

The background of the cover is a painting of a naval battle. Several large sailing ships with multiple masts and sails are visible on the sea. The ships are depicted in a style that suggests a historical or classical painting. The colors are somewhat muted, with a lot of browns, greys, and muted blues. The ships are positioned in a way that suggests they are engaged in a battle or a chase. The overall tone of the painting is dramatic and historical.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

*Fantastica* World Classics

**THE ADVENTURES OF  
RODERICK RANDOM**



TOBIAS SMOLLETT

# THE ADVENTURES OF RODERICK RANDOM



NEW EDITION



*Fantastica*



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New Edition, Children's Classics

Published by Fantastica  
fantastica@mediaworld.uk  
www.imediaworld.uk

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ISBN: 9781911495987

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## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Of all kinds of satire, there is none so entertaining and universally improving, as that which is introduced, as it were occasionally, in the course of an interesting story, which brings every incident home to life, and by representing familiar scenes in an uncommon and amusing point of view, invests them with all the graces of novelty, while nature is appealed to in every particular. The reader gratifies his curiosity in pursuing the adventures of a person in whose favour he is prepossessed; he espouses his cause, he sympathises with him in his distress, his indignation is heated against the authors of his calamity: the humane passions are inflamed; the contrast between dejected virtue and insulting vice appears with greater aggravation, and every impression having a double force on the imagination, the memory retains the circumstance, and the heart improves by the example. The attention is not tired with a bare catalogue of characters, but agreeably diverted with all the variety of invention; and the vicissitudes of life appear in their peculiar circumstances, opening an ample field for wit and humour.

Romance, no doubt, owes its origin to ignorance, vanity, and superstition. In the dark ages of the World, when a man had rendered himself famous for wisdom or valour, his family and adherents availed themselves of his superior qualities, magnified his virtues, and represented his character and person as sacred and supernatural. The vulgar easily swallowed the bait, implored his protection, and yielded the tribute of homage and praise, even to adoration; his exploits were handed down to posterity with a thousand exaggerations; they were repeated as incitements to virtue; divine honours were paid, and altars erected to his memory, for the encouragement of those who attempted to imitate his example; and hence arose the heathen mythology, which is no other than a collection of extravagant romances. As learning advanced, and genius received cultivation, these stories were embellished with the graces of poetry, that they might

the better recommend themselves to the attention; they were sung in public, at festivals, for the instruction and delight of the audience; and rehearsed before battle, as incentives to deeds of glory. Thus tragedy and the epic muse were born, and, in the progress of taste, arrived at perfection. It is no wonder that the ancients could not relish a fable in prose, after they had seen so many remarkable events celebrated in verse by their best poets; we therefore find no romance among them during the era of their excellence, unless the *Cyropaedia* of Xenophon may be so called; and it was not till arts and sciences began to revive after the irruption of the barbarians into Europe, that anything of this kind appeared. But when the minds of men were debauched by the imposition of priestcraft to the most absurd pitch of credulity, the authors of romance arose, and losing sight of probability, filled their performances with the most monstrous hyperboles. If they could not equal the ancient poets in point of genius they were resolved to excel them in fiction, and apply to the wonder, rather than the judgment, of their readers. Accordingly, they brought necromancy to their aid, and instead of supporting the character of their heroes by dignity of sentiment and practice, distinguished them by their bodily strength, activity, and extravagance of behaviour. Although nothing could be more ludicrous and unnatural than the figures they drew, they did not want patrons and admirers; and the world actually began to be infected with the spirit of knight-errantry, when Cervantes, by an inimitable piece of ridicule, reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view, and converting romance to purposes far more useful and entertaining, by making it assume the sock, and point out the follies of ordinary life.

The same method has been practised by other Spanish and French authors, and by none more successfully than by Monsieur Le Sage, who, in his *Adventures of Gil Blas*, has described the knavery and foibles of life, with infinite humour and sagacity. The following sheets I have modelled on his plan, taking me liberty, however, to differ from him in the execution, where I thought his particular situations were uncommon, extravagant, or peculiar to the country in which the scene is laid. The disgraces of *Gil Blas* are, for the most part, such as rather excite mirth than compassion; he himself laughs at them; and his transitions from distress to happiness, or at least ease, are so sudden, that



neither the reader has time to pity him, nor himself to be acquainted with affliction. This conduct, in my opinion, not only deviates from probability, but prevents that generous indignation, which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world. I have attempted to represent modest merit struggling with every difficulty to which a friendless orphan is exposed, from his own want of experience, as well as from the selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind. To secure a favourable prepossession, I have allowed him the advantages of birth and education, which in the series of his misfortunes will, I hope, engage the ingenuous more warmly in his behalf; and though I foresee, that some people will be offended at the mean scenes in which he is involved, I persuade myself that the judicious will not only perceive the necessity of describing those situations to which he must of course be confined, in his low estate, but also find entertainment in viewing those parts of life, where the humours and passions are undisguised by affectation, ceremony, or education; and the whimsical peculiarities of disposition appear as nature has implanted them. But I believe I need not trouble myself in vindicating a practice authorized by the best writers in this way, some of whom I have already named.

Every intelligent reader will, at first sight, perceive I have not deviated from nature in the facts, which are all true in the main, although the circumstances are altered and disguised, to avoid personal satire.

It now remains to give my reasons for making the chief personage of this work a North Briton, which are chiefly these: I could, at a small expense, bestow on him such education as I thought the dignity of his birth and character required, which could not possibly be obtained in England, by such slender means as the nature of my plan would afford. In the next place, I could represent simplicity of manners in a remote part of the kingdom, with more propriety than in any place near the capital; and lastly, the disposition of the Scots, addicted to travelling, justifies my conduct in deriving an adventurer from that country. That the delicate reader may not be offended at the unmeaning oaths which proceed from the mouths of some persons in these memoirs, I beg leave to promise, that I imagined nothing could more effectually expose the absurdity of such

miserable expletives, than a natural and verbal representation of the discourse in which they occur.

## APOLOGUE

A young painter, indulging a vein of pleasantry, sketched a kind of conversation piece, representing a bear, an owl, a monkey, and an ass; and to render it more striking, humorous, and moral, distinguished every figure by some emblem of human life. Bruin was exhibited in the garb and attitude of an old, toothless, drunken soldier; the owl perched upon the handle of a coffee-pot, with spectacle on nose, seemed to contemplate a newspaper; and the ass, ornamented with a huge tie-wig (which, however, could not conceal his long ears), sat for his picture to the monkey, who appeared with the implements of painting. This whimsical group afforded some mirth, and met with general approbation, until some mischievous wag hinted that the whole—was a lampoon upon the friends of the performer; an insinuation which was no sooner circulated than those very people who applauded it before began to be alarmed, and even to fancy themselves signified by the several figures of the piece.

Among others, a worthy personage in years, who had served in the army with reputation, being incensed at the Supposed outrage, repaired to the lodging of the painter, and finding him at home, "Hark ye, Mr. Monkey," said he, "I have a good mind to convince you, that though the bear has lost his teeth, he retains his paws, and that he is not so drunk but he can perceive your impertinence." "Sblood! sir, that toothless jaw is a d—ned scandalous libel—but don't you imagine me so chopfallen as not to be able to chew the cud of resentment." Here he was interrupted by the arrival of a learned physician, who, advancing to the culprit with fury in his aspect, exclaimed, "Suppose the augmentation of the ass's ears should prove the diminution of the baboon's—nay, seek not to prevaricate, for, by the beard of Aesculapius! there is not one hair in this periwig that will not stand up in judgment to convict thee of personal abuse. Do but observe, captain, how this pitiful little fellow has copied the very curls—the colour, indeed, is different, but then the form

and foretop are quite similar.” While he thus remonstrated in a strain of vociferation, a venerable senator entered, and waddling up to the delinquent, “Jackanapes!” cried he, “I will now let thee see I can read something else than a newspaper, and that without the help of spectacles: here is your own note of hand, sirrah, for money, which if I had not advanced, you yourself would have resembled an owl, in not daring to show your face by day, you ungrateful slanderous knave!”

In vain the astonished painter declared that he had no intention to give offence, or to characterise particular persons: they affirmed the resemblance was too palpable to be overlooked; they taxed him with insolence, malice, and ingratitude; and their clamours being overheard by the public, the captain was a bear, the doctor an ass, and the senator an owl, to his dying day.

Christian reader, I beseech thee, in the bowels of the Lord, remember this example “while thou art employed in the perusal of the following sheets; and seek not to appropriate to thyself that which equally belongs to five hundred different people. If thou shouldst meet with a character that reflects thee in some ungracious particular, keep thy own counsel; consider that one feature makes not a face, and that though thou art, perhaps, distinguished by a bottle nose, twenty of thy neighbours may be in the same predicament.”

## CHAPTER I

### Of my Birth and Education

I was born in the northern part of this united kingdom, in the house of my grandfather, a gentleman of considerable fortune and influence, who had on many occasions signalised himself in behalf of his country; and was remarkable for his abilities in the law, which he exercised with great success in the station of a judge, particularly against beggars, for whom he had a singular aversion.

My father (his youngest son) falling in love with a poor relation, who lived with the old gentleman in quality of a housekeeper, espoused her privately; and I was the first fruit of that marriage. During her pregnancy, a dream discomposed my mother so much that her husband, tired with her importunity, at last consulted a highland seer, whose favourable interpretation he would have secured beforehand by a bribe, but found him incorruptible. She dreamed she was delivered of a tennis-ball, which the devil (who, to her great surprise, acted the part of a midwife) struck so forcibly with a racket that it disappeared in an instant; and she was for some time inconsolable for the lost of her offspring; when, all on a sudden, she beheld it return with equal violence, and enter the earth, beneath her feet, whence immediately sprang up a goodly tree covered with blossoms, the scent of which operated so strongly on her nerves that she awoke. The attentive sage, after some deliberation, assured my parents, that their firstborn would be a great traveller; that he would undergo many dangers and difficulties, and at last return to his native land, where he would flourish in happiness and reputation. How truly this was foretold will appear in the sequel. It was not long before some officious person informed my grandfather of certain familiarities that passed between his son and housekeeper which alarmed him so much that, a few days after, he told my father it was high time for him to think of settling; and that he had provided a match for him, to which he could in justice have no

objections. My father, finding it would be impossible to conceal his situation much longer, frankly owned what he had done; and excused himself for not having asked the consent of his father, by saying, he knew it would have been to no Purpose; and that, had his inclination been known, my grandfather might have taken such measures as would have effectually put the gratification of it out of his power: he added, that no exceptions could be taken to his wife's virtue, birth, beauty, and good sense, and as for fortune, it was beneath his care. The old gentleman, who kept all his passions, except one, in excellent order, heard him to an end with great temper, and then calmly asked, how he proposed to maintain himself and spouse? He replied, he could be in no danger of wanting while his father's tenderness remained, which he and his wife should always cultivate with the utmost veneration; and he was persuaded his allowance would be suitable to the dignity and circumstances of his family, and to the provision already made for his brothers and sisters, who were happily settled under his protection. "Your brothers and sisters," said my grandfather, "did not think it beneath them to consult me in an affair of such importance as matrimony; neither, I suppose, would you have omitted that piece of duty, had you not some secret fund in reserve; to the comforts of which I leave you, with a desire that you will this night seek out another habitation for yourself and wife, whither, in a short time, I will send you an account of the expense I have been at in your education, with a view of being reimbursed. Sir, you have made the grand tour—you are a polite gentleman—a very pretty gentleman—I wish you a great deal of joy, and am your very humble servant."

So saying, he left my father in a situation easily imagined. However, he did not long hesitate; for, being perfectly well acquainted with his father's disposition, he did not doubt that he was glad of this pretence to get rid of him; and his resolves being as invariable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, he knew it would be to no purpose to attempt him by prayers and entreaties; so without any farther application, he betook himself, with his disconsolate bedfellow to a farm-house, where an old servant of his mother dwelt: there they remained some time in a situation but ill adapted to the elegance of their desires and tenderness of their love; which nevertheless my father chose to endure, rather than supplicate an unnatural and inflexible parent

but my mother, foreseeing the inconveniences to which she must have been exposed, had she been delivered in this place (and her pregnancy was very far advanced), without communicating her design to her husband, went in disguise to the house of my grandfather, hoping that her tears and condition would move him to compassion, and reconcile him to an event which was now irrecoverably past.

She found means to deceive the servants, and get introduced as an unfortunate lady, who wanted to complain of some matrimonial grievances, it being my grandfather's particular province to decide in all cases of scandal. She was accordingly admitted into his presence, where, discovering herself, she fell at his feet, and in the most affecting manner implored his forgiveness; at the same time representing the danger that threatened not only her life, but that of his own grandchild, which was about to see the light. He told her he was sorry that the indiscretion of her and his son had compelled him to make a vow, which put it out of his power to give them any assistance; that he had already imparted his thoughts on that subject to her husband, and was surprised that they should disturb his peace with any farther importunity. This said, he retired.

The violence of my mother's affliction had such an effect on her constitution that she was immediately seized with the pains of childbed; and had not an old maidservant, to whom she was very dear, afforded her pity and assistance, at the hazard of incurring my grandfather's displeasure, she and the innocent fruit of her womb must have fallen miserable victims to his rigour and inhumanity. By the friendship of this poor woman she was carried up to a garret, and immediately delivered of a man child, the story of whose unfortunate birth he himself now relates. My father, being informed of what had happened, flew to the embraces of his darling spouse, and while he loaded his offspring with paternal embraces, could not forbear shedding a flood of tears on beholding the dear partner of his heart (for whose ease he would have sacrificed the treasures of the east) stretched upon a flock bed, in a miserable apartment, unable to protect her from the inclemencies of the weather. It is not to be supposed that the old gentleman was ignorant of what passed, though he affected to know nothing of the matter, and pretended to be very much surprised, when one of his grandchildren, by his eldest son

deceased, who lived with him as his heir apparent, acquainted him with the affair; he determined therefore to observe no medium, but immediately (on the third day after her delivery) sent her a peremptory order to be gone, and turned off the servant who had preserved her life. This behaviour so exasperated my father that he had recourse to the most dreadful imprecations; and on his bare knees implored that Heaven would renounce him if ever he should forget or forgive the barbarity of his sire.

The injuries which this unhappy mother received from her removal in such circumstances, and the want of necessaries where she lodged, together with her grief and anxiety of mind, soon threw her into a languishing disorder, which put an end to her life. My father, who loved her tenderly, was so affected with her death that he remained six weeks deprived of his senses; during which time, the people where he lodged carried the infant to the old man who relented so far, on hearing the melancholy story of his daughter-in-law's death, and the deplorable condition of his son, as to send the child to nurse, and he ordered my father to be carried home to his house, where he soon recovered the use of his reason.

Whether this hardhearted judge felt any remorse for his cruel treatment of his son and daughter, or (which is more probable) was afraid his character would suffer in the neighbourhood, he professed great sorrow for his conduct to my father, whose delirium was succeeded by a profound melancholy and reserve. At length he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all imaginable inquiry, could not be heard of; a circumstance which confirmed most people in the opinion of his having made away with himself in a fit of despair. How I understood the particulars of my birth will appear in the course of these memoirs.



## CHAPTER II

I grow up—am hated by my Relations—sent to School—neglected by my Grandfather—maltreated by my Master—seasoned to Adversity—I form Cabals against the Pedant—am debarred Access to my Grandfather—hunted by his Heir—I demolish the Teeth of his Tutor

There were not wanting some who suspected my uncles of being concerned in my father's fate, on the supposition that they would all share in the patrimony destined for him; and this conjecture was strengthened by reflecting that in all his calamities they never discovered the least inclination to serve him; but, on the contrary, by all the artifices in their power, fed his resentment and supported his resolution of leaving him to misery and want. But people of judgment treated this insinuation as an idle chimera; because, had my relations been so wicked as to consult their interest by committing such an atrocious crime, the fate of my father would have extended to me too whose life was another obstacle to their expectation. Meanwhile, I grew apace, and as I strongly resembled my father, who was the darling of the tenants, I wanted nothing which their indigent circumstances could afford: but their favour was a weak resource against the jealous enmity of my cousins; who the more my infancy promised, conceived the more implacable hatred against me: and before I was six years of age, had so effectually blockaded my grandfather that I never saw him but by stealth, when I sometimes made up to his chair as he sat to view his labourers in the field: on which occasion he would stroke my head, bid me be a good boy, and promise to take care of me.

I was soon after sent to school at a village hard by, of which he had been dictator time out of mind; but as he never paid for my board, nor supplied me with clothes, books, and other

necessaries I required, my condition was very ragged and contemptible, and the schoolmaster, who, through fear of my grandfather, taught me gratis, gave himself no concern about the progress I made under his instruction. In spite of all these difficulties and disgraces, I became a good proficient in the Latin tongue; and, as soon as I could write tolerably, pestered my grandfather with letters to such a degree that he sent for my master, and chid him severely for bestowing such pains on my education, telling him that, if ever I should be brought to the gallows for forgery, which he had taught me to commit, my blood would lie on his head.

The pedant, who dreaded nothing more than the displeasure of his patron, assured his honour that the boy's ability was more owing to his own genius and application than to any instruction or encouragement he received; that, although he could not divest him of the knowledge he had already imbibed, unless he would empower him to disable his fingers, he should endeavour, with God's help, to prevent his future improvement. And, indeed, he punctually performed what he had undertaken; for, on pretence that I had written impertinent letters to my grandfather, he caused a board to be made with five holes in it, through which he thrust the fingers and thumb of my right hand, and fastened it by whipcord to my wrist, in such a manner as effectually debarred me the use of my pen. But this restraint I was freed from in a few days, by an accident which happened in a quarrel between me and another boy; who, taking upon him to insult my poverty, I was so incensed at his ungenerous reproach that with one stroke with my machine I cut him to the skull, to the great terror of myself and schoolfellows, who left him bleeding on the ground, and ran to inform the master of what had happened. I was so severely punished for this trespass that, were I to live to the age of Methusalem, the impression it made on me would not be effaced; the more than the antipathy and horror I conceived for the merciless tyrant who inflicted it. The contempt which my appearance naturally produced in all who saw me, the continual wants to which I was exposed, and my own haughty disposition, impatient of affronts, involved me in a thousand troublesome adventures, by which I was at length inured in adversity, and emboldened to undertakings far above my years. I was often inhumanly scourged for crimes I did not commit, because, having

the character of a vagabond in the village, every piece of mischief, whose author lay unknown, was charged upon me. I have been found guilty of robbing orchards I never entered, of killing cats I never hunted, of stealing gingerbread I never touched, and of abusing old women I never saw. Nay, a stammering carpenter had eloquence enough to persuade my master that I fired a pistol loaded with small shot into his window; though my landlady and the whole family bore witness that I was abed fast asleep at the time when this outrage was committed, I was once flogged for having narrowly escaped drowning, by the sinking of a ferry boat in which I was passenger. Another time, for having recovered of a bruise occasioned by a horse and cart running over me. A third time, for being bitten by a baker's dog. In short, whether I was guilty or unfortunate, the correction and sympathy of this arbitrary pedagogue were the same.

Far from being subdued by this informal usage, my indignation triumphed over that slavish awe which had hitherto enforced my obedience; and the more my years and knowledge increased, the more I perceived the injustice and barbarity of his behaviour. By the help of an uncommon genius, and the advice and direction of our usher, who had served my father in his travels, I made a surprising progress in the classics, writing, and arithmetic; so that, before I was twelve years old, I was allowed by everybody to be the best scholar in the school. This qualification, together with the boldness of temper and strength of make which had subjected almost all my contemporaries, gave me such influence over them that I began to form cabals against my persecutor; and was in hope of, being able to bid him defiance in a very short time. Being at the head of a faction, consisting of thirty boys, most of them of my own age, I was determined to put their mettle to trial, that I might know how far they were to be depended upon, before I put my grand scheme in execution: with this view, we attacked a body of stout apprentices, who had taken possession of a part of the ground allotted to us for the scheme of our diversions, and who were then playing at ninepins on the spot; but I had the mortification to see my adherents routed in an instant, and a leg of one of them broke in his flight by the bowl, which one of our adversaries had detached in pursuit of us. This discomfiture did not hinder us from engaging them afterwards in frequent skirmishes, which we maintained

by throwing stones at a distance, wherein I received many wounds, the scars of which still remain. Our enemies were so harassed and interrupted by these alarms that they at last abandoned their conquest, and left us to the peaceable enjoyment of our own territories.

It would be endless to enumerate the exploits we performed in the course of this confederacy, which became the terror of the whole village; insomuch that, when different interests divided it, one of the parties commonly courted the assistance of Roderick Random (by which name I was known) to cast the balance, and keep the opposite faction in awe. Meanwhile, I took the advantage of every play-day to present myself before my grandfather, to whom I seldom found access, by reason of his being closely besieged by a numerous family of his female grandchildren, who, though they perpetually quarrelled among themselves, never failed to join against me, as the common enemy of all. His heir, who was about the age of eighteen, minded nothing but fox-hunting, and indeed was qualified for nothing else, notwithstanding his grandfather's indulgence in entertaining a tutor for him at home; who at the same time performed the office of parish clerk. This young Actaeon, who inherited his grandfather's antipathy to everything in distress, never sat eyes on me without uncoupling his beagles, and hunting me into some cottage or other, whither I generally fled for shelter. In this Christian amusement he was encouraged by his preceptor, who, no doubt, took such opportunities to ingratiate himself with the rising sun, observing, that the old gentleman, according to the course of nature, had not long to live, for he was already on the verge of fourscore.

The behaviour of this rascally sycophant incensed me so much, that one day, when I was beleaguered by him and his hounds in a farmer's house, where I had found protection, I took aim at him (being an excellent marksman) with a large pebble, which struck out four of his foreteeth, and effectually incapacitated him from doing the office of a clerk.

## CHAPTER III

My Mother's Brother arrives—relieves me—a Description of him—he goes along with me to the House of my Grandfather—is encountered by his Dogs—defeats them, after a bloody Engagement—is admitted to the old Gentleman—a Dialogue between them

About this time my mother's only brother, who had been long abroad, lieutenant of a man-of-war, arrived in his own country; where being informed of my condition, he came to see me, and out of his slender finances not only supplied me with what necessaries I wanted for the present, but resolved not to leave the country until he had prevailed on my grandfather to settle something handsome for the future. This was a task to which he was by no means equal, being entirely ignorant, not only of the judge's disposition, but also of the ways of men in general, to which his education on board had kept him an utter stranger.

He was a strong built man, somewhat bandy legged, with a neck like that of a bull, and a face which (you might easily perceive) had withstood the most obstinate assaults of the weather. His dress consisted of a soldier's coat altered for him by the ship's tailor, a striped flannel jacket, a pair of red breeches spanned with pitch, clean gray worsted stockings, large silver buckles that covered three-fourths of his shoes, a silver-laced hat, whose crown overlooked the brims about an inch and a half, black bobwig in buckle, a check shirt, a silk handkerchief, a hanger, with a brass handle, girded to his thigh by a furnished lace belt, and a good oak plant under his arm. Thus equipped, he set out with me (who by his bounty made a very decent appearance) for my grandfather's house, where we were saluted by Jowler and Caesar, whom my cousin, young master, had let loose at our approach. Being well acquainted with the inveteracy

of these curs, I was about to betake myself to my heels, when my uncle seized me with one hand, brandished his cudgel with the other, and at one blow laid Caesar sprawling on the ground; but, finding himself attacked at the same time in the rear by Jowler, and fearing Caesar might recover, he drew his hanger, wheeled about, and by a lucky stroke severed Jowler's head from his body. By this time, the young foxhunter and three servants, armed with pitchforks and flails, were come to the assistance of the dogs, whom they found breathless upon the field; and my cousin was so provoked at the death of his favourites, that he ordered his attendants to advance, and take vengeance on their executioner, whom he loaded with all the curses and reproaches his anger could suggest. Upon which my uncle stepped forwards with an undaunted air, at the sight of whose bloody weapons his antagonists fell back with precipitation, when he accosted their leader thus:

"Lookee, brother, your dogs having boarded me without provocation, what I did was in my own defence. So you had best be civil, and let us shoot a head, clear of you."

Whether the young squire misinterpreted my uncle's desire of peace, or was enraged at the fate of his hounds beyond his usual pitch of resolution, I know not; but he snatched a flail from one of his followers, and came up with a show of assaulting the lieutenant, who, putting himself in a posture of defence, proceeded thus: "Lookee, you lubberly son of a w—e, if you come athwart me, 'ware your gingerbread work. I'll be foul of your quarter, d—n me."

This declaration, followed by a flourish of his hanger, seemed to check the progress of the young gentleman's choler, who, looking behind him, perceived his attendants had slunk into the house, shut the gate, and left him to decide the contention by himself.

Here a parley ensued, which was introduced by my cousin's asking, "Who the devil are you? What do you want? Some scoundrel of a seaman, I suppose, who has deserted and turned thief. But don't think you shall escape, sirrah—I'll have you hang'd, you dog, I will. Your blood shall pay for that of my two hounds, you ragamuffin. I would not have parted with them to save your whole generation from the gallows, you ruffian, you!" "None of your jaw, you swab—none of your jaw," replied my uncle, "else I

shall trim your laced jacket for you. I shall rub you down with an oaken towel, my boy, I shall." So saying, he sheathed his hanger, and grasped his cudgel. Meanwhile the people of the house being alarmed, one of my female cousins opened a window, and asked what was the matter. "The matter!" answered the lieutenant; "no great matter, young woman; I have business with the old gentleman, and this spark, belike, won't allow me to come alongside of him," that's all. After a few minutes pause we were admitted, and conducted to my grandfather's chamber through a lane of my relations, who honoured me with very significant looks as I passed along. When we came into the judge's presence my uncle, after two or three sea-bows, expressed himself in this manner; "Your servant, your servant. What cheer, father? what cheer? I suppose you don't know me—mayhap you don't. My name is Tom Bowling, and this here boy, you look as if you did not know him neither; 'tis like you mayn't. He's new rigged, i'faith; his cloth don't shake in the wind so much as it wont to do. 'Tis my nephew, d'y see, Roderick Random—your own flesh and blood, old gentleman. Don't lay a-stern, you dog," pulling me forward. My grandfather (who was laid up with the gout) received this relation, after his long absence, with that coldness of civility which was peculiar to him; told him he was glad to see him, and desired him to sit down. "Thank ye, thank ye, sir, I had as lief stand," said my uncle; "for my own part, I desire nothing of you; but, if you have any conscience at all, do something for this poor boy, who has been used at a very unchristian rate. Unchristian do I call it? I am sure the Moors in Barbary have more humanity than to leave their little ones to want. I would fain know why my sister's son is more neglected than that there fair-weather Jack" (pointing to the young squire, who with the rest of my cousins had followed us into the room). "Is not he as near akin to you as the other? Is he not much handsomer and better built than that great chucklehead? Come, come, consider, old gentleman, you are going in a short time to give an account of your evil actions. Remember the wrongs you did his father, and make all the satisfaction in your power before it be too late. The least thing you can do is to settle his father's portion on him" The young ladies, who thought themselves too much concerned to contain themselves any longer, set up their throats all together against my protector—"Scurvy companion—saucy

tarpaulin—rude, impertinent fellow, did he think to prescribe to grandpapa? His sister's brat had been too well taken care of. Grandpapa was too just not make a difference between an unnatural, rebellious son and his dutiful, loving children, who took his advice in all things;" and such expressions were vented against him with great violence; until the judge at length commanded silence. He calmly rebuked my uncle for his unmannerly behaviour, which he said he would excuse on account of his education: he told him he had been very kind to the boy, whom he had kept at school seven or eight years, although he was informed he made no progress in his learning but was addicted to all manner of vice, which he rather believed, because he himself was witness to a barbarous piece of mischief he had committed on the jaws of his chaplain. But, however, he would see what the lad was fit for, and bind him apprentice to some honest tradesman or other, provided he would mend his manners, and behave for the future as became him. The honest tar (whose pride and indignation boiled within him) answered my grandfather, that it was true he had sent him to school, but it had cost him nothing, for he had never been at one shilling expense to furnish him with food, raiment, books, or other necessities; so that it was not much to be wondered at, if the boy made small progress; and yet whoever told him so was a lying, lubberly rascal, and deserved to be keel-haul'd; for though he (the lieutenant) did not understand those matters himself, he was well informed as how Rory was the best scholar of his age in all the country; the truth of which he would maintain, by laying a wager of his whole half-year's pay on the boy's head—with these words he pulled out his purse, and challenged the company: "Neither is he predicted to vice, as you affirm, but rather, left like a wreck, d'ye see, at the mercy of the wind and weather, by your neglect, old gentleman. As for what happened to your chaplain, I am only sorry that he did not knock out the scoundrel's brains instead of his teeth. By the Lord, if ever I come up with him, he had better be in Greenland, that's all. Thank you for your courteous offer of binding the lad apprentice to a tradesman. I suppose you would make a tailor of him—would you? I had rather see him hang'd, d'ye see. Come along, Rory, I perceive how the land lies, my boy—let's tack about, i'faith—while I have a shilling you shan't want a tester. B'we, old gentleman; you're bound for the



other world, but I believe damnably ill-provided for the voyage." Thus ended our visit; and we returned to the village, my uncle muttering curses all the way against the old shark and the young fry that surrounded him.

## CHAPTER IV

My Grandfather makes his Will—our second Visit—he Dies—his Will is read in Presence of all his living Descendants—the Disappointment of my female Cousins—my Uncle's Behaviour

A few weeks after our first visit, we were informed that the old judge, at the end of a fit of thoughtfulness, which lasted three days, had sent for a notary and made his will; that the distemper had mounted from his legs to his stomach, and, being conscious of his approaching end, he had desired to see all his descendants without exception. In obedience to this summons, my uncle set out with me a second time, to receive the last benediction of my grandfather: often repeating by the road, "Ey, ey, we have brought up the old hulk at last. You shall see—you shall see the effect of my admonition," When we entered his chamber, which was crowded with his relations, we advanced to the bedside, where we found him in his last agonies, supported by two of his granddaughters, who sat on each side of him, sobbing most piteously, and wiping away the froth and slaver as it gathered on his lips, which they frequently kissed with a show of great anguish and affection. My uncle approached him with these words, "What! he's not a-weigh. How fare ye? how fare ye, old gentleman? Lord have mercy upon your poor sinful soul!" Upon which, the dying man turned his languid eyes towards us, and Mr. Bowling went on—"Here's poor Roy come to see you before you die, and to receive your blessing. What, man! don't despair, you have been a great sinner, 'tis true,—what then? There's a righteous judge above, an't there? He minds me no more than

a porpoise. Yes, yes, he's a-going; the land crabs will have him, I see that! his anchor's a-peak, i'faith." This homely consolation scandalised the company so much, and especially the parson, who probably thought his province invaded, that we were obliged to retire into another room, where, in a few minutes, we were convinced of my grandfather's decease, by a dismal yell uttered by the young ladies in his apartment; whither we immediately hastened, and found his heir, who had retired a little before into a closet, under pretence of giving vent to his sorrow, asking, with a countenance beslobbered with tears, if his grandpapa was certainly dead? "Dead!" (says my uncle, looking, at the body) "ay, ay, I'll warrant him as dead as a herring. Odd's fish! now my dream is out for all the world. I thought I stood upon the forecastle, and saw a parcel of carrion crows foul of a dead shark: that floated alongside, and the devil perching upon our spritsail yard, in the likeness of a blue bear—who, d'ye see jumped overboard upon the carcass and carried it to the bottom in his claws." "Out upon thee, reprobate" cries the parson "out upon thee, blasphemous wretch! Dost thou think his honour's soul is in the possession of Satan?" The clamour immediately arose, and my poor uncle, being, shouldered from one corner of the room to the other, was obliged to lug out in his own defence, and swear he would turn out for no man, till such time as he knew who had the title to send him adrift. "None of your tricks upon travellers," said he; "mayhap old Bluff has left my kinsman here his heir: if he has, it will be the better for his miserable soul. Odds bob! I'd desire no better news. I'd soon make him a clear shin, I warrant you." To avoid any further disturbance, one of my grandfather's executors, who was present, assured Mr. Bowling, that his nephew should have all manner of justice; that a day should be appointed after the funeral for examining the papers of the deceased, in presence of all his relations; till which time every desk and cabinet in the house should remain close sealed; and that he was very welcome to be witness to this ceremony, which was immediately performed to his satisfaction. In the meantime, orders were given to provide mourning for all the relations, in which number I was included; but my uncle would not suffer me to accept of it, until I should be assured whether or no I had reason to honour his memory so far. During this interval, the conjectures of people, with regard to the old

gentleman's will, were various: as it was well known, he had, besides his landed estate, which was worth £700 per annum, six or seven thousand pounds at interest, some imagined that the whole real estate (which he had greatly improved) would go to the young man whom he always entertained as his heir; and that the money would be equally divided between my female cousins (five in number) and me. Others were of opinion, that, as the rest of the children had been already provided for, he would only bequeath two or three hundred pounds to each of his granddaughters, and leave the bulk of the sum to me, to atone for his unnatural usage of my father. At length the important hour arrived, and the will was produced in the midst of the expectants, whose looks and gestures formed a group that would have been very entertaining to an unconcerned spectator. But, the reader can scarce conceive the astonishment and mortification that appeared, when an attorney pronounced aloud, the young squire sole heir of all his grandfather's estate, personal and real. My uncle, who had listened with great attention, sucking the head of his cudgel all the while, accompanied these words of the attorney with a stare, and whew, that alarmed the whole assembly. The eldest and pertest of my female competitors, who had been always very officious about my grandfather's person, inquired, with a faltering accent and visage as yellow as an orange, "if there were no legacies?" and was answered, "None at all." Upon which she fainted away. The rest, whose expectations, perhaps, were not so sanguine, supported their disappointment with more resolution, though not without giving evident marks of indignation, and grief at least as genuine as that which appeared in them at the old gentleman's death. My conductor, after having kicked with his heel for some time against the wainscot, began: "So there's no legacy, friend, ha!—here's an old succubus; but somebody's soul howls for it, d—n me!" The parson of the parish, who was one of the executors, and had acted as ghostly director to the old man, no sooner heard this exclamation than he cried out, "Avaunt, unchristian reviler! avaunt! wilt thou not allow the soul of his honour to rest in peace?" But this zealous pastor did not find himself so warmly seconded, as formerly, by the young ladies, who now joined my uncle against him, and accused him of having acted the part of a busybody with their grandpapa whose ears he had certainly abused by false stories

to their prejudice, or else he would not have neglected them in such an unnatural manner. The young squire was much diverted with this scene, and whispered to my uncle, that if he had not murdered his dogs, he would have shown him glorious fun, by hunting a black badger (so he termed the clergyman). The surly lieutenant, who was not in a humour to relish this amusement, replied, "You and your dogs may be damn'd. I suppose you'll find them with your old dad, in the latitude of hell. Come, Rory,—about ship, my lad, we must steer another course, I think." And away we went.

## CHAPTER V

The Schoolmaster uses me barbarously—I form a Project of Revenge, in which I am assisted by my Uncle—I leave the Village—am settled at a University by his Generosity

On our way back to the village, my uncle spoke not a word during the space of a whole hour, but whistled with great vehemence the tune of "Why should we quarrel for riches," etc. his visage being contracted all the while into a most formidable frown. At length his pace increased to such a degree that I was left behind a considerable way: then he waited for me; and when I was almost up with him, called out in a surly tone, "Bear a hand, damme! must I bring to every minute for you, you lazy dog." Then, laying hold of me by the arm, hauled me along, until his good nature (of which he had a great share) and reflection getting the better of his he said, "Come, my boy, don't be cast down,—the old rascal is in hell, that's some satisfaction; you shall go to sea with me, my lad. A light heart and a thin pair of breeches goes through the world, brave boys, as the song goes—eh!" Though this proposal did not at all suit my inclination, I was afraid of discovering my aversion to it, lest I should disoblige the only friend I had in the world; and he was so much a seaman

that he never dreamt I could have had any objection to his design; consequently gave himself no trouble in consulting my approbation. But this resolution was soon dropped, by the device of our usher, who assured Mr. Bowling, it would be a thousand pities to balk my genius, which would certainly one day make my fortune on shore, provided it received due cultivation. Upon which, this generous tar determined (though he could ill afford it) to give me university education; and accordingly settled my board and other expenses, at a town not many miles distant, famous for its colleges, whither we repaired in a short time. But, before the day of our departure, the schoolmaster, who no longer had the fear of my grandfather before his eyes, laid aside all decency and restraint, and not only abused me in the grossest language his rancour could suggest, as a wicked, profligate, dull, beggarly miscreant, whom he had taught out of charity; but also inveighed in the most bitter manner against the memory of the judge (who by the by had procured that settlement for him), hinting, in pretty plain terms, that the old gentleman's soul was damned to all eternity for his injustice in neglecting to pay for my learning. This brutal behaviour, added to the sufferings I had formerly undergone made me think it high time to be revenged on this insolent pedagogue. Having consulted my adherents, I found them all staunch in their promises to stand by me; and our scheme was this:—In the afternoon preceding to the day of our departure for the University, I resolved to take the advantage of the usher's going out to make water (which he regularly did at four o'clock), and shut the great door, that he might not come to the assistance of his superior. This being done, the assault was to be begun by my advancing to my master and spitting in his face. I was to be seconded by two of the strongest boys in the school, who were devoted to me; their business was to join me in dragging the tyrant to a bench, over which he was to be laid, and his bare posteriors heartily flogged, with his own birch, which we proposed to wrest from him in his struggle; but if we should find him too many for us all three, we were to demand the assistance of our competitors, who should be ready to enforce us, or oppose anything that might be undertaken for the master's relief. One of my principal assistants was called Jeremy Gawky, son and heir of a wealthy gentleman in the neighbourhood; and the name of the other, Hugh Strap, the cadet of a

family which had given shoemakers to the village time out of mind. I had once saved Gawky's life, by plunging into a river and dragging him on shore, when he was on the point of being drowned. I had often rescued him from the clutches of those whom his insufferable arrogance had provoked to a resentment he was not able to sustain; and many times saved his reputation and posteriors, by performing his exercises at school; so that it is not to be wondered at, if he had a particular regard for me and my interests. The attachment of Strap flowed from a voluntary, disinterested inclination, which had manifested itself on many occasions in my behalf, he having once rendered me the same service that I had rendered Gawky, by saving my life at the risk of his own; and often fathered offences that I had committed, for which he suffered severely, rather than I should feel the weight of the punishment. These two champions were the more willing to engage in this enterprise, because they intended to leave the school next day, as well as I; the first being ordered by his father to return into the country, and the other being bound apprentice to his barber, at a market town not far off.

In the meantime, my uncle, being informed of my master's behaviour to me, was enraged at his insolence, and vowed revenge so heartily that I could not refrain from telling him the scheme I had concerted, while he heard with great satisfaction, at every sentence squirting out a mouthful of spittle, tintured with tobacco, of which he constantly chewed a large quid. At last, pulling up his breeches, he cried, "No, no, z—ds! that won't do neither; howsoever, 'tis a bold undertaking, my lad, that I must say, i'faith; but lookee, lookee, how do you propose to get clear off—won't the enemy give chase, my boy?—ay, ay, that he will, I warrant, and alarm the whole coast; ah! God help thee, more sail than ballast, Rory. Let me alone for that—leave the whole to me. I'll show him the foretopsail, I will. If so be your shipmates are jolly boys, and won't flinch, you shall see, you shall see; egad, I'll play him such a salt-water trick I'll bring him to the gangway and anoint him with a cat-and-nine-tails; he shall have a round dozen doubled, my lad, he shall—and be left lashed to his meditations." We were very proud of our associate, who immediately went to work, and prepared the instrument of his revenge with great skill and expedition; after which, he ordered our baggage to be packed up and sent off, a day before

our attempt, and got horses ready to be mounted, as soon as the affair should be over. At length the hour arrived, when our auxiliary, seizing the opportunity of the usher's absence, bolted in, secured the door, and immediately laid hold of the pedant by his collar who bawled out, "Murder, Thieves," with the voice of a Stentor. Though I trembled all over like an aspen leaf, I knew there was no time to be lost, and accordingly got up, and summoned our associates to our assistance. Strap, without any hesitation, obeyed the signal, and seeing me leap upon the master's back, ran immediately to one of his legs, which pulling with all his force, this dreadful adversary was humbled to the ground; upon which Gawky, who had hitherto remained in his place, under the influence of a universal trepidation, hastened to the scene of action, and insulted the fallen tyrant with a loud huzza, in which the whole school joined. The noise alarmed the usher, who, finding himself shut out, endeavoured, partly by threats and partly by entreaties, to procure admission. My uncle bade him have a little patience, and he would let him in presently; but if he pretended to stir from that place, it should fare the worse with the son of a bitch his superior, on whom he intended only to bestow a little wholesome chastisement, for his barbarous usage of Rory, "to which," said he, "you are no stranger." By this time we had dragged the criminal to a post, to which Bowling tied him with a rope he had provided on purpose; after having secured his hands and stripped his back. In this ludicrous posture he stood (to the no small entertainment of the boys, who crowded about him, and shouted with great exultation at the novelty of the sight), venting bitter imprecations against the lieutenant, and reproaching his scholars with treachery and rebellion; when the usher was admitted, whom my uncle accosted in this manner: "Harkee, Mr. Syntax, I believe you are an honest man, d'ye see—and I have a respect for you—but for all that, we must, for our own security, d'ye see, belay you for a short time." With these words, he pulled out some fathoms of cord, which the honest man no sooner saw than he protested with great earnestness he would allow no violence to be offered to him, at the same time accusing me of perfidy and ingratitude. But Bowling representing that it was in vain to resist, and that he did not mean to use him with violence and indecency, but only to hinder him from raising the hue and cry against us before we should be

out of their power, he allowed himself to be bound to his own desk, where he sat a spectator of the punishment inflicted on his principal. My uncle, having upbraided this arbitrary wretch with his inhumanity to me, told him, that he proposed to give him a little discipline for the good of his soul, which he immediately put in practice, with great vigour and dexterity. This smart application to the pedant's withered posteriors gave him such exquisite pain that he roared like a mad bull, danced, cursed, and blasphemed, like a frantic bedlamite. When the lieutenant thought himself sufficiently revenged, he took his leave of him in these words: "Now, friend, you'll remember me the longest day you have to live; I have given you a lesson that will let you know what flogging is, and teach you to have more sympathy for the future. Shout, boys, shout!"

This ceremony was no sooner over than my uncle proposed they should quit the school, and convey their old comrade Rory to the public-house, about a mile from the village, where he would treat them all. His offer being joyfully embraced, he addressed himself to Mr. Syntax, and begged him to accompany us; but this invitation he refused with great disdain, telling my benefactor he was not the man he took him to be. "Well, well, old surly," replied my uncle, shaking his hand, "thou art an honest fellow notwithstanding; and if ever I have the command of a ship, thou shalt be our schoolmaster, i'faith." So saying he dismissed the boys, and locking the door, left the two preceptors to console one another; while we moved forwards on our journey, attended by a numerous retinue, whom he treated according to his promise.

We parted with many tears, and lay that night at an inn on the road, about ten miles short of the town where I was to remain, at which we arrived next day, and I found I had no cause to complain of the accommodations provided for me, in being boarded at the house of an apothecary, who had married a distant relation of my mother. In a few days after, my uncle set out for his ship, having settled the necessary funds for my maintenance and education.



## CHAPTER VI

I make great progress in my Studies—am caressed by Everybody—my female Cousins take notice of me—I reject their Invitation—they are incensed, and conspire against me—I am left destitute by a Misfortune that befalls my Uncle-Gawky's Treachery—my Revenge

As I was now capable of reflection, I began to consider my precarious situation; that I was utterly abandoned by those whose duty it was to protect me: and that my sole dependence was on the generosity of one man, who was not only exposed by his profession to continual dangers, which might one day deprive me of him for ever; but also (no doubt) subject to those vicissitudes of disposition which a change of fortune usually creates, or which a better acquaintance with the world might produce; for I always ascribed his benevolence to the dictates of a heart as yet undebauched by a commerce with mankind. Alarmed at these considerations, I resolved to apply myself with great care to my studies, and enjoy the opportunity in my power: this I did with such success that, in the space of three years, I understood Greek very well, was pretty far advanced in the mathematics, and no stranger to moral and natural philosophy: logic I made no account of; but, above all things, I valued myself on my taste in the belles lettres, and a talent for poetry, which had already produced some pieces that had met with a favourable reception. These qualifications, added to a good face and shape, acquired the esteem and acquaintance of the most considerable people in town, and I had the satisfaction to find myself in some degree of favour with the ladies; an intoxicating piece of good fortune to one of my amorous complexion! which I obtained, or at least preserved, by gratifying their propensity to scandal, in lampooning their rivals.

Two of my female cousins lived in this place, with their mother, since the death of their father, who left his whole fortune equally divided between them; so that, if they were not the most beautiful, they were at least the richest toasts in town; and received daily the addresses of all the beaux and cavaliers of the country. Although I had hitherto been looked upon by them

with the most supercilious contempt, my character now attracted their notice so much that I was given to understand I might be honoured with their acquaintance, if I pleased.

The reader will easily perceive that this condescension either flowed from the hope of making my poetical capacity subservient to their malice, or at least of screening themselves from the lash of my resentment, which they had effectually provoked. I enjoyed this triumph with great satisfaction, and not only rejected their offer with disdain, but in all my performances, whether satire or panegyric, industriously avoided mentioning their names, even while I celebrated those of their intimates: this neglect mortified their pride exceedingly and incensed them to such a degree that they were resolved to make me repent of my indifference. The first stroke of their revenge consisted in their hiring a poor collegian to write verses against me, the subject of which was my own poverty, and the catastrophe of my unhappy parents; but, besides the badness of the composition (of which they themselves were ashamed), they did not find their account in endeavouring to reproach me with those misfortunes which they and their relations had brought upon me; and which consequently reflected much more dishonour on themselves than on me, who was the innocent victim of their barbarity and avarice.

Finding this plan miscarry, they found means to irritate a young gentleman against me, by telling him I had lampooned his mistress; and so effectually succeeded in the quality of incendiaries that this enraged lover determined to seize me next night as I returned to my lodgings from a friend's house that I frequented: with this view, he waited in the street, attended by two of his companions, to whom he had imparted his design of carrying me down to the river, in which proposed to have me heartily ducked, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, it being then about the middle of December. But this stratagem did not succeed; for, being apprised of their ambush, I got home another way, and by the help of my landlord's apprentice, discharged a volley from the garret window, which did great execution upon them, and next day occasioned so much mirth at their expense that they found themselves under a necessity of leaving the town, until the adventure should be entirely forgotten.

My cousins (though twice baffled in their expectation) did not, however, desist from persecuting me, who had now enraged

them beyond a possibility of forgiveness by detecting their malice and preventing its effects: neither should I have found them more humane, had I patiently submitted to their rancour, and borne without murmuring the rigour of their unreasonable hate; for I have found by experience, that though small favours may be acknowledged and slight injuries atoned, there is no wretch so ungrateful as he whom you have most generously obliged, and no enemy so implacable as those who have done you the greatest wrong. These good-natured creatures, therefore, had recourse to a scheme which conspired with a piece of bad news I soon after received, to give them all the satisfaction they desired: this plan was to debauch the faith of my companion and confidant, who betrayed the trust I reposed in him, by imparting to them the particulars of my small amours, which they published with such exaggerations that I suffered very much in the opinion of everybody, and was utterly discarded by the dear creatures whose names had been called in question.

While I was busy in tracing out the author of this treachery, that I might not only be revenged on him, but also vindicate my character to my friends, I one day perceived the looks of my landlady much altered, when I went home to my dinner, and inquiring into the cause, she screwed up her mouth, and fixed her eyes on the ground, told me her husband had received a letter from Mr. Bowling, with one inclosed for me. She was very sorry for what had happened, both for my sake and his own—people should be more cautious of their conduct—she was always afraid his brutal behaviour would bring him into some misfortune or other. As for her part, she should be very ready to befriend me; but she had a small family of her own to maintain. The world would do nothing for her if she should come to want—charity begins at home: she wished I had been bound to some substantial handicraft, such as a weaver or a shoemaker, rather than loiter away my time in learning foolish nonsense, that would never bring me in a penny but some folks are wise, and some are otherwise.

I was listening to this mysterious discourse with great amazement, when her husband entered, and, without speaking a syllable, put both the letters into my hand. I received them trembling, and read what follows:

‘To Mr. Roger Potion

‘Sir,

‘This is to let you know that I have quitted the Thunder man of war, being obliged to sheer off for killing my captain, which I did fairly on the beach, at Cape Tiberoon, in the Island of Hispaniola; having received his fire and returned it, which went through his body: and I would serve the best man so that ever stepped between stem and stern, if so be that he struck me, as Captain Oakum did. I am (thank God) safe among the French, who are very civil, though I don’t understand their lingo; and I hope to be restored in a little time, for all the great friends and parliamentary interest of the captain, for I have sent over to my landlord in Deal an account of the whole affair, with our bearings and distances while we were engaged, whereby I have desired him to lay it before his majesty, who (God bless him) will not suffer an honest tar to be wronged. My love to your spouse, and am your loving friend and servant to command, while

‘Thomas Bowling,’

‘To Roderick Random

‘Dear Rory,

‘Don’t be grieved at my misfortune, but mind your book, my lad. I have got no money to send you, but what of that? Mr. Potion will take care of you for the love he bears to me, and let you want for nothing; and it shall go hard but I will see him one day repaid. No more at present, but rests

‘Your dutiful uncle

‘and servant, till death,

‘Thomas Bowling.’

This letter (which, with the other, was dated from Port Lonis, in Hispaniola) I had no sooner read than the apothecary, shaking his head, began: “I have a very great regard for Mr. Bowling that’s certain; and could be well content—but times are very hard. There’s no such thing as money to be got; I believe ‘tis all vanished under ground, for my part. Besides, I have been out of pocket already, having entertained you since the beginning of this month, without receiving a sixpence, and God knows if ever

I shall; for I believe it will go hard with your uncle. And more than that, I was thinking of giving you warning, for I want your apartment for a new prentice, whom I expect from the country every hour. So I desire you will this week provide yourself with another lodging.”

The indignation which this harangue inspired gave me spirits to support my reverse of fortune, and to tell him I despised his mean selfish disposition so much that I would rather starve than be beholden to him for one single meal. Upon which, out of my pocket money, I paid him to the last farthing of what I owed, and assured him, I would not sleep another night under his roof.

This said, I sallied out in a transport of rage and sorrow, without knowing whither to fly for shelter, having not one friend in the world capable of relieving me, and only three shillings in my purse. After giving way for a few minutes to the dictates of my rage, I went and hired a small bedroom, at the rate of one shilling and sixpence per week, which I was obliged to pay per advance, before the landlord would receive me: thither I removed my luggage; and next morning got up, with a view of craving the advice and assistance of a person who had on all occasions loaded me with caresses and made frequent offers of friendship, while I was under no necessity of accepting them. He received me with his wonted affability, and insisted on my breakfasting with him, a favour which I did not think fit to refuse. But when I communicated the occasion of my visit, he appeared so disconcerted that I concluded him wonderfully affected with the misery of my condition and looked upon him as a man of the most extensive sympathy and benevolence. He did not leave me long under this mistake; for, recovering himself from his confusion, he told me he was grieved at my misfortune, and desired to know what had passed between my landlord, Mr. Potion, and me. Whereupon I recounted the conversation; and, when I repeated the answer I made to his ungenerous remonstrance with regard to my leaving his house, this pretended friend affected a stare, and exclaimed, “Is it possible you could behave so ill to the man who had treated you so kindly all along?”

My surprise at hearing this was not at all affected, whatever his might be; and I gave to understand with some warmth, that I did not imagine he would so unreasonably espouse the cause of a scoundrel who ought to be expelled from every social

community. This heat of mine gave him all the advantage he desired over me, and our discourse, after much altercation, concluded in his desiring never to see me again in that place; to which desire I yielded my consent, assuring him, that, had I been as well acquainted with his principles formerly as I was now, he never should have had an opportunity of making that request. And thus we parted.

On my return, I met my comrade, Squire Gawky, whom his father had sent, some time ago, to town, for his improvement in writing, dancing, fencing, and other modish qualifications. As I had lived with him since his arrival on the footing of our old intimacy, I made no scruple of informing him of the lowness of my circumstances, and asking a small supply of money, to answer my present expense; upon which he pulled out a handful of halfpence with a shilling or two among them, and swore that was all he had to keep his pocket till next quarter-day he having lost the greatest part of his allowance the night before at billiards. Though this assertion might very well be true, I was extremely mortified at his indifference: for he neither expressed any sympathy for my mishap nor desire of alleviating my distress; and accordingly I left him without uttering one word: but, when I afterwards understood that he was the person who had formerly betrayed me to the malice of my cousins, to whom likewise he had carried the tidings of my forlorn situation, which afforded them great matter of triumph and exultation, I determined with myself to call him to a severe account for which purpose I borrowed a sword, and wrote a challenge, desiring him to meet me at a certain time and place, that I might have an opportunity of punishing his perfidy, at the expense of his blood. He accepted the invitation, and I betook myself to the field, though not without feeling considerable repugnance to the combat, which frequently attacked me in cold sweats by the way; but the desire of revenge, the shame of retracting, and hope of conquest, conspired to repel these unmanly symptoms of fear; and I appeared on the plain with a good grace: there I waited an hour beyond the time appointed, and was not ill pleased to find he had no mind to meet me, because I should have an opportunity of exposing his cowardice, displaying my own courage, and of beating him soundly wheresoever I should find, without any dread of the consequence.

Elevated with these suggestions, which entirely banished all thoughts of my deplorable condition, I went directly to Gawky's lodgings, where I was informed of his precipitate retreat, he having set out for the country in less than an hour after he had received my billet; and I was vain enough to have the whole story inserted in the news, although I was fain to sell a gold laced hat to my landlord for less than half-price, to defray the expenses and contribute to my subsistence.

## CHAPTER VII

I am entertained by Mr. Crab—a description of him—I acquire the Art of Surgery—consult Crab's Disposition—become necessary to him—an Accident happens—he advises me to launch out into the world—assists me with Money—I set out for London

The fumes of my resentment being dissipated, as well as the vanity of my success, I found myself deserted to all the horrors of extreme want, and avoided by mankind as a creature of a different species, or rather as a solitary being, noways comprehended within the scheme or protection of Providence. My despair had rendered me almost quite stupified, when I was one day told, that a gentleman desired to see me at a certain public-house, whither immediately I repaired; and was introduced to one Mr. Launcelot Crab, a surgeon in town, who was engaged with two more in drinking a liquor called pop-in, composed by mixing a quartern of brandy with a quart of small beer. Before I relate the occasion of this message, I believe it will not be disagreeable to the reader, if I describe the gentleman who sent for me, and mention some circumstances of his character and conduct which may illustrate what follows, and account for his behaviour to me.

This member of the faculty was aged fifty, about five feet

high, and ten round the belly; his face was as capacious as a full moon, and much of the complexion of a mulberry: his nose, resembling a powder-horn, was swelled to an enormous size, and studded all over with carbuncles; and his little gray eyes reflected the rays in such an oblique manner that, while he looked a person full in the face, one would have imagined he was admiring the buckle of his shoe. He had long entertained an implacable resentment against Potion, who, though a younger practitioner, was better employed than he, and once had the assurance to perform a cure, whereby he disappointed and disgraced the prognostic of the said Crab. This quarrel which was at one time upon the point of being made up, by the interposition and mediation of friends, had been lately inflamed beyond a possibility of reconciliation by the respective wives of the opponents, who, chancing to meet at a christening, disagreed about precedence, proceeded from invectives to blows, and were with great difficulty, by the gossips, prevented from converting the occasion of joy into a scene of lamentation.

The difference between these rivals was in the height of rancour, when I received the message of Crab, who received me as civilly as I could have expected from one of his disposition; and, after desiring me to sit, inquired into the particulars of my leaving the house of Potion; which when I had related, he said, with a malicious grin, "There's a sneaking dog! I always thought him a fellow without a soul, d—n me, a canting scoundrel, who has crept into business by his hypocrisy, and kissing the a—e of every body."—"Ay, ay," says another, "one might see with half an eye that the rascal has no honesty in him, by his going so regularly to church."

This sentence was confirmed by a third, who assured his companions that Potion was never known to be disguised in liquor but once, at a meeting of the godly, where he had distinguished himself by an extempore prayer an hour long. After this preamble, Crab addressed himself to me in these words: "Well, my lad, I have heard a good character of you, and I'll do for you. You may send your things to my house when you please. I have given orders for your reception. Zounds! What does the booby stare at? If you have no mind to embrace my courteous offer, you may let it alone, and be d—d." I answered with a submissive bow, that I was far from rejecting his friendly offer, which



I would immediately accept, as soon as he should inform me on what footing I was to be entertained. "What footing! D—n my blood," cried he, "d'ye expect to have a footman and a couple of horses kept for you?" "No, sir," I replied, "my expectations are not quite so sanguine. That I may be as little burthensome as possible, I would willingly serve in your shop, by which means I may save you the expense of a journeyman, or porter at least, for I understand a little pharmacy, having employed some of my leisure hours in the practice of that art, while I lived with Mr. Potion; neither am I altogether ignorant of surgery, which I have studied with great pleasure and application."—"Oho! you did," says Crab. "Gentlemen, here is a complete artist! Studied surgery! What? in books, I suppose. I shall have you disputing with me one of these days on points of my profession. You can already account for muscular motion, I warrant, and explain the mystery of the brain and nerves—ha! You are too learned for me, d—n me. But let's have no more of this stuff. Can you blood and give a clyster, spread a plaster, and prepare a potion?" Upon my answering in the affirmative, he shock his head, telling me, he believed he should have little good of me, for all my promises; but, however, he would take me in for the sake of charity. I was accordingly that very night admitted to his house, and had an apartment assigned to me in the garret, which I was fain to put up with, notwithstanding the mortification my pride suffered in this change of circumstances.

I was soon convinced of the real motives which induced Crab to receive me in this manner; for, besides the gratification of his revenge, by exposing the selfishness of his antagonist, in opposition to his own generosity, which was all affectation, he had occasion for a young man who understood something of the profession, to fill up the place of his eldest apprentice, lately dead, not without violent suspicion of foul play from his master's brutality. The knowledge of this circumstance, together with his daily behaviour to his wife and the young apprentice, did not at all contribute to my enjoying my new situation with ease; however, as I did not perceive how I could bestow myself to better advantage, I resolved to study Crab's temper with all the application, and manage it with all the address in my power. And it was not long before I found out a strange peculiarity of humour which governed his behaviour towards all his dependents. I

observed, when he was pleased, he was such a niggard of his satisfaction that, if his wife or servants betrayed the least symptom of participation, he was offended to an insupportable degree of choler and fury, the effects of which they seldom failed to feel. And when his indignation was roused, submission and soothing always exasperated it beyond the bounds of reason and humanity. I therefore pursued a contrary plan; and one day, when he honoured me with the names of ignorant whelp and lazy ragamuffin, I boldly replied, I was neither ignorant nor lazy, since I both understood and performed my business as well as he could do for his soul; neither was it just to call me ragamuffin, for I had a whole coat on my back, and was descended from a better family than any he could boast an alliance with.

He gave tokens of great amazement at this assurance of mine, and shook his cane over my head, regarding me all the time with a countenance truly diabolical. Although I was terribly startled at his menacing looks and posture, I yet had reflection enough left to convince me I had gone too far to retract, and that this was the critical minute which must decide my future lot in his service; I therefore snatched up the pestle of a mortar, and swore, if he offered to strike me without a cause, I should see whether his skull or my weapon was hardest.

He continued silent for some time, and at last broke forth into these ejaculations: "This is fine usage from a servant to his master—very fine! damnation! but no matter, you shall pay for this, you dog, you shall; I'll do your business—yes, yes, I'll teach you to lift your hand against me." So saying, he retired, and left me under dreadful apprehensions, which vanished entirely at our next meeting, when he behaved with unusual complacency, and treated me with a glass of punch after dinner.

By this conduct I got the ascendancy over him in a short time, and became so necessary to him, in managing his business while he was engaged at the bottle, that fortune began to wear a kinder aspect; and I consoled myself for the disregard of my former acquaintance, with the knowledge I daily imbibed by a close application to the duties of my employment, in which I succeeded beyond my own expectation. I was on very good terms with my master's wife, whose esteem I acquired and cultivated, by representing Mrs. Potion in the most ridiculous lights my satirical talents could invent, as well as by rendering her some Christian

offices, when she had been too familiar with the dram bottle, to which she had oftentimes recourse for consolation, under the affliction she suffered from a barbarous husband.

In this manner I lived, without hearing the least tidings of my uncle for the space of two years, during which time I kept little or no company, being neither in a humour to relish nor in a capacity to maintain much acquaintance; for the Nabal my master allowed me no wages, and the small perquisites of my station scarcely supplied me with the common necessities of life. I was no longer a pert unthinking coxcomb, giddy with popular applause, and elevated with the extravagance of hope: my misfortunes had taught me how little the caresses of the world, during a man's prosperity, are to be valued by him; and how seriously and expeditiously he ought to set about making himself independent of them. My present appearance, therefore, was the least of my care, which was wholly engrossed in laying up a stock of instruction that might secure me against the caprice of fortune for the future. I became such a sloven, and contracted such an air of austerity, that everybody pronounced me crestfallen; and Gawky returned to town without running any risk from my resentment, which was by this time pretty much cooled, and restrained by prudential reasons so effectually that I never so much as thought of obtaining satisfaction for the injuries he had done me.

When I deemed myself sufficiently master of my business I began to cast about for an opportunity of launching into the world, in hope of finding some provision that might make amends for the difficulties I had undergone; but, as this could not be effected without a small sum of money to equip me for the field, I was in the utmost perplexity how to raise it, well knowing that Crab, for his own sake, would never put me in a condition to leave him, when his interest was so much concerned in my stay. But a small accident, which happened about this time, determined him in my favour. This was no other than the pregnancy of his maidservant, who declared her situation to me, assuring me at the same time that I was the occasion of it.

Although I had no reason to question the truth of this imputation, I was not ignorant of the familiarities which had passed between her master and her, taking the advantage of which I represented to her the folly of laying the burden at my door,

when she might dispose of it to much better purpose with Mr. Crab. She listened to my advice, and next day acquainted him with the pretended success of their mutual endeavours. He was far from being overjoyed at this proof of his vigour, which he foresaw might have very troublesome consequences; not that he dreaded any domestic grumbings and reproaches from his wife, whom he kept in perfect subjection; but because he knew it would furnish his rival Potion with a handle for insulting and undermining his reputation, there being no scandal equal to that of uncleanness, in the opinion of those who inhabit the part of the island where he lived. He therefore took a resolution worthy of himself, which was, to persuade the girl that she was not with child, but only afflicted with a disorder incidental to young women, which he could easily remove: with this view (as he pretended) he prescribed for her such medicines as he thought would infallibly procure abortion; but in this scheme he was disappointed, for the maid, being advertised by me of his design, and at the same time well acquainted with her own condition, absolutely refused to follow his directions; and threatened to publish her situation to the world if he would not immediately take some method of providing for the important occasion, which she expected in a few months. It was not long before I guessed the result of his deliberation, by his addressing himself to me one day in this manner: "I am surprised that a young fellow like you discovers no inclination to push his fortune in the world. Before I was of your age I was broiling on the coast of Guinea. D—e! what's to hinder you from profiting by the war which will certainly be declared in a short time against Spain? You may easily get on board of a king's ship in quality of surgeon's mate, where you will certainly see a great deal of practice, and stand a good chance of getting prize-money."

I laid hold of this declaration, which I had long wished for, and assured him I would follow his advice with pleasure, if it were in my power; but that it was impossible for me to embrace an opportunity of that kind, as I had no friend to advance a little money to supply me with what necessaries I should want, and defray the expenses of my journey to London. He told me that few necessaries were required; and, as for the expense of my journey, he would lend me money, sufficient not only for that purpose, but also to maintain me comfortably in London until

I should procure a warrant for my provision on board of some ship.

I gave him a thousand thanks for his obliging offer (although I was very well apprised of his motive, which was no other than a design to lay the bastard to my charge after my departure), and accordingly set out in a few weeks for London; my whole fortune consisting of one suit of clothes, half a dozen ruffled shirts, as many plain, two pair of worsted and a like number of thread-ed stockings; a case of pocket instruments, a small edition of Horace, Wiseman's Surgery, and ten guineas in cash; for which Crab took my bond, bearing five per cent interest; at the same time giving me a letter to a member of parliament for our town, which he said would do my business effectually.

## CHAPTER VIII

I arrive at Newcastle—meet with my old Schoolfellow Strap—we determine to walk together to London—set out on our Journey—put up at a solitary Alehouse—are disturbed by a strange Adventure in the Night

There is no such convenience as a waggon in this country, and my finances were too weak to support the expense of hiring a horse: I determined therefore to set out with the carriers, who transport goods from one place to another on horseback; and this scheme I accordingly put in execution on the 1st day of September, 1739, sitting upon a pack-saddle between two baskets, one of which contained my goods in a knapsack. But by the time we arrived at Newcastle-upon-Tyne I was so fatigued with the tediousness of the carriage, and benumbed with the coldness of the weather, that I resolved to travel the rest of my journey on foot, rather than proceed in such a disagreeable manner.

The ostler of the inn at which we put up, understanding I was bound for London, advised me to take my passage in a collier

which would be both cheap and expeditious and withal much easier than to walk upwards of three hundred miles through deep roads in the winter time, a journey which he believed I had not strength enough to perform. I was almost persuaded to take his advice, when one day, stepping into a barber's shop to be shaved, the young man, while he lathered my face, accosted me thus: "Sir, I presume you are a Scotchman." I answered in the affirmative. "Pray," continued he, "from what part of Scotland?" I no sooner told him, than he discovered great emotion, and not confining his operation to my chin and upper lip, besmeared my whole face with great agitation. I was so offended at this profusion that starting up, I asked him what the d—l he meant by using me so? He begged pardon, telling me his joy at meeting with a countryman had occasioned some confusion in him, and craved my name. But, when I declared my name was Random, he exclaimed in rapture, "How! Rory Random?" "The same," I replied, looking at him with astonishment. "What!" cried he, "don't you know your old schoolfellow, Hugh Strap?"

At that instant recollecting his face, I flew into his arms, and in the transport of my joy, gave him back one-half of the suds he had so lavishly bestowed on my countenance; so that we made a very ludicrous appearance, and furnished a great deal of mirth for his master and shopmates, who were witnesses of this scene. When our mutual caresses were over I sat down again to be shaved, but the poor fellow's nerves were so discomposed by this unexpected meeting that his hand could scarcely hold the razor, with which, nevertheless, he found means to cut me in three places in as many strokes. His master, perceiving his disorder, bade another supply his place, and after the operation was performed, gave Strap leave to pass the rest of the day with me.

We retired immediately to my lodgings, where, calling for some beer, I desired to be informed of his adventures, which contained nothing more than that his master dying before his time was out, he had come to Newcastle about a year ago, in expectation of journeywork, along with three young fellows of his acquaintance who worked in the keels; that he had the good fortune of being employed by a very civil master, with whom he intended to stay till the spring, at which time he proposed to go to London, where he did not doubt of finding encouragement. When I communicated to him my situation and design, he did

not approve of my taking a passage by sea, by reason of the danger of a winter voyage, which is very hazardous along that coast, as well as the precariousness of the wind, which might possibly detain me a great while, to the no small detriment of my fortune; whereas, if I would venture by land, he would bear me company, carry my baggage all the way, and if we should be fatigued before we could perform the journey it would be no hard matter for us to find on the road either return horses or waggons, of which we might take the advantage for a very trifling expense.

I was so ravished at this proposal that I embraced him affectionately, and assured him he might command my purse to the last farthing; but he gave me to understand he had saved money sufficient to answer his own occasions; and that he had a friend in London who would soon introduce him into business in that capital, and possibly have it in his power to serve me also.

Having concerted the plan and settled our affairs that night, we departed next morning by daybreak, armed with a good cudgel each (my companion being charged with the furniture of us both crammed into one knapsack), and our money sewed between the linings and waistbands of our breeches, except some loose silver for our immediate expenses on the road. We travelled all day at a round pace, but, being ignorant of the proper stages, were benighted at a good distance from any inn, so that we were compelled to take up our lodging at a small hedge alehouse, that stood on a byroad, about half-a-mile from the highway: there we found a pedlar of our own country, in whose company we regaled ourselves with bacon and eggs, and a glass of good ale, before a comfortable fire, conversing all the while very sociably with the landlord and his daughter, a hale buxom lass, who entertained us with great good humour, and in whose affection I was vain enough to believe I had made some progress. About eight o'clock we were all three, at our own desire, shown into an apartment furnished with two beds, in one of which Strap and I betook ourselves to rest, and the pedlar occupied the other, though not before he had prayed a considerable time extempore, searched into every corner of the room, and fastened the door on the inside with a strong iron screw, which he carried about with him for that use.

I slept very sound till midnight when I was disturbed by a violent motion of the bed, which shook under me with a continual