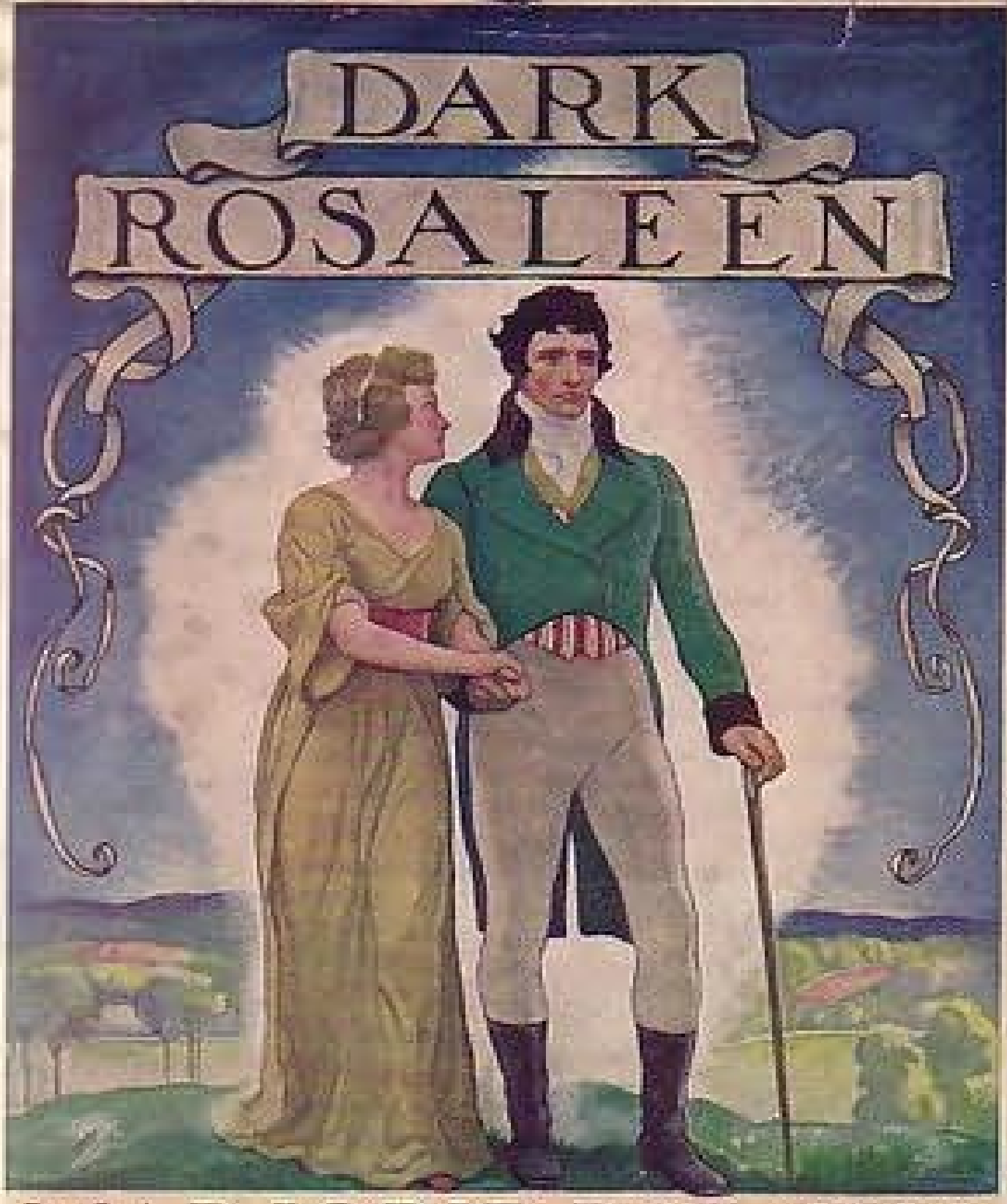
DARK ROSALEEN



MARJORIE BOWEN

The glamorous past of Ireland comes to vivid life in this exciting historical romance.

Dark Rosaleen

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PROLOGUE

O! the Erne shall run red
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal, and slogan cry,
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen! My own Rosaleen!
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!

—JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN (From the Irish of Costello)

(DARK ROSALEEN is one of the many names symbolical of Ireland, in use among the patriots and forbidden by Law. The use of it was attended by severe penalties.)

"There was mixed with the public cause in that struggle, ambition, sedition and violence; but no man will persuade me that it was not the cause of liberty on one side, and of tyranny on the other."

—LORD CHATHAM ON THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

The boy was building a small fort in the Orangery, of toy bricks, mud, and sticks. The Orangery was empty. Only a few, dry, fragrant leaves from last year remained in the corners and on the wide sills of the windows which reached from floor to ceiling. On the other side a magnificent tapestry was carefully hung and the figures on it seemed to fill the large building.

When the boy glanced up from his fort he was acutely aware of all these strange, tall figures, which were moving in a stately cavalcade towards the corner where he lay: white elephants, camels of a pale honey colour, giraffes and zebra speckled and striped, princes turbanned and wearing armour that sparkled with gold thread, slaves leading monstrous beasts by scarlet cords, and captives, their arms bound behind them—all these seemed, to the lonely boy, to watch him at his play; and as the sun, pouring in through the long panes of glass, caught here a strand of bullion, there a thread of silk, they appeared to move as if about to speak.

Above the corner where the boy worked was the Triumphal Car bearing the Hero of this parade, and close by the heavy wheel was a Negro who helped to push the majestic chariot.

The expression of this figure, which seemed bent, not only in labour but in supplication, and the way in which he rolled his eyes, as if in a frenzy of terror, affected the little boy. The man was a slave and plainly expected punishment. As the boy returned to his work, laying out his lines and galleries and ramparts according to the drawing in Indian ink beside him, marking the places for each cannon and building up the citadel where the flag should fly at last, he was conscious of the shadow thrown over him by the suffering of another —a picture only, but terribly real.

He vaguely regretted that his mother and stepfather Mr. Ogilvie had not remained to keep him company, and presently he sat up with a sigh, brushing the dried earth off his hands and with his back to the tapestry, gazed out through the open door on to an expanse of lawn and park where all the grass, trees and flowers seemed to shimmer in the sun.

The long silence was broken by the first of two visits which were to make that day memorable. As he stared through the open door another boy put his head round it and smiled.

'I was told to come and play with you. May I do so?'

The child nodded with grave courtesy. Visitors to the Château were not rare, but this one spoke English and that was a little uncommon.

'My mother sent you?'

'Oh, yes,' the stranger advanced. 'Her Grace said that the other little lords and ladies were away, but that I might have the honour of coming here to play with your Lordship.'

The boy did not at all like this way of speaking. He felt embarrassed by the other's fawning awkwardness. The stranger was a little younger than himself, sharp, shrewd and precocious in manner.

'Oh, what a beautiful fort you are making here, may I look at it?'

The other rose, his natural sweetness struggling with a dislike of this intruder. He brushed the powdered earth from the knees of his trousers.

'Of course you may look at it, but there is not very much to see. I have only half finished, there is a good deal of work but I like to do it all myself. You are English, are you not?'

'Oh, no, like your Lordship, I am Irish—I was born in Dublin.'

'My name is Edward and if you have come to visit us there is no need for you to be so formal.'

'Oh, but I could not presume on any familiarity! It is very condescending of her Grace to receive us at all. You are a Lord, are you not? And the son of the greatest nobleman in Ireland?'

'The title I have is nothing. Mr. Ogilvie says it is but a formal thing, and I like better to be Edward Fitzgerald, Esquire.'8

'But your father was a Duke,' insisted the other child eagerly, turning away from the fort in which he had not taken the least interest,

'and your brother is a Duke now and I have seen his great house in Dublin. It is a magnificent palace indeed.'

Edward Fitzgerald was at a loss for a reply; his uneasiness increased. He could see that his visitor was of a rank greatly inferior to his own and that he had been told to flatter him, and he, who had been brought up in advanced ideas, greatly disliked this.

'Yours is the greatest family in Ireland,' insisted the visitor, gazing at the young Lord with curiosity. 'Why, the Geraldines are princes, are they not? You read about them in the history books—it was Maurice Fitzgerald who rose in rebellion against the king and was hanged at Tyburn, and all the great earls of Kildare and Desmond were Geraldines too!'

'We don't talk of such things,' replied Edward with increasing embarrassment, and to escape from the subject he added in nervous haste, 'And who are you?'

The other boy made a bow.

'I am only your Lordship's humble servant—Thomas Reynolds. In fact,' he added, with false humility that sat oddly on one so young, 'though we try and keep up the appearances of gentry and have a great deal of money we are nothing but silk mercers from whom her Grace is condescending enough to buy her brocades, it is true that my mother is a Fitzgerald—but a very distant relative.'

'There is no condescension in mother dealing with you and it is very honourable to be a silk mercer.'

'Oh, yes, indeed, and we are very thankful for our good fortune and prosperity. Her Grace has been a very generous customer. Coming to France with my mother, who has been to Lyons to buy pieces of damask and brocade, I asked to make a little tour of the country, as gentlemen do to finish their education, and she thought we might venture to come to Aubignè to pay a humble visit of respect to her Grace.'

As young Master Reynolds saw the boy whose possible friendship he so much desired to gain, considering him with candid, uncalculating eyes, he began to strut about and boast of the number of his warehouses, the size of his shops, the business of his wharves

—all of the handsomest, the most commodious in Dublin—and to brag of his own future.

'I shall go to Trinity College—I shall go into the army, no doubt. I shall keep racehorses, I shall come often to Paris for my diversion'—then, as if recollecting himself—'how idle all this must seem to you! What is the utmost a merchant can attain compared to the future that is before your Lordship!'

Edward smiled, honestly amused.

'I shall be a soldier, too. Did you see my fort? I think it will look very well when the cannon are set in place.'

'A soldier. Oh, yes. How fine you will look in regimentals! I suppose you will very soon get a company? Your brother, his Grace, has several in his gift.'

'I don't want to get promotion that way. I hope to earn distinction by merit.'

Tom Reynolds smiled. 'Truly, what odd notions your Lordship has been brought up in! I swear that sounds like the talk of some of the republicans and democrats whom my mother says are poisonous creatures and on no account to be listened to.'

'My mother does not think so, nor does Mr. Ogilvie nor my brothers and sisters, nor any one they know. No, nor my uncle either.'

'Your uncle.' Thomas Reynolds snatched eagerly at that word. 'That is his Grace of Richmond, is it not?'

Reluctantly Edward nodded. This insistence on ranks, titles and riches embarrassed him. He began to defend himself against something vaguely offensive in the other's personality by relating some of the modern precepts with which his mother and Mr. Ogilvie had so earnestly inculcated him.

'All men are equal. Rank without merit is nothing. A man to be of any consequence has to succeed in the world on his own deserts. The savage who turns wild is perhaps the happiest of all. I hope to go and see savages some day in America. It must be glorious to hunt your own dinner and cook it and sleep under a tent.'

Master Reynolds giggled behind a hand discreetly held before his mouth.

'It is very droll. My mother would not believe it were I to tell her your sentiments. Savages, indeed, and all men born equal!'

'It is so,' insisted Edward stoutly, but reddening before the other's ridicule. 'And, believe me, I never think at all who I am.'

'Well,' replied the other, with a flash of what was almost insolence. 'If your Lordship is so indifferent I would you could change with me! I vow I should not find it a matter of no consequence to be a brother of the Duke of Leinster, the nephew of the Duke of Richmond, and a son of one of the noblest families in Ireland.'

Edward turned abruptly to the little fort and again endeavoured to engage his visitor's attention; but young Master Reynolds was plainly not at all interested. He began, instead, to examine the Orangery, to exclaim about its size and splendour and the beauty of the Château.

'It belongs to your uncle, does it not? He is Duke of Aubignè too, in France? Oh, I thought it a splendid place! The Duchess is so gracious as to give my mother tea on the terrace.'

Edward laughed. 'I am afraid you do not understand us at all. You must find me rather dull. I don't know what to do to amuse you.' He frowned in an effort to think of some distraction for his unwelcome and disliked guest. 'There are the fishponds—we have some carp supposed to be a hundred years old. Then the fountains, too, or would you like a walk along the Garonne?' he added anxiously.

But Master Reynolds rejected all these attractions.

'I think we should go back to the Château and sit with the Duchess and my mother. Perhaps you will present me to Mr. Ogilvie whom I have not seen yet?'

His bold eyes roamed over the gorgeous tapestry which was now gleaming in the rays of the sinking sun and exclaimed: 'That must be worth a great deal of money! My mother had one to sell once, not so fine as that, and got near a thousand pounds for it.'

Edward, who had never thought of anything in terms of money,

was again at a complete loss.

'It is a beautiful thing,' he said, thoughtfully. 'I think there is no room for it in the house, that is why they keep it here. The Orangery is warmed in winter for tha plants, so it does not get damp.'

Master Reynolds stepped close to the arras and stared at the figure of the triumphant conqueror in his gilded chariot.

'Would it not be splendid to be in his position!' he exclaimed, with real feeling. 'Fancy, to be at the head of such a procession, with all this pomp and parade just for oneself alone! A wreath of laurel and gold armour and jewels round one's neck!'

'But there is the slave—see how unhappy he looks, as if expecting a beating! How can the man in the chariot feel glad with that poor creature pushing his wheel?'

The slave?' exclaimed Master Tom, swinging round in amazement. 'Why, that adds to the pleasure of it, to think that one has all those people to do nothing but one's will!'

'They are human beings too,' exclaimed Edward, reddening. 'They have their rights and it is very horrid to think that they should suffer. I wish Mr. Ogilvie would talk to you. If you would listen to him a little while you would soon think quite differently.'

Master Reynolds smiled behind his hand, and said, with a smoothness displeasing in one of his age:

'Why, I have no doubt Mr. Ogilvie is a very learned gentleman and would soon convert me.'

'Let us go and find him,' exclaimed Edward eagerly. But before the two boys could leave the Orangery, Edward's mother came swiftly across the lawn and said kindly to young Reynolds:

'Your mother's coach is waiting and she is asking for you. I am afraid there is no more time for you to see the Château. You will come another day, perhaps.'

'Or I may wait on you in Dublin, your Grace?' replied the boy eagerly.

'Why, yes, that of course, and I must come to your mother's warehouses to see what new silks she has brought from Lyons.'

As the coach rolled away towards the great gates of scrolled iron, the Duchess laughed good-humouredly.

'That is a sad little monkey. The poor, slily, conceited woman! It is unhappy for them that her husband is dead, for I believe he was a man of sense and judgment.' Who are they?' asked Edward, still baffled and puzzled.

'Did he not tell you? Mrs. Reynolds, who has the big silk warehouse in Dublin. I believe she is worth twenty thousand pounds, and I have always found her very obliging and courteous; she is a Fitzgerald, too, but not of your family, I think. But it is impossible to put her at her ease, and what has she not made of the boy!'

The deepening light began to return to the landscape the colour which had been taken out of it by the heat of midday, the trees in the park, the plantains, the oaks, the beeches, took on firm shapes. The river, which had been imperceptible in the haze, now appeared blue as violets, and beyond the meadows showed the brilliant grass ready for the hay-making, studded with blue and white and yellow flowers. Every brick and stone in the façade of the Château was clearly visible, every veining, calcyx and stamen in the flowers curling round the terrace balustrade stood out.

Edward was comforted by the beauty about him. He had been jarred and ruffled by the visit of the little silk mercer, he had felt vicariously humiliated by the talk of the other boy. He wanted to go back and look at his fort; but he hesitated. He did not care to go into the Orangery in the dusk; for then, even more than in the sunshine of the afternoon, the figure of the crouching slave pushing the wheel became alive and ominous. Ashamed of his own intangible fear, which he did not even put in the form of a thought, the boy went slowly on his way.

But when he reached the foot of the stone stairway that led to the terrace he met the second visitor, a little girl wearing a pale blue cloak and a wide straw hat tied under her chin. She said in French (which he knew as well as his own language):

'Oh, you are Edward? Madame said I would find you here.'

She gave him her hand and the boy put it on his own and kissed the fingers as he had seen his father and Mr. Ogilvie do when presented to ladies.

'What would you like to do, Mademoiselle?' he asked. The child reflected a second.

'I was told that we might go and pick some peaches, but I—I prefer nectarines.'

'We have some nectarines, too,' he replied. 'Come with me before it gets too dark for me to see which are the ripest.'

She put her hand through his arm, and with an engaging air of confidence walked beside him through the gloom. They reached the long, deep, pink-coloured brick wall of the fruit gardens where pears, nectarines, peaches and apples in espalier were nailed, facing southwards. The fruit was warm and luscious behind the curling leaves protected by fine net.

Will you have a nectarine or a yellow plum? Or one of these pears which I don't know the name of, but which are supposed to be very rare?'

'I would like a nectarine, please.' He stepped across the border which was set with tufts of basil, thyme and rosemary and putting his hand under the net he picked one, two, three, and placed them in the folded arms of the little girl.

'What is your name, Mademoiselle?'

'Louise.'

She fingered the fruit curiously, delicately. 'They are quite warm from the sun.' She offered him one and they ate silently.

Edward felt in complete sympathy with her, he longed to tell her all his most secret thoughts, even about the Negro on the tapestry in the Orangery. He looked at her very keenly. Young as she was she had much character in her face, and at the corner of her mouth was a small brown mole.

She was a very serious little girl, but not in the least timid or shy.

She began to talk of herself, how she was being taught to embroider and to play the harp. She was often in Paris, but liked the country, where she had a pony, better. When she grew up she meant to have a cabriolet with a white horse.

Then she listened with interest while the boy told her of himself, of his lessons with Mr. Ogilvie whom he loved so much, his desire to become a soldier, of his brothers and sisters.

They turned slowly back towards the house, and as they neared the terrace they heard a voice call:

'Louise. Louise.'

'It is my mother. It is time I went. Some day you must come and see us. We too have a garden and I would like to show you our still-room. I am allowed to make things there myself sometimes. Comfits, you know, from violets and rose petals. You put them in the hot sugar —'

'Louise, Louise,' came the voice of her mother.

'Oh, don't go,' implored the boy, 'please stay, there is so much I want to ask you. When shall I see you again?'

She shook her head with a child's vagueness.

'Soon,' he insisted.

'Oh, yes. I like you very much. I must come again soon.' Then she turned, and obedient to the insistent call, ran away. He saw her little figure in the blue cloak pass rapidly up the steps to the terrace and then become lost behind the balustrade and the vases of flowers.

She had gone.

CHAPTER 2

He found the large rooms with the windows open on to the terrace empty except for the servants who were lighting the candles in the girandoles before the mirror and on the side tables. Presently his mother came into the room. He did not speak to her about Louise, because of some deep reserve that he did not himself understand. He did not ask where she had gone, or what was her name, or if she might come back again, although he wanted to know these things.

His mother kissed him and told him that it would soon be time for his bed. Mr. Ogilvie came in and stood by the bookshelf, turning over a volume with his long fingers. The child watched the gleaming table being set with silver, blue and white china, glasses that had a gilt line round the rim, and napkins of shining linen with an edge of thick lace. Some one sang outside, quite a distance away, but the voice came clearly through the open window into the silent company.

'Mother, what song is that?'

'It is an Irish sing; do you like it?'

'What is the name of it?'

'Oh, it is just some ballad, dear, that the peasants sing.'

'You are not Irish, are you?'

'No, Neddy, darling, I'm English.'

'And Mr. Ogilvie isn't Irish?'

'No, sweetheart, he is Scotch.'

'And I?'

'Oh, you are Irish.'

'I see. Then the song belongs to me.'

'Why, yes, if you like to put it like that,'

He thought again, then asked seriously:

'Mother, are there slaves in Ireland?'

The lady was a little confused by this. 'Well, dear, there are slaves if people bring them. A few blacks from the plantations of America.'

'The people, the Irish themselves, they are not slaves, are they?'

'Why, no; what made you think of it?'

'I don't know,' he replied hastily, suddenly fearful of betraying his secret about the man in the tapestry. Mr. Ogilvie looked up from his book. With the serenity of a member of a nation that has been, from time immemorial, free, both from domestic and foreign tyranny, he said quietly:

'I'm afraid, Neddy, there are slaves in Ireland, though they may not have that name. They are a misgoverned, oppressed people. You may be able, when you are older, to do something about that.'

The boy reddened so suddenly that his mother was alarmed and thought he had had a flush of fever. He saw himself rushing to the slave in the arras, saving him from his abject position, freeing him, and with him would be Louise offering her sun-warm nectarines. 'Shall I?' he asked eagerly.

'Why, certainly,' said Mr. Ogilvie, closing his book. 'There'll be a great deal that you will be able to do, Edward.'

His mother kissed his hot cheeks. She did not care to think of the future when he would be no longer a child. 'Never mind about that, now; you must go to bed—you are very late, you know.'

PART TWO

CHAPTER 1

The young man looked round the hotel bedroom with curiosity. He had laughed and talked all the way up the wide stairs, speaking of his experiences during his journey from Dublin: a rough crossing in the overcrowded packet, trouble with passports and papers, the difficulty of obtaining food at wayside inns, the expense of all accommodation! But he made no complaint; he seemed to have found the whole of the journey a delightful adventure.

It was the hotel-keeper who accompanied him to the large room with the balcony that looked upon the Rue de Richepanse. He was a nondescript individual, as reserved as the traveller was loquacious, and merely remarked, 'I have a lighter chamber, but it is let to another citizen, also an Englishman:

'I am not English.'

'Eh?'

'No, I am Irish.'

The Frenchman shrugged as if the distinction was unimportant.

'The citizen will take this room? It will be thirty francs a week.'

'That is very expensive, is it not?'

'I could not let it go for less. Everything is dear in Paris just now, and the citizen should have understood—'

But it seemed that the question of money really held very little interest for the newcomer.

'Thirty francs or what you will,' he agreed cheerfully. 'And I do not know how long I shall stay.'

He went to the window and found himself gazing down on a street that had been smart, but had lately become shabby.

'This has been a private house?' he asked.

'Yes, citizen. You no doubt marked "*National Property*" written

across the front.'

'Yes, indeed. It has been confiscated?'

'Yes, citizen.'

'And this, I suppose,' remarked the young man thoughtfully, 'was one of the family's bedrooms?'

'A lady's bedroom, citizen.'

'Ah, yes.'

A slight uneasiness clouded the open features of the Irishman. 'A lady's bedroom, and only a little while ago! That is not very pleasant, is it? Did you say you had no other chamber?'

'None, citizen, unless the Englishman cares to change with you, but you must arrange that yourself.' And with a slight impatience the landlord moved towards the door.

'Well, it doesn't do to be fussy. I will take the room,' smiled the Irishman, but he thought to himself: 'It is rather dreary; it looks as if the place had been sacked.' The apartment was large, but it seemed gloomy because of the height of the ceiling. A Chinese wallpaper with a green and blue pattern was damaged considerably and patched here and there with another fabric. The bed was old-fashioned, with four pillars, but entirely devoid of curtains or hangings. The furniture was covered with a light violet brocade, which seemed in many places to have been recently scrubbed. A mirror between the two windows was cracked, and a table by the bed, though richly gilt, had a broken leg. The curtains at the windows were of cheap grey drugget, and the whole room was stark and bleak.

But it was very difficult to find accommodation in Paris at all, and the young man had been particularly recommended to this hotel as being much the cleanest and most reasonable in price and most reputable in the company entertained. So he took the room and asked if his luggage might be brought up and if he might have a cabinet or closet for his servant.

Without replying, the landlord opened a door in the wall by the bed, which led into a small closet with silver silk panels on the walls.

Sunk in the floor was an alabaster bath and above it a basin in the shape of a cockle shell was set in the wall. The faucets were of silver in the shape of fishes' heads. This incongruous elegance surprised the Irishman.

'The lady's *cabinet de toilette*, you perceive,' said the landlord. 'But the citizen's Negro'—he would not use the word servant—'can sleep there very well.'

'What was the name of the family who had this hotel—of the lady who used this room?'

'Aristocrats. *Emigrés*. What does it matter? They can be of no interest to the citizen or to me. I have to attend to my dinner.' And he added, taking a step back into the room, 'It is not possible the citizen is interested in aristocrats and *emigrés?*'

'No,' replied the Irishman, not out of fear but because it was the truth. 'I have come to Paris because I am interested in the new methods of government adopted after your glorious revolution.'

'You will like the Englishman, then,' said the landlord who appeared a little mollified by this declaration. He brought out the thin book he carried under his arm and opened it:

'The citizen's name, age, trade or business and purpose for being in Paris?' he added.

The traveller took the book, and placing it on the broken table by the bed, while the Frenchman held the candle, he filled in:

'Edward Fitzgerald, of Leinster House, Dublin. Age, twenty-nine years. Gentleman, of independent means.' This was not sufficient for the Frenchman.

'The police want to know more than that,' he said, peering over his guest's shoulder. So with slight reluctance, the Irishman added: 'In the parliament of Ireland for the county of Kildare. Son of James Fitzgerald, Duke of Leinster and of Amelia Lennox, Duchess of Leinster. Captain in His Majesty's nineteenth regiment of foot.'

'There, is that enough for you and your police?'

He handed the book to the Frenchman, who looked at it with a dry curiosity.

'Your business in Paris? The citizen has forgotten to put that.'

'The citizen does not know it,' was the reply. 'I will, if you please, interview your police, your generals, your deputies, what you will, myself, and explain to them that I am here to observe for myself the condition of affairs that is so variously reported in England.'

This silenced the Frenchman, who wrote the date, 'Brumaire 23rd, 1st year of the Republic,' at the top of the page and withdrew, saying, 'The ordinary is served in half an hour; if the citizen comes below he will find plenty of good company.'

When Edward Fitzgerald was alone he made a further inspection of the apartment, which, in a way he could not account for, repelled him. He thought: 'To-morrow, I will look for something else. There must be some old coffee houses, or hotels or furnished rooms to be had for very little—after all, though the *emigrés* are in the wrong, one cannot help pitying those who have lost everything. A woman's room.'

His Negro, Tony, entered with the baggage, followed by a servant who brought a pallet and some blankets to make up a bed in the toilette closet.

'It is not a very cheerful place, Tony,' said Fitzgerald, 'I think we will move to-morrow, but to-night we must make the best of it.'

He looked at the Negro with that profound compassion with which he never failed to regard him. The poor creature, who had saved his life during the American war, was hideous. Only the look of love and goodness in the dark eyes gave any charm to this grotesque face.

Fitzgerald kept the Negro with him out of gratitude and charity. He valued, and, in a sense, loved Tony, who was also involved with some half nightmare dream of his childhood, with the figure of a crouching slave that he had once observed in a tapestry, in France, he thought, very long ago, when the terror of the slave had seemed to enter into his own soul, terrifying him, and he could seldom look at Tony without recalling in some measure a touch of that past horror.

CHAPTER 2

When the Irishman descended into the public restaurant he found it well filled with a crowd who formed a strange gathering to one used to the splendour and formality of Dublin society.

Paris, since the execution of the King and the establishment of the Republic a few months before, had become the meeting place of all bold and impetuous spirits, who believed that this great nation, in defying all the traditions of Europe, had advanced mankind nearer the Millennium, of all those adventurers who loved excitement and all those scoundrels who believed that in a state of chaos they might find more to their advantage than would be possible in ordered society.

Edward Fitzgerald, lighthearted, enthusiastic, and thoroughly imbued with those new ideas which had been steadily growing in strength since they had been inaugurated by Voltaire and Jean Jacques Rousseau, looked with interest at his strange companions.

The cheap tables and chairs and rough linen contrasted sharply with the splendid proportions of the room.

A few candles and oil lamps cast wavering shadows over the company, all men, with rough, curiously cut clothes, cropped hair and sashes of red, white and blue. All titles of courtesy or formality were abolished, every one was 'brother,' 'comrade,' 'citizen.'

The atmosphere was full of excitement. There were English, American, and Irish present, and as far as possible all distinction of nationality was waived. Fitzgerald could not help a smile, which he felt instantly to be unworthy, at the thought that these odd creatures, who would have been laughed at in Dublin or London, represented the brotherhood of mankind. Though his own dress was as simple as possible it came from a good tailor, and though he wore no wig over his short, curly hair it was well dressed. His linen was immaculate and his shoes polished. He felt that all these details rather set him apart from the rest of the company and caused a good many glances, of by no means friendly curiosity, to be cast in his direction.

He had just begun his thin meat soup when a particularly dirty and disreputable-looking individual flung himself into the vacant chair the other side of the small table.

'Do you not,' he asked rudely, 'find this poor accommodation? We are very rough here and that usually frightens away the sightseers.'

He spoke in a curious English with an accent that Fitzgerald did not know at all.

Not in the least affronted the Irishman replied pleasantly:

'I am not a sightseer.'

'Well, if you are not here out of curiosity what is your reason?'

'And yours for asking me?' said Fitzgerald, with an even more amiable smile.

'Oh, one is expected to be open in this society, no airs and no mysteries,' and then, without asking if his company was acceptable or not he ordered his supper to be brought.

There was something about the man—a force, a power, a candour—that attracted Fitzgerald though he was ugly and offensive in his manner.

'This does not turn your stomach, you are not squeamish?' he asked, turning his head in the direction of the other groups in the restaurant.

The air was now thick with coarse tobacco smoke, with the steam from the boiled meats that were being taken out of the soup and flung on to plates to be soused with vinegar, with stale fumes of cooking.

'No,' said Fitzgerald. 'I have been through the American War, we did not live softly then. When it was over I travelled alone across the continent and lived with the Indians. I endured every kind of hardship and liked it.'

The Englishman glanced at him with a new respect.

'I should not have thought that,' he remarked grudgingly.

'I have been all over Europe, too,' continued Fitzgerald, 'and not

travelled in comfort. I have always been interested in the progress of mankind. Can you wonder that I am in Paris?'

'You fought in America, eh?' said the other, ignoring this. 'A dirty business that. One of King George's officers?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Well, you fought on the wrong side.'

'Sometimes I think so,' agreed the Irishman, with a frankness that appeared to surprise his companion, who asked him suspiciously 'if he was still in the English army?'

'Yes, yes. But holding a commission does not quite destroy one's wits or one's power of reflection. Neither am I English, but Irish.'

'You think that there is a difference?'

The Englishman gulped down the large cup of coffee and milk before him, wiped his wet mouth with the back of his hand, and added vehemently:

Ireland is a cruelly misgoverned, maltreated country. Whoever you are, sir, and you seem to have money and position, you should, instead of running over to Paris out of curiosity, stay at home and do what you can for your miserable countrymen. An Irishman,' he repeated; 'well, I have not much respect for an Irishman who wears the uniform of King George.'

Fitzgerald flushed and sat silent. Not only the unaccustomed rudeness of the address, but the truth in the words stung him bitterly and he could not find an answer.

The Englishman considered him with a bold, not unfriendly interest. Fitzgerald was extremely elegant. He was of middle height and very slim. His dark, grey eyes were shaded by long, black lashes which gave him a look of great gentleness, but the expression of his face was open and amused.

'Your name?' the stranger rapped out.

'Edward Fitzgerald.'

'Ah, the Duke of Leinster's brother?'

'Yes.'

'Well, I am Tom Paine, if that means anything to you.' The Irishman flushed with excited pleasure.

'The author of *The Rights of Man*?'

'The same, sir.'

'Then I am very happy to make your acquaintance.'

'Indeed! Then you are not of the party of your illustrious countryman, Edmund Burke, whose arguments I took the liberty of demolishing.'

'I am of no man's party or policy so far, sir,' replied Fitzgerald. 'One can understand Mr. Burke's point of view. One would not have the Queen hurt, nor the King either. But the principle of the thing—'

'Bah! The King or the Queen or the gentlewomen or the gentlemen!' interrupted Paine derisively. 'Are you going to make an omelette without breaking any eggs? This business is not for those who are chicken-hearted, sir.'

'No, one understands. But it is difficult to avoid some compassion, perhaps, even,' added Fitzgerald boldly, 'remorse.'

'That is because you belong to their caste. You are an aristocrat and can *not* understand. I, sir, am a working man, a stay maker, a tobacco dealer. I have a right to speak for the people, but you—'

'Yes?' the Irishman caught him up. 'Who have I the right to speak for?'

'Your own class. Better stay in it, eh? What good can you do? Not at least while you are half and half. In King George's army and running over to Paris to meddle with us! You know, sir, perhaps, that I am deputy for the *Pas de Calais*.'

Half amused, Fitzgerald nodded.

'A Duke's brother,' continued Paine. 'A pity! I like you. What are

you doing with a finger in this pie?'

'I am very much a younger son,' replied Fitzgerald seriously. 'I've always had these ideas. I do not, when I can avoid it, use any courtesy title that may be mine. I have never leant on my brother's influence. What position I have in the army is due to my own merit and the usual luck of war.'

'Ah, very well,' said Paine, with a grin, 'but I suppose you don't sit for a rotten borough in that farcical parliament of yours in Dublin?'

Fitzgerald flushed again, this time deeply.

'I did not want to take it,' he exclaimed in chagrin, 'but it's difficult to go against the head of one's family.'

He spoke with real vexation and Paine laughed.

'There, you see, I put my finger on the spot! You belong to them. Member of your brother's pocket borough. First of Athy then of Kildare.'

'I tried to do some good in the parliament. Even if I got my seat corruptly that doesn't prevent me from speaking out.'

'It's no use speaking out in the Irish parliament,' said Paine brutally. 'I doubt if it's any use speaking out in Ireland at all.'

'There are bold, intelligent men amongst us,' replied the Irishman warmly, 'who have for years been demanding our liberties.'

'In what terms do they demand them?' asked Paine, leaning across the soiled cloth.

'In what terms should they demand them?' asked Fitzgerald.

'In terms of war,' said Paine, suddenly. Leaning back in his chair he shouted for another cup of coffee. 'Rebellion,' breathed Fitzgerald, half to himself. 'Well, I and others have thought of it.'

'But a risk, eh?' Paine turned his ugly face on him briskly. 'For men like you, possible ruin. You've a great deal to lose. It's hard, I know. Well, let it all go by, Mr. Fitzgerald. Stay among your own class. That's my advice.'

'There are other Englishmen and other Irishmen in Paris?' asked Fitzgerald, quietly ignoring this.

'There are several. Some of them, I dare say, known to you. They are none of them aristocrats. You know it is rather perilous for an aristocrat to be in Paris now. You, Mr. Fitzgerald, might any moment be arrested as a suspect.'

'I suppose I am protected by my commission in the English army.'

'Well, if you like to take that sort of protection it doesn't show you very strongly in sympathy with those republican ideas you affect to assume.'

Very patiently, still ignoring these sneers and the abrupt ill manner, Edward Fitzgerald asked:

'Who are some of these Irishmen?'

'Well, there is Mr. Wolfe Tone, he is a friend of General Hoche and of Carnot, my fellow deputy. Tone is an extraordinary man,' Paine said. 'He has no end of energy and enthusiasm, he works day and night—'

'For what cause?'

'For the liberty of Ireland. That is not my concern, but perhaps it should be yours.'

Without waiting for a reply, Paine jerked a dirty thumb over his shoulder. 'There's another Irishman at that table in the corner if you can see him through the smoke—the fellow in the green coat.'

Fitzgerald, glancing across the room, saw a very stout, athletic young man, better dressed than most of the company. His red hair was cut in a heavy fringe which came to his eyebrows and gave his thick-set features a slightly ferocious expression.

He was talking in a very voluble, self-assertive manner but there was something about his personality that seemed very vaguely familiar to Fitzgerald.

'Who is he?'

'I cannot tell you.' Paine shrugged bluntly. 'He may be, for all I know, an English spy. Many of these fellows are here incognito. They lead a quite successful life in Dublin and no one knows where they go when they run over to Paris. Calls himself, I believe, Mr. Smith—that is a very convenient name usually adopted by those who do not wish their identity known.'

'If you knew me better,' said Fitzgerald, 'you would find it really amusing to suppose that I might be a spy. On the contrary, I, too, risk something in being here. No doubt it is extremely imprudent of me, but I am not used to count the cost.'

He rose as he spoke, suddenly dispirited, for the blunt words of Thomas Paine had cast a certain uneasiness over his rather light-hearted and unthinking enthusiasm. He was Irish and doing nothing for Ireland—that was true. It was true also that his principles, of which he had been so proud, and in whose support he had been so ardent, had not meant very much to him in a practical manner. He had fought in the long war in which England had tried, against all justice and reason, to subdue the colonists of North America. He still held a commission in the English army, sat in parliament, was a member for his brother's pocket borough, had used, not to any great extent, but still used, the influence of his uncle, the Duke of Richmond, in procuring his company. He had lived pleasantly, enjoying all the advantages that belonged to his almost princely birth, while these men were working for a definite cause, enduring every degradation, deprivation and danger. It was true that he was compromising himself by being in Paris, but he was not there in the service of any definite cause, but merely, he was forced to confess to himself, out of an excited interest, an enthusiastic curiosity.

He turned away abruptly. Paine gave him no salutation and made no effort to follow him. Dragging a packet of dirty, dog-eared papers out of his pocket, the Englishman began to read them, muttering over the sentences as he did so.

Fitzgerald passed down the room mastering his nausea at the foul, enclosed air, the loud, raucous talk. It was not the first time that he had found his principles clash with his prejudices as a gentleman. Of all whom he could observe through the thick, bluish smoke he approved most the young Irishman in the green coat. He was more and more certain that somewhere he had seen that man though this

was not curious, seeing how many hundreds of people he had met during his campaigns and travels.

As he looked, the Irishman suddenly raised his head and returned his glance. Instant recognition sprang into his eyes. He hastily left his companions and crossing to the door where Fitzgerald hesitated, said in a low whisper: 'You are here, my Lord, incognito?'

'Not at all, I go under my own name, but I think there are no titles here.'

'Ah, they are a very fanatic people,' replied the Irishman beneath his breath. 'You must make allowances, it is different for me.'

'Who are you?'

'I can trust your Lordship?'

Why, certainly.' Fitzgerald was a little vexed. 'I should know you, perhaps, as you know me.'

'Why, no, that is scarcely to be expected, my Lord, our positions are so different. I am Mr. Thomas Reynolds, a silk merchant of Dublin. Her Grace condescends to deal with us.'

Fitzgerald stared in front of him. Reynolds went on talking in thick whispers, but Fitzgerald did not hear.

'When did we meet before?' he interrupted, frowning, breaking in on the other's discourse.

'I have seen your Lordship several times in Dublin, but naturally you wouldn't notice me there; it is a different world, one understands.'

Again Fitzgerald cut him short: 'When we were children, wasn't it?'

'Oh, surely,' smiled the other, much gratified, 'your Lordship is not remembering that! My mother brought me once to the Château in Aubignè where you were staying with your mother.'

Fitzgerald was still puzzled. 'I can't quite remember.'

'I should think not, it must be fifteen, nay nearer twenty years ago,

my Lord.'

'I was building a fort in the Orangery.'

'Why, so you were, sir. I remember it well.'

This was not true. Thomas Reynolds, precocious child as he seemed, could recall scarcely anything of his visit to the Château d'Aubignè, but it had been constantly recalled to his mind by his mother.

Fitzgerald, with an effort, brushed aside his recollections.

'Do you intend to stay here?' asked Reynolds. 'Your Lordship would do much better at White's near the Palais Royal. I am moving there myself to-morrow. No doubt your Lordship will be meeting all the interesting people, the deputies and generals.'

'I am here without purpose or plan, merely on an impulse.'

'It is very strange, is it not,' said Reynolds, 'to see a world so upside down. The son of the Duke of Orleans is called General *Egalité:*

'That is slightly absurd,' smiled Fitzgerald.

'Well, they have succeeded,' and then with a mixture of bravado and insolence beneath his air of respect, Reynolds added, 'everything topsy-turvy! Crowned heads, noble heads, falling under the axe! No more titles and Jack as good as his neighbour. No more property and the poorest with as good a chance as the richest!'

'Are we not talking a little too boldly?'

'Bah, no one here understands English! If I can be of any service to your Lordship—'

'Why, no, Reynolds, not at the moment, I think.'

'Your Lordship mustn't think me presumptuous but I have been here a good many times and know my way about, better than a man of your Lordship's position would—'

Fitzgerald did not quite understand this. He wondered if the man

before him was involved in some conspiracy, if he was one of those Irish patriots whom Wolfe Tone was known to be rallying. Impulsive as he was he felt that this conversation was becoming too imprudent. He asked:

'Do you know to whom this hotel belongs?'

'One of the nobility who was guillotined, I suppose. I could find out for you. Yes, I think a De Clermont—I don't really know. I remember when I first came here the landlord used to keep the head of one of the daughters of the house—'

'The head!' exclaimed Fitzgerald aghast.

'Yes, she was guillotined or poisoned herself by drinking the verdigris she obtained by pouring vinegar over some brass curtain rings—a surgeon was interested in her and when she died, he embalmed the head and the landlord used to keep it in a glass box and show it for curiosity, but of late it has disappeared.'

Fitzgerald, though hardened by all the savage details of war, felt sickened at the callously related incident. He remained silent, leaning against the wall.

'She looked quite charming even as a deaths-head,' continued Reynolds, delighted to be able to claim so long the attention of the great Lord. 'I remember they had her hair combed out nicely on a blue silk cushion—pretty fair it was, even then, and a fold of muslin brought up under her chin so that you could not see where the knife had come. Upon my word, she was quite a beauty though rather yellowish; they had even preserved a little mole by her lip. They used to call her Mademoiselle Louise.'

'Who was she?'

'Why, that I don't know. One forgets, but I think the landlord has a little water-colour somewhere of the head that he might show you. It wouldn't be anybody that you knew, sir?' he inquired.

'Why, no.' Fitzgerald shook his head. 'I have few French friends.'

CHAPTER 3

He left the dining-room and went up to the greenish bedchamber in which Tony had already lit the candles. This glorious era of liberty—this dawn of a new world, did not look so glamorous at a near view. Fitzgerald felt his spirits sink. These ugly, dishevelled, coarse-mannered men, breaking away from all the graces and refinement of life, these tales of horror, this universal callousness...'Eh, well, I suppose there is some mud to be waded through—'

He went over to the window and opened it wide, hoping for a breath of pure air, but only a faint, grey fog came over the housetops opposite.

He was trying to piece together some broken childish memories, which had come to him intermittently all his life. Tom Reynolds, an offensive boy, over-dressed, an Orangery, a long, sunny afternoon and the black man—had the black man really been there or only in a fancy? Fitzgerald believed that he had really been there, crouching in abject terror and humiliation that it had been impossible for him, Fitzgerald, to relieve. And then a girl, a child—Louise—he remembered her quite clearly; he had never been able to find out who she was. As a youth he had often asked his mother about her: 'A girl named Louise, mother, who came to us once in Aubignè,' and the Duchess had always laughed and said kindly: 'So many children came to Aubignè, how could I remember this one, and I dare say a number of them were named Louise!' He could hear himself insisting: 'I was making a fort in the Orangery and the nectarines were ripe.'

'But, my dear, you were always making forts—the nectarines were ripe every year.'

'It was the same day as that on which the Reynolds came to see us.'

'No, Neddy, darling, you must have dreamt her.' Sometimes Fitzgerald thought so too, for this picture of Louise had the insistence of a recurrent dream. He continued to sit at the window. The rumble of the city noises came to him like the buzz of the home-bound bees in the gardens near the Garonne, and the scent of the dust in the streets was tinged with the scent of the withered leaves, of bay and laurel in

the Orangery, of balm and laurel warmed by the long hours of sunshine. He was homesick for that rich world of childhood which is so full of delight.

He heard Tony speak to him and turned with the sharpness of one suddenly awakened. The servant held in his hand a pile of dusty but very fine garments, women's chemises and caps threaded with little lilac and lemon-coloured ribbons, filmed with dust. Tony explained that, on opening a cupboard to put away his master's clothes, he had found them huddled away. A lady's room, the landlord had said.

The young man gazed at the garments with shame and pity; the Negro pointed out the embroidered name 'Louise de Clermont.' He thought of the drawing that Tom Reynolds had mentioned, the decapitated head—Louise, was it possible? He would not think so; he himself folded up the garments and put them back in the press.

'We will move from here to-morrow, Tony. I think after all we will go to White's in the Palais Royal, though it is reputed to be very expensive and frequented by such hot Jacobins that I expect we shall get into trouble.'

The Negro smiled in obedience without understanding what his master said.

A knock on the door: Mr. Thomas Reynolds with a dozen suggestions to make.

'I believe he is a good, loyal, honest fellow, and I ought to like him,' thought Fitzgerald. 'He is more active than I am, he is doing work, it seems to me, while I only play at things.' Yet he resisted the young man's attempts to draw him into his company.

'My dear fellow, I have no spirits at all to-night. I seem dead with exhaustion and yet the voyage was nothing. This room—I think, depresses one.'

'Ah, speaking of the room.' Reynolds put his hand in his pocket. 'This is the picture—the landlord lent it me without demur.' He held out a little water-colour. Fitzgerald called for the candle. The painting, skilfully done, showed the head of a young woman reposing on a blue cushion and muffled to the chin in folds of muslin. At the corner of her

mouth was a mole.

It is terrible,' murmured Fitzgerald, returning the drawing to Reynolds.

'This was her room, sir,' said Reynolds, looking with avid curiosity round the chamber. 'The finest apartment in the house. Very magnificent, is it not? But I expect they make you pay dear for it.'

Despite his avowed democratic opinions and proud as he was of the position he had acquired through the vagaries of revolution, Thomas Reynolds could not forbear boasting of the distinguished acquaintances that he had made in Paris: Deputy Lazare Carnot, Lazare Hoche, the brilliant general of brigade, but though he had much to say about these successful Frenchmen, these true democrats and republicans, it was obvious that he was far more impressed by the acquaintance of General *Egalité*, as the Duc de Chartres was now named.

'Ah, he was a hero too, as Colonel of the 14th Dragoons; he fought at Valmy for France against Austria—'

'Against his own blood, his own family,' interrupted Fitzgerald. 'It is not agreeable, is it? But I suppose it was difficult for him if he really believed in the cause of the people. That is a problem, is it not, my dear Reynolds?' he asked, not noticing how the young man smiled with pleasure at this familiar address. 'How far one should follow one's hereditary loyalty and how far one should follow the dictation of one's own conscience?'

'General Egalité is a splendid young man, but the people, it is true, cannot forget his birth. I think it is quite likely that his father will follow the King to the guillotine.'

'Ah, that now,' exclaimed Fitzgerald, 'that is what would happen. You would never be quite trusted, would you? You would, as it were, betray your own class for nothing. The people would never accept you as one of them, and each side would have some good cause to disdain you.'

'It is difficult for your Lordship, no doubt,' acceded Reynolds, cleverly giving a personal point to the conversation, 'but for a man like myself there can be no question.'

'No question of what?'

'What to do, sir. I belong to the United Irishmen. We have meetings here and in Dublin, too, at the house of Mr. Oliver Bond, a friend of mine. A silk merchant in a large way.'

Fitzgerald interrupted him.

'You must not tell me these things. Remember who I am.'

'That is why I tell you,' replied Reynolds, with what appeared a frank simplicity. 'You are a Fitzgerald, sir.'

'You must think of my brother's position, of my friendship with the Viceroy—' He broke off.

'I understand very well, but I could not for a moment suppose that you would betray us.'

'Betray you!' cried Fitzgerald vehemently. 'That's another matter! I thought you were pressing me to join you.'

Reynolds looked at him with a bold smile.

'It would be quite in your character, my Lord, if you did. One must belong to the time one lives in, and after all we have justice on our side.'

Fitzgerald did not answer. He recalled the words of his beloved and admired uncle, the Duke of Richmond, who had recently said to him, 'Do not, my dear Edward, mix yourself up in these fashionable treasons. There are many wrongs in the world, but it is not revolutions that will put them right, nor disloyalty,' he had added, with a little emphasis on the last words.

Reynolds, shrewd and quick seemed to divine his thoughts:

'I dare say, my Lord, we should be called traitors in London, perhaps even in Dublin, among some sets. But can we be traitors to a government that has never recognised us? To the laws, that have been forced on us? To a tyranny that we have resented for years?'

'Politics are intolerable,' murmured Fitzgerald.

'These are not politics, my Lord. I saw you talking to Mr. Paine downstairs. He would put the matter better than I do.'

'I need no man to put it to me, I feel it in my heart. It is a question of what one can do, what one ought to do. The English, perhaps, do their best in Ireland, and yet, I don't know. Everything is wrong. It is beyond one man to put it right.'

'But not beyond many, sir. We call ourselves United Irishmen. We compromise men of all creeds.'

Fitzgerald said abruptly: 'From what I heard openly in America, and whispered in Dublin, Wolfe Tone is trying to persuade the French to invade Ireland.'

'And if he were, my Lord?'

'I should not care to be a party to it. I don't think what it would mean to me as an English officer, nor of any affectionate loyalties I may have. No, Reynolds, it can't be done that way. The French need all their breath to cool their own porridge. They've no money to spare for us and we've nothing at all.'

'I notice you say "us" and "we," my Lord.'

Fitzgerald laughed. 'Well, I'm Irish, but one must keep one's wits. The people are too oppressed, too brutalised by ill treatment to be easily disciplined. It would be utter ruin, too, if one failed.'

'Wait, sir, and see what will happen with Ireland. You may consider the country ruined without the French—'

'Reynolds, be careful, I conjure you. This man, Tone, I don't know him. He seems a fanatic. See, I'm talking against my inclination. I am inclined to be an adventurer, but I have responsibilities—these Jacobins are too wild. I don't know, but even here in France it seems to get out of hand, we don't want bloody chaos in Ireland.'

'You'll get that, sir, anyway. Do you think the English can go on grinding the people down with their taxes, their penal laws and their persecution of the Roman Catholics? Their pocket boroughs, their viceroys, these booby lords from London, who come over and set themselves up as kings...' He made a dramatic pause and then

added, with a fall in his voice, 'Your Lordship must forgive me. I have spoken very boldly, but, I hope, like an honest man. I was deceived.'

'In what, Reynolds?'

'In thinking that your Lordship would remember he was a Geraldine.'

'No, I remember that, indeed I do. That gives me a sense of responsibility. I don't want to help on something that's going to bring ruin to thousands. I hope redress might be got in a legal way, through parliament, the ministers, or the government. I don't know, I haven't thought, but...'

Reynolds laughed bitterly, his hand on the door.

'Believe me, my Lord, nothing will be done in Ireland save by force of arms.'

'That is what Paine said,' replied Fitzgerald, smiling, 'but I am not yet persuaded. Good-night, sir.'

Reynolds took his leave, and Fitzgerald remained alone with Tony in the large, high, green-blue bedchamber.

'Why, here I have stood, Tony, arguing and in a muse, and allowing you to set out my clothes. Instead, you must, if you please, put them back in the valises, for we are moving to-morrow.'

The Negro obeyed without replying.

'I do not think I can sleep here,' sighed Fitzgerald; 'not even for one night.'

CHAPTER 4

He put on his cloak and went out into the street. It was earlier than he had thought. The oil lamps that lit the streets showed through a curtain of fog. He looked up at the façade of the hotel across which was written in large letters: 'Propriétè Nationale. *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*.'

He found himself at the entrance to a theatre, a stream of reddish light poured out on the dirty pavement where beggars, fruit vendors, sellers of newspapers and pamphlets gathered.

He went in, paid for a scat and took his place. The theatre was full. Among the audience was that same air of exalted, almost hysterical gaiety and high spirits that he had noted in the restaurants.

The piece was dull, the orchestra poor; he could find no distraction in the entertainment. At the end of the first act he was about to leave when, chancing to glance up he saw a woman he knew. Madame de Sillery, a famous blue-stocking whom he had met in London and whom, despite his dislike of learned ladies, he had found amusing and attractive.

Her principles were his own. She too, was an ardent disciple of Jean Jacques Rousseau. She had been the governess of that Duke of Orléans who had renounced his title, re-naming himself Philippe Egalité, and she had had the honour of inculcating the first principles of democracy into the young Bourbon prince who had fought on the side of the people at Valmy. Her influence over Philippe Egalité was well known to be unbounded, and it was believed that it was she who had brought him openly over on the side of the revolutionaries.

It should have been her hour of triumph; but Fitzgerald knew that she was very little in Paris and that she seemed to live in a perpetual disquiet. He was, therefore, surprised to see her openly at the theatre.

It was with an instinctive desire to offer some protection as well as to obtain some diversion for himself that he hastened to her box.

Madame de Sillery received the young Irishman with unfeigned joy. She was a woman past middle age, supremely elegant, at once enthusiastic and shrewd. Her lean features were attractive and she

wore the fantastic fashions of the first year of Liberty with distinction. Her husband, the Marquis de Sillery, was in prison and would probably be guillotined, but she bore no trace of either mourning or despondency on that account; she had long been separated from the man whose name she used, and there were few who believed in the platonic turn she so coolly gave to her friendship with Philippe Egalité.

'Oh, Lord Edward'—she spoke English well, and on every possible occasion—'sit down behind me. Do not attract any attention. That is Mademoiselle d'Orléans.' She nodded to a pale girl seated behind her. 'I thought it well we should make a public appearance here. What are you doing in Paris? Ah, it is pleasant to see a friendly face. You must come home with me afterwards and have a little supper.'

Fitzgerald bowed to the young princess for whom he felt great compassion.

The curtain went up and the people became absorbed in the play. Madame de Sillery held up her muff, and under cover of it spoke rapidly to the young man.

'You know everything does not go well here. I have come back to fetch Mlle. d'Orléans away—to Switzerland. One does not care to talk of these things. The people are going mad. I believe no one is safe. And you—was it not risky for you to come here? But, of course, you have your uniform, but if we are at war with Britain, will that protect you?'

'Madame,' he whispered back, 'tell me of yourself, I pray you. Are you indeed in any danger?'

'I—I don't know: Her thin smile was bitter. 'But Monsieur d'Orléans, you see, he did everything, even voted for the death of the King. But it was not enough—the people are not satisfied. My friend, I feel as if we all walked on a volcano.'

'But Monsieur de Chartres,' protested Fitzgerald; 'is he not the hero of France after fighting at Valmy?'

'You think so? But indeed no I Neither tie nor General Dumouriez. No, there is this jealousy of the high-born and nothing can wipe it out! These people after all are the *canaille*...' The narrow nostrils of the

Marquise de Sillery distended with scorn.

'Yes, one feels that. The cause is right but the people all wrong,' said Fitzgerald.

'As I can tell you!' whispered the lady rapidly. 'You would think after what I have done to persuade these royal children to renounce their rights, to be good Frenchmen and firm patriots, that there would be some reward for me? But nothing!'

'Yet you have moderate men in power, men like Carnot.'

'Just because they are moderate, my friend, they will be swept away. Believe me, it will soon not be safe in Paris for moderate men. Are you staying long?' she added swiftly, turning the conversation.

'No, Madame, I have only a brief leave,'

'That is as well for you.'

He glanced at the pale young girl who sat in the shadow of the box. She seemed overwhelmed with anxiety for her father, her young brothers. Fitzgerald, thinking of the water-colour which Reynolds had shown him, said: 'You should get her away from Paris, madame.'

'Indeed, I mean to, as soon as possible,' and she added: 'I think it is almost certain that they will guillotine M. d'Orléans, and then what is to become of his children? You think M. de Chartres is able to do anything with these people? No, all the Bourbons will be penniless exiles.' She changed the subject: 'You will come home to supper with us? We are no longer in the Maison Egalité as they call the Palais Royal now, but we have a decent apartment.'

'I will come, very gratefully.'

'We shall be alone save for my poor adopted daughters. There is unprotected innocence there, Monsieur—what am I to do with them?' She added, as if to herself: 'They too will be ruined.'

Fitzgerald knew that she referred to the two young girls whom she had adopted in their infancy and brought up with the Orléans children. They were supposed to be American orphans of war, who had, by a series of changing circumstances, fallen into her hands, but

the common belief was they were her own children by M. d'Orléans.

CHAPTER 5

When the little party left the theatre the fog had dispersed and a bleak moon was shining high over Paris. It had become much colder and the beggars had wandered away from the porch of the theatre where the lights were being rapidly extinguished.

Madame de Sillery summoned one of the hired carriages that were loitering for a chance fare.

'It is neither prudent nor economical now to keep one's own vehicle,' she remarked. Then, half in derision, half in earnest, she smiled. 'If I had known how inconvenient a revolution would be I doubt if I should have worked to have brought one about. Theory is one thing, sir, and practice another.'

Fitzgerald got into the carriage with the grave, silent girl in her plain hood and cloak, and the vivacious, elegantly-dressed woman, whose brilliant chatter seemed to hide a desperate anxiety. As if to distract herself by dwelling constantly on the commonplace, she demanded of Fitzgerald where he was staying. He told her, adding that he thought to move to White's Hotel on the morrow.

He felt the night heavy and cold about him. They went, by Madame de Sillery's direction, through the back streets, and she seemed relieved to reach the modest house. She knocked three times on the narrow door; a manservant opened it with an air of apprehension.

'It is I, Pierre. All is well? You have not been disturbed?'

'Yes, yes, Madame, all is well. But there has been much noise and, I think, rioting in the streets—the windows of the house nearby were broken. Madame and Mademoiselle should not go out alone...'

'I have found, by a miracle, an escort, Pierre, and I judged it wise to put in a public appearance. It would be fatal to seem to be in hiding. Has Mr. Carnot been here to-night?'

'Yes, Madame, but he could not stay. He has gone again, to the military depôt, I think.'

'Ah, well, it does not matter.' She turned to Fitzgerald. 'Pardon the disorder of my household, Monsieur, and be good enough to step upstairs to the salon:

Fitzgerald followed her to a room which was brilliantly lit by a fine crystal chandelier. The walls were painted white and the windows draped by fine, clear muslin, the furniture was in grey ash wood. Fitzgerald had the impression of entering into something pure and cold, like the interior of a shell. The fire had almost burnt out, and a young girl lay half asleep on a sofa drawn up by the heap of cinders on the hearth.

'Pamela!' exclaimed Madame de Sillery, putting down her muff wills an air of vexation. 'The child has gone to sleep! And let the fire out! And what was Pierre doing that he did not come up to see to it!'

'Ah, Madame,' said Mademoiselle d'Orléans in a low voice. 'Pierre is frightened. He has been on guard downstairs. We must never go out again. We must never leave each other until we are safe across the frontier.'

'Mademoiselle,' exclaimed Fitzgerald, 'if I can be of the slightest use to you—some protection—'

Madame de Sillery instantly took to herself this offer, which the young princess only accepted by a proud smile.

'Indeed, Monsieur, we need all the friends we can get, and one like yourself is doubly welcome. Pamela, Pamela, are you really asleep? Mademoiselle, have the goodness to pull the bell and demand from Pierre some fresh wood. Monsieur, I regret that you should have found us in this confusion.'

Fitzgerald did not hear her excuses; he had approached the cold hearth and seas looking down at the sleeping girl. She could have been no more than eighteen years of age and her face, flushed with sleep and surrounded by unbound hair, was lovely. A small book had fallen from her hand and a harp with some sheets of music was standing by the sofa.

As if his glance had the power to penetrate her sleep she stirred and sat up, then, seeing a stranger, with an air of confusion pulled straight her white frilled gown.

'This is Pamela,' said Madame de Sillery, who had already lightly touched several objects in the room into a more orderly arrangement. 'If you would be formal, she is Mademoiselle Ann Caroline Stephanie Sims, and this, Pamela, is Lord Edward Fitzgerald, of whom you have heard me speak. I met him in England—at Isle-worth at Mr. Sheridan's house.'

Fitzgerald kept his eyes on the lovely face of Pamela, who smiled at him in silence.

'Your name should be Louise,' he breathed.

'I have a great many names, Monsieur, but that was never one of them.'

'It should have been; he insisted, loyal to his dreams.

'Do I remind you of some one?'

'Of yourself only.'

'But you have never seen me before?'

'Do not be too sure, Mademoiselle.'

The elegant person of Madame de Sillery suddenly and rapidly interposed between them. 'You must not spoil my Pamela, Monsieur. She is both wild and wilful—I have a great deal of trouble with the dear girl, one moment in a melancholy and the next in the wildest high spirits.'

'How should I spoil her, Madame? I have not passed her a single compliment:

Pamela suddenly moved away. Going up to Mademoiselle d'Orléans she put her arm round her. 'Oh, Adelaide, I would we were out of Paris. It was so lonesome to sit here alone listening to the noises of the street, and knowing that Pierre was frightened!'

'We are leaving,' cried Madame de Sillery quickly, 'at once, as soon as we can move. We are in danger of being detained if we delay.'

The mysterious Pamela that he had come upon so unexpectedly completely filled the mind and soul of Fitzgerald. He knew that he need look no further for the fulfilment of his dreams; all seas here.

His usual easy flow of conversation was subdued to a few words; he watched Pamela. Madame de Sillery, in her agitation, did not notice the absorption of her guest in her adopted daughter; she was distracted by fear and the keynote of all she said was that they must leave Paris immediately.

Mademoiselle d'Orléans broke her grave silence to protest: 'But, Madame, we cannot if my father is arrested.'

This dreadful sentence made them all look at the speaker.

'Surely, Mademoiselle,' exclaimed Fitzgerald, 'that is not possible? The Assembly, after all, are composed of enlightened, moderate and intelligent men, patriots, opposed to all violence...'

'But already,' interrupted Madame de Sillery, scornfully, 'there has been violence, massacres, unnecessary executions, horrible things that you know nothing of, my poor friend. Indeed, indeed, I greatly fear that what Adelaide said has but too sure a ground.'

The young princess leant back in her chair. She could neither eat nor drink.

'If we stay,' urged Madame de Sillery, 'it may be all of us—arrested. Worse.'

'Then,' cried Fitzgerald, thinking of nothing but Pamela, 'you must not stay. I will myself see you over the frontier.' Pamela, who was less disturbed than the other two women, smiled at him over the edge of a glass of water. 'Did you come to Paris for that—to play knight-errant to distressed females? Nay, rather, I thought, for patriotic schemes of your own.'

'I believe I came to Paris precisely to see you, Mademoiselle Pamela. As for schemes, I think I have no heart for politics.'

He remembered Tom Paine and Mr. Reynolds with a little regret, a little remorse, but this new and powerful emotion absorbed him. As if to justify himself he continued with much animation: 'I fear if I meddle

I may do harm. I must think of my brother and my English relatives.'

'Your Irish affairs!' interrupted Madame de Sillery. 'Have no dealings with your rebel countrymen, they are lunatics.'

'It is strange to hear you say that,' said Pamela, smiling, 'you who were so ardent in this wonderful cause of liberty and the rights of man.'

Madame de Sillery stared at the girl. Absorbed in her secret terrors, she seemed to hear very little of what was going on around her.

'I tell you people get out of hand, the mob will govern soon. The voice of reason, of toleration, of moderation will be no longer heard. Take care, Lord Edward, it will be the same in Ireland!'

The Irishman defended the new French government which had, he declared, so far behaved in a way to arouse the enthusiasm and respect of all intelligent and enlightened men, and as for Ireland, he laughed aside any danger there. Why, the United Irishmen and kindred societies were officially recognised; they had objects at which no one could cavil, merely to enlist all creeds and opinions to help in the betterment of the country, the clearing away of the manifold corruptions which hindered parliamentary reform.

Madame de Sillery interrupted impatiently: 'It began like that over here, societies and clubs and intelligent, enlightened men talking! Bah, it is useless! What is the end, people like ourselves, ruined, robbed, flying for their lives!'

Mademoiselle d'Orléans rose and suddenly left the table. Pamela followed her to the fireplace.

A clock struck. With an effort Fitzgerald told himself that he must leave. Neither Madame de Sillery nor Mademoiselle Adelaide took much notice of him, their courtesy was overruled by their intense apprehension. But Pamela looked at him and gave him her hand, and when he said Till to-morrow' she nodded as if this appointment with a stranger was the most natural thing in the world.

CHAPTER 6

The next day he was prevented from the early attendance on Madame de Sillery which he had planned, by the arrival in his room of Mr. Reynolds with some other Irish who had lately arrived in Paris full of enthusiasm for the new government, many of them already deep in plans to apply the principles and methods of the French revolution to the state of Ireland.

Fitzgerald put them all by, laughing. The sun shone, though it was wintry. He must go to Pamela, but he promised them his company at White's, where he intended to remove himself during the course of the day, then went out into the streets of Paris which to him were very agreeable, with a great bustle of people going eagerly to and fro on this business of creating a new world for mankind. But the scene he had witnessed the night before lingered uneasily in his mind; men were embracing each other with joy at the news of the victory of Jemappes, and yet the relatives of the hero of that battle, M. de Chartres, he had seen only a few hours ago looking at each other with apprehension, and whispering of a flight over the frontier. But Fitzgerald, optimistic, lighthearted, unable to believe evil of any, could not believe that the family and friends of Philippe Egalité, of M. de Chartres, were really in any peril.

He found Madame de Sillery alone in the pale room which looked bleak in the wintry light. She was busy with papers, letters and accounts, and appeared surprised to see him. Her troubles of the night before had not diminished. She said to him at once:

'My dear pupils do not wish to leave Paris while their father is in danger, but you must help me persuade them—'

She spoke distractedly, hardly knowing who it was before her, but the Irishman's next words brought her up to an astonished realisation of his presence and an amazed scrutiny of his person.

'I am sorry to interrupt you in your urgent affairs, Madame, but my business is pressing too. You are the guardian of Pamela—of Mlle. Sims, are you not?'

'Poor Pamela—yes. In her infancy I took pity on her unprotected innocence. She and the little Hermine have no friend save myself.'

'Then, Madame, I have the honour to ask you for the hand of Pamela and to request that our marriage may be very soon.'

He smiled at the lady's look of bewilderment, and added:

'The times are difficult, are they not? And you speak of a flight; besides I must not stay long in Paris—'

'There are some formalities to consider, Monsieur,' said Madame de Sillery, frowning.

'I know. I will subscribe to them.'

He told her his age, his rank, his prospects, his connections, his fortune, while the lady rapidly considered this astounding proposition.

'You have not spoken to Pamela? You only saw her for the first time last night.'

'But it is enough. One cannot explain. But you, Madame, must understand without explanation. We looked at each other. I do not think that she will refuse me.'

'Pamela,' said Madame de Sillery, rather pale, and biting the end of her quill pen, 'has nothing. The Orléans family are ruined. Do you understand that—ruined!' Her face became hard, and sharp lines showed round her mouth and nose. 'I have nothing, either. Whether one goes against or follows the revolution it comes out the same.'

'But that does not matter to me at all, Madame. I have sufficient. My brother, should I choose to ask him, would see I was placed very high, so would my uncle, the Duke of Richmond.'

'But you,' said Madame de Sillery, looking at him with shrewd, lively eyes, 'are a revolutionary, too? You are bitten by this fashionable fever of the times, are you not? What is to become of Pamela if you are proscribed? She will have nothing.'

Fitzgerald, even in his present exalted mood, was startled by this.

'But I have no intention, Madame, of taking any active hand against the English government. God forbid. My brother, my mother,

my uncle, my friends, are all intimates of the English court. I hope that affairs in Ireland will be accomplished in moderate fashion. We have men like Mr. John Fitzgibbon, Mr. Robert Stewart and Mr. Grattan, who speak for reform.'

'Bah!' Madame de Sillery swept aside all this. 'You make a show of prudence, but you are not prudent. You are wild, hot-headed, and on the first excuse will fly to extremes.'

Her restless glance strayed to the papers under her nervous hands.

'But it is an emergency,' she muttered. 'One must take what chance one can! This marriage will be better for Pamela than anything else that offers.'

'I only want your leave to ask her. Pamela and I will surely quite soon understand each other.'

'You must not think to live in Paris or in France, Monsieur. You must take her away to Ireland. You must promise me to keep out of your Irish politics and brawls.'

'I believe I shall not have any temptation to enter into those matters, Madame. I intend to live very quietly, for a while at least, retired in the country.'

'Ah, that would suit Pamela very well. She is quite a little savage in her tastes. All for peace and birds and flowers...so she was brought up, you know, with the Orleans children, a simple natural creature.'

'So I was bred myself, Madame. I have had near ten years of war, of wandering, and I wish to be quiet for a while.'

Madame de Sillery considered him closely, appraising his elegance, his air of candour and good humour, the look of refined intelligence...She held out her hand with an air of impulsiveness.

'Very well, you shall have your Pamela. But do not surprise her like you did me. While we are in Paris—

I do not know how long that may be—wait on her, be with her constantly, learn her tastes, her mind, and give her a chance to learn

yours. And, Monsieur, since you are going to burden yourself with a wife, and a young, penniless, wilful wife at that, be a little careful how you conduct yourself. I speak from a bitter experience.'

Fitzgerald wanted no more than this; as he kissed the lady's extended hand he asked:

'Where is she now?'

'With Mlle. d'Orléans. They try to distract one another by playing on the harp and drawing.'

Madame de Sillery pulled the bell. When Pierre entered:

'Ask Mlle. Sims to come at once.'

And when Pamela came into the room, Madame de Sillery said:

'This gentleman wishes to make himself agreeable to you.'

Pamela answered without embarrassment.

'I was expecting him.'

CHAPTER 7

From Lord Edward Fitzgerald to his mother, the Dowager Duchess of Leinster, from Paris, the first year of the Republic, 1792.

'DEAREST MATHER,—I know you will be surprised to hear from me here—do not be uneasy, this town is as quiet as possible and, for me, a most interesting scene. I would not have missed seeing it at this period for anything...I lodge with my friend, Paine; we breakfast, dine, and sup together. The more I see of him the more I like and respect him. I cannot express how kind he is to me; there is simplicity of manner, a goodness of heart, a strength of mind in hint that I never knew a man before possess, I pass my time very pleasantly, and read, walk, and go quietly to the play. I have not been to see any one, nor shall not. The present scene occupies my thoughts a great deal.

'Give my love to Ogilvie and the girls. I think he would be much entertained and interested if he were here. I can compare it to nothing but Rome in its days of conquest: the energy of the people is beyond belief. There is no news the Morning Chronicle does not tell you, so I won't repeat it.

'I go a great deal to the Assembly; they improve much in speeds.

'God bless you, dearest mother, believe me,

'Your affectionate son,

'EDWARD.'

P.S.—Let me know if I can do anything for you here. Direct —Le Citoyen Edouard Fitzgerald, Hotel de White, au Passage des Petits, pres du Palais Royal.'

A little later, after the taking of Mons and the victory of Jemappes:

'I am delighted with due manner in which the French feel their success; no foolish boasting or arrogance at it; but imputing all to the goodness and greatness of their cause, and seeming to rejoice more on account of its effect on Europe in general than for their own individual glory. This indeed, is the turn every idea here seems to take; all their pamphlets, all their treaties, all their songs extol their achievements but as the effect of the principle they are contending for, and rejoice at their success as due triumph of humanity.

'All the defeats of their enemies they impute to their disgust for the cause for which they fight. At the coffee houses and playhouse every man calls the other "camarade," "frère," and with a stranger they begin, "Ah, nous sommes tous frères, tous hommes, nos victoires sont pour vous, pour tout le monde"; the same sentiments are always received with peals of applause. In short, all the good enthusiastic French sentiments seem to come out, while to all appearances one would say they had lost all their bad. The town is quiet, and to judge from the theatres and the public walks, very full. The great difference seems in the few carriages, the dress, which is very plain.

'Tell Ogilvie I shall leave this next week and settle my majority, if I am not scratched out of the army...I dine to-day with Madame de Sillery.

'God bless you, dearest mother. I am obliged to leave you. Love to the girls. I long to see you and shall be with you at the beginning of the week after next. I cannot be long front you.

'Yours,

'E.F.'

'PS.—In the midst of my patriotism and projects you are always the first thing in my heart and ever must be my dear, dear mother.'

The last lines were penned in a mood of remorse, for it was no

longer the adored mother who was really foremost in the thoughts of Edward Fitzgerald, but Pamela. She was his companion in those quiet walks, those pleasant readings, those modest visits to the playhouse which took all his time. That he should have met such a woman at such a moment sent the young man to the heights of ecstasy.

Hand in hand with Pamela he seemed, indeed, to face the dawn of the Millennium.

CHAPTER 8

But though Pamela was his constant, his immediate preoccupation, she could not altogether divorce him from the society of his countrymen, nor did Tom Paine, though he good-humouredly mocked the young lord and English officer as a mere adventurer who would not be willing to sacrifice the slightest of his natural advantages for any cause, fail to inculcate him with all his own extreme principles.

As Fitzgerald entered Whiles one cold afternoon, Mr. Reynolds, who seemed waiting for him, presented to him a young man for whom he felt an instant liking and respect.

This was Mr. Wolfe Tone, whose life had been all action and whose indomitable purpose had surmounted almost inconceivable difficulties without means or influence. Scarcely speaking the French language, he had come from America, where he had left a wife and small family, the pleasant life of a farmer and complete security, to endeavour to rouse the French in the cause of Irish independence, and he had so far accomplished his purpose that he was in touch with every man of influence in Paris.

He was a slender young man with an aquiline nose and smiling eyes, extremely well-dressed in the Republican fashion with a little air of honest coxcombry that he laughed at himself as an admitted weakness. He said at once, with the utmost frankness:

'I hope, sir, that you have considered what it means, making the acquaintance of men like myself?' Fitzgerald smiled at this warning which came oddly from the boldest of the supporters of the French Revolution. But Tom Reynolds seemed displeased.

'You were the last man to be so prudent, I thought, Mr. Tone,' he exclaimed, on a note of reproach. 'Lord Edward can be of the greatest assistance to your schemes.'

'And may do himself the greatest amount of damage,' replied Mr. Tone. 'Are you, my Lord, sincere, or merely excited by youthful ardour?'

'I am sincere in my good wishes,' replied Fitzgerald. 'I have not thought yet how far I should go in action.'

'You wear the uniform of King George,' said Tone, without the least malice or reproach. 'You are highly connected in England. I should be sorry if any of my intrigues should hurt your future, sir.'

'But what of yourself, Mr. Tone?'

'I never had very much to lose, sir, and now have nothing at all. My old father is provided for and my brothers are wild, adventuring fellows like myself. As for my charming wife and dear children, I must trust them to Providence.'

Lord Edward was infinitely touched by these words from the man he had always heard referred to as a dangerous fanatic and an unprincipled agitator. He held out his hand and the young man clasped it warmly. Mr. Tone's mention of his family gave Fitzgerald the first hesitation in his half-formed projects. Was it not his duty to be careful hen he was to attach his fortunes to those of Pamela? when not Madame de Sillery herself warned him? No politics, no brawls, no intrigues...

Mr. Tone instantly noted the cloud on the ingenuous face smiling at him.

'We cannot expect to involve men like you,' he said, regardless of the glances and frowns of Thomas Reynolds. 'You have too much to lose. It were better, sir, if you kept away from us and knew nothing of our schemes.'

Uneasy at his own hesitation, Fitzgerald replied bluntly: 'I don't hold with a French invasion of Ireland, even if they had the men and money, which I doubt.'

'I did not hold with it myself, sir, some time ago,' replied Mr. Tone, in no way rebuked or discomposed, 'but now there are many of us come to change our way of thinking. Not only myself, sir, who am of but small account, but many others, not fanatics willing to do anything for bread or plunder, nor unprincipled agitators, but gentlemen of good education and intelligence, and of peaceful tastes too, sir,' added Mr. Tone, rather wistfully, 'who would sooner handle a plough than a sword.'

'You do not think the affairs of Ireland; interrupted Fitzgerald,

'would be better left to men like Grattan, Stewart, Fitzgibbon?'

Mr. Tone shook his head. Slight derision flashed in his large eyes.

'I trust none of them.'

'They are moderate men and the policy of the English government is moderate.'

'Do you think so, sir?'

Again Mr. Tone regarded him with kindly mockery. 'Perhaps there is a good deal that you, moving in vice-regal circles in Dublin, so much out of the country, far in America (as I hear you have been) have not heard. You must meet Mr. Thomas Addis Emmett, a learned gentleman, sir, one who has gone painfully into these questions, and Mr. John Sheares, and Mr. Bond and many others. And yet The impetuous Mr. Tone checked himself. 'No, I think it were best for you not to meddle.' Yet he looked at Edward Fitzgerald with a bright appeal in his eyes as if he implored him to disregard advice and to join heart and soul in the cause to which he had himself devoted his entire life.

Fitzgerald hated his own hesitation. Never had he felt so conscious of his divided loyalties, his English connections, his obligations as an English officer, as a member of the Irish Parliament for his brother's borough, as the future husband of the unprotected Pamela...

Mr. Reynolds, who had been watching him closely, stepped forward and seemed to be about to begin a vehement urging of his reluctance, but Mr. Tone, with a gesture of authority, checked his friend.

'Let him be. It were neither wise nor kind to persuade him,' he said definitely. 'But, sir, you may tell us one or two things, without disloyalty to your friends, that would help us very much.'

'All that I in honour may,' said Fitzgerald, grateful to the man who had not thrust on him a difficult decision. 'Well, then, sir,' replied Mr. Tone, who spoke rapidly, but very clearly, who seemed to have all his facts at his finger-tips, besides a very winning and persuasive

manner, 'would, in the case of a rising, your brother join us? His Grace of Leinster, I mean. He is considered here our greatest man and I have often been asked by the French what part he would take. He is believed to have Liberal sympathies. He was a member of the old volunteers and afterwards of the United Irishmen.'

'My brother is a very good-natured man, not at all inclined to action. I believe you would have his sympathy, but you must not count upon his support.' Mr. Tone accepted this without comment.

'And your other brothers, Lord Henry, for instance?'

'I don't know. Perhaps Henry. They are none of them bigots or tyrants, sir. I believe at a push even Leinster—but I had best say no more.'

'You shall not, sir,' cried Tone immediately and warmly. 'I will not even put to you the other questions that I had in mind.'

'You lose your chance,' grumbled Thomas Reynolds. Mr. Tone took no heed of that, but drew from his pocket a packet of papers.

'Maybe there are matters here that your Lordship has never reflected on,' he remarked pleasantly. 'Look at them, I pray you, when you have a little leisure,' and he took his leave.

Mr Reynolds lingered. He had,' he said, 'a private matter of which he wished to speak to his Lordship.' He was always very punctilious in his use of titles of respect when he was alone with Fitzgerald, though in company he affected the brusque, republican manner or the sentimental tone of loving friendship then fashionable in Paris, but now, as always when they were alone together, it was the silk merchant speaking to the nobleman whose mother seas his customer.

It seemed he had a personal favour to ask and one that rather surprised Fitzgerald. Mr. Thomas Reynolds wanted a lease of Kilkea Castle, which belonged to the Duke of Leinster...'if Lord Fitzgerald would say a word for him perhaps he might have it and on terms not too difficult,' and he added that he was thinking of marrying the sister of Mr. Tone's wife.

'Why, Mr. Reynolds, there should be no difficulty. I am sure my

brother will be glad to have you as a tenant.' But Fitzgerald thought, though his courtesy did not permit him to say so, that it was odd that the young silk merchant, in the midst of his patriotic schemes, should be thinking of socially raising himself by purchasing the lease of a pretentious residence, and using his money to give himself a stake in that country which he believed would shortly be shaken by a revolution.

Mr. Reynolds expressed a hearty gratitude for this promise, and went on to ask his Lordship if he would be present at the banquet to be given at White's tomorrow. It was to celebrate the victories gained by the French over the Austrians at Mons and Jemappe, and was intended to be purely British, but some deputies of the Convention, some generals and other officers of the armies then stationed in or visiting Paris, would be present. Mr. Reynolds ran over the names of several English and Irish people of importance who were openly going to declare their adherence to the principles of the French Revolution.

Without hesitation Lord Edward promised to be present.

CHAPTER 9

But that evening, when in the pale drawing-room at Madame de Sillery's house he told Pamela of his intention, she begged him not to attend, although the banquet was being given to celebrate a victory largely gained by her adopted brother, M. de Chartres.

He was surprised and overwhelmed at her warm appeal, for she had not asked him any favour before, and he forgot the banquet, his friends, and all their schemes and intrigues in the joy of her tenderness, her concern for him; this admission that their futures were involved.

The young girl looked passionately into his face. There was often something at once wild and wistful in her manner, as if she snatched herself desperately from a great melancholy.

'Do not go. Will you never understand how dangerous it all is? Will you always close your eyes to what is happening daily? You have your head in the air, I think.'

'Does my safety matter so much to you?' he asked, caring for nothing but to receive that assurance again and again.

'Were you not vowed to my service from the first moment that we met?'

'Indeed I was, dear, and I would not let anything in the world come between us.'

'This will come between us. You will be ruined and perhaps arrested, and how would I endure it?'

'Then I will not go, Pamela, if it will cause you the least uneasiness; and, dear, when will you marry me?' Her smile trembled into tears as she gave him both her hands.

'Is this the moment to think of our happiness? Oh, when you want —you know!'

'Then as soon as we can, Pamela. I know not what the formalities are here, but I will ascertain them to-day, this hour.'

'Would you be more careful of your safety if you were my husband?'

'If I were your husband, Pamela, I should think of nothing but you, of how to make you happy. As for my own happiness I should not need to consider that, for it would be assured.'

'Then marry me. Take me away quite soon, whether Adelaide and Madame de Sillery will leave Paris or not.'

'I intended to return to England soon, Pamela; next week, so I promised my mother. I hope to put in for my majority, too, and what could be of a more greater delight than to take you with me as my wife? My mother will love you!'

'Will she? I wonder! I am rather different from other young women. I have noticed English ladies, they are cold, proud.'

'My mother is not, nor my sisters, nor dear Henry. They will all love you, Pamela, nearly as much as I do. They will adore you, and my uncle Richmond, he will be your devoted servant, and my dear aunt Louise Connelly, and Lady Sarah Napier.'

'You do not even know who I am. Though I have been brought up with princes I am nothing and have nothing.'

'Pamela, do not you know that I have loved you since you were a tiny child and I gave you some nectarines? Why, I can smell the balm and laurels on that warm, sunny afternoon when I built the fort—I believed I never went back to put the flag on it...'

She smiled and shook her head, not understanding. 'And I want you to wear a little patch by your mouth, Pamela.'

Overwhelmed by the pain of his happiness, he dropped his face on her hands which rested on the arm of the yellow silk sofa.

'Oh, my darling, that this should happen to me.'

'Have you never loved before?'

'Never. I have always been in love with you. I thought I had found you twice, once your name was Kate, but no.'

'You said Louise.'

'Kate, Louise, Pamela. What does it matter, it was always you. When will you marry me?'

'When you will, if it will keep you from your dangerous friends and lure you home again; and I'll leave them, all of them, and go with you anywhere.'

CHAPTER 10

On taking the last letters of his mother and sisters from his pocket, Fitzgerald pulled out also the packet of papers that Mr. Wolfe Tone had given him. He opened and began to read them. When his eye had passed over a few sentences, even Pamela for a while went out of his mind. Here were facts carefully noted down, accounts of events, signed, dated, witnessed; yet, for all that, almost incredible. It was true, as Mr. Tone had surmised, that he, so long absent from Ireland and enclosed within the circle of the upper classes, had known little of this. How England ruled in Ireland; the scourging, branding, burning, the torturing; the Roman Catholics forcibly expelled from their homes, the Protestants put in their place, the systematic outrages of the Peep o' Day Boys, of the Orange men, of Protestant societies protected by the Government, the endless corruption of Parliament; the measure of injustice dealt out not merely to a wretched peasantry but to an intelligent, enlightened, peaceful gentry. Did it not all reveal an implacable desire to exterminate the Irish race and all traces of one of the most ancient cultures in Europe?

Fitzgerald, after an absorbed perusal of the papers, put them down and leant back in his chair. He thought, 'Does Grattan know of all this, and Stewart, or Leinster, or Henry? Then what ought I to do? Why, what Tone, the Sheares, and Reynolds do, of course.'

The papers dropped to the floor. Only a coward would hesitate...then, he remembered Pamela.

'No, I can't. I almost promised her. It would not be fair.'

Then there was his mother, his sisters, his good-natured brother Robert, the greatest man in Dublin, his beloved Henry, too. All these would be hurt, feel themselves disgraced, be brought perhaps near ruin.

'I can't do it. I ought not to do it.'

Tony came into the room and found his master sitting in front of the desk and thought he seemed ill, but Fitzgerald turned quickly, on the servant's timid question. 'No, Tony, I am very well. Ask them to give you a little brandy, if you please, and, Tony, put out my clothes for to-night, for I shall go down to the banquet they give.'

He thought: 'Did I promise that I would not do that? I can't help it, I must go. I should be the only Irishman in Paris not present. Besides, what harm could there be in it? They are all moderate men, and if they were not I ought not to hold back.'

As the Negro, with an anxious look, brought him the brandy, Fitzgerald said, 'Pick up those papers, Tony, and put them carefully together.' He rested his elbow on the desk and took his hot forehead in his hands. Those other men, they were risking all they had...they had not as much as he to risk, but what they had they were staking on this cause. Wolfe Tone had spoken of an adored family. What more could a man stake than that? But Pamela. Would it be possible to jeopardise the happiness of Pamela?

He slowly unfolded and read for the first time with only half his attention the letters from his family. They were tender with solicitude and affection; they begged him to be careful and return home at once; the English newspapers were full of a thousand disquieting reports from Paris; there were many Irish there, men of noble sentiments, no doubt, but rash, wild, some of them even open rebels...would he, for the sake of his mother and sisters, be careful? Not be concerned with rebels?

Fitzgerald put away the letters, locking them in his desk while his mind dwelt on that last word—rebels. To a foreign government, to a foreign tyranny? 'They are loyal to their own country, but I, what am I?'

He wrote hurriedly to Pamela.

'I must go to this banquet. I cannot stay away. Do not be uneasy. No harm will come of it, and in a few days we shall be in England.' He scratched out that word and wrote in 'Ireland:

Tony was lighting candles in the inner room which served as a dressing closet. Fitzgerald continued to sit at his desk. Never in all his wanderings had he felt so far from home, so much an exile. It was not the place but his destiny that had become strange and unfamiliar.

CHAPTER 11

The British dinner held at White's to celebrate Jemappes was an affair at once sober and brilliant. There was no fanatic talk, no boasting, no violent invective, but when dinner was over there were these toasts:

'*The Armies of France*. May the example of its citizen soldiers be followed by all enslaved countries till tyrants and tyrannies be extinct.'

Then proposed by General Dillon:

'*The People of Ireland*. May government profit by the example of France and reform prevent revolution.' Sir Robert Smith then drank to:

'*Speedy abolition of all hereditary titles and feudal distinctions*,' and if this last toast had a slightly fantastic air, there was nothing to be said against the sobriety and good taste of the other sentiments so publicly proclaimed.

Edward Fitzgerald, when he returned to his chambers, could not feel that he had been guilty of any vast indiscretion. To publicly renounce his courtesy title was at the utmost a rather childish act which he was slightly ashamed of, but for the rest his mind was eased and his spirit relieved by this act of public adherence to his countrymen's cause.

CHAPTER 12

The following morning he was out early, searching the florists' shops for flowers for Pamela. They were difficult to find in mid-winter and very costly, and he had not much money with him. He had sent Tony to Madame de Sillery's with his letter pleading for forgiveness for his attendance at the banquet, and he followed this himself almost immediately, taking with him to the pale room faint winter violets and primroses, cold beneath moss and leaves in a basket of gilt straw.

He found Pamela upon her knees beside the sofa on which Mademoiselle d'Orléans lay, her face hidden in a cushion. M. d'Orléans had been arrested, and his friends had warned his family that it would be wise for them to leave Paris immediately.

'Pamela, we will go at once, as soon as we are married.'

'I cannot wait for that. Madame de Sillery leaves tomorrow.' She gazed at him with an intense earnestness. 'Do you care enough for me to come with us?'

'Pamela! I will come with you this instant. I have no affairs that I cannot settle in a few hours, and we will be married in Switzerland, in Belgium, where you will, at the first place where we halt long enough.'

'That is the answer I hoped for,' said Pamela. Through her distress a wild joy flashed in her blue eyes. 'I believe we shall be very happy, you and I.'

'Are you surprised, Pamela? Did you expect me to hesitate on niceties?'

'No, but I am expecting a great deal of you. Adelaide, look up.'

The young princess sat up.

'Monsieur must excuse me,' she sighed. 'I regret this disorder.' Her handkerchief, already damp with tears, went again to her eyes. 'What have I to live for that I should fly?—but my father wishes me to go.'

'But surely the National Assembly would not touch M. d'Orléans?'

cried Fitzgerald. He again had that curious sense of bewilderment which had come to him so forcibly when he had noticed the unpopularity of the young hero of Jemappes. He thought of those Frenchmen whom he had met at the dinner last night. All appeared intelligent, moderate, enlightened men. Was it possible that there might be other influences at work and that an era of anarchy, chaos, was really at hand?

'Is it really true that M. de Chartres cannot obtain the release of his father?' he asked, frowning. 'It is indeed true,' said Mademoiselle Adelaide, wearily. 'He and M. Dumouriez are at Tournai—we mean to go there, to consult with them—one would think, after Valmy and Jemappes he might have some claim on France!'

Madame de Sillery entered the pale room. Her face looked old and haggard, and her usual elegant energy had changed into what seemed a useless impatience of words and movements. Fitzgerald, looking at her with compassion, remembered the story that she had long been not only the intimate friend but the lover of the unfortunate prince just arrested. She had with her the other adopted child, Hermine Compton.

'Ah, well, Mr. Fitzgerald, what do you think of our fortunes now?' she asked. 'I have at length been able to persuade Mademoiselle Adelaide to leave Paris. Do you accompany us?'

'Without any doubt,' answered Fitzgerald, and drew Pamela's hand through his arm.

CHAPTER 13

The weather suddenly changed. A mighty storm broke over Paris, bending the bare trees in the gardens of the Tuileries, along the banks of the Seine and in the Bois de Boulogne, sending broken branches whirling with straw, placards and dirty newspapers down the long, grey streets. The packets were delayed. Fitzgerald received no letters from England, and his sense of being cut off from his home and his usual life increased strongly. It seemed to him that he had snatched Pamela to him amid a violent tempest which disturbed the earth and heavens and altered all the lives of men. Public affairs began to take a sinister turn, even his sanguine temperament could not deny that the National Assembly was losing ground. It seemed to have no authority to stop riots, massacres, murders; terrible tales came in from the provinces; a low, steady murmur demanded the head of Philippe Egalité; might soon demand the head of M. de Chartres and his young brothers and sisters. With all the haste possible, Fitzgerald made preparation for these people, who a few weeks before had been to him strangers, but who now were his dearest concern on earth, to escape from what was becoming a city where anarchy was let loose.

CHAPTER 14

'Mr. Tone,'—Fitzgerald, on a chance meeting, paused and spoke impulsively—'you see where affairs are leading. You would not wish this for Ireland?'

'I am afraid, sir,' replied the other, smiling and unmoved, 'that what is happening in Ireland is worse than this. Have you read those papers I left with you?'

'Yes. They were horrible, but even so—'

'But I would not concern you, sir, with these affairs,' interrupted Mr. Tone. 'I hear of your approaching marriage.'

'Yes. That pledges me deeply and away from you, I fear. It is difficult, but I do feel myself bound.'

'I know. I understand. Perhaps if we were fortunate—'

Fitzgerald flushed. 'I should not like to appear a fair weather friend.'

'Nay, but if we were fortunate,' persisted Mr. Tone, 'you might further help us.'

'If in any way I could—without jeopardising the happiness of one who has suffered already! I do not disguise from you, Mr. Tone, that she and her family are flying for their lives, and I am busy on the preparation for this desperate journey.'

'Good luck to you, sir, and every happiness. Since you are not remaining in Paris I will not tell you any of my secrets. Keep clear of me and all my affairs, Lord Edward.'

But Fitzgerald could not bear to leave the man whom he so liked and admired, with this ease. He pressed Mr. Tone's hand and asked: 'But all goes as you would wish?'

'No, I have an impatient mind. If all went as I wish I should be landing with fifty French frigates behind me in Bantry Bay to-morrow, but...well...one must curb one's desires. Some of the progressives,

Lazare Hoche, M. Carnot and others are good fellows...but forget their names, my Lord, forget you saw Wolfe Tone, John Sheares and Thomas Addis Emmett.'

'I shall forget nothing,' cried Fitzgerald, warmly. 'But I shall not need to mention these matters.'

CHAPTER 15

Twenty-four hours later, hired carriages took Madame de Sillery, Hermine Compton, Pamela, Edward Fitzgerald, Mademoiselle Adelaide d'Orléans, and a few servants across the frontier. The Irishman had in his pocket a letter which announced his dismissal from the English army on account of his attendance at the banquet at White's Hotel. He did not mention this to Pamela, though he had at once told Madame de Sillery of the difference in his prospects.

'Oh, heavens!' that lady replied impatiently. 'What does any of that matter if we can but save our necks?'

CHAPTER 16

The journey, begun furtively, soon took on the character of open flight. The friends of liberty fled from the land of liberty and the ardent disciples of Jean Jacques Rousseau escaped in terror from the city where it was intended to transport his remains with all honour to the Pantheon. Madame de Sillery, who had from the early days of '89 boldly entertained all the Republican leaders, all the deputies of the National Assembly at Belle Chase, whose encouragement had induced a royal prince to espouse the popular cause, now fled from her native country in open terror, leaving that Liberal friend of the people, Philippe Egalité, who had voted for the death of his cousin the King, himself in prison, and in terror of that same guillotine Louis XVI had mounted not so many months before, whilst the young sister of the hero of Valmy and Jemappes, whose victory had been toasted at that enthusiastic banquet at White's, wore a veil to disguise her Bourbon features from hostile eyes. Madame de Sillery's bitterness was beyond expression, and the three young girls were nervous with fatigue and fear.

Mademoiselle d'Orléans left a father and two young brothers in the power of that spreading anarchy from which she had just fled, and continually broke into self-reproaches and would, but for Madame de Sillery's firmness, have insisted on turning back to Paris to share the fate of her family.

Fitzgerald alone was at ease, even happy. He was glad that Pamela was ruined, that she had nothing; he was glad that she was in peril, that he had been able to snatch her from it, he was infinitely pleased that she came to him thus forlorn, adorned only with the power of his dreams. The cold was intense; as they passed the frontiers the snow began to fall, but Madame de Sillery's relief at not having her passport questioned, nor any delay enforced on her, helped her to endure the discomforts of the weather.

The travelling carriages, changing horses at every post-house, proceeded as swiftly as the bad weather allowed across the muddy Flanders roads.

At one posthouse he could get no fresh saddle horse and so Fitzgerald had to take his place in the carriage beside Pamela.

It was the end of the short winter day and the cold seemed to increase with every hour. A heavy fall of sleet drifted down and was lost in the stiff furrows of mud that edged the roadside.

A few poor farms broke the dark monotony of the fields, and a faint blur of murky red showed where the sun was breaking the western clouds briefly before the final dark.

Pamela was huddled in one corner of the carriage, Hermine Compton leaning against her. Both the girls were half asleep, their coats turned up to their chins, folded shawls making pillows for their heads, and fatigue and cold seemed to emphasise the essential fragility of their youth.

Fitzgerald sat down opposite them, and taking off his greatcoat, placed it gently across their knees.

Pamela roused herself, pulled her hand out from her muff and gave it to him. He held it, leaning forward in his seat.

They would stop at Tournai, where they would be met by M. de Chartres and M. Dumouriez, and there they would be married. A strange marriage for people of their quality, but the times were strange.

The horses were fresh, and though the roads were uneven the carriage proceeded swiftly. The leathers at the window were not up and the young man could see the darkening fields on either side, and the red streak in the west growing fainter. It was a prospect of indescribable melancholy. The only sounds were the hoofs of the horses, an occasional crack of the whip from the coachman, and the heavy breathing of Hermine, as, broken by fatigue, she sank more and more heavily against Pamela.

Pamela left her hand in her lover's. To please him she had put a small patch at the corner of her mouth. She was now completely the realisation of his early vision, Louise of the nectarines, of the sunny late afternoon, of the walled fruit garden.

Tony was on the box, staunch but miserable, shuddering in heavy woollen overcoat and shawl, his face blanched to a blue tint by the freezing weather.

So Fitzgerald carried with him into this forlorn and alien night all the figments of that summer day long ago, the crouching black in the tapestry, the little girl on the terrace, and all the dreams they brought.

He tried to shake himself free of these remembrances which were touched with a faint horror. He tried not to remember the lofty green bedroom in the hotel in the rue de Richepanse, nor the water-colour sketch Tom Reynolds had shown him, nor the white feminine garments which Tony had brought from the press in the wall...

None of these things mattered now. He was happy. He had resolved to devote all his life to Pamela. Already the doctrines and the company of Tom Paine, the ideals and schemes of men like Mr. Tone, like Tom Reynolds, and the other Irish whom he had met in Paris, seemed far away. To his present mood that banquet at White's was just a piece of bravado.

That was all over now; whether these men were right or wrong, whether their plans would bring good or evil for Ireland, he could not be among them; it was Pamela and a peaceful life for him. Though he had been dismissed from the army he had some means, and many dear and well-placed relatives...Pamela might have many pleasant days...

She was looking at him steadily, her blue eyes smiling and tranquil; her expression was one of infinite trust. In an excess of love and gratitude he dropped his face on to her cold hand and pressed his warm lips to her chilled fingers.

'We are pledged now. Pamela. There is nothing but happiness ahead for us.' But while he spoke some mockery whispered in his soul: 'How dare one human being ever say that to another?'

'I do not expect very much,' replied Pamela. 'Just your company and a little quiet in which to enjoy it.' She spoke in a whisper for fear of disturbing Hermine.

Darkness rushed by the window, fitfully broken by the light of the coach lamps which showed nothing but barren glimpses of mud and bare trees, with now and then a gleam in some dark wayside water or the slash of the sleet across a milestone, or the dim glow of a candle in a cottage door or window.

The travellers shuddered, for the cold was penetrating. The young man could not shake off the intense melancholy of the moment, of the place; it seemed as if the very pulse of the world had stopped and they were riding aimlessly into nothingness. To raise his own spirits he said aloud:

'At Tournai we shall be married, and in a few days we shall be in Ireland and all this will be forgotten.'

The jolting of the carriage over a hole in the road woke Hermine. She gazed round her, startled, and clung to Pamela.

'This is a long stage!' she cried. 'Why do we ride in the dusk? Are we pursued? Ah, they have sent some one after us!'

'No, no,' cried Fitzgerald earnestly. 'You are safe now, Hermine! We are across the frontiers, in Flanders. There is nothing to be feared.'

But Hermine was not completely reassured. She was a soft, timid creature, whose small courage this hurried journey had completely overthrown. She moved to the other end of the carriage and pressed her face close to the cold glass, watching the scattered rays of the carriage lamps moving over the road in a wavering blur.

The lovers faced each other alone. Pamela had withdrawn her hand on which she wore his gold ring, set with a cornelian engraved with a satyr; it was a jewel which had been in his possession in Paris and one that he had long loved. She was almost lost to him in obscurity. He felt his senses bewildered by these interchanged shadows, and again dreams, and the memories of the past that were more powerful than dreams, had great power over him.

He should have been completely happy, and so, he told himself valiantly, he was. Yet this happiness was overshadowed by a sense that he was not master of his own destiny, and that neither he nor Pamela were intended for happiness.

The sleet changed to snow, the flakes lay in a white rim round the carriage windows. They gazed at each other through an increasing cold in which their warm breaths showed scattered lights; they were entering the suburbs of Tournai.

CHAPTER 17

As the carriage stopped in the inn yard the travellers were met by General Dumouriez and General Egalité, as M. de Chartres was called. Both wore the uniform of the Republic; the Bourbon prince, not yet twenty years old, had a graceful, romantic appearance; the other was a noble-looking man well past middle age. Both had adopted the classic Republican style, their hair was short and un-powdered, they wore the tricolour sash, they seemed in a considerable nervous agitation.

Mademoiselle Adelaide rushed to her brother and clung to him. Fitzgerald glanced at them with compassion, their situation seemed to him to hold a peculiar humiliation, a peculiar terror.

'I trust,' M. de Chartres exclaimed, after Madame de Sillery's rapid introductions, 'that M. d'Orléans is safe?'

Neither M. Dumouriez nor Madame de Sillery noticed this use of an abolished title which was unwise in public. The young soldier, holding his sister closely, added:

'He's to be arrested! And I no longer have any influence!'

'So many misfortunes, so much injustice!' exclaimed Madame de Sillery, who was overcome by fatigue. 'It is incredible!'

Fitzgerald drew Pamela away from all of them, out of the dark, the cold thin snow, into the warm light of the inn. Tony followed with the hand valises. The young man, between the woman and the 'Negro, felt himself still clouded by that childhood's adventure; the slave had come down from the tapestry to put himself under his protection, and Louise had grown into his bride who was leaning on his arm. But, attendant on them, were a thousand nameless shadows that seemed to menace, to overcast all his happiness. He would not heed them; he held Pamela closely to him and kissed her cold mouth by the little patch that she wore to please him.

PART THREE

CHAPTER 1

The little estate had an odd charm, and seemed far away from reality.

A stranger, who had come with an air of assurance up the narrow lane, paused, and glanced about him with a frown.

It was a soft day with an opal coloured sky. The high elm trees were covered with their first green, and the shrubs showed small and shining leaves.

The traveller slightly shrugged his shoulders as if resolutely dismissing uneasy thoughts, and proceeded to a small gate in the fence which gave on to a gravel court surrounded by high old trees. At the back was the little white house soft with shadows cast by the boughs of a tall ash tree. Red roses and golden honeysuckle grew up to the bay windows, and among them hung wicker cages in which thrushes were singing.

The estate was enclosed by a high wall like a rampart which was set with carefully clipped bushes and small trees that gave a deep and pleasant border of shade. In parts the wall sank until it was no higher than the knees and disclosed a long, distant blue view across pretty cultivated country to the Curragh.

This was Kildare Lodge, situated a little way out of Kildare town, and the man who had come there on pressing business had found some difficulty in discovering this rural retreat.

A perfect summer stillness lay over everything. There was no one in sight, and no sound except the song of the captive thrushes.

The stranger paused at the small gate; he seemed in half a mind to return without executing his errand, but, putting this aside, he advanced with a firm step up the gravel path to the toy-like white house. The two bay windows were wide open, the fine muslin curtains stirred faintly in the warm air. On one of the bottom sills was a stand of auriculas and mignonette; by it was a gilt workbox on which were baby's caps in lace and cambric.

The stranger again hesitated. He could find no means of attracting attention in this place so invitingly open to all the world, so

unprotected and, it seemed, so empty. But as he stood undecided and a little embarrassed, a lady appeared in the open doorway and stood between the waving tendrils of honeysuckle.

She wore a frilled muslin jacket and a gown of white lawn with a lilac sprig. She had an ivory thimble on her finger, and a pair of delicate scissors hung by a blue ribbon to her waist.

Her face was lovely and at the corner of her lips she had a little patch, a fashionable coquetry which seemed out of place with her simple dress.

'Lady Edward Fitzgerald?' asked the stranger.

'I am she,' the lady replied readily, in an English which had a foreign accent. 'But I expect it is my husband you want. Will you come inside, sir?'

He followed her into a parlour which was, even more than the garden and exterior of the house, touching in its simplicity.

Everywhere there were flowers, growing in pots, arranged on stands and carefully tended (no cut bouquets or formal arrangements), with such a lavishness of bloom, that with its open window and fine breeze blowing in, the room just seemed to be a continuation of the garden.

A child of a little over a year old sat on the sofa and played with a large shell, which he now and then held to his ear to listen to the murmur of the sea, and now and then caressed with his fingers to feel the glossy surface.

The only expensive thing in the room was a service of fine china which had just been unpacked; cups and saucers still swathed in straw stood about on the table.

'That is a present from my good mother-in-law,' said the lady. She had the kind of manner which treats everybody alike and no one with either great coldness or great confidence. 'It has been sent me to-day from England. See how pretty it is, fine as eggshell and the colours so bright. What name shall I give my husband?' she added, fixing her large, clear eyes on the stranger. 'He is out in the garden with Tony working at his beds. Of course he will be pleased to see

you, yet I am sure he will be sorry to be disturbed. He is his own under-gardener, you see, and loves his work.'

'I don't know if Lord Edward will remember me, Madame. My name is Sheares, Mr. John Sheares. I didn't know that I should be disturbing Lord Edward. Your home, Madame, I confess, puts me out of humour with my business.'

'You come on politics?' She frowned instantly. 'Well, we have had enough of those.'

'Politics! I will give it a less tedious name, Madame. Say, the affairs of Ireland. I am not very well known to Lord Edward, but I represent many friends of his.'

The lady looked at her child, her glance was poignant; the stranger interpreted it and said with emphasis: 'Friends, Madame; believe me, I could intend no harm to this obvious felicity.'

'My husband,' replied Pamela briefly, 'is, I believe, very happy here. Come, sir, let us find him.'

Mr. John Sheares followed her out of the little house and discovered the man whom he had come from Dublin to see at the back of the courtyard in a small flower garden, his coat off and a spade in his hand, on which he rested, while, under his directions, a huge Negro was delicately digging in the border of primroses, polyanthus, pinks and cloves.

Edward Fitzgerald looked up, and on seeing Mr. Sheares seemed for a moment startled, but quickly recovered, and, slipping on his coat, bade his visitor:

'Welcome to Kildare Lodge, where you find me as happy as Adam before the fall.'

Pamela frowned a little; she did not seem as lighthearted as her husband. She went back to her little house, her child and her needlework, while the two men, by Mr. Sheares's express wish, remained in the open air.

Fitzgerald's welcome of this man, of whom indeed he remembered very little, was warm, but he asked candidly: 'Why did

you put yourself to the trouble to follow me out here into the wilderness? I am still sometimes to be seen at Dublin, and may be there next month.'

'I thought, sir, we could meet here with less noise than in Dublin. A man travelling through Kildare may venture to call on an acquaintance without his attracting suspicion.'

'Suspicion!' echoed Lord Edward, lightly. 'Now, what pass have we come to that you must use that word? Are there more troubles than I know of already from the public prints? An odious war on the Continent, this miserable government at home! I still read the papers, I assure you. They remain my principal diversion, after my flowers and shrubs.'

'All the journals that speak the truth of the present state of affairs in Ireland have been suppressed,' said Mr. Sheares briefly. He added: 'I have come expressly, this juncture passes the need of compliments, on the behalf of others to ask how far your Lordship will go with us?'

Fitzgerald did not answer. He turned his eyes to the borders of flowers which Tony continued to rake diligently with his small hand fork.

'I speak for the United Irishmen,' added Mr. Sheares. He was a tall, fine-looking man, a lawyer, but with the air of a soldier.

'You are aware, sir, that we continue to exist, though all such societies and clubs have been suppressed by the Government?'

'Yes, yes, I am aware of it,' replied Fitzgerald, carelessly.

'Yet you have not joined us, sir? Mere lack of a formality, I suppose?'

Fitzgerald still smiled:

'It is difficult to take these affairs with full seriousness in a place like this—but pray continue, sir.'

'I, perhaps,' said Mr. Sheares, 'have no right to endeavour to draw your Lordship from your rural retreat, but we cannot forget how

you spoke for us. I mean, for the oppressed people of Ireland. Ay, and were even arrested for that generous protest, soon after your return from France in '92. Yours was the one voice then, I think, my Lord, raised against the measures of the English Government. We were sorry that your Lordship did not speak again.'

'I felt that I spoke to no purpose.'

'I know,' replied Sheares. 'So do men like Grattan and Ponsonby. We are left to our own resources. Believe me, they are not ignoble.'

Lord Fitzgerald, leaning on his spade, smiled wistfully.

'What can I do? You speak to a man who has no more than eight hundred a year, a small estate, a small family, a peaceful mind.'

'Has your Lordship forgotten '92 in Paris? I met you there. You remember Mr. Tone, Reynolds, Bond?'

'Yes, I remember them all, and good patriotic fellows they were. I remember, too, how I felt myself, what excitement, exultation,' he sighed. 'I also took a resolution not to meddle too much in dangerous affairs, and I found a wife. Besides, what was it?' he added, with increasing animation. 'Under one's very eyes France fell into anarchy, chaos, horror. One could not wish that for Ireland. Yet I don't know.' He added an impulsive question: 'Are you thinking of foreign invasion, Mr. Sheares? I remember that was Mr. Tone's design then.'

'Some of us think of that as a desperate expedient, my Lord, and some of us believe that perhaps it is the only one. The English Government is weak both in authority and in military force.'

'A display of foreign power on the coast!' Fitzgerald interrupted with a frown. 'I don't like it. I'm partially English myself, you know. I'm deeply attached to many English people, am even a friend of the Prince and the Duke of York; I always feel my loyalty very divided, Mr. Sheares. Perhaps you had better tell me no more of your plans. I don't wish to see Ireland under the French flag.'

'But surely, sir, you wish to see it under its own flag?'

'Is that possible?' asked Fitzgerald. 'Sometimes I wonder!'

'The present state of affairs can't go on,' declared Mr. Sheares, with his air of authority and his formidable glance fixed upon the other. 'Even shut away here, sir, with your flowers and your wife and your child you must realise what is going on in the country. Look at the Catholics. Promised everything, a few poor concessions given, then most forcibly repulsed. They and the Dissenters are now joined in one common cause. The English Government, sir, under the iron rule of Mr. Pitt, is pledged to give nothing, not an inch, to Ireland. Their design now, more than ever, is to crush us, exterminate us.'

'I have heard it said,' interrupted Fitzgerald, 'that the design may be—I tell you this in confidence, sir, I got it from my brother Leinster—to force Ireland to a rebellion, and thus obtain an excuse for sending over a powerful military expedition.'

'That may be,' replied Mr. Sheares. 'If we are prudent and well organised, which I believe we shall be, we can defy such tricks. My Lord,' he added urgently, 'you must be aware that only through the force of arms have we any hope. Clare and Castlereagh, who once supported the Reformers, are now hot for the English supremacy, and,' he added, with the firmness of a man who had flung down an unanswerable argument, 'what do they mean by the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, sent as a moderate to pacify our troubles? Is not that in itself a declaration of enmity?'

'It has certainly made me lose all patience with the Government,' agreed Fitzgerald, 'but I doubt if I am a man to help your cause save with the goodwill and the small subscription that any modest patriot may give you.'

'We lack military men, my Lord. We have among us no soldiers, and then your Lordship's influence and connections...'

Fitzgerald interrupted:

'I could not answer for any of them. My brother Leinster has always had the cause of the people at heart, but it could not be expected that he would take any open action against the Government. Henry is settled in England; Charles, I know, would not meddle. I could not be expected to involve them. Should I go in with you I would not even let them know my designs nor my whereabouts. But shall I go in with you?' he added, with a sudden half humorous sparkle in his dark eyes. 'I doubt it. I have no great ability and find it difficult to make

calculations or go into the ramifications of policies, or weigh up this or that. I was always known as rash, and something of a dreamer. I doubt if I'd do you any good.'

'Your Lordship's name alone would carry the greatest weight and encouragement to all engaged in this enterprise. We have among us many men of great eloquence, learning and talent, some of whom you know, such as Thomas Addis Emmett, O'Connor, and my own brother Henry, who is well spoken of by all.'

'I know, I know,' said Fitzgerald, warmly. 'Mr. Tone, what does he do? I have not heard of him for a while.'

'A banished man, sir. He is bound to keep his proceedings dark, but he is much in France and still works at the Directory for an expedition.'

'And you, too?' said Fitzgerald. 'Is that your aim?' He looked straight at the other. 'You want first an armed rising and then a landing of a French force in Ireland?'

Mr. Sheares replied boldly:

'We have not got, so far, such a plan yet, sir, but I hope that will be the end of it.'

He said no more, but tactfully left Fitzgerald to the thoughts that this speech must provoke.

A free Ireland, a country liberated by the force of her own arms, once again with her own flag, her own properties, her own arts and culture, a free nation among the free nations of Europe. A people, almost exterminated by hundreds of years of systematic oppression, lawless cruelty and internal divisions, once more raised, triumphant. To an enthusiastic and enlightened mind such a prospect was almost irresistible. Fitzgerald felt all the excitement of the French days of '92 return, and he wondered if he had been right in forgoing everything in view of his obligation to Pamela. He murmured half to himself: 'I am quite happy here, quite pleased and content,' and fell silent again, pacing up and down the gravel path, between the neat borders of flowers.

In no tone of urging, Mr. Sheares said:

'Your Lordship's principles are so well known, you have ever been so foremost in your advocacy of liberty, that we considered it scarcely just to yourself to leave you in your retirement in ignorance of our intentions.'

'You must not think,' replied Fitzgerald, 'that I shall hang back in such a matter. You may, when you will, enrol me as one of your United Irishmen. I confess it attracts me more now it is a secret society put down by Government than when it was openly permitted.'

'Tyrants are generally fools! The administering of the oath is now illegal,' said Mr. Sheares. 'Since all our members are liable to arrest we have to use considerable caution, but as there are so many of us, and as it would be almost impossible for a traitor to gain admittance to our ranks, we have little to fear.'

Fitzgerald seemed to rouse himself suddenly out of a slightly uneasy mood. With a warm look he put his hand on Mr. Sheares's arm, and said:

'Come into the house. Pamela will have some refreshment for you. We must not talk too long on heavy topics. It seems to me hard to be serious-minded on such a morning.'

'Sir, I am a peaceful family man myself, and I would I were not the one to darken your felicity, but there are those in Ireland who cannot see the sun for misery, and we must think a little, sir, of our children and what their fate will be if we allow these tyrannies to encroach unchecked.'

They entered the house. Pamela had a meal ready for them on the table, where the Duchess of Leinster's china had been unpacked, all very delicate and dainty and pretty, with a fresh little country maid to wait on them. The warm wind, which was rising a little, blew the curling tendrils of the honeysuckle and the petals of roses through the wide open bay window where the thrushes sang behind the muslin curtains.

'Have you come to take my husband away from me?' asked Pamela from behind her pots of honey and cream. Mr. Sheares thought there was something in her eyes and her manner that seemed to bespeak a constant apprehension of danger. He replied earnestly:

'No, Madame, I call God to witness. I only wish to know his mind.'

Fitzgerald, putting his arm on his wife's shoulder, which was warm through the thin muslin, said:

'If I go to Dublin, you will come too, Pamela.'

'But I don't wish to go to Dublin,' cried the lady with vehemence, 'to lodge in Leinster House which is gloomy and vast like a barracks or a prison! There is misery abroad whenever one puts one's foot in the street, and all your relatives, Edward, though they are so dear and kind, do not really like me but think that all the time I am a Frenchwoman, a stranger, one who has not helped you much by marrying you.'

'Oh, hush, my dear little Pamela, you must not say those foolish things. You are too sensitive and think too much of people not liking you—and such nonsense!'

'I have never,' put in Mr. Sheares, sincerely, 'heard any one say they do not like your Ladyship. Why, is not Lady Edward Fitzgerald a reigning toast and beauty?'

'Ah,' laughed her husband, 'and did she not when she was in Dublin dance every night? Did I not go to ball after ball just for the pleasure of seeing her?'

'Those light moods have passed,' murmured Pamela, with a touch of sullenness. 'I have a child now. The truth is, I suppose, I am a little weary of the world.' Then she broke into sudden smiles and glanced, as if pleading for an excuse, at Mr. Sheares, 'Oh, sir, forgive me, but when you have been in the midst of great affairs since you were a child and been through those hideous days in France and seen so many you knew and loved taken from you by violent death, why, then you grow a little frightened. You want a little cottage like this, I suppose, and nothing else.'

'Believe me, Madame, it is to preserve such homes as this and such women as yourself that I and all patriots labour.'

CHAPTER 2

For the rest of the meal they talked on other matters. Shortly after, Mr. Sheares took his leave, refusing to discuss any more politics with Lord Edward. In the pretty, sunny room, however, he left a bundle of papers, 'which related,' he said gravely, 'the numerous activities and designs of the United Irishmen.'

So completely did Mr. Sheares trust Lord Edward that he gave him these papers of the highest importance without even cautioning him as to the peril there might be in disclosing them to anyone through accident or misfortune.

As soon as their handsome guest had gone (he had left his horse in Kildare to avoid any impression of a formal visit to Lord Edward) Pamela turned quickly to her husband.

'What are you going to be involved in now? I behaved as well as I could. I was not discourteous, was I? But why must he come here to disturb us?'

'Hush, my darling, you must not distress yourself. I already knew almost all he said, but I suppose'—the young man frowned with the difficulty of expressing himself—'well, all these other men have ventured a good deal, you see, and I suppose they think I should, also my principles are known.'

'So should your circumstances be!'

'They also,' he replied, troubled, 'most of them, at least, have wives and children, dear enough to them, Pamela!'

Surprised by his unexpected seriousness, for she had hoped that he would laugh away the visit of the serious, proud Mr. Sheares, she ran to him and clung to his arm:

'You're not really considering joining them?'

'My dear Pamela, there's nothing in joining them. Every Irishman worth the name belongs to them already; as for it being illegal, there is nothing in that—I'm in no danger. Why, even Clare, who is the most English of any in the Government, is my friend. Nothing and no one

could touch me whatever I did.'

Pamela did not feel this confidence. She shook her head:

'I heard M. d'Orléans say something like that. He too, was very certain he was safe, and what was the end of it?'

'All that was so different, Pamela, I am almost ashamed to think how safe I am, besides they do not mean any dangerous intrigue—'

She interrupted quickly:

'I heard that man talk of a descent on the part of the French!'

'Ah, that is Mr. Tone's work. He is a remarkable man, full of implacable energy, a great patriot. He has been working for years at that project, and may achieve it yet—'

'Bah, you are trying to evade me, Edward. You know well enough that if there was a French invasion all concerned in it would be considered as traitors!'

'No, no, Pamela, you must not think such things. You see, I have agitated you for nothing, I would you had not seen Sheares.'

'Would you had not seen him, darling.'

Deeply distressed, he begged her to be calm. Tears were running down her face and she sobbed as she leant against his shoulder. When she had first come to Dublin she had led what had seemed to many a life of thoughtless gaiety for one whose adopted father had lately been guillotined, and whose adopted brothers and sisters were imprisoned or in exile. She had seemed, indeed, to forget everything except her married love and trivial pleasures. But she had had moments even then when she would lie in his arms weeping for no cause at all, or when, resting in a chair beside the fire, she stared into the flames musing on what he hardly liked to question, answering his caresses only with sighs.

He had his sad moods himself, and these depressions of hers frightened him. They were so closely united that the mood of one affected the other, and when Pamela was sad her husband would be too. A common memory, a common dread seemed to engulf them

both.

He desperately kissed away her tears and spoke of their joys and delights in the Kildare cottage, swearing to her that whatever he did her personal happiness should not be touched. But she shook her head beneath his kisses, knowing too well that he had no power to keep such promises. In her mind was the recollection of how easily she had detached him from his friends in Paris, how quickly he had left all those dangerous Republicans to follow her across the frontier.

'Then,' she reflected, 'we were not married. Nosy he has had me for several years, perhaps my spell is not so potent.' She thought, too, with some self-reproach: 'Perhaps it is wrong to try and keep a man like this inactive,' and she pulled away from his embraces and went resolutely back to the crate of china and began taking off the wisps of straw and polishing the cups and saucers and plates with her handkerchief.

CHAPTER 3

Fitzgerald returned to the garden. He felt he could not bear more words with Pamela; the moment was past speech, yet why? Sheares had said very little he, Fitzgerald, did not know, and he had been expecting some call from the United Irishmen, but there are days that seem to mark the end of an epoch and this was surely one.

Fitzgerald turned his gaze to where the wall was low. He liked to look across the tranquil stretches of the rich, cultivated country towards the sparkle of the river. Standing there it was difficult to believe that an entire nation was being goaded into desperate revolt, that on every hand were instances of tyranny, oppression, cruelty, intolerance, which had united in one staunch brotherhood the Dissenter and the Catholic, the peasant and the gentleman. Fitzgerald was not familiar with the twists and turns of politics which were the usual weapons of men like Clare and Castlereagh, Grattan and Ponsonby. His nature was essentially simple, and averse to any intrigue; he had no taste for the details of governing. His early training had been military, and he had no guide beyond his own intelligence by which to judge the present situation of his country. The democratic experiment in France did not show now with that pristine splendour in which it had glowed in '92; hideous excesses had disgraced the cause of liberty, and the name of Jacobin was abhorred by all moderate men in Europe, Englishmen in particular. Even those Whigs who had hitherto considered they stood for advanced and liberal principles, regarded all the disciples of the French Revolution with horror.

Fitzgerald himself had to admit that he had been the victim of a generous, a foolish delusion. He looked back to those first Parisian days of his, that impetuous visit to Paris in '92 with regret, to the dreams he had had then which he would never be able to have again. Sharp little details emphasised those pictures of the past, the green bedroom in the first hotel where he had stayed, and his meeting with Tom Paine, Mr. Reynolds and the other Irishmen, the water-colour sketch of the girl's head, then his chance visit to the theatre and seeing Madame de Sillery in her box, and afterwards going home with her to supper, and Pamela asleep by the dead fire in the pale room. That long, cold journey towards Tournai and their marriage; Hermine Compton asleep on the other girl's shoulder. He had held

Pamela's hand as they watched the rays of lamplight from the carriage windows and the black melancholy fields; it was curious that his present sunny surroundings could not efface the darkness of those memories. His mind went further back, to his uncle's Château at Aubignè, the tapestry in the Orangery and the visit of the boy Reynolds, when he was building his toy fort...

He paused by the low wall; his dark, usually animated face was thoughtful.

'I am not the man for them; I ought not to do it. I doubt if I can do them any good, but I'll join them formally, to show I am not against them or standing out. What would the Government do if we were discovered? I wonder if there would be great severity. Clare's my friend and Castlereagh's wife seems to love mine. I would I were in Leinster's place or that he was in mine. Dear fellow, he should show a stronger hand.'

But as he gazed over the soft Irish landscape the romantic, the adventurous side of the proposed enterprise became uppermost in his mind. After all, why be afraid? England had only a small force in Ireland and was harassed by troubles abroad. If the Irish were properly organised, if it was possible to arm them, if there was a rising simultaneously all over the country, might they not, without the help of the French Republic, achieve something?

He believed that there was something he might do. He was a good organiser, a good soldier. He had had considerable experience in the American wars. As a Fitzgerald he would possess unbounded authority, awake unbounded loyalty and love. Every Irishman would be on the side of reform, of freedom. They would throw out the foreigners, the jobbers, break up this farcical Parliament and obtain the reform for which they had been pressing since England had told Ireland to defend herself when Belfast demanded aid against the invader in '78; and Ireland's murmured reply had been: 'If we must defend ourselves, we must rule ourselves.'

Not under any slant that could be given to the affair, could the taint of treason or treachery attach to them. They would be Irishmen fighting for Ireland. They would behave in every way with tolerance and moderation. There would be no more bloodshed than was necessary. The English should be sent back to their own country. 'Pamela has made me too happy. I have been idle too long. Sheares

is quite right, I ought to do something. It's foolish, almost cowardly to say I can't help.' He turned away abruptly from the low wall. He was sorry, for the first time in his life, that he had so little money. Money would be very necessary.

It was as if, Fitzgerald thought, everything in his life had suddenly fallen into place, like the pieces of a puzzle deftly and unexpectedly arranged.

'I suppose I've been wanting to do this. I suppose I was meant to do this, ever since I used to be troubled by that figure of the black slave in the tapestry if it was in the tapestry and not really there—I can never be sure.' He paused to look at his deep crimson roses; he could never pass these flowers, the result of his own labour, without the tribute of admiration. How rich they hung, weighted down on their fine stems, dark red petals folded over the hidden gold heart. For the first time he reflected between amusement and sadness: 'I should not be considering these—but pinning on my coat some of these poor shamrocks Tony is carrying away with the weeds.'

Pamela appeared at the window and looked out across the shadows on the lawn; her face was troubled. Her husband, so sensitive to her moods, felt that she knew he was going to risk their happiness; betray their happiness, perhaps, she would call it, and he was bitterly puzzled as to where his duty lay.

She had no one but himself; he knew she was aware that she, snatched from disaster, from the midst of a doomed family, was only loved by his friends for his sake. She was very lonely, had been perhaps always lonely, even in the crowded days at Belle Chase.

He was not surprised nor hurt that few people really liked Pamela. She was for him alone. Only for him did her charms and graces unfold, like a flower opening to warmth; he could not be displeased that she kept for him all her secrets of soul and mind. She had fulfilled for him even the expectations of a dream; if Pamela died or left him he would stand in a void.

And if he had to leave Pamela? He could not imagine her existing apart from himself. Surely she would wither and blow away on the first chance wind, like a blossom from a felled tree.

He was confronted by an old dilemma—should a man who has

achieved for himself a rare happiness jeopardise it for others, for a cause, for an ideal, perhaps for a dream?

'It seems folly, yet if no one had ever done so, there would have been little of worth in the world.' Pamela did not look at him; she put up her arm and pushed aside the sprays of honeysuckle. Her movements were languid; she was expecting another child. Since she would not glance at him, he could not bear to look at her; he turned away, beyond the ash tree and thought with resentment of John Sheares; the reserved, taciturn man who had, without fuss or ado, put before him—what?

Fitzgerald was instantly ashamed of his pang of dislike for his visitor; he thought of what Sheares and all his fellows were risking; of the stakes, the hazards, the rewards, of what was surely the noblest game a man could play.

And the little house and garden, even the woman and the child, seemed, in comparison to this, just vain, pretty toys.

PART FOUR

CHAPTER 1

In the spacious drawing-room of Mr. Oliver Bond, one of the wealthiest, most respected merchants in Dublin, who had already been fined and imprisoned for his bold stand against the government, the tall wax candles had been lit and the rich damask curtains drawn carefully, so that no thread of light would show from within.

About twenty gentlemen were gathered round the long, shining table on which were piles of paper, stand-dishes, quills, knives for sharpening them, slender engraved decanters and glasses.

Among the company were Mr. Thomas Reynolds, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. John and Mr. Henry Sheares, Mr. Thomas Addis Emmett, Mr. Lawless, Dr. M'Niven, Mr. Oliver Bond himself, Major Jackson, who had just arrived from Paris with messages from Mr. Wolfe Tone, and Mr. Emmett's younger brother Robert, who was still at college.

There was nothing unlawful in the appearance of any of these men, who had been forced by an arbitrary law into changing from a peaceful society which had had, in the first instance, the blessing of the government, into a secret organisation which was becoming every day more and more like a conspiracy.

Each man, before entering into these dangerous affairs had counted the probable risk he ran, but these reflections had never been put forward in any open discussion and only the greater secrecy that accompanied each of their meetings showed that they were aware of their increasing danger.

These were usually held at the mansion of Mr. Oliver Bond, for this gentleman, liberal, cultured, generous, had a reputation for musical entertainments and literary evenings which formed a good excuse for the gathering together of so many people so frequently at his house.

The ladies of the establishment would always, when the United Irishmen met, give a concert of harp, spinet and singing. They were careful to leave the windows open so that some of the music could be heard in the streets; many members brought their wives with them, so that when they came and when they left, there was always feminine

chatter, and a coming and going of sedan chairs, and boys in livery and link bearers which gave the whole proceeding an innocent air. But the ladies soon retired to an upper room and then, with the curtains drawn and the candles on the table, the men brought out their papers and discussed their projects which became, with every day, more daring.

The recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, the liberal-minded Viceroy, who was pledged to reform, the sending of Lord Campden, who though humane, was known to be weak, and sent as a mere figurehead to mask the actions of men like Lord Castlereagh, Secretary for Ireland, and Clare, the Lord Chancellor; the suppression of every journal except the government ones; the protection given to Orange Societies and their outrages, the terrible cruelties practised in all parts of the country on the Catholic peasantry, the hopelessness of obtaining legal redress from a corrupt parliament, all these had increased the firm resolve of these Irishmen to throw off English rule by force to a point when they, prudent, sober as they were, no longer counted the cost.

Rebellion was their simple objective; most of them were now reconciled to the necessity of obtaining French help, and this meeting was for the purpose of selecting a delegate to undertake the delicate and dangerous mission of going to Paris and putting the state of Ireland before the Directory.

Mr. Wolfe Tone was in the French capital, and none could have been more zealous or hardworking, but, since he had long been banished from Ireland, it was impossible for him to judge of affairs there as accurately as one fresh from Dublin. Lazare Carnot, President of the Directory, though sympathetic, wanted more information before he would send a fleet.

Mr. Oliver Bond, speaking as quietly as if he had been conducting some business transaction, put this question to the gentlemen present: 'Who is to go to France?'

The young merchant leant slightly forward in his place and glanced down the line of intent, grave faces. He flushed as he repeated his question:

'Who is to go to France?'

Mr. O'Connor and Major Jackson offered again to undertake this journey, so difficult, so perilous, so supremely important. Mr. John Sheares, who was in the chair, objected that these two gentlemen, passing so frequently between France and Ireland, would certainly come to be suspected. Since Lord Fitzwilliam's recall the government had become in all departments a great deal more vigilant.

Arthur O'Connor admitted the force of this objection. 'But who would you propose, Mr. Sheares? Carnot wants a military man—and one well versed in affairs here—'

'Sir, I did think of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—'

At this name there was a little stir in the company; Mr. Reynolds exclaimed:

'Lord Edward! He is not one of us! But it is true that in Paris, in '92, he was a fervent republican—'

There has never been any doubt as to Lord Edward's views, Mr. Reynolds—nor as to his loyalties—he has long known of our activities —'

'But never taken part in them,' put in Mr. Reynolds sharply.

'He may do so now. I waited on him in Kildare and had some talk with him. He is now in Dublin and I have told him of this meeting.'

'You expect him, then!' asked Oliver Bond; his astonishment caused Mr. Sheares to smile.

'Why not?'

'It is a graver risk for him—'

'For all of us, sir. And I have never heard any reflections on Lord Edward's courage.'

'He hung back in '92,' muttered Mr. Reynolds.

'Did he? He was cashiered from the English army for that banquet at White's—'

Mr. Reynolds shrugged, then carefully poured himself out a glass

of sherry.

'I don't believe he'll come,' he said, his small deep-set eyes lively with interest. 'I don't believe that he'll come.'

'At least,' remarked Oliver Bond, 'he's late.'

A servant entered and asked his master if he should bring in a gentleman who had given the password. 'Do you know him, Higgins?'

'Sir, it is Lord Edward Fitzgerald.'

CHAPTER 2

As the young man greeted the company, most of whom were known to him, many thought that this Edward Fitzgerald had much more to lose than any of them, and did not seem to realise what it meant to risk everything on one throw. Some of them were inclined to think that he joined them out of lightheartedness, and some pitied him for joining them at all. They did not foresee any immediate menaces to life or property, but they believed that they might be embroiled in severe disturbances to their peace and their fortune; and if not desperate men, they were prepared to go to great lengths in the cause they had undertaken; they wondered if this son of a Duke, this brave young soldier, was a man whom it was fair to embroil in their affairs.

Mr. John Sheares, in particular, who had gone to Kildare to rouse him from his retreat, showed compunction and began urging the newcomer to think well what it meant for a Fitzgerald, at this moment in the nation's affairs, to join the secret society of the United Irishmen.

Fitzgerald responded: 'Your motives are good, and but for appalling tyranny in the country, your society would be open, your meetings public. I have no hesitation in joining you.'

As they did not reply to this, and he still read in their looks a hesitation, a compassionate reluctance, he spoke with an added firmness:

'Nay! I read your kind thoughts. You know of my English connections. You think it may be very hard for me. You noted that in Paris in '92 I gave up politics suddenly on my marriage.'

'But we remember,' said Mr. Sheares, 'when your Lordship returned to Dublin, you spoke up in the House.'

'My principles have never changed, nor my hopes and wishes,' replied Fitzgerald, smiling, as he leant forward with that complete forgetfulness of self that so quickly evokes complete trust. 'Most of you have wives and families. All of you have your comfortable homes and your pleasant fortunes, therefore you risk as much as I can, for no man can risk more than his all.'

No one answered for a while, and Fitzgerald looked from one to another, smiling; then his glance fell on Mr. Reynolds whom he had not met since the Paris days of '92; but memory darted further back than that—to some depth of time when a boy had been building a fort in an Orangery and another boy had come prying in on him. Fitzgerald was amazed by his own sense of easiness in this encounter; for a second time the two men gazed at each other as if they were alone; then Reynolds said boldly:

'I am glad to see you in this company, my Lord.'

CHAPTER 3

With an eagerness that was from a desire to pledge himself to himself as much as to these other men, Fitzgerald asked if he might take the oaths as a member of the United Irishmen, though Mr. John Sheares urged:

'They may in your case be waived, my Lord. They could give us no more security than your character affords, and might for you be an additional peril.'

But as Lord Edward insisted, the oaths were accordingly administered; there had been lately a great military activity in Dublin and the new town major, Sirr, and his squad of special police, had shown great diligence in rooting out disaffection against the government. So the ceremony of taking the oaths was kept secret. It was Mr. Henry Sheares, a milder-looking man than his brother, with red birthmarks on his chin, who explained to the new member the good reasons they had for what might seem a childish parade of secrecy.

'A few years ago, sir, it was different. Then the Lord-Lieutenant himself might have joined us, but now we have been forced underground, and are considered dangerous. We, in particular, my brother and I, have against us the animosity of Lord Clare—'

'I believe every loyal Irishman has that,' interrupted Fitzgerald. The man is implacable. He is devoted to the supremacy of the English and nothing will swerve him from his way.'

'But he has against us a particular animosity,' said John Sheares. 'I have endeavoured to expose his tyrannies in the Press. He insulted me in the House once, claiming that I was a Jacobin, a French spy. Well, let all that go...what I would say to your Lordship is'—he paused; the gentlemen looked earnestly at Fitzgerald who stood a little apart from them against the wall, smiling, and, as it seemed, carefree—'is this—I, and I believe Mr. O'Connor, possibly Major Jackson, are marked men—our acquaintance is dangerous—'

'Do you think that I am in favour of the government, Mr. Sheares? Pray say no more—I have thought over all the consequences seriously enough.'

He ceased with an abruptness that seemed to forbid further discussion. Mr. Reynolds said:

'Will your Lordship really take the oaths? It is not needful.'

'Ay, indeed I will.'

Mr. Bond then put into Lord Fitzgerald's hand a paper called The Constitution,' and explained it to him, afterwards administering the oaths on the Scriptures, while this document was held on his right breast with the Bible.

Mr. John Sheares explained that 'The Constitution' contained the declarations, the tests, the regulations, the names of various committees, and formed a certificate of admission into the society. Then: 'Sir, so that you may recognise another United Irishman, you should accost him in this manner: '*I know U.*,' and the person accosted, if initiated, will answer, *'I know N.*,' and so on, each alternately repeating the remaining letters of the word until you had spelt 'United Irishmen.'

For the lower ranks there was a form of examination in a series of questions which it was as well Lord Fitzgerald should know.

'Are you straight?'

'*I am*.'

'How straight?'

'*As straight as a rush*.'

'Grow on then, in truth, in trust, in unity, and sympathies.'

'What have you in your hand?'

'*A green bough*.'

'Where did it first grow?'

'*In America*.'

'Where did it bud?'

'*In France*.'

'Where are you going to plant it?'

'*In the crown of Great Britain*.'

The badge or crest used by the society was either a harp without a crown, two hands clasped together, the shamrock and the harp surmounted by a star.

Their mottoes were *'Erin go bragh,' 'The Union of Irishmen; Unite and be free.' 'The day sacred to liberties.' 'The Emerald Isle.' 'The people are awake, they are up, the morning star is shining.'* The colour of the society was green and their uniforms (rarely worn, but they could not forget they had been in the first place a military organisation) were also green, faced with black, white and yellow.

The whole heart of the meaning of the society lay in the first article of the Test, which was, as the heading of the paper read:

'TO BE TAKEN IN THE AWFUL PRESENCE OF GOD.'

> *'I do voluntarily declare that I will persevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every religious persuasion, and that I will also persevere in my endeavour to obtain an equal, full and adequate representation of all the people of Ireland.*
>
> *'I do further declare that neither hope, fears, rewards nor punishments, shall ever induce me directly or indirectly to inform on or give evidence against any member or members of this or similar societies or of any act or expression of theirs done or made collectively or individually in or out of this society, in pursuance of this obligation.'*

CHAPTER 4

Lord Edward Fitzgerald, having taken the oaths, Mr. Oliver Bond suggested that the Chairman, Mr. John Sheares, should read out some extracts from the proceedings of former meetings, that they might give the new member some idea of the work they had done, and of their principles.

This suggestion was adopted.

Mr. Sheares then took a sheet from among his papers and read out:

'The object of this institution is to make a United Society of the Irish nation; to make all Irishmen citizens, to make all citizens Irish. Nothing appearing to us more natural at all times, and at this crisis of Europe most seasonable, than that those who have common interests and common enemies—who suffer common wrongs, and lay claim to common rights, should know each other and act together.

'In our opinion ignorance has been the demon of discord which has so long deprived Irishmen, not only of the blessing of well regulated government, but even the common benefits of civil society. Our design, therefore, in forming this society is to give an example which, when well followed must collect public will, and concentrate the public power into one solid mass; the effect of which once put in motion must be rapid, momentous and consequential.

'In thus associating, we have thought little about our ancestors and much of our posterity. In looking back, we see nothing on the one part but savage force succeeded by savage policy; on the other, an unfortunate nation "scattered and peeled, meted out and trodden down!" We see a mutual intoleration and a common carnage of the first moral emotions of the heart which lead us to esteem and place confidence in our fellow creatures. We see this

and are silent. But we gladly look forward to brighter prospects—to a People united in the fellowship of freedom —to a Parliament, the express image of that People—to a prosperity established on civil, political and religious liberty—to a peace which rests on the right of human nature and leans on the arm by which these rights are to be maintained.

'Our principal rule of conduct must be to attend to those things with which we agree, to exclude from our thoughts those in which we differ.

'We agree in knowing what are our rights and in daring to assert them, the rights of men, their duty to God, we are in this respect of one religion. Our creed of civil faith is the same, we agree in thinking that there is not an individual among our millions whose happiness can be established on any foundation so rational and so solid as on the happiness of the whole community.'

When he had finished, with a slight flush on his face, he glanced towards Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Then he folded up his papers and sat down amid low murmurs of approval. Fitzgerald thought of the conversation he had had with Tom Paine in the dirty, noisy restaurant in Paris in '92.

'How will you obtain your liberties—how will you even ask for them?'

'In terms of war.'

There was, for a short space, silence in the room, as each man thought what it would mean to himself, to those dependent on him, and his fortunes, if their bold endeavours failed. Mr. Tom Reynolds, who was seated close to Lord Edward, leaned towards him and asked:

'Is your Lordship satisfied?'

Fitzgerald answered aloud, so that all could hear.

'I hope, gentlemen, that you will have cause to be satisfied with me.'

Mr. Bond rang the handbell, and, when the servant came, asked for more ink. As the door was opened, Fitzgerald heard the sound of a harp, Mrs. Bond was playing to her friends and the melody came faintly down the stairs. It seemed to Fitzgerald that he had heard it that day on the sunny terrace when he had first met Reynolds and Louise and an incredible melancholy that had no connection with any reality that he knew of, possessed him, like an enemy surprising a fortress. He heard his name.

'Lord Edward—we have a proposal to make to you—

CHAPTER 5

When Fitzgerald returned to Leinster House he walked through the vast apartments noticing nothing of the splendours, absorbed in a matter that made him indifferent to his surroundings.

When a servant said that his Grace was waiting for his return and wished urgently to see him, he stared at the man absently and did not for a while understand the message.

'Leinster,' he repeated, 'wishes to see me? Ah, yes, I have been away a long time. I suppose it is late—near midnight, is it not?'

CHAPTER 6

The second Duke of Leinster was an amiable man, good-natured and pliant to a fault, lacking in energy and decision. He had always been a man respected for his virtues; his private life was blameless and he treated all who were in his service or on his estate with great consideration.

Though deploring the measures of the English Government he had remained loyal to it, and though he had been himself one of the Irish volunteers from which the Society of United Irishmen had sprung, he had withdrawn from that organisation the moment it was made illegal. No one who knew him could hope for any manner of action from him, no one who had even a slight acquaintance with him could fail to like him.

He waited for his brother in the little writer's closet by his bedchamber. In the place of honour was a circular portrait of his father, twentieth Earl of Kildare who, through the favour of the English King, had merged that proud title behind that of Duke of Leinster. The Duke moved about restlessly, snuffing the two candles so severely that they were nearly extinguished, turning over a pile of English and Irish newspapers, glancing at the travelling clock on the desk in the corner. It was a wet night, he could hear the rain slashing against the glass of the tall window. Edward entered, his cloak still about his shoulders.

'Edward, where have you been? Pamela has been much distressed.'

'Here,' thought the younger brother, 'is, soon enough, the first painful part of what I have undertaken. I must, in a way, deceive Robert.'

'Why should you suspect, sir, that I have been anywhere in particular?'

'Pamela's been very anxious about you, Neddy. She sent Tony after you, and he, loitering at the corner of the street, saw you enter the house of Mr. Oliver Bond. That man is against the Government; there were a great many other gentlemen there to-night—you are not joining any secret club of Jacobins, Edward?'

'Nay, that I can swear.'

'But you evade me,' exclaimed the Duke, eyeing his brother with some irritation, and pacing about; 'you put me off. Edward, have you come to Dublin to mix in these infernal politics?'

Edward frowned, cast his uneasy glance on the ground, and murmured:

'I must leave Leinster House.'

'Why?' asked the Duke quickly, pausing beside him and gripping him by the arm. 'You *are*, then, involved in something dangerous, and you fear it may react on me! You could have no other reason for leaving us.'

'Oh yes, indeed, I have many,' smiled Edward, looking up with a return of his usual high spirits. 'Pamela doesn't like the place, it makes her cry and throws her into the vapours. It is too vast and gloomy and imposing, my dear Robert; why, the little maid we brought with us from Kildare has done nothing but weep ever since she came up. She says that she feels herself in a prison.'

'Ah, you *do* put me off. You *are* involved in something perilous. Good God, Edward, you cannot be so mad as to really be contemplating undertaking anything against the Government? You ought to know, better than any man, how resolute they are to put down the least sign of revolt!'

'They do it already, do they not?' returned the younger Fitzgerald. He was a man who could not for more than a moment or two disguise his feelings, for he was impetuous and forthright. 'With presses raided and peasants scourged, and men tortured in the Castle yard. Bah! You need not talk of severity, Robert; they are indulging in it already.'

'These miseries cannot be put to rights,' sighed the Duke unhappily, 'by any secret intrigues, Edward. You must understand that.'

'What I engage in could not be called a secret intrigue,' said his brother warmly. 'If I consult with a few respectable, intelligent and honest men, as to what means may be taken to put right this wretched

state of affairs, do not blame me, brother, and do not inquire into my actions. I say I will leave Leinster House. I was wrong to come here. But it is a pity, sir, that you cannot join us.'

And he added with an air of frankness: 'Which is it, Robert, principle or timidity?'

Leinster could not help laughing, though ruefully, at this.

'You're impossible, Edward! I suppose it's both. I've no mind to ruin the family, and I've got many friends among the English. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, are my friends, and I must confess they are the most good-natured fellows in the world, and would not see any harm done. I may say the same of Lord Campden, these are humane men, Edward, like ourselves.' He spoke with a certain vehemence as if he were trying to convince not only his brother but himself.

'I know they are our friends, and it is difficult to go against them. But these humane men, Robert, are not helping Ireland. Yes, I know, they are all kind-hearted and gentlemanly enough, but we are not dealing with them, but with Clare, Castlereagh and their followers. Lord Clare might be called the ruler of Ireland now—his influence is supreme—and it is overwhelmingly for the English supremacy.'

'Clare is being loyal,' interrupted Leinster uneasily, 'to the oaths he took to the sovereign when he vowed obedience—I don't blame him, and you mustn't either, Edward, of all men,' he added warmly, 'for Clare himself has spoken to me about you.'

'About me?'

'Yes. I believe he spoke to Charles too, and to Henry when he was last in Dublin. It was a warning. He said "he wished to God you'd get clear of Ireland."'

'Now, why should he say that?' mused Fitzgerald, puzzled but not alarmed. 'And I living so quietly at Kildare!'

'Your principles are too well known, and that stand you made in Parliament; and then you having to leave the army after that stupid banquet at White's—'

'Well, when York became commander-in-chief he offered me back my commission, did he not, and I refused it.'

'You don't suppose that puts you in a better light in Clare's eyes, do you?' cried Leinster, exasperated. 'It is no good for us to argue, Edward. Let Ireland save herself. Revolutions don't bring people happiness. You ought to have seen that in France. Surely you had your lesson there. Murder, chaos, anarchy!'

'We are not pressing for revolution, Robert, but for reform.'

'Well, those fellows in France said that, did they not?'

He put his hand to his head with a gesture of weariness, for he was not a man who could put much force and energy into any argument. Above all he loved a peaceful life. With a considerable effort he took his younger brother by the arm and tried a personal appeal.

'Look here, Edward, the happiness of too many people are in this. There's Pamela and her children. She's no one but you, you know. Her position is peculiar, you do owe it to her to be careful. I don't speak for myself nor for Henry, nor for Charles, and yet we and our families do stand to be ruined if you are imprudent—it's horrible in Kildare now—'

'I thought of that,' murmured Edward, moved, 'and I confess I don't like it. Yet it's hard for a man to be tied by his family duties, Robert. You must allow me some independence.'

'Good God!' exclaimed the Duke, now really alarmed. 'You speak like a man already involved! Tell me what you have done?'

'No, that I can't, sir.'

'Well, then,' exclaimed his elder in increasing distress, 'that proves that you are indeed in some lunatic intrigue.'

'It proves nothing of the kind, only that I must conduct my affairs myself, and that I will tell you nothing of what I do or where I go. You may set your mind at ease,' he added, with a kind of desperate joviality, 'for I am minded to take a voyage abroad.'

'Not to France? That would confirm my worst fears!'

'Not to France,' said Edward, but his smile seemed to contradict his words. 'I am going to Hamburg. I can take Pamela with me, and Tony, all the retinue, and so you will be at peace, Robert. You will know at least that I am not attending treasonable meetings in Dublin.'

'I shall not be at all sure that you do not go on treasonable errands abroad.' The Duke was baffled, unhappy. He looked regretfully at his younger brother, whom he held very dear. Without much hope he added:

'Lady Louise Connolly, Mr. Ogilvie and Lady Sarah Napier, they have all spoken to me about you, Edward, in terms of loving alarm—I don't like to think what our mother would feel—I've kept it from her—'

'Well, you can soon tell them that I am safely out of the country, then there'll be no more to be said.'

'Have you told Pamela about this?'

'Why, not yet. Your man met me as soon as I came into the house, and it is so late.'

'Well, then,' said Leinster, 'go and see Pamela, late as it is, see what she says at being dragged off to Hamburg on I know not what wild-goose chase. I leave my cause in Pamela's hands.'

CHAPTER 7

'This is what I don't like—it will get worse, too. Leinster, as head of the house, really has a right to my loyalty, but the country, those other men? I don't know. It's difficult.'

Fitzgerald went to the handsome formal apartment assigned to himself in Leinster House and found Pamela waiting for him, seated on her bed, wrapped in a white cashmere shawl. As soon as she saw her husband enter the room she ran towards him with a fierce little cry, and caught him by either arm and looked into his face as if she would read his very heart.

'Why, Pamela, what now? What's taken you? You should be abed.'

'You've been so long.'

'Well, Leinster stayed me—that's no fault of mine. He had his man in wait for me. Why are you so distressed, Pamela?' and his heart sank.

'I don't know. Every one tells me that you're imprudent. I'm not liked, either. They consider me a foreigner. Oh, Edward, what are you engaged on? That man, that Mr. Sheares, who came to Kildare has taken you away from me after all!'

'Pamela, Pamela, you must not speak so, nor think so. You know that nothing could take me away from you.' But even as he held her in his arms and tried to comfort her, something of her apprehension was communicated to him and seemed to chill his own enthusiasm.

'Listen, Pamela, you must not behave like this.' He spoke with some authority. 'I have a secret to tell you. It is for you and for no one else. Can I confide in you when I see you so distraught?'

She checked herself instantly at that, anything was better than losing his confidence.

'I always promised I would tell you everything, Pamela, and so I will. No one else is to know, not even Leinster—I evaded him just now, and Heaven knows it was difficult and hurt.' She drew away from him

and sat on one of the stiff ornate sofas. Pamela loathed Leinster House, she looked round her with a half shudder as if she found herself imprisoned, and drew her shawl closely round her shoulders.

'So, you *have* been doing something dangerous? But as long as you tell me...Come, Edward, I will forgive all.'

'It is only this, Pamela. I and a few friends of mine are united together to try and do something for Ireland. Not in the way of violence, you understand, but of reform.'

'Aye, aye, you need not tell me, Edward. I have heard all that before—in the talk at Belle Chase! Come to facts. What is it you must do?'

'Well, dear, as I am a military man, and almost the only one among them, I believe, they want me to go to France and meet M. Carnot and General Hoche—and Mr. Wolfe Tone.'

'Oh, my God, that dangerous man, that rebel! Banished, is he not? He would be hanged should he dare return!'

'That has nothing to do with it, Pamela. He will not return to Ireland, or at least...' He caught himself up, and Pamela, glancing over his shoulder, read his secret in his face; these two found no difficulty in understanding one another.

'You plan for a French descent on Ireland?'

'Hush, Pamela, you must not say that—even here.'

'But did you not tell me that you would tell me everything?'

'What I have to tell you, Pamela, is only this...We must go presently to Hamburg and there meet whoever is sent by the French Directory—it may not be necessary to go to Paris. I don't know. Mr. O'Connor and Major Jackson will travel there by different routes.'

'This is to arrange a rising in Ireland,' whispered Pamela, still gazing at him fiercely.

'Perhaps, dear, I do not know myself. I have these instructions. We will go together and we will take Tony and your maid. You shall travel in comfort.'

'I don't want to leave Ireland. I want to return to Kildare.'

'God knows I do,' and he added, with a strange simplicity, 'these two months there should be much to do in the garden. I don't like to leave my trees and flowers to another. But Pamela, there is no choice.'

'What do you mean—no choice?'

'I mean I've offered my services to these men and they trust me. There is not one of them who could leave Ireland with as little suspicion as myself. Indeed, dear, I do no wrong and nothing dangerous.'

'Try not to mislead me with false comfort, Edward; but I will not complain or you will go deep in this business and not tell me of it.' She put her hand to her lips and her fair head sunk on the sofa.

He came round the front of the sofa and went on his knees beside her. He wished she would stay in Ireland, in his mother's care till the child was born, but dare not ask this.

'Indeed, Pamela, I have been so happy with you, so content. You seem to fill up all the needs of every moment.'

'Yet you cannot leave it at that, dear?' she asked, and her nervous fingers touched the thick dark hair about his forehead. 'You cannot be content with that happiness? You and I together in our cottage with the poor little children, and the silly birds and the flowers. No, you are a man and therefore all that is not enough for you!'

'It is enough for me, Pamela, and you must know it. But those others—'

'Why, what obligation have you to them?'

'A man is worthless, surely, if he has no obligations to others, to all the world, dear. Things are happening in Ireland that I would not have you know of, and I surely have my part in trying to put their miseries straight...But come, Pamela, even if we should go to Paris you would make friends there.'

'Paris? I should step over many graves there.'

They were silent, and again he had, vividly, that impression which had come over him so strongly in the coach as they drove to Tournai that wintry day, that surely neither of them was destined for happiness. Again that nameless menace fell like a shadow over both of them, but he brushed it aside.

'Not a word, Pamela. Remember, I have trusted you and you only.'

'Not a word,' she replied, smiling. 'And, after all, to whom should I speak? I have many acquaintances but no friends, and no *confidantes*.'

'Lady Moira, Lady Castlereagh like you very much, Pamela. They want to be kind, to love you—'

'For your sake!' She leant back on the stiff cushions. Her little peaked face, peering through the loosened hair, looked ill.

'I don't want to be ungrateful, Edward, but you must understand I really am alone. I have no one but you. I do not even know quite who I am, and all my childhood was strange. Maybe I am only poor Ann Sims who has no right to the soft life she leads, and maybe I am a kind of disinherited princess who has sleeping furies in her blood. But whoever I am, my Edward, I have no one but you.'

Her hands found his and clutched them tightly; they were like two children lost in the dark.

'No one but you in all the world, Edward.'

'You've got the babies, dear.'

'They seem only part of you, and what should I do with them once you were gone?'

'You must not talk so. You will get low-spirited. Trust me, believe in me.'

She smiled wistfully at the vanity of that; how could their mutual love, trust and loyalty save them from sorrow?

'Stay here, Pamela. You ought not to travel now—I shall so soon

return—'

She put her fingers quickly over his lips.

'No more of that. If you leave me, if you ever leave me I shall die, do you understand?—die!' Then, with a quick change of mood: 'I wonder if I should, if it would be as easy as that?'

PART FIVE

CHAPTER 1

A group of men drank a health in an upper room of a small inn in Basle.

'Mother Erin dressed in green ribbons by a French milliner if she can't be dressed without!'

They had no need for ambiguity, but used a formula. The toast was one often honoured at their secret meetings in Dublin.

When they had, with this glass of wine, finished their meal, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Arthur O'Connor and Major Jackson sat in silence over their coffee.

Since the outbreak of war with England, France had shown herself very willing to listen to proposals put forward by the Irish patriots, and schemes for a French invasion of Ireland, of which Theobald Wolfe Tone was the linch-pin, had been continually urged in Paris. Lord Edward had not very willingly come to what he still considered a desperate expedient, the introduction of an armed foreign force in Ireland, but his conscience had been soothed by the proviso which the United Irishmen had made already with the Directory, which was that their armies should come as allies in the same manner in which Rochambeau had gone to America, and that they should, while in Ireland, receive Irish pay and be treated as Irish troops. A complete national independence, a Republic on the model of the Republics of America and France was the bold and glittering ideal at which these Irishmen aimed.

These three had come to Basle to meet Lazare Hoche, the brilliant general who had recently put down, with as much tolerance and mercy as swiftness and skill, the last desperate revolt of the Royalists in La Vendèe.

Fitzgerald had been informed that, owing to his connection with the d'Orléans family, through his marriage with Pamela, his presence in Paris was not desirable, in case it seemed that he was engaged in some intrigue to raise M. d'Orléans to the throne. The jealous French Republicans had not forgotten their suspicions of some years when M. Dumouriez had been believed to have some hope of elevating the heir of the cadet branch of the house of Bourbon to the honours

forfeited by the elder line.

The Irishman laughed at these ill-founded suspicions; he had not seen M. d'Orléans since he had been a witness at his marriage in Tournai, and that unfortunate prince, who had refused to serve Austria against his country and whom his country refused to now employ, wandered a penniless exile between America and Switzerland, earning his living as best he might.

O'Connor said: 'This seems the wrong setting in which to discuss a conspiracy—and, Fitzgerald, I do not like the place; it throws me into lethargy.'

Fitzgerald, staring from the window at the moving, golden-green pattern of clear, fading leaves and withered berries through which the autumn wind moved slowly, did not reply. Though so full of energy, rapid in his decisions and his movements he was (he alone knew how much) often lost in dreams and tormented by the sensation that he was being hurried on to his destiny without his own volition. He was animated by hopes as to the success of the enterprise to which he had put his hand, and yet he viewed secretly (for he was careful not to say anything openly that might damp the ardour of his companions) the whole prospect with an odd misgiving; he thought often of his little cottage in Kildare as of a lost paradise. What a brief secluded interlude that had been, the garden where he had worked with his own hands, the bay window with the honeysuckle where Pamela had sat and sewed her baby clothes, the child in his cradle, the veiled Irish sky above, the view beyond the low wall, the shining beauty of the river—all lost, so soon and so suddenly! If he should ever come on such peace again, he felt there was much terror and confusion to be passed through first.

He shook himself from his musing and turned his eyes from the lulling rhythm of the boughs waving in the sunshine, and spoke on a half sigh.

'Our friend is late, but when travelling one cannot be exact in one's appointments. I wish they had let me go to Paris.'

But Arthur O'Connor, who had so frequently and with such skill penetrated in different disguises into the French capital and had had several interviews with M. Carnot, remarked 'that it was as well that Lord Edward had not been allowed to go to Paris, where surely he

and his black servant, who was inseparable from him, would soon be noticed.'

'Yes, I fear poor Tony betrays me. I have not got it in my heart to leave him behind. I tried to persuade him to stay with Pamela in Hamburg.'

'But even without Tony,' said Arthur O'Connor, 'you might, sir, be very easily recognised, and what good would that do you or the United Irishmen, and what pain might it not inflict on your family!'

'I don't like to think of them. I don't indeed.'

'There is no hope of bringing over his Grace?' asked O'Connor.

'I suppose when we are successful a great many people may come over to us—I can't answer for more than that.'

The door had opened abruptly and a tall man in a plain travelling cloak, grey with dust, entered the room; the three Irishmen rose, all instantly recognising General Hoche. He was notable in any company not only for his uncommon height and bold bearing, but for the deep purple sabre scar which puckered his face from brow to eye.

'I am sorry,' said Fitzgerald, 'not to have been allowed to wait on you in Paris, General Hoche. I hardly thought you would take the trouble to come to Basle to meet us here.'

'I remember you in '92,' replied Hoche, looking at him keenly, 'but I did not, however, take much notice of you then. I thought now, that since I am to lead this expedition to Ireland, I would like to have the close acquaintance of the man who is to be the military leader—I understand, Monsieur, that you are chosen?'

Fitzgerald flushed; he felt himself an amateur leader compared to Hoche.

'It is a question,' he smiled, 'of the best we have—a poor best, I admit, sir, but there are no soldiers in our organisation of greater experience than myself.'

'A good deal of experience is needed,' said Hoche.

He seated himself at the small table, sighed, pulled off his gloves

and cloak and threw them down carelessly on the floor, then, pouring himself coffee from the warm pot in front of him, drank eagerly; it was a long journey from Paris to Basle and he must soon undertake it again, for he could not long be spared from the capital.

'I have heard a great deal about your Irish affairs,' he continued, in his forceful, frank manner, 'from Mr. Tone, who is an ardent patriot if ever there was one! Why, the man leaves one no peace day or night urging on this famous expedition. He has given me dozens of maps and plans and prepared a thousand schemes for my landing in Bantry Bay.'

'There can be no better place,' said Fitzgerald, eagerly. 'And you, sir, could have no better adviser than Mr. Wolfe Tone, who has given years of his life to this affair.'

'He does not,' asked Hoche with a dry smile, 'exaggerate? Pardon me, gentlemen, but your nation seems enthusiastic.'

'Our affairs make us so,' replied Fitzgerald, rising. It is a country groaning under tyranny—since England has been involved in war with France she has, naturally as it might seem, but in reality most foolishly, treated the Irish with unparalleled severity. I do not disguise from you, sir, that I, for one,' continued the young man with increasing animation, 'would have been very glad to have been the ally of England if she would have given us reasonable terms, nay, even recognised our existence and honoured our liberties, but since she has chosen to endeavour to exterminate us (it is no less than that, sir, exterminate us), since she has recalled Lord Fitzwilliam, a moderate and a tolerant man, since one cruel, implacable, unjust, like Lord Clare, has been given all influence, since we may neither speak nor act, but must with the least voicing of our minds be judged as traitors, why, then, I have come to resolve, sir, that there is no help for us but in a foreign force. The terms of that help,' he added, 'have been put before the Directory.'

'That is none of my business.' Hoche smiled over his coffee cup. 'I am to get these frigates to Ireland—Brest to Bantry Bay—land my men and join you in a rising of the native Irish which you, sir, have no doubt skilfully prepared.'

'Mr. O'Connor will answer you,' said Fitzgerald. 'He knows more of that matter than I do. I have but newly taken an active part.'

O'Connor said: 'Them United Irishmen are very well organised from Belfast to the south. You know, sir, we were military to start with, the Irish volunteers raised in '89, and we have not lost any of our old discipline. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that there is no true Irishman who does not belong to us. I do not speak only for the Catholics, we count Dissenters, all grades of Protestants in our ranks —Mr. Tone is the secretary for the Catholic movement. Catholics, as you know, sir, have been more deeply wronged than any, tantalised so often by promises of reform which at the last minute have been denied them.'

'I know your grievances,' replied the French soldier. 'They are the same as those of all subject people, and as I said before, all that fringes on politics is no concern of mine. I would know something of the practical side of affairs, for instance, how am Ito feed my troops?'

'Ireland,' replied Fitzgerald at once, 'has been supplying nearly the whole of the English army. These supplies, diverted to your ranks, sir, should leave you with no need for complaint.'

'And,' said Mr. O'Connor, 'you will arrive when the harvest is being taken in; there will be abundance of everything.'

'So Mr. Tone assured me,' smiled Hoche, 'but I am not sorry to get your confirmation—I've read some history—heard some tales of 1689—'

'And as for arms, we have a certain amount,' continued O'Connor. 'Large numbers of the Militia are ready to come over to us with, of course, their weapons and artillery, and our first action upon rising will be to seize the military depôts.'

The English keep a very small force in Ireland?' asked Hoche dryly.

'Yes, they believe the people reduced to a level from which there can be no fear of violence.'

Lazare Hoche tapped on the table with his fingers; he seemed not altogether satisfied and continually looked sharply at Lord Edward Fitzgerald. 'This open disaffection, this almost open rebellion, these secret meetings, these illegal societies have been going on for some

years? And the English government are so ill served that they have suspected nothing?'

'They may have suspected a good deal,' said O'Connor, 'but they believe that they have suppressed all. They continually seize printing presses, papers, put editors and writers into jail.'

'But,' insisted Hoche earnestly, 'they have no idea of this scheme? That a foreign invasion is planned? That there is a design to seize Dublin Castle, the Viceroy and his staff?'

'None whatever,' smiled O'Connor.

'And you have, in this wide organisation stretching all over the country, among these men of all ranks and classes whom you have enrolled, not one traitor, not one informer?'

'Not one,' replied the three Irishmen almost together; Lord Edward, to whom suspicion of any one was impossible, laughed and added: 'Why should you think, General Hoche, that there are any such base fellows among us?'

Hoche replied dryly: 'Among a vast gathering of conspirators there is usually at least one traitor; among a large body of supposed honest men usually at least one who may be bought.'

'I would answer for the fidelity of all the gentlemen whom I have met.'

Hoche exclaimed: 'Why, sir, that's a very rash pledge,' and he stared curiously at Fitzgerald.

Arthur O'Connor replied: 'I do not think so, I believe, General Hoche, that you need not be tormented by any fear of treachery.'

The young French general continued to look at them all steadily, folding his arms on the table and leaning forward among the wine glasses.

'Well,' he said at length. 'I think I know how to read men, and you, I believe, gentlemen, are to be relied upon, as far as daring and fidelity go. For your abilities,' he added, with simple frankness, 'I may not answer. And maybe ability will count in this venture for more than

daring or fidelity.'

Fitzgerald replied with candid simplicity: 'I was not ill thought of in the army—I did pretty well in the American war and was about to have been promoted, and not through favour either, when I was cashiered for that banquet at White's.'

Lazare Hoche rose suddenly; the other men got to their feet. The Frenchman had much on his mind. This expedition to Ireland appealed to him in many ways; he was himself an enthusiast, a son of the people who had lived to see the people triumphant, and a soldier of genius. In this task which the Directory had assigned to him, a task both difficult and splendid, he saw an opportunity to gratify his ambition and sustain his principles. He was not insensible to the glory of being the deliverer of Ireland, nor insensitive, for he was a humane and generous man, to the pleasure of rescuing an oppressed people. But the proposed expedition seemed very formidable in the eyes of the experienced soldier; he had discounted much of the burning enthusiasm of Wolfe Tone, and he was disposed to discount something of the confidence of the three gentlemen before him. He wondered if in this young nobleman, so charming, so amiable, full of courage and fire but inexperienced in either statecraft or military leadership and candid and open to a fault, there was quite the man for this venture.

He said gravely: 'I recommend to you, gentlemen, prudence, and yet I know there is no good advising a man against his nature.' Then, directly addressing Fitzgerald: 'If you, sir, could, for the sake of others, do violence to your native candour, be circumspect, even crafty,' but looking into the ingenuous face before him he broke off with a laugh. 'No, 'tis useless!'

'You think me a fool,' smiled Fitzgerald, amused; 'one who will go and babble his secrets to the first he meets!'

'No, not that. I believe you one who would find it very hard to dissimulate, to distrust—I must say, gentlemen,' he added, flashing a look from one to the other of the Irishmen, 'that I find it very difficult to believe that the English government are as asleep as you seem to think them. I have read your parliamentary reports in the French papers—Sir Laurence Ponsonby, Grattan, have all warned them—and Lord Moira—did he not open their eyes?—I cannot but believe you are more closely watched than you think, that you are even spied

upon, What of the English Secret Service?'

At these words, spoken with such authority, a faint cloud did pass over the confident spirits of the Irishmen; each reflected rapidly on all the men whom he had met since he had joined the United Irishmen, all who assembled in those secret meetings at Oliver Bond's and at the various taverns in Dublin, all those they had come upon elsewhere who had given correctly the sign and countersign...their recollections reassured them; they could have sworn there was not one of those who would play the traitor.

Lazare Hoche picked up his dusty cloak and worn gloves with another sigh.

'Don't be too confident,' he urged. The English aren't fools. They must suspect men who have never concealed their opinions—'

'Of course,' interrupted Fitzgerald, 'they do not suspect, they know, that we are what they call Jacobins, revolutionaries—but they have not the least suspicion that we have any organised plan of insurrection—of obtaining foreign help—'

'Well,' said the Frenchman, dubiously. 'You are very fortunate and the English are very incompetent—I should have thought—' He broke off. 'Lord Clare, now, is he not vigilant?'

'Yes—and does mischief enough. We only fear that the treatment of the people may madden them into rising before we are ready—but Clare hasn't an inkling of what men like ourselves are about.'

'I wonder,' replied Hoche, still unconvinced by this staunch confidence. 'William Pitt, now—a strong hand there, eh? I suppose he is as anxious for England as you are for Ireland. Has he not his spies, his informers?'

'Not among us,' said Fitzgerald, smiling.

'You are confident. Well, perhaps you are right.' Hoche, with the air of one who has said his say, turned to the door.

'Mr. Tone sails with you?' asked Fitzgerald. 'I love that man,' he added, enthusiastically. 'Pray tell him so and how I regret I might not come to Paris to meet him.'

'Yes,' smiled Hoche. 'Mr. Tone has that force and courage which makes the soul of any cause.'

Mr. O'Connor asked the Frenchman: 'You are staying in Basle for the night? You would not immediately return to Paris without any rest?'

'Immediately,' replied Hoche. 'I am not supposed to be here. No one will ever know of my visit, but I could not undertake this expedition without meeting you,' and he offered his hand first to Fitzgerald, then to O'Connor, and Jackson. He smiled at all of them, gave a little nod and left the room as abruptly as he had entered.

'Well,' exclaimed Fitzgerald, half laughing, 'he must be in earnest to come so long a way for so short a stay! He is a rough fellow, but I like him.'

'I think,' said O'Connor, 'he will see that the expedition sails—if any man can.'

Major Jackson remarked: 'He came to look at you, Fitzgerald, to take your measure.'

Lord Edward coloured. 'I would he had found a better man to meet his scrutiny. It is indeed a case of one more experienced, more able than myself, but I hope,' he added, with a grimace, 'he thought us honest and not too imprudent. He rather insisted on his talk of traitors and dupes—'

'I suppose he was right,' replied O'Connor, 'yet, somehow I had not thought of that so seriously. Supposing we were,' he added, 'all the while being watched by the government! Had, even, a spy in our midst—at all our meetings!'

'Why, it is incredible,' interrupted Fitzgerald. 'All the men whom they suspect, like Tone, have been banished. If they had any doubt of us, we should not be at liberty.'

'But Hoche put the idea into my head, I must confess. They might allow us to go on, give us a rope to hang ourselves, try to force us to give them an excuse to crush us finally. After all, a rebellion would give them fair means to send an expeditionary force from England, to put the Hessians on us like they did on the Colonists in America—'

'It would be dangerous if they tried that,' cried Fitzgerald warmly, 'and too late. Once the French had landed we should be able to keep the English out.'

O'Connor asked reflectively, 'What sort of a man is Campden? I always thought him a mediocre fellow.'

'And so he is, I believe.'

'Well, I don't much like that,' said O'Connor. 'When one comes to think of it—why send a weak man if he is not to be just the catspaw to get Clare's hot chestnuts out of the fire?'

'Clare would not dare go very far and is, at bottom, just enough.'

'You speak kindly of him, sir, because he has always been friendly with you, but by many he is deeply hated. The Sheares now—'

'Ah,' interrupted Fitzgerald, 'I believe there was some purpose in that. John Sheares ran away with an heiress right under Fitzgibbon's nose! And then there was some question of a duel over a newspaper article—all personal. No, I think that Clare, when it came to it, would prove himself humane enough.' Then, with a slight impatience, for he was a man to whom any discussion soon became tedious: 'I shall be glad to get away from Switzerland; the air is deadening.'

CHAPTER 2

Lord Edward travelled with an eager heart towards Hamburg where Pamela waited for him.

Remembering Hoche's earnest warnings, he sent Tony with his baggage by another route and travelled incognito, calling himself a young wine merchant.

The tedium of the journey through the long, dusty summer days was as intense as his ardour to be at the end of it. The letters from Pamela were passionate, though not without reproaches. She loathed Hamburg. She feared for his safety. She urged his return. She entreated him not to be lured to Paris. Both her health and her spirits were sunk since the birth of her second child. Her husband felt a deep remorse on the subject of Pamela, who should have had, according to his own first promises, all his life, and had instead but a part of it, who had been put aside for concerns for which she cared little...

'But that must not be thought on—what did Hoche promise, what did the Directory engage for?

'Seventeen sail of the line, thirteen frigates, with an equal number of transport. Forty-three sail in all, having on board an army of near fifteen thousand men—before the autumn. That's what must be thought on, and we are ready for 'em—why, Leinster, dear fellow, will be surprised! Will he come over, I wonder, and Henry? I'm glad that Henry is in England, well, out of it all—and sweet, dear, anxious mother! I must be ready. There'll be much to do. Hoche thought me too easy, too slight, I could see. But if one sets one's teeth and does one's best—I believe I can do it—*I must do it*—'

CHAPTER 3

During the last stage of this weary travelling, when he had passed the German frontiers without his faked passports causing the least surprise, Fitzgerald found himself with one companion in the public coach. His natural candour was relieved to see that this was a person before whom he need not be on his guard; he could not imagine a creature more inoffensive than this young woman dressed in a heavy suit of mourning. She kept her elbow on her knee, her chin in her palm, and gazed with a mournful vagueness at the autumn landscape as they made their laborious progress over ill-kept roads, between orchards brilliant with fruit, and fields bright with harvest.

Fitzgerald, who could not be long with any one without speaking and advancing some courtesy, soon offered the lady fruit from his travelling basket, a cushion for her feet, some information as to the places through which they passed, and at the first halt a drink of cool water, refreshing in the dust and heat.

The lady was timidly grateful. Her simple story was soon divulged; she was French, of noble birth, orphaned of both parents in the terrible days of '93. She had lately lost her husband from cholera, and with him the pitiful remains of her small fortune. She was now on her way to Hamburg where a distant connection promised her shelter.

Fitzgerald was warmly drawn towards the bereaved exile. Forgetting his incognito he promised her the protection of Pamela when they reached Hamburg, for the lady had expressed a dread of her unknown relatives who had only offered grudgingly, she declared, the most meagre assistance.

'Ah, Monsieur, so you have a wife waiting for you at Hamburg!'

'Yes, we shall stay there a few days and then return to Ireland. While we are in Hamburg we are at your service. My wife is French also.'

'But you are English.'

'No, Madame, I am Irish.'

'Ah,' she turned her face, childishly bewildered, towards him; she

was very fair and her pale blue eyes were sad, 'but on the passport you showed at the frontier you were described as an English wine merchant!'

Fitzgerald, completely at his ease, laughed good-humouredly. 'Ah, well, Madame, there may be reasons why one travels under an assumed name. Times are difficult.'

'Ah, yes,' she replied vaguely, as if the matter had no interest for her at all. 'Difficult indeed! Irish, you say? It is very sad in Ireland now, is it not?'

'For many people, yes, Madame. It is an unhappy country.'

'It is because of this unhappiness that you travel in disguise? You try to do something to help the Irish?'

'I did not actually say I travelled in disguise, Madame.'

'But the name on your passport is false and you are so clearly not a wine merchant. Ah, you need not be afraid of speaking before me. I know nothing of public affairs.'

Fitzgerald felt a pang of vexation at having so soon betrayed to the first stranger he met that his journey was secret or mysterious; he recalled Hoche's warning, yet even as he did so, felt a certain shame in even a shadow of suspicion for this forlorn creature, who, moreover, betrayed no further curiosity as to his journey or errand.

They continued to converse during the last stage of the journey to Hamburg, and if, in the course of this idle talk he betrayed any of his political opinions, he was sure that he did so in a way that was entirely general and prudent.

Nor could he forbear pressing his offer of hospitality, urging that the lady, who seemed indeed little more than a child in years, should stay with himself and Pamela, until she had recovered from the discomforts of the voyage, instead of immediately going to her unknown relative.

But when the coach reached Hamburg, and while Fitzgerald was looking to his hired servant and giving him directions about his baggage, the lady disappeared. When the young Irishman returned

with the intention of escorting her to Pamela's lodgings, he found only an empty place in the coach. He supposed that, sensitive of accepting favours from strangers, she had preferred rather to face her unknown relative, and when he reflected on the matter he found that he had not her address, or even her name, so that the matter was at an end. He dismissed it from his mind with a little regret, but nothing could long cloud his happiness when he was going to meet Pamela.

CHAPTER 4

As he was eagerly mounting the steps of the fine house in the suburb where Pamela was lodged, a lady, in a full suit of mourning, was seated in an inn near the docks, and writing to her employer and lover:

'I had a piece of extraordinary luck to-day. I travelled the last stage to Hamburg with the Duke of Leinster's brother. My appearance and this suit of sables proved most useful. He accepted without question the first tale I told him. He was trying to be prudent, but it was not difficult, even though I assumed an entire lack of interest in politics, to draw from him his opinions and something of his affairs. Indeed, he gave me several good clues which I will send you later. He has been abroad on traitorous business. I should think he met some French general, probably Hoche, at Basle (for he was not himself allowed into France owing to the Bourbon commotion), and probably concerted plans for a descent on Ireland.

'He is charming, but something of a fool who wears his heart on his sleeve; quite the wrong man for such work. I hope soon to have other occasions to be useful to you.'

CHAPTER 5

'You have left me too long,' cried Pamela. 'I have grown half sick with apprehension.'

'But what could have happened to me, my dear, my love?'

'It is useless speaking like that now! But you are returned—yet it seems only like a dream—not the waiting, but your return—Oh, Edward, do you know that to me all our love and our being together seems like a dream? Something that I try to snatch at but cannot grasp.'

These words of hers stirred in him a faint, and as he sensed, prophetic alarm. He had also felt that menace of brevity in his relationship with Pamela. Their happiness had been like a lonely, lovely flower without root or bud or fruit, bringing with it great joy, but fading soon.

'Why do we feel like that?—and in this moment, when we are together again!'

'I don't know.' Pamela rested her tired head on his shoulder. 'Perhaps because I have known so much unhappiness; but with you it has been different. All your days you have been secure. Do you, too, feel as if this—could not last?'

He would not confess as much, but caressed her in silence; the fatigue of his journey was on him, the exhaustion of long days of excitement and movement.

'We will return to Ireland, Pamela—go home—'

'Ah, to Ireland! But not to Kildare Lodge, not to the country and tranquillity.'

'I'll not deceive you, Pamela. We must go to Dublin. Shall I tell you any more?' he asked anxiously. 'I want to give you my whole confidence, dearest, yet I would not burden you.'

'I want to know everything,' cried Pamela, 'everything. I know you have been scheming. I can guess what your schemes are. The only

consolation I can have, the only way I can learn to endure, is to know everything.'

'Like the Roman wife,' he murmured with a tender smile. 'But I won't tell you now, Pamela, in the very first moment of our meeting. Let's have the children in and play together a little and be happy.'

'Have you the heart to play, Edward? I confess I have not.'

'You must not take so sad a view of all, Pamela, or I shall have no heart to go on and do what I must do. And why should we not be confident? All goes very well!'

She shook her head without answering, as if she discounted all his hopes. Beyond the wide, high window the sky darkened over the sea; Pamela felt herself now, as always, an exile; nowhere that she went could she feel at home...Belle Chase, the Palais Royal, Dublin—only, for a little while, in the cottage at Kildare, had she felt herself safe, in her proper place.

'What are you going to do that is dangerous, Edward? You see, I cannot be light-hearted and talk of trifles.' He answered gravely, accepting her mood:

'I saw Hoche at Basle. He spoke to me very plainly. He seemed rather to doubt if I was the man for this enterprise.'

'And I do not think you are, my dear, my dear. I think you are too candid and open. Do you know, sitting here alone thinking so much of it all, I have wondered, Edward, if you should go on—nay, for the sake of others as much as for your own,' she added, seeing he was about to protest. 'I know how your loyalty is sworn and your conscience engaged, but, Edward—are you of use to this cause? Come, did General Hoche ask you as much?'

'Nay, he was not quite so unflattering as that, Pamela,' laughed Fitzgerald; 'and I told him that poor as my best was it was all we had. There is no one of more experience nor more authority. The other gentlemen are all lawyers, or doctors, or merchants.'

'Well, another thing I thought—you being so trusting, so confident, so open-hearted, is it not possible that you are—betrayed?' This word fell menacingly between them, waking in her mind the echoes of a

thousand terrors, of sleepless, lonely nights, and in his the memory of Hoche's doubts and cautions...

'Hoche said as much,' he admitted, downcast.

'It is very usual in conspiracies,' cried Pamela. 'Think, Edward, is there no one whom you might doubt? The government has been so quiet for so long it makes me suspect that perhaps they allow you to go very far, that they may crush you once and for all. Do you not think,' she continued rapidly, 'that the English would be glad for an excuse to send an armed force to Ireland and put the people down for ever? Ah, I know nothing of the ins-and-outs of politics. It is but a woman's idea —'

It had been Hoche's idea too, and Fitzgerald was silent with an inner dismay, but he instantly 'comforted himself.

'The case is peculiar, Pamela. I doubt if it has parallel in history, but we are not a handful of fanatic conspirators, or bigots. We are a nation, yes, a whole nation, Pamela. All sober, respectable, honest opinion in Ireland is with us. It is not likely, then—nay, it is scarcely possible that we should harbour amongst us a traitor. Why,' he exclaimed, warming to the matter as he spoke, 'what could the English Government offer that would induce anybody to betray us?'

'Money,' sighed Pamela, with a wan smile. 'Place, titles, safety, why, everything that men value—that such men value.'

Edward shook his head; before his mind passed the faces of his colleagues as he had seen them gathered round the table in Oliver Bond's house; all, surely, honest faces.

'If,' he argued, 'any of these men had wanted those prizes, Pamela, they would have remained faithful to the government, then they might have obtained them without any difficulty. Most of them have posts, talents and fortunes—for instance, where might I not have been if I had pushed my brother's influence? Aide-de-camp to the Duke of York, perhaps!'

Pamela sighed again at his constant misunderstanding; here was a man whom one could not make see the evil, the trickery, the self-seeking that there was in the world. 'I do not talk of yourself, Edward, nor of men like yourself, but there are those who might find it

easier to succeed this way. Oh, I don't know, I mustn't poison your mind against your friends, and I have been so uneasy with you so far away.'

Her voice broke. He gathered her into his arms, and she wept on his shoulder. Outside the sombre sea darkened into the stormy clouds; the heat was ending in a storm. She had a terrible sensation of hopelessness, like a foretaste of doom.

Tony brought in refreshments, wine and coffee and chocolate. He had arrived a few days before his master whom he regarded with looks of anxious love.

Fitzgerald did not speak to the servant, but still keeping his arm round his wife, held out his free hand which the Negro eagerly kissed. He closed his eyes, conscious of Pamela's warm weight against his shoulder; her fatigue seemed one with his own uneasiness. He thought with envy of Lazare Hoche. 'That is the kind of man to be, enthusiastic yet practical, bold yet prudent, but one cannot alter one's nature. I shall never be like that.' And all those old thoughts of those hot summer days in France flowed into his exhausted mind. 'There was a river there, the Garonne, and I cannot rightly distinguish it from the Curragh, which we see from Kildare—Kildare, shall I ever go back there again? Those flowers that I did not want any one else to handle, the garden, so neatly planned. I dare say many of the shrubs have perished by now. Perhaps the time is not so far ahead when the whole place will be desolate and no one will even know who lived there.'

Pamela looked at him. 'What,' she asked steadily, as if she discussed an affair of no importance, 'is your part to be in this rising?'

'Hush, do not speak so plainly even here, my love,' Fitzgerald said quickly.

'You promised me your confidence. Come, this is a good moment. Then we shall not speak of it again.'

'I am their leader, Pamela. I am to organise a rising in Leinster, then a march on Dublin. I am to attack the Castle; the Militia will come over. I shall have under me men like O'Connor and the Sheares, Major Jackson, Bond, and many more, all faithful, accomplished, devoted. Do not fear for me. I shall have good advisers.'

Pamela gave a low cry. He said passionately:

'Oh, my love, your terror seems an ill-omen! Wish me luck at least!'

Pamela shook her head, refusing his appeal.

'You know that you had all my wishes, once and for all, the first time I met you! Aye, all my wishes and all my hopes for all my life! And all my fears too. I've no one but you, Edward, as I told you, in Dublin...if anything should happen to you I am finished.'

'We can't fail, it isn't possible for us to fail! You must not think of that, Pamela, but of what it will mean when we have succeeded—'

She stared at him intently, almost with that concentration that people turn on a beloved face they do not think to see again.

He knew she was given to moods, and discounted her melancholy; but he was disappointed. He had looked forward to a joyous reception after their separation; with therefore a certain heaviness, yet always with his charming loving deference to her least wish, he begged that she might have the children in...he had some toys for the little boy, wooden bears and chamois from Basle...

She bid Tony fetch them and the maid, then half to herself, and in deep distress, she muttered:

'They will lead a strange life, poor children, moving here and there, and I feel they will be disinherited!'

His ready flush answered her; he was indeed a little stung. Uneasiness as to his children's future had once or twice troubled him; disinherited, certainly, if he failed. As the door opened and the nurse came in, he said, with great sweetness:

'No, Pamela, it is their heritage that I endeavour to return to them. That they may be more certain and proud in the name of Irish than ever I could be.'

PART SIX

CHAPTER 1

On a dark day of wind and rain when the tumultuous clouds seemed to fly just above the housetops of Dublin, and the storm obscured the English flag on the castle, Mr. John Ogilvie called by appointment at the handsome residence of the Earl of Clare, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

The Scotsman was full of well-controlled but considerable agitation, and had to stay a moment in the large vestibule to collect his forces; yet he was visiting one with whom he had long had an amiable acquaintance, nor could the formidable power of the dreaded Lord Chancellor ever have touched his modest but secure fortune.

When he entered the handsome apartment, well lit by fire and lamps, where Lord Clare awaited him, Mr. Ogilvie's demeanour, however, betrayed some of his inward trepidation. He saluted in silence Lord Clare and another gentleman who was lounging on a sofa but who rose with amiable courtesy at his entrance. Mr. Ogilvie was not reassured by recognising another of his acquaintances, the young nobleman, Robert Stewart, who had recently become, on his father's elevation to the peerage, Viscount Castlereagh, formerly member for Oxford at Westminster, now Secretary for Ireland and member for County Down.

Mr. Ogilvie knew from a certain withdrawal in the manner of both these men, which was something more than silence, that the matter on which they wished to see him was very important, delicate and perhaps embarrassing; he could not forbear a sigh, for he feared he knew too well what it was.

Lord Clare, a man past middle age, was of stern and resolute appearance. Lord Castlereagh was extremely handsome, over six feet in height, of a splendid figure, graceful and expensively dressed; his features, which had a classic regularity, were impassive. He had begun as an Irish Reformer, almost a patriot, but was now hand and glove with Clare in maintaining the English supremacy; his manners were mild and nothing had ever been known to ruffle his perfect courtesy.

'Mr. Ogilvie,' exclaimed Lord Clare brusquely, 'let us come shortly to the matter in hand.' He had, even when he wished to be amiable, an air of authority which was almost dictatorial and a shortness in his speech that was like a tone of command.

'It is my wish,' replied the Scots gentleman, who remained standing, alert and suspicious.

'You are surprised, no doubt, that I have sent for you, having nothing but a civil acquaintance with you. You are surprised, perhaps, at the presence of Lord Castlereagh.'

'No, why should I be?' replied Ogilvie dryly. 'I have a certain friendship with his lordship that leads me to hope that he is here for the pleasure of my company.'

Castlereagh smiled very civilly without speaking.

'I employ no messengers,' said Clare, 'I write no letters in this affair, I come straight to you as the husband of the Dowager Duchess of Leinster, you understand?'

Fearful of displaying some imprudence, the Scot was silent, and Clare continued: 'You can throw prudence to the wind here, I know everything.' Then, as if irritated by the other's continued silence, he added: 'For God's sake, man, don't stand there dumb, you understand me well enough!'

'Indeed,' replied Mr. Ogilvie with unabashed fortitude, 'I do not understand you at all, my Lord. How may I guess to what your allusions point?'

'They point,' flung out Clare with increasing roughness, 'to that young man, Edward Fitzgerald. To that fool, I would have said, sir, but remembered that you had the tutoring of him.'

'I suppose, sir,' put in Castlereagh, with smiling smoothness, 'that you do not hold Mr. Ogilvie responsible for Lord Edward's opinions.'

'He might be responsible for the formation of his character,' retorted Lord Clare; 'but perhaps we may blame nature for that, it would be more polite to Mr. Ogilvie. Plainly, between these four walls, sir, the young man's a fool. I like him,' he added, before the other

could answer. 'I like his family, they have all been friends of mine. That little French wife of his too, married in that crazy fashion! She is a poor, childish soul! Hear me, Ogilvie,' he spoke vehemently, drawing his thick brows together, 'I tell you this, as friend to friend, get Lord Edward out of Ireland. You shan't be stopped; all the ports will be left open to you.'

'On my honour, my Lord, I don't know what your lordship talks about!'

'I dare say not,' returned Clare impatiently, 'but you can guess, can't you? The whole country is in a state of smouldering insurrection and rebellion, and has been for years. One of the ringleaders is Lord Edward. I dare say you affect not to know that.'

'I do so affect,' replied Ogilvie stoutly. 'I should have thought Lord Edward was open enough in his opinions and actions not to fall under your lordship's suspicions—he spoke his mind boldly in Parliament, as I believe—'

'Those men who spoke their minds so boldly in Parliament are keeping out of the way now if they have any sense,' returned Clare. 'Look at Grattan. He was boldest of the bold, was he not? He has now openly declared his intention of leaving his seat, sitting at home, and keeping his mouth shut. Come, sir, come, you must know what's happening and what's going to happen.'

'I don't know any more, Lord Clare,' replied the Scot, fixing the Lord Chancellor with steady eyes, 'than I see in the public prints.'

'Then you're not so well-informed as I thought you were. You've heard nothing, I suppose, of a French descent on Ireland? Well, we have. That fire-eater, Hoche, has got near fifty ships of the line at Brest waiting to fall on the Irish coast, making for Bantry Bay, as we believe. Where do you think we've got ships or soldiers to meet them, eh? And the whole country ready to rise and welcome them, cut all our throats in our beds, too, I've no doubt.'

'Surely your Lordship doesn't suppose,' said Mr. Ogilvie slowly, 'that Lord Edward has any hand in such treasonable practices?'

No, I don't suppose—I *know*.'

'You *know*, Lord Clare?'

'Yes, you don't think that I haven't my agents, my means of information? This young friend of yours is damned imprudent. Why, only this autumn, when he was travelling to Hamburg, he meets a woman in a coach and lets her get all his secrets out of him:

'Impossible!'

'Well, she got enough to write information to her friend, one of Pitt's jackals. Fitzgerald told her enough to enable her to make a pretty shrewd guess that he'd been to meet Hoche at Basle, he and some others—I suppose them to be O'Connor, Wolfe Tone, and a few more of these dangerous rascals. What did Lord Fitzgerald go to Hamburg and Basle for, dragging his wife and children with him? Bah, don't try to come the innocent over me, Mr. Ogilvie,' cried the Chancellor with increasing vehemence. 'I tell you I know, I have my own agents among these United Irishmen, as they call themselves, who report everything to me.'

'Good God! How I pity all these poor, unhappy gentlemen! Why doesn't your lordship strike at once, since you know all their treacheries?'

'It doesn't suit me. Campden's in a damnable position, no strength behind him, no authority. How do we know what help we're going to get from England? We are supposed to manage on our own. I want to find out all who are implicated, I want to have all my fish in the net before I pull it ashore. It is less dangerous to the State to let this conspiracy continue and be aware of it than crush it and have others spring up of which perhaps we shall have no knowledge.'

Lord Castlereagh interrupted, with elegant courtesy: 'But I don't think, Lord Clare, we ought to trouble Mr. Ogilvie with our difficulties. I don't suppose he's much concerned in how we keep the peace in Ireland. It was to speak about Lord Edward Fitzgerald that he was asked to attend you, I think.'

'Yes, I say, of all the men involved in this, he is the only one for whom I have any compassion. There are some rogues among them, those brothers Sheares, for instance, whom I would gladly see, whom I intend to see, on the gallows, but for Lord Edward, with his breeding and family—it would be a pity. I should be sorry for the Duke of

Richmond, he is a friend of the Prince and York.'

'That ought to keep him safe in any case, surely,' put in Mr. Ogilvie anxiously.

'It couldn't keep him safe if he was discovered planning an armed rising!' cried Clare impatiently. 'I don't go to Leinster, tho' I have given him a hint; but he's weak, wavers this way and that, half a traitor himself for all I know, and his other brothers are in England, I can't get at 'em. Besides, I take you, sir, to have a better head than any of them. Go to your Lord Edward, tell him I know what's going on, tell him, if you like, that there's a traitor in his organisation who betrays everything to me, and that he owes it to his mother, wife, and children, to clear out of the country as fast as he can.' Mr. Ogilvie was silent in sheer dismay. He did not know that Fitzgerald's affairs had gone as far as this; indeed, knew nothing at all; he groped in dark conjecture.

Lord Castlereagh said, with a gentle emphasis: 'Lady Edward Fitzgerald is a friend of my wife, who likes her. I should be sorry if any mischief came to her—all this between ourselves, as you understand, Mr. Ogilvie? We really have no right to give you this warning with a foreign invasion threatened—we shall have to take very severe measures.'

'I don't believe,' protested Mr. Ogilvie, 'that there is any plot or plans for a rising. I can't credit it, and as for Lord Edward being in it—'

Lord Clare interrupted impatiently: 'I am a lawyer, sir. I study facts before I speak. I'm not talking out of whimsies or suppositions, and I tell you I've my hand on this nest of traitors. I could inform you where they meet, the articles of their constitution, their oaths, their passwords, all the rest of the damned nonsense.'

'You seem surprised,' smiled Lord Castlereagh, 'but I assure you it is so. Won't you act on Lord Clare's advice?'

'I have no reason to suppose that Lord Edward is involved in anything that would justify my advising him to leave the country.'

'You are very prudent and very loyal to your stepson,' said Lord Castlereagh, 'but, without more ado, I dare say you will take our meaning, which I assure you is one of pure kindness to yourself and Lord Edward.'

'There's not much time to lose,' added Lord Clare sternly. 'If those damned French really do set sail we shall have to have an expeditionary force over here, and the whole country will be under the military—Lord Carhampton's Act will be revived. There is no more to say, I think.'

Mr. Ogilvie paused inside the door. He had been given his dismissal, yet he stood his ground feeling that here was an opportunity to say something he had long wished to say but had been by the conventions of polite society prevented from uttering. He glanced from one to another of these men who were to hold the destiny of Ireland in their hands, and his gaze rested longest on the younger of the two, Lord Castlereagh, quiet, almost indolent in looks and bearing, but, the shrewd Scot was sure, by far a more powerful personality than the formidable Lord Chancellor.

'I am neither English nor Irish, my Lord; perhaps I could therefore ask—you know I have no direct concern in your reply, therefore perhaps I may hope for it—if any policy of reconciliation is intended, any measures of real reform are being put forward?'

'You ask that,' demanded Clare brusquely, 'when there's a foreign fleet on the horizon?'

'If it is true that there is a foreign fleet on the horizon, it seems to me the very moment for concession,' said Mr. Ogilvie.

'That would look like fear,' said Clare.

'It would be fear,' smiled Castlereagh, 'and, Mr. Ogilvie, we are not afraid.'

'I can see that, but England can surely afford to be generous. These conspirators are not fanatics or bigots or ruffians.'

'They have such in their ranks,' interrupted Castlereagh. 'They encourage such to follow them.'

'Why, naturally, sir, such scum will cling to the fringe of any movement, but I think the unrest is among the educated classes—they began, at least, by asking for most reasonable terms; you, yourself, Lord Castlereagh, were of their number.'

'No doubt they so began, sir,' sneered Lord Clare, 'but how do they mean to end? Moderate men have either come over completely to the government ideas like Lord Castlereagh here or have withdrawn in silence like Mr. Grattan.'

'In silence and despair,' added Mr. Ogilvie. 'It is curious,' he continued reflectively, 'that men like yourselves, gentlemen, should not see something of the other side; you surely must in your hearts acknowledge the reasonableness of what these people demand, you must understand the bitterness with which the Roman Catholics constantly see themselves deluded, find the promises made to them broken. You must have a very clear comprehension of what the peasantry suffer and what indescribable rage is provoked by the protection given by the government to the Orangists and Loyalists—Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Moira have both spoken out—'

Lord Clare rudely interrupted: 'Indeed, it seems that we have a United Irishman in you, sir.'

'As I said, I am so completely outside it that I am able to speak. You have done me the honour to confide in me, you have done me the kindness to give me a warning for Lord Edward Fitzgerald, not that I consider he is involved, but maybe I have other friends who are, and I ask you, gentlemen, if it is not still possible to adopt a policy of reconciliation towards the Irish and prove to them that England can be more firmly their friends than France?'

'I can tell you candidly,' replied the Lord Chancellor, 'no such policy is intended, Mr. Ogilvie. If you have, or think you have, any friends among the malcontents, tell them so. Lord Campden has been instructed to put down all insurrection by force of arms—in case of trouble we shall have over as many soldiers as England can spare—the Hessians—Sir Ralph Abercrombie and Sir John Moore are already spoken of to lead 'em.'

'You do want to make slaves of the Irishmen or to exterminate them—as they themselves realise.' Castlereagh raised his fair head; under his pleasant, almost indolent manner, such a flame of energy and resolution, such a steady purpose, so unmovable a courage flashed, that the Scot felt himself suddenly futile and foolish before a force that nothing could check.

'I suppose, sir,' said the Secretary for Ireland, 'you have imbibed

a good amount of Jacobin sentiment at Leinster House. How much folly is talked on the subject of liberty and tyranny! I suppose Mr. Pitt may be allowed to be as good a patriot as, say, Mr. Wolfe Tone? Pitt's concern is England. It is mine. We are in the midst of a dangerous war. We intend to survive it, and with undiminished prestige. That is, plainly, our business. We have no other. We do not mean to see the French anarchy that the Jacobins copy introduced in Britain. You mentioned that I was a reformer, I am so still. But one does not talk of reform in the midst of war, treason, revolt. I press for a Union with England—for what reform you will, but—in time of peace.'

'Good God, my Lord!' exclaimed Mr. Ogilvie. 'What peace do you expect from the methods you employ?'

'Quite a sound one,' replied Castlereagh severely. 'If I can root out the United Irishmen and all their works, I dare say Ireland will be quiet for another hundred years.'

'Lord Castlereagh, I profoundly disagree with you—the cruelties, the injustice, the misery—'

Clare interrupted the Scot, who was deeply moved:

'You would expect us, Mr. Ogilvie,' he smiled grimly, 'to be at least as loyal to our duties as these misguided wretches are to what they consider theirs? We can have no mercy with traitors, with conspirators, and, as I think, assassins.'

'No, no, my Lord!' exclaimed Mr. Ogilvie, 'that is going too far! You have mentioned Lord Edward Fitzgerald and other gentlemen of repute, and then you speak of assassins!'

'There may be such in the ranks of the United Irishmen. *The Union Star*, I think you would call that an assassination journal. It advocates all manner of violence. You can see it for yourself posted on the walls any day in Dublin.'

'Aye,' retorted the other, with his hand on the doorknob, 'it is common talk in Dublin that the wretched editor of that so-called assassination journal is protected by the Castle.'

'Where did you hear that?' asked Castlereagh quickly. 'It is a most insolent libel.'

'It is also a strange thing, my Lord, that this paper is allowed to appear when many more respectable journals are suppressed, and that the editor of it comes and goes in peace, though his whereabouts must be well known at the Castle. The Irish are a quick-witted people, my Lord, and they have supposed that this journal is allowed to be published to discredit them, to give a handle to the cry that they are murdering cut-throats.'

Castlereagh did not deign to reply to this. He said gently, yet briefly: 'Please repeat to Lord Edward Fitzgerald this conversation—if you have any friendship for him.'

CHAPTER 2

Mr. Ogilvie went directly to Lord Fitzgerald's lodgings; he was considerably alarmed, the more so as Fitzgerald had for the last few weeks kept out of his way and that of most of his friends, seldom seen at Leinster House, never at the Castle or in vice-regal circles, and seemed indeed to have so cut himself off from society that he might be considered in a manner hidden, coming and going between Dublin and unknown destinations in the country, appearing for a little while at the house of a friend and then going again. Since his journey to Hamburg he had kept very removed from his family, and Mr. Ogilvie knew that they were deeply anxious on his behalf. He had himself of late several times endeavoured to see his stepson, who was always, however, abroad; and from Pamela he had been able to glean nothing save that she herself lived in scarce concealed agitation.

But this time as he paused on the step of the house, his hand on the bell, Lord Edward himself came out. The old Scotsman had him at once by the arm. 'You'll not escape me this time, Neddy! I have no doubt you don't wish to see me, but I must speak to you.'

A look of apprehension crossed the young man's face. It was a wild night, and the wind swept round the two men, blowing at their coats and scarves and their hair.

'Is it really important?' asked Fitzgerald, grasping his step-father's hand warmly, 'for I have an appointment in half an hour.'

'I fear, my Lord, it is indeed important; for your family's sake, permit me to see you.'

Lord Edward's dark eyes continued to search the Scotsman's face as if he hoped to read something there.

'Come into the house, of course,' he murmured in a distracted manner, and led Mr. Ogilvie into a small front parlour where a low fire smouldered. He lit two candles and set them on the table, then flung off his hat, but did not remove his cloak, and remained standing by the table in the attitude of one who has been checked in a hasty errand. He asked Mr. Ogilvie to tell him his news.

'It is just this, sir,' said the Scotsman, lowering his voice. 'Nay,

Neddy,' he dropped into more familiar address of childhood, 'is it safe to speak here?'

'It is my own house, sir.'

'Yes, I know, but I am terrified even here. Well, then, come close and let me whisper it. Clare sent for me to-day—I went at once as you may imagine; Castlereagh was there.'

'Two enemies of Ireland,' said Fitzgerald, still keeping his eyes on Mr. Ogilvie's face.

'Two friends of yours though, Edward; they warned me.'

'Of what?'

'I expect you know; I don't want to go into it. I don't altogether like them nor admire their policy, but I must say they behaved in a humane and gentlemanly manner.'

'Why did they speak to you?' asked Fitzgerald, still staring across the small flare of the newly lit candles.

'I don't know. I suppose they thought I was sufficiently tactful—it seems they don't want to disturb Leinster or your other brothers.'

'What do they suspect?' muttered Fitzgerald, frowning.

'That's not our concern, Edward, my dear fellow, they gave me a distinct warning for you. Clare said you were to get out of the country as soon as possible. There is talk of a French fleet leaving the French coast for Ireland.'

'Well, there's nothing in that,' said Fitzgerald; 'there's rumours of that in all the prints.'

'Maybe, but these two seem to have certain knowledge. They talk of Hoche being on board and Wolfe Tone, and of there being a descent planned on Bantry Bay. They said there were two large military forces coming from England under Abercrombie and Moore, and that Campden had full and secret powers; that there would soon be military law in Ireland.'

'Ah, well,' sighed Fitzgerald in a troubled whisper, 'that might

have been expected. That is only what one looked for.'

Mr. Ogilvie held up his hand. 'Don't say a word to me, Edward; confide nothing in me; be as circumspect as if you were before your greatest enemy—I won't hear a word. I said I knew nothing of your affairs—I swore it.'

'Well, it was true enough, and you're right, I won't speak before you, my secrets are not my own.'

'I mustn't even know that you have secrets, Edward. I just wish to give you the warning of these two men. Won't you listen to it?'

'How much do they know?'

'Too much for your comfort and safety! Naturally I had to be guarded, and plead even a blanker ignorance than I possess, but it seems that they have all the details of a secret society—the United Irishmen.'

'Impossible!'

'Edward, I entreat you to be prudent. Do not let me even know that there is such a society and much less that you belong to it.'

'Well, then,' said Lord Edward, smiling, yet with a certain wildness in his looks, 'there's no more to be said, my dear sir. I thank you for your kindly love, and now you must let me go my way, I shall be late.' He pulled out his watch and gazed at it anxiously. 'I understand quite well. Clare and Castlereagh have warned you that I may be possibly a rebel, a dangerous one.'

'They think that you and your friends are in league with this French fleet, that you went to Hamburg to arrange this invasion. Edward, did you meet a woman the last stage of the journey to Hamburg? Did she travel in the coach with you?'

'Yes, yes, I recollect I did—a poor creature in mourning.'

'She was one of Pitt's spies,' said Mr. Ogilvie grimly. 'She found out who you were. She wrote a report of it to England. You must have been very imprudent, Edward.'

Fitzgerald blushed with amazement and shame.

'But I told the creature nothing. And a spy! It seems impossible.'

Mr. Ogilvie sighed.

'You were always too ingenuous and credulous, Edward. Maybe you told her nothing, but you allowed her to infer a great deal. In brief, she guessed much, and sent her surmises to England. You've been watched and spied on, my poor boy.'

'Spied on!' said Edward, looking at Mr. Ogilvie with an increasing bewilderment. 'How is that possible? I mingle with none but my friends.'

Mr. Ogilvie laid his firm hand ors the young man's shoulder.

'Those two men, Clare and Castlereagh, know what they are talking about. They admitted they have their spies in the very heart of your organisation, that they receive almost daily reports of your meetings, of your plans, your schemes.'

Lord Edward shook his head and laughed. 'They're cunning foxes both of them! But that was only a feint to draw you! On my honour, I swear it was. I can undertake for all my fellows and for myself —they're gentlemen, all of them. It is impossible.'

'Impossible—you use that word too often—impossible that *one* informer has worked his way among you?'

'Impossible,' repeated Lord Edward, still smiling, for to him what Mr. Ogilvie had said was so absurd that he refused to heed it. 'Can't you see that that is what Clare and Castlereagh would say to force your hand? They hoped, I suppose, that you knew something and that you would then betray it, thinking the cause lost. Why, it is the very oldest trick of all. A most primitive way of discovering a conspiracy to say "all is confessed, useless now to conceal anything!"'

'You try to make me out the simpleton,' smiled Mr. Ogilvie. 'I must say I never thought of that. Lord Clare's speech carried conviction. Castlereagh's not the man to play the fool either.'

'Not the fool, perhaps, my dear sir,' agreed Fitzgerald, more and more confident, 'but the man would set a trap. Now, I have undertaken

not to tell you any of my plans, and I won't. But do be confident; don't think that I'm running into anything stupid or adventurous, a mere boyish prank to scare the Castle. No, no,' he added, with increasing warmth, 'assure all my friends that I am perfectly safe, and as for traitors amongst us, or informers, why, it is out of the question.'

Mr. Ogilvie looked at him steadily, wondering if this superb unblemished confidence was based on a good foundation.

'I must be gone,' said Lord Edward, 'there is an appointment to-night which I must keep. Thank you, thank you a thousand times, but don't be afraid of these men.'

He took his old step-father's hand in his warm fingers.

'Do you remember all the good times we had together, sir, and in France, too? That was splendid, was it not? Do you know, I often remember them now, and it heartens me so.'

'You do need heartening then, Edward?'

'Why, every man does.'

'And there's Pamela and the children.'

'I've thought of them. I fear she is not too happy, sir. I wish you'd come and see her often.'

'You keep her hidden away. You hide away yourself, avoiding all your friends, Edward. Everybody notices it.'

'I don't want to involve any one,' said the young man frankly. 'I must tell you that, although I promised not to speak to you of my dangerous affairs.' He paused a moment, playing with his gloves, swinging them across the palm of his hand. At length he asked:

'Did Clare mention any names beside mine?'

'Yes, he mentioned the two Sheares, John and Henry—with venom, I thought.'

'Yes, yes, that's nothing new; he hates both of them. He thinks John wrote some of those articles which stung him so. Then there's a question of a duel once. He insulted John, of course, in the House.

There's nothing in that. Any other names?'

'He spoke, naturally, of Wolfe Tone.'

'Ah, poor Tone.' Fitzgerald laughed. 'He has long since come into the open, has he not? Nothing there either. He didn't mention any other names?'

'No, Edward, no other names.'

'Nor give any inkling of where he thought the meeting place was?'

'No, he's too clever for that. He would have no such knowledge if, as you think, he merely spoke to draw me, and I suppose, though he wished you warned, he did not wish all your friends warned.'

'Well, then,' continued Lord Edward earnestly, 'there was no hint, no mention of any names or places? He didn't betray that he really had any knowledge of this so-called conspiracy, of these so-called secret meetings?'

'No, I cannot help you there, Edward. It was merely a general and a most solemn warning for you to leave Ireland. Clare said all the ports should be open for you and your family. Oh, Edward, why not take his advice? Be a man of the world for once. Go with Pamela to visit Henry at Richmond. It's charming on Boyle's Farm. You will be heartily welcome. Forget all this.'

Lord Edward shook his head. Without any subterfuge he replied:

'I can't. I've gone too far. To draw back now would be to betray my friends.'

'My God,' cried Mr. Ogilvie. 'I feared as much!'

'Well, now you know what you only guessed. Don't disturb my mother with it. Believe me that it will be all right. Pray for me, sir. Trust that my intentions are honest. Come with me now. I don't want Pamela to find you here, it would disturb her.'

With gentle force he drew the old man out into the windy street, pressed his hand again, then hurried away into the darkness, his head bent before the rain.

CHAPTER 3

'It is a month,' said Fitzgerald, 'since the wind has blown favourable for Ireland, and still Hoche does not sail.'

His glance went round the company gathered at Mr. Bond's house and rested on the grave countenance of Mr. Thomas Addis Emmett, who had lately much withdrawn himself from these meetings. As if replying to a challenge that gentlemen replied:

'It is a pity that our destinies have to wait on the wind. Does not that fact, my Lord, give you a sharp sense of the unstability of our enterprise?' Fitzgerald smiled and faintly coloured.

'Pray, Mr. Emmett, repeat to the meeting the substance of our late conversation in the Shakespeare Gallery in Exchequer Street. These gentlemen must know your mind—and mine.'

The company looked towards Mr. Emmett, who looked down at the papers on the table before him.

'There is so much at stake,' he said, and paused. His thoughtful silence impressed the others, for all greatly respected his judgment, his courage, his patriotism.

The meeting was more largely attended than usual and held in greater circumstances of secrecy. To-night there had been no pretence of a musical party, but the gentlemen had come in by twos and threes through the warehouses at the back. The meeting was held in a chamber near the store house; the shutters were closed, the house silent in front, and, to any one patrolling the streets, might have been unoccupied. The police had lately been very active.

Scattered on the table before the Irishmen were the last reports from France, enthusiastic yet anxious messages from Wolfe Tone and from Mr. Lewine, who was in some sort the accredited Minister of the United Irishmen to the French Republic, and who had lately been empowered to obtain a loan of at least half a million pounds from France or Spain; reports, too, from the country—Kildare, Leinster, Wexford.

Fitzgerald continued to look steadily at Mr. Emmett.

'The wind!' he exclaimed with nervous impatience, listening to the beating on the shutters, 'which may at any moment change, and still they do not sail. It is not the fault of Hoche, that I dare swear, nor of Wolfe Tone...it is Ireland's luck.'

Mr. John Sheares, snuffing a candle carefully, remarked:

'If need be, we must manage without the French help.'

'Aye,' said Fitzgerald, 'so we must indeed. Yet I cannot help dwelling on the fact that this is the moment for them to land—for us to rise before from England reinforcements are sent. Why, Cork is so defenceless it would fall were only five thousand men landed at Bantry.'

All grew silent. Fitzgerald spoke again, with a slight effort.

'Mr. Emmett, you were about to speak?'

'My Lord, I hold it useless! You are not one who is to be influenced once you have made up your mind.'

'Still I would wish the others to know your opinion—your highly valued opinion, which I, seeing you no longer came to these meetings, asked for—'

'And answered, my Lord,' replied Mr. Emmett. 'By accusing me of deserting the cause—'

'Why, so I thought you spoke, Mr. Emmett, in those terms. But pray, sir, explain to the company.'

Mr. Emmett rose; his face was flushed. He was moved, though in his whole demeanour was a great steadiness, but all present listened to him intently. He spoke directly to Lord Edward.

'My Lord, I am not a person to desert a cause in which I have embarked. I knew the dangers of it when I joined it—dangers only for myself or the friends about me. I am not the man to be deterred by the consideration of what may happen to myself or them. We might fall, but the cause might not fail, and, so long as the country was served, it would matter little—'

He paused, smiled sadly. Mr. Henry Sheares moved uneasily, and put his hand over his eyes as if the candle light hurt them. Mr. Oliver Bond's chin was sunk in his cravat. Fitzgerald seemed to listen more to the wind than to the speaker.

'—but, my Lord, when I knew that the step you were taking will involve that cause itself—my fears are great; I tremble for the result—'

'To what step do you refer, sir?' asked Mr. John Sheares.

'Sir, you have changed a civil into a military organisation—your secretaries, chairmen and delegates are now captains, colonels and adjutant-generals. You have shown a want of caution that must have attracted the attention of the Castle. There has been much rash speaking and writing, a confiding in strangers, gentlemen. I fear that you have roused the government to employ spies and informers—'

Lord Edward put in impetuously: 'Sir, all the remarks you have made are but so many reasons for an immediate and general rising of the people. Indeed, the reports I have here show that their impatience is no longer to be restrained, nor can it, in my opinion, with advantage to the cause, be resisted—'

'My Lord,' replied Mr. Emmet with emphasis, 'all the services that you or your noble house have ever rendered to the country, or can ever render to it, will never make amends to the people for the misery the failure of your present plans will cause them!'

Fitzgerald rose, picked up and held out the papers before him.

'I tell you,' he cried impetuously, 'our chances of success are magnificent! Examine these returns, which show that one hundred thousand armed men may be counted on!'

'My Lord, they are on paper, and will not furnish fifty thousand in array. My name, for one, is enrolled there, but, I tell you candidly, you will not find me in your ranks. At first you declared that fifteen thousand Frenchmen were necessary to a rising. Now, when the English begin to pour troops into the country, you would act without waiting for Hoche—'

'If he does not come, I would. Come, Mr. Emmett, if we cannot get these fifteen thousand Frenchmen, or ten thousand, or five

thousand, will you then desert the cause?'

All present looked at the man thus warmly challenged, but Mr. Emmett lost nothing of his composure.

'My Lord,' he replied, 'you put the matter in such a light that I feel branded as a traitor in the eyes of the meeting—but what matters that? If you could obtain but the assistance of three hundred French officers to head our people you might be justified in this attempt, but not without them! Whom have we capable of leading our unfortunate people against a disciplined army?'

Lord Edward laughed.

'I know something of the English army. By Heaven, there is nothing like discipline there! Besides, we shall greatly outnumber them—'

'My Lord, we must not be deceived—they *are* disciplined and we are not. If the Irish are repulsed and shaken, who is to reform their lines?'

'Good God, sir, you pick at straws! I will undertake to seize Dublin without a general rising—'

'And if you did, my Lord, and were encamped in Phoenix Park, what would you be but a rabble unable to perform the least military evolution? On the arrival of regular troops you would be scattered, massacred—you, my Lord, are the only military man among us, and you cannot be everywhere. You delegate your authority to those whom you think are like yourself, but we have no such persons amongst us.'

There was a murmur among the listeners, most of them assented to the justice of Mr. Emmett's remarks, agreed that all must depend on the arrival of the French fleet. But Lord Edward broke in with impatience:

'I say we will not be dependent on these foreigners. If they come in large numbers it may be but a change of masters. We had all determined to rise whether Hoche arrives or not.'

I take my leave,' said Mr. Emmett, crossing to Fitzgerald. 'I withdraw from these proceedings. I hope to go in mutual confidence

and friendship.'

'Why, surely,' said John Sheares. 'There could be no question but that we rely on your good discretion, Mr. Emmett.'

'I am sorry that you should doubt mine,' cried Lord Edward, with a cordial clasp of his friend's hand.

'Tis the only thing about you I do doubt, my Lord. My warmest wishes go with you!'

Arthur O'Connor followed Mr. Emmett into the outer room, where a single small lamp lit the dusty expanse of the warehouse.

'I am sorry for this,' he said, troubled. 'We relied greatly on your opinion.'

'You have had it,' replied Mr. Emmett. 'And it was not relished. Do not mistake what I said,' he added earnestly. 'Lord Edward—and I know him as well as any man can—is the noblest of human beings. He has no deceit, no meanness, no selfishness in him, but is all frankness, openness and generosity; but—I speak plainly—he is not the man to conduct a revolution to a successful issue.'

'Where can such be found?'

'They are rare indeed. Good-bye. God watch over you all!'

'Are you coming to the meeting at Jackson's, in Church Street, to-morrow? Tom Reynolds has arranged it—'

'No, I don't like Reynolds, I told you. He has a bad character, a spendthrift, a libertine, a flatterer—'

'Some think him the best and honestest man in the Union.'

Without replying to this Mr. Emmett took his friend's hand and said:

'O'Connor, I believe you and I could do this, but we will never get the chance. Sober men aren't listened to in a crisis, and that is natural enough. Good-night.'

And Mr. Emmett went down the dark warehouse stairs, through

the mansion, silent save for the fitful melody of Mrs. Bond's harp, and out into the sombre streets, where the wind, as if in mockery, blew favourable to the fleet that did not sail.

CHAPTER 4

Arthur O'Connor returned to the meeting. Every one was talking together in low tones, discussing the opinions of Mr. Emmett. Some, notably Mr. Henry Sheares, seemed uneasy. Mr. Reynolds was very hot on disregarding all advices, all warnings—an immediate rebellion, whether Hoche sailed or not! Fitzgerald appeared by no means downcast by his friend's (and he held Emmett very near his heart) disapproval. He asked for silence and addressed the company.

'Mr. Emmett spoke of spies and informers, gentlemen. I ought to tell you something which occurred to-day, but which was put out of my mind by anxiety for the expedition—by Mr. Emmett's speech. You should know that I have received a warning.'

Mr. Henry Sheares looked up sharply.

'An anonymous warning, Lord Edward?'

'No, there is no need that I should disguise from whom it came—it was my step-father, Mr. Ogilvie.'

'I expect,' said Mr. O'Connor, 'you have had many such warnings from your friends, Lord Fitzgerald? They must guess something of your activities.'

'I should not trouble you with it if it were nothing more than that. Mr. Ogilvie was sent for by Lord Clare. He found Castlereagh there. They had some conversation. The gist of it was that these two gentlemen, who professed themselves my friends, deputed him to try to get me out of the country.'

At these words all the men gathered round the table and looked at Fitzgerald, who had risen and was standing near the candles, as usual flushed and animated.

'There is nothing in this, as you will suppose. Indeed, I took it very lightly. Lady Castlereagh is a friend of my wife. It is quite natural he should feel some friendliness towards me, and you may imagine it would be quite likely they should consider that I hold opinions dangerous in these times.'

But this was a specific warning, was it not, my Lord?' put in Mr. Bond anxiously; 'referred to something known of your actions?'

'Clare would not say so, and Ogilvie, of course, had to be on his guard, and indeed, himself knows nothing. Why should he? You know I have lately detached myself from all my relatives.'

'Well, then,' said Mr. Henry Sheares, relaxing a little in his chair, 'there is nothing here to make a to-do. Clare and Castlereagh have some inkling, no doubt, that there is trouble brewing for them. They know, of course, of the intended invasion and must suspect that many in Ireland know of it, too.'

'Nay, but what I have to say to you,' interrupted Fitzgerald with increasing warmth, 'is that Clare told Ogilvie that he knew all our proceedings, that he was aware of everything that was going on; in short, there was amongst us, in our most secret councils, some spy or informer in the Castle's pay.'

He looked smilingly round his friends' faces as he spoke, and saw on them the expression that had been on his own when Mr. Ogilvie first broke this matter to him.

'Spy and informer here. But impossible! We are all gentlemen and well known one to the other,' exclaimed John Sheares.

'It is monstrous,' said Tom Reynolds, with contempt. 'That is one of Clare's weapons, don't you see? He knows nothing except that there must be some general understanding among loyal Irishmen, and so he tries to sow dissension, and suspicion.'

'Yes, yes, so I took it,' replied Fitzgerald. 'Of course, he gave Ogilvie no details, but I thought it right to report to you that both Clare and Castlereagh have declared openly they knew all our plans.'

'Why, then,' exclaimed Bond, 'have we not been arrested long since?'

'Ogilvie seemed to have the impression that they were giving us a long rope with which to hang ourselves, but, as you say, I think it but a feint on their part.'

John Sheares reflected a moment. He looked at his brother then

shook his head slowly.

'No, I don't think it's possible. They wouldn't dare to play such a dangerous game. If they really knew anything about us, our leaders would have been arrested long since. They could not venture to risk an invasion, a rising. No, they were laying a trap.'

'But this question of a traitor,' pursued Fitzgerald. 'Is there anything we can do there?'

John Sheares shrugged and threw out his hand in a gesture of incredulity.

'Why, my Lord, what could we do? We are all gentlemen and have all taken our oaths and are all known one to another. We have no English among us, no man of doubtful character.'

'Nor in the whole country?' pursued Fitzgerald, who was still troubled by the vehemence with which Mr. Ogilvie had repeated Clare's warning. 'Might there not be some informer somewhere?'

'If he was in the country, my Lord, he would not know any of the secrets of the society, but only his own small part therein and be of little, if any, use to the Castle.'

Lord Fitzgerald sat down, saying:

'I fear I waste your time, gentlemen, on trivialities, but I was bound to repeat what Mr. Ogilvie told me.'

Mr. Henry Sheares, who had not the bold character possessed by his brother, but who was an amiable, agreeable man and one who showed more apprehension of danger than most of the United Irishmen, asked:

'Did Lord Clare mention any names?'

'So I demanded of Mr. Ogilvie. The answer was—none, except yourself and your brother, Mr. Sheares.'

'Ah,' exclaimed John Sheares, 'I thought so. Lord Clare detests us and would get us if he could—even to the gallows.'

'Oh, I swear he was frank enough about that,' smiled Fitzgerald.

'But let his hatred make you no more uneasy than his friendship does me, sir, and you will be as carefree as I am.' As if dismissing the subject he picked up a pile of papers, copies of the reports from the provincial centres of the organisation which had been sent to headquarters; detailed plans for the rising, the seizing of the Castle, and the military depôts; for the marching of the insurgents to meet the invaders in Bantry Bay, which the French had finally, on Irish advice, elected for a landing. The English had no batteries there, and even if they had had it would have been impossible to command the whole of the vast bay with even a large amount of artillery.

'I feel,' exclaimed Mr. Oliver Bond, rising to fetch some sherry and glasses from the sideboard, 'as if I was on the edge of a volcano. I would to God it would explode!'

'The waiting,' agreed Mr. Sheares, 'is terrible. This inaction, marking time, wondering from day to day, waiting! Why the fleet was promised in October, now we're near on Christmas—indeed, Lord Edward is right: one should not wait.'

There fell an anxious silence in the room, disturbed only by the chink of glasses, as Bond served his fellow-members, passing round the table the bottles of brown wine, reflecting the candles, which, burning low, cast a mellow light on the men's anxious faces above their folded cravats, their dark coats. Beyond them were shadows and beyond that again the glow of the fire which had burnt down to a steady heart of gold.

Fitzgerald suddenly looked up from the glass he had not touched, his nostrils slightly dilated, his eyes gleaming under the disordered dark hair.

'Listen!' he cried. 'I think the wind has changed.'

'It has dropped,' said Mr. Bond, pausing with a glass in his hand.

They all listened. The sound of the wind to which they had become used for the last month, a strong steady gale blowing towards Ireland, had indeed suddenly ceased.

Fitzgerald went to the window, regardless of caution, and tore aside the curtains and opened the casement. The moon was labouring through heavy clouds, the warehouse roofs of Dublin

showed dark and huddled in the uncertain light, the candles fluttered in the fresh air that suddenly disturbed the still heat of the room.

Fitzgerald took his handkerchief and held it out of the window, and as a gust of wind rose, it was swept away from him. He gave a sharp exclamation:

'The wind has changed. It is blowing against us!'

CHAPTER 5

Mr. Thomas Reynolds returned to his house as the stormy dawn was discolouring the skies above Dublin. He had come from a carnival at the Rotunda and his mood was black. His companion, a woman on whom he had already spent too much money, had stolen a diamond pin he had inherited from his mother. Most of Mrs. Reynolds's jewels had disappeared—and not into the coffers of her son's wife.

Mr. Reynolds had been drinking heavily, but he had a strong head. It was with a steady hand that he turned over a pile of unwelcome letters that his wife had flung on his dressing-table.

There was one from his steward at Kilkea Castle which he had obtained through the favour of Lord Edward, lamenting that the military had been quartered on the estates and had devastated the property searching for rebels, and one from his head clerk stating that ladies came into the warehouse and cut off lengths of valuable brocade, declaring they had the permission of Mr. Reynolds. Another from a friend claiming repayment of a loan, one from an acquaintance demanding a settlement of a gambling debt...

Mr. Reynolds swept them all on to the floor, yawned, lit a candle, selected a brandy flask from among the pomade pots and scent bottles, took a long draught, then pulled out of the pocket of his expensive coat a bundle of last night's newspapers.

Once more he read carefully over the paragraphs that announced that the French fleet, with Hoche and Grouchy on board, had been wrecked by gales in Brest harbour. Perhaps true; perhaps lies. He looked up at the bleak uncurtained windows. A storm was tearing the dark clouds across the empty sky.

'It must be wild enough at sea.'

The bold face of Thomas Reynolds became grim and calculating in that wild winter light as he stared at the threatening skies and listened to the dull roar of the winds blowing away from the Irish coasts.

CHAPTER 6

At his breakfast table, while Pamela frothed her chocolate, Lord Edward learnt from the public journals the confirmation of the rumours which had passed so anxiously among his friends.

On the night of the departure of the French squadron for Ireland seventy-four of the ships had struck upon the rocks and been lost. It was believed, too, that Generals Grouchy and Hoche, who were on board *La Fraternité*, had been, in the storm, separated from the body of the fleet and were either lost or had been forced to return to Brest. The remnant of the armament was supposed to be forcing its way through contrary winds, gales and fogs, towards the Bantry Bay...The newspapers fell from Fitzgerald's hand; he could no longer command himself.

Pamela rose as she saw her husband's face and ordered Tony out of the room as she went behind her husband's chair, where he sat leaning forward on the pretty table.

'Read there,' he whispered. 'I cannot tell you—the worst—after all the waiting!' She picked up the bent paper and read the news from France, then cried desperately:

'Oh, Edward, it may not be true! They would invent that to dishearten us.'

'I fear it is true. One may see for oneself the weather. My God, why could they not start before, with the wind set fair for Ireland for a month?'

He held his head in his hands and stared at the carpet. Again there swept over him that inexplicable sense of fatality which had shadowed him since he was a child. He never had felt the confidence of a man who is destined to successful action, and sensed it like a fatal flaw in himself. Over all his high spirits, his enthusiasm, his hopes had fallen this shadow, not of weakness, not of indecision, but of the sense that he and his cause were marked out for the mockery of fortune.

And Pamela had always shared his feelings. She had been, since she had married him, afraid of his destiny.

The wind cast the rain in large sheets on to the window, rattling the panes; howled in the chimney, scattering the ashes and embers on the hearth. The whole city, the whole island, was grey, as if wrapped in mourning. Pamela, thinking only of her fears, took her husband by the shoulder, and bent over him.

'Edward, won't you let this be the end of it? I've endured almost enough, with the children to think of and so much uncertainty. Will you remember now Mr. Ogilvie's warning? Will you remember what Mr. Emmett said?'

'I should not have told you those things,' muttered her husband. 'Must you always bring them up?'

'Don't speak harshly, Edward! Nay! I don't care if you do! Let us go to England. Henry wants us—your mother. Think of her. You always cared for her more than you did for me or the children. I will go to her. I will ask her to help persuade you.'

'Pamela, you dare not do it!' He jumped up, taking her hands fiercely. 'My mother knows nothing, nobody knows anything. I've almost had to lie to them, too, for the first time in my life deceive them. I have trusted you and you alone, Pamela. You can't betray me by as much as a look!'

'Sometimes I think I could,' she answered desperately. 'Sometimes I could go to your brother Leinster and give him the whole tale and have you seized and taken out of this dreadful island. Oh, Edward, what can you hope for now if this fleet is ruined?'

'It is not all ruined,' he said obstinately. 'I was overthrown for a moment only. Pamela, see, it says here, even in the English prints, that the rest of them make for Bantry Bay, and if they landed with a few men we could do it; by God, we could! Nay, we could do it without, as I maintained to Emmett.'

'How can they land in such foul weather? Such a gale already! What ship could live in such a sea as there must be around Ireland's coasts to-day?'

'Well, if the French ships can't live, neither can the English,' said Fitzgerald, with a forced smile. 'Moore and Abercrombie won't get

here, either, and the troops in the country amount to nothing...Campden will be helpless. I'll do it, I say, I'll do it—'

'But Hoche, you were counting on Hoche,' she urged, turning from one argument to another in her desperation.

'It seems that he is lost, with Grouchy, and, I suppose, Mr. Wolfe Tone.'

'*La Fraternité* is not lost,' cried Edward Fitzgerald, with the air of a man who refuses to be discouraged. 'Hoche lives, I'm sure he lives, and he will, if need be, fit out another expedition. He will not disappoint us. I have met the man. I know him. Tone too, I can answer for him—his life is in it.'

'And not his only, I think,' cried Pamela, twisting her hands, hardly able to control herself. 'But yours and mine and our children and all your friends. Oh, God, Edward, I would you had never met these people who have led you into all this! I see nothing but evil coming of it!'

He gave her a furious look.

'I should not have told you, Pamela. I certainly love you too much. That was my weakness.'

'And now I discover mine. I am a woman, nothing but a woman. You should never have taken me for more.'

'I did not, dear. But I took you for a woman of a rare fortitude.'

'Well, so I am! Have I not been brave? You took all my happiness from me when you made me leave Kildare. What do you think that journey to Hamburg was to me? No, I must not complain. I am truly not only weak, but cowardly. Forgive me, Edward. But I would ruin my reputation in your eyes if I could but persuade you—'

'You could if any could, Pamela. I am heartsick myself, for the things we have lost. I don't think I am the man for this, either. Emmett was right, though I withstood him. I feel that every time I think of it, and I must confess I've been much unsettled by that talk of treachery. But I can't go back.'

'Why not, Edward? Here is a fair excuse. Let the whole thing wait for another time. Go to England as soon as the packets can sail. Till then let us return to Kildare, far away from trouble, so if any is suspected, if any information is lodged at the Castle—Oh, Edward, I don't know what I'm saying!'

He shook his dark, handsome head. 'You see, Pamela, I'm better protected than any of these men. Even Clare and Castlereagh are my friends, and tried to warn me. I can't take advantage of that, can I? I don't think the ports would be open to the Sheares or Bond or Reynolds or O'Connor. I believe they are all marked. They must be—their names are known. Don't you see, Pamela, that I couldn't do it? Escape and leave them to face it—when they hadn't a chance, and I had?'

'Oh, a man's honour'—she sighed wearily—'yes, I know all about that! But you might break down even those niceties for my sake.'

'A man can't, Pamela. He simply can't. It's his friends first in a case like this. I should show up as a coward if I was to fly and leave them to it. I should never be able to look you in the face again. What tale would you tell the children after?'

'Edward, I am not well; indeed I am not well. I have tried to disguise it from you, but I doubt if I can endure much more of this terrible secrecy—this anxiety—this living almost in hiding.'

'You need not do that, Pamela. You should go about more—it would help divert suspicion.'

'Why, that's worst of all. When I go with your brother or his wife or with Lady Moira or any of these people, I feel them watching me, perhaps kindly, perhaps maliciously, hoping some word will drop from my lips that will help them to understand. Can't you realise, Edward, the strain it is? And I have always told you, I am a foreigner here, and none of them like me very well.'

She checked herself suddenly, alarmed by the look of distress on his pale face.

'I despise myself,' she whispered in a hoarse voice. 'I become a mere raving woman, and a piteous thing that is—'

'I had no right to love you, Pamela. You must find it hard to forgive me, dear. I find it hard to forgive myself. I took it all so light-heartedly then. I never realised how this—how Ireland—would get hold of my heart. Oh, Pamela, don't look like that—so forlorn! Why, I'm a fool to talk despondently—I don't feel it. What will you say when you see the green flags above the Castle, dear, and Campden and his staff sent aboard a ship for Dover, like so many bundles of returned merchandise?'

She tried to smile in response to his sudden wild, high spirits, but she thought: 'God help me, I don't believe that any but the doomed are so confident.'

CHAPTER 7

Lord Edward, as if he broke away from bonds, left Pamela. Catching up his hat, and without a cloak he hastened out into the wet streets, the steady wind howling about him, snatching away the mist from the roofs, and sending the rain in gold gushes against the grey fronts of the houses.

His first thought was to consult with his friends on the news published in the journal, and then, if possible, to get quickly together a meeting of the United Irishmen that they might decide what their course was now to be if the French did not land at all, or were only able to send a small body of troops.

He called, therefore, at the house of Arthur O'Connor, and found that gentleman, like himself, deeply perturbed.

'I don't know what to say, Fitzgerald. It looks as if the very elements were on the side of England.'

'We'll rise without them, as I said, but we must wait and see if any do come. We ought to go to the coast, perhaps, ourselves. I don't know. My wife grows so fearful, I don't want a premature explosion,' he added, as if to himself. 'That's hard to bear, O'Connor. I should not have told her anything—'

'Can you trust her? She is Lady Castlereagh's friend, and in a moment of weakness, of excitement—'

'Not a friend, an acquaintance. And I can trust Pamela not to speak—I can't trust her, though, not to die of keeping silent.'

He stood at the window. The rain was ceasing with the rising of the wind. The clouds were swept up high, leaving the city outlined against the pale-washed sky which showed beneath the tumult of the storm.

'Let us ride out,' cried Fitzgerald. 'I have been far too long in narrow streets and shuttered rooms. Let us ride a little way into the country. The wind will freshen our wits.'

CHAPTER 8

In half an hour they were on the road, free of the dark gloomy shape of the Castle, fortress and prison, of the detested pride of the English flag that fluttered, gaunt and sodden, above the city.

Neither spoke. The rain and the wind and the steady exercise soothed them better than any words. They rode along the banks of the Liffey, which was grey and swollen. The clouds broke overhead. They looked up to see a rift of blue sky, pale and distant. The wind seemed to drop a little, and the thoughts of both the men were with the shattered fleet travelling towards Bantry Bay.

'Ogilvie,' said Fitzgerald suddenly, 'told me that Clare mentioned the *Union Star*. He accused us of conniving at it—and assassination. I saw it posted up to-day—a sheet that advised the taking off of Campden—'

The Castle is running it,' replied O'Connor, whose own journal had recently been suppressed, 'to blacken our characters and ruin our chances; to give them an excuse for unparalleled severity.'

'Ogilvie challenged them with that to their faces.'

'They denied it?'

'Castlereagh said it was a foul libel.'

'He lied. I don't understand Castlereagh. Why is he so diligent against us?'

'I don't know. I liked him, he seemed so mild. Now! He must know that torture is used—the cat-o'-nine-tails, the pitch cap, the scourge! I confess I am afraid of Castlereagh, O'Connor.'

'Why?'

'He is the type who always seems to be successful.'

Arthur O'Connor shrugged under his wet cloak.

'About the *Union Star*—that damned rag does us much harm. I

suppose Clare denied all knowledge of it?'

'Neither denied it nor admitted it, but Ogilvie had his impression strengthened that the Castle knew all about it.'

'Well, our hands are clear there,' said O'Connor with impatience. 'We have had no dealings with the *Union Star* nor the editor, nor any of the printers. If our affairs should come to be publicly examined we should have no difficulty in proving that we have not advocated any manner of violence. But, by God, what the Government does is sufficient to provoke assassination. Did you hear of that poor boy last night? They had him tied up in the Castle yard for a flogging—the second that he'd endured. He got untied from the triangle under the excuse of a confession—sent them off to look for non-existent arms at his lodgings, then cut his throat with a pen-knife he got hidden about him.'

'We must strike for it!' cried Fitzgerald, urging his horse faster. 'Even without the French—'

'And two days ago a wretch they'd put into the warm pitch cap broke out all smeared with turpentine and drowned himself in the Liffey. A man was thrashed to death at Drogheda for having a shamrock on his ring.'

'O'Connor, O'Connor, we must rise, must risk it, even if it comes to all of us cutting our throats in jail.'

'I'd do that, sooner than be hanged.'

'Hanged!'

'Horrified, my lad? They'd do it.'

'Yes, yes; that must be faced.'

They rode in silence, full of anxious thoughts. Suddenly, out of the misty, wind-scattered rain, a party of English soldiers came towards them, ten or twelve, riding at a canter.

The officer passed Fitzgerald, gave him a sidelong glance, then pulled up his steaming horse and turned so as to obstruct the passage of the Irishmen.

'Lord Edward Fitzgerald, I think?' said the Englishman. His fair, narrow face, wet from the rain, showed cold and haughty beneath the elaborate head-dress, sodden and dripping on to his cloak.

'That is my name, sir,' said Fitzgerald.

'Well, I don't like the colour of your neck-cloth,' said the Englishman insolently.

Fitzgerald had drawn up his fine black horse. He wore, according to his custom and contrary to the habits of most gentlemen, a neck-cloth of green silk instead of a white cravat, fastened loosely round his neck and tied in the front.

'Why? It is a pleasant colour,' he answered quietly; 'that of nature, of hope.'

'I don't like it. I think you would do well, sir, to take it off. Nay, I demand that you take it off. Hope? The damned French have gone down in a storm.'

Arthur O'Connor had paused beside his friend.

'Your cloth bespeaks you a gentleman,' said Fitzgerald in dry rebuke.

'Green, I think,' continued the officer, 'is the colour of the United Irishmen.'

'That society has ceased to exist, sir. It was made illegal some time ago, was it not?' asked Mr. O'Connor pleasantly. 'And I have no knowledge that green was particularly their colour.'

'And I have some knowledge that it was,' replied the Englishman. He twisted round in his saddle, and peering into Lord Fitzgerald's face, added: 'And it's a bad colour to be wearing just now. What do you intend to do, sir?'

'Why, all I can say,' answered Fitzgerald, 'is that here I am, and here is my neck-cloth, and if any of you like to come and take it off, you're welcome to try.'

The officer glanced at his men, hesitated, then shrugged and rode on at a gallop, his escort behind him, his wet plumes flapping in

the rain.

'So they became as insolent as that!' cried Fitzgerald. He called over his shoulder to the Englishmen: 'If you think yourself insulted, sir, you know where to find me.'

CHAPTER 9

The mighty gales increased, shot with lightning, echoed by thunder. The whole country waited in silence. Men appeared to go about their daily tasks as usual, but there was not one of them who did not wait in either apprehension or hope for news of the French fleet.

The plans of the United Irishmen were complete. They had gained over eight thousand of the militia in Dublin, including a large number of the garrison of the Castle. There were those among them who thought that the moment was ripe, that the signal for a rising should have been immediately given. This was the opinion of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, but he was overruled by the civilians like Sheares and Bond, who considered that they should at least wait for news of the French fleet.

This came soon enough. During five days seven of the shattered frigates tossed in full view of the coast outside Bantry Bay, but unable because of the persistent gale of wind to effect a landing, while ten others were driven back. Yet how easy this landing might have been! This was impressed with the bitterest irony on the minds of those tormented by such agonising suspense, by the fact that during these four days no British sail came in sight and only a few troops were moved to meet the invaders.

The elements, however, served England better than could her own ships and men. Exhausted, battered, suffering from lack of provision, separated from their commander, the Frenchmen at length turned and battled their way back to Brest, all attempt at an invasion being, for some months at least, obviously abandoned.

Then, after the slackening of the storm and when all hope or fear (as it might be) from the invader was gone, came the news of the sudden death of Hoche (not without suspicion of foul play) sent in disheartened but not despairing messages from Tone and Lewine, who, unbeaten and implacable in their purpose, had returned to Paris to urge the fitting out of another fleet.

During these days of terrible strain and suspense the Castle gave no sign of fear or anger; it seemed to take no measures of defence. The Government offered neither conciliation nor unusual

severity towards the people, arrested no one of the United Irishmen, appeared, indeed, unaware of the spirit of insurrection which was murmuring before their very eyes.

This sullen calm made some of the Irishmen uneasy. Campden had men upon his staff whom no one could believe to be fools; it was difficult to credit that Clare and Castlereagh had been so completely hoodwinked; that the iron hand and eagle glance of William Pitt was not even raised or turned towards Ireland. John Sheares said: 'I feel as if there was a great invisible net over the whole island being drawn slowly closer and closer.' He had pondered much on what Mr. Ogilvie had repeated of Lord Clare's warnings about treachery, and he had 'consulted privately Lord Edward Fitzgerald as to who this possible traitor might be, yet could suspect no one even when going over all their members name by name...

Fitzgerald said: 'We give too much thought to this; let us strike at once.'

The opinions on this matter were much divided, but those who were for venturing on rebellion without French aid, were supported by the arrival of the ardent leaders from the North, Lowry and Teeling. They were accompanied by a deputation of sergeants from the Clare, Kilkenny and Kildare militia, who waited upon the provincial council of Dublin with an offer to seize, in the name of the Union, the barracks and the castle, without requiring the aid or presence of a single citizen.

Fitzgerald was for instantly accepting this plan, but it was considered by the other members of the Dublin committee too daring. The executive decided, after a tedious and troubled discussion, that the affair was too difficult to be undertaken at this juncture, when all were disheartened by the disaster to the French fleet.

Alarmed and disgusted by this lack of action in the Dublin leaders, the Northerners fled to Hamburg, and the English Government, as if aware that at this moment there was disorganisation among the ranks of the conspirators, issued a proclamation promising a free pardon to any rebel who should come forward, give up his arms, and submit himself.

These blows to the cause were, however, in some manner recompensed by the assurances received from Irish agents in Paris

that another expedition was being prepared and might with confidence be looked forward to in April.

Arthur O'Connor and some others set out for France to put the state of the United Irishmen before the Directory and to urge the setting out of another fleet.

But Edward Fitzgerald remained in Dublin, still urging action without waiting for foreign aid. There was a lull in affairs as there was in the weather. A sullen calm hung in the sky and bitter silence brooded in the island.

CHAPTER 10

The first news that his friends received of Arthur O'Connor was that, with some Irish priests, he had been arrested at Margate with papers in his possession addressed to the French Directory and referring to the promised invasion of England.

It was learnt by Lord Edward in Mr. O'Connor's own house, where he chanced to be, advising about the next issue of the official paper of the United Irishmen which Arthur O'Connor, so brilliantly talented, so able, so daring, edited.

Overwhelmed by this misfortune to his friend and to the cause, he had scarcely time to collect himself when soldiers entered accompanied by a magistrate, and, by order of the government, searched the establishment and seized all the printing materials and papers.

Lord Edward could do nothing to check what seemed to him an unwarrantable outrage, but he expressed his opinion with more warmth than prudence, and under the face of the magistrate offered the housekeeper, who was being rudely treated and greatly embarrassed by the seizure of her property, a place in his own house. The hated Town Major, Sirr, the head of a band of special police, informers, secret agents and spies, was present and spoke roughly to Fitzgerald:

'You are very rash to be here, sir, even more rash to speak and defend this woman.'

'Is it so rash and imprudent not to conceal one's opinions,' replied Fitzgerald hotly. 'Are we indeed all become helots?'

'You have been found on suspected premises. There is much against you, even to the neckcloth you wear,' continued Sirr, but Fitzgerald impetuously interrupted him: 'I take no warning. I do not deny that Mr. O'Connor was a friend of mine.'

'It is rather dangerous,' sneered the Town Major, 'to say you are a friend of one who now lies in the Tower of London under a charge of high treason. Take care, my Lord, take care—'

'My God, do you presume to warn me?'

'Ay, I do. And I dare say you've had warnings from better men. Take care. Don't presume too much on being the Duke of Leinster's brother—'

'Do you think I do? Stand out of my way—you and your rascally band of informers!'

'As to that, my Lord, look rather among your own fine friends! Maybe there's one of them, whom you hold dear enough, in the pay of the Castle.'

Lord Edward was about to reply violently to this jibe when the housekeeper flung herself between him and the police officer and passionately implored him to be silent.

'My Lord! my Lord! I could not endure to think that it was this house and through my trouble you have become involved!'

CHAPTER 11

That evening there was a hastily summoned meeting at the house of Oliver Bond. Fitzgerald spoke, and with more than usual authority, for he was able to urge on them the ill-consequences of their indecision in refusing the chance to seize the Castle when it had been offered them some while before, by the leaders from the North.

'Our affairs,' he declared, 'have been hampered not only by ill-luck, such as the storm and the contrary winds, but by too much hesitation and reluctance for action on our own part. Surely it is now obvious to all of us, after the arrest of O'Connor and the sudden vigilance on the part of the government, that we must all act immediately and together, or be arrested and hauled off to prison as common malefactors?'

What was there to hope for, and what might be demanded save in terms of war? The suspension of Habeas Corpus Act, Carhampton's transportation of untried prisoners, the free quarters of the military on the people, the burning of Roman Catholic houses and chapels, the atrocities of the Peep O'Day boys, who were protected by the government, the use of torture on the least suspicion of disaffection, all persuaded even moderate men that the only hope lay in an appeal to arms.

In the English House of Lords, Lord Moira had spoken passionately of the misgovernment of Ireland. Lord Fitzwilliam, the recalled Viceroy, had foretold rebellion—'Forty-five thousand men couldn't keep the country down.'

The delegates agreed with grave resolution. Each had reached the point where he threw aside all hesitation; each knew that the rising had been organised with a thoroughness and a skill, largely owing to the talents and energy of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, that gave a guarantee of success even to the most cautious. A general staff had been formed, and to each county an adjutant-general had been sent to supply returns of the strength and state of the local force. There were reports to hand of the military positions in all the different districts of Ireland, and instructions, which Lord Edward had drawn up himself, were ready to be despatched to all these various officers. Every detail had been considered and carefully thought out. Lord

Edward had, for instance, written: 'Those in the maritime counties are charged, on the first appearance of a friendly force on the coast, to communicate the same in a most speedy manner to the Executive. They must then immediately collect their force and march forward with as many of the yeomanry and militia as possible. Each man to be provided with at least three days' provisions and to bring on all they can of carts, draft horses, horses' harness, horses to mount cavalry with three or four days' forage, taking care to seize nowhere the property of a patriot where an enemy can be found to raise contribution.' And every aspect of the rising received from him the same anxious attention, and as he proceeded to detail his plans, all felt their hopes rise. There was a determination about his person, his voice, his speech that heartened them all; and he, in his turn, was encouraged by their obvious faith and trust in him. He looked round the eager, anxious faces turned towards him and said, with a sigh and a smile: 'I think, gentlemen, we cannot fail, we are so securely entrenched that the government cannot possibly reach us and once we have sprung our action all will be won in a single blow.'

The others agreed that his confidence seemed rather to be based on sober, well-founded hope than on wild or fanatic enthusiasm.

'I am rather glad,' continued Lord Edward, 'that we are able to accomplish this without foreign aid. The fleet the Directory sent was too large for my approval. It will be a great thing if Ireland can free herself without the aid of these foreigners. For my part, I have no more wish to live under the French than under the English.'

CHAPTER 12

As Lord Edward was leaving Bond's house he was called by Mr. Thomas Reynolds, who came hurrying after him.

Fitzgerald had lately fallen into a great liking for this man, which was in direct contradiction with his early impression of him. He now thought there was a bold simplicity, a staunch fidelity about the fellow that marked him above his abilities, which were commonplace enough. His particular duty then was to act as provincial secretary for the County of Kildare and to bring up to Dublin the reports of the patriotic activities in that county.

He said in a low tone as he walked with Lord Edward through the cold, twilit streets, 'that he had not these reports quite ready, but hoped to be able to procure them in a day or so, and asked if he might wait on Lord Edward himself with them, instead of deferring this till the next meeting at Oliver Bond's, which was planned for the twelfth of the present month.

'So you may,' replied Lord Edward, 'breakfast with me on Friday, if you will. You know that I have moved my wife again from Leinster House, where my brother begged me to leave her to divert suspicions, so he said. Poor Leinster, I am sorry for him, and I feel in a way I deceive him, yet I am sure he will be mighty glad when all is over. His position at present is miserable.'

'I hear they harry his estates, finding more traitors there than in any other part of Ireland,' said Reynolds.

'I fear I must lay that to my account. The government suspect our whole family. Well, it cannot be helped, a few weeks will alter all.'

The two men turned a corner, bowing their heads before the chill wind, turning their collars up, shoulder to shoulder in the dusk.

'I am sorry about O'Connor,' said Fitzgerald in his impulsive way. 'That cuts one to the heart! He was imprudent, poor fellow. Why did he walk on foot behind his baggage from Margate to Dover, and offer such large sums on the way; and then to carry those papers with him! Castlereagh has gone to London—I don't like that. My God, it would be terrible if they hanged O'Connor!'

'He is to be tried at the Kent Assizes, is he not?'

'Aye, don't let us think of it. Perhaps if we're successful before then we can make terms for his release. We part ways here, I think.' He paused, and gave Reynolds his hand. 'You'll find me at Denzel Street. It is just possible I might send back my wife to Leinster House. My brother urges it and it might be wiser. The other place is always mine, and I shall be frequently there.'

Reynolds continued to keep his hand in that of Lord Fitzgerald, thus detaining him by the clasp on his wrist. The wind was blowing about them, stirring their hair and cloaks as they stood at the corner of the dark street.

'Your Lordship never had any inkling of any possible traitor? That sticks in my mind. Lord Clare mentioned it. A Judas he would be, eh? He must keep very quiet—a clever fox!'

'Reynolds, I never think of it.'

'I suppose the government would give a very large sum for information—eh?'

'Why, that's a strange thing to say, Reynolds! I suppose they would spend an immense fortune to ferret out our secrets, but the Irish are a faithful race: though we have had to trust many of the baser sorts, I never had any fear.'

'Nor I, my Lord,' answered Reynolds smoothly, 'but it is a wonderful thing, is it not, that for two years this conspiracy should have gone on, almost openly as it were, and no one spoken? Why, I was just thinking,' and he half laughed in his deep collar, shuddering as the bitter wind lashed his face, 'that if any information was given as to that next meeting at Bond's, for instance, why, the whole chiefs of the conspiracy could be seized at once, and all our vast organisation powerless! You'll be there, I suppose, my Lord, and the Sheares and Bond himself? Why, think of it, it makes me tremble in my heart.'

'I don't think of it,' replied Fitzgerald. 'I keep my mind on hopeful things. I don't think of that any more than I think of the French being so near that they could have flung a biscuit on shore, then sailing away.'

He wrung Reynold's hand and turned away into the dusk. The other young man remained at the corner of the street and watched him pass under the fluttering of lamps out of sight.

Thomas Reynolds seemed regardless of the cold and storm. He bit his chilled forefinger thoughtfully and his face settled into a smooth, implacable expression. Then, as if he suddenly realised the weather, he shook himself, drew his cloak more closely towards him, and turned not towards his own house, the handsome mansion in front of the silk warehouses, but down the narrow, dark alley, where he made his way with difficulty, avoiding the garbage and the filthy puddles between the cobbles.

CHAPTER 13

When Lord Edward returned to his house in Denzel Street he found his wife was out. He knew that she was to have been at Leinster House that afternoon, but was surprised that she had not yet returned. He went, therefore, at once to his brother's residence. He found the Duke expecting him, with a heightening of the anxiety which had marked him of late.

'Edward, I have detained your wife here. I sent for her maid and your Tony to help make her comfortable. The children, too, of course, I think they ought to stay with me.'

'Why?' asked Edward. He always, now, felt painfully embarrassed in his brother's presence. He believed the Duke guessed much more than he disclosed.

'I don't like her to remain down in the town in a hired house,' said the Duke anxiously. 'That infernal town major, Sirr, aid his men are everywhere; you wouldn't like it if they searched and rifled your house? She is not at all well, Edward, and it wouldn't be fair to expose her to that.'

'I think it most unlikely it would happen. Yet certainly I am pleased that she should be here.'

'They would scarcely come here,' said Leinster, with a nervous half-smile. 'Whatever the government might think of me they'd owe me too much respect to send the soldiers here.'

He looked at his brother narrowly, endeavouring to search that warm, candid face which was so bad at any manner of concealment. Then he sighed and turned away. He could not press Edward for a confidence that he knew would never be given. He passed his days in a constant fear that his beloved younger brother might be engaged in some rashness beyond anything he dared conjecture. But what more could be done? Clare and Castlereagh and Campden had all given their hints: 'Get the young man out of the country, the ports will be open,' and these warnings had been conveyed to Fitzgerald without effect. There was no more to be done...

Edward pressed his brother's hand. 'I thank you,' he said with

great affection, 'for this kindness to Pamela.'

He would have liked to have added that he felt all the more deeply the Duke's warm consideration, because he knew that the young Frenchwoman was not greatly loved at Leinster House, and also that his brother, besides being burdened by politics, was deeply troubled at the illness of his own wife. The Duchess was, indeed, dying, though none had had the heart to tell the Duke so; yet it was commonly supposed he knew it and that it helped to intensify his melancholy. He had six children to provide for, and his affairs became daily more uncertain.

'Yes, yes, Edward,' he urged, 'let her stay here. That will be something I can do for you. Our mother, too, and Henry would be pleased. They're almost overborne with all this.'

'Don't let Henry come to Ireland!' said Edward sharply. 'At least, not yet.' He paused, anxiously turning over in his mind what effect, if the worst came to the worst, his failure, the discovery of the plot, his own arrest, might have on his family. He had tried to keep away from them as long as possible, but it had not been easy to avoid their watchfulness, their constant care.

'Charles,' said the Duke, 'is so affected that he has gone into the country, as far away as possible from politics.'

'What do you all suspect, Robert? Nay, I should not ask you that. We have decided not to put things into words between us. Do be more confident, my dear fellow; indeed you must be.'

'I don't like O'Connor's arrest,' replied the Duke nervously. 'What had he got in all those papers for the French Directory?'

'Not my name, I think.'

'You only *think*, Edward, but here we are again on forbidden subjects! Go to Pamela; believe me, I'll do my best. She is safer here, and happier too, I think. No one will bother her. She has her rooms to herself. I know she doesn't like the house, but at least it is away from the streets and the noises. She can't hear the patrols of soldiers and police nosing about, and see that odious fellow Sirr. Edward, I fear informers.'

'Informers!' Edward turned sharply on that word. 'What do you mean, sir, informers?'

'Why, you know, there are such going up and down the country, gleaning information about the rebels and receiving fine pensions for it.'

'Ah, those mean creatures!' Edward smiled. 'I thought that you meant some dangerous traitors, some one of importance who really knew perilous secrets.'

'There has been a great activity in the city of late, Edward. Every time I go up to the Castle I see all on the alert although they keep a smooth front. The garrison is under arms—constantly.'

'Is it?' laughed Fitzgerald. 'We long to have these same arms, but to aid, not the Castle, but the people!'

'Castlereagh,' continued the Duke, 'who went to London for poor O'Connor's affair, is back again. I don't like that. He's a formidable man, and nothing'll move Clare, the villages in Wexford are harried without mercy...I can't begin to tell you the things they've done on my estate. It's ruin for me, too, of course—no rents this year. I don't know how we're all going to live. Well, I suppose something'll happen one way or another. I spoke to Campden about the Hessians. He can do nothing, he says.'

Edward was silent. It went very ill with him to withhold his confidence from his brother. His own discretion lay heavy on his heart.

CHAPTER 14

Pamela lay on a couch drawn up before the fire. Her attitude was that in which he had first seen her in the little hired house, the pale room in Paris. She had changed in those few years, though she was still not much more than a girl. Her face was pinched and sharp, her loveliness overcast, her rich hair hung in neglected disorder on to her shoulders. She had been in very bad health of late, subject to fainting fits, weakened by insomnia and constant blood-letting.

Her loss of bloom and look of trouble greatly endeared her in her husband's eyes. There never had been any flaw in his affection for Pamela. After six years of marriage he loved her as much as he had loved her when he had first seen her, or when he had sat beside her on the long coach journey through the bleak night to Tournai. It had been with him, once and for ever—love. Louise, Pamela...the vision and the reality in one.

'Are you happy here, Pamela? My brother is very good to bring you here, but do you wish to stay?'

'Oh, what you will!' she smiled. 'It makes very little difference to me. Tell me, Edward, what did you decide to-day? You were at Bond's, were you not?'

'I'll not weary you with all that, dear. Everything is ready, you must not be so frightfully uneasy. Oh, Pamela, you will kill yourself, and that will be an end of me and of the rebellion tool.'

She tried to smile. 'How can I be at peace, especially since O'Connor's arrest and the driving back of the French fleet? Edward, you expect too much, and I am more unfortunate than most women as I have told you so often, my all is on you.'

'There are my people, dear Pamela. They love you so much.'

She interrupted the tender falsehood:

'Nay, they don't. They but put up with me for your sake. I'm always alien, I know, and the poor Duchess, she is so ill, a dying woman, I think, and your brother is distraught by that, and I but add to their unhappiness!

They're being ruined too, you know that, Edward? And I can't help thinking that it's your fault.'

'I have that on my mind also, Pamela. It isn't altogether true. The government have a black mark against the Fitzgeralds. One of us was hanged at Tyburn, you know.' He laughed ruefully. 'One, nay, seven of us! A Geraldine! It's not a name of good omen to the British Government.'

'The English Generals are to be sent over, are they not?—Moore and Abercrombie?'

'Hush, hush!' He put his fingers over her strained mouth. 'I won't have you bother yourself with these things, Pamela. I won't have you think of them. You must concern yourself only with the children and keeping warm and snug here. Where's your pretty work you used to be so busy with? You're always idle now, and that's bad for you, dear.'

'Oh, I read a little, and I look into the fire and see castles! They're always in the past, never in the future. I feel as if you and I had had our happiness, Edward. What a poor, weak, railing creature you must think me! I know I'm no heroine, Neddy.'

He sat down beside her on the couch and drew her to him so that her head rested on his shoulder, and they looked together into the fire, burning low and clear on the broad marble hearth.

'I've been out with Lady Castlereagh,' she mused, 'and Lady Moira. She has been kindest of all. I really think she likes me a little, Edward.'

'You've been careful with Lady Castlereagh?' he asked between tender kisses on her brow. 'Her husband is a very clever man, though she may be goodness itself he would get anything from her. He is dangerous.'

'Edward! As if I have not been careful! That has been my one pride. I have been a conspirator, you know, since I was quite young. In Paris I used to hear all the secrets of the Revolution when M. d'Orléans received the deputies at Belle Chase.'

She sat up suddenly. 'No one gets from me a single hint! I think

that's why they dislike me! Even your brother is a little hurt. They believe I might take them into my confidence, but no, nothing from Pamela! Come, tell me, dear, what was decided to-night?'

He believed every word she said and trusted her utterly. He never had the least uneasiness on the score of any possible indiscretion on the part of Pamela. He knew her as he knew himself, and without any hesitation and as simply as if he showed her a letter from a friend he drew from the pocket of his coat a package of papers, for he was aware that this was, as she had declared, her one joy...to know herself completely in his confidence, the recipient of all his most dangerous secrets.

'This will hearten you, my sweet Pamela, read this. The returns of the National Committee.' He put into her hand a paper entirely in his own writing headed, 'National Committee, 26th February, 1798.' Underneath was written, 'Ulster and Munster make no new returns this time. We state their former returns again,' and below was a list of five provinces; Ulster, Munster, Kildare, Wicklow, Dublin, and next these names two columns, one headed '*Armed Men*' and the other '*Finances in Hand.*'

'Does that mean anything to you?' asked Fitzgerald, smiling to see his wife's frown of concentration as she looked at these figures.

'Why, yes. I am not so stupid as all that, Neddy. I see that Ulster sends over a hundred and ten thousand men, and is contributing four hundred and thirty-six pounds, three and four pence.' She laughed. 'And Munster comes next with a hundred thousand and one hundred and forty-seven pounds.'

'Look at the bottom of the columns, my love. You will see that one has carried forward two hundred and thirteen thousand, three hundred and ninety-two men, and over eight hundred pounds. Then, if you will please to turn the page, you will see Dublin City'—he pointed out the items one by one with his forefinger—'Queen's County, King's County, Carlow, Kilkenny, Meath. And what have we together? Nearly fifteen hundred pounds in cash and two hundred and seventy-nine thousand, eight hundred and ninety-six men.'

'But these are civilians, not soldiers,' suggested Pamela anxiously.

'Yes, I've heard those doubts expressed before, my wise little counsellor.' He smiled. 'It has been questioned whether the United men could stand in battle before the King's troops. But remember we expect assistance from France, and they will soon discipline us. Even an untrained man, my love, who is nothing much of a soldier, if he has the heart and spirit, can do a good deal. They may harass the escorts of the ammunition, cut off detachments of foraging parties, make the King's troops feel themselves in an enemies' country, while the actual battles would be left to the foreign troops. And much of the Irish Militia has come over to us.' He then eagerly showed her other papers with lists of the Colonels, Captains, and other officers, and remarked on the name of Mr. Thomas Reynolds, who had lately asked for a Colonelcy for Kilkea and Moon.

'I must make him treasurer or secretary as well. He is a fine, honest fellow. I like him very much, Pamela, and that is queer, because I met him as a child and felt a strange abhorrence for him. Now, there are few among the United Irishmen whom I like better. He is coming to Denzel Street soon, and I must give him a copy of these returns of the National Committee. But there's enough of this dry business for you, Pamela. It is only to show you that all goes on well.'

'Lady Moira told me,' said Pamela, returning the paper, 'that her husband is trying in the House for some measure of conciliation.'

'We don't want it,' said Fitzgerald firmly; 'the moment has passed. They might have done that before. Now it will look like fear—at least, so we shall take it, and refuse it all.'

'Oh, Edward, I think they mean it sincerely!'

'I've no doubt Moira does—he's a fine man. There's sincerity on our side, also. Castlereagh won't give way, nor Clare. Campden, of course, is only a makeshift. If there was real trouble I expect they'd withdraw him in an instant. I did hear rumours of Cornwallis being sent. Military law and a Commander-in-Chief, eh?'

'But Lord Moira,' insisted Pamela, 'he—indeed he would try his best to give you what you want.'

Fitzgerald drew another paper out of his pocket and held it before his wife.

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'But Lord Moira,' insisted Pamela, 'he—indeed he would try his best to give you what you want.'

Fitzgerald drew another paper out of his pocket and held it before his wife.

'Read that, my love.'

Pamela read: ' 'Read that, my love.'

Pamela read: '*Resolved*—That we will pay no attention whatever to any attempt which may be made by either Houses of Parliament to divert the public mind from the grand object which we have in view, and nothing short of the complete emancipation of our country will satisfy us.'

'I see you're obstinate,' she cried, 'and must go on!'

He went, of a sudden, on his knees beside her, put his arms round her waist, and drew her to him in a close embrace.

'Pamela, don't let's think of it any more. But for tonight we'll lock the storm outside; we'll bar the window against the wind and rain. Just you and I, dear! As so often before! Can't you forget all but ourselves, Pamela, for a little while? Put all else out of your mind and dream. Tell me what your dreams are, Pamela?'

'Who can do that?' she cried wildly. 'Could you tell me yours?'

'I think I could. I remember a little boy on a warm sunny afternoon —but there, that sounds commonplace.'

'What follows, dear?'

'Why, there was a girl, yourself. We never met until you were old enough to marry. But still it was you, Pamela. You had that little patch, I always make you wear it, and I put some ripe nectarines into your arms. I remember your blue hood and cloak, and all those sweet southern plants smelling so fragrantly? Pamela, don't you sometimes yearn for the sunshine? Pamela, you love me a little?'

He pressed her close, and his lonely mind went back to his dreams—dreams or visions, or remembrances. Why did they affect him with such an unutterable nostalgia, such an unbearable poignancy? Were they not all fulfilled? Did he not clasp in his arms the woman who had grown from the adored child? The very fruition of a boy's vision? Were not all he had loved then still with him? His mother, Mr. Ogilvie, his brothers and sisters, his friends? Why, then, this sadness, for sadness it was...the tears stung his eyes.

'Yet I have been so fortunate,' he thought in disdain of his own melancholy, 'been able to put my hand to something worth while, to undertake a worthy action, to get out of the rut of common things, to make a fine attempt to risk everything on an ideal—for others. Not many men have the chance of that—yes, I'm lucky indeed.'

He was roused by Pamela's kiss on his brow that lay against her breast. She whispered:

'Look up, my love. Your dreams make you sad.'

CHAPTER 15

Mr. Thomas Reynolds sauntered into a fashionable glover's shop in Skinner's Row, and asked to look at some riding gauntlets.

The man behind the counter, instead of bringing out any of his merchandise, replied:

'You'll find Mr. Hanlon upstairs.'

Mr. Reynolds pushed open the door of the back of the shop and mounted to an upper chamber, where a plain, robust gentleman, very quietly dressed, with steel-rimmed glasses and a woollen scarf, was seated at a table. Under his hand was a portfolio bulging with newspapers and manuscripts. Beside this lay a brace of pistols. A small fire burnt on the hearth, but had not yet heated the bleak room. The day was wintry, nor had the gales ceased.

Round the walls were boxes and cases of gloves and skins. The only furniture, beside the table, was a few chairs, on one side of which Mr. Thomas Reynolds seated himself with his cool assurance that so far had remained unshaken before any event.

'Good day, Mr. Hanlon,' he said, lounging back with his hands in his pockets; and the other, whose aspect and accent both showed him to be an Englishman, replied dryly:

'Good day, Mr. Reynolds. What have you got for me to-day? Remember we are expecting something important.'

'I trust, sir,' said the other coolly, 'that you consider that what you have already had from me is of a good deal of importance.'

'If you could look over reports of the secret committee of the House of Lords, nay of both Houses of Parliament from the year '93, Mr. Reynolds, you would know that the Government has had a very early knowledge of the conspiracy carried on by the United Irishmen, that they have spent a very great deal of money on a regular system of espionage, and that there are very few secrets of the society that are not in their hands.'

'Or so you think, sir,' grinned Mr. Reynolds, with great effrontery.

He drew back his heavy coat, showing his handsome dress. 'I know, of course, that there are spies and informers amongst us, yet they are mostly fellows in subordinate positions who are not able to come at any very great matters.'

'Wolfe Tone was betrayed by M'Nalley, you remember that, I suppose,' observed the Englishman, adjusting his spectacles.

'I have heard it, and that he had a pension of three hundred a year for his pains,' returned Reynolds impudently 'I hope all were as well paid.'

'We get our information,' continued the Englishman unmoved, 'also from Mr. Frederick Ditton, and some of your solicitors too—M'Gutchen, these two have now gone to Maidstone, where they may help to secure the conviction of O'Connor. M'Gutchen, as you know, since he is a friend of yours, is still in the confidence of the United Irishmen; then we employ Captain Armstrong, who has proved invaluable. I speak of the informers you know, Mr. Reynolds,' added Mr. Hanlon, with considerable emphasis. 'Believe me, we have yet other sources of information and are by no means dependent on you.'

'Yet you seem to give yourself a certain concern with me, sir, or why this private interview?'

'You said that you had something particular to communicate. What you have told us hitherto has not been of much use to us.'

'I don't want to compromise my friends, sir,' said Reynolds. 'I won't give names, you understand. I'll disclose enough of the conspiracy to enable the Government to put it down, but I don't want any one hurt, and I won't appear as a witness.'

'I dare say that could be arranged, Mr. Reynolds. Let's hear first what you've got to say. As for not mentioning names, I don't see that anything you could tell would be the least use without them,' and Mr. Hanlon rapped his fingers on the hard cover of his red portfolio. This seemed to be a signal, for an inner door which Reynolds, for all his sharpness, had not perceived, opened, and a tall, fair gentleman who must have been standing close behind it, entered the apartment. He wore a fur-lined coat buttoned up to his chin and did not remove his hat, which was pulled over his eyes, but he made no attempt at disguise. Without a salutation he gave a keen look at the informer,

then stood in a languid attitude by the poor fire. Even Thomas Reynolds was a little disturbed, for he immediately recognised Lord Castlereagh. But quickly recovering his impudence, he exclaimed:

'I perceive your lordship does put some value on my poor testimony!'

Castlereagh replied mildly:

'I have to make use of some detestable instruments, Mr. Reynolds. The Government is in such a position that it cannot afford to overlook any possible form of assistance. I have listened to your conversation with Mr. Hanlon and it seems to me you use evasion and are prepared to waste our time. That I cannot permit. Let us come very plainly to the facts.'

'It's facts I mean to offer your lordship.'

'And it's facts I'll offer you, Mr. Reynolds. You are, I believe, in considerable difficulties, pressed for debt, have been living extravagantly, taken up with women who spend your estate. You have even had to borrow from an old servant of your family. You owe a great deal to one Mr. Cope, who suggested you should raise funds by selling your friends.'

'I didn't know your lordship was aware of my poor history.'

'We have our sources of information, Mr. Reynolds. In brief, you are in immediate need of a large sum of money.'

'I don't want to be paid for my information. I don't want honours or rewards, I assure you.'

'None has been offered you, Mr. Reynolds. Pray leave aside these fine sentiments, sir. The Government is prepared to pay handsomely.'

Doggedly, with increasing ill-temper, but losing nothing of his effrontery, the young man declared:

'I won't show up in the witness-box.'

'We'll get others who can do that, Mr. Reynolds; we want information.'

'What information, sir?'

'Whatever you can give us, particularly the plans of this conspiracy and the means whereby we may seize the heads of it. I know the disaffection is widespread. I have taken means to put it down, but it is now essential that the chiefs should be seized and their plans disclosed. Can you, or can you not, do this for us? I believe,' he added, with sharp contempt, 'that we have no other informer in our pay who is so high in the confidence of these unhappy gentlemen as yourself. They are poor judges of character, sir, to trust you so completely.'

'I don't like the word informer, my Lord, indeed I don't. I'm a man of honour and respectability. What I'm doing is out of loyalty to His Majesty and to avoid bloodshed.'

'I said it before, Mr. Reynolds, that we should leave aside all sentiment. Your motives may be what they will, that is nothing to me. If you don't require any recompense for your service, all the better for the pocket of His Majesty's secret service department.'

'I don't say I shan't want to be recompensed for my out-of-pocket expenses,' admitted Reynolds sullenly. Beneath the gaze of Castlereagh's eyes which looked at him so steadily from behind the light lashes, his own did at last shift a little and finally turn aside. 'I dare say that would be no more than a matter of five hundred pounds—though Cope said the Government would go to a thousand a year—'

'Five hundred pounds,' repeated Castlereagh, with a faint ironical smile. 'And how much do we get for that, Mr. Reynolds? You know your fellow spy, Captain Armstrong, has just been here.'

Reynolds interrupted jealously: 'Armstrong don't know what I do! He may have worked himself into the confidence of Mr. Henry Sheares and his brother, but he don't know anything of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.'

'But you do, Mr. Reynolds,' interrupted the Secretary for Ireland. He turned to his subordinate. 'Make a note of that, Hanlon. Mr. Reynolds has mentioned the name of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the Duke of Leinster's brother. I tried to save him—you may remember? It's no use now, we can't have any further consideration. He, without

doubt, is their military leader.'

'Armstrong,' continued Reynolds, sullen, jealous and uneasy, 'don't know, I tell you, my lord, what I do. Fitzgerald has offered me a Colonelcy. I'm secretary and treasurer for the provincial branch of the Union in Kildare.' He paused, biting his lips, wondering how best he could make the bargain, wondering how much Armstrong had already given away. It was humiliating to be but one of a large number of informers. He would have liked to have had all the credit and rewards for himself. He did not dare, under Castlereagh's gaze, attempt much subterfuge.

'I suppose you know that the United Irishmen have sent emissaries to the camps of Laughlinstown; they've done very well in getting the men over, I believe. Lord Carhampton ain't popular. Luttrel's a bad name in Irish history.'

'I know,' interrupted Castlereagh, 'that disaffection is spreading among the troops. Captain Armstrong lets me know everything. We have that in hand now that Abercrombie has arrived back in Dublin, but what's planned here? When did you last see Lord Edward Fitzgerald?'

'Last night,' admitted Reynolds abruptly. 'I met him at the Black Rock Tavern, him and Oliver Bond. There is to be a meeting of the Executive at Bond's on the twelfth—something to be planned for St. Patrick's Day, I think.'

'Will all the leaders be there?' interrupted Castlereagh, who, during the whole of this interview, had neither moved nor changed his expression save for the faintest shadow of contempt which now and then passed over his features.

'Cummings and M'Cann of Grafton Street were there,' said Reynolds, 'and Hugh Williams. Lord Edward tried to persuade me to become a Colonel for the Boroughs of Kilkea and Moon. He gave me the resolution, and returns of the National Committee.'

'You have them on you?'

'Yes.'

'Please take those papers from Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Hanlon.' The

Englishman put out his hand. For a second the informer hesitated. It was not apparent whether his reluctance to give up the documents was due to stupidity or remorse, whether he was wondering if he had disclosed too much without having secured the promised substantial reward, or whether he felt squeamish at the thought of thus betraying the lives of men who trusted him absolutely.

The hesitation, whatever it was, did not last long. He put his hand in his pocket and brought out the papers in Lord Edward's own handwriting which he had shown to Pamela in Leinster House a few days before. Mr. Hanlon took them without comment and passed them on to Castlereagh, who glanced over them immediately and then, without a word, placed them in his inner breast pocket.

'I have lately,' continued Reynolds, looking narrowly at the Minister, 'become very intimate with Lord Edward for the sole purpose of helping the Government quench this horrible conspiracy which is intended to convulse the country and sever it for ever from England.'

'I don't need to be told that, Mr. Reynolds. Please keep to the facts.'

'Your Lordship deals rather harshly with me,' exclaimed Reynolds, rising to his feet. 'By God, I won't go any further without an assurance that I'm going to be well treated.'

'What do you consider "well treated," Mr. Reynolds? You've already been offered rewards, but you said you have no pecuniary advantages in your mind.'

'I want your promise that my name's not to be revealed. I can't face those men. Besides, if there was the least suspicion I should be killed like a rat.'

'One understands that, Mr. Reynolds. Your name shall be kept secret—you shall not be called upon as witness. You've already asked for five hundred pounds, it shall be given to you.'

'I want something else too, and that's justice. When I went last to Kilkea Castle, that's my property, you know—'

'Yes,' interrupted Castlereagh, 'leased from Leinster, through his

brother's influence. I know all about it, Mr. Reynolds.'

Angry at this, Reynolds continued spitefully: Well, sir, I want that looked to. When I went last to Kilkea the military had been over it, laying the place waste, and at least twelve thousand pounds worth of damage done.'

The damage shall be assessed and the Government will meet it,' replied the Secretary for Ireland. 'Pray tell me what more you know of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and his plans.'

'I called on him at Leinster House this morning. He is there with his wife. I told him that I'd heard that the Lawyer's Corps were to be called up in case of rioters or alarms, that they had orders to attend Smithfield, and such as had not ball cartridges were to get them at the house of Councillor Saurin, and such as were going out of town did not think their arms safe, but would deposit them with him, and this was to be kept secret. Lord Edward, upon my telling him this news, was agitated, and said: "It looks as if the Government had got wind of the conspiracy."'

'Did he seem to fear arrest?' interrupted Castlereagh.

'Indeed he did, sir. He said that he wished he could get to France to hasten the invasion, that he knew Talleyrand Perigord very well. He told me that he had not approved at first of general invasion, but that now it had come to it, and the French had some very fine, fast sailing frigates and that he would like to get hold of them and put on board as many English and Irish officers as he could procure, and as many men as he had drilling, with stores and ammunition of different kinds, and run them into some port in this country. He became very enthusiastic over the idea, and said he had heard Wexford might do, and that it would be unsuspected and if they succeeded they could establish a rallying point until other help should come. But he added that it was too late now for this scheme, that he must remain in Dublin and do what he could without French help. I tried to assure him that nobody could be informing the Government as to the doings of the United Irishmen. He walked up and down the room in a very agitated fashion, then agreed with me. "No, it is impossible. The Government cannot have been informed of it. They have never known where we meet."'

'And that was all?' asked Castlereagh.

'Shortly after this the servant came and asked was he ready for dinner, and I went away. He wanted me to stay to dinner, but I would not.'

'Is Lord Edward to be at this meeting at Oliver Bond's on the twelfth?'

'Yes, my Lord, all the leaders will be there. It is the final consultation before the rising.'

'Very well,' said Castlereagh. 'I think there is no more to be said, Mr. Reynolds. Mr. Hanlon will write you an order for five hundred pounds. You may make yourself easy on the score of the damage to Kilkea Castle. Of course,' he added, 'further rewards may be yours if your information proves valuable and you care to claim them. The government would pay very well, and no doubt there would be those who would hail you as the saviour of your country.'

'What am I to do in the meantime, so?'

'Go back among these men, maintain your place with them, keep their confidence, especially the confidence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald; get, of course, all the information you can and lay it before us.'

'By God, that is a dangerous thing to ask me to do, my Lord!'

'I believe you do not lack courage nor effrontery, sir. You will be able to hold your own with these men.'

'I run the risk of being murdered,' remarked Reynolds, but without timidity, rather with a grim audacity.

'You run also the chance of being extremely well paid—pensioned for life,' snapped Castlereagh. 'A fine position in England, nay, somewhere abroad on the Continent, what you will. And then your patriotism—your resolve to serve His Majesty. Just stand firm for these few weeks, Mr. Reynolds, and you need have no more anxiety for the rest of your life. The British Government will be grateful.'

These words, though gracious in their sense, were spoken in a tone of pure insult, which made even the brazen front of Thomas

Reynolds flush a little, and his bold eyes shift aside.

'Between you and Captain Armstrong,' added Castlereagh, 'I think that we shall put our finger on all the ramifications of this conspiracy.'

Reynolds asked: 'What will be the fate of these men, sir, when they are arrested?'

'It is not part of the bargain we have just made, Mr. Reynolds, for me to tell you that. You are perfectly aware of the punishment to which traitors make themselves liable.'

'In the case of Lord Edward, I suppose,' said Reynolds, who seemed to speak with more curiosity than compunction, 'the brother of the Duke of Leinster, the nephew of the Duke of Richmond, I imagine some compassion might be shown?'

'Imagine what you please, Mr. Reynolds.'

The informer shrugged, hesitated, then put his hand in his pocket and drew out another paper.

'I'm obliged to your Lordship for your consideration about Kilkea Castle,' he said. 'Perhaps you would like to see this, the proclamation drawn up by the United Irishmen. It is meant to be published on St. Patrick's Day and given away in handbills.'

With that he gave a brief salutation and with a showy lift of his shoulders, left the room, sauntering, much at ease.

The Secretary for Ireland turned with an unchanged face. 'Have you made a note of all that?' he asked.

'I've taken the heads of the conversation, my Lord. The rest I can remember. It all seems clear sailing. But supposing the fellow plays double, goes back and warns these men he's sold them or that Armstrong sold them? Dealing with villains is damned awkward.'

'He won't. One knows the type. Cupidity. They haven't any money to give him. He's lived beyond his means, aspired beyond his rank. He shows himself in the Rotunda with his mistress, who is dressed up in brocade from his own warehouse with his mother's diamonds in her

hair. He likes to be flattered by his superiors. One or two pleasant words from Campden would buy him for life, but it isn't necessary. We have him already. Cupidity, Hanlon, cupidity. We have him safely—besides, he is afraid of his neck. Since Hoche didn't land, and Abercrombie did, men like that think the rebellion can't succeed.'

'I thought, too, sir,' suggested the confidential secretary respectfully, as he put his papers together, 'that he was envious of Lord Edward, hated a superior—'

'Yes. Such creatures do. They want to destroy what excels them. A very vile fellow. But useful, Hanlon, useful.'

CHAPTER 16

Lord Castlereagh, who did not intend to pause till he had defeated this vast, dangerous conspiracy, went, when he left the glover's shop, direct to the residence of Lord Clare and laid before him all the information he had received from Thomas Reynolds, which was the most important they had yet received from any spy.

The Lord Chancellor, who remained staunch to the English Government, received the news with grim pleasure. 'So, we have them at last.' He looked with amazement at the writings in Lord Edward's hand. 'The young fool, and he was warned!'

'I don't know that he's such a fool. The whole thing seems pretty well planned out—a good soldier, a good organiser...He's credulous, that's all. He can't believe in treachery.'

'It's damnable,' cried Clare angrily. 'What are we going to do with him? Leinster's brother! I like him, too. He won't leave, I suppose? No persuading him?'

'I'm afraid not. My wife can't get anything out of Lady Edward, poor creature, either. She's very staunch. I believe she knows everything.'

'Well, we must try and save him—for the rest, let 'em hang.'

'There must be no weakness—none. Yet I'm sorry,' said Castlereagh, 'for men like Emmett, the Sheares, and Bond too, educated, intelligent, misguided men, but not scoundrels.'

Clare did not share these humane views. He picked up one of the papers which Castlereagh had handed him. It was the proclamation intended to be published on St. Patrick's Day which Reynolds had given his Lordship on his departure.

'Read this; one of their handbills, I suppose! Look here, my Lord, you talk about misguided gentlemen! Traitors, treasonable scoundrels, I say! What have they written here?' He read aloud:

'The organisation of the Capital is perfect, no vacancies existing on our staff. Arrangements have been made and are still making, to

secure for our oppressed brethren the benefit of freedom. And the sentinels whom we have appointed to watch over your interests stand firm at their post, vigilant of events and prompt to give you notice and advice, which on every occasion at all requiring it you may rely on receiving. The most unfounded rumours have been set afloat, fabricated for the double purpose of delusion and intimidation. Our enemies talk of treachery in the vain and fallacious hope of creating it.' Clare glanced up at Castlereagh and smiled, then continued:

'But you, who scorn equally to be their dupes or their slaves, will meet their forgeries with dignified contempt, incapable of being either goaded into untimely violence or sunk into pusillanimous despondence. Be firm, Irishmen, and be cool and cautious; be patient yet awhile; trust in no unauthorised communications; and above all we warn you, again and again we warn you, against doing the work of your tyrants by premature, by partial or divided outbreaks. If Ireland should be forced to throw away the scabbard let it be in her own time.'

'This fine rigmarole,' cried Clare, 'is the work of one of those damned Sheares, I expect!'

Castlereagh made no comment on this. He remarked: 'I suppose they'll secure a conviction in O'Connor's case?'

'Oh, yes, he'll be hanged, certainly. A pity it isn't over here instead of in England. It would have a good effect.'

'Campden is most uneasy. He feels this situation almost intolerable. I suppose he'll be recalled.'

'I think so, and Cornwallis sent. We need a soldier.'

'I should have thought reinforcements for Abercrombie would have arrived before now.'

'They'll come, I expect, with the first fair wind. But we can do without them. I only regret that Fitzgerald's in this.'

'But he is,' said the Secretary for Ireland quietly, 'committed beyond concealment or excuse. Put him out of your mind, my Lord. He has deliberately made his choice—this lunatic attempt at revolt. As we have made ours, to suppress it. England for us—as Ireland for him. I'm sorry, too—we have no choice now.'

PART SEVEN

CHAPTER 1

On the 12th of March the United Irishmen met at the house of Mr. Oliver Bond. Nothing had occurred to disturb their sense of security. It was ten o'clock on a Monday morning, a bright cold day. As the gentlemen took their places round the table, the servant brought in a note to Mr. Bond. It was from Thomas Reynolds. He wrote that he knew there was particular business on hand and that he had been desired by Mr. M'Cann to be punctual, but that he could not attend, and made his apologies on the score of his wife having been taken suddenly ill.

Oliver Bond gave this information to the other men, who made nothing of it; nor was the presence of Thomas Reynolds necessary on this occasion.

Lord Edward, the Sheares brothers, and some others were late. The meeting was a little delayed on that account, the members talking to each other in broken conversation.

Pale sunlight streamed through the high windows illuminating the tense, eager faces of the men as they passed the little handbills for St. Patrick's Day to one another.

All were young and enthusiastic. All, by the severity of their clothes, showed their republican sympathies. All wore the close-cut hair, dressed in classic style that, directly opposed to the loyalists' queues and powder, had gained for the Irish the nickname of 'croppies.'

Mr. William Michael Byrne, a handsome, elegant young man, went to the window and glanced down the windswept street.

'There are a great many soldiers about,' he remarked. 'They seem to be patrolling round here.'

'No,' said Mr. Bond, 'no more here than anywhere else. They search, and if need be, burn suspect houses everywhere. No, we are safe enough—'

'I think, though,' replied Mr. Byrne, 'that the sooner we act the better—'

'Why, if Lord Edward is listened to, it will be soon enough—he becomes every day more impetuous,' said Mr. Bond, who was setting out the papers for the meeting.

'I don't wonder. My God! I'm for action, too. I don't know how it is to continue, indeed I don't. I saw that villain Sirr this morning, with his people. He seemed active—'

'How many have we here?' asked Mr. Bond, glancing round the company. 'Fourteen. We might open the meeting. The others will, surely, be here immediately.'

'A moment,' said Mr. Peter Bannan of Portalington, who was at the door and listened. He heard Mr. Laurence Kelly, who kept the street entrance, exchanging the password with some newcomers.

'Where's M'Cann? Is Ivers from Carlow come?'

Mr. Bannan held the upper door open. He had not recognised any of the voices, so thought that these were delegates from the country. A party of strangers in rough clothes mounted the stairs. The foremost held a large pistol and came on at a run.

Put up the papers!' cried Peter Bannan suddenly. At the same instant the stranger swung him from the door and rushed into the room, covering the company with his pistol.

'I am Mr. Swann, a magistrate of County Dublin. I have a warrant for the arrest of all of you—'

'On what charge?' cried William Byrne, springing from the window.

'High treason. Hold up your hands or I'll shoot.'

But Mr. Byrne, with the utmost boldness, leaped to the table and catching up some of the papers, began to tear them across. He was immediately seized by a couple of the disguised sergeants who had accompanied Mr. Swann.

'They know the password!' whispered Mr. Bannan, as he was arrested.

'Betrayed!' cried Oliver Bond, staring in front of him—'and by whom?'

Broken exclamations fell from the lips of the others, but they quickly silenced themselves, communicating only by glances. Now on their discretion depended their property, perhaps their lives, the safety of their families.

Mr. Swann read from his warrant.

'Dr. M'Nevin, Mr. Addis Emmett, Dr. Samson, Lord Edward Fitzgerald—'

'None of these gentlemen is present,' said Mr. Oliver Bond, very pale and tense. 'I know nothing of their whereabouts.'

'We have separate warrants for them,' replied the magistrate, who was gathering up the papers. 'They will be easily apprehended. Mr. John Sheares and Mr. Henry Sheares,' he added, glancing round the room. 'Neither of these gentlemen is present?'

'No,' replied Mr. Bond, who conducted himself with great firmness. 'I know nothing of them. I have seen none of them for weeks. Pray, sir, tell your man to loosen my hands a little.'

'Mr. Thomas Reynolds?'

'He is not present either.'

'Well, gentlemen, we must take such as we have found. Those are my orders, and as I said, for the others we will soon find them.'

A glance of agony was exchanged between the conspirators. They knew that all the men mentioned in the warrants must be on their way to the meeting. Only by some peculiar chance had they had been so late.

As the prisoners were conducted down the stairs, Mrs. Bond came out on the first landing, followed by a maid with a service of coffee prepared for the meeting. Mr. Swan pushed her against the wall roughly.

'Stand aside, ma'am.'

'Oliver.' She looked frantically for her husband among the crowd.

'May I speak to my wife?' The young man resisted the two police who hurried him forward.

'No, you may not. The charge is high treason.'

'Don't struggle,' whispered Mr. Byrne to his companion. With a fierce effort Mr. Bond controlled himself, but, as he saw his wife jostled by the police and himself brutally torn away from her, he realised the awful situation—his utter ruin—high treason—the rope. 'Where are you taking us?' he demanded, as he was dragged from his own front door.

To Newgate—'

'The prison for common criminals!'

'That will not demean us, but those who put us there,' said Mr. Byrne.

Mr. Bannan exclaimed: 'God strike the traitor!'

But the prisoners forgot the unexpected cruelty of their own fate in their relief on finding that, as they left the house there was no sign of their friends. Either by chance, or through some warning they had not come to the meeting. Mrs. Bond remained at the top of the first flight of stairs, gazing down into the street, through the door that the police had left open. She neither moved nor spoke. As the trembling maid set the coffee service down she had overturned the pot, and a stream of brown liquid, unheeded by either of the women, trickled down the empty stairs.

CHAPTER 2

In her huge bedroom in Leinster House Pamela lay in bed, scarcely able to raise her head for pain and weariness, when the maid ran in and cried that the soldiers were come.

'Is my Lord arrested?' exclaimed Pamela, first sitting up in bed and then leaping to the floor, picking up her chamber gown and putting it on with one movement.

'Nay, Madame, pray don't take on so! My Lord is not arrested. They have but come for his papers. And don't try to array yourself, now pray don't. You have not the strength!'

Pamela put the girl aside. She had long expected this, and the moment was no more frightful than the anticipation of it had been. She pulled a lace cap over her scattered hair, dragged on her little brocade shoes, fastened the ribbons at her neck and went out into the outer room, where the officer sent to search Leinster House, Major O'Kelly, very civil and much embarrassed at his task, nervously waited.

'Well, sir,' she asked, 'what has happened?'

The soldier's awkwardness increased at the sight of her illness and distress.

'Madame, I'm very sorry to say—my duty's disagreeable, believe me. There's been a conspiracy discovered.

Mr. Oliver Bond and some friends of his have been arrested. We've a separate warrant out for Lord Edward. We've come to search Leinster House for him.'

'Well, you must search it! It's not my house—I suppose,' she said, interlocking her fingers. 'The Duke will tell you where you must go.'

'I wouldn't presume to ask you if you know where Lord Edward is, Madame.'

'It would be a waste of time, would it not?' she smiled wildly.

'His papers, Madame. I must ask you for his papers.'

'I suppose you'll find whatever there is whether I give them to you or not. My husband does not leave his papers with me. I have some few of my own of no importance.'

She went to a desk, unlocked it, began to take the papers out, then seemed to change her mind, and turning back, said to Major O'Kelly:

'Forgive me, sir, I really have not the strength. I was abed when you came. I must sit down. Go through the papers yourself. I dare swear you will find nothing treasonable there.'

Frowning and biting his lip, for he disliked his task the more as he proceeded with it, the officer went to the desk, gathered up the papers, which were intermingled with trifles that he found it hard to touch, a few dried flowers tied with a silk thread, a child's leather shoe, a little sketch of a small house, a few flower roots awaiting the spring. He half made to close the desk. 'It is no work for a soldier; they ought to send a magistrate.'

'But I'd rather, sir, deal with you,' said Pamela. 'Please take what you wish.'

In silence Major O'Kelly gathered up the papers. He was relieved on glancing at a mirror in front of him, to see that Lady Edward, seated in exhausted fashion on the couch, was smiling. He knew then that he had nothing incriminating in his possession, and he was glad.

'Have all the leaders of this so-called conspiracy been apprehended?' she asked.

'I don't know, Madame. I believe they can't find Mr. Emmett or Councillor Samson and some others. There's—there's warrants out for a good many. It's a sad, wretched business. Pray, hold me excused, Madame.'

'Why, you do your duty. I hope I do mine.' She smiled wanly, twisting her hands together. The officer thought that she looked shockingly ill, and was eagerly taking his leave when she stayed him.

'Can you tell me any news of—this conspiracy?'

'Nay, Madame, very little. I believe that the papers seized at Mr. Bond's were of great importance and have been carried to Council—'

'Who was arrested?'

'Why, Dr. M'Nevin at his own house, Sweetman the brewer, and Jackson the ironmonger—'

'Well, I know none of them—and I dare swear that neither does my husband.'

Another party of soldiers brusquely entered the room. They had been searching Frescati, Leinster's little country house. The Duke accompanied them. He was red in the face with vexation and humiliation, but Major Boyle, who was in charge of the dragoons, turned very civilly to Pamela.

'Madame, you will be glad to hear,' he said with great good-nature, 'that our search is in vain. Lord Edward has escaped—we can find him nowhere.'

Pamela smiled. 'I am as ignorant, sir, of his whereabouts as you can be.'

'It is not our purpose, Madame, to press you as to whether that is true or no.' Then, with a certain malice, the soldier added: 'But our search has not been altogether in vain. We found this, Madame, under your pillow,' and he showed her a little map of Dublin carefully marked and covered with notes in Lord Edward's handwriting.

'You searched my room!' cried Pamela.

'I could not prevent them,' said her brother-in-law with great heat. 'Pamela, I am greatly humiliated that this should happen in my house.'

'Your Grace knows that we have a warrant,' returned Major Boyle firmly. 'We deal with high treason—'

'But this lady's condition—common humanity!' stammered the Duke, who could scarcely command himself. 'I tell you Dr. Lindsay is much alarmed for her. I have sent for him—'

'I would not for the world agitate Lady Edward,' said Major Boyle

pleasantly. 'If she will explain the map of the Castle, with all the routes marked in red?'

At that she flushed, bit her lips, and seemed to with difficulty hold back passionate words.

'Can you tell us anything of it, Madame?' insisted the officer.

'It is a little map a clever gunsmith made for my husband; he is interested in such things. Lord Edward is a good engineer.'

'It is a plan for surprising the Castle,' said Major Boyle to Major O'Kelly. 'A dangerous piece of evidence.'

'You've no right to say as much, sir!' spoke out the Duke, but Major Boyle interrupted:

'If I might advise your Grace to be silent on this deplorable matter?'

Leinster put his handkerchief to his lips and turned away abruptly. Pamela did not speak, but as the two men moved towards the door after very civil farewells, she broke out: 'I did not think you would search my very bed!'

CHAPTER 3

Lady Louise Connelly broke in on Pamela's misery. 'What has been found? What has happened?' she asked, aghast at the poor young wife's scared face. The doctor had advised blood-letting, and she was deathly pale propped against her pillows, with her bandaged arm folded across her breast.

'Nothing,' she said, raising her drooping head. 'They have not got him—I don't myself know where he is—but they found a wretched map under my pillow. I had no time to hide it; I but got out of bed and they were there and had it.'

'A map! But what's that?' cried Lady Louise distractedly.

'I don't know. I suppose it may be dangerous. It was, they say, a plan for surprising the Castle—'

'For God's sake tell me no more. Do not mention his name, my love!' She seized the young woman's hand. 'I have the greatest good opinion of your sense and conduct. Do not give a soul, do not give myself, a hint of where he is—if you know it!'

'I don't; I know nothing. What am I to do? Tell me, I will obey you. I will be good, indeed I will—I can command myself.'

'You must stay here at Leinster House, see everybody who waits on you, keep a strict silence about politics.'

'Yes, yes, I will do that—and indeed, I know nothing.'

'You must not suppose that any of the government people will insult you. Some underlings might if you went out, but here you are safe.'

'As if I thought of that! Tell me what I must do for him. I am not well; it is almost impossible for me to entertain company—I would my child was born! Ah! I feel I should not have had the children—the eldest but three years old.'

'But you must see everybody who is so good as to call on you, Pamela, to show that you are not plotting mischief—also that your

sickness is not a sham! Oh, what a miserable business! And what horrors they say of him, that he invited the French over and that it was in a traitorous attempt to massacre all at the Castle! I'll swear that isn't true,' added Lady Louise vehemently, gazing keenly at Pamela as if she would force her secrets out of her. 'You know that it isn't true, don't you, my love?'

'I know nothing,' whispered Pamela from her pillows, feebly, but without faltering. 'But anything Edward did—his least action—would be just—and noble.'

'Yes, yes, I was sure! He could never be engaged in this horrid treason! I knew it—' She checked herself, for Pamela seemed near fainting. 'I must not agitate you. Edward is innocent, we must rest on that, and therefore they can't touch him. Now, for you and your comfort. Do you want money, my dear?' Lady Louise took some gold pieces out of her pocket and was about to put them on the little table beside Pamela's bed, but she said:

'Indeed I have plenty. I have some by me. Edward gave me money not long ago, to get out of Leinster House, for I told him it had grown detestable, and I would not stay here much longer. I wish to have a quiet home of my own for my lying-in. Oh, you must let me go away, indeed, indeed! I would rather be in Denzel Street.' She paused, and the other woman was silent, respecting her bitter distress and her struggles to gain some composure. At length Pamela asked: 'What will they do with these men? Mr. Bond, for instance? He was very rich and important, was he not? Something is going to be done to save him, I suppose. Edward would wish that. Edward loves him.'

'Oh, my dear, you may believe everything is being done. Leinster will do what he can, but he has very little influence—'

'Lord Castlereagh and Lord Moira used to be very kind to me,' said Pamela distractedly.

'I fear Lord Moira, too, has very little influence. Come, Pamela, we won't talk of any of this. Be quiet and compose yourself, and if you don't know where he is, why that's the better for all of us. Oh, my dear,' cried the poor lady, almost moved to tears, 'I pity you exceedingly, and I don't know what to do for you! Indeed I don't, it is all such a wretched, miserable business! Poor Edward, first seduced and then

betrayed!'

'Betrayed!' cried Pamela sharply. 'There was a traitor then?'

'Why, so I think there must have been, so they say, but who, no one knows. The whole thing has been kept a secret, so as not to get in the papers. I saw Lord Castlereagh myself. I rushed to him at once this morning and asked him much, and he said: "I fear I cannot answer your questions; you know I am bound to secrecy. Pray don't believe any reports you hear, for upon my word, nothing has yet transpired." He seemed distressed.'

The two women stared at each other. Pamela was the more calm. She said: 'I will do as you tell me. I will see everybody. I am quite innocent of any wrong. I am sorry about the map, but after all it can't mean much. I try to think about the children, and I'll try to get well. I suppose I'd better go back to Denzel Street. I want to be quiet—you'll understand that. You have all been so kind.'

Lady Louise kissed her, and as she did so, whispered, as if afraid of the sound of her own words:

'If you *do* see him, or hear of him, pray him, for your sake, to have pity on us all and leave the country.'

CHAPTER 4

Lord Edward Fitzgerald had been saved from arrest by the fact that he had turned the corner of Bridge Street in sight of Mr. Oliver Bond's house at the moment that that gentleman was being hurried out a prisoner. Fitzgerald, instantly comprehending the misfortune that had overtaken his friends, turned back with his companions. He made his way through back alleys to Leinster House and was on the point of entering when Tony, who was lying in wait for him, told him that the soldiers were at that moment actually searching his apartments. Lord Edward, who had been separated from his companions (they thinking that they were less likely to attract attention singly than in a group) again turned through the back streets of Dublin, wondering where he should conceal himself. There were, of course, very many refuges open to him, but he passionately wished not to compromise any one. He finally decided to go to the house of Doctor Kennedy in Aungier Street, a man he thought very unlikely to be suspected.

As soon as Lord Edward was secure in his place of concealment at Dr. Kennedy's house, he thought of how he might retrieve the disaster which had overtaken the United Irishmen. Dr. Kennedy was soon able to furnish him with the names of the men arrested, who included three important officials of the Leinster Executive.

'I must,' exclaimed Fitzgerald, 'at once communicate with these men. I must keep in daily touch with them. I don't intend to stay in your house, my dear Kennedy, and put you into danger, but I must remain in Dublin.'

'They have a warrant out for you, my Lord; cried Kennedy; 'they've been searching Leinster House.'

'Poor Pamela, I hope they were civil, and my brothers too, it's hard. But, Kennedy, I can't leave Dublin.' He said this with an almost childish simplicity which made his friend think with a pang: 'Here is a man who can't be saved!'

'There is no need,' continued Fitzgerald eagerly, 'for our spirits to be overcast by this; the rising ought to take place no later than the end of May, say the twenty-third. It is impossible for the government to have come to any proceedings before then—and we will rescue our

friends from the Castle, from Newgate, wherever they may place them —without the least difficulty.'

'If you, sir, are not in the meantime arrested,' protested Dr. Kennedy earnestly, 'surely this is not our time. The government have evidently full knowledge of our proceedings—informer's work!'

Edward Fitzgerald shook his head. 'No, I can't—I won't—believe it that there's a traitor at work, information laid! I dare swear it was no such thing. A mere chance. The town major, Sirr, he is very vigilant...I suppose he observed the meetings at Bond's and took a chance to get the warrants from Swami. A traitor! That's not to be thought of! Come, we mustn't turn our minds in that direction. It is time for quick action; we have perhaps delayed too long. Tone was right, we ought to have struck in August. Well, we won't lament now. I leave here to-night. I must keep in touch with the Executive. It is only a question of a few weeks at most. Now, who shall I send for to employ as a messenger?'

Dr. Kennedy suggested one of the Sheares brothers. 'No, they are too well known, they are probably marked already. I think I will send for Tom Reynolds.'

'You're sure of him? Why wasn't he at Bond's?'

'Why, yes, as sure as one man can be of another,' remarked Fitzgerald. 'He's been in the affair from the first. He knows everything; he is quick and intelligent. He did not come forward so much as the others, he passes more as a young man about town. His gamblings, his dissipations, and his appearances at Rotunda have put the government off the scent. Yes, I'll send for Tom Reynolds. As for his not being at Bond's, well, I was not there myself!'

CHAPTER 5

Thomas Reynolds, conducted by one of Dr. Kennedy's servants, entered the room of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was seated before a table covered with papers neatly filed and arranged. He was writing busily, but threw down his pen and rose instantly as Reynolds entered. There was no dismay in his looks; there was, indeed, a brightness in his appearance, an energy in his manner like those of a man on the brink of success. He held out his hand and grasped that of his friend warmly.

'Reynolds, I've sent for you to be an intermediary between me and the Executive.'

'You won't leave Dublin, then?' asked Mr. Reynolds curiously.

'Why no, of course not. It is not even to be considered. The rising is to be for May—as early as possible in May.'

'May—as early as possible in May,' Reynolds repeated slowly.

'Yes, don't let any of them get disheartened by these arrests. See, I have already filled up the places in the Executive, and here is an address to the members.' He put two papers into the hands of Thomas Reynolds. 'And let's leave for the counties. We must not mind what has passed, it signifies nothing! Tell them, all our members, with all the arts of which you are master, my dear Reynolds, that the time is at hand when they shall be called into action, that they may rely upon my being in my place on the day of need.'

Thomas Reynolds gave Lord Edward Fitzgerald a long, a searching look, as if he found it hard to credit both the words and the bearing of the man to whom he spoke. It was indeed difficult for a man of his character to realise that a human being could exist who was above all doubt of suspicion and subterfuge. Fitzgerald's complete candour and absolute trust seemed to Reynolds unreal. He turned his eyes away, he glanced down at his well-polished boots, rubbed his hands together, and then said: 'I think you'd best get out of Dublin, my Lord—out of Ireland. All your friends wish that, I know.'

'Reynolds!' cried Fitzgerald reproachfully, 'that is impossible. Pray don't waste time on that argument, pray don't! See, I have

another commission for you. I have in my trust thirteen pounds as treasury for the Barony of Offaly, thirty-two pounds as treasury of the County of Kildare—I'll have these sums handed over to you, and you must return them to the proper persons.'

'Yes, yes,' replied Reynolds, looking up swiftly, 'but that seems but a trifle compared with the other affairs your Lordship has in hand.'

'One must be careful even of these trifles. Good organisation is all. Now don't stay here, Reynolds, one never knows, the house may be watched.'

'You're not remaining here, my Lord?'

'No.'

'Where shall I find you then?'

'Why, I don't know what my friends intend for me,' smiled Fitzgerald. 'Surgeon Lawless is coming for me with a disguise; he is taking me to another place.'

'But I must know where it is, sir, if I am to be your messenger to and fro to the Executive.'

'Come here again to-morrow and they will tell you where I am.'

He again affectionately pressed his friend's hand, and bid him and all his fellow United Irishmen 'be of good heart, for he felt in his very blood omen of a perfect success.'

Thomas Reynolds folded the papers into his pocket, took leave of Fitzgerald with fewer words than his wont and thoughtfully left the house of Dr. Kennedy. He did not, however, leave Aungier Street, but remained hidden in the shadows of a doorway till he had seen a gentleman who, he supposed, must be Mr. Lawless enter Dr. Kennedy's house, then come out soon afterwards with a companion wearing a broad-leaved, old-fashioned hat with a long mantle. Lord Edward, no doubt. But Reynolds did not follow them; he considered it unnecessary to give himself that amount of fatigue. He turned, instead, slowly towards his own house.

CHAPTER 6

Mr. Reynolds had scarcely started on his way when a passer-by, coming in the opposite direction, suddenly stopped and stepped in front of him in a determined manner. He knew him at once for Thomas Neilson, one of the United Irishmen.

'Ah, Mr. Reynolds,' said Neilson, 'I will accompany you a little farther. I have something of importance to say to you.'

'The street is not the proper place for it.'

'Then we may go to Bond's house,' replied Neilson, falling into step beside the other, and taking his arm with a firm grip. 'We must consult as to what is to be done for those arrested—they must be saved.'

'With all my heart,' said Reynolds, and he added in a low voice, leaning forward so that his lips were on a level with the other's ear, 'I have just been to see Lord Edward. He is in the best of spirits and bids us all keep up heart.'

For reply Neilson gave him a grim, silent look. When they reached Oliver Bond's house, Neilson, urging that the police were after him, and that he was not safe in the streets, took Reynolds into the handsome mansion he had so often frequented.

'Mrs. Bond is very anxious to see you. Will you wait on her?'

'With all my heart,' replied Reynolds. 'I will give her what comfort I can. I fear that her husband will be convicted. The most amiable, the most generous of men! But there is already a scheme on foot whereby the other prisoners will offer to disclose their plans without mentioning names, if his life is to be spared—that might cause at least a delay.'

'Did you mention that to Lord Edward?' asked Neilson roughly. 'What is one man's life against the success of the cause? But you may say that to Mrs. Bond; it is good enough to comfort a woman's grief.' And they went up the stairs, past the room where the meetings were usually held, and Neilson threw open a back door which led through the large warehouses which were connected with the house in

Bridge Street. Reynolds followed Neilson without hesitation, but the latter's appearance became every moment more and more menacing. Reynolds was unarmed, and it came into his mind that he was committing a folly, but his courage was beyond any shaking.

Neilson walked across the warehouse and opened two large doors which concealed the crane gate and a drop of several feet into a mews. Reynolds stood rigid while the other gazed down into the darkness below the open doors. Neilson turned round and demanded, while he clutched Reynolds by the arm: 'What should I do to the villain who could insinuate himself into our confidence for the purpose of betraying us? My God, Reynolds, we have been betrayed, and I believe I know by whom!'

Without the least faltering the informer answered: 'If you could find such a traitor you should shoot him through the heart.'

Neilson put his hand on the pistol at his belt. He was a powerful athletic man and could without much exertion have cast Reynolds backwards through the open crane doors. The informer knew himself very near violent death, but his colour did not change, nor his eyes sink. His breath did not hurry nor his hands tremble. With folded arms he stared scornfully and boldly at the man who suspected him.

'I believe it is you, damn you,' said Neilson; 'you and Armstrong.'

'If you think that, dispose of me—it is in your power.'

This boldness, which seemed to Neilson impossible in a guilty man, caused him to falter in his purpose. He took his hand from his pistol and turned away from the door. Reynolds instantly seized the advantage. 'Is this a joke to try me, my dear fellow? What is the meaning of it? It is really absurd, you know, to bring me up here to this dismal place for this nonsense.'

'You can take it as a joke to try you if you will,' cried Neilson, frowning, 'but some one has furnished the government with intelligence, and it must be one of the officers on the County Meetings Committee.'

'Why should you suspect me?'

'I'll give my reasons at our next meeting,' said Neilson. 'You'll be

there, I suppose. You were not at the last.'

'Neither was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, nor others,' replied Reynolds instantly. 'And I *shall* be at the next. I have some of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's orders to communicate. The rising is for May.'

Further impressed by this, Neilson said nothing. Reynolds turned and with a firm, heavy step left the warehouse, entered the mansion, passed down the stairs, and paused to glance at an open door where Mrs. Bond was sitting by the fire in an attitude of profound dejection. She stared at the door as she heard his step, but her eyes were blank. Mr. Reynolds made a formal salutation and passed out into the street. He was incapable of fear and his heart did not beat one wit the faster for this unexpected adventure, but he turned over in his mind, with a certain dry surprise, the probable cause of this suspicion. He had thought himself so safe.

'I must be careful. I must remember that every one isn't so credulous as Fitzgerald.'

CHAPTER 7

When Reynolds next met Mr. Hanlon above the glove shop he was disguised with more than his usual care and had made his way very circumspectly to Skinner's Row. With some temper he informed the government man of his interview with Lord Edward, of the intentions of that leader of the revolt, and of his own unexpected and unpleasant encounter with Thomas Neilson.

'Lord Clare and Lord Castlereagh both want Edward Fitzgerald got out of the country. Can you do this?'

'I suggested it to him, but he won't go. He is a bigoted fanatic. He thinks it his duty to remain at the post of peril,' replied Reynolds with a sneer. 'He was always a fool. I remember him as a child. Full of new-fangled notions even then!'

The Englishman glanced very oddly at the informer and seemed about to make some comment on this, but refrained. Mr. Reynolds, however, rightly read his look.

'I don't dislike Lord Edward,' he remarked insolently. 'I swear that I pity him—so misled by bad company—but such traitors can't be endured.' Mr. Hanlon glanced aside.

'Well, if he likes to run on his fate you'll keep us informed as to his whereabouts.'

'I am to return to Kennedy's house to-morrow. They will tell me then where he is. Lord Edward has not the least suspicion of me, but what about this damned man Neilson? Am I supposed to go to the meeting on the eighteenth at O'Riley's?'

'Certainly you are,' replied Hanlon. There will be the most valuable information to be extracted there.'

'Well, I don't care about it, as I say. I am suspected. They'd think nothing of shooting me.'

'You've got a very bold front and a very plausible tongue, Mr. Reynolds. Can't you persuade your friends of your honesty? Take an oath, if need be, of your fidelity and that you were not the person who

betrayed the meeting at Bond's.'

'I might not be believed.'

'You'll have to risk that, Mr. Reynolds. If you go back on the government now you won't have much in the way of reward to look for.'

'I told you I didn't do it for reward, but out of loyalty to His Majesty.'

'Let rewards go, then,' replied Mr. Hanlon brusquely. 'Consider this—that if you do not continue to remain among these conspirators and detail their plans to the government, you may be considered as one of them. You may find yourself in Newgate, Mr. Reynolds, and, I can assure you for your private information, there's no mercy intended. Government is going to extreme measures, the Hessians are already being quartered on the city. Castlereagh don't intend to take a chance.'

Reynolds frowned and said sullenly: 'Why don't you strike at once; why not put an end to it?'

'You know the government's policy, they wish these men to go as far as possible that they may be crushed once and for all. But never mind that, Mr. Reynolds, Lord Castlereagh expects of you that you should attend the meeting on the eighteenth.'

As Reynolds did not reply, the Englishman added: 'With whom did Lord Edward leave Dr. Kennedy's house?'

'With a Mr. Lawless, a surgeon.'

'Ah, yes, we have his name. Make it your business, Mr. Reynolds, to keep in touch with Lord Edward and tell us of his whereabouts. I suppose you will give evidence against the fourteen men arrested at Bond's?'

'If it is taken secretly.'

'It will be.'

'Then I am ready. For the sake of His Majesty's government.'

'Very good, Mr. Reynolds. Lord Castlereagh will remember these services.'

Mr. Reynolds rose and carefully adjusted his scarf round his face.

'If the government convicts these men—'

'On your evidence they will convict—'

'And the punishment?'

'I don't know in every case. But for Oliver Bond and William Byrne hanging is intended.'

The informer continued to twist the thick silk about his throat.

'A pity for Mr. Byrne,' he remarked coolly, 'a fine young man. And but a year married.'

CHAPTER 8

When Edward Fitzgerald left the house of Dr. Kennedy, Mr. Lawless, one of the most loyal and devoted of the United Irishmen, took him to the house of a widowed lady whose quiet life and insignificant personality rendered her a most unlikely object of suspicion. She was a warm patriot, and when Mr. Lawless had asked her if she would find shelter for Lord Edward Fitzgerald, whom she had never seen but whose name and fame were very dear to her, she had instantly agreed.

It was to this small house then on the banks of the canal, outside Dublin, that Mr. Lawless conveyed his friend, who was carefully disguised in a powdered wig worn in a queue, a coat cut very different to his usual fashion, a broad-leaved hat and a heavy travelling cloak. He passed under the name of Jameson, and the story was to be that he was a friend of Mrs. Grant's son, who had perished abroad long since, and had lately come from the West Indies by way of England. But there was, indeed, little need for any tale at all, for the sole inhabitant of the house, besides the lady herself, was an old maidservant, faithful, taciturn and solitary and a manservant whose family had suffered horribly in the scourgings and burnings in Wexford.

'You are as safe here, sir, as you can be anywhere in Ireland,' said Mr. Surgeon Lawless.

'I'll not stay long for fear of implicating these good people. I suppose it is a legal offence now to shelter me! I must move from place to place, Lawless, so that no one may have the blame of hiding me. I am glad I have seen Reynolds,' he added; 'that's off my mind. He has full instructions and a heartening message. There is a meeting at O'Riley's on the eighteenth. Well, God bless you, Lawless. I don't want to keep you any longer.'

'Is there no more service I can do you, sir?'

'Nothing more. There's only one thing I want in the world, and that's, of course, to see Pamela and the children.'

'For God's sake, don't venture that, sir. No one is the least likely to look here, but Denzel Street, where her ladyship has gone, why,

they'll be searching that like they did Leinster House.'

CHAPTER 9

The Negro servant, Tony, who could not long be quiet away from his mistress, but like a dog, must follow her and sit at her skirt's hem if possible, only happy when he was able to perform some service for her or for the children, came timidly creeping into the little parlour of the house in Denzel Street long after he was supposed to be abed in his own quarters. He thought that his mistress had been looking very ill recently and he had it on his mind that he must watch her and at the first alarm call the doctor. He knew that she sat up very late, often dozing in the chair before the fire in the parlour, till long past midnight. As the Negro cautiously opened the door he saw that the two candles were still burning and the fire glowed on the hearth.

His mistress was there as he had expected to find her, half hidden in a hooded chair, but there was another figure, seated on a stool on the hearth and holding her hand. The slave closed the door with a delicate care: it was his master whom he had seen in the half light of candle and fire. Fitzgerald had got to his feet on the opening of the door. Pamela had risen and clasped his arm. 'It is only Tony!' they breathed together with relief. Fitzgerald laughed cautiously. 'Why, Tony, how did you guess I was here?'

'He looks after me like a watch-dog,' said Pamela. 'You didn't tell him I was still in Dublin?'

'I told no one.'

Tony approached. He was, in his master's eyes, a tragic figure, with something about him of the beaten captive animal. His forlorn face twitched with pure joy as he stared at his master. Fitzgerald impulsively gave him his hand and the servant went on his knees and pressed it to his lips.

Poor Tony,' said Lord Edward, his other arm round his wife. The slave looked up, and saw that they had both been weeping; the tears gushed down his own cheeks as he began to sob with the bewildered misery of a child.

Fitzgerald gently withdrew his hand.

'Hush, Tony. I don't want the other servants to know I'm here. It's

you and you only who must be aware I'm still in Dublin. You understand? Go back to your quarters, Tony, or something may be suspected. I shan't come here again, not till all is over. Come, Tony, I trust you.'

The slave rose, gave a long look at his master, then at his mistress, then with reluctant but unquestioning obedience left the parlour.

'Poor soul,' said Lord Edward, 'but for his appearance which marks him everywhere I would take him with me, Pamela. There is a man to be trusted. Sit down again, my love, and be at ease. I fear his coming has disturbed you.'

'You should not be here, I feel it's so dangerous. You were always imprudent, Edward. I fear you make a bad conspirator.'

'I fear I do, Pamela,' he replied ruefully. 'Hear what happened yesterday,' he added, trying to turn her from her grief and apprehension. 'I am known, as I told you, as Jameson, and a pretty good tale has been made up to account for my presence with Mrs. Grant. But what should happen but that I must leave a pair of my boots outside the door to be cleaned, and the fellow who polished them, the manservant there, took a chance to say to his mistress in the morning that he knew who the gentleman upstairs was, but that he need not fear, for he would die to save him, and he then showed her my name written at full length in one of the boots.'

'Oh, Edward!' exclaimed Pamela, 'that is the kind of thing—you see, you don't think of such details!'

'Indeed, I must confess I do not! But there was no harm in it, Pamela. He was a noble fellow. I told Mrs. Grant I should like to have some talk with him, for she related all to me, thinking I might consider it dangerous to remain. But it seemed the fellow's family had suffered in Wexford and he was for our cause. He told Mrs. Grant that he would not look at me, for he said, if they should take me up I can then swear, you know, that I never saw him.'

'But it's dangerous! It's all dangerous.'

'Come, dear, you are not going to be one of those who try to persuade me to leave Dublin?'

'I want you to,' she said earnestly. 'Lord Clare spoke again to your brother Leinster about it. He said, "For God's sake get that young man out of the country. All the ports will be open to him."'

'I'm obliged to Lord Clare,' smiled Fitzgerald, 'yet I don't thank him for thinking me a coward. Come, darling, let us sit by the fire a little as we did before Tony came in. I don't want to leave you in any agitation.'

Pamela took her place again in the hooded chair, and her husband, after putting out the candles which were guttering down to the sockets, sat on the stool at her feet, before the firelight, and took her hand in his strong, steady clasp.

'If only,' she murmured, 'I could be sure you are not betrayed.'

'I am indeed sure of it,' he said. 'And now, Pamela, you must believe in me, trust me, be sure that all is going to end well. Mr. John Sheares and his brother are carrying on my work for me. I am very pleased the way things go. Pamela, you shall smile and say you are hopeful!'

'Yes, yes, dear. I know that what any man can do, you will. I wrote to Major O'Kelly and thanked him for his kindness when he came to Leinster House—was that right?'

It was gracious, Pamela, but I don't see how the fellow could have been less than civil—'

'Lady Moira is so compassionate! I spoke to Lady Castlereagh about Mr. Bond and the other prisoners, but she said that she could not interfere in her lord's affairs—but Lady Louise said that he seemed distressed.'

'Castlereagh! He is cold-blooded enough! Why, I've heard that from his office in the Castle you can hear the cries of those they torture in the yard—nay, I should not have told you that, Pamela—think how soon it will be over—so soon.'

'Will it, Edward? Mrs. Bond went to see her husband in Newgate. He was loaded with irons—'

'Pamela, don't look like that! I promise you that we shall be happy

again—soon—by July—in Kildare Lodge again. Won't you believe me?'

She smiled, though the tears were in her eyes, at his wistful urgency.

'I promise you, Pamela—happiness again! Oh, my darling,' he cried, with a sudden rush of feeling, 'how I have failed you—'

'No, Edward, no! Sooner you than any other man, were this to be the end of all.'

He bent his face on her hands in order to hide his tears.

'Play your harp again, love, do your needlework, have the children much about you.' He rose suddenly, 'I must not stay, Pamela.'

'It is lunacy indeed!'

She tried to command herself, and, rising too and holding him fast, begged from him some particulars as to his plans.

'God help us, Pamela, it is to be soon. It has been postponed again and again, and now there are so many troops in the country it has been difficult to do all from a place of concealment. I have had to rely so much on Reynolds and the Sheares. I don't know if I can do it, but at least one can try, come out into the open with a sword at one's side again and a uniform on, and the Irish flag up—that will be something—'

'But you don't think there's any chance of failure, Edward?'

'I dare not think that, Pamela, I dare not. These brutal Hessians, one doesn't like to dwell on what they do, and yet you know, Pamela'—he smiled sadly—'the thought came to me to pity them too. They are press-ganged, sold into this slavery of foreign service to fill the pocket of their prince. Something's wrong with the world, Pamela, isn't it?'

'I wish you hadn't thought so, darling. I wish you'd been content to stay where you were happy, in Kildare.'

CHAPTER 10

Thomas Reynolds, who had not seen Lord Edward for some time, was deputed to take to him the news of a successful meeting of the United Irishmen and to assure him that everything was, as far as human foresight could tell, in train for the explosion of the revolution.

Reynolds had been, for some time, unaware of the hiding-places of Lord Edward, so quickly was the Irish leader moved by his friends from one house to another.

The informer had not dared show too much anxiety as to Edward Fitzgerald's whereabouts. He knew himself suspected, and though he had outfaced these doubts, taken oaths as to his fidelity and even evaded the assassination prepared for him by some more vehement and suspicious member of the organisation, he still went warily.

As he proceeded to the house of Mr. Murphy, a leather merchant, where Fitzgerald had lately moved, a placard newly pasted on the wall of a barracks took his attention. He stopped to read it. It was an offer of a thousand pounds reward for the apprehension of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

Reynolds paused for a moment, shut his lips closely, cast down his eyes, reflected, then hastened on his way. He found Mr. Murphy in a state of considerable agitation. He, too, had just heard of the proclamation, and made no disguise that if he had known of it he would have hesitated to give Lord Edward shelter. The thought of the soldiery being let loose on his house was more than the unfortunate merchant could contemplate with equanimity. He told Reynolds, too, as he received him in the carefully shuttered parlour, that Lord Edward Fitzgerald and two of his friends had had a brush with the town major, Sirr, the other day when he had been endeavouring to go to Moira House to see his wife, who stayed much with Lady Moira. There had actually been a struggle in a dark alley, the snapping of pistols. Fitzgerald had got away, so had Lawless, but they had left behind M'Cabe in the hands of the police.

He, adroitly enough, had given himself out to be a muslin merchant from Scotland and so been allowed to escape. 'But the whole affair is disquieting,' added Murphy, I can't say I care to share

Bond's fate.'

'Lord Edward is imprudent, no doubt,' smiled Reynolds, 'yet for several weeks he has been safely concealed in the capital, and even his own friends, as I surely believe, think him in England or France. Therefore do not disturb yourself, my dear sir. Allow me instantly to go his Lordship.'

But Mr. Murphy was full of anxiety. He could not stop speaking. 'My Lord will often entertain as many as six people to dinner, and allows himself to be frequently visited by Mr. Thomas Neilson, one of the most imprudent of men, who comes openly, without any disguise, to see him, in broad daylight too. God save us!'

'But there has been nothing to make you think any one suspects my Lord to be in Dublin?'

'I don't know! A thousand pounds is a lot of money! And only the other day, Mr. Reynolds, he and Mr. Lawless, thinking they were followed along the canal in Thomas Street, lay down in the ditch in thick mud! Then, with Thomas Neilson for company, he went to reconnoitre the line of his proposed advance on the Kildare side of Dublin, you know, to mark out the route on the map which he keeps in his pocket. He was then, at Palmerston's, stopped and questioned by a party of soldiers. He was well concealed, however, in his cloak and his wig, and with great adroitness made himself out to be a surgeon on his way to visit a man seriously injured, whereupon he and Neilson were allowed to proceed—a near thing each time, Mr. Reynolds!'

When the informer was conducted to the small attic room occupied by Lord Edward, he found him reclining in an easy-chair with, for him, an uncommon look of fatigue.

Reynolds thought him much changed since he had seen him last. He seemed ill and flushed, and complained of a chill or fever which he believed he had taken perhaps from lying in the wet ditch and not being able to change his clothes quickly enough on a night of a cold wind. But his spirits seemed still high, and he greeted Reynolds enthusiastically, and listened with the greatest pleasure to the message that gentleman brought him from the last meeting of the Executive of the United Irishmen. At last, in a few days' time, Lord Edward was to go to Leinster, from there to raise his standard, the green Irish standard, while the forces available in Dublin, Wicklow and

Kildare would join him in an advance on the capital, where they would take by surprise the camp and the artillery at Chapelizod. At both of these places they were assured of a large number of the Irish soldiery going over to them. After this had been accomplished the insurgents were to march on the capital, seize the Castle, the person of the Lord Lieutenant, and all the members of the Government in Dublin...

Fitzgerald listened with delight to this report, the while he looked at a large cluster of spring flowers, lilacs, jonquils, jasmine and mignonette that stood in a drinking-glass beside him. Mr. Reynolds guessed that these flowers came from Pamela, and had been grown in the garden of the cottage at Kildare.

'They told me you were in want of money, my Lord,' said Reynolds. 'I have made bold to give you fifty guineas.' He took the packets of gold out of his pocket and laid them down on the table before Lord Edward. 'I gave fifty guineas also to my Lady.'

Lord Edward took the gold, wrote a receipt for it, and thanked the other warmly for his thoughtfulness. Reynolds then put a case of pistols with a mould for casting bullets beside the money.

'And I was begged to let you have these and tell you that your uniform would be delivered here to-night.'

'Let it be indeed to-night, and I do not intend to stay here long. Poor Murphy is plainly disturbed, and I cannot find it on my conscience to put any one long in such uneasiness.'

'But where will you go?' asked Reynolds, careful to keep any peculiar eagerness out of his voice.

The M'Cormicks', or back to Mrs. Grant's. I have many hiding-places in Dublin, and I let my friends choose which I shall go to next. Be assured that you will know as soon as any where I am. But let us hope that when we next meet,' he added, with a warmth in his dark eyes, 'there will be no need for any further secrecy.'

He thanked Reynolds again, and in most affectionate terms for his kind thought about the money. He had, indeed, been straitened.

'I will give,' said Reynolds, 'Lady Edward another fifty guineas in the course of a few days.'

'How is she?' interrupted Lord Edward, rising and pacing up and down the low room. 'I tried to see her at Moira House, but there was a scuffle on the way and I judged it prudent not to go, lest I was followed.'

'She seemed very well and cheerful. Happy with the children and confident. She gave me this.' He put his hand in his pocket and drew out on his palm a small ring.

'I told her I might be watched, as I believe I am, and not able to see her again, but would write to her in that case, and she said she would not attend to any letter purporting to come from me unless it was sealed with this ring.'

'Let me look at the ring.'

It was a small red cornelian engraved with the figure of a dancing satyr.

'I remember it,' said Lord Edward abruptly, and turned away. There was no reason for Thomas Reynolds to remain longer, yet he hesitated, fingering his gloves, his cane, his hat, turning his curious, hard face directly towards the other man.

'You know there's a thousand pounds reward offered for your taking up, Lord Edward?'

'Yes, I know; it makes little difference. I have none but loyal friends.'

'You have loyal friends who would very gladly get your Lordship down to the coast, and find a boat and get you out of the country.'

'No more of that. It vexes me, indeed it does. I'd never think of going.'

CHAPTER 11

Mr. Reynolds said coldly:

'Lord Edward Fitzgerald's at the house of Mr. Nicholas Murphy, No. 153 Thomas Street. He'll be there all to-day and to-night, but probably gone, and I shan't know where, to-morrow.'

'I can rely on this?' asked Mr. Hanlon.

'I suppose,' said Reynolds with a sneer, 'you can send a posse of soldiers to see if it be true?'

'I will do so immediately.'

Reynolds, who had remained standing, holding his hat in his hand, said: 'I have had to supply fifty guineas to Lord Edward and another fifty to his wife. I have spent nine pounds on a case of pistols. I hope that will be remembered in my expenses.'

Mr. Hanlon looked at him very curiously.

'You shall certainly not be out of pocket for your generosity, Mr. Reynolds, but may I ask why it was necessary to go to these lengths?'

'Merely to lull suspicion. I do not—and remember I have the government's word on this—wish to appear in this affair, at least till Lord Edward is arrested and the whole plot blown over.'

CHAPTER 12

Mr. Murphy, whose apprehension was roused to a dreadful pitch, ran up to tell Lord Edward that he had seen a guard of Hessians pass down the street and after them the town major, Sirr, with a posse of police, going to make a search of Mr. Moore's house at the Yellow Lion in Thomas Street, and he immediately suggested that he should get up on the roof and lie down between the gables of the warehouses. Half laughing, half sighing, Fitzgerald obeyed, and presently came down, after the alarm proved false, complaining, in an amused tone, of the grime on his clothes.

'There's little matter for that, my Lord,' said Murphy, 'for there's a fine new suit come for you. A woman just left a bundle, and said I was to give it to you. She told me she came from Mrs. Moore.'

'That will be my uniform.'

He and Murphy opened the bundle in the attic bedroom, where the flowers from Kildare still perfumed the close air. It contained a uniform of a clear green colour heavily braided down the front, with rose-coloured cuffs and a cape. This was a long-skirted coat, vest and pantaloons. There was also a short jacket and a pair of trousers that buttoned from the hip to the ankle with thick black Spanish leather on the sides and a sugar-loaf cap, green and crimson with a large tassel. Fitzgerald looked with pleasure and Murphy with dismay as these bright, beautiful clothes were displayed.

'Oh, God, sir, you'd better get these out of the way!'

'I suppose I had till the moment comes to wear them,' agreed Fitzgerald reluctantly. 'Take them and conceal them.'

Murphy needed no further urging. He threw the uniforms into the cloth that had concealed them when the woman had carried them through the streets, ran upstairs with them into the warehouse, and threw them under some goatskins, which smelt so offensively that he believed it would prevent any from approaching them.

The soldiers were still searching Mr. Moore's house, but there seemed no suspicion thrown on that of Mr. Murphy, so Lord Edward came down at his usual time and dined with his host and Thomas

Neilson. It was then about four o'clock and everything was quiet, save that a party of Dumbarton Fencibles passed rapidly up Thomas Street. Nicolas Murphy, prying from the window, thought that he saw Mr. Swann, the magistrate who had made the arrests at Bond's, in their company, but could not be sure of this. But when these had gone all was silent, and the acute fears of the leather merchant were something allayed. Yet the meal was largely silent, despite Lord Edward's efforts at cheerfulness and his earnest, eager talk of an immediate rising.

Contrary to his custom, for he seldom took wine, he drank some sherry with whey in it for his feverish chill which was heavy on him, then went upstairs, saying he would lie down for a while.

Neilson went out into the street and most imprudently, thought Nicolas Murphy, walked up and down before the house, as if keeping watch, continually rapping the door and looking in and saying: 'Is he safe? You had best be cautious!' till Murphy, in terror, bade him be gone and not compromise him by his imprudence.

CHAPTER 13

Edward Fitzgerald, when he threw himself on the bed in the attic, fell into a drowsy musing, produced by the fatigue of nervous strain, the slight fever he had, and the strong hot wine to which he was totally unaccustomed. The May evening was warm, almost heavy, yet he felt himself shivering, and drew the cotton coverlet over him on the narrow bed where he lay. Then in a while he was burning hot. He threw off not only the quilt but his coat, and lay there in his shirt and trousers. It seemed as if he was sinking away from reality and instinctively he put his hand to his hip-pocket where he had his papers—the plan of his march from Leinster to Dublin; the plans of the Castle; the lists of men and money, as if he would preserve these from being lost in the oblivion into which he was falling.

He stretched his hand, with the same instinctive anxiety, to the small table beside him on which lay the gold that Reynolds had left. The pistols and the mould for making bullets were downstairs. He recalled vaguely that he was unarmed, and sat up, fighting with his sleepiness, and took out a pocket knife from his coat, with a water-waved blade and a coarse buck handle, and put this down ready to his hand among the gold pieces.

Then he lay back with a sigh, at ease, and lost all sense of where he was; this small attic in a stranger's house and all the pressing and anxious details of his great enterprise became dim to him, and he was stalked, like an unsuspecting prey, by long-evaded dreams.

He was back again in the Orangery in the Château D'Aubignè. He was building a fort. It had a likeness to the Castle of Dublin. He was putting a flag above the fort, a green flag with a harp, and a wretched, crouching, deformed slave was imploring him for help; and it was Tony, and he moved his hands uneasily—he felt the creature's lips and tears on his hand. There was Louise with the nectarines in her arms and then again is was not Louise but Pamela, and then neither. It was a dead woman with pale hair which fell over a blue cushion. He moved, stirred, and moaned. A familiar voice brought him painfully back to the present moment. Mr. Murphy was in the doorway and nervously asked him if he would like some tea.

'No, no, indeed, I will have nothing more. What o'clock is it?'

'It is about seven o'clock, my Lord.'

'What, have I lain here so long?'

'It will do your lordship good, you don't look very well.'

'No, that's true, my head's heavy. I believe I have a touch of fever, but it's nothing, it will pass by the morning. Could you not bring that uniform up, Murphy? It will be safe enough here. What did you do with it?'

Mr. Murphy muttered 'that that uniform was one of those things best hidden away.'

'You're very fearful, Murphy.'

Lord Edward smiled in a kindly fashion. He sat up in the bed, pressing his heavy forehead with his hot hand. 'I quite understand I had no right to come here. I'll go to-morrow. Let me sleep a little longer now.'

'Well, my Lord, if you feel disposed to take any tea, there'll be some served in the back drawing-room in a few moments.'

'I'll come down if I'm awake.'

Nicolas Murphy left the room, from which the sunlight was fading, yet every object in the attic was oppressively clear to Lord Edward, who turned his face away on the pillow and tried to find refuge again in his dreams.

'Pamela, if I could have but seen her again—that's hard—not to see her. If I could have got to Moira House that night. I've not been fair to Pamela. Pamela and her baby. That little boy at Mrs. Grant's whom I used to walk along the canals with at night, he was a sweet fellow. I promised him to root up the orange lilies at the bottom of the garden. How charming when my Edward is that age! O God! I promised Pamela that she would be happy again, that we should return to Kildare! How dare I do that? Her flowers are fading. I wonder will she send me more? The cottage should look charming now.'

He could not raise his spirits for his own consolation, though he had seemed so cheerful before his friends. 'This is a wretched life to

live—skulking away like this.

Poor Murphy is badly frightened. I must leave here tomorrow. One feels like a malefactor—hiding like this.'

For weeks he had been hunted, and now there was a price on his head...All his eager courage could not wholly cast off depression. He sank into a half-feverish stupor. He was a small boy running through the large deserted Orangery, past the tapestry, out on to the smooth lawns along the banks of the Garonne, pursued by those monstrous shapes that torment childhood, demons that have neither name nor form.

He thought he had not only to evade these terrors for his own safety's sake but for that of Louise and the Negro, both of whom must in some way be protected by his reaching them. He saw himself, in this dream, straining every nerve, running through a strange twilight, yet across familiar scenes. Then they were upon him, the hideous pursuer's footsteps sounded loudly in his ears. He gave a cry and a convulsive movement, a leap into a void, across which Louise, with a frightful smile, pointing to a bloody throat, beckoned. He roused himself by a despairing effort of the will and found himself in the darkening attic seated on the hard bed. For a second reality was like a vision before his eyes, then he was able to focus Nicolas Murphy, his face a greenish pallor, standing in the doorway, behind him two strangers and then a man in a soldier's jacket wearing a round hat with a sword in his hand.

Instantaneously Fitzgerald saw the two men prepare to hurl themselves upon him and Murphy step in front of them. One of them then thrust a pistol violently in the leather merchant's face and called out to the soldiers in the doorway to 'hold him.'

At this, Fitzgerald, with a leap like a tiger, hurled himself on his two assailants, a sword was thrust at his breast, but bending, only cast him backwards on the bed. He snatched up the pen-knife lying on the side table with a movement that sent the gold rolling all over the floor. The three men struggled together, Fitzgerald casting off both the others and wounding them with repeated blows from his single weapon.

Mr. Swann, from the doorway, fired his pistol but without effect. He then called loudly from the open door.

'They are murdering Lord Edward!' cried Murphy, struggling with the soldiers who had him in custody. At this the magistrate struck him under the eye with the pistol and told the soldiers to take him down to the yard. Fitzgerald had freed himself from his captors; one was at his feet groaning, one sprawling on the bed, his shirt all bloody, his eyes wild. His penknife in his hand he plunged towards the door as the town major, Sirr, appeared in it. This last took deliberate aim with his pistol and wounded Lord Edward in the shoulder, so that he fell back again on the bed. At that Major Sirr's reinforcements rushed at him, but he was instantly on his feet, and had them all flung off save one, who clung to him but could not stay him such was his frantic strength and desperate resolution as he struggled towards the door. The stairs were full of soldiery. Seeing Fitzgerald's furious endeavours to escape, these laid their matchlocks across the stairway and thus prevented his progress, but he continued to struggle even when they had overpowered him and were dragging him towards the door. His shirt was torn off his back, and the blood was trickling from his wounded arm. The soldiers, nettled by his resistance, handled him very roughly, and half threw him, half pulled him to the door where a sedan chair with an open top waited in the warm twilight; an escort of Dumbarton Fencibles with drawn swords about it. Sirr, with a cold and gloating look, followed his prisoner and looked at him where he leant between two of his captors, suddenly exhausted and drooping.

'You'll be sorry for this violence, my Lord. I have a warrant for your arrest.'

'You did not tell me that,' gasped Fitzgerald, 'and it is natural for a man to defend himself when seized by surprise.'

He spoke calmly, steadily, though in a faint voice. He was helped into a chair, a greatcoat flung round him. The blood from his arm was staining both his shirt and breeches, and his pallor was ghastly. Mr. Swann suggested that a surgeon should be instantly sent for.

'We will take him to the Castle,' replied the town major.

But the magistrate objected that since he had made an attack on his people, and, as it seemed likely, mortally wounded one of them, Ryan, the man who had first fallen on him, it was more fitting that he should be lodged in Newgate.

Sirr objected that Lord Campden had had a room prepared for him at the Castle. Fitzgerald, through his agony, heard this, and whispered:

'So—you did not come by chance? I was betrayed!'

'Sir, an information was laid.'

'Who? Who?'

They did not answer this, but continued their argument as to where their prisoner should be lodged.

'Take me to Newgate,' gasped the wounded man. 'I don't want to go to the Castle when Bond and the others are in Newgate.'

Major Sirr, however, decided that this important prisoner had best be taken to Lord Campden, so Lord Fitzgerald was carried in the chair to the Castle. He did not speak during the journey, nor when they helped him out and brought him into the room of Lord Campden's secretary.

CHAPTER 14

He had been followed to the Castle by Nicolas Murphy, who, in company with two soldiers of the Dumbarton regiment, had been brought off in a carriage and placed in the Castle's guard-house. The leather merchant's hands had been bound and the soldiers would not let him put his handkerchief to his face to wipe away the blood that was gushing from the wound made by Mr. Swann striking him in the face with the butt end of the pistol. Nor had he been allowed to drink a glass of wine that a neighbour offered him, Major Sirr breaking the glass as it was held forward, declaring 'that wine was not fit for rebels.'

The soldiers took possession of Mr. Murphy's house and began to wreck it. They rushed into the cellars and brought out all the bottles of wine they found there, breaking open the desks and bookcases, examining the clothes-press and plundering the house, the soldier's wives running in to take up the linen and silver for themselves.

Not troubling to look for a corkscrew, the military smashed off the necks of the bottles of costly wines, then glutted, sent out what they could not drink in exchange for whisky.

In the attic where Lord Edward had lain, Pamela's flowers, overturned in the struggle, lay withering in the dark, among the bloodstains on the floor.

CHAPTER 15

Mr. Watson, Lord Campden's private secretary, found Lord Edward leaning back on a couple of chairs in his office of the war department, with arm extended and supported by the surgeon, who was dressing his wound. He was very pale but serene. He had already been searched and his papers, including that which contained the map of the line of advance on Dublin, had been seized.

Mr. Watson, greatly moved, came forward quietly and in a low voice, so as not to be overheard, said that he had a commission from the Lord Lieutenant to treat him with every consideration, consistent with his being a state prisoner, and added delicately that he was going himself to break the intelligence to Lady Edward.

'Your Lordship may trust,' added the Englishman earnestly, 'in my fidelity and secrecy, and—if there is any confidential communication, or any personal act of kindness in your service you wish done, I...well, I hope you'll trust me, sir.'

The prisoner looked collectedly at the speaker and bent his head as if in acknowledgement of this courtesy.

'No, no, thank you. Nothing, nothing. Only break it to her tenderly.'

'I hope, sir,' continued Mr. Watson, 'that you'll give Lord Campden no blame for this unfortunate affair. Indeed, he asked me to assure you that every courtesy shall be shown. I'm sure I speak for Lord Castlereagh too. I know that these gentlemen have only regretted that you have not before, sir, left Dublin.'

'If I had done so,' whispered Lord Edward faintly, 'I should be the one who would be now full of regret.'

The surgeon who had bandaged the arm remarked: 'The wound is not dangerous.'

Lord Edward lifted his dark eyes and said: 'I'm sorry to hear that!' Then he glanced at the surgeon, who was Mr. Stewart, the Viceroy's surgeon-general, and then at Mr. Watson, who was gazing at him with compassion, and said:

'Pray thank Lord Campden and Lord Castlereagh, all who may be concerned in me, for their civility.'

He paused, then making an effort over his great weakness, said:

'I would rather go to Newgate with the felons—and my fellows—than have any peculiar favours. Indeed, sir, do you suppose that it will matter to me where I house?'

With that he leant back against the two chairs and closed his eyes, and it was impossible for them to say whether he was conscious or not, but the surgeon heard him mutter: 'I have broken my promise to Pamela, about Kildare—'

Apart from the wound in his shoulder, he was badly bruised in the struggle, and there was a gash on the back of his neck which caused him much discomfort.

When Mr. Watson went down the Castle steps on his errand to Lady Edward Fitzgerald (for he intended no other to take this message) he heard that the magistrates had claimed Lord Edward on account of his wounding their people and that he was therefore to be taken out of the jurisdiction of Lord Campden and lodged in the common prison at Newgate.

Mr. Watson was also warned that however compassionate he might feel towards Lady Edward, and however delicately Lord Campden wished to behave towards her, there was an order in Privy Council that she should within twenty-four hours leave Ireland.

The government held, and had for long held, strong and undeniable proof of treason on the part of her husband. The papers found on him were not needed to show that he had planned a revolution.

CHAPTER 16

On the news of the arrest of the National leader, despairing revolts, like convulsions of agony, broke out in Ireland, provoking violent reprisals. Flames flared out from castle and farm and were only quenched when the ruins afforded nothing that would burn. Shrieks and cries rose and were only stifled when the life that had uttered them was stiff and rotting. Dublin was lit by the flare of rebel property burnt in the streets, by the glow of destroyed houses. Above a countryside laid waste the spring-decked trees bent their boughs beneath a burden of dead men. In the streets of the broken villages the people knelt, with bowed heads, while their fellows were scourged by the soldiery.

In Lord Castlereagh's office in the Castle, Mr. Hanlon carefully entered in his account books of the secret service:

May 20th, 1798—Mr. Thomas Reynolds, by desire of Lord Castlereagh, one thousand pounds (£1000.)

CHAPTER 17

On a mild, sweet morning, Pamela, half deranged by misery, affectionately attended by Lady Louise Connolly, took the packet for Holyhead. Her desperate appeal to be allowed to share her husband's prison had been refused—she was banished from Ireland, and with her children was to take refuge with the Duke of Richmond in London. She had her baby, of a few weeks old, in her arms, and said little to the earnest solicitude of Lady Louise, who desperately tried to give her ease and comfort. Pamela merely whispered: 'They might have let me go to him.' Then, once, and very wildly: 'I believe that I shall never see Ireland again!'

Tony did not accompany his mistress. The slave lay dying in Denzel Street. Since his master's arrest he had lain with his face turned to the wall and refused food or drink.

CHAPTER 18

In the shortest possible time after the news of his brother's arrest, Lord Henry Fitzgerald arrived in Dublin. Devoted and affectionate as the Fitzgeralds were, the devotion and affection between these two brothers was of a particular intensity. Lord Henry had gone to the Duke of Portland and demanded an order to share Edward's prison. The minister had courteously pointed out that as Lord Edward had not been arrested on his warrant, it was impossible for him to grant this favour. Both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were friends of the Leinsters and warmly sympathetic towards Lord Edward, but affairs being as they were in Ireland, and the King against concession, it was impossible for the moment to interfere, and all Lord Henry's passionate endeavour could achieve was a promise that the royal brothers would use all their influence for a postponement of the trial until matters should be quieter in Ireland.

Lord Henry was maddened, on his arrival in Dublin, by the refusal of all to grant him permission to see his brother, who still lay in the grated room in Newgate, without one of his relatives being allowed to see him. The infuriated Irishman forced his way into the presence of Lord Clare, who told him dryly: 'None of the prisoners is to see friends, the reasons are such as even Lord Henry in his cooler moments would approve, that it was true that Mrs. Emmett had got in to her husband but that was by error and such a case would not occur again. Lord Edward was going on very well, the wound healing tolerably, though the balls were not yet out, but as for Ryan, the man whom he had stabbed, his life was despaired of.'

'Even if Ryan dies,' said Lord Henry, 'I suppose it will only be a trial for manslaughter?'

'I think, whether he dies or not,' replied the Lord Chancellor, 'it will be a trial for high treason. I am sorry, Lord Henry. I did what I could for your brother, but he is one of those who rush to their fate. Now it is no longer in my hands.'

Lord Henry met the same response from Castlereagh, who, mild and courteous, as if feeling really concerned, yet declared that it was not in his power to show the least indulgence to Lord Edward Fitzgerald. He said he must lie in prison till he stood his trial, but he

advised the Fitzgeralds to use all possible influence at the English court, to have in readiness an instant pardon from the King. 'To avoid,' added his Lordship smoothly, 'the very worst occurring.'

Stung almost to a frenzy of agony, Henry waited on Lord Campden, only obtaining an audience after several vexatious delays and difficulties.

Lord Campden was a humane, good-natured man, who always voted for tolerance and mercy, and endeavoured to employ soft measures, but he was completely overruled by others. He allowed his policy to be dictated to him by Clare and Castlereagh; he bowed to what he considered 'emergencies of the moment,' and he let much of which he strongly disapproved be done in his name.

It was therefore with a good deal of embarrassment and almost distress that he received Lord Henry, who, with that kind of warm, generous violence that was characteristic of the Fitzgeralds, threw himself at once into the subject.

'My Lord, I have no time to waste. I speak tormented with the thought of a brother ill, perhaps dying, in prison—in a felon's prison.'

'My Lord,' began Campden, nervously wiping his lips with his handkerchief, 'I am deeply compassionate for your unfortunate situation.'

'I am not the only one,' interrupted Lord Henry. 'I think of my mother, my uncles, my sisters, that unhappy lady, Edward's wife, cast out of the country with her young family, for Leinster, so humiliated by the way his appeals have been ignored. Sir, I have so many wrongs and miseries filling my heart that I scarce know where to begin my appeal!'

'You are aware, sir,' replied Campden, with increasing embarrassment, 'that you speak to a man who can do little or nothing?'

'I speak to the Viceroy of Ireland, sir, the representative of the King of England, and, after all, I do not come to ask much, merely permission to visit my brother, to stay with him while he is ill, in danger, perhaps, of his life.'

'I cannot give it to you,' said Campden, with the irritation of a weak man pushed to extremities. 'I have promised I will be firm. The country is in an appalling state. Even with military law, we can scarcely keep the people down.'

'You do not need to tell me that,' replied Henry Fitzgerald. 'Even Moore and Abercrombie sicken at the work they do. But I must not speak of that, no, nor think of it. I only ask to be allowed to see my brother in Newgate—his wife was denied that privilege, sir. She had to leave the country without speaking to him again, and I believe for weeks they have not met, and then only in secret, and she with her child just born—'

'Indeed, Lord Henry, you need not seek to emphasise to me the horrors and miseries of this case. But your brother has been imprudent—seduced and then betrayed by bad friends.'

'Let us leave that out of it, sir,' cried Lord Henry hotly, 'or I may say that which will throw me in Newgate too. I am an Irishman.'

'I remember that,' replied Campden, 'and make allowances for much. Do you think that this is pleasant for me?'

'I fear, my Lord, I do not care whether it is pleasant for you or not. You have the power; with a word, you could grant me my request.'

'You exaggerate, sir, I have not the power. Indeed,' said Campden, 'I am sorry that I saw your Lordship, for this can be merely distressing to us both. You should apply to the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Castlereagh, they have this matter in hand.'

'Sir, I have applied to them and been refused. I now apply to you. I have not begged for anything before ever in my life, nor, ever asked a favour. But here I do beg and do ask a favour. Sir, my brother has not even a room to himself. Soldiers stay with him, night and day. He lacks everything, even fruit—and there was a piece of cruelty which I can scarce bear to mention. They hanged a man, one Clinch, in front of his window. He heard the noise and asked what it was. Mr. Stone, who was put with him, told me.' Lord Henry turned aside abruptly and a spasm passed over the amiable face of Lord Campden.

'That was wrong, it should not have been; it must not happen again,' he muttered in considerable agitation. 'Aye, my Lord, so you

say now—too late! So Castlereagh said, but it happened! He was allowed to hear, too, that Ryan, the poor man he wounded, had died. That affected him. I believe he has been out of his mind. He is never alone. He has no news of his wife, his family. He does not see one friendly face. Sir, he is in the grated room at Newgate.'

Campden did not answer. He nervously tapped on the tortoiseshell table in front of him and bit his lip.

'You did not know my brother, sir,' continued Lord Henry, turning towards the Viceroy, tears in his eyes, and looking, in a way that was very moving to the Viceroy, so much like the man for whom he pleaded. 'He is no common being, so brave, and so reckless, so unsuspicious, aye, if he had not been, he had not been in Newgate now. He certainly was betrayed, most foully betrayed. I say he is no common being, tender as a woman, most compassionate, most amiable, most sensitive.'

'Such a man as that,' muttered Campden, 'should not have undertaken what your brother did.'

'That was part of his character, sir, to feel for the oppressed, to stake his all on what he at least thought was a high cause. Think, sir, he had a beautiful wife, and loving children and every means of promotion and advancement in the English Government, and he was a man who valued all these things—who loved life and was cheerful—and he threw it aside—'

Campden shook his head. 'I can't help you. I can't do anything.'

'Oh, my Lord, how could you bring yourself to say those words?' cried Lord Henry, flushing with the deepest scorn. 'With a word you can do it! What are you afraid of? I tell you the Prince and Duke of York are both my friends, they have wished me well—'

'But the Princes are not in Ireland,' cried Campden distractedly. 'I would to God I were not! Was there ever any man sent in my place who has not wished himself out of it? They say they're sending Cornwallis. I would he were here. Don't you see, sir, I can't give any concessions to any one?'

'I'm not to see my brother?' asked Lord Henry through pale, strained lips; 'after I've come here, humiliated myself, begged as I've

never begged before, as I told you? I'll do what you wish, I'll promise anything. I'll undertake to remain in Newgate till he's brought to trial, to sleep in his cell—anything, if that will satisfy you.'

Campden rose. He was trembling, his agitation was as great as that of the man who importuned him with these desperate entreaties.

'I can't do it, my Lord. All I can say is that if your brother is dying, if the surgeon says his hours are really numbered, then perhaps you may go to him.'

Lord Henry stood for a moment motionless, fighting for control. In a voice made expressionless by his effort to keep it steady, he said at length: 'My brother made his will the other day. He was not allowed to see his lawyer, a young man whom he liked and trusted. The paper had to go in and out of the prison by the hands of the doctor, and yet a stranger, this poor man Murphy's landlord, was allowed to go in and look at Edward out of curiosity. This man, sir, went to visit his tenant in prison, on a question of the lease, and got quite easily the papers signed by Lord Clare allowing him to go in and look at my brother. He found him with two ill-looking fellows of Beresford's regiment, with drawn swords standing by his bed.'

'Sir, there is no need to go into this,' sighed Lord Campden, again wiping his lips. 'I know nothing of it. You must ask Lord Clare.'

'Listen, sir, to what I have to tell you. He saw my poor brother lying there. He spoke to him, and Edward said: "Have you been in to Murphy? How is poor Murphy's face?" His voice was very weak, but his wits must have been collected, for he remembered the blow he had seen Murphy given by Swann's pistol.'

'Lord Henry,' cried Campden, with sudden firmness, 'you torture yourself for nothing. It is useless to run all over this. I cannot give you permission to see your brother.'

He rang the bell that stood on his desk, and summoned his secretary.

Lord Henry, fearful that he might be provoked to violence, with an almost mechanical effort, made a brief salutation and left the Castle.

CHAPTER 19

'So this is where the beckoning dream has led, behind prison bars—and now, nothing left but to die. How long will that take? I had thought that Henry would have got to me. Why did Sirr's bullet go wide? Oh, God, could it not have ended then? What will they do to the people? Oh, God, pity Ireland. I heard them hanging Clinch. It ought to have been myself. Tony—the slave. I could not help him after all. I could help no one. And Pamela. I broke my promise to Pamela.'

Lord Edward lay and stared at the grated window. Between the bars the light showed white and bleak. It fell on the swords of the soldiers as they lay ready to hand across the dirty table, and on the soldiers themselves, lounging on their stools, on the dark walls of the prison, on the face of the young man lying on the rough bed, facing failure, ruin, death.

The bullets were still in his arm, which burnt and stung as he moved. The wound at the back of his neck caused him such pain that he could not rest his head on the pillows but had to turn it uneasily from side to side. Fever bewildered him. He tried to focus the grated window, those lines of white light, those bars of black iron, as a hold on reality. He tried to pray, to snatch at thoughts of peace...'Our Father Who are in Heaven—' Heaven...the blue, warm, sweet dusk of a terrace, flowers hanging heavy with scent, a fair child with sunny fruit in her arms...'Mother, who was she? You must know—Louise!' A lady's bedroom with Chinese wall-paper—'Put those things away, Tony, a woman's garments. I shall move to-morrow. She poisoned herself by soaking brass curtain rings in vinegar. Louise dead—dead? With whom did I ride to Tournai, cold and dark, enclosed in the chill carriage? Don't think of it, don't think of it. General Hoche, you are right, I am not the man for this task. Wolfe Tone, now, there's a brave fellow with a young family, too, as I hear. I suppose you'd hardly believe your eyes if you saw the green flag over the Castle—'

He sprang from the bed and grasped at a chair with his wounded arm. The effort sent the blood and pus starting through the bandages. He wore the shirt and pantaloons in which he had been arrested; round his neck swung a gold locket. The soldiers leaped up.

'Get me the uniform, Murphy, that's not a thing to hide away. The

flag ought to be ready too. I never finished the fort, and set the flag atop.'

He tried to snatch at one of the swords on the table. The soldiers seized him.

'He's shouting treason! He ought to be put in irons like other rascals.'

He flung them off with a strength that frightened them. 'Come on, damn you! I'm ready!' He plunged towards the door. 'I want to go out. I can't stay in this place. D'ye hear? Where is my brother Henry?' As they grappled with him he sank in their arms, half fainting with agony as they touched his inflamed wound. 'I'm sorry to trouble you, gentlemen. I would be easy if I might see Henry.'

They put him on the bed, where he lay face downwards shuddering, and one went for the surgeon, grumbling, 'There's too much consideration shown; he ought to be in chains. He'd soon be quiet if he was tied up.'

Lord Edward sank into a darkness that was soon peopled with monstrous shapes. A tortured Negro, a scourged Irishman, a croppie in a pitch cap, a murdered girl with a mole by her lip, Lazare Hoche, gigantic, scornful, scarred from brow to chin, crying: 'You are not the man for this work!' He turned about, shouting. The prison was full of strange faces. He heard the English drums beating for an advance. With a shout he leaped at them all, the blood staining his bandages and trousers.

That night they had a keeper from the madhouse to hold him down, and people gathered under the prison windows to listen to his cries.

CHAPTER 20

Lord Henry sat forlorn in Leinster House, haggard from sleeplessness, turning over with nervous fingers some papers on the desk before him. The first was a copy of his brother's will, made by Mr. Leeson, his lawyer, who had sat in his carriage at the door of the prison whilst the document was conveyed to him from the prisoner.

'I, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, do make this as my last will and testament, hereby revoking all others: that is to say, I leave all estates, of whatever sort, I may die possessed of, to my wife, Lady Pamela Fitzgerald, as a mark of my esteem, love, and confidence in her...

Near this paper lay Lord Henry's own memoranda:

'Has he got fruit? Does he want linen? How will the death of Ryan affect him? What informers are supposed to be against him?

'Upon his pain subsiding, the hearing of Ryan's death (which he must have heard) caused a dreadful turn in his mind. Affected strongly on the 2nd of June—began to be ill about 3—Clinch executed before the prison. He must have known it—asked what the noise was.

'Mr. Stone, the officer attending him, removed the 2nd of June, could not learn who was next put about him.

'2nd of June, in the evening a keeper from a madhouse put with him.

'3rd of June, wrote the Chancellor a pressing letter to see E.'

The answer to this letter also lay under Lord Henry's hand. It was a refusal, and contained only this ghastly consolation:

'Mr. Stewart, the surgeon, has just now left me, and, from his account of Lord Edward, he is in a situation which threatens his life. Perhaps if he should get into such a state as will justify it, your request may be complied with.'

Lord Henry flung aside Lord Clare's letter to read yet again a missive that had been sent him that morning from Newgate:

'My Lord, having in happier days had some success and much satisfaction in being concerned for you and Mr. Grattan in the city election, I take the liberty of writing to inform you that your brother, Lord Edward, is most dangerously ill—in fact dying—he was delirious some time last night. Surely, my Lord, some attention ought to be paid him. I knowyou'll pardon this application.

'I am, yours, 'With respect and regard, MATT. DOWLING.

'I am a prisoner a fewdays—on what charge I knownot. Seeing you or any friend he has confidence in, would, I think, be more conducive to his recovery than fifty surgeons. I sawhim a few moments last night, but he did not knowme. We'll watch as well as in our power.'

CHAPTER 21

Lord Edward had fallen from his delirium to exhaustion. He made no complaint and stated no wishes, and did not ask even to be allowed to see his relatives.

On Friday a great lowness came over him and all believed him dying. He lay still on his pillows with his face turned to the wall, his bandaged arm stretched stiffly over the coverlet.

He tried to keep his mind collected and to distinguish dream from reality, but was unable to do this, and presently started up and asked 'where poor Tony was?' and was sure they were taking him out to beat him or place on his brow the pitchcap. Then he lay quiet again, and wondered if Louise and Pamela were really the same person, then asked again about the noise outside the prison, and if 'they were hanging another prisoner?'

'I'm in Newgate. I've got to die in Newgate. Why, there's nothing in that. Better men have died in worse places.'

He turned round in the bed, quieter for the moment and wondered what the yellow light was. 'Evening, I suppose, and a lamp lit—why, who is this?' He stared at a weeping woman's face. Her lips twitched, she tried to be calm, but her tears ran down her cheeks steadily. He frowned, puzzled. He thought she held a mirror and that in that he saw his own reflection, distorted, grey and terrible. But this reflection spoke.

'Neddy—it is Henry—and this Lady Louise. We are at last allowed to visit you.'

Lord Edward smiled. Lady Louise bent over him. He kissed her wet cheek and whispered:

It is heaven to me to see you.' Then turning about, he said, 'But I can't see you.' It seemed to him that the lamp had gone out.

Lady Louise whispered: 'Henry has come.'

'Where is he, dear fellow?'

Henry fell upon his knees beside the bed and the two brothers embraced. The soldiers had left the room. The three were alone. Edward leant his head on Henry's shoulder and whispered: 'This is very pleasant.'

He remained silent and they wondered if his senses were clouded, or if he knew what was going on about him; Lady Louise said timidly: 'Lady Edward is safe. Pamela is safe. I saw her on board for Holyhead. Richmond is looking after her.'

'Yes,' said Henry. 'I met her on the road. She was well.'

Edward's dark lashes lifted a little. He murmured:

'And the children too? She is a charming woman.'

He raised himself from his brother's shoulder and added, with an air of formal civility, as if he spoke to strangers: 'Lady Edward Fitzgerald is a charming woman.'

'He does not,' whispered Lady Louise to her nephew, 'realise his situation.'

Lord Henry did not answer. He was absorbed in gazing at his brother and marking, as if he would impress it for ever on his heart, the expression of pleasure with which those worn features turned towards him. The surgeon, Mr.

Garnet, who had lately been attending the prisoner, appeared in the door. Lady Louise motioned him away, but he came forward and whispered that they were to be allowed no longer, but might return in the morning.

'It will be too late in the morning, surely,' sobbed Lady Louise, withdrawing from the bed. The surgeon did not answer and a couple of soldiers showed in the entrance. Lord Henry did not move, but continued kneeling by the bed, holding his brother's limp hand. He was composed, and there was an uncommon force and earnestness in his expression. Never, thought Lady Louise, had the likeness between the two brothers been so marked. In one heartrending emotion, in the other the approach of death had overshadowed their handsome faces.

The officer at the door made an urgent sign that they must now go.

'Edward, I will wish you good-night,' whispered Lady Louise, keeping calm, she knew not by what effort of love; 'we will return in the morning,' she added, bending over the dying man. 'You seem inclined for sleep.'

'Do, do,' smiled Lord Edward. 'Yes, I'll sleep.'

Mr. Garnet then entered the room. Lord Edward suddenly sat up in bed, exclaiming:

'I knew it must come to this, and we must all go,' and then he began to ramble a little about the Irish Militia and numbers—of men and money.

Lady Louise said: 'It agitates you to talk upon these subjects.'

Mr. Garnet touched Lord Henry on the arm.

'My Lord, I'm asked to send you away. It is nearly midnight. Indeed, you may come away—he understands nothing.'

With a look of incredulous horror Lord Henry rose. 'Is this the extent of your charity? A few moments. Do you think that I'll leave him now? Ill, perhaps dying—'

'Surely dying, my Lord—'

'What a gross gratuitous cruelty then to bid me leave him! His bitterest enemy could not murmur did you swerve from your duty now!'

'Alas, sir, it does not rest with me.'

The two men had withdrawn against the wall and spoke in agitated whispers. Lord Henry had to lean against the doorposts to support himself.

'Oh, God! What am I to do? He had the tenderness of a woman to all whom he loved, and is he to die abandoned among strangers in a prison?'

The surgeon did not answer, and the soldiers, on a sign from the

officer who approached, took Lord Henry by the shoulders and put him out of the room, while he, stupefied with misery, exclaimed:

'You have murdered my brother amongst you as surely as if you had put a pistol to his head!'

Edward did not know that Henry had been forced away, he put out his hand into the darkness, for he could no longer perceive the lamplight, and whispered: 'Henry, do you like the uniform? With the rose-colour facings! Don't you think the fort will look very fine when I have the green flag atop? I must be quick, finishing it—there's not much more time—it becomes so dark, Henry. I never liked to stay here in the dark. Why, I can't see you. But the flag is very bright. Henry —'

CHAPTER 22

'Newgate Prison, 6 o'clock, June the Third, 1798.

'Mr. Garnet presents his most respectful compliments to Lady Louise Connolly and begs leave to communicate to her the melancholy intelligence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's death. He drew his last breath at two o'clock this morning after a struggle which began soon after his friends left him last night.'

PART EIGHT

CHAPTER 1

The lady declared that she did not greatly care for the lodgings in the rue Richepanse. The rooms were gloomy, and over a third-rate restaurant, but she was tired, she could search no further; the apartments would do for the present. It was a few months after the revolution of July, 1830, and Paris was still in something of a turmoil.

'My business is important,' said she, noting perhaps that the pretty young landlady looked at her dubiously. 'I dare say I shall soon be lodging at the Tulieries; yes, indeed, I am well known to His Majesty, and was, in a manner, brought up with him!'

'Indeed, Madame? Of course His Majesty was long in exile, and made some strange acquaintances, and now he has come to the throne, Paris is full of poor creatures importuning him with petitions.'

The landlady spoke without much civility and the stranger retaliated, by saying, with an air of dignity:

'I am not one of them! Louis Philippe, when M. de Chartres, was one of the witnesses at my marriage in Tournai in 1792'—she paused, impressed by the strangeness of her own words—'how odd that sounds!'

'Indeed, Madame, it is a long while ago, before I was born! And what of the price for the rooms? Fifty francs a week would be very little! It is a handsome chamber! You are American, you said?'

'No, no, I am French—'

'Your maid said that your name was Pitcairn and that you were married to the American consul at Hamburg.'

'Did she?' replied the other vaguely. 'Oh, well, I call myself Madame Sims, and as for the room, I don't like it. And fifty francs is very dear.'

She leant in the window-place and looked round with an air of apprehension as if she expected to discover something unpleasant, even horrible. She was frail, graceful, rather fantastically dressed in a fashion at once ornate and shabby, and was over fifty years old (the

landlady gave her sixty). Extreme ill-health and, it seemed, sorrow, had ravaged features that might have been lovely once.

'No, I don't like the room,' she repeated. 'See, that cheap cotton damask is peeling off the wall, and that nasty green Chinese paper beneath is blotted with damp—'

'It is a very handsome house and used to belong to a noble family before '89—this was a lady's bedroom. Madame has seen the *cabinet de toilette*? All marble! One doesn't get luxuries like that nowadays—and the great presses in the wall! I found some lady's garments in one of them. Fine as a cobweb, but, unfortunately quite rotted away. Madame is lucky to find such a room.'

Madame Sims, with an air of great fatigue, sank into the sagging chair by the hearth and asked for a fire to be lit; it was a dark autumn day and the stale air in the room was chilly.

'It is a long time since this was a private mansion,' she remarked.

'About forty years. It used to be a hôtel—quite fashionable. A number of Irish used to come here—then, when the Bourbons were restored, it failed, like White's. But I keep the restaurant open. Madame will dine there tonight? Or up here?'

'No, no, downstairs—I like company. Could I have a little tea now? My maid will make it. Irish, you say?'

'Yes, all the rebels, you know. There is one comes here now, quite often. Is not that curious? Of course, he is an old man now, and rich, but he doesn't seem able to keep away.'

'The Irish rebels? I thought that they were all dead.

I was in Ireland once myself. Would you send up the fire and the tea?'

CHAPTER 2

The landlady slaked her curiosity by questioning the maid of Madame Sims, a gross German, who seemed to bear little affection to her mistress, and who, in her uneasy French, was willing enough to gossip.

'I really don't know who she is—she tells so many odd stories! A little odd, eh?' The German tapped her forehead mysteriously. 'She was married to M. Pitcairn as I told you, but separated from him long ago—she has had children, but they're scattered. She boasts about her grand connections, but she has never any money. I mean, not enough. She says that the French King will pension her. I'm just staying on to see. If it is all lies, I shall leave. I'm tired of dragging from place to place—'

'She looks a bit shabby! Ill, too, isn't she?'

The German nodded mysteriously.

'I don't think she'll last for more than another month or so, but it's worth your while to keep her for a bit—just to see if she does get any money.'

CHAPTER 3

As Madame Sims entered the restaurant she noticed a faded little water-colour hanging on the wall, and asked the landlady, standing behind her tureen and soup plates at a side table, what it was?

'I don't know, Madame. A waxwork or a girl asleep, I suppose. It was here when I took the house.'

'I think she is dead,' said Madame Sims. 'How fortunate she is! Young and dead, you know. So many of us don't know when to die. We go on living when it is a disgrace to do so.'

The landlady stared at her doubtfully. Madame Sims was plainly fidgety, unbalanced, and most oddly dressed in black lace and white taffeta finery that wanted mending and cleaning and made a mockery of her ruined grace, which had become exaggerated into a mincing affectation.

'A mole by the lip!' she added, peering into the drawing. 'I remember when I used to wear one! I never knew why.'

She glided to her table with a grand air that made the landlady and the maid helping her with the soup giggle.

'She looks like a death's head—with those ribbons in her hair too!'

Madame Sims had asked to be set near the Irishman who usually dined in the rue Richepanse. 'I haven't spoken to an Irishman for years and years. I shall be pleased to make this gentleman's acquaintance.'

But that evening he was late, or not coming at all. There were very few people in the restaurant and the table by Madame Sims remained empty. But she chattered gaily to the maid who waited on her, and, when she could get the attention of that personage, the landlady, about her splendid prospects in Paris; about her friendship with the King of the French, her early days with him at Belle Chase and the Palais Royal. Much amused, her two listeners winked at one another.

Madame Sims fell suddenly silent when a newcomer shuffled in and took his place at the table next her. She asked, in a curious whisper, if that was the Irishman? And on the maid replying that it was, she studied him curiously.

He was a tall, stout, robust man of sixty or so, with a broad hard face, small bold eyes, a bitter mouth, a coarse chin. Very handsomely dressed. He ate voraciously and grumbled about his food. When he had satisfied his first hunger he stared curiously at his companion, who regarded him with a smiling coquetry.

'Monsieur is Irish?' she asked, catching his eye. 'No, no, English, ma'am, English,' he replied in that language. 'I was in the government service, ma'am, till that damned fellow Canning got into power.'

He was quite eager to talk about himself. The lady proved a sympathetic listener. Over his wine he became quite confidential. He did not often find any one who spoke English in this wretched place.

'Why do you come here, sir?'

'I don't know! I stayed here as a young man. One feels drawn. It's odd—'

'Very odd,' said Madame Sims. Her eyes were turned on a ring that he wore on his little finger, a cornelian which she knew, though she could not see this, was engraved with a figure of a dancing satyr. 'I suppose in those days you were a rebel, sir.'

'No, Madame. I flatter myself I have always been a patriot. I acted for the British Government even then.'

'My God!' cried the lady, staring at him. 'Doesn't it seem long ago? A lifetime!'

'Yes, but I can remember it very well—'

'Why, so can I. I was in Ireland in '98.'

'Were you indeed, Madame?'

'Yes. I suppose you were concerned in the rebellion?'

'In putting it down, yes. I served Lord Castlereagh pretty well, and

he was not unmindful. But this rascal Canning—'

'How unfortunate they were, these rebels! Do you recall the bloody ends they came to? Mr. Bond and—another leader died in prison, Mr. Byrne was hanged, so were the Sheares brothers, holding hands, hanged together! And Robert Emmett—they say that the dogs lapped his blood in the public place—'

'You seem very well informed, Madame!'

'And Wolfe Tone! How audacious he was with his attempts to land a French fleet! He cut his throat to escape the hangman, did he not?'

'You've a good memory, Madame. Well, the rebellion was put down. And Pitt got the Union, and I suppose Ireland is quiet for a while, and I am proud to say that I had a hand in it. But look ye, Madame, I might have expected something better than a consulship in Iceland!'

Madame Sims leant from her table and said:

'That is a pretty ring you are wearing! A lady's ring, is it not?'

'Why, yes. I wear it as a sort of souvenir. She was a charming little creature who gave it to me! And, let me whisper, of royal birth!'

Madame Sims laughed convulsively and rose.

'I haven't made a noble thing of my life either, Mr. Reynolds,' she said. 'Thirty years of stupid waste—how the futilities of every day can degrade one!'

He got awkwardly to his feet.

'You know me!'

'Ah, yes. I recognised you at once.' She shook the crumbs from her taffeta frills. As she left the table she said: 'Remember that Castlereagh also cut his throat.'

Thomas Reynolds winced. He dropped his glance from that haggard face and without asking who she was, turned away. Nor did he ever return to the restaurant in the rue Richepanse.

Madame Sims went upstairs to the high chamber where the cheap red damask peeled away from the faded green Chinese wall-paper, and sat huddled over the fire that burned to one corner of the marble hearth; but she knew that it was impossible for her to warm herself, for the chill of death was already in her blood.

A few months ago she had heard (for she still had a scattered correspondence with Ireland) that the leaden coffin which wrapped Lord Edward had perished, and the curious visitor to St. Werburgh's vaults beneath the chancel might see his woollen shroud.

'And I went on living—even now am here in this city to beg for a pension. Why, it is very ridiculous. Now that I am old—O God, old!—I'm no nearer the meaning of any of it. Thomas Reynolds is rich and not remorseful. And they are all dead. Why? O why? What was the use of any of it?'

She rocked herself to and fro before the fire that gave out little heat for her. 'There is only this, perhaps some day they'll be remembered in Ireland.'

She hung her head down low.

'O God, am I the Pamela who was so happy in the little house in Kildare!'

THE END