

BOY OF THE PYRAMIDS

A Mystery of Ancient Egypt



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

RUTH FOSDICK JONES

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Chapter 1

Fourteen Copper Rings

The sun, rising over the desert cliffs, shone across the green valley of Egypt and the broad River Nile right into Kaffe's eyes. It woke him up, and Kaffe didn't like to be waked that way. He scowled. Then he sat up in bed with his eyes still shut tight.

"Num!" he called. "Num!"

There was no answer, so he tried again, louder this time: "Num, draw the curtains!"

Still, no answer came. Suddenly Kaffe heard something that sounded very much like a snore. He forgot that he was going to stay sleepy so that he could take another nap after Num had drawn the curtains to keep out the sun. He opened his eyes and bounced out of bed, and there was Num, his black body shining in the sunlight, snoring peacefully on the reed mat at the foot of Kaffe's bed.

"Num," cried Kaffe, "get up!" He put out his foot to give the black man a kick in the ribs. People weren't considerate of their servants long ago in Egypt, and anyway, Num was a slave. He wasn't used to consideration.

But Kaffe's foot stopped short just before it touched Num's ribs. Beyond the slave was a cedarwood chair, and

folded carefully on the chair was Kaffe's kilt of fine white linen. Not his everyday kilt, but his best one, with his copper-and-turquoise collar laid on top of it.

When he saw that, Kaffe remembered everything and forgot to be cross because Num had overslept and let the sun shine in his eyes. For this was the day his father was taking him to Memphis to spend the copper rings he had been saving.

Altogether Kaffe had fourteen copper rings. He was very rich for a ten-year-old Egyptian boy. That was because his father had given him two fields. The harvest from them belonged to Kaffe, and his father had paid him eight copper rings for his first harvest and six for his second. That very morning he was going to the great city of Memphis to spend the copper rings, all fourteen of them.

With a whoop Kaffe bounded over Num, out of his room, through the house, and into the garden. By the time Num had risen sleepily to his feet wondering what all the noise was about, Kaffe was splashing joyfully in the garden pool.

He wondered what he could buy for fourteen copper rings. He had never bought anything before.

"Let's see," he said aloud. "I might buy a new ball. A husk ball covered with leather. But that wouldn't cost very much. Maybe I could get one of the wooden bakers that kneads dough if you pull a string—or I could get Mother a new bracelet."

Then suddenly he had an idea, such a wonderful idea that he dove under the water and kicked his feet in the air. "I shall buy a dagger," he said to himself. "One with a golden handle and a flint blade, or maybe a copper blade. A real dagger." None of the boys he knew had one, but then, none of them owned two fields like Kaffe. "And," he added, "if it doesn't cost too much, I'll get the wooden baker, too."

Blowing and sputtering, Kaffe stuck his head out of the water, only to have it pushed swiftly under again. "What—," he began as soon as he could speak.

"Look out," said a voice above him, "or the crocodile will get you!"

Kaffe winked the water out of his eyes. His father, Socharis, was standing on the edge of the pool. "And I suppose it was the crocodile who dunked me," answered Kaffe, laughing. Then he saw his father's kilt, all freshly pleated, and his newly curled wig, and the black false beard that Socharis wore whenever he went away anywhere.

"Oh, Father," Kaffe cried, "you are ready to go. You'll wait for me, won't you?" He scrambled out of the pool.

"There is no hurry," answered Socharis. "We shall eat our breakfast here while you dry yourself in the sun."

He clapped his hands. Almost like magic a slave appeared carrying a big bowl of dates, figs, bananas, and grapes. Behind him came two more slaves, one with a bowl of milk for Kaffe and the other with a plate of wheat cakes. This was their breakfast.

“Now, Kaffe,” said his father when they had finished, “as soon as you are dressed, we can start. I shall tell the slaves to get the boat ready.”

Kaffe ran into the house and burst into his room. Num was there waiting to hand him his kilt and necklace and help strap on his papyrus sandals. That was all Kaffe wore, so it did not take him long to get dressed. He was ready in almost as short a time as it takes to tell it.

On a little stand near the door was an ebony box with a border of lotus and papyrus flowers carved around the sides and the figures of the god and goddess of the Nile on the top. In this box Kaffe kept his copper rings. He opened it and counted them to be sure that they were all there, then snatched it up and ran from the room. At the garden door he stopped. Just outside two people were talking, and they were talking about him.

“It is a great deal of money for a little boy to spend.” That was Nasha, his mother. Kaffe sighed. He thought he had better not tell her about wanting to buy a dagger. He didn’t think she would like it.

“Now, don’t worry, Nasha,” he heard his father say. “It will turn out all right.”

“I hope so,” she answered. “But don’t let him spend all those rings foolishly, will you, Socharis?”

“Certainly not. Certainly not,” replied Socharis. “Where is that boy?” he asked, looking around.

“Here I am, Father,” called Kaffe, running out of the house. “Good morning, Mother.”

“Good morning, Son.” Nasha bent down to kiss him. One hand, with the fingers dyed henna color, rested lightly on his shoulder. Kaffe thought she was very beautiful. Her hair, without her wig, was short and black like his. The green paint around her eyes made them look very large and dark, and she wore a soft green robe over her white linen dress.

“What are you going to buy in Memphis, Kaffe?” she asked.

Kaffe had been afraid she would ask that. “Oh, something very fine,” he answered. “It’s to be a surprise. You’ll see when we get home.” He hopped first on one foot, then on the other. “Can we go now, Father?” he asked.

“Yes, I think the boat is ready.” Socharis picked up his gold-headed staff and turned to leave.

“Goodbye, Mother,” shouted Kaffe and tore down the garden path to the big stone gateway on the river bank before Nasha had time to ask any more questions.

Beyond the gateway was the boat. It was a very gay boat. The rails and even the big steering oar were painted brightly in blue and red and black and white. In the stern was a painted canopy under which Socharis and Kaffe could sit out of the sun. Twelve slaves were already bowed over their oars in the middle of the boat, and as Socharis came down the steps, other slaves were making fast a smaller boat with a cloth-covered cabin that they would tow down the river after them. This was the kitchen boat, and on it were still more slaves and reed baskets of food to be cooked for their dinner.

Socharis stepped on board and sat down under the canopy. Num followed with the litter they would need to carry them through the streets of Memphis. The steersman shouted an order, the slaves pulled on the oars and began their singsong chant, and the boat swung out into the river.

Kaffe looked back at the shore. Only the tops of the trees and the awning over the flat roof of the house showed above the high garden wall. Outside the wall were fields where many slaves were working in the hot sun. There was one field in the very center. That was one of Kaffe's fields. His other field was next to it, farther away from the river, and far off behind them both rose the yellow cliffs at the valley's edge. Beyond them was the desert.

Soon the house and the field with the fig tree in the center were hidden from sight behind a bend in the river. Kaffe sat down beside Socharis on a low stool. "Where are we going first when we get to Memphis?" he asked.

He hoped his father would say that he could decide, but Socharis said, "I have an errand to do at the slave market. I need a new field hand and another woman for your mother."

"Oh," said Kaffe. He was disappointed. He did not like to go to the slave market. Sometimes the slaves cried when they were separated from their families. This often happened when one man wanted part of a family and another man wanted another part. Kaffe wondered if the trip to Memphis was going to be as much fun as he had thought.

But it was pleasant on the river. They passed little villages and houses, like the one Kaffe lived in, and tall marshes of papyrus plants. These were reeds from which paper and ropes and sandals were made. Then there were all kinds of boats to watch. One that sailed past them carried a mummy case painted in bright colors and decorated with gold. This was a funeral boat, and the mummy case was a coffin made in the shape of a man's figure. The slaves who rowed the boat were chanting mournfully.

“Are they going to Giza where Khufu is building his pyramid, Father?” asked Kaffe. Khufu was the pharaoh of Egypt, the king who ruled over the whole Nile Valley and all the people in it down to the very last slave. Most of the rich noblemen of the country were buried around the great tomb that he was building for himself.

“Yes. They probably are going to Giza,” said Socharis in answer to Kaffe's question.

After the funeral boat had passed them, they met a nobleman who Socharis knew, bound up the river for a picnic. Then they began to see fishing boats floating down to the marshes at the river's mouth, and trading boats from far up the Nile, low in the water with their cargoes of ivory and ebony and gold. As they drew near Memphis, the river seemed alive with boats. It was fun to be with Socharis because he could always tell what a boat had in it if he knew where it came from.

Kaffe pointed to a big boat. “Where is that one from?” he asked. He knew it must have come from far away, for it was big enough to have a mast and sail as well as oars.

“It has come from Syria with a load of cedarwood,” answered Socharis. “You can smell it, Kaffe.” And Kaffe could. The air was spicy with the smell of the wood.

“That smaller boat over there,” Socharis went on, “brings copper from Sinai.” Soon he had told Kaffe where all the boats came from and what goods they were carrying.

All the bigger boats seemed to be trying to land at once. Sailors shouted at each other, oars scraped together, and every so often there was a sharp snap of an overseer’s whip on a slave’s bare back. Socharis’ boat threaded its way toward shore. The slaves shipped their oars, and the boat slid quietly up to the landing stairs.

Then the litter was set down on the ground so that Socharis and Kaffe could step in. This was a kind of chair that was carried on poles by four slaves, and there was plenty of room in it for Kaffe and Socharis to sit side by side. When they had settled themselves comfortably, the slaves picked up the carrying poles and away they went toward the marketplace, with Num running ahead to clear a way for them through the narrow, crowded streets.

The SARACEN STEED

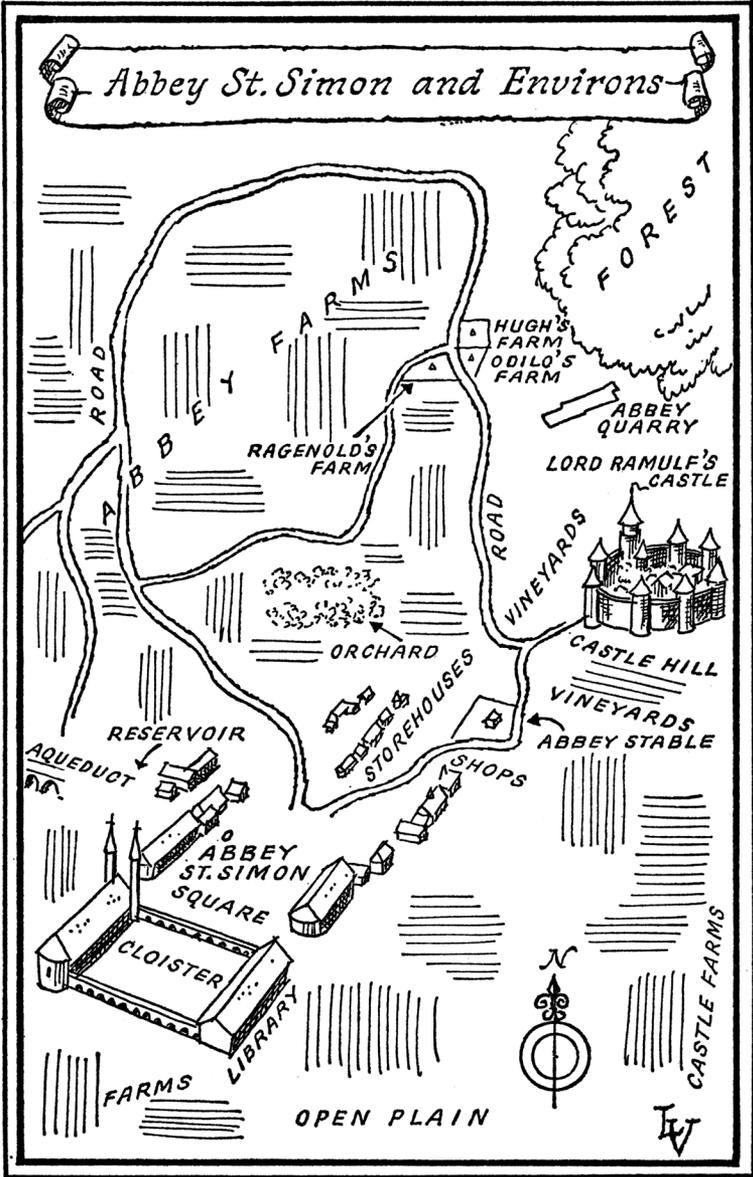
by
Arthur Anthony Gladd



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY



Abbey St. Simon and Environs



In Old Aquitaine

COME, BERNO, no time for dozing!” cried Hugh, pausing in the midst of his chopping one morning in 732 A.D. “We’ve a hard day’s work ahead of us if we’re to finish this task.”

Aptly was September called Wind-month on those plains of southwestern France, rolling toward the far Pyrenees. Through the night, fierce gusts had howled over the area’s fertile farmlands, sending roof-tiles flying, scattering haystacks, and buffeting orchard and vineyard.

A dead tree had crashed to earth through the fence of one of the many farm plots surrounding Abbey St. Simon, and the two sun-bronzed country boys, in homespun tunics and pantaloons and heavy, crudely-made boots, had swung their axes since daybreak, clearing it away. After that, the reed fence which protected the field from the inroads of wild creatures would have to be repaired.

You might not have guessed that the boys were brothers. Hugh, a rangy, growing youth, with brown hair and eyes

and a good-natured face, tended to favor his Celtic forebears who had once occupied this old land of Gaul. Berno, four years younger, and, to his disgust, a few heads shorter, had inherited his crisp black curls and dark eyes from Latin conquerors. His features resembled those of the statues turned up by plows every now and then in the surrounding fields. For here, three centuries ago, as a great, arched aqueduct testified, had stood a Roman town.

That town, as was the case with so many others, had been razed by the barbarian hordes which had overrun Europe when the empire of the Caesars crumbled. It was an era of chaos for Duchy of Aquitaine, in which Abbey St. Simon was located. And out of the mingling of people had sprung boys like Hugh and Berno, part original stock, part Roman, part barbarian—heirs to a striving new Europe.

Young Berno had started the day industriously, matching ax-stroke for ax-stroke with Hugh. But as the sun had mounted higher, he had often stopped to shield his eyes and to gaze apprehensively southward over the plain beyond the patchwork of farm fields. Now, frowning mightily, lost in thought, he had not heard a word his brother had said.

“Berno!” Hugh studied him briefly, then called with a forced grin, “Dreaming doesn’t cut up trees any more than it mends fences!”

Down at the other end of the tree, Berno came to with a start. “I’ve been dreaming no more than you,” he protested. “You’ve looked yonder a few times yourself.”

Ax in hand, Hugh moved to the younger boy’s side, stretching his broad shoulders to ease them from the work of chopping. “So I have ... a *few* times.” He tousled Berno’s hair. “But not between every ax-stroke, lad.”

As he spoke, his eyes swung south and his strong jaw tightened.



*Rainulf the Bold had issued forth with his men-at-arms
from the castle.*

The horizon looked much as it usually did on any Wind-month morning, with the plain meeting a hazy sky streaked with scraggly wraiths of clouds.

But somewhere beyond its distant line the great battle might well be raging at this moment, the battle on whose outcome depended not only his family's future, not only the fate of Abbey St. Simon, but the destiny of all Aquitaine.

Two weeks had passed since Rainulf the Bold had issued forth with his men-at-arms from the castle on the nearby hill. Hugh and Berno had watched as, in dark silhouette, the force had descended to the plain.

Tall Lord Rainulf had ridden in front, head and shoulders above the horsemen who had trooped after him. Behind had trudged a file of foot soldiers, bearing swords and battle axes or shouldering spears.

Southward they had marched to join the army which Duke Odo of Aquitaine was mustering from all his domain to repel the Saracen invaders who had crossed the Pyrenees from Spain.

Since then, there had been occasional news from merchant mule trains carrying north wares from a threatened town, from processions of refugees evacuating the countryside. Their accounts had not been reassuring.

All through the south of Aquitaine, towns and castles had been captured and sacked, farms ravaged, inhabitants put to the sword. Abbeys and churches had been looted, used as stables, burned to the ground. Split into various mounted columns, the invaders had struck this way and that in the whirlwind Saracen fashion which made united resistance difficult.

Then last week, Lady Gertrude, wife of Lord Rainulf's brother, Lord Humbert, and her son, young Master Euric,

had arrived with a small entourage, fleeing their castle only a day's ride south.

They had brought word that the Saracens had remassed and were driving steadily northward, that Duke Odo was marching to head them off, that a pitched and very likely decisive battle was imminent.

Hugh had felt the strain of the days since then as much as anyone had. This morning, with the sun a blazing ball in the dusty sky, with a gritty wind lashing his hair, stinging his skin and smarting his eyes, he had felt especially on edge, though he had done his best to conceal it from Berno. Every whirling dust-devil had seemed a portent of disaster.

"Hugh ..." Berno broke the silence in a small, strange voice. "Do you think it's true that the Saracens—" The youngster took a deep breath. "Do you think they *really* have great, curved swords, twice as long as I am tall?"

"Now where did you hear that?" Hugh's lips compressed.

"Well ..."

"Don't tell me. Let me guess." Hugh made a play of thinking hard. "Was it by chance from our neighbor Ragenold?"

"Nay, not exactly."

"Oh! Then could it have been young Waifer?"

Berno flushed and looked at the ground.

"I knew it!" Hugh said, almost angrily. "Those two. Between Waifer and his father more wild tales have been spread than would fill all the books in the abbey library. I think they must lie awake nights, spinning them out of thin air."

"They didn't spin this out of thin air. They heard it from the peddler."

"What peddler?"

"A peddler who stopped with his cart on the edge of the

abbey farms yesterday. He'd just come up from the south. He knew all kinds of things about Saracens."

"Such as what?"

"He said that even the smallest of them is much taller than Lord Rainulf. That their horses are twice as big as ours. That there are so many of them that if they rode by ten abreast, it would take them a year to pass. And he said—"

"Spare me the rest!" pleaded Hugh. Swinging his ax, he buried it deeply in the trunk of the tree. "I'm honestly surprised at you, Berno," he said more evenly, folding his arms across his chest. "Swallowing stories like that. I almost think that if someone told you the Saracens had two heads and breathed fire and smoke, you'd be ready to believe it."

"But the peddler said—"

"I don't care what he said. Why, he probably hadn't been within miles of the fighting. Don't you see what he was up to? He wanted to draw a crowd about him so that he could sell his wares, and he knew that a sure way of doing so was to cry that he had news of the Saracens. Then he started hawking his goods, making people forget to bargain by filling their ears with frightening tales. Isn't that about what happened?"

"I guess he did sell quite a few things."

"Most of them worthless, no doubt."

"Well, I know you'll think so," said Berno. "But Ragenold and Waifer and many others bought all the amulets he had, especially those that were warranted to—"

"To ward off Saracens?"

"Aye! How did you know?"

"How did I know?" cried Hugh. "Berno, that's all you needed to hear. It shows how much truth there was in anything that peddler said. It also shows how foolish Ragenold and Waifer and others like them are, believing

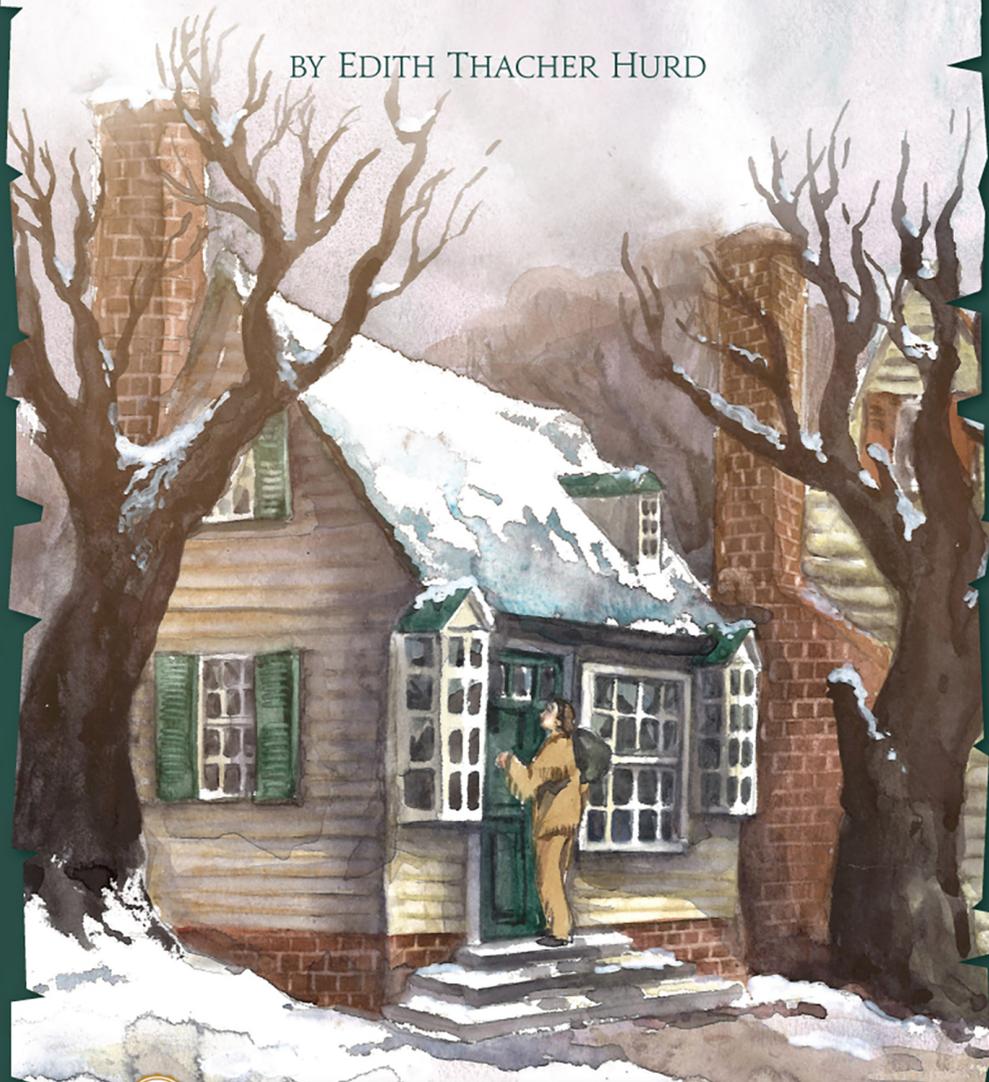


Pulled this way and that, he held on with all his strength.



THE THREE GOLD DOUBLOONS

BY EDITH THACHER HURD



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY



THE THREE GOLD DOUBLOONS

This wonderful tale follows the adventures of a printer's apprentice, Tom Cartwright, in colonial Williamsburg. Not only is Tom caught up in an exciting historical time period, but also in an engaging plot. With skillful writing, the author weaves in inspiring messages, such as how kind actions to those who don't deserve them can come back to bless you in the most unexpected ways.

"When I read this book, I knew it was one that needed to be brought back to the world. It has everything that makes a worthy book: high literary, moral, educational, and entertainment value. If you are a parent that likes to feed your child's minds with literature that uplifts and teaches, this book is a wonderful choice."

Tom drew back into the shadow of the wall, for at that moment, the gate opened and two of the governor's black horses appeared pulling a large wagon behind them. Tom could just make out the dark forms of several men crouching low on the seat. The horses' hoofs must have been padded, for they scarcely made a sound even on the cobblestones of the courtyard.



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CHAPTER 1

Tom shivered a little as he walked. It was the first day of the new year, 1775, and even a buckskin jacket and long leather breeches offered little protection against the sharp January winds. The red clay of the road had frozen into thin ruts that made walking painful in soft leather moccasins.

Stopping a moment, Tom closed his eyes against a spat of white snow swirling out of the cold sky. As he stood, he listened. He listened to the endless sighing of the tall pines through which the road had been cut. He listened to the sound of the snow sputtering against the buckskin of his jacket, and he listened to the silence. Suddenly, now that he had only a little farther to go, Tom was afraid. Deep down inside of him was a new sort of fear that he had never known before, not the kind of fear that crept over you when you were lost in the woods at night and couldn't tell which way to turn. No, nor the kind of fear you had all alone in a cabin when the lightning tore out of the mountains and smashed across the valley, jabbing at the trees in great yellow streaks.

"I almost wish I hadn't come," he thought as he turned once more to face the cutting wind. "I wish I'd stayed home. How am I ever going to get used to living in a town, to wearing the funny clothes they do, to not carrying a gun, and those stiff shoes?"

Suddenly, Tom knew what was the matter. He knew all right, but he didn't like to admit it even to himself. He missed

his ma. He was homesick even though he was fifteen and had been away from home only four days. He couldn't help it. Right now Williamsburg seemed a mighty long way from Frederick County.

Wiping his cold hand across his mouth, Tom swallowed hard and took a firmer grip on the stick holding his little bundle of possessions. Then he broke into a dog-trot. He had gone barely a mile when suddenly, looking ahead, he saw it. There it was. He could just make out the shapes, the fences, and the already tiny spots of light showing through the gray winter darkness.

"Williamsburg!" Tom whispered aloud as he stopped. "Williamsburg." He said the name almost reverentially. Would it truly be his home from now on? Tom felt a heavy pounding inside of him as he hurried forward once more. It was not long before he came to a small sandy path running beside a wooden fence. Inside the fence stood several red brick buildings.

"Must be the college," thought Tom. "Must be William and Mary, 'cause Mr. Thruston told me that would be the first thing I'd come to. 'It's the college at one end of the town and the Capitol at the other, Tom,' he had said. 'And, coming in from the mountains as you will, you'll see the college buildings first.'"

Tom was soon at the gates. He stood looking in. Directly in front of him at the end of a long walk stood a large red brick building more beautiful than anything Tom had ever seen in his whole life. It was topped by a high cupola, and along the front ran a double row of windows, from each of which glimmered a small spot of yellow light. On either side of this main building were two others, smaller, but equally elegant, it seemed to Tom as he stood wondering which Mr. Thruston had told him was the school for the Indian boys.

Too lost in admiration and too absorbed trying to recall

all that he had read of the great men and students who were fortunate enough to study and teach here, Tom paid little heed to the hubbub of voices and clatter of horses' hoofs and carriage wheels that kept up continuously behind him on the main street of the town. Suddenly there came a "Holla. Clear the way."

Tom jumped and threw himself safely out of the way, waiting until the heavy, pounding hoofs had passed. Then he turned. Angrily he looked after the fast-disappearing carriage. Through the dusk he could just make out an arrogant figure sitting erect as a musket in the high seat, the reins held tightly in his hands, while the woman beside him looked neither to right nor left.

There came a whimper, a short growl, and Tom saw something white sprawled in the frozen road before him. Dropping his bundle, he ran forward. A small white dog lay on its side where the carriage had passed. Tom knelt down and, with strong, tender fingers, felt the little creature all over.

"You're not really hurt," he half whispered as he stroked the long white hair back from the little black eyes. "He may have hit you, but he did you no harm."

Then Tom lifted the dog in his arms, and as he stood up, he saw for the first time the large group of people gathered about him. There was anger and resentment in the faces, and Tom's unasked question was answered by a mountain of a man whom Tom took to be a blacksmith, for he wore a great leather apron over his jacket.

"It's our Governor, boy. You must have just come to Williamsburg, or else you'd know better than to be caught even on the sidewalk when His Lordship is out driving."

"Eh," a young dandy beside him agreed. "But what horses, my friend. Beautiful, beautiful! If one must be run down, at

least let us have the Governor's best."

There was a roar of laughter as the dandy stopped speaking. Tom stood bewildered. He did not understand the laughter. Was he being made the laughingstock of them all? Or was this just the manner in which city folk joked with each other? A hot flush of anger spread over his face. He felt his grip tighten on the small dog in his arms. But before he could think how to address the young man, the crowd seemed to melt into the darkness as abruptly and quietly as they had collected, leaving Tom angry and alone in the strange city.

CHAPTER 2

“Then you are a newcomer?”

Tom whirled, for he had not heard anyone come up to him. The man repeated his question as he saw the surprised look on Tom’s face.

“Eh,” Tom answered gruffly, determined not to allow himself to be laughed at again. “I’ve just come. A fine welcome your governor gave me, almost running me down and trampling on this little dog without even stopping to see what damage he’d done.”

The man, who seemed to Tom to be standing almost too close to him now, smiled a queer, crooked smile that looked hardly a smile at all, more the mere twisting of the thin, pale lips.

“That’s right, boy, Lord Dunmore doesn’t care much for us, nor we for him, for that matter. The king sent him to whip our colony back into obedience, but he’s not succeeding too well.”

Once more the lips twisted, and this time Tom looked more closely at the sharp nose, the deep-set eyes, and the narrow little chin down which ran a deep cleft that looked as if it had been molded of soft clay. The man’s clothes were elegant, but since he was standing so close, it was not hard for Tom to see that, despite their elegance, they were threadbare at the cuffs, and there were spots on the waistcoat.

After a moment of silence between the two, Tom, remembering that he had as yet no place to spend the night, asked questioningly:

“I wonder, sir, that is—do you by any chance know a certain Mr. Purdie? Mr. Alexander Purdie, sir. He is a printer. His business is with Mr. Hunter and Mr. Dixon, whom, I believe, are the printers of the Virginia Gazette.”

“Indeed,” the stranger said in a low, half-whispering voice. “We all know the good Mr. Purdie, but may I correct you. He is no longer in business with Hunter and Dixon, for scarcely a month ago he set up his own shop. I have heard it rumored that he did not agree with his two partners in this trouble we are having with the king.”

Tom’s heart sank. Perhaps now that he was in business for himself, Mr. Purdie would not want an apprentice. Perhaps his business would be too small to need any help. Or even more likely, he already had all the helpers he could employ. Tom had dreamed so long of becoming a printer and being allowed to work on the Virginia Gazette, and now—now perhaps there would be no place for him at all.

“He doesn’t even publish the Gazette, then?” he burst out miserably.

“Not yet, boy,” the stranger answered, somewhat puzzled by Tom’s unhappiness. “But I have no doubt he will eventually. In fact, I believe he has already announced such an intention as soon as he gets himself squared away in the new shop. That will give us three Virginia gazettes here in Williamsburg, all blowing away as hard as they can every week.”

Tom gasped. “Three gazettes!”

“Eh,” the older man answered, cocking his three-cornered

hat well over his left eye. “There’s Mr. Hunter and Dixon’s; there’s Mr. Pinkney’s—he took over from Mrs. Rind—and soon there will be Mr. Purdie’s.”

As he spoke, the man made a motion to take Tom by the arm. There was a weak growl. Tom looked down in surprise. The little dog that had, up until this moment, lain quietly in his arms, moved uneasily. Tom could feel her body go tense now.

“Ugly rascal.” The stranger withdrew his hand. Tom was puzzled. The man seemed friendly enough, and the dog had not objected to Tom picking her up and holding her, yet she would not let this stranger so much as touch Tom’s arm. What did she sense that Tom did not? He puzzled over this as he walked back to pick up his small bundle of possessions that he had dropped at the edge of the street when he hurried to the little dog.

“Come, boy.” The stranger followed after him. “I’ll show you Mr. Purdie myself. I’ll be going that way, for I’ve decided that the two of us must seal our friendship in a tankard of ale at the Raleigh. It is most opposite Mr. Purdie’s at the other end of the Duke of Gloucester Street.”

“You mean, sir”—Tom hesitated—“that you would like me to drink ale with you at the Raleigh Tavern?”

Tom remembered that the men who used to come from Williamsburg to talk to his father about the lands to the west spoke often of the Raleigh—the good food, fine company, and happy time to be had there. Indeed, many said it was the finest hostelry in all of Virginia.

“That’s just what I mean, boy.” The man chuckled hoarsely. “We’ll stop there, you and I, and you can tell me more about yourself.”

Tom was silent a moment, thinking. Indeed, he would have

THROUGH THE WALL



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

Alida Sims Malkus



"Let go. Drop!" they cried to her.

CHAPTER 1

The Arrest

S UDDENLY THE sound of heavy footsteps drew nearer, coming up the stairs, tramp, tramp, tramp, nearer, strange and threatening. Hansi's father pushed his chair back from the table, Mama grew white, Hansi set down the forkful of *Wiener Schnitzel* made especially for his birthday dinner. They waited in silence. What was it?

Papa rose noiselessly and started toward the back, but the footsteps were already here at the front door. They did not stop, the door burst open; they were inside.

The Russian police of East Berlin. Five of them!

"You will come with us, Karl Gruner." The red-jowled lieutenant in charge looked fixedly at Papa. Two of the police stepped forward, one on each side of him. They were even taller and stronger than Papa—and armed.

"But what for?" Papa demanded. "What is the charge, Herr Lieutenant?"

"You know quite well, Gruner, and if you don't you will soon. Come along now." The harsh voice of the

lieutenant matched his heavy jaw, the rough stubble on his chin. Hansi would never forget that face. The others were just a blur.

Papa reached down and lifted Hansi in his arms in a tight hug, then turned to Mama. But the police jerked him away. Papa smiled reassuringly at Mama as they led him out. "I'll be back soon, *Liebling*," he said. "Take care of Mama, Hansi."

The soldiers pushed Hansi's father roughly through the door. Mama ran into the hall to gaze after him and wave, but he could not look around. His broad back, his blond head passed beneath the hall light, then the dark of the street swallowed him up, along with the police. The tramp-tramp of Russian great boots receding, that was all.

Hansi threw his arms tight around Mama's waist, and they went back into the room and sat down at the table. He felt cold and empty inside, and his heart was pumping fast.

"But why, Mama?" he pleaded. "What could it be?"

His mother's face was drawn and sick-looking. She did not answer. Suddenly she could not keep back the tears. They fell down her face like a thin waterfall. She put her head down on the table, trying to hide her face in her arms.

Hansi sat silent and still, his blue eyes dark with fear and speculation. What could Papa ever have done? But nothing, that was the only answer. Presently Mama sat up and wiped her eyes. "And on your birthday night," she said, "Your twelfth birthday. But come, Hansi boy; eat your supper now—the good *Wiener Schnitzel*. Everything will be alright."

"I am alright now. Just a little nervous—and disappointed—on your birthday. Papa may be back—even tonight, or tomorrow."

Obediently Hansi lifted a forkful to his mouth and chewed. But he could not swallow. They sat quietly, looking off into space, afraid to see each other's eyes and read the darkling thoughts there.

"Hansi," Mama whispered after a while, "I had best tell you, now. Come sit close to me. So... *Papa may never come back.*" Her breath was coming in wheezes. Now she would have an attack of asthma, poor Mama. He put his arms around her shoulders.

"*Ach,*" she moaned. "We should have gone—gone before—before this happened. Before the Wall was built. Listen, Hansi," she whispered. "You must never tell this. Papa was a prisoner, a prisoner of war—before you were born, the Second World War. After our country was defeated, he—he was taken by the Russians to Siberia, along with thousands of other German prisoners. To Siberia, to the mines. Dreadful, it was bitter cold. Thousands of prisoners died. But after five years of it, Papa escaped. He made his way back here to East Berlin. To his home—but there was nothing left of it. A burned mass of rubble."

Mama's breath was coming in dreadful gasps. "But he found me," she went on after a moment. "We had been betrothed before the war. I had waited for him, so long. And I had my parents to take care of; they were old, they had suffered much. So Papa took another name, and we were married, and stayed on because of the old folk. We moved into this old place—Papa's real name?" She looked fearfully around the old paneled room but could not speak again.

She rose and stumbled toward the couch in the alcove. Hansi put pillows at her back and ran for the medicine.

“Mama, I’ll call the doctor. I’ll go fetch him right now.” He pulled the quilt up over her.

“No, no.” She shook her head. “*He is one* of them, the Reds—they would take you away from me, I know, if they thought I was sick.” She caught his hand and held on to it tightly.

After a while her breathing grew easier, and she seemed to doze. Hansi carefully slipped his hand from her clasp and stood up. He tiptoed over to the window and looked out over the dark streets of East Berlin, so dark and quiet. People were rarely abroad at night; the Wall police would arrest them or take a shot at them.

His eyes roamed the city, looking for the Wall. Yes, there it was, way beyond, there to the west. He could see the row of lights following the River Spree. Then a broken row hidden in places by the buildings bordering the Soviet sector. His father had forbidden him ever to go near there—that terrible Wall which the Russians had built to keep the German people apart, to separate families and let no one leave the east half of the city. The Wall that cut Berlin in half.

Some of the boys at school had watched the Soviet soldiers and the People’s Police build it. First they had strung the barbed wires up, and criss-crossed them, and tangled them, until nothing could get through, and afterwards they began to build a real wall of stone, with spikes and more barbed wire on top.

Papa had taken him down there once himself, to see it. The day they started the Wall was a Sunday, August 13th, 1961. The People’s Police, those were the young trained soldiers of East Berlin itself, and the “Factory Combat Groups,” all armed, stood in a solid line. And there were

armored cars, and big water throwers to keep anyone from passing over the borderline into West Berlin, and tanks—crowds of people were watching on both sides of the Brandenburg Gate. The Soviet police were turning the powerful hoses on West Berliners who were shouting angrily at this new outrage.

“I never thought to see such a thing as this,” Papa had said in Hansi’s ear as he held him up so that he could get a look at the whole thing. “Germans turned against Germans, brother against brother—you will never forget this, Hansi.” Papa had expressly forbidden him ever to go down there again. “It is dangerous, my son, dangerous for all of us, believe me.”

“But there are other Germans on the west side, right on the other side of the barbed wire,” Hansi had said. Some of them were always there, watching. The boys said that there were guns and tanks, as well. Hansi had never seen a tank, and when he asked Papa later if he couldn’t go down with the boys just once his father had been very much upset.

“Do you want to be shot at?” he said fiercely. “They don’t stop at children, remember. The Communists don’t want any German to leave East Berlin, and never forget that Communist Russia is in charge of our city now. Thousands of Germans have already fled, and thousands more will get across to West Berlin,” his father had said.

But why then had the police come and taken his father away? In his heart Hansi knew the answer. The Communists would send Papa back to Siberia, to the mines. This was all due to the war, World War Two, before he was even born. The Allies and Russia had won the war, and they had divided the city of Berlin between



There was starlight, and the sentinel could see plenty well enough.



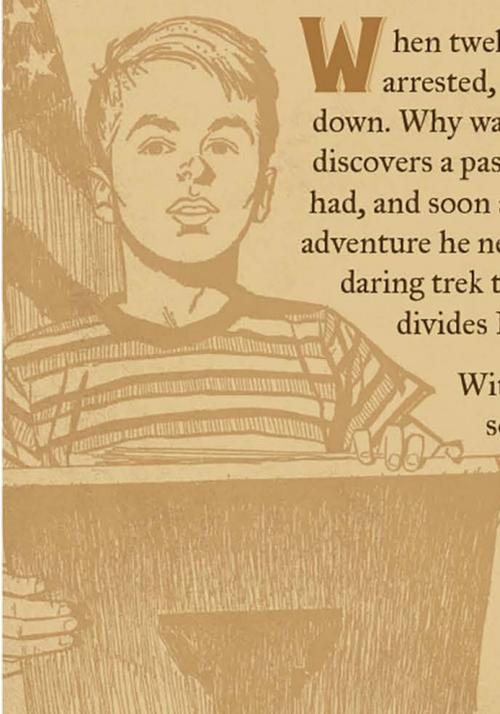
A bullet struck the water beside his head.



"I am speaking today for the American Constitution."

THROUGH THE WALL

Suddenly the sound of heavy footsteps drew nearer, coming up the stairs, tramp, tramp, tramp, nearer, strange and threatening. The Russian police of East Berlin. Five of them!



When twelve-year-old Hansi's father is arrested, his world is turned upside down. Why was his father taken away? Hansi discovers a past he didn't know his family had, and soon after, he embarks on an adventure he never could have imagined—a daring trek to cross the great wall that divides East from West Berlin.

With the help of a small dog and some other friends he makes along the way, Hansi comes to realize that the things he's been taught in post-World War II East Berlin may not provide the best way to live after all.



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