



THE JADROON



CHAPTER I

Six Months in New Orleans¹

When I left college, I was not happy at home. I was young and my mind was full of great ideas. I wanted freedom and love. I wanted to travel and see the world. That's why I left England and started on a trip across the Atlantic² to the New World³. In the month of January 18, I arrived in New Orleans. An hour after my coming, I was already walking about the city.

At first I looked with interest at the houses and streets of a new city, at the people around me, but soon my thoughts turned to other things. I tried to understand how I could possibly make myself useful in real life. I had been one of the best pupils in college, but how could I now use the education I had received? I had learned languages and logic. Now, in real life, I did not know how to use them. I had thought that I was an educated man but now I understood that I really knew nothing.

The first six months that I spent in New Orleans were a good school for me. I learned more of life than I had learned during many years of study at college.

By the end of those six months I had very little money. After paying for my room I had only twenty-five dollars left. I had to write home for more money and wait for an answer. I knew that I had to wait for many weeks because ships sailed very slowly at that time.

I wanted to find work but my education had not prepared me for any kind of useful work. Without friends and with my mind full of cares I walked about the streets. It was the middle of June. The weather was hot and becoming hotter every day. Many people left New Orleans to go to the North. I thought I could go away too. St. Louis seemed to me the best place and I decided to go there. I had enough money for the trip, but I did not know how I was going to live after that. I packed up my things and went on to the *Beauty of the West*,⁴ the boat in which I was going to make my trip.

¹ **New Orleans** ['nju:ˈɔ:lənz] — Новый Орлеан (город на юге США)

² **the Atlantic** [ði ə'tlæntɪk] — Атлантический (океан)

³ **New World** ['nju:ˈwɜ:ld] — Новый Свет (Америка)

⁴ **Beauty of the West** — «Красавица Запада» (название парохода)

CHAPTER II

The Beauty of the West

I came to the boat two hours before it was to start and spent this time looking over the ship.

It looked like a big house about two hundred feet long. It was built of wood and painted white. There was a row of windows along the top part of the house and two tall funnels rose in the centre. The machine was on the deck and the boilers were very large. There were also all kinds of bags, boxes and barrels on the deck. The room for passengers was large and long and it looked rich — with fine tables, sofas, chairs and arm-chairs.

From the passengers' room I went to the deck. This was the favorite place with the passengers during the trip. There were chairs on the deck where the passengers sat talking and looking at the river. I sat down in one of them and decided to watch the busy life of the river-port.

Our *Beauty of the West* was ready to start. Another large boat named *Magnolia*¹ was also about to start and there were tens of passengers on its deck. The boats were so near that their sailors could shout to each other. From their words I understood that the *Magnolia* and the *Beauty of the West* competed with each other. I soon learned that they were to start at the same time and that they were going to have a race.

I had heard that the best boats often had races. The captains of both the *Beauty of the West* and the *Magnolia* were popular men. Each of them wanted to show to everyone that his boat was the best. The owners of the boats thought only of their money. The boat that won in one of these races became especially popular with the people. There were always many passengers who wanted to make a trip on such a boat.

I soon saw that the passengers also had a great wish to take part in the race. Many of them were discussing the possible results. Some of the passengers were real experts.

“I offer twenty dollars that the *Beauty* wins the race,” cried a young man by my side. “Twenty dollars on the *Beauty*!”

My thoughts were not very pleasant. It was my first trip on an American boat, and I had heard that these races often ended unhappily. I

¹ *Magnolia* [mæɡ'nouljə] — «Магнолия» (название парохода)

remembered all the stories of “explosions” on the river. Many of the passengers had the same thoughts. Some of them wanted to ask the captain not to take part in the race. I also decided to speak to the captain.

CHAPTER III

A New Passenger

Before I reached the captain, I saw a carriage driving up to the river-port. In it was a young richly-dressed woman. The carriage stopped in the centre of the river-port and I saw the young woman talking to one of the sailors. The man pointed to our captain. The captain came up to the side of the carriage and took off his cap to the young woman. I heard every word.

“Sir! Are you the captain of the *Beauty of the West*?”

“Yes, madam,”¹ was the answer.

“May I go by your boat?”

“I shall be most happy, madam. There is still one more free room on the boat.”

“I don’t need any room. You will reach my plantation before twelve o’clock, and I shall not have to sleep on the boat.”

The captain was under the impression of the words ‘my plantation’.

“Where do you want to land?” he asked.

“At Bringiers² — but, captain, I’d like to ask you something.”

“I’m listening to you, madam.”

“I hear you are going to have a race with the *Magnolia*. Then I cannot be your passenger. Those races often end unhappily.”

“Madam —” the captain began and stopped.

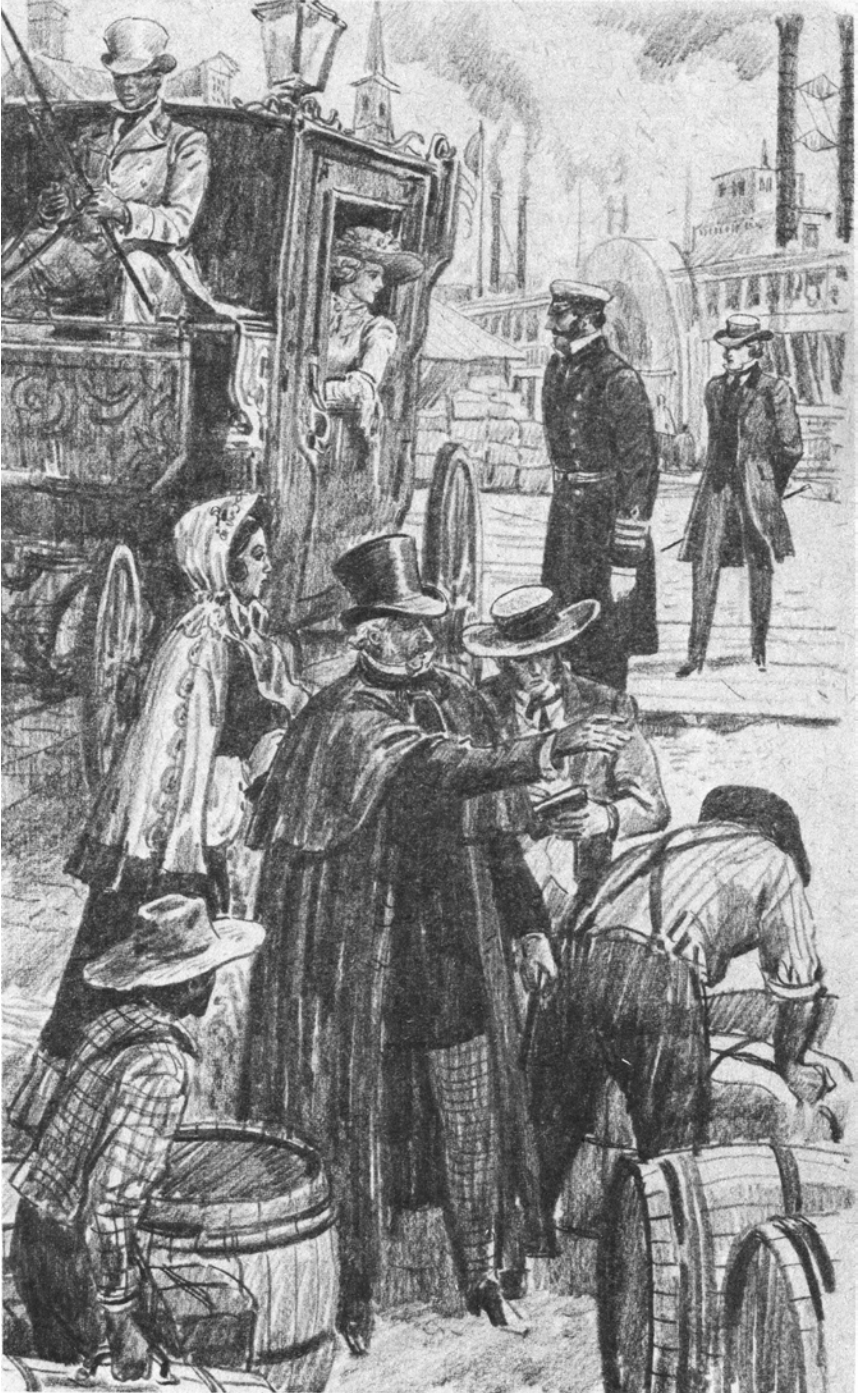
“Oh, you cannot decide — then I must wait for some other boat.”

The captain looked unhappy. He certainly wished to have a race, but the young woman was the owner of a plantation... At last the captain said:

“I agree, madam. The boat shall not race. I promise you that.”

¹ **madam** [ˈmædəm] — мадам, госпожа (*обращение*)

² **Bringiers** [brɪŋˈʒɛːr] — Бринжьер (название городка)



“Thank you, captain.”

She jumped down from her carriage, gave her arm to the captain, and he led her on to the ship.

CHAPTER IV

Eugenie Besancon¹

I felt I was greatly interested in the young woman. She was very pretty. And I saw that she, too, was looking at me with interest. My clothes and my look told her that I was a stranger in that land.

I wanted to know the name of this woman, so I turned to her servant — a tall, grey-haired man.

“Sir, who is your mistress?” I asked.

“A young woman,” was the answer.

“Really. Any one may tell that if he looks at her. I’d like to know her name.”

“You have no business² to know it.”

“Is it so important to keep it secret?”

The man made no answer and turned away. I tried to learn the young woman’s name from the driver of the carriage but he, too, did not want to tell me.

Soon I learned her name. I had returned to the boat and had again sat down on the deck to watch the sailors who were carrying the young woman’s luggage: a great number of barrels, boxes, bags of coffee and dried hams.

“Food for the plantation,” I thought, and suddenly saw some letters written on one of the boxes. I jumped from my seat and read — ‘Eugenie Besancon’.

CHAPTER V

The Starting

The last bell rang and the large wheels of the ship began to turn. The

¹ **Eugenie Besancon** [ju:ʒə'ni:bezən'sɔŋ] — Эжени́ Безансон

² **You have no business** — Вам незачем (*досл.* нет дела)

boat moved slowly from the river-port into the middle of the river.

I came out on deck to look at the banks. The last houses of the city were soon passed. The ship moved on between the beautiful banks of the Mississippi.¹ The river was very large. Its water was of a yellow colour. Dark forests showed far away. Between those forests and the river banks lay cotton fields. There were plantations with beautiful houses of their owners. All along the banks were the poor small houses of the Negro slaves. I saw them at work in the fields in their bright cotton dresses. There were millions of them!

For a moment the day lost its brightness. How could I enjoy all that beauty when the slaves had to work day and night!

The thought of Eugenie Besancon came back to me as I saw several girls working in the field.

I left the deck and went to the passengers' room to look for her. There were several women there, but she was not among them. I sat down and looked at the other passengers. There were all kinds of people² on the boat. Some were rich. Important people from New Orleans with their wives and daughters. Others were plantation owners going home. Also there were several richly dressed young gentlemen. Among them I saw the man who had offered twenty dollars on the *Beauty of the West* in the boat-race. Eugenie Besancon's servant was also in the room, but I wished to see his mistress. Suddenly I saw her. She came out of her room. She was without a hat and her golden hair looked beautiful. She was a very beautiful young woman and it seemed she was enjoying the trip. I understood that she knew some of the passengers. She talked with them and laughed. It was pleasant for me to look at her, but my thoughts were sad.

"In an hour it will be night, and she will have to land. I will never see her again!" I thought.

She sat down in a chair and looked round the room. Suddenly our eyes met. She looked at me, then she rose, walked to the door and left the room. I felt unhappy. With a sad heart I went to the deck, hoping to see her again.

¹ **Mississippi** [ˌmɪsɪˈsɪpi] — Миссисипи (река)

² **all kinds of people** — разные люди



CHAPTER VI

“Do Not Let the *Magnolia* Beat Us!”

The sun was going down and a yellow light fell on the river. Standing on the deck, I enjoyed the beautiful sight. Suddenly I saw a large boat down the river. It was the *Magnolia* coming after us. A loud noise reached my ears. Men and women shouted and talked loudly and there was the sound of feet walking on the deck. At first everybody had forgotten about the race, but the sight of the *Magnolia* produced a sudden change.¹ All the passengers sitting in the chairs jumped from their seats and ran to the back part of the boat.

From my position on the deck I could see the *Magnolia* very well. A

¹ produced a sudden change — вызвал неожиданную перемену



number of¹ our passengers came up to the captain. They were asking him to have a race. He did not want to discuss this question with them and walked from place to place. The passengers came after him.

“Well, captain,” cried one, “if the *Beauty* doesn’t race, I am sure she² will never be a popular boat again.”

“That’s right!” said another. “I have decided: I shall make my next trip on the *Magnolia*.”

“The *Magnolia* is a fast boat,” said a third.

The poor captain did not know what to do.

The *Magnolia* was preparing to pass us. The sailors were at work on her deck. The boiler-doors were red-hot and a bright fire rose several feet above the tall funnels.

“They are burning hams!” shouted one of our passengers.

¹ A number of — Несколько

² В английском языке понятие корабль соотносится с местоимением женского рода.



The other boat moved faster and faster. As it came nearer the noise grew. The passengers of the *Beauty* ran about the deck shouting and pointing to the *Magnolia*. The other boat was now side by side¹ with us. There was a minute of silence. Another minute and the *Magnolia* passed us.

A shout of joy came from her decks. The *Magnolia* passengers laughed at us.

“Look at that old poor ship!”

“Hurrah for² the *Magnolia*!”

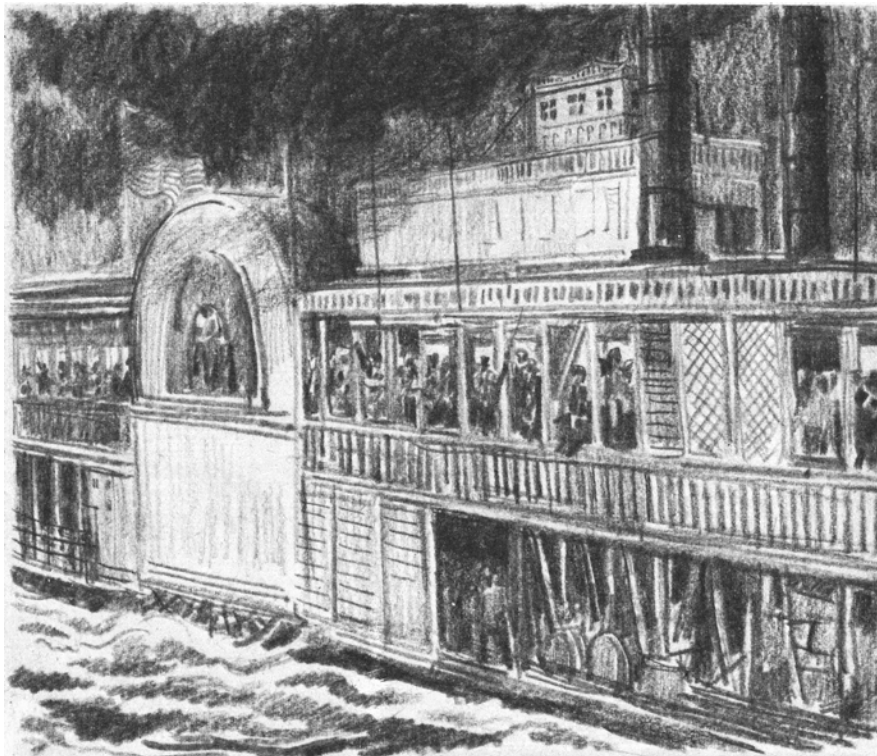
“Throw us a rope, we shall try to pull you!”

The passengers and sailors of our boat felt very unhappy. They were angry with the captain.

Poor captain! I was watching him all the time. I knew his secret. As

¹ **side by side** — зд. борт к борту

² **Hurrah** [hu'ra:] **for** — Ура



he walked about the deck he was attacked by an angry group of women passengers.

“We shall never travel by your boat again!” they cried, one after another.

This made the man angry. His face was red; there was fire in his eyes. At last he decided to explain everything to the passengers.

“Before leaving New Orleans, I gave my word to a young woman.” He could not finish, because Miss Besancon ran up, crying out:

“Oh, captain, don’t let that boat beat us! Pass her... please!”

“But, miss,”¹ the captain said in surprise. “I made the promise to you!”

“Dear captain, I free you from that promise. Please try to pass her. I hope it is not too late!”

He answered,

¹ **miss** — мисс (обращение к девушке)

“Miss, I am sorry to say that I cannot race against the *Magnolia*. She is burning hams. I, too, wanted to take some hams, but I did not because I had promised you not to race.”

“Hams?” she cried. “How many? Will two hundred be enough?”

“Oh, less than that,” answered the captain.

“Antoine!”¹ she called to her old servant. “How many hams do we have?”

“Ten barrels, miss,” he answered.

“That will be enough, I believe? Use them, captain.”

The captain looked quite happy.

“I shall pay you for them,” he said.

“No — no! You needn’t do that. The hams were for my plantation people, but we shall send down for more. Antoine, go to the sailors. Get the barrels. Use them, captain, but do not let the *Magnolia* beat us!”

The news got about the boat and the sailors went to work. The barrels were brought, the hams lay on the deck. Soon the boiler-doors were red-hot and the wheels turned faster and faster. There was silence on the boat. Everybody was watching the *Magnolia* which came nearer every moment.

CHAPTER VII

A Boat-Race on the Mississippi

It had grown dark. But the windows of both boats were full of light and the bright ham fires were burning. The people on the decks were watching the race with great interest. The *Magnolia* was again quite near and the passengers on the two boats could easily talk to each other. Now our passengers laughed at the people on the *Magnolia's* deck.

“Have you any letters for St. Louis?” shouted someone from the *Beauty*.

“Hurrah for the *Beauty*!” cried another.

“Have you enough hams?” asked a third. “We can give you a few if you like.”

It was almost twelve o’clock, but no one of the passengers wanted to

¹ **Antoine** [жнт'wa:n] — Антуан

go to bed. I was near the captain. He was looking at the right bank of the river. There were some lights there.

“It is Bringiers!” he cried.

“Ye-e-s,” said a sailor standing by his side. We’ve reached it in quick time.”¹

“But I must lose the race!”

“Why?”

“I must stop here. The young woman who gave us the hams. I must land her.”

“We are so sorry,” said the sailor. “But if you must you must. We’ll beat them another time, I’m sure.”

“Prepare for landing,” said the captain. Suddenly a group of young women came up. Miss Besancon was among them.

“Miss,” said the captain, turning to her, “we must lose the race.”

“Why?” she asked in surprise. “Are there not enough hams?”

“No, miss,” answered the captain, “it is not that. Do you see those lights?”

“Yes — well? That is Bringiers.”

“Yes, and you must be landed there.”

“Will you lose the race then?”

“Certainly.”

“Then I shall not land. I’ll come home one day late. And you will not lose the race because of me.”

Again the *Beauty* slowly moved on. Nearer and nearer came the *Magnolia*. Now the two boats were side by side again. Another foot. The captain threw up his cap, and a shout of joy went up.

CHAPTER VIII

The Life-Belt

After the shout of joy we heard a loud noise. It was an explosion. Large pieces of wood flew up, smoke rose into the air, cries for help rang out in the night. I could not stand on my feet and fell down.

When I was on my feet again, I did not know what I was doing. I

¹ in quick time — быстро

walked to the back part of the ship. There I stopped and looked around me. The front part of the boat was covered with smoke, the ship was on fire¹. I understood that the captain and sailors who had been in that part of the boat were all dead. Many people were in the water.

The boat was beginning to go down. It was a very dangerous situation. The *Magnolia* was trying to turn and come nearer, but she was still several hundred yards away. There was not a moment to lose². If we wished to save our lives, we had to jump into the water. The reader may think that I was very afraid. I was not. I had saved my life many times before and I was sure of myself. Besides I had a life-belt in my bag. I ran to my room and put it on.

I was in the room when I heard the sound of voices. It was Miss Besancon and her servant. They were very afraid. The old man was trying to tie together a few chairs. He hoped they could help them keep themselves above water³. But I understood those chairs were very poor help because they were of heavy wood. I began to think how to save the young woman. The bank was far enough.

“But surely I can swim to the bank,” I thought, “I shall give her my life-belt and swim by her side.”

“Miss Besancon!” I called out.

She turned.

“No!” the old servant cried angrily, thinking that I also wanted to use those chairs. “It will not carry two, sir.”

“It will not carry one, either,” I answered.

I pulled off the life-belt and held it out to the young woman.

“Miss,” I said, “don’t try to use those chairs. Here, take this. It will save your life.”

“What is this? No, no, sir.”

“I can swim to the bank without it. Put it on, quick! There is no time to lose.”

“Oh, what a good man you are!”

“No words — now, to the water! Jump and don’t be afraid. I shall jump after you.”

The girl jumped into the water, and I saw her swimming away from

¹ **the ship was on fire** — паролод был в огне

² **There was not a moment to lose.** — Нельзя было терять ни минуты.

³ **keep themselves above water** — продержаться на поверхности воды

the ship. At that moment I felt that someone took my hand. I turned round, it was Antoine.

“A good man!” he cried with tears in his eyes.

Suddenly I saw a man who was ready to jump into the water. His eyes were fixed on ¹ the girl and the life-belt. It was clear what he wanted to do. Running up I caught him and pulled him back. As I did so I saw that this was the man who had offered twenty dollars on the race.

“Not so fast, sir,” I said holding him. He said something angrily and I saw a knife in his hand. It was so sudden that I had no time to jump away. I felt a pain in my arm. But before the man could raise his knife again I struck him and the knife fell out of his hand. At the next moment I jumped into the water.

I was without my coat and boots and I could swim freely. After a few moments I raised my head above the water and looked back. Antoine and my enemy were struggling on the deck. Soon I was by the side of the girl. I held her with one hand and we swam fast. But soon I felt that my strength was leaving me.

Still we safely reached land and got out of the water with great difficulty. The girl helped me. I remember that I saw a large house and heard the words:

“This is my house...”

I also remember how I walked along a road led by a woman’s hand, and entered a garden. Servants were coming from the house with lights. My shirt was covered with blood. I remember a voice crying out ‘wounded!’. Then I became unconscious.²

CHAPTER IX

Where Am I?

When I came to,³ it was day. A bright sun was shining through the open window. I was lying on a low bed in a little summer house which stood in the garden.

It was clear that I was in a friend’s house and in good hands. But

¹ **His eyes were fixed on** — Его взгляд был устремлен на

² **became unconscious** — потерял сознание

³ **When I came to** — Когда я пришел в себя

whose house was it? The events of the night before came back to my memory. I remembered how I had reached the bank and got out of the water. What had happened after that I could not remember well enough. A house, a garden, trees, flowers, lights, black servants... There was also the memory of a beautiful girl's face but I could not tell if it had been real. The pain in my arm called me back to my present situation. I looked around the room. There were two tables in it, one in the centre and the other by the wall with a bookshelf over it. A pretty clock stood on another shelf. It was cool in the room because the window on one side and the glass-door on the other stood open. A slight wind passed across the room.

A noise was heard, I raised my eyes and saw two legs in yellow trousers, heavy arms, white shirt and the dark hair of a Negro. His shining face was black with white teeth and large ears that stood out from his head. This made him look so funny that I laughed loudly, forgetting my pain. His thick lips smiled kindly and then he began to laugh as loudly as I.

CHAPTER X

Old Zip¹

The Negro began to speak.

“There is a good young master!² Old Zip is glad to see him well.”

“Zip?”

“Yes, master, the same old Negro. The doctor told me to take care of the white gentleman. Won't the young mistress be glad? White folks, black folks — all will be glad!”

“And who is your young mistress?” I asked.

“Doesn't master know? The young woman you saved. What a swim it was — across the whole river!”

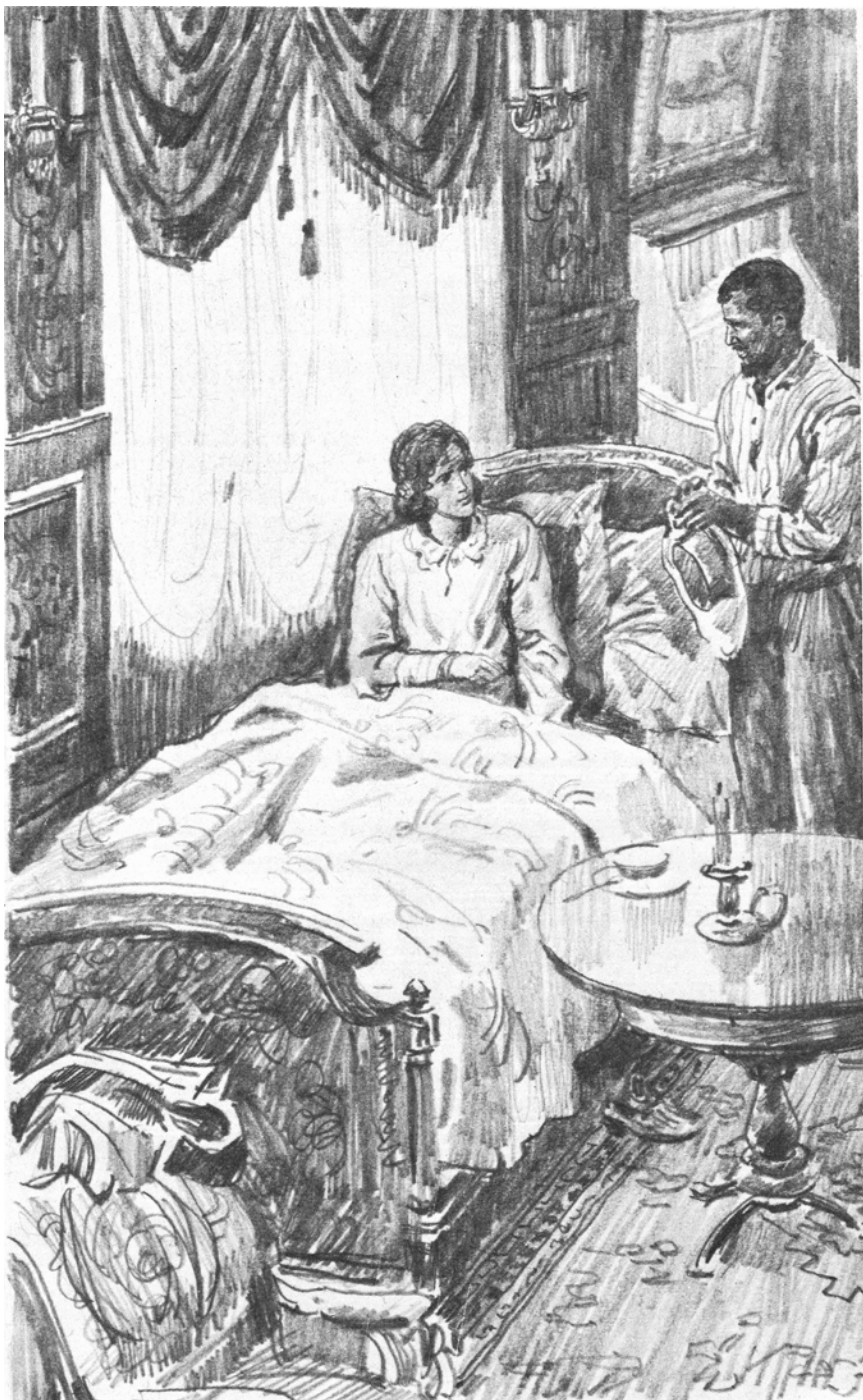
“Am I in her house?”

“Oh, certainly, master. In the summer house. The big house is on the other side of the garden, master.”

“How did I get here?”

¹ **Zip** [zip] — Зип

² **master** ['ma:stə] — господин (*обращение*)



“Old Zip carried you here in these very arms. Master and young mistress came to the bank down there. Mistress shouted — black folks came out. There was young gentleman, all covered with blood. He became unconscious and mistress told me to carry him here.”

“What then?”

“Old Zip jumped on the fastest horse and rode for the doctor. The doctor came along quick and took care of the master’s arm. But how did young master get the big wound?” Old Zip looked at me with interest. “The doctor asked that, and young mistress didn’t know anything about it.”

“That’s right,” I thought. “The young woman knows nothing about the fight with my enemy.”

Suddenly a thought struck me.

“Antoine,” I cried, “has he not come to the bank?”

Old Zip’s face grew sad.

“No, master,” he answered, “he is dead. The folks have been to the village and up and down the river. No Tony. The captain and fifty passengers have not come back. The other boat saved some. Others swam to the bank, but not Tony.”

“Do you know if he could swim?” I asked.

“No, master, he couldn’t. I know that because he one day fell into a little river and Old Zip pulled him out.”

“Then he is lost,”¹ I said.

“Poor Tony. Everybody is sorry for him.”

“You liked him then.”

“Everybody liked him. Black folks, white folks — all loved him. Mistress loved him. What will young mistress do now? She has no other friends. And that old fox Gayarre² — he is a bad man.”

He suddenly stopped as if he were afraid that he was saying too much.³

“You mean Gayarre, the lawyer?” I asked.

Old Zip’s large eyes showed surprise.

“That’s right,” he said. “Do you know him, young master?”

¹ **he is lost** — он погиб

² **Gayarre** [geɪˈɑːr] — Гейяр

³ **as if he were afraid that he was saying too much** — как будто боялся, что сболтнул лишнее

“A little,” I said. I remembered that I had one day met that man in New Orleans. He was a lawyer. If Miss Besancon had no friends, this man was very dangerous. I was interested in the young woman. Wishing to know more about her I turned to Old Zip with my questions. He was ready to answer them and in half an hour told me all he knew.

Eugenie Besancon was the daughter of a planter who had died two years before and Gayarre helped her run the plantation.¹ Old Zip did not know if Miss Besancon was rich. He only knew that Mr. Gayarre had given her much money every time she asked for it. She spent much. Old Zip described several big festivals that were held at the plantation. He also spoke of the life his mistress led in the city where she usually lived the greater part of the winter. I could see that Old Zip was fond of Miss Besancon.

“I’m afraid for my mistress,” he said, shaking his head. “She spends too much money. It may end very badly.”

When Old Zip spoke of Gayarre, he shook his head still more sadly. He did not like the man. I learned from the old Negro that Gayarre owned a plantation near Besancon with more than a hundred slaves. And he was a very cruel planter. During the summer months Gayarre lived on his plantation and came every day to the ‘big house’.

I was sure Old Zip knew something else about this man, but he did not want to talk about it.

Yet, he had told me so much that I was surprised where he had learned it.

“Who told you all this, Old Zip?” I asked.

“Aurore,² master.”

CHAPTER XI

Gayarre

I wanted to know who Aurore was. But I had no time to ask Old Zip any more questions because at that moment two men entered the room.

“The doctor, master,” Old Zip told me standing back.

It was easy to tell which of the two was the doctor. Edward Reigart¹

¹ **helped her run the plantation** — помогал ей управляться на плантации

² **Aurore** [a:'rɔ:rɛ] — Аврора

was a tall man of forty. His face spoke of cleverness and kindness.

The other man was quite different. He looked like a fox with his cruel face. It was Gayarre. He was a short man of fifty. He had dark hair and a large nose on his face.

The doctor looked at my wound and asked me how I had slept. Then he told me to stay in bed. I was very weak, because I had lost much blood.

“But you will be well in a few days,” the doctor said.

I asked about Antoine. Nobody had heard anything more about him. He was certainly lost. I told them how I had seen Antoine and my enemy on the burning ship. Then I described my fight with the man who had wounded me. Gayarre listened with interest. When I began to describe Antoine’s chair which could not save his life, I saw that the lawyer’s dark eyes shone with joy.

When Gayarre spoke to me, I decided not to tell them my real name and I gave them my mother’s Edward Rutherford.²

Telling me once more not to leave the bed, the doctor and Gayarre left me.

CHAPTER XII

Aurore

Old Zip brought in breakfast. A young girl of about thirteen was helping him with the cups and plates. This was Chloe,³ his daughter.

Chloe looked at me with great interest. She nearly broke the cups and plates. I was yet weak but I enjoyed the breakfast prepared by Chloe’s mother — who, as Old Zip told me, was ‘the mistress of the kitchen’. After breakfast I felt much better although my wound gave me a slight pain.

The plates were taken away, and Old Zip came back to my room.

“And now, Old Zip,” I said, “tell me of Aurore. Who is she?”

“Poor slave, master.”

“A slave!” I cried out in surprise.

¹ **Edward Reigart** [ˈedwəd reɪˈɡɑːt] — Эдуард Рейгарт

² **I gave them my mother’s Edward Rutherford** [ˈɪɡəv ðəm maɪ ðə ˈmʌðəz ɛdwəd ˈrʌðərfɔːd] — я назвался по фамилии моей матери Эдуардом Радерфордом

³ **Chloe** [ˈklɔʊ] — Хлоя

“She is Miss Eugenie’s servant,” he continued, “she does the mistress’s hair, sits with her, reads to her — does everything.”

“Reads to her! — A slave?”

I was greatly interested in Aurore.

“Yes, master. Old Master Besancon was very good to the coloured people — he taught many of them to read books. He taught Aurore to read and write. Young Miss Eugenie taught her music. Aurore is a very clever girl. She knows many things. Just like the white folks.”

“But Aurore is a poor slave just like you, Old Zip?”

“Oh, no, master! She is quite different. She does no difficult work. She is very dear. She costs two thousand dollars! Many rich people wanted to buy her.”

“Why must Aurore cost so much?”

“She is a very good girl —”

“She is beautiful, isn’t she, my friend Old Zip!”

“Master, it isn’t for an old Negro to say, but other people say — white folks and black folks — that she is the best-looking Quadroon in all Louisiana.”¹

“A Quadroon?”

“Yes, master — a coloured girl. But she is as white as her mistress. One is a rich planter and the other — a poor slave just like Old Zip — buy them, sell them, all the same.”²

A bell rang from the house.

“Old Zip is wanted, master. I’ll be back again in some minutes.” Saying so, the Negro left me and ran to the house.

I stayed alone. The long talk tired me and in a few moments I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIII

Miss Eugenie and the Quadroon

I slept for an hour or so. Then something woke me. I heard a slight noise.

¹ **Louisiana** [lu(:),i:zɪ'æpə] — Луизиана (*штат на юге США*)

² **all the same** — все равно

“He is waking, madam!” a voice said.

My eyes opened, but for some moments I thought that my dream continued. There before me was the face I had seen in my dream. The long black hair, a beautiful face, and eyes that were large, dark brown and burning. It was Aurore. I knew her from Old Zip’s description. The other woman was Eugenie. I loudly showed my joy at seeing her.

“Sir,” she answered, “I am glad you are so much better. The doctor has told me you will soon be well again. I have heard how you were wounded. How shall I thank you for my life?”

“You needn’t thank me, madam. It was my duty. To save your life wasn’t much risk.”

“No risk, sir! Every risk — from the knife of that man, from the waters. Oh, how thankful I am to you!”

Suddenly she stopped, then continued, “Poor Antoine. I am so sorry about him!”

“Yes, madam,” I answered, “that’s a heavy blow to lose an old kind servant.”

“More than a servant, sir! Since my poor father’s death he has been like a father to me. You say he was struggling with the man who wounded you when you saw him last, sir?”

“He was.”

“There is no hope then. The boat went down a few moments after it. Poor Antoine! Now I have no friends — and soon I may need friends.”

She was crying. Aurore was also in tears.

“Sir,” Eugenie said at last. “I am going away now, but I shall come back soon. Really, I am sorry I have come. The doctor told me not to visit you, but I wished so much to see the man who had saved my life. Good-bye. Come, Aurore!”

I was left alone and lay thinking over our talk. I knew that Eugenie was in danger. I felt friendship for her, but—nothing more. Why did I not love this young and beautiful woman? Why? Because I loved Aurore!

CHAPTER XIV

Life in Louisiana

My life on the plantation was uninteresting and without change, but it

was broken from time to time by the girl I loved. At such moments I was happy. Two times every day I was visited by the beautiful Eugenie and the Quadroon. But these visits lasted for only a few moments, while the hours between them were so long that they seemed like days to me. I could not show my feelings while I spoke with Eugenie, my thoughts were with the Quadroon. I only looked at Aurore. She looked at me, and our eyes spoke in their own language.

“My burning looks may give me away,” I thought. “If Eugenie learns of my love, that will be a blow to her. In love with a slave! Her slave! But what is that to me? I do not care¹ if the whole world knows of my love. But I do not want to give Eugenie a blow — she is so kind and friendly! My love must be secret.”

I had everything possible to help me get well: cool drinks, flowers, fruits. I ate the best food prepared by Old Zip’s wife. Those were dishes popular in Louisiana. Old Zip told me many things about the life on the plantation. When I was tired of his talk, I turned to books. There were many of them on the bookshelves in my room.

Soon I could sit for the first time at my window. Through the window I could see the great river with its yellow waters shining in the sun like gold. From time to time a boat with its sailors in red shirts passed by. Across the river I could see fields. On the nearer bank stood a big house with trees around it. The garden was part of the Besancon plantation. A road ran from the garden. I saw people passing along it. The coloured men and women wore clothes of a sky-blue colour and large hats. Negroes often rode past or an open carriage passed by. I also saw women in their light summer dresses and heard their laughter. The birds sang their joyful songs.

CHAPTER XV

My Diary

I began to keep a diary.² Here are a few lines from it.

July 12th. — Today I am able to sit up and write a little. The weather is very hot. But I feel cool because a slight wind passes across my room.

¹ **I do not care** — Мне все равно

² **to keep a diary** — вести дневник

Old Zip tells me that a new overseer has come to the plantation. His name is Larkin.¹ It seems that he is Gayarre's man because he brought a letter from the lawyer. Old Zip does not like Larkin and describes him as a 'white man from the North'.

The slaves think that their most cruel overseers come from the North.

July 14th. — Today I was visited two times by Miss Besancon who, as usual, came together with Aurore. Our talk was short. Miss Besancon still looks unhappy. I thought this was because of Antoine's death, but now it is clear that she is unhappy about something else. I do not feel happy, either, because I have to hold back my feelings. Aurore usually does not speak. She stands by the door or behind her mistress listening to our talk. When I look at her, she looks away.

July 15th. — Old Zip was right about the new overseer. Two or three things that I have heard about this man make it clear that he is very cruel.

People from the village brought news that they had found Antoine's body on the bank. Later it came out that it was some other man killed in the explosion. I am interested to know if the man who wounded me is alive. There are still many wounded passengers in the village.

July 21st. — Today Miss Besancon is sadder than ever before. She again looked at me in a strange way.² Aurore also looked at me. It seemed she was interested in my talk with Eugenie. I wished so much to have a talk with Aurore and tell her everything!

July 25th. — Some of the slaves were beaten by Larkin so cruelly that their backs were covered with blood. It is certain that Miss Besancon does not know about this.

July 26th. — The doctor promises to let me out³ in three days. I like this man. I learned that he was not a friend of Gayarre. From the doctor I have tried to learn some facts about Gayarre and the Besancon family. Now I know that Eugenie's father was richer at one time — they had often held festivals at the house. Even after his death Miss Besancon continued to receive her father's friends. Many young men want to marry her, but she does not love anyone.

I am right about Miss Besancon. She is in a dangerous situation.

July 28th. — Gayarre has been at the 'big house'. He visits Miss

¹ **Larkin** ['lɑ:kɪn] — Ларкин

² **She again looked at me in a strange way.** — Она снова как-то странно посмотрела на меня.

³ **to let me out** — разрешить мне выходить

Besancon every day. Old Zip tells me some of the slaves beaten by the overseer spoke about it to their young mistress. She discussed it with Gayarre. His answer was that Larkin was right as he punished the slaves. This shows that he is fully on the side of the new overseer. Old Zip learned these facts from Aurore.

August 2nd. — Gayarre has been at the house and stayed longer than usual. What brings him here? “He seems master of the plantation,” says Old Zip, “and gives his orders to everyone. All are afraid of him and his man Larkin.”

August 3rd. — Today for the first time I was able to go out of my room.

CHAPTER XVI

I Leave the Plantation

I had just had breakfast early next morning when a man came into my room. I saw the unpleasant face of Gayarre.

“Excuse me, sir,” he began, “do you know that I am the friend of Miss Besancon’s and I —”

“Go on,¹ sir!”

“If you stay here longer, you understand, sir, people will begin to talk —”

“Enough, sir. I understand you very well. It is against your plans that I am staying on this plantation. I shall go from here this very morning.”

“My dear sir,” he answered, “I am sorry about this, but the fact is —”

“Please stop that, sir. Leave me alone.”

“Oh,” he said. “I am sorry that you should take it in this way.”² And he went away.

I came to the door and looked after him. He walked to the big house and went in.

I did not know what to do. For another week or two I had hoped to stay where I was. Now I had to leave the plantation and go to the hotel at Bringiers. I was sure that Miss Besancon knew nothing about Gayarre’s plan. She had visited me a few hours before and had not said a word

¹ **Go on** — Продолжайте

² **I am sorry that you should take it in this way.** — Жаль, что вы меня не так поняли.

about it. It was very bad that Eugenie was in that man's hands. But I was sure that living in the village I should be able to visit the plantation¹ as often as I liked. There was another thought that troubled me. How could I live in the hotel without money? I was glad Miss Besancon had given me clothes. I woke one morning and found a man's dress on the chair. I did not ask how it came there. I decided to speak about that with Eugenie later. But how could I get some money?

Suddenly I remembered Reigart.

"He will help me," I thought.

When the good doctor came, I turned to him² with my problem. Really, he was a very kind man! At the next moment some money lay on the table and he asked me to use it.

"Very strange," Reigart said, "this wish of Mr. Gayarre to send you away from the plantation as soon as possible. What can it mean? Miss Besancon may not think I am her good friend and I don't want to ask her about it. It seems she is not free to do as she wishes. I am afraid she is in Gayarre's hands and she is more a slave than any of her own people. Poor young woman!"

"I want to go now, doctor."

"My carriage is at the door. I shall take you to the hotel."

"Thank you. I shall be ready in a few minutes."

"Shall I walk over to the house and prepare Miss Besancon for your going away?"

"Be so kind. I believe Gayarre is there now."

"No. I met him near his own plantation. She is alone. I shall see her and come back for you."

The doctor left me and walked over to the big house. He was absent only a few minutes.

"I am surprised at what I have heard," he said as he came back. "Miss Besancon heard from Gayarre just an hour ago that you wish to leave the plantation and stop at the hotel. She was surprised because you had said nothing about it when she saw you. She did not want to let you go but at last she had to agree. Now she is waiting to receive you."³

Led by Old Zip, I entered the house. Miss Besancon rose to meet me.

¹ **I should be able to visit the plantation** — Я смогу приезжать на плантацию

² **I turned to him** — я обратился к нему

³ **to receive you** — чтобы принять вас

I saw that she was in tears.

“Are you really going to leave us, sir?” she asked.

“Yes, madam. I am now strong again. I have come to thank you for your kindness and say good-bye.”

“Ah, sir, I am sorry you leave me so soon. But —” she stopped for a moment and then continued,

Bringiers is near: promise that you will visit us often — every day?”

I need not say that I was glad to give her that promise.

“Now,” she said, “I am less sorry to say good-bye!”

She held out her hand and I raised it to my lips. Tears again came to her eyes and she turned away not to let me see them.

CHAPTER XVII

Decision

A month passed since I had left the plantation. I continued to live in the hotel at Bringiers. I spent most of the time walking through the fields. I went boating or fishing.¹ I enjoyed talking with Reigart, whom I now called a friend. His books, too, were my friends; they gave me my first lessons in learning the green world. I studied trees in the forest. In that short month I received more real information than during years of study at school.

I visited Miss Eugenie three times a week or more. Sometimes I met young people in the house — her friends. Sometimes I found her alone with Aurore. But I could never find the girl I loved alone. How I wished to meet her!

Eugenie was still sad. I did not know why. It was clear, however, that Gayarre was making some plans against her. He tried not to meet me, and I tried not to meet him.

I had a kind feeling of friendship for Miss Besancon, but there was another and stronger feeling in my heart — my love for Aurore. I loved this young girl with all my heart. But did she love me? More than anything else in the world I wished to receive an answer to this question. I must meet Aurore and talk to her. I cannot wait. I decided to go to the

¹ **went boating or fishing.** — Я катался на лодке или ловил рыбу.

plantation next day and see Aurore.

CHAPTER XVIII

A Surprise

I started for the plantation early in the morning. My horse knew the road and I became lost in my thoughts.¹

“Whom do I love,” I thought, “a slave! A beautiful one, but still a slave! How the world will laugh! How Louisiana will laugh! Marry a slave! If I marry her, I shall not be able to stay in this land. All this I knew, but I do not care.”

Suddenly I heard a loud noise. I looked up and saw that I was near the Besancon plantation. A carriage was just leaving the yard. It turned down the road and drove away. There were women in it, but I could not tell who they were.

“Miss Besancon and Aurore, maybe,” I thought sadly, “and I have come for nothing.”

I came opposite the house and saw Old Zip.

“I can ask him who is in the carriage,” I decided and stopped the horse.

“How well young master rides!” the Negro cried.

I smiled and asked if Miss Besancon was at home.

“No, master, she has just left,” he answered.

“Of course, Aurore was with her?”

“No, master, she’s gone out alone. Aurore is at home.”

I was very glad to hear all this.

“Master won’t go before he’s rested a little,” the old man spoke. “Aurore will get master a glass of cool drink. The day is very hot.”

“You are right, Old Zip,” I answered. “I shall rest for a few minutes.”

Telling the Negro to take care of my horse, I entered the yard. My heart beat as I walked to the house.

“I shall now see Aurore,” I thought, “I shall speak freely of my love.”

Suddenly I heard the sound of a voice coming through the open

¹ I became lost in my thoughts — Я глубоко задумался

windows of the room. It was Aurore talking to someone. Her voice was too low and I could not understand the words. Now the sound of another voice came. I started as if bitten by a snake.¹ It was the voice of Gayarre.

CHAPTER XIX

My Worst Enemy

I cannot describe my feelings. It was some time before I could pull myself together.²

“The man is a dangerous enemy,” I thought. “It is clear that his visit is secret. He has come to speak to Aurore when she is alone.”

The voices had become louder and I now heard every word that was said. Gayarre was speaking.

“Does this young man love your mistress?”

“Mr.³ Gayarre, how can I know?”

“If he tries something,” said Gayarre in an angry voice, “I shall not let him visit the house. So I have decided.”

“Oh, Mr. Gayarre, I’m sure, my mistress will be unhappy about it. Remember. Mr. Edward saved her life and she is so thankful to him.”

“Maybe someone else will also be sorry? Maybe you? Do you love him?”

“Oh, sir!” cried the Quadroon. “How can you talk so? I love! I — a poor slave!”

It seemed that Gayarre liked these words. His voice was less angry now.

“Beautiful Aurore, do you know who can really make you free?”

“Mr. Gayarre, I have said before, I cannot listen to this — I cannot and will not.”

“Aurore, don’t be angry with me! I want to make your life easier. I love you.”

“Mr. Gayarre, I repeat —

“Dearest Aurore. Say you love me, say one word! You shall be free, you will have everything, every pleasure, rich dresses. My house will be

¹ I started as if bitten by a snake. — Я вздрогнул, как ужаленный (змеей).

² It was some time before I could pull myself together. — Я долго не мог прийти в себя.

³ Mr. [ˈmɪstə] — сокр. от Mister — мистер, господин

yours —”

“Enough, sir! I don’t want to hear more!”

“No, dearest, beautiful Aurore! Do not go yet —hear me —”

“Stop it, sir!”

“A word, a word, Aurore!”

I decided it was time for me to enter. Gayarre turned to me with an angry look.

“What business have you here, sir?”

“I need not ask you the same question, Mr. Gayarre. Your business is clear enough. Ha! Ha! Ha!”

“The sooner you go the better!”¹ he shouted.

“For whom?”

“For you, sir!”

I had now also become angry.

“Sir,” I said stopping in front of him, “leave alone this young girl.” Gayarre started but said nothing. I continued:

“You are not a gentleman, sir. So I promise that if you don’t go in a minute, I shall throw you out of this room.”

Gayarre understood that I meant it.²

“You shall pay dearly for this,” he cried.

“Go, sir!”

He turned and ran to the door.

CHAPTER XX

An Hour of Happiness

The girl looked at me thankfully, she took my hand and held it to her lips.

“What are you doing, dear Aurore?” I said, “what for do you thank me? I have not done anything.”

“Sir! You have done much! You don’t know this land. Nobody here will say a word in favour of³ a poor slave. We, coloured people, have no rights. You don’t know how thankful I am to you!”

¹ **The sooner you go the better!** — Чем скорее вы уберетесь, тем лучше!

² **that I meant it** — что я намерен это сделать

³ **in favour of** — в защиту



“But we are friends, Aurore. Look on me as — a brother —”

“You, sir. You my brother — a white gentleman. What am I? A slave.”

“Aurore,” I said, “it is the first time that we have met alone. I want to say something to you—”

“To me, sir! What?”

“Aurore, I love you!”

“Love me! Oh, sir, it is not possible!”

“Listen, Aurore. From the first hour that I saw you — I loved you. Day and night, I think of you. You are in my dreams, always. I love you with all my heart!”

“Love me, poor girl!”

“Aurore,” I continued, “I have told you all. Now — do you love me?”

I was not sure of my own voice as I asked the question. Before I could finish speaking, I heard the words:

“I, too, from the first hour!”

In the next moment I held her in my arms and kissed her. Then we sat together without speaking. We were happy.

But our short dream was soon over. We began to discuss our plans like good friends.

“In a few days I must receive money from home. I believe it will be enough to buy you. Then we’ll be able to marry. We shall go somewhere.”

Aurore smiled sadly.

“I am afraid,” she said, “that you will not be able to buy me.”

“Why?”

“Others have tried. They offered big money, but mistress does not want to let me go. Oh! How thankful I was to her then! But now — it is different.”¹

“I shall give more — the whole of my money. Of course, that will be enough.”

“She will not agree. There is a reason — You don’t know everything —”

Tears came to her eyes and the girl sat down on the sofa, covering her face with her hands.

I was going to ask her about the reason when the noise of carriage

¹ **But now — it is different.** — Но теперь — другое дело.

reached my ears. In the present situation I did not wish to meet Miss Besancon. I said good-bye to Aurore and ran out of the house.

CHAPTER XXI

The Old Enemy

I left the plantation and took a road leading past the Negro village. Those were fifty or sixty small houses standing in two rows. One house looked like another and in front of each grew a tree. Under the trees Negro children were playing all day long. By the side of the houses stood the big house of the overseer.

When I came nearer to the village, I heard a cry. It came from the overseer's house. What was it? I rode into the street, stopped the horse and looked around me. At one end of the village and near the overseer's house was a platform. Many Negroes — men, women and children — had gathered round the platform. They stood with their eyes turned to the platform. I could hear angry voices. A black slave on the platform was whipping someone. I knew that Negro. He was Gabriel,¹ a large and strong man. All the other Negroes and whites were afraid of him.

The whipped man was tied to a tall post. He was Old Zip. Little Chloe and her mother were standing near the platform crying.

Without thinking a moment, I rode up to the platform and struck Gabriel with my whip. He jumped down from the platform and ran to his house. I heard shouts of joy from the Negroes. Suddenly they stopped. Then several voices cried out:

“The overseer! The overseer! Be careful, master! There he comes!”

I now saw a man coming up to me with a pistol in his hand. He looked dangerous and his red face showed that he was very angry. When he reached my horse's head, he stopped and cried:

“What the hell do you want here?”²

He did not finish and stood looking at me in surprise. I, too, was

¹ **Gabriel** [ˈɡeɪbrɪəl] — Габриэль

² **What the hell do you want here?** — Какого черта тебе здесь нужно?

surprised: the overseer was my enemy on the boat.

“It’s you, is it?” the overseer cried at last. Now it seemed he was still angrier than before.

He raised his pistol which shone in the sun. My horse was afraid and started back. This saved my life. At the next moment I struck the man with my whip-handle and he fell down unconscious. I got off my horse, came up to the lying man and looked over the wound on his head. It was not deep. I took the pistol that lay near and then saw another pistol in one of the overseer’s pockets. I pulled it out, too.

“Tell him,” I said turning to the Negroes, “when he comes to himself¹ that if he attacks me again, I shall also have pistols.”

I spoke to Old Zip who told me his story. Larkin wanted Chloe to be his servant.² Old Zip said no and Larkin ordered to whip him.

As I got on my horse and rode off, I heard the loud cries of the Negroes. They showed that the Negroes were thankful to me, so I felt proud and happy.

CHAPTER XXII

She Loves You!

Soon I was again on the road riding slowly and thinking about what had happened.

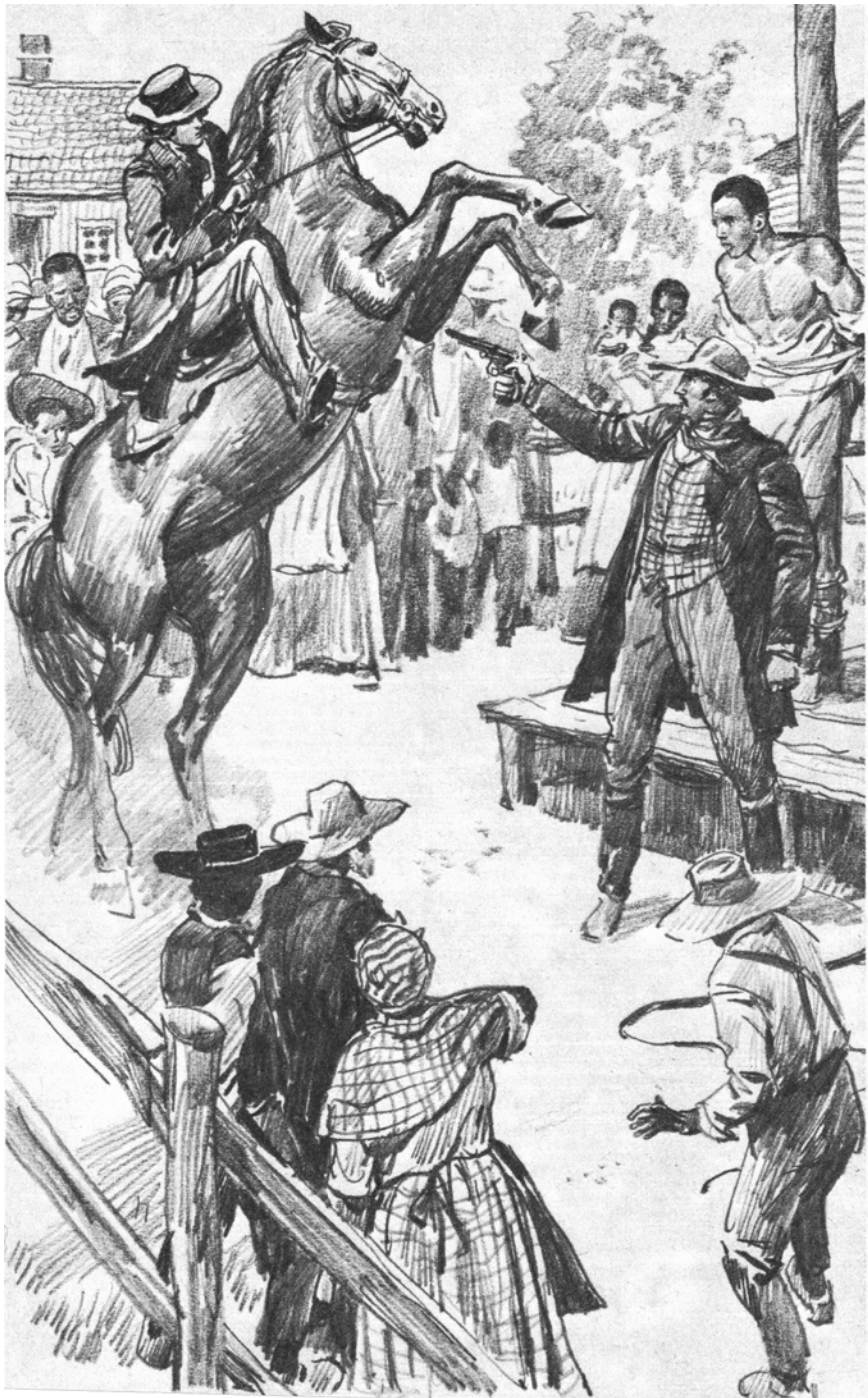
“It is clear that the overseer Larkin is Gayarre’s man. He knows me now and he will not soon forget me. However, I don’t think he will again attack me openly. Now I know Gayarre’s plans and I’ve had another fight with Larkin, so I must not wait any longer — I must discuss with Miss Besancon the business about Aurore as soon as possible.”

I came to Bringiers with the decision to go to the plantation again early next morning. On my table I found a letter with a cheque for 200 pounds. I was glad to receive the money — now I could pay off my debt³ to Reigart.

¹ **when he comes to himself** — когда он придет в себя

² **Larkin wanted Chloe to be his servant.** — Ларкин хотел, чтобы Хлоя стала его служанкой.

³ **could pay off my debt** — смогу отдать долг



I passed the night without sleep.

“Will Eugenie agree to sell the Quadroon?” I thought. “How will she take¹ the news that I love Aurore?”

I was very sorry for poor Miss Besancon. She was so unhappy about her debt to Gayarre and she was in his hands. There was talk that very soon he was going to become the owner of the Besancon plantation. I had learned it all from Reigart the day before, and the news had made me wish still more to see Miss Besancon.

Early in the morning I was on my horse, riding to the plantation.

I found Miss Besancon at home. She looked brighter than usual. There was even a smile on her face. Aurore was not present.

Our talk was about the events of the day before. I told her everything about the overseer. She was greatly surprised.

“It is Gayarre, again Gayarre,” she said.

“May I ask you, are you unhappy about this man,² Gayarre?”

She did not speak for a moment, then said:

“Please, sir, let us talk about something else. Some day³ you will know all. I can’t tell you now.”

Talk of something else! Of course, I began to talk of Aurore. I told the whole story of my love, from the time of my dreams to the moment when we had opened our hearts to each other.

My listener sat on the low sofa before me. As I spoke, I was not looking at her. I finished with a beating heart and waited for her answer. A slight noise made me turn suddenly. Eugenie had become unconscious and lay on the floor. I ran up to her and wanted to call out for help when the door opened and a woman came into the room. It was Aurore.

“Oh!” she cried. “You are killing her! She loves you!”

CHAPTER XXIII

Thoughts

Pleasant and sad thoughts passed through my mind. The love of the Quadroon made me happy, but the thought that Miss Eugenie loved me

¹ **How will she take** — Как она воспримет

² **are you unhappy about this man** — вы несчастны из-за этого человека

³ **Some day** — Когда-нибудь

made me very sad.

“Now I have opened the secret of my heart to Eugenie,” I thought, “what will be the result of it? How will she act? Certainly, Eugenie is clever and Aurore is her friend, but still she is her slave!”

“I understand what my love for the Quadroon means,” I thought. “If I marry a slave, I will have to take her away from Louisiana.”

“How shall I be able to meet Eugenie next time?” I thought again, “there is darkness and danger before me. I have only one hope and joy — the love for Aurore.”

I rose early, dressed and ate my breakfast. But I did not know what to do next. At first I wanted to go back to the plantation and speak to Eugenie again. But then I decided to wait a little — a day or two. I stayed in my room and tried to kill time by reading. I did not want to see anyone or talk with other people.

Three days passed. More and more I wanted change. So one morning I went to the forest. I walked among the trees and saw many animals but all my thoughts were about something else. Those were love dreams about the beautiful Aurore.

I walked and walked. Suddenly I saw a light before me and I came out to a pretty opening in the forest. The sun shone warmly, and the ground was covered with flowers of all colours. The opening was so beautiful that for some minutes I forgot everything else. Then I lay down on the grass. I lay thinking for some time, and soon I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXIV

A Snake!

I slept for an hour and saw a dream. Many faces came before me. They moved and changed, but two of them were present all the time: the faces of Eugenie and Aurore.

I woke up from sudden pain. I was afraid as I heard a slight sound in the grass. I looked around and saw the long shining body of a snake near me.

The pain was not a dream: there was blood on my hand. I jumped to my feet.

“The snake bit me,” I thought. “In an hour I may be dead.”

My first thought was to kill the snake, but it was gone.¹ What must I do? I had only one hope — to reach Bringiers as soon as possible. Reigart could help me there. I started walking fast under the trees. I walked and walked, but suddenly I stopped and looked around. I understood that I had lost my way.² The danger made me active again. Again I walked through the forest as fast as I could.

Ho! There was light! The sky! I could see the sun shining through the trees. I was sure the plantation was before me. What joy! I walked on with a beating heart. In a few moments I stood in the open sunshine. Oh, what was that? The same opening was again before me. I felt weak and could not walk, so I had to sit down on the ground.

“I like this opening in the forest so much less than two hours ago. Now I have to die here!” I thought.

I understood that I had to act. Suddenly an idea came to me. Tobacco is good for a snake’s bite.³ I had some tobacco in my pocket. I took it out and put it into my mouth. Then I put it on the wound. After that I tore a piece from my shirt and with it tied the tobacco to my hand. My arm was red and I began to feel a slight pain.

I started off again. My plan was to try once more to find a way out of the forest⁴ and reach the village.

CHAPTER XXV

The Runaway

Suddenly I saw a man who had come out from behind the trees. When he saw me, he stopped. My greeting to him was a shout of joy.

“He will show me the way! He will save me!” I thought.

But to my surprise the man suddenly turned round and walked back into the forest. I called out to him to come up to me. He did not stop. I started after him. I was already weak but understood that only this man could save me. For a few minutes I could run faster than he.

“Stop!” I called out. “Stop, man! Why do you run? You needn’t be

¹ **it was gone** — она (змея) исчезла

² **I had lost my way** — я заблудился

³ **Tobacco is good for a snake’s bite.** — Табак помогает от укуса змеи.

⁴ **to try once more to find a way out of the forest** — еще раз попытаться выбраться из леса

afraid!”

He made no answer. Now he ran faster than me.

“Stop,” I cried out taking out a pistol, “stop or I’ll fire!”

This time the man stopped.

“Fire!” he cried turning round, knife in his hand, “but take care.¹ If you miss, I’ll kill you!”

I stood looking at him in surprise. The man before me was Gabriel.

With a knife in his hand the Negro was a dangerous enemy. I did not forget the blow I had given him with my whip. It was clear that he remembered it, too. But I was wrong. As soon as Gabriel saw who I was, his arm with the knife fell to his side. He spoke to me like a friend:

“Oh! You, master — black man’s friend! I thought it was that white overseer!”

“That’s why² you ran from me?”

“Yes, master.”

“Then you are —”

“A runaway, yes. I can tell you that because you are my friend. Look here!”

He pulled off his shirt. His back was all covered with marks of dried blood. This unpleasant sight made me start.³

“Poor man!” I cried.

“Master,” he continued, “you struck me with your whip. But that was nothing. Gabriel thanked you for that. He was glad when young master made him run away from the platform.”

“You were sorry that you had to whip Old Zip?”

“Yes, master. The white overseer made me do it. He tried to make me whip Old Zip another time. But I said no. That’s why you see this here.” He pointed to his back.

“You were whipped because you did not want to whip Old Zip?”

“Just so, master Edward. But I showed him!”

“What have you done to the overseer?”

“I struck him. Besides I have run away. They’ve lost a good Negro-worker in the field.”

“So you have run away from the plantation?”

¹ **take care** — берегись

² **that’s why** — вот почему

³ **made me start** — заставил меня вздрогнуть

“Just so, master Edward. I’ll never go back!”

I understood that Gabriel was a brave man. I liked him more and more.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Snake Doctor

I looked at the slave with pleasure for some moments. The pain in my arm called me back to the danger of my present situation.

“Will you show me the way to Bringiers?” I asked the Negro.

“I am afraid, master.”

“Why?”

“Master forgets I’m a runaway. The white folks will catch Gabriel and cut off his arm.”¹

“What?”

“Sure, master — that’s done in Louisiana. A white man strikes a Negro, folks laugh, folks cry out: ‘beat him!’ A Negro strikes a white man, they cut off his arm.”

“If I do not reach the doctor in less than twenty minutes, I must die.”

“Doctor! Is master Edward ill? Tell Gabriel. The black man can take him to the village, risking his life.”

“I was bitten by a snake.” I showed him the wound.

“The doctor knows nothing about it. Gabriel will help you. Come along,² young master.”

“Show me the way!”

Gabriel walked off among the trees. When we had covered several hundred yards, I saw bright sun. There was an opening in the forest in front of us. When we reached it, I saw it was the same opening where the snake had bitten me. But I was very weak now. I could not look at the bright light. My arm was burning. The reason for all this was clear: it was the snake’s bite.

My black friend told me to sit down on the ground and wait. Then he

¹ **The white folks will catch Gabriel and cut off his arm.** — Белые (люди) схватят Габриэля и отрубят ему руку.

² **Come along** — Идем

began walking around with his eyes fixed on the ground.¹ I watched him with great interest. Suddenly he stopped and gave out a cry of joy. Forgetting his advice to sit quiet, I jumped up from the ground and ran to him. Gabriel pulled up a plant. He cleaned part of it and made me² put it into my mouth and eat it. The Negro now brought some water. With it he washed my hand. After that the snake doctor put some leaves of the plant on the wound and tied it up as before.

Everything was now done and I waited for the result. Soon I fell asleep. When I woke, I felt that I was well again. The Negro had saved my life! My heart was full of thankfulness to Gabriel. I was happy because I had a new black friend. We sat side by side on the grass and talked. Gabriel told me many interesting things about snakes.

Many hours had passed since I left home and I felt very hungry. I told the Negro about it.

“Come along, master,” he said. “Gabriel will find you something to eat in his own home. Master will wait there till the sun goes down. Then Gabriel will show him the way back.”

The Negro turned round and walked off. I came after him. A short walk brought us to a large forest lake. Great trees grew up out of the water which looked black. The Negro stopped near a large tree. It grew in such a position that its top reached far out over the water.³ Gabriel jumped on the tree and walked along its trunk. I came after him. When we reached the top I saw a small boat on the water. The Negro untied the boat and told me to get in.

In his boat Gabriel took me over to a small island in the centre of the lake. The dark forest rose all around it like a wall. The lake was busy with active life. There were thousands of birds on the lake. The sight was new to me and I looked on it with great interest.

The boat struck against a tree growing from the water and my friend told me to get out. In a moment I entered the home of the runaway.

¹ **with his eyes fixed on the ground** — не отрывая взгляда от земли

² **made me** — заставил меня

³ **its top reached far out over the water** — его верхушка нависала над водой



CHAPTER XXVII

I Learn Sad News

Gabriel's home was dark, and it was some time before I could see anything around me. It was a large cave which could easily hold more than ten people. Near the middle of it I could see the place for a fire. Along one side there was some dry grass — the Negro's bed. A log was used as a chair and there was nothing to serve for a table. Among other things in the cave there was a plate, a cup and one or two old pieces of clothes.

My friend had tied his boat and entered.

“Well, master,” he said, “this is the home of a runaway. The man-hunters won't find him here.”

“Why, Gabriel, how did you find such a place?”

“I have known it for a long time, master. Gabriel came here before when he ran away from master Hicks¹ before old master Besancon bought him. He never wanted to run away from old master Besancon. He was good to the black folks. But now life is difficult for the poor Negroes. The new overseer whips them — till blood comes. I'll never go back, never!”

“But how are you going to live? Where will you get your food?”

“Oh, master Edward, I'll always get enough to eat. The poor runaway has some friends on the plantation.”

“Oh!”

“See what Old Zip has brought him! He came last night to the forest. But, master, you are hungry. Have some meat. Chloe cooked it. It's good — eat, please.”

As he said this, he put before me a large wooden plate full of meat. We had a good dinner. After dinner we sat talking for a long time. We discussed the Negroes' life. I promised Gabriel to come back and help him run away from Louisiana. He wanted to leave his own country and try to reach Canada.²

When the sun went down, I prepared to go back. We agreed upon a signal so that when I came again, Gabriel could bring his boat to carry me

¹ **Hicks** [hɪks] — Хикс

² **and try to reach Canada** [ˈkænədə] — и попытаться добраться до Канады

across to his home. Then we crossed the lake and the Negro showed me the way in the forest. He also showed me certain marks by which I could know it again.

As I reached the village, I tried not to meet anyone. But at the hotel men and women looked in surprise at my dirty and torn clothes. Some of them tried to ask questions, but I made no answer. I walked to my room and sent for Reigart.

A number of people had gathered around my door and I could hear their talk.

“Is it the same man who fought with overseer Larkin?” said one.

“The same.”

“English, isn’t he?”

“Don’t know. I say, he struck him a heavy blow. With his whip-handle! Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Next came words that made me interested.

“He wants to marry Miss Besancon, they say.”¹

“I think, he wants to have her plantation.”

There was loud laughter.

“He may get the young woman,” continued a voice, “but not the plantation.”

“Ah yes, it must be sold for debts.”

“Old Gayarre owns the plantation now.”

“Poor girl!”

“Some say, her father didn’t leave much when he died. He already had debts.”

The doctor came.

“My dear Rutherford, where have you been?” he asked in surprise.

“To the forest.”

“And these wounds — torn clothes — blood?”

“I ran through thick forest.”

“But why?”

“I was bitten by a snake.”

“What! Do you speak seriously?”

“Quite — But I found a plant in the forest, it saved my life.”

“Who helped you find it?”

“A friend whom I met in the forest.”

¹ they say — говорят

“A friend in the forest!” Reigart cried in still greater surprise.

“Not so loud!” I said to the doctor in a low voice.

“Do not ask any more questions. You will soon learn all.”

Reigart looked at my wounds.

“Now, doctor, this news of Miss Besancon—” I asked.

“It is true, I am sorry to say.”

“Poor Eugenie!”

“The plantation was heavily in debt. Gayarre owns it now.”

“And what about the slaves?”¹

“All of them will be sold.”

“All — and — Aurore?”

My heart was beating as I put the question. Reigart did not know of my love for Aurore.

“The Quadroon girl, you mean! Of course. She is a slave and they are going to sell her, too.”

I cannot describe my feelings as I listened to his words.

“Poor Miss Besancon,” I said, “what will become of her? She has no friends.”

“I have heard something of an aunt who lives in the city. Miss Besancon may stay with her.”

“Doctor,” I cried, “I must go to the plantation.”

“Not tonight.”

“Tonight — now!”

“My dear Mr. Rutherford, you must not.”

“Why?”

“I cannot let you do that. You are not well enough.”

“But —”

“I cannot listen to you. You must stay in your room —”

I had to agree.²

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Letter

I woke in the morning and lay for some time thinking about the

¹ **And what about the slaves?** — А как же с рабами?

² **I had to agree.** — Я должен был согласиться.

events of the day before. At last I decided to go to the plantation and see what the situation was there. As I was dressing, I saw a letter that lay on the table. I opened it and read:

“Dear sir,

“Today is my birthday and I am the unhappiest woman in all the land. The same sun that has risen on my birthday looks down on a woman who is ruined.¹

“It was my greatest wish to make you happy; to show how thankful I am to you. I am sorry to say I am not able to do anything now. I am no more the owner of the plantation Besancon, no more the mistress of Aurore. Eugenie Besancon is now a poor woman.

“But there is unhappiness worse than the loss of money — unhappy love.

“Good-bye, dear sir! It is better we should never meet again.²

Yours, Eugenie”

“Poor Eugenie,” thought I, “how unhappy she is! I must try to talk to her, though I don’t know that she will see me after writing this letter.”

I ordered the servant to get my horse ready and soon rode quickly away to the plantation. When I came there, I was surprised to see two horses near the house. Old Zip was holding them.

“Who are those people?” I asked him, without getting off my horse. “Lawyers,” he answered. I understood that their business was in the house. Old Zip told me all the other news.

“Larkin still stays on the plantation,” he said. “The slaves will be carried down to the city and sold.³ Gayarre comes and goes away many times a day. Miss Besancon has gone away.”

“Gone away? Where?”

“I don’t know, master — to the city, I think. She left last night.”

“And where is Aurore?” I asked with a beating heart.

“Aurore has gone too, master — together with Miss Eugenie.”

“Aurore gone?”

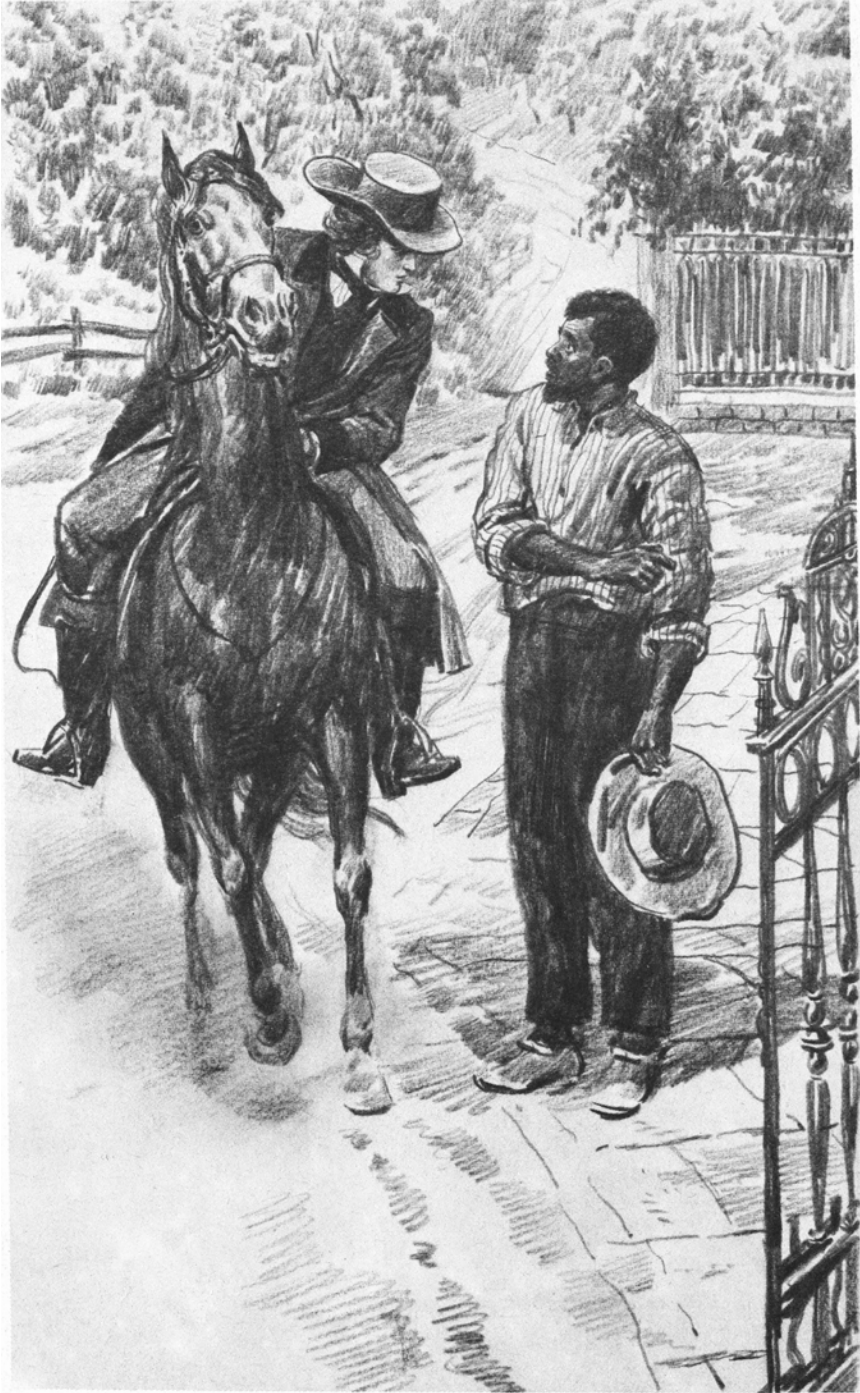
“Yes, master.”

I was struck by the news. I asked the Negro again and again about the two young women but he could tell me nothing else.

¹ **who is ruined** — которая разорена

² **It is better we should never meet again.** — Лучше нам никогда больше не встречаться.

³ **The slaves will be carried down to the city and sold.** — Рабов увезут в город и продадут.



I had no business to stay on the plantation Besancon any longer. I had no business at Bringiers. With a kind word to Old Zip I turned my horse round and rode away. In a few minutes I came back to my hotel and began preparing to leave for New Orleans.

CHAPTER XXIX

Important Sale of Negroes

I am fond of country life. As soon as I find myself in the centre of the forest, I enjoy the beauties of the forest around me.

And yet I must say that I have always liked the life of a big city with its concerts, the drama and so on. How I always wished to see them after I came back from the country.

This time, however, I thought of no such pleasures. One thought alone was in my heart — Aurore.

“My position is very difficult,” I thought as I sat over my breakfast in a New Orleans hotel. “Firstly, I love this beautiful Quadroon. Secondly, she is going to be sold. Thirdly, I don’t know that I shall be able to buy her.”

The hotel-boy came:

“A newspaper, sir?”

He gave me a fresh number. I looked over the page and stopped at these lines:

“Important Sale of Negroes!

“Plantation Besancon.

“Forty field workers in good health, of different age. Several house-servants, drivers, cooks. A number of coloured boys and girls, aged from ten to twenty.”

The names were given in full. I read on:

“1. Zip, 48. Negro in good health, understands house-work and can look after horses.

2. Hannibal,¹ 43. Black field worker...”

Last came that name:

“65. Aurore, 19. Quadroon. Good house-servant.”

¹ **Hannibal** [ˈhɛnɪbəl] — Ганнибал

My heart beat as I saw it. My hands shook. The newspaper fell from them.

I took up the paper again to learn the time and place of the sale. The place I knew well — a big hall in the house next to the hotel. The time — I read:

“Tomorrow at twelve!”

I looked at the clock on the wall. It was almost twelve. I counted my money. I had a hundred dollars. Certainly that was not enough.

CHAPTER XXX

Eugene D’Hauteville¹

I spent the whole day looking for Aurore. The other Negroes had already come, but she was not among them. They had not even seen her. Nobody knew anything about her. When I came back to the hotel, I remembered that I was to expect a visitor that night.² He was Eugene D’Hauteville, a young man with whom I had made friends on the boat on my way to New Orleans.

I remembered I had become interested in this sad-looking young man. Our talk had made me feel that I could trust him like a friend. I needed a friend now. Though D’Hauteville was my own age, I felt certain that he knew more of the world than I. He certainly could help me — but not with money. I remembered the answer he had made when I asked for his address:

“I am sorry to say, I have no home.”

“Maybe he is an office-worker who has lost his place,” I thought, “or a poor painter. His dress is rich enough, but that does not mean anything.”

I wanted to see the young man very much. As the clock was striking nine D’Hauteville stood before me. I was again surprised at how sad his face looked. Strange enough, it seemed to me that I had seen that face before.

It was hot in the room: the summer was not over. So we decided to go out. We walked for a time talking of our boat trip to New Orleans

¹ **Eugene D’Hauteville** [ˈjuːdʒiːn dətəˈvɪl] — Юджин Д’Отевилль

² **I was to expect a visitor that night** — вечером у меня должен быть гость



and other things. Then we found a bench and sat down on it. It was time to tell my secret, and in half an hour Eugene D’Hauteville knew the story of my love.

He spoke only once, when I was describing the sad ending of my last talk with Miss Besancon.

“Poor Eugenie!” he cried. When I had finished my story, he asked:

“Do you want to buy the Quadroon?”

“I certainly want to buy her but —”

“How much money have you got?”

“About one hundred dollars.”

“That will not be enough. Well, I have less than a hundred dollars.”

For some moments D’Hauteville was lost in thought.¹

“After all,” he said to himself in a low voice, “if she is not able to find the papers, she is lost — it is a great risk.”

“Sir, what are you speaking about?”

“Oh! I am sorry. I was just thinking — let’s go back, sir. It is getting cold.”

We turned back and walked for some time without speaking. The great city clock struck twelve o’clock.

“In twelve hours the ‘Important Sale’ will begin,” I said. “If I cannot buy Aurore today, there is only the hope that he who buys her may later sell her to me. I’ll be ready to pay any price.”

“No — he who buys her will not sell her for any price.”

“Why do you think so, Mr. D’Hauteville?”

“I think I know the man.”

“Who is he?”

“Mr. Gayarre.”

The news struck me.

“I know something of the family history of Eugenie Besancon,” D’Hauteville continued. “There was a man on the boat who was coming together with us to New Orleans — he is Gayarre’s man. He will certainly be present at the sale and try to buy the girl.”

“Oh! What can I do to save Aurore from this man?”

“I am thinking about that myself. All hope is not lost. There is still one chance. Well, it is just a plan, but I’ll try it. I have no time to lose — I’m going. Tomorrow at twelve I shall be with you at the sale. Good

¹ was lost in thought — задумался

night!”

D’Hauteville did not give me time to ask any questions.

Thinking over his dark promise, I walked slowly to my hotel. Without undressing I threw myself on the bed, but could not sleep that night.

CHAPTER XXXI

The Sale

Hundreds of plans passed through my mind during that night. Yet when morning came, I had not decided on any of them.

It was twelve o’clock when I walked to the house where the sale of the slaves was to take place. It was a great round hall with white walls. There were no windows: the light came from above. On one side stood a desk on a platform. By the side of the platform was a large stone. A stone bench ran around part of the wall. This was the well-known slave-market of New Orleans, the place where men, women and children were bought and sold. Here a husband had often been taken away from his wife, a mother from her child. Often tears had fallen on that floor, often those walls had heard the cry of the wounded heart!

As I thought of all these cruel actions I felt angry.

When I entered, there were already many people in the hall. They stood talking in groups. From time to time laughter rang through the hall. There was one group, however, which looked quite different from the others. These were the Negro slaves from the Besancon plantation. Some of them were sitting on the stone bench, others — standing beside it. All were sad. Only a few spoke in low voices. Mothers sat holding their children in their arms. Aurore was not there.

I stopped behind one of the groups of white men and watched for D’Hauteville. All kinds of people passed in and out. A large man with a red face passed through the door. In one hand he carried some papers, in the other a small hammer.

“Here he comes!” a voice cried.

“That’s he!”

In another minute the red face was seen above the desk. A few blows of the hammer were heard in the hall and the sale began.

The first Negro who was ordered on the large stone was Old Zip. They sold him like a horse. I looked at the door, watching every man that passed in. D’Hauteville was not coming.

Behind me the sale continued. Aurore’s name was last, so I had time to wait. Yet I turned away from the door and began to watch the people around me.

A group of richly-dressed young men stood near.

“So, Marigny,¹ you really want to offer a price for her?” asked one.

“Yes, I do,” answered a young man.

“How high will you go?”²

“Oh, I haven’t much money, my dear friend.”

“Then you won’t be able to beat the others,” said the first speaker, “I know many who want to buy her — rich men all of them.”

“But I know somebody who will beat you all,” said a third speaker.

“Who? Name him!” asked several voices.

“Old Gayarre.”

“Gayarre, the lawyer.”

“That’s right. I am sure the old planter will beat even the rich Marigny here!”

Marigny was biting his lips. He looked very unhappy.

“Gayarre did much to ruin the plantation, did he not?” asked one.

“They say so.”³

“Why, he was a great friend of the family — the friend of old Besancon.”

“Yes — the lawyer-friend. Ha! Ha!”

“Poor Eugenie! She will not be a rich woman now. It will be easier for her to choose a husband. Ha! Ha!”

“You can try to marry her, Le Ber.”⁴

“Le Ber isn’t her friend now. There is a young Englishman — the man who swam to the bank with her after the explosion on the river. Is it so, Le Ber?”

“Ask Miss Besancon about it,” answered Le Ber in an angry voice. The others laughed.

¹ **Marigny** [mæriˈnjɪ] — Мариньи

² **How high will you go?** — Сколько максимум вы можете дать?

³ **They say so.** — Говорят, что так и есть.

⁴ **Le Ber** [ləˈber] — Ле Бер

“I wanted to see her,” said the first speaker again. “I went to the plantation, but did not find her there. She had left two days before. Where is she, sir?”

I waited for the answer to this question with interest. I had looked for Eugenie that day, but could not find her, either. It was said she had come to the city, but no one had seen her.

“Where can she be? Le Ber, you must know,” repeated the man.

“I know nothing of Miss Besancon,” answered Le Ber sadly.

The talk suddenly stopped. Two or three voices cried out:

“There! There! She comes.”

I turned round. Aurore was at the door.

CHAPTER XXXII

Sold!

The Quadroon stood quietly looking over the faces before her. There was a coloured girl by her side and a man walking in front of the two girls. It was Larkin the overseer.

“Come along,” he told Aurore and the other girl, “this way.”

The girls came after him across the hall towards the desk. I stood behind the other people and Aurore did not see me. As soon as they passed by I looked after them. Oh! beautiful Aurore!

I was not alone in looking at the beautiful young woman. Every eye in the hall was turned towards her. Aurore was standing near the platform. I could see her sad face. She looked over the faces again and she saw me at last. There was joy in her eyes, a smile came on her lips. As our eyes met silent words of love were passing between us. I had almost forgotten where I stood.

A noise in the crowd brought me back to my present situation. People began to turn around to look at me. I looked away. Again I watched the door for D’Hauteville. Why was he not coming?

There was silence for a moment. I looked towards the desk. A dark man came onto the platform and was speaking to the man at the desk. A minute or two passed and I saw that the overseer took Aurore by the hand and raised her on the stone.



It was clear that she was to be sold next.¹ I ran to the door and looked out into the street. No D’Hauteville! I ran back into the hall. The sale began.

“A thousand dollars for the Quadroon,” the man at the desk was saying.

I felt someone pull me by the sleeve.² I turned round, it was D’Hauteville. I could not hold back a shout of joy. His look told me that he had brought the money.

“I came in time,” he said in a low voice, putting a purse into my hand. “There’s three thousand dollars — that will be enough. Well, I cannot stay here now — we shall meet after the sale. Good-bye!”

I turned my eyes towards the desk.

¹ she was to be sold next — следующей должны были продать ее

² I felt someone pull me by the sleeve. — Я почувствовал, как кто-то потянул меня за рукав.



“Fifteen hundred dollars for the Quadroon — good servant — fifteen hundred dollars!”

“Two thousand?” I called out in a shaking voice.

The crowd was surprised that the price was so high. There were looks and smiles and all kinds of opinions spoken about me. I did not hear them. I did not see the people around me. I saw Aurore — only Aurore, standing on the stone.

“Two thousand dollars — twenty one hundred — two thousand, one, two — twenty two hundred dollars —”

“Twenty five hundred dollars!” I again cried out.

“Twenty five hundred dollars,” repeated the man at the desk, “twenty five — six — you, sir? Thank you. Twenty six hundred dollars for the Quadroon —”

“Oh, they will go above three thousand!” I thought.

“Twenty seven hundred dollars!” said someone.

“Twenty eight hundred and fifty!” a young man shouted.

“Nine,” said the tall dark man who had talked to the man at the desk.

“Twenty nine hundred — two thousand and nine hundred.”

“Three thousand!” I cried. It was my last word. I waited for the result with my heart stopping within me.

“Three thousand one hundred dollars — thirty one hundred dollars.”

I looked at Aurore and, turning away, walked slowly across the hall. Before I had reached the door, I could hear the voice of the man at the desk calling out:

“Three thousand five hundred — going at¹ three thousand five hundred — going — going —”

I heard the hammer. “Sold!” There was a noise coming from the crowd. The tall dark man was talking to the man at the desk. Aurore stood beside him. I now remembered that I had seen the man on the boat. He was Gayarre’s man of whom D’Hauteville had spoken. Gayarre had bought the Quadroom.

For a time I stood, thinking.

“What next? What must I do now? Well, I shall free Aurore just the same.² It will be dangerous, but I don’t care. I must act at once. First, I must learn where she will pass the night. She must know I am near!”

Stopping near the wall, I took out my notebook and wrote on one of its pages:

“I’ll come tonight — EDWARD”

Then I tore the leaf and came back to the door. At that very moment a carriage drove up. I went and took another which stopped a little behind. When I entered the hall again, Gayarre’s man was leading Aurore away from the desk. I stood near the door among the crowd. As Aurore was passing by, I put the note into her hand. A moment later the carriage door closed after the young woman. Gayarre’s man got onto the seat besides the driver and drove off. A word to my driver was enough. Whipping his horse he started after the first carriage.

¹ **going at...** — идет за... (форма объявления цены при распродаже с аукциона, повторяемая не более трех раз. При отсутствии предложения более высокой суммы удар молотка возвещает о том, что вещь продана за последнюю названную цену.)

² **just the same** — зд. несмотря ни на что

CHAPTER XXXIII

Back Again

The carriage in front turned to the right into the street which ran towards the river. I thought at first that they were going to the river-port but I was mistaken. The carriage stopped in front of a big house. I told my driver to stop at the corner. From my place I could see that all the passengers of the other carriage were going to the house. In a short time a man came out and handed the money to the driver who drove off at once.

I read the name of the street. It was clear that before me was Gayarre's house. I decided to continue watching. I decided to follow Aurore to her new home. It was good I had the three thousand dollars given to me by D'Hauteville. With that I could travel to the end of the world.

Suddenly I heard the sound of wheels and another carriage turned into the street. It was driven by a Negro. He was also one of Gayarre's men whom I had often met in Bringiers.

A servant brought out some boxes. The dark man came out and got onto the carriage seat besides the driver. The black woman led Aurore to the carriage. At this moment a man riding a horse came. After speaking to Gayarre's other man he rode away at once. It was Larkin.

The driver raised his whip and the carriage drove off. It went down the street, then turned to the left towards the road. My driver followed. We had already gone a few miles¹ when I first thought of why I was driving after them. Did I want to fight against them on the road? No, they were three strong men — and I was alone. I ordered my driver to stop. From the window I looked after the carriage in front until it drove out of sight.²

"I did the right thing that I followed," I told myself, "I have learned that they are going to Bringiers. Back to the hotel now!"

Soon I was in my room. To my great joy, I found D'Hauteville there. I told him about my decision to carry off³ Aurore. He liked my plan and offered me his help. I was only too glad: at a time like this I needed a friend.

¹ a few miles — несколько миль (*миля* = 1609 метров)

² until it drove out of sight — пока она не скрылась из виду

³ to carry off — зд. освободить

There was no boat going up the river that night, so we decided to buy two horses. Before sunset we left the city and were riding along the road to Bringiers.

We did not speak on the way. I was busy with my thoughts. My friend was also thinking about something. "We shall go to Gayarre's plantation at once," I thought, "stop near the house and send a note to Aurore through one of the slaves. If that can't be done, we shall learn in which part of the house she will pass the night. When all have gone to bed we'll enter the room and free Aurore. That seems easy enough. Our horses will carry us back to the city. There we shall wait until some friendly boat takes us away from this country."

I discussed my plan with D'Hauteville. He liked it. We both agreed that our greatest difficulty was in sending a note to Aurore.

The night was very dark. We could feel that a storm was coming. That was the best thing for our plans.

It was still early when we reached the plantation. All was quiet at Besancon. There were no lights in the house. The Negro village was also dark and silent. The houses were empty. We rode in silence and watched the road in front of us. We were afraid to meet people. Between the plantations another road led to the forest. We decided to take it and hide our horses behind the trees on the other side of the fields. On such a night we did not risk to meet anyone in the forest.

We soon came to the place where another road started from the main road. Suddenly the sound of voices reached our ears. Some people were coming in our direction from the village. We stopped and listened. Those were two horsemen. When they came nearer, we saw that they were Larkin and Gayarre's other man.

"Well," Larkin was saying, "it was the biggest price we have ever given for a Negro."

"The old fool! He is not always so free with his money."

"Well, one can buy good things when one has dollars to spend. She is the most beautiful slave in the whole of Louisiana."

Now both horsemen were far away and we did not hear the ending of the talk. I called out to my friend, and we rode out from behind the trees. A few minutes later we turned into the road leading to the forest.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Another Runaway

It was dark, and we found it difficult to ride. My friend came ahead of me. It seemed he knew the way better than I did. I was surprised at this, but said nothing.

At last we reached the forest.

“We can leave our horses here,” my friend said.

As D’Hauteville spoke lightning came. For some seconds we could clearly see the tall trees around us. Then all was darkness again and silence.

“The storm will soon come,” I said.

There came lightning again.

“We must hide our horses,” repeated D’Hauteville, “with the light they may be seen from far away. Let us look for the best place.”

Getting off our horses we tied them up to the branches and walked back to the open ground. Soon we came to Gayarre’s plantation and walked to a place opposite the house. Here we stopped to rest and decide what to do next.

A field lay before us, leading almost to the walls of the garden of Gayarre’s house. On one side were the houses of the Negro village. By their side stood the house of the overseer.

“We must try to keep away from this place,” I thought, “the dogs will be our worst enemies. I know that Gayarre has several.”

“And now, sir,” said D’Hauteville, “what if they find us here?”

I turned and looked at him.

“My friend,” I said, “you have already done very much for me, but you must not risk your life.”

“How, sir?”

“If they find me here — look!” I opened my coat showing him my pistols.

“Yes,” I continued, “I shall use them in a dangerous situation. But you must stay here. I shall go to the house alone! Stay on this side of the field until I come back — until we come back because I shall not come back without her.”

“I’ll go with you. I also have an interest in this expedition.”

“You?” I asked in surprise.

“Of course,” my friend answered, “I love danger. This makes me interested. I am going with you.”

“As you wish, sir,” I said, “come on, then!”¹

I walked fast across the field towards the house, and my friend followed me.

We soon reached the garden. Here we stopped to discuss our plans. Suddenly we saw a woman in one of the windows.

“It is Aurore,” said my friend in a low voice.

“How can he know her?” I thought. “Ah, I see,² he saw her that morning at the sale.”

Aurore opened the window and looked out into the darkness.

My heart jumped with joy. She had understood my note. She was looking for me! D’Hauteville thought so, too. We were both very glad.

The Quadroon stayed by the window only a moment. Then she closed it and turned away. I moved nearer to the window. D’Hauteville followed. In a few seconds we were in front of the window. We stood still watching the Quadroon.

The room before us was a kind of library as there were bookshelves and a table covered with papers. Aurore’s movements seemed strange to us. The Quadroon came up to the door and turned the key. In one corner of the room stood a large desk. Over it there was a number of shelves with papers. The Quadroon came up to the desk and began to look over the shelves. She pulled out some papers from one of the shelves and hid them in her dress. Then Aurore crossed the room and stood in the window. She saw us at once. A moment more and the girl was in my arms. Then we started walking away across the field.

CHAPTER XXXV

A Night in the Forest

Lightning came from time to time, and it was not difficult to find the way. We crossed the field and walked in the direction of the place where we had left the horses. My plan was to reach the city before daylight. There I hoped to hide the Quadroon and myself until

¹ **come on, then** — тогда пошли

² **I see** — понимаю



we could get out to sea or up the river to one of the free states.¹

We made our way among the trees, until we came to the place. “Strange, where are the horses? We must be near them now.”

“Yes,” D’Hauteville said, “this is the very tree to which I tied my horse. The horses are gone!”

Something — maybe lightning had frightened the horses, and they had run away into the forest. There was a slight hope that they had not gone far. We went to look for them. D’Hauteville took one direction, I took another.² Aurore stayed under the trees.

I walked about the forest, came back to the garden wall, followed it to the road, and even went a short way along the road. At last I gave up all hope³ and turned once more to the forest. D’Hauteville had come back there before me. As I came up, I saw that D’Hauteville and the Quadroon were busy discussing something. Then Aurore passed something to the young man. Those were the papers she had taken from the shelf of the lawyer’s room. As D’Hauteville was hiding them under his coat he saw me coming up.

“I’ve found no sign of the horses,” he told me.

We were in a very difficult situation. All three of us had broken the law of the land. Now that the horses were lost we could not travel to the city fast enough and had to stay where we were until morning.

We gathered some branches and leaves and made a bed on the ground. Aurore lay down on it. I covered her with my coat and she was soon asleep. For myself I needed no bed. I sat down near my dear girl, with my back against the tree⁴, and in this way prepared to pass the night. I was dressed lightly and the night was cold. D’Hauteville offered me his coat. I did not want to take it because he, too, was dressed very lightly. I sat thinking about what to do next.

Suddenly an idea came to me.

“If we cannot find our horses, D’Hauteville must go to Bringiers and get other horses and carriage. Next night he will meet us on the road. It

¹ **until we could get out to sea or up the river to one of the free states** — до тех пор, пока нам бы не удалось добраться до моря или уехать (пароходом) вверх по реке в один из свободных штатов

² **D’Hauteville took one direction, I took another.** — Д’Отевилль пошел в одном направлении, я — в другом.

³ **I gave up all hope** — я оставил всякую надежду

⁴ **with my back against the tree** — прислонившись спиной к дереву

will not be difficult: nobody knows him in Bringiers.”

The plan was so simple that I was surprised why I had not thought of it before. During the night I discussed it with D’Hauteville and he said he liked it.

Morning came at last and my friend came up to say good-bye to me.

“I’ll come back with horses or carriage,” he said. “When it gets dark, you will find me at the end of the road leading to this forest. Well, sir! I feel sure that for you all will be well. For me? Ah —”

He looked very unhappy. What did that mean? Had this strange young man a secret?

He turned suddenly and walked away through the forest. We stayed alone. I thought of the danger of our situation. Gayarre’s plantation was two hundred yards from the forest. We had to look for a hiding- place somewhere else in the forest. Suddenly I remembered Gabriel, the runaway.

We must try to find our way there at once. We started walking along the path leading to the opening in the forest where the snake had bitten me. Suddenly I heard a sound that frightened me more than anything else. Aurore caught me by the arm and looked at me with questioning eyes. I listened and soon I heard the sound again. It was the barking of a dog.

CHAPTER XXXVI

The Signal

Our only hope was that the dogs could not follow us across water. I had not forgotten the signs Gabriel had shown me. I also remembered the signal on which we had agreed. The moment I thought of my new plan I made a sign to Aurore and we started walking again.

We could hear that the dogs were already in the field. We walked with great care. Our way lay near the opening in the forest where the snake had bitten me. I remembered the path very well and we were now able to run fast. At last we reached the lake. Passing along the fallen tree we soon stood among the branches at the top. With the help of my knife I made a small pipe. With this I could produce a sound which could be heard far across the lake. I placed the pipe to my lips and gave the signal.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Dogs

Hiding among the branches we waited. I shall never forget those moments.

“The runaway may not be in his home,” I thought, “or he may be asleep. Day is night to him and at night he goes out to look for food —”

Again I heard the sound which frightened me most of all at the moment — the barking of a dog. I told Aurore to pass along the tree behind me. I myself stood up among the branches, looking towards the land. Again came the barking as the dog came out from the forest. He stopped for a moment, then barked and jumped forward. Behind him followed a second. I pulled out a pistol and prepared for a fight. The first dog reached the fallen tree, jumped on it and came running towards us.

My position was good. The dog could come up to me only along the log. I fired and the dog fell off the tree. I saw another coming up. I fired again. As the second dog fell into the water, I stayed standing on the tree with my eyes turned towards the land.¹

“There is little hope just the same,” I was thinking, “more dogs will come and with them the men-hunters. They cannot be far behind. Well, I hope Gabriel may yet come in time!”

I turned towards the water. There was no sign of the boat. I turned once more to the land. A noise was heard. A man came out in the open ground. He was alone and without a horse. I knew him — it was Ruffin,² the man-hunter.

The dogs I had killed were his — two dogs well-known to all the Negro slaves. This man was well-known, too. He lived in the forest and was always ready to serve the planters. I had often heard of the man-hunter from Old Zip. Gabriel had also described him to me. Stories were told of his cruelty. He had killed several runaways. Every Negro village along the river was afraid of him. His name was used by black mothers to frighten their children. Such was Ruffin, the man-hunter.

As he came out from the forest, he did not see us. We were hidden by the branches. Besides the man looked in another direction.

¹ I stayed standing... with my eyes turned towards the land. — Я продолжал стоять... устремив взгляд на берег.

² Ruffin [ˈrʌfɪn] — Раффин



The next moment he saw me.

“Hell!” he cried out in surprise. “That is you! Where are my dogs?”

I did not answer.

“Do you hear? Where are my dogs?”

I did not speak. He saw the blood on the log. He remembered the shots.

“Oh! You’ve killed my dogs!”

He raised his gun towards me and continued:

“Come off that log and take your girl with you! Quick! Another minute and I’ll shoot you!”

In answer I also raised my pistol. Looking the man straight into the eyes I shouted back:

“Fire at your own risk!”¹

The sight of my pistol stopped him. But not for long. The next mo-

¹ **Fire at your own risk!** — Стреляй на свой собственный риск!

ment we heard the sound of a shot. He missed and I fired. The man fell to the ground with a loud cry.

At this moment I heard a noise and, turning, I saw Gabriel. He had pushed the boat among the branches and made us a sign to get in.

“Quick, master! Quick, Aurore girl! Jump into the boat. Gabriel is your good friend. He will save young master!”

Soon we were far from the fallen tree, crossing the open lake towards Gabriel’s home.



CHAPTER XXXVIII

Love in the Hour of Danger

We came to the small island. I got out of the boat and helped Aurore. In a few minutes we stood in the middle of Gabriel’s room. We were safe,

but there was no joy in our hearts. We knew that there was no hope for us.

“The fight with Ruffin has ruined us,” I thought, “if he is dead, his body will soon be found and show our enemies where we are. If he is alive, he will show them how to find us.”

I had one pleasure in this hour of danger — Aurore’s love. We were frightened but we had the happiest time in Gabriel’s home. It was the first time I could talk freely with Aurore since the day when we had opened our hearts to each other.

The hour of happiness was soon over. We suddenly heard cries that sounded through the forest. Voices reached our ears from across the water. Gabriel who was watching the lake told me that boats were coming to the small island.

I came out and saw several boats. They were full of men carrying guns.

“No use for you to fight,”¹ cried a voice. However, the boats did not come nearer. The men knew I carried pistols and were afraid.

“You cannot run away,” continued the speaker.

“Don’t talk to them,” shouted another.

I knew the voice. It was Larkin. I understood that it was no use to fight against twenty men who carried guns, and I called out:

“I am ready to go with you. Take me to the judge.”²

“We are your judges,” answered one of the men.

More than ten pistols and guns were raised. Several men jumped on the tree and tied my arms behind my back. I could say just one word of good-bye to Aurore who had come out of Gabriel’s home. As the men led me into their boat she cried out:

“You were afraid to meet him openly alone — no, not one of you!”

From the talk of my enemies I learned that Aurore and Gabriel were following us in one of the other boats.

I was brought back to the fallen tree. A crowd of men was waiting. Among them I saw Ruffin with his arm bandaged and bloody.³ “It’s a good thing I haven’t killed him,” I said to myself.

Our boats touched the bank. I was landed and they led me off. We passed on quickly — as fast as the crowd could make way through the

¹ **No use for you to fight** — *зд.* Сопротивляться бесполезно

² **Take me to the judge.** — Отведите меня к судье.

³ **with his arm bandaged and bloody** — с рукой в окровавленной повязке

thick forest. Soon I saw that the forest opened in front. It was the opening. Here we stopped and in the open light I looked at my enemies. There were some thirty or forty men carrying pistols and guns. Gayarre was among them and beside him his man Larkin.

“Why did we stop?” I asked.

“Don’t be in a hurry!”¹ said one.

“Take me to the judge!”

“Yes, we shall! The judge is here!”

“Where?”

“Where is the judge? Judge, where are you?” a third cried, laughing. I could not understand what it was all about until Ruffin came up to me.

“Have you ever heard of Judge Lynch?”² he said in a low voice.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Judge Lynch

I was frightened. They were going to lynch me!

The crowd had now surrounded me. Ruffin’s words were followed by a shout of laughter.

He continued:

“I see you haven’t heard of that judge. Well, he will do your business quick!”

Another shout of laughter came from the crowd. It made me so angry that I could not be silent.

“I have given you a bullet, so that you can’t raise your gun now. But just the same you don’t know how to use your gun.”

The crowd now laughed at Ruffin. He was very angry and his face was red. It seemed that he wanted to strike me. But at this moment he was called away by the leaders of the crowd. For a few minutes they discussed something in low voices. Then two of the men took a rope and tied it around a big branch. One of them came up to me and told me their

¹ **Don’t be in a hurry!** — Не спеши!

² **Have you ever heard of Judge Lynch?** - Ты когда-нибудь слышал о судьбе по фамилии Линч? (Суд Линча — по имени жившего в XVIII в. в США плантатора - расиста Чарльза Линча — самосуд, зверская расправа без суда и следствия, совершаемая реакционными элементами над неграми и прогрессивно настроенными белыми.)



decision. I had broken the law. I had stolen slaves and tried to kill a man. I was sentenced to death.¹

You will say that my story is not true. You will not believe that people can be lynched. You will think that these men did not mean to hang me.

You are mistaken if you think so. There was the rope — there was the tree — there stood my judges before me. Their faces were cruel.

I was carried across to the tree with a rope. Suddenly we heard a noise and a group of horsemen came into the opening in the forest.

My heart jumped with joy. Among the horsemen I saw the kind face of Edward Reigart. Behind him rode the sheriff.² Now I was sure that my life was saved. I was not afraid, therefore, when the sheriff told me that I was arrested ‘in the name of the law’. The crowd started an angry shouting. Guns and pistols were raised. However, soon all was quiet again. The sheriff and his men carried me off. The crowd came after us. We passed through the forest, across the fields and along the road leading into Bringiers.

CHAPTER XXXX

Eugenie Besancon Again

We found the judge in his office, ready to hear the case.³ He waited for silence and then began:

“Now, gentlemen, what is the charge against⁴ this young man?”

“Negro-stealing, your Honour,”⁵ answered the sheriff.

“Who brings the charge against him?”

“Mr. Gayarre,” said a voice in the crowd.

“Mr. Gayarre,” said the judge, “what is the case against this man?”

Gayarre began to speak:

“He has broken the law several times. Firstly, he is against slavery. He said that the black slaves in America must be free.

¹ **I was sentenced to death.** — Я был приговорен к смертной казни.

² **sheriff** [ˈʃerɪf] — шериф (должностное лицо, выполняющее главным образом административные и судебные функции)

³ **to hear the case** — слушать дело

⁴ **what is the charge against** — каково обвинение против

⁵ **your Honour** [ˈɒnə] — Ваша честь (обращение к судье)



Secondly, he taught one of the slaves to strike his overseer and then helped him to run away to the forest. Thirdly —” here Gayarre came to the most important part of his charge.

“Thirdly,” he continued, “this man entered my house on the night of October 18th, and stole from there the girl-slave, Aurore Besancon.”

“It is not true!” a voice cried from the crowd. “Aurore Besancon is not a slave!”

“Who says that?” Gayarre asked. His voice was shaking.

“I!” answered the voice. At the same moment a young man jumped on to one of the benches. It was D’Hauteville!

“I say it!” he repeated. “Aurore Besancon is not a slave, but a free Quadroon. Here, your Honour, read this.”

He handed some papers across the room. The sheriff passed them to the judge who read them aloud.

Those were Tree papers’ of Aurore, the Quadroon, signed by her

master August¹ Besancon. Everybody was greatly surprised, but the crowd was silent. Gayarre did not speak for a time. Then he cried out:

“Your Honour, this paper was stolen from my desk, and —”

D’Hauteville did not let him continue.

“Mr. Gayarre,” he said, “if it was stolen — then my charge against you is true. Now, sir, you kept this paper in your desk and you said that Aurore Besancon was your slave. How is it?”

Gayarre’s face became white.

“Here, your Honour,” D’Hauteville continued, “I have another paper which may interest you. Look at it, please.”

He held out another paper to the judge. It was also read aloud. This was the will of August Besancon by which he left 50,000 dollars to his daughter Eugenie Besancon. It was to be paid to her when she reached the age of 21.²

“Now, Mr. Gayarre, my charge against you is that you have hidden this money — spent this fifty thousand dollars on your own pleasures!” “This is a serious charge,” the judge said. “Your name, sir, if you please,” he continued turning to D’Hauteville. Now the young man stood in the strong light of the open window and I could clearly see his face. It seemed to me again that it looked very much like some face I had seen before.

“Your name, if you please?” repeated the judge:

“Eugenie Besancon.”

At the same moment the hat was pulled off — together with the false black hair³ and the long golden hair fell to the young woman’s shoulders. A loud shout of joy came from the crowd.

I felt that I was free. The sheriff came up to Gayarre and put his hand upon his shoulder.

“I arrest you in the name of the law,” he said.

“You have no right!” cried Gayarre, “these papers are false!”

“They are not, Mr. Gayarre,” said the judge. “They are signed by August Besancon. I myself know his handwriting.”

¹ **August** [ˈɔːgəst] — Август

² **It was to be paid to her when she reached the age of 21** — Она (сумма) должна быть выплачена, когда ей исполнится 21 год (*по достижению совершеннолетия*)

³ **together with the false black hair** — вместе с париком черных волос



“And I!” called out a voice. Everybody looked at an old man who spoke. Antoine stood before the crowd.

Reader! My story is ended. But you are interested in the afterhistory of our heroes. There is very little to tell. You will be glad to know that Eugenie Besancon got back her plantation and money. Antoine stayed with her. You will be glad to know that Reigart soon became a judge. You will be glad to know that Old Zip, his wife and Chloe were brought back to their old and now happy home. The snake doctor Gabriel also came back to Besancon. He never again wanted to run away to the forest.

You will not be sorry to know that Gayarre was put in prison.¹

Antoine brought the charge against Gayarre.² After the explosion the

¹ Gayarre was put in prison — Гейяра посадили в тюрьму

² Antoine brought the charge against Gayarre. — Антуан подал в суд на Гейяра.

chairs had saved his life after all. He reached the bank far down the river. The idea came to him to hide for a time and watch Gayarre secretly. He knew that Gayarre had a plan to ruin Eugenie and decided to find him out. His plan worked.¹

You won't be sorry to know that the overseer Larkin was also put in prison. Ruffin, the man-hunter, drowned in the swamp.

Now you will say that I have forgotten the Quadroon and myself. No, I have not. The best dream of my life became real. It will be enough to say that during all my life I was happy with my beautiful Quadroon.

¹ **His plan worked.** — Его план удался.

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