whig in good repute he claimed to be; and, when some

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months had gone by, the matter clean slipped our memories.

It was in early summer that Gilbert Sedden lifted our knocker. My father had returned and was gone again; for once he had started his work for his Excellency, he proved too valuable a man for General Washington to let go, and he was scarce back from one errand ere he was off on another, quite content to be so employed since I had a safe home with Uncle John and a companion in Rosalie. My uncle was at his counting-house and Rosalie was staying with the Peters family at Belmont, so it was to me that Jinny, my colored maid, brought news of the visitor.

"I done tol' him she was n't to home," she grumbled, "but he 's a very highty-tighty young gentleman. He say he 's bound to know when *will* she be home. He say ol' Ma'am Roberts sent him; but that ain't true, 'cause she 's done gone away."

"I had better see this insistent gentleman," I sighed, putting down a hunting shirt I was stitching for Val and going to the glass to smooth my hair.

"He don' want to see you, nohow," Jinny an-

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nounced. "I ask' him would he like to see my missus, please. And he say, 'certainly not'—jus' like that. Short and snappy like."

"That 's too bad, for he 's going to see me," I declared, and made my way downstairs.

I entered the drawing-room with as stately an air as I could contrive, and a young man standing before the window bowed deeply. Straightening his back, his eyes met mine, whereupon he stood up stiffly and said:

"You 're not Rosalie Roberts. You 're too young."

Something in the manner of those simple words angered me, and I replied curtly:

"You were told my cousin was not at home. My serving-maid understood you to say you had come from my aunt. If that is the case, cry me your errand, and—an I think it of sufficient moment to justify it—I will send for Miss Roberts."

"It is of moment," he said positively. "But I can wait more readily than I can open up Mistress Roberts's private affairs to another."

"In that case I will bid you good-day," I said, curtseying and motioning him to the door.

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"I have told you I can wait," he declared, moving as if to invite himself to a chair.

"We do not take lodgers," I informed him, not troubling to hide a certain amusement at his discomfiture.

"Lodgers!" he exclaimed, astounded. "I thought Mistress Roberts would be back."

"She will," I replied. "Assuredly she will return; but not to-day, nor perchance to-morrow, nor the next day. In fact, I have no exact idea when she will come home."

This was clearly a facer for the visitor, and he stood for a moment turning his hat in his hands; then, as if he had made up his mind about something, he looked me in the eye and said:

"What know you of certain British Letters of Protection?"

It was my turn to be confounded. Was this —could it be the highwayman in person? Or was it some agent of his, sent to make, from the sale of the papers, the money he had failed to find when he stopped us on the road? I tried to picture this young man with two purple bars painted across his face; and, thinking of him thus, I seemed to discern something sinister in his

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aspect. He was about the height of the robber, but our assailant had had a more provincial accent, which, doubtless, had been assumed. In sooth, I now made sure the two were one, and drawing a deep breath, I answered his question with another:

"What know you of those papers?"

Ere he had opened his lips to reply, a voice sounded through the house.

"Patty! Patty!" it called. I ran to the door, intent upon warning Rosalie away; but I was too late.

"I pray you say you 're glad to see me back!" she cried. "You seem far from overjoyed. Yet, an you don't welcome me for my own sake, you must for my companion's; that I 'll wager."

"This is Mistress Rosalie Roberts." The visitor rather made a statement than asked a question, and Rosalie looked at him in sudden surprise.

"Yes," she began, but I interrupted.

"He comes with some rigmarole of British Papers of Protection," I said hurriedly, intent on warning her ere she spoke.

Rosalie raised her eyebrows at this.

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"You wish to see me, sir, on this business?" she asked.

"I am sent by your mother as her business representative. My name will be unknown to you, but it is Gilbert Sedden. I have here a letter from her and yet others from friends of yours in New York. I have been assured by those in that city that re-occupation of Philadelphia is no part of the present military plans and, as your mother has authorized me to take over her interests, I think it right that you should not be endangered within the Continental lines by possession of such papers and am prepared to assume the charge of them from now on."

"'T is vastly thoughtful of you," Rosalie returned, and who could say whether she spoke in earnest or in irony. "An you will give me the letters, I will take the whole matter under advisement and let you hear from me. You will readily understand that I am not prepared to answer offhand in so momentous a matter."

The young man bowed and shortly took his leave, having told us he was to be found at the City Tavern until he secured a more homely lodging.

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With her packet of letters in her hand, my cousin turned to me.

"What thought you of this emissary of my mother's?" she asked.

"He needed but the purple stripes to be the image of our highwayman!" I declared.

"Stuff, child! This was no more than a boy," my cousin laughed. "That other was a man."

"He would scarce go about such business undisguised," I insisted.

"Nonsense, Pat! This is but a child. Innocent as a kitten whose eyes are just opened, and vastly proud of his important errand. Though why my mother chose such an one—"

"None the less, for all his innocence, he means to make you pay dearly for those missing papers," I told her dryly.

Rosalie gave no heed to this, having seated herself and begun to run through her letters. There were several delicately wafered epistles, evidently from ladies. One was in her mother's scrawl. Another in Rebecca Franks's hand. And of two unmistakably masculine, one which was sealed with a great seal that seemed vaguely familiar to me, Rosalie slipped into her pocket unread,

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even while she knit her brows over her mother's scratchy lines.

"At all events, that is clear enough," she said, drawing a deep breath. "It lacks only my father's signature to leave me no recourse. I am to sell all we own in town and country and, if I will not go to join my parents, I must turn the proceeds over to this Gilbert Sedden, who is their duly appointed messenger and 'a right-thinking youth, worthy of all trust.'"

"How know you this is Gilbert Sedden, at all?" I asked peevishly. "I am positive he is our highwayman who, belike, hath waylaid the real messenger and, taking his letters, is personating him to lay his hands on your fortune."

"Patty," cried Rosalie, "you should write romances like Fanny Burney's 'Evelina,' or dramas for the Southwark theater! Jack André would pale with envy at your imagination, an he could hear you."

I was annoyed at this, so I said:

"Then, on three or four smooth words and the possession of a letter that may be stolen, you propose to throw your whole fortune into this man's hands?"

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"Nonsense!" rejoined Rosalie. "The young man must convince Uncle John that he hath the authority he claims, before I give him a penny-piece. However, I am not ill pleased to have him here if the properties must be sold. 'T will preclude the question of any of the money being diverted to our army's necessities." She gathered up her scattered belongings and prepared to go upstairs. "You don't seem interested in the guest I brought with me," she turned to hint, teasingly.

"I am not interested," I vowed. "I have no thought for aught save this scamp's purpose."

"Then keep out of the garden," she called back over her shoulder. "He drove from headquarters with Mr. Richard Peters, and I thought it best to return here with him."

"He? Who?" I demanded.

"Your father," Rosalie laughed. "He went to leave the horses."

But I was gone without waiting for further words.

As was only too usual, my father had no more than come to say good-by and was off again the

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next day; however, I was the happier for having seen him.

He and Uncle John talked over with Rosalie the questions brought up by young Sedden's arrival, the three agreeing that the papers he carried were undoubtedly authentic and that there was no reason for supposing their bearer other than he represented himself. No argument could convince me of this, but the only concession I obtained, who was for sending this man to the right-about, was that Uncle John would be in no hurry to sell the Roberts family's holdings, and meanwhile would keep an eye on the new-comer; although Rosalie was all for haste, having ever the recollection of the Papers of Protection and the use they might be put to in hostile hands.

That he might be the more easily observed, Sedden was invited to the house now and again, and soon it became only too plain to me that he was doing his uttermost to ingratiate himself with Rosalie and influence her to return to her mother's side, although she had never received any pardon for her overt acts against the British, and we had no reason to suppose she would be

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safe within their lines. Sedden dwelt upon Madam Roberts's advancing years and need of her daughter's loving care, and to me it seemed that he was making headway; wherefor I grew to hate him so that I could scarce bring myself to speak to him with civility. In addition, I still held to my suspicions, although I had ceased to insist that he was our highwayman, finding him no less sinister because I was alone in my doubt of him.

In my diary are countless notes of sayings and doings of his, all of a nature to confirm the suspicion I held him in, which was not weakened by his success in pleasing the others of the household. Thus matters rested until Val, on leave, came to make us a visit.

My brother is a young officer of great promise, and has had much to do with the efficiency of our Secret Service, himself at times taking risks that are no part of his duties; hence he has tales to tell of happenings that do not reach the ears of the rabble, and, on the first evening of his visit, Uncle John, Rosalie and I sat around the library table, over dishes of walnuts and early apples, agape for any news he might see fit to pass on to us.

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But Val said naught save that the apples were good, and Rosalie grew impatient.

"Cry us your doings, Val," she said. "Who giveth you useful tidings now that poor E. P. U. is silent?"

"The boot is on the other foot," Val said slowly. "For the first time are we out-generaled in this department."

"What 's that you say?" Uncle John spoke hastily, for him. "I thought our Secret Service was the one branch that had not been starved."

"True enough," said Val. "When needful, his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief hath fed it from his private purse. Nor do I mean now that we are not informed about our enemy. My complaint is that they have equally early and exact information of our every move."

For an instant there was silence about the table; then Rosalie said:

"That must be stopped!"

"Aye," Val agreed, "but how?"

"I have an invitation from Becky Franks to visit her in New York." Rosalie and Val eyed each other; but he shook his head even before Uncle John had uttered an explosive "No!"

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"Val," I asked, leaning across the table, "how long has this welcome information been reaching the British?"

"For a month at least," Val answered.

"Then I know who sent it!" I exclaimed excitedly. "I was sure from the first that he was a villain."

"I like not your choice of words, Patty," said Val. "Both Rosalie and I have gathered information for our country, nor thought ourselves villainous because of it."

"But that is different," I said lamely. "You never tried to betray another; and this man, I am well assured, is bent upon leading Rosalie within the British lines. No doubt," I added as an after-thought, "he is to be well paid for his trouble."

"Patty," cried Rosalie, "you are too bad! Indeed, you are a very Indian for prejudice where you take a dislike."

"I don't know," I said; "I ne'er took one before. But I am certain I can tell a rascal when I see one."

"Who is the man Patty hath in mind?" Val asked.

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"A mere boy. My mother's messenger. Rebecca Franks, who met him on his way here, writes him down a 'dear, delightful dunderhead.' And 't is thus I myself would rank him. Moreover, he hath no facilities for obtaining information," Rosalie declared.

"Where is he?" Val asked. "Faith, he should at least be entertaining if two girls hold such diverse opinions of him."

"As to his facilities for obtaining information, we have no knowledge of them, I confess; yet remember, when you were E. P. U., none knew how you obtained the information you published. However, I am ready enough to write Master Sedden down a dunderhead if that will pleasure you," I said aside to Rosalie, tossing my curls.

"Then he is not my man," Val vowed, "for, believe you me, the one who is eyes and ears for the British to-day is no lack-wit."

"At all events, I 'll send for him, Val," Uncle John said. "It will be of interest to see how you judge him."

In less than half an hour Gilbert Sedden was ushered in and sat down to a plate of our simple refreshment.

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"You have but lately come from New York," Uncle John began. "What do you think of my niece's project to go there on a visit?"

Master Sedden's eyes wandered to mine in some surprise.

"Not I," I said. "I 'll set no foot there till it is freed from tyranny."

"I 'm more poor-spirited," laughed Rosalie. "I confess that I like the gaiety of headquarters. The dances, the plays and—yes, the officers too, even though they are our enemies."

" 'T is a liking they reciprocate," Sedden declared. "When I said I was for Philadelphia, I was loaded down with messages, as you know."

"Then you fancy, an I were to venture there, I should not be punished for a naughty child?" Rosalie questioned jestingly. "I confess I gave some small trouble hereabout, last year. Think you they would be minded to put me in a—closet, for my contumacy?"

"An they did, it needs must be one big enough to entertain all the officers of the army," Sedden said with a smile. "I supped at the club one night, and you were the toast of the evening. Sooth, at the last they drank your health in broken

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glass, vowing that they would run no risk that cups so honored should fall to lowlier use."

"Now what say you to that, Patty?" Rosalie cried, her eyes sparkling.

"I say the loss falls heaviest on the lady who owned the glasses," I told her tartly. In truth, though hospitality prevented outspokenness, I credited no word of young Sedden's story, and was amazed that the others swallowed aught so improbable.

"There speaks the thrifty housewife," Val hurried to gloss over my brusqueness, for Sedden had reddened at my curt words. "I wonder, Master Sedden, to change the subject of a sudden, are you related to Gustavus Sedden?—a noted man, nowadays."

Now there was no man of that name that ever I 'd heard of, and I guessed at once that there was more in the question than appeared on the surface; so I pricked up my ears for the answer which came, simply enough:

"I have not a relation in the world save an uncle in England, and he is on the distaff side."

No more was said; yet I felt Val was satisfied. Rosalie again began to talk of ways and means

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of accomplishing her purpose to visit New York, vowing she would never be content till she had been there and keeping up her chatter until at last Master Sedden took his leave.

As Val lit our candles our cousin said to him:

"And so those troublesome despatches are signed 'Gustavus'?"

Val nodded agreement, while I thought admiringly how much quicker she was than I to apprehend and seize upon the point of his remarks.

"I 'll either stop the letters there or send you word whom they are from, ere I 've been a week in New York," she laughed as she started up the stairs.

Val shook his head, for he knew the risk she would run, who was already marked as one clever enough to trick our enemy; yet I followed her sore at heart. I was no patriot such as they were. I was only a loving little girl, well aware that either of those two so dear to me would count their lives as of no weight in the scale against a possible service to the cause.

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CHAPTER IV

TO my surprise, even my uncle had taken a a fancy to Gilbert Sedden. The young man had a way of seeming very frank and simple, which set me on my guard the more but seemed to satisfy both Rosalie and Uncle John; and when he talked of his regret at the delay in the settlement of the Roberts family's affairs because of the added expense his longer stay entailed, Uncle John offered him occasional employment of one sort or another. Thus months wore by, and at last an errand to New York engaged young Sedden, and I heaved a sigh of relief when I knew that he had actually set out on business that would require some weeks' absence and, for a while, would rid me of the annoyance of his presence.

Meantime Rosalie had by no means abandoned her project of a visit to the larger city. She was in correspondence with Val, and, assuredly, on that subject; but naught more definite had been said of her going, and I hoped that Val would discourage the trip, for his opinion would carry

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weight with her as perchance no other's would.

"What do you say to making another call at Mount Pleasant, Patty?" she suggested one fine day.

I made a wry face.

"I pray you hold me excused," I said. "I love not General Arnold. Indeed, were all our officers like to him, I 'd be tempted to turn Tory."

"The general will not be there," Rosalie assured me. "Since the court martial is over and General Washington's reprimand, which he was ordered to make by that court, proved to be more eulogy than reprimand, Arnold is again bent upon furthering his own fortunes and has asked his Excellency for an active command."

Still I shook my head.

"Mrs. Arnold scarce looks at me," I pouted. "She treats me as a tiny child. Almost I expect to hear her talk to me in baby-talk."

"Run put your hat on," my cousin commanded me. "If you care not to see Peggy, at least you want to see her baby. It groweth very knowing."

Thus it came about that once more, after almost a year, we two rode to Mount Pleasant.

Talking by the way, Rosalie gave me further

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information of the reasons for Arnold's absence, her intimacy with his wife never having waned.

"His wounds are all healed," she said, "and he vows he 's bent on active service. He first asked his Excellency for command of the navy, which naturally was refused. Such refusals, even when necessary, prey upon his mind and make him exceeding bitter and morose. In truth, such is his opinion of his abilities that I doubt not he thinks himself ill used when he does not get exactly what he wants. But now he has been given command of the left wing of the army, a post of honor, and I expect to find Peggy very happy over this satisfaction after the humiliations he has endured."

Mount Pleasant looked much as it had when we visited it before; yet to my eye there was a certain air of neglect observable. The drives and borders were not so trim. The men's liveries seemed tarnished. Still, the same state was maintained, and lovely Peggy was as lovely as ever.

"You shall see my son, but he hath a rash upon his head that troubleth me," she said with a pretty air of motherly solicitude, "especially as we have just received instructions to join the general."

"To join him in the field—with an infant?" Ro-

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salie exclaimed. "Oh, Peggy! do not attempt it till the babe is older!"

"No, no! General Arnold is not with the Army of the Left," Peggy assured her. "Had you not heard he hath been given command of the post at West Point?"

"But I understood that he desired active service above all else," Rosalie said thoughtfully.

"I, too, thought so," Mrs. Arnold replied in a puzzled tone, "but I know he asked for this appointment."

"Perchance he could not stand the fatigue of the saddle," Rosalie suggested.

"It can't be that. He had spent weeks in proving himself ere he undertook his journey to New England, and I have had despatches assuring me that he was quite whole again."

Mistress Hannah Arnold, the general's sister, here interrupted the conversation by bringing in the baby, a lusty, towardly child, which absorbed my attention from then on, so that it was not till we were on our way home that I learned what further had passed between these friends.

"Two new gowns I must have," Rosalie said positively, as we turned toward town.

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"Two gowns at once!" I was astray for a moment, for my cousin had been most frugal in her expenditures since her parents had been dependent upon what she sent them.

"Two at least, and a hat," she declared, with an emphatic nod of her head. "Rosalie Roberts need not cut a dash, but she cannot go to New York a dowdy."

"You are not going to New York!"

"Not yet," she agreed. "But Peggy is sure that if I accompany her to West Point, there will be no trouble in passing me in from there."

"Rosalie," I said, with tears in my eyes, "you cannot be so cruel as to take this needless risk merely for the sake of a little frolic and idle admiration!"

Rosalie looked at me, then she whipped up the horse, and for a moment I thought I was to have no answer to what was, after all, rather a statement than a question. But at last she spoke:

"Do you not see that my belief in the cause of liberty transcends all else in my life? It has parted me from my parents,—and I love them, Patty,—and it may part me from you and Uncle John. . . . Val has not found out who is sending

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the British the news that checks and hampers all our efforts in the field, so I must go. 'Tis a duty that will not be denied."

"You are the last one to go. If you make any attempt to circumvent a spy on us from within the British camp, your very life will be in jeopardy. Do you not see that you will be the first to be suspect if aught goes wrong?"

"Nay, that I do not! On the contrary, I count on their thinking I would never venture within the lion's jaws unless I meant to give no excuse for their snapping shut."

"If Val has failed, how can you hope to succeed?"

"I have a suspicion, Patty, that the needed clue is already in my hands."

"Tell Val of it. He—"

"That I cannot do as yet. The happiness of my dearest friend is tied up in this affair, and no one else will handle it so tenderly as I."

Again she whipped the horse; and as he jumped forward she seemed to wish to dismiss the matter, but I would not have it so. She had said too much or too little.

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"Then I 'll tell him," I declared boldly. "I 'll write that Peggy Shippen is mixed up with it; and he will find out the rest."

Rosalie turned and looked at me, then she shook her head.

"You will never be so cruel, Patty, even were I not about to tie your hands by confiding in you."

"I want no confidences. I 'll put my fingers in my ears," I said childishly, but Rosalie stopped me sternly, and I think I realized then for the first time that she was much older than I.

"Unless you listen, and give me your word not to meddle, I will leave for New York to-day, before you have a chance to get word to Val."

She meant exactly what she said, and with an ill grace I gave in.

"This is a matter of a man's life and honor, Patty, and one in which I should have no hope, did I not bear in mind his great love for his wife and children. An I can get into my hands positive proofs of what are now scarce more than conjectures, I shall try to make him realize their position should he be caught—as caught he must be sooner or later. I may fail to bring him back to

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right thinking, but I can do no less than make the attempt."

"Rosalie, thou art absolutely reckless!" I exclaimed. "A man in such case hath no honor, and must be desperate. He would simply make way with you. It would not be risking your life; it would be throwing it away."

"Nonsense, child," Rosalie explained patiently. "I shall not go to him with my proofs in my hand. Those will be in safe keeping, and any ill done to me would at once release them for use against him."

A sudden thought came to me at this moment, and I put my hands to my head.

"Am I crazed?" I asked. "At first I thought you were assuredly talking of General Arnold, but now I know that cannot be." Even as I uttered the words her face told me that this was Rosalie's suspicion, and my voice died on my lips. "How can it be?" I whispered. "My father says he is one of the greatest of our generals. Surely such an one could not stoop—"

Rosalie held up her hand and stopped me. "He has stooped low already," she declared. "I

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learned much I was sad to hear, when last I was at Belmont. Setting aside the matters for which he was tried, Mr. Peters hath other accusations against him which he declares are proven up to the hilt, and he is a lawyer, little like to mistake the value of evidence, Patty. Indeed, he goes so far as to state openly that fifty thousand dollars which he left in Arnold's hands to pay for needful supplies for our soldiers, when first we took over Philadelphia, were applied on the purchase of Mount Pleasant. General Washington is so noble that he cannot believe ill of his officers, a fact which Arnold trades upon. For all his lavish expenditures, 't is lack of money that has ever been his undoing. Only recently it came to my ears that he had begged a loan from the French king, through the good offices of Monsieur de la Luzerne."

"Did he get it?" I asked, horrified at the impression the high-minded French gentleman must have received on such a request from one of our officers.

"Nay," said Rosalie. "The French Ambassador told him, in effect, that he was no money-

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lender; and that when, indeed, the envoy of a foreign power lends money, it is to corrupt him who receives it."

"That might have put into his mind the idea of trading with the enemy," I suggested.

To this Rosalie said: "No,—it began long before that."

But once more I suffered a revulsion of feeling.

"It can't be true! I 'm sure it can't!" I cried. "You have naught to base such a terrible suspicion on. 'T is far more likely the culprit is Gilbert Sedden, this stranger who hath forced himself among us."

"Save your breath, Patty," Rosalie advised. "I already have some proofs of what I say. Moreover, this informing began before ever that lad landed on our shores."

"Give me one proof then,—just one,—and I 'll be convinced."

"Before I go on, I must remind you that you are pledged to silence," Rosalie said. "I have three arrows in my quiver. First, I shall try to move Arnold by the thought of his older boys and Peggy and her son. Failing there, I shall

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endeavor to substitute false news for that he sends, to make him ridiculous and discredited by our enemy—which should be easier than it sounds. My last recourse will be to denounce him. I cannot shield Peggy at the expense of the cause."

"Yes, yes, I see that!" I returned impatiently; "but the proof! You give me no proof at all."

"Do you remember a letter that came from the British camp when first we went together to Mount Pleasant?"

"To be sure I do," I said. "I never could forget it. General Arnold made a fine fuss over nothing."

"General Arnold made a fine fuss over something, that I 'll grant you," Rosalie declared. "But he had his reasons. That letter was not meant for Mistress Peggy's eyes."

At this I burst out laughing.

"Rosalie," I shouted, "pray, who is prejudiced now? 'T is a most amusing idea that Major André should write kindly to a fellow-soldier, if an enemy, to offer to buy for him what he may need in millinery supplies and cap-wire."

"You may laugh, Patty,—I only wish I could,

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