

# **Big Abel and the Little Manhattan**

Cornelius Mathews

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## Advertisement

*"Sundry citizens of this good land, meaning well, and hoping well, prompted by a certain something in their nature, have trained themselves to do service in various Essays, Poems, Histories, and books of Art, Fancy, and Truth."*

## Dedication

– Dedication.

## Letter

TO  
JEDEDIAH B. AULD. –

MY  
TRUE FRIEND  
AND  
EARLY SCHOOL-FELLOW:  
ONE OF THE SIX HUNDRED SCAMPERING BOYS OF THE OLD CROSBY-STREET  
HIGH-SCHOOL:

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE BOOK,  
WITH  
SINCERE AFFECTION AND REGARD.

C. M.

New-York, – *March 3d, 1845.*

### CHAPTER I. The Ghost of New York.

Whoever has sailed up or down the East River in a fog, or driven to Hallet's Cove, Long Island, on a dusty day, or walked the Third Avenue in the moonlight, has been beset by the vision of a great white tower, rising, ghost-like, in the air, and holding all the neighborhood in subjection to its repose and supernatural port. The Shot-Tower is a strange old fellow, to be sure! 'Spite of that incessant buzzing in his head, he holds himself as high and grandly, as though he hadn't the trouble of making shot for the six-and-twenty United States. He never dozes or nods, even in the summer noon; nor does he fall asleep in the most crickety nights, but winks, with that iron top of his, at all the stars, as they come up, one by one; and outwatches them all. There he is, gaunt and clean, as a ghost in a new shroud, every day in the year. Build as you may, old Gotham! Hammer and ding and trowel on all sides of him, if you choose, you cannot stir him an inch, nor sully the whiteness in which he sees himself clothed, in that pure glass of his of Kipp's Bay! If you have seen him once, you know him always. A sturdy Shot-Tower to be sure! and go where you will, you carry him with you. He is the Ghost of New York, gone into the suburbs to meditate on the wickedness of mankind, and haunt the Big City, in many a dream of war, and gun-shot wounds, and pattering carnage, when he falls asleep.

And can you see him from the back steps of the City Hall? Not with the naked eye: but Lankey Fogle standing there, once on a time, had him present to him, and shook at the very thought. He had just come down from the witness-stand, within, and was pausing at the porch, when he was of a sudden smitten on the shoulder, and he heard, audibly, a voice say to him:

"Meet me by the Shot-Tower, at twelve to-night!"

A voice, but nobody; for he looked about promptly, and down the steps, and back through the Hall. No one visible; but he knew the voice, and had a mind yes, he was forced to have a mind, to obey it. Lankey Fogle had the Shot-Tower in fear; but he must go. His hat pressed close upon his eyes eye-brow and brim were part each of the other; a faded blue coat, out at elbows, the broad wrists hanging over his hand; shuffling shoes; and Lankey, a little man, withal: he descended the steps slowly, struck across the Park, by the angle of the Rotunda, and stood on the brow of Chatham street, towards the square. The Jews were as thick, with their gloomy whiskers, as blackberries; the air smelt of old coats and hats, and the side ways were glutted with dresses and over-coats and little, fat, greasy children. There were countrymen moving up and down the street, horribly harassed and perplexed, and every now and then falling into the hands of one of these fierce-whiskered Jews, carried into a gloomy cavern, and presently sent forth again, in a garment, coat or hat or breeches, in which he might dance and turn his partner, to-boot.

Lankey Fogle plunged down the declivity.

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"A coat, sir?"

"Wont you, now, a new under-tog?"

"That 'ere hat!"

"This way, sir, we're the No Mistake!"

And as he slipped out of their hands

"Cotton-baggin', sir, to fill out?"

"My eyes! there's holes for a ratter!"

"He'll be a wreck, I say, 'fore he reaches the square he'll never live past Roosevelt my 'ord for it!"

A soft strain of the flute floated from a back-room, as his figure passed the door, joined by a mellow, low whistle, which are, it is supposed, integral parts of speech in the dialect of Jewry.

Lankey glided along, wrapped up in his coat and inner meditations, for it was nearing night; but it was of a truth as much as he was worth to get himself clear of the young barbarians who hung upon his skirts, as he passed along, and nearly brought them away. It was a bad case certainly, for the sun getting toward a level, shot through and through his apparel, passing in at an elbow and coming out at the hand; or piercing him through, from back to breast, as he turned; till every dusty corner of Lankey was lighted up with a sort of dim splendor.

And when he came by the theatre (the Chatham), the case was worse than all, for he was set upon from the area of the theatre by a swarm of fly-away boys, with

"Lankey! which way, now?"

"I say, Lankey Fogle, where are you larking to?"

"Come in, will you? Kirby on the top round."

"Yes, yes, he's in the big bellows to-night. We'll treat you to a go!"

"And peanuts besides!"

"Keep off, will you, you young serpents!" And he glanced from under his rim.

"Why, what on earth's the matter, now? Lankey in a huff!"

"Three cheers for Lankey in a huff!"

The air was cracked with a small storm of cheers, which, blowing over, they renewed their game; but Lankey stood firm; and when they had all run up to him with a question and a close look in his face, and twisted him round on his heels by the arm, he passed on, and reached the square, thinking of the old white Shot-Tower, and the figure it would make by the time he go there, toward the round hour of night.

He was in the elbow, turning to cross the long walk, when he was called by name. He looked up; it was the little Franklin Theatre, abutting the burying-ground, you know, with all its golden letters blotted out, its balcony for

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the pretty actresses to stand in razed away, its little snug box-office crushed, and the heart and soul of it, in the shape of foot-lights and curtains, taken out; it was a second-hand shop, when Lankey looked up at it, and a mysterious little man standing in an upper window winked at Lankey, and uttered in a low voice:

"All right!"

Lankey looked at him with astonishment written out on his countenance in magnificent large text.

"I say, it's all right!"

The devil it is, thought Lankey; and looked again.

"I say, it's all right," a third time; this time with a knock on the crown of his hat.

Lankey smiled scornfully on the mysterious man and moved on; he had a new motive for speed.

There was Doyer street, yet; a war-path to the west, once, it is said, in Indian times; and if he could get past that once, all would be well. But Doyer street is a queer street, we all know; so crooked and gad-about and whimsical. Ten chances to one if a man enter it at one end with his head on his shoulders it be not turned about by the time he is fairly out at the other. Doyer street was not born, like other streets, in the commissioner's office, but was laid, so to speak, at the door of the square, exposed to the tender mercies, dependant on the charities of chance-comers (for every man is father to this disinterested little by-way), to give it a stone or a touch of a kerb! The eye of the druggist's red bottle was bloodshot, at the corner, for one thing; and there was a melancholy old woman carrying in a bunch of eels with their heads down for another! But Lankey Fogle had a hope, and as sure as there's white light from the moon, he cleared it at a moderate run.

When Lankey stood fairly at the mouth of the Bowery, he looked far away up its broad path as if he could see, looming up on its line, that ugly old Shot-Tower; that everlasting ghost of a tower that, go where he would, was in Lankey Fogle's eye, without an eye-stone to take it out. But he saw instead, this time, how, moved by a patriotism out of bounds, the whole air about this other theatre was indescribably hung with flags; a general hanging out, there seemed to be, of all the bunting of the country. The rope was strong; the flags were thick; and they waved away, shutting out the sky and making a better heaven for the East Bowery gazers to look up at and live under.

And black Vulture, that marvellous steed, how he came down the great, black, gaping precipice, upon the bills, striking the printer's ink from his heels, like fire! And the patriotic Putnam, how he held on and clinched his teeth and set his hat fiercely a-cock! The bills were huge and yellow, and the type fearfully large; and how the ragamuffins plunged down the steps, and the muffin-eaters rushed up! Lankey Fogle's resolution shook within him; his feet quivered in his shoes with doubt; and he was on the eve of throwing himself in the wake of a chimney-sweeper down the pit-entrance, when, looking straight before him, at the bill, his eye, in spite of itself, fell upon a portentous "Beware!"

It was enough: he hurried on as though the devil were at his back. And although now and then accosted by a Bowery Boy with a rough hand, and run against in token of affectionate recognition by a big vagabond, Lankey, all things considered, made good speed; and, before he well knew it, was out upon the Avenue; and then he began to quake.

He had not gone many steps in this direction when an arm was quietly thrust into his own; and he found himself marching abreast of a stranger. He looked around. The stranger was a short man in a dusty coat, with a red, blossomy nose. What was the stranger's business with Lankey Fogle?

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There was a mighty din upon the Avenue, and it was not easy to tell. The hard riders were coming in from Harlem, and the road roared with the spinning of wheels, and the air was thick with flying dust. There were men, solitary, in little gossamer-built sulkies, who seemed borne along on the air itself: and men in couples in light waggons; and hard-drinking parties of four in barouches; and gentlemen far gone in close coaches; all in tremendous speed as if some great event were coming off immediately, a mile or two ahead, and they bound to be there at the peril of their lives. Then they were mightily bothered by men on horseback, who, taking each the footpath at the side of the road, laid themselves out on their horses and swept everything clean before them. Then by great lumbering butcher-boys, who, on shambling cart-horses, came down the Avenue in troops, allowing themselves to be tossed about the road like so many hulks fallen into an eddy they could not manage; scrambling hay-carts, with the hay off, returning, and running their scraggy poles and shelving into the ribs of travellers, without the slightest reference to utility or ornament.

So, with all they had a hard time of it, Lankey and the stranger. But they had got by this time at the cross-road that strikes off to Cato's; and there began to be prospect of conversation; and happy that there was, for Lankey Fogle was smarting for it.

"Sir!" said the stranger, turning full upon Lankey at a point where they began to have a glimpse of the Tower, "this is the most important event of your life!"

Lankey did not deny it.

"It involves the destiny," continued the stranger, "the destiny, I say, of you and your posterity to the latest generation."

The proposition was laid down and no one opposed it.

"Whether the hopes of mankind are to be blighted by the course you shall adopt to-night, remains to be seen!"

It did.

"Remains to be seen," he resumed; "And how far you are worthy of the trust reposed in you "

Their noses were close together; and they watched each other like dogs.

"By the confiding and generous Henry."

Lankey Fogle seized his hand.

"I understand you," said Lankey "enough said!"

The stranger buttoned his coat and went into a small pothouse by the road-side. Lankey Fogle took the road again, as far as Cato's, and was forced to go in: it was not the Cato's of infancy, the Cato's governed by that venerable and worthy and dusky man, in his little cropped pate and clean apron: when stages from far countries (Rye, and Sawpitts, and Danbury, and Cross River) came jingling, with their merry chains, to the door; the driver dismounted, and the inside gentlemen dismounted, and there was a mighty bringing out of lemonade and crackers and sugar-biscuit to be tendered in the most gallant style to the green-veiled beauties within. No, no, that Cato's was gone away; a great grave had been digged for that, a clean white cloth had been spread over it, and it was buried beyond resurrection. That Cato's had been launched on the stream of time, and had gone backward, like an ark of peace and comfort, and true jollity, sailing to whence it could not return. But there stood the great white Tower over the way; reproaching it silently for parting company: for tavern and tower they had known each other from the corner-stone: and Lankey Fogle hurried in, for he thought the old Tower some how or other stooped his

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back to the very door of the new Cato's, to see what kind of nonsense could be going on there now that the old soul was gone.

Lankey called for a Monongahela, hot-and-hot.

The landlord brought it himself.

"A queer night this," said the landlord.

Lankey Fogle took a long pull.

"A skimmery shimmery night, sir," pursued the landlord.

Another pull toward the bottom.

"The Shot-Tower has been busy as a bee all day to-day; and such a singing as he's kept up!"

Lankey Fogle admitted it by his manner of setting down the glass.

He went out very quietly, winking at the landlord in a sleepy way; at which the landlord, in turn, shook his head. As he got into the road again, a great hay-cart was passing, so high piled up, that the moon now abroad, seemed to be sleeping in its top among the fresh-mown blades. His heart sunk within him. He entered the wide gate at the Mount Vernon school, where the trotting-course used to be. He passed through the orchard. There was a shout behind him; it was the city leaving off its work, with a cheer. There was a mighty blaze in the sky; the city lighted up for the night. How green the grass was! how it sparkled and winked and laughed in the clear moonshine! But there was a shadow on it now a huge shadow, made neither by man, nor house, nor tree; it was the dark side of the old Shot-Tower; and when Lankey looked up, how wickedly and wilfully, cool and self-possessed, that old white ghost of a Tower held himself! Not inquisitive, nor overbearing, but scandalously calm and indifferent. Lankey Fogle was alarmed, much more than if he had pitched himself head-foremost into Lankey's waistcoat, and offered downright fight; and when he saw in its shadow a figure leaning down and delving the earth he leaped the fence! Was it to keep his appointment, or fly from it?

## **CHAPTER II. Big Abel and the Little Manhattan come to terms; and get a Night-View of the City.**

"Hillo!"

A voice again as at the City Hall porch: and this time a body. It wasn't the Shot-Tower that spoke, as you might suppose; but the figure that delved the ground rose up, slowly, bringing with it out of the earth, some burthen or other in its hand (that was clear); and leaning his spade against the Tower came forward, now, getting towards the light, bearing by a ring an oblong iron box.

"Hillo I say!"

Lankey Fogle hadn't said a word as yet: and the other stepped out into the moonlight. He was a goodly figure to look on: a tall square person: a new hat it shone like a cat's back in the clear light straight out at the rim: a new blue coat, brass-buttoned: pantaloons of a drab tint: and in boots that as he walked whispered in a pleasant creak of the shop they had lately left: he stood, as I said, a goodly figure to look at, square upon the ground; with the small oblong iron box in his hand.



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Lankey Fogle paused in contemplation a second or so: and then went forward and took this other by the hand.

"I'm glad you've come," said the holder of the box. "I began to have a doubt."

Lankey Fogle looked up at the moon. There was something that glistened, like dew, creeping down his cheek.

"It's hard," said the other. "No doubt of that." And he wrung Lankey again by the hand. "But it's the best we can do, I believe. The Island is clearly ours," he went on to say. "Yours or mine: from his snout at the Battery to where he flanks off at Kingsbridge and Harlæm. One of us knows that: whichever of the two it is: and if that Supreme Court of Judicature, as they call it, had its due it would sit in that nice building over there, and never have leave to adjourn."

Lankey's eyes glowed in the dark and looked toward the Prison, off the shore: where it sate in the clear night, a great square cold block, locking in, like a stone with a toad at its heart, as it did, so many pale men and women, drearily.

"I've had enough of this," pursued the other. "Loitering about the courts: opening attorneys' doors, softly on their hinges: and taking off my hat to the judges, going in and out. Ten years is enough, I think; with getting called up (they had you to-day) to testify to all the rumpuses about the door."

It was enough. Lankey acknowledged that by being there.

"Isn't it wonderful, now, there never was a lawyer to be found among all them hungry, starving, trotting, dancing fellows, to take up our cases cases involving the Property and Buildings of all this City there was a chance for 'em, I should say, to make a figure in! Nobody for Plaintiff, in *Fogle* versus the *Corporation*; or, as I thought it ought to run, *Corporation* at the suit of *Abel Henry Hudson*. The Bar has been in fits ever since our case was first opened in the offices. That's clear: and they'll never wake up or come to, I'm afraid. We are to make a verdict for ourselves. Is that it?"

Lankey Fogle took his hand again. That was it.

"We are friends?"

"I hope so," Lankey made answer. "Big Abel we are!"

This was Big Abel, then! as hearty a person as you'd see in many a day: with his fair blue eyes and sturdy girth.

"And we'll do as we talked of!" said Big Abel. "Little Manhattan (as you think your title rightly runs) are we agreed?"

The Little Manhattan was silent at the question. So silent that he seemed to be a part of Nature there: as one of the dark, old, slumbering, silent trees: and not a man of speech.

Hard, hard it was to him to come to any terms by which his Great Inheritance, as he in his poor visionary way accounted it, should pass away; to part with any share the least or greatest of all that wide domain the City held. It was the best (Big Abel said): and so it was. The Bay rippled gently: as in counsel to the act: softly the old oak trees whispered, far on high, holding council thereabout themselves: and toward the moon the old Tower held up its head, and white as she and fair to look on, might have agreed with her that this of Big Abel and Lankey was well done. Done it was: and, out at the Mount Vernon gate again, they struck across the country.

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There is a little hill there, and climbing that by winding paths, through an orchard, they got upon the road. Beyond, descending now, they come upon the sunken meadows, with little rills running, creeping rather, here and there, and glittering in the moon. About, a few late fellows, the frogs were piping, in a revel of their own; and now and then, as Lankey and Big Abel glide along, some little birds, troubled in their dreams, stirring in the bushes. In the midst of all this stillness or calm motion of the night, a figure passed them: in the very middle of the field: a figure, singing.

It was quite clear who this was; without a question. A Poor Scholar who had wandered out into the open country, and the clear night, to coax away certain cares that pressed at his heart: to think over a past full of gloom and sadness and hard perplexities; and to call up as he wandered on a fair shape whose shadowy hand he sought in vain, for it flew away ever as he stretched his own toward it. Pale he was, indeed, but with eyes lit as the night was with a more than common and day-time lustre. His apparel one could see was plain and darkened into a better black than belonged to it in broad day-light, by the friendly night. And yet, poor and sad, and sorrowful as he was, as you would suppose, he went on his way singing a cheerful song; blessing everything about him, whether it was the green earth his foot trod upon, or the air that caught his fingers as he shook them in chorus to his singing, or the blue, far-away sky he looked up to often as he walked.

"William the Poor Scholar!" said Big Abel to the Little Manhattan, as he crossed them. "He had a case in Court once, I recollect. It was all about a book, and the judge said it was a glorious thing to write a book; and that's all he got for it!"

Lankey Fogle recollected tales of sages and medicine-men, and prophets among the old tribe that once sate in the Island; and he couldn't call to mind the case of one who hadn't been well-fed, well-clothed, well-lodged; down to his old age; and then laid in the earth with lamentation.

Well. They were on Murray's Hill now. The moon had gone down, and where they stood they saw the city by his own light, the winking of his own eyes, so to speak, and no other. It was silent so silent they might have heard him breathe in his sleep almost. There were his stores, and his churches, and his warehouses, and his forges, all asleep! All but his great long Streets, and they were wide awake as they well could be, on a short allowance of oil, chasing each other up and down, crossing hither and thither and round about with long lines of dozy lamps, plunging into the hollows, climbing the slopes and far declivities, and blinking at each other to keep awake. That was all they could make of it, Big Abel and Lankey; till by and by there crept out of it, as out of a dark womb, a coach followed closely by a hearse making speed toward the country. And this passed away like a mist, bearing a body (a murderer's self-smitten, no doubt, for such a one had been lately taken from the prison) toward an old graveyard at East Haddam, in Connecticut, with no other attendants save the wild flying horses and their driver, and the two within, the brother and the mistress of the suicide. Pry keenly as they would into the wide domain they discerned that, and nothing more. When by and by Lankey Fogle, listening, in the dead stillness heard the beating of a doleful bell, and then what seemed to his ear like the drumming of the partridge in the woods, from down the city; a Phoenix rather; for presently there sprung a mighty flame (how grimly Lankey Fogle smiled at that!) which swallowed in an instant all the dusky light: put out the lamps: and brought up swifter than in a goblin dream the shining house-tops far away, and glittering vanes, and yellow caps: in which Lankey Fogle and Big Abel stood out upon Murray's Hill, that you might have seen them many a mile around. And then it fell: a great shouting that kept it company falling with it: and all was dark again. Big Abel and Lankey came down the hill, by the way of the old road, and met going toward the city a countryman in a felt hat, with a herd of cattle. Nothing passed, except that Big Abel asked how many head he drove. Lankey Fogle spoke not a word. He had another thought, moving among the great, green trees, that huddle together and make a wood of themselves, just there. They were aiming for the Reservoir: the one off Bloomingdale: and crossing a few meadows: then a road: then the rail-track that hurries forward here, with a spring to clear the gloomy Tunnel, not more than three miles away, they were under its very wall. It was Lankey that led this time: and climbing the steps, Big Abel close after, they came upon the wall. A goodly Mug, in truth, for the city to drink from. But that wasn't it. A gloomy face, with all sorts of strange, fantastic eyes, shining in it everywhere. Nor that. It was here, as Lankey made known to Big

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Abel, where the old Manhattan in the Indian time stopped pursuing his game: and well he might, for at that day 'twas all a wide, waste, dreary flood beyond, so it is said. He claimed beyond this wall no right and made it over, to Big Abel, once and for ever. Inside this line, he set his claim.

With their backs against the city as they looked abroad toward the unhoused country a man in a woollen cap, and lame withal, hobbled out of the little box at the middle of the wall, and shouted after them

"Ay ay there what do you want?"

It was a gruff voice; and Big Abel and Lankey halted.

"What do you want, I say?"

Big Abel looked into the Reservoir, then down the wall, fifty feet or so, and made answer

"We're here to look after our property!"

The woollen cap went away with great speed, and closing the door of the box, mounted a chair inside and looked through a window over the door.

"Madmen no doubt, got away!" he said.

He watched till he was quite weary in the leg: and nothing came of it: except that Lankey and Big Abel rambled the wall: then he unchaired himself and went to bed, making up his mind as well as he could to have to drag the Reservoir in the morning.

Without reference to the woollen cap they got to the ground, and made for a little public house they knew of in that suburb; catching far-off glimpses down side-streets of the river, with a watchman now and then; or what they supposed to be a watchman; a something silent and monumental with a leathern top, and lifeless stick hanging at the side. And, now they had a view of the little public house they were glad, by his windows, to see him yet awake. The city all about there looked so stark and deep in slumber; the little public house the only sould astir all round; and going in, Big Abel and Lankey found there was work there, and plenty of it, without anything from them, for about a table with a speckled, oil-cloth top, four boys were hard at play with cards. One of these was a little fellow, with a thin, pale face, and eyes so broad and dark and mournful, they seemed always on the very edge of tears. With cards, but in a game of their own devising, the process and order of which (it was called Newspaper) seemed to be this: That the two and fifty cards were inscribed each on its face with the name of a city journal: Morning, Evening, SemiWeekly, Weekly: with an ironical reference, by the way, in some cases, for these gentlemen have a turn for that: and distributed to the four young gentlemen equally. Now, the forfeit lay here, that at each round the holder accounted on the table with a chalk, for the value, at news-boy rates, of the thirteen journals in his hand, and the difference between the two lowest was the penalty against the lowest, payable in meat and drink.

It so happened (as it came out in the course of time), that the luck, shape the dealing as they would, fell against the little pale-faced boy. The games to play, were three.

"Now for the Albany-brewed!" This was the cry at the end of the first round, raised by a pock-pitted player, with a frayed black neck-cloth raking the table as he bent over his cards.

The Albany-brewed came in, in four glazed mugs.

Another game: the little, pale-faced boy fishing in his pocket again, short of a penny to pay for the poached eggs.

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"Broke!" said the pock-pitted player.

"He must go out!" said another over-grown fellow, who was disposing of the eggs with his eyes as fast as he could.

"To be sure, he must!" returned the pock-pitted player: and without further ado, they proceeded this was strictly according to the rule and usage of the game to hustle him. He resisted a little: not much. One of the players spoke for him, but it was of no use; and when the scrambling was over on the outside they came back presently, bringing with them a new boy: re-opened the game: and on the third hand (going against the new-comer, with a rush) they ordered oysters, and clearing off the cards, set in for a regular time. Somebody was crying at the door: but this was nothing: and, through oysters and poached eggs, by comfortable stages they came upon the beer. Three games more: all for beer this time: and if the house had been a mile wide, and a couple or so high, it would have been hardly big enough to hold them. Long ago, though, Big Abel and Lankey Fogle had seen the way through their business; for at the very coming into the little stall they had entered upon it, by Big Abel's clapping his oblong box, with the ring towards him, on the table, swinging up its lid, and saying,

"There's my proofs!" called for Lankey's.

All that Lankey Fogle did, was to call out to the landlord to put more light on, which being done, he threw off his hat, turned about and looked calmly on Big Abel. There was the straight black hair, the swarthy skin, the slumberous and autumnal eye. There was no mistaking these. The Little Manhattan, beyond a doubt! And now Big Abel where are you? A little musty scrap, out of the box, another, and still another. It seems so. In truth it does. Old Henry Hudson's lineal heir: great-grandson, it would seem. Lankey Fogle (this was a name he got from idle boys, and not by birth), great-grandson to that fierce old chief, who swayed with iron, this Island once, heading his red Manhattanese! Big Abel, great grandson to the old navigator-trader, of brave English blood. By right of Nature this city, built it who did, is the Little Manhattan's clearly, all. Big Abel claims, as first discoverer (Lankey Fogle glares on this); but, better still, purchase of some old chief or other. He thinks it was the same chief that Lankey claims from: but this he can't make out so well. The oblong box is shut again: the city is between them, but whose, who can tell? To-morrow they will set forth, dividing it for themselves: each taking what he can, in fairness and good will. For they are friends now. Perfect confidence: perfect confidence between them. The long mistrust with which they have lowered at each other through the courts is ended now; melted into a fine, twilight mist; in which each seems magnified and gentle to the other. To-bed, now, not as for many years, but hopeful of their own. Yes these, so far apart in many things, so close together in their fortunes now are whimsical enough to make belief that the old merchant-navigator and the old Indian chief are still abroad through all these streets, in spirit; that, somehow or other, as the color of the soil shows itself in the tree, they are still out of their very graves, holding to the city as their own. Well! we shall see what came of it.

### **CHAPTER III. How it goes the First Day: with the City Waking up.**

Breakfast for the Little Manhattan and Abel Henry Hudson (known as Big Abel everywhere)! Spread in an upper chamber, with a cheerful look out at the window, on the river: a snowy cloth: a roasted duck, shot on the river, not far away: a steak of savory deer: a pile of honest buckwheat cakes. Big Abel fell to, as became his girth; but Lankey, quietly, and thoughtful of other viands that came into his mind and offered themselves.

Then, brightening up after a while, how pleasant they were: talking over plans and routes through the city; which course now, which now.

"I shall claim all I can!" said Big Abel.

Lankey made no objection.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

"He was a navigator, you know, my great-grandfather?"

Very well.

"A trader?"

Well again.

"A builder, with a touch of carpenter's craft in his day?"

Very well, too.

"And now, what are you going to claim?"

"We shall see!" said Lankey. He said nothing more, and they set out. Big Abel paying the bill, by the way, to start.

It was a bright and cheerful morning, this, on which the Little Manhattan and Big Abel set forth to divide the City: Pilgrims both, of good heart, and bent to seize, each what he could, in fairness, to himself. A clear day before them, as ever lit the Island from its first day down; so clear, the eye commanded what it would, far away or near. Nothing that day was lost to view: each house came out, in the pure atmosphere, and stood forth for itself. A man a mile away was to the eye as much a man as though he stood at hand: the spindle post spoke up, so to say, for every one to look at him, as much, quite as much as the steeple in his bulk. With spirits wakeful and alert, they set out; and going in toward the city's heart a little, were shortly at the spot, the very spot, where the blue omnibuses come from. They stood about, half a dozen of them, waiting the coming forth from a low, white office, of a bush-whiskered man of sun-burnt look, who every two minutes or so appeared, accordingly, and saying, "Now!" turned on his heel, and went in again. Whereupon one of the blue stages put forth at a creeping pace, to get speed as it went on; another closed in from behind, and the drivers, three in their box seats, and as many, with a straggler thrown in, on the walk, kept up a hubbub of talk for a few minutes more. Their talk that morning, as it is very often, no doubt, was all about a famous whip of their fraternity, who had come to his death a week before. Not by diving to the ground, by reason of a jolt, from the omnibus top (in despair of going any faster); nor under a wheel, coming against his own with him between (dropped there, in the hurry of making change, to get on); nor ridden to death astride the pole (pulled to a saddle there, by a combination of the horses out of a spite for too few oats and too much tonnage, on a sweltering day). None of these: but quietly, of a fever, as any other man might, in his bed; with an old aunt and a grandmother, from the country, or some such worthy bodies, at his side.

"He was a regular two-twenty-seven!" said one of the drivers, talking, somewhat grandly, in the air, you see, over to another, high up in his box, too.

"His muscle to hold in with was a caution," the other answered, picking up his reins as the lamented used to.

"He was to have driv' twenty in hand, on a wager, next week," spoke up one from the walk, a little man, "and he'd have done it!"

He was a little man, this speaker; but how their eyes sharpened and their ears grew when he spoke. He was stoop-shouldered, too, and hardier of aspect than the others: a hard-headed little fellow: and he held all these rugged drivers in his hand like so many hackneys. What an Authority that little man was! and when he said, "He'd have done it!" it was settled for ever.

There was no doubt he would: they all allowed it, in chorus.

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Then it came out, in further discourse, that the gentleman in question had made the quickest trip, from the Village to White Hall, anywhere on record, since the first stage was set on the route in too few minutes to speak of. But there was another gentleman mentioned, he was present, the little driver himself, in person, who had carried a heavier fare. Fourteen inside, I think it was, two with him on the seat, a cradle a-top, with a family market-basket, a boy; in fact, there was no end to the load; and he might as well have moved the village down into the city, come to that, churches and all, while he was about it.

This omnibus-life, the Little Manhattan's or Big Abel's? For the build (Henry Hudson having, it is said, brought the first wheeled carriage into the Island), Big Abel's; but then for horse-speed, that being at the pace and a good deal after the manner, of the wild-horse Indian scampers, Lankey's. This being the case, they hurried on, leaving them to run without jurisdiction, as they always will, I guess.

Further on, they were passed by great swarthy charcoal waggons, leaping along, with a tinkling twang from underneath, as though they had been great grasshoppers with iron lungs. Then they encountered, coming out, masons in green baize jackets, bearing stone-hammers in their hands, and full of speed. They were aiming for the suburb, where they had work to do; plenty of it. The Little Manhattan looked at them gloomily as they passed.

"Stretching stretching:" this was what Lankey said to himself. "Always stretching. Will he never be still, and stop growing?" He meant the City.

Big Abel gave them a good-morning; and seemed, by the cheerful look he wore, to send his heart along with them as they hurried on.

There was a pause between Lankey and Big Abel; when Big Abel spoke up; his mind, somehow or other, went back to it.

"You met a man on the Avenue, yesterday?"

Was it a man with a nose like a pink?

"That was the man: and he told you I was waiting?"

He had: accosting Lankey by Big Abel's appointment, it seemed, to jog him on his way to the Tower.

"There was another; down the Square," Lankey said, "in front of the little Franklin Theatre, who knocked his hat on his head, after a strange way!"

Another! Big Abel knew nothing of this one.

By this time they had come to where a master with his clerk was bringing out in state, in front of his shop, a Giant Boot (a miserable creature, though, to the Nabob on the other side of the town); and Lankey Fogle began to talk of an old village that used to be thereabout in the Indian times, to recall what he had heard many gossips tell, of dusky wigwams, and council-fires, lit there, just where they stood, and trophies hung upon the trees.

He would have claimed this region for his own, for this; and Big Abel allows, if he will but show a single cinder of the fires yet burning, a single trophy, a single pole still up, that it is his. Lankey Fogle looked about: near, far away, into the air, upon the ground. Nothing, Lankey! Nothing. But after this, turning a corner not far off, his eye grew bright. There stood before them on a little pedestal, a panther's skin about his loins, a feather in his raven hair, in one hand a bow, tawny too in every limb, a figure that seemed to have possession of the spot by right. A tobacconist's; this a dumb Indian; proffering to all comers, with the other hand, cigars. Yet, simple as it is, and cheap, Big Abel staggers at recollection that the town is held in every part by such as these.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

The iron box he bore began to grow heavy enough: the thought even came into his mind of dashing it in pieces on the ground: how could his title hold against these swarming figures everywhere? But Lankey claimed; this was a great comfort to Big Abel; the shops alone and did not say these Indians held the city, as he might, in trust for him.

Presently Big Abel took possession of a great range of merchants' shops (the seeds of which were sown, no doubt, by trader Captain Hudson, long ago); and they went on more cheerfully than ever. Cheerfully? Aye proudly, and more than that. Looking at the majestic style in which he walked that street, only, you'd have certainly thought Big Abel owned the city, without any reference whatever to his iron box!

Big Abel began to see his way clearly; for wherever they went he saw, shops, shops; the trade that first set foot upon the soil with Henry Hudson, carrying all before it in a flood. Wigwams! He scorned (in his soul, that is to say) the thought! What were bare tents, with little dusky old women and papooses, diving in and out, to these gay rows with ladies, fair to see as day, gliding in and forth again, the many-colored show about the doors, the smiling clerks within; this was fairy-land to him, the other heathendom and worse.

There went tumbling before them just then, before swarthy Lankey, fair-complexioned Abel, in the sunshine a little negro-boy. His garments, coarse and clean, were blotched with patches: no doubt of that. A rainbow would have faded before him, and made a leap into the sky for another set of colors at the very sight. He was black: very black. His hair was woolly as the old ram's fleece. His foot, flat as the ground it stood on. And yet was there ever such a great black earthen jar-full, with its two wide ears, of genuine jollity, the very extract and oil of gladness, such a bounding, rolling, laughing piece of broad mirth? A great green bag, plethoric with morning lessons, slung over his shoulder: sometimes on the sidewalk, then over the gutter into the very middle of the street, at the tail of an omnibus, on his own account: then back again with a cry for the shoulder's sake of some other: then zigzagging his way along the stoops, making the most, with his great broad eyes, of the shop windows ('specially of that everlasting white lady in the pinched-up waist, seated by the side of the gentleman in superhuman blue pantaloons): the day was brighter, and bluer, and happier altogether, for that cheerful negro-boy, depend upon it!

As he rushed between the two, carolling and capering like a colt, Big Abel dropped, unseen, a piece of silver in his gaping bag; and Lankey Fogle dropped not money, for money *he* had none, but a look so kind and magical after it, it must have changed the coin to yellow gold before it slid to the bottom.

Another dumb Indian! Under the same circumstances as before, only this one wore a short blue frock, and carried a box in his hand as though he was setting out on a journey in a great hurry, but not forgetting to take his cigars with him.

Farther down there stands a Half-Way House; the Hurrah House, the neighbors call it; where the omnibus-drivers halt in hot summer days, and resort of nights; with heavy streaked and dabbled columns; a mighty lamp of many colors above its porch (a mere child though, like the boot, to a lantern on the East side), great enough to entertain a small drinking party in. But as there was no ladder, just then, to get in by, Big Abel and Lankey passed into the house himself. Now this house is a noisy house, and a dirty-waitered house, and badly-watered, and meagre and thin in his drinks. But then he's proud of his steaks; and that brings him up again. With good reason, too, for Lankey and Big Abel lingered so in their meal, and were so assuaged and subdued and put down, in spirit, by these same dainty steaks of his, that it was a long while before they got forth again.

They idled the afternoon away; that was their humor; without accomplishing much, and at dusk came to Potter's Field (the Parade Ground, now, you know), where they took possession of a bench. The hour fell on them like a spell; and they were silent for a long while. There were a few rambling there, for the fresh air; maid-servants with children; but these, as night closed in, went out at the various gates, one after the other, leaving Big Abel and the Little Manhattan alone in the summer darkness. Now and then a weary man, coming from his work, crossed the long path, to shorten his way home; but these came only at intervals, and so drearily and un-life-like, that all was

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as subdued as though they were mere shadows.

In the still evening air, far, far on high, a night hawk, wheeling up and down, or crossing to and fro, kept up his lonesome cry, and seemed like a troubled spirit that had broken away from the city, and yet was somehow tangled and perplexed within its view.

"This is mine, I think!" Lankey said; but so sorrowfully that he seemed to claim a property that would be a burthen to his spirit to own.

Big Abel pondered the claim. He recollected how from time to time, the plough, when they were shaping this field, had used to come upon a mouldering bone; that even now old flinty arrowheads were found about; it was but a waste ground, a few idle trees: he could not deny the claim that Lankey made. He consoled himself however by seizing a great church and place of learning, standing before them (Christian Faith and Useful Knowledge came over passengers, you know, with Captain Hudson), and on great squares of stately houses all around.

The Little Manhattan saw none of these, nor cared to see them; for out of the dark there sprung to him, dusky men who bore to grassy hillocks there, a warrior with his bow, a maiden in her long black tress, a prophet in his cunning robe, and laid them down; and though they turned their back on these now for a time, and went away, they came again, and still again, and never, through all time and change of place, forgot to come, and think in peace and kindness that here their wise man, warrior, maiden lay. Willingly and cheerfully, so to speak of it, the Little Manhattan took this sacred field, and yielded up the church without a stint!

Long lingering, at length they rose; wondering at each other not a little, and trying in the dark to guess each other's thoughts.

They passed an open window, and out of it came a voice whose sadness and sweet tarrying on the tones it poured out checked them, as though they had some part in its gentle sorrow.

They had listened for a minute, when the Little Manhattan turned on his friend, and said

"This is part of the song sung in the open fields by that Poor Scholar!"

"It is," he answered; "and this is William's mistress. You see her, crossing the light now!"

Lankey did: a fair gentle shape that might have lived in the sun-beam or moon-beam for ever, and fallen by no act or seeking of its own, to earth, among the shadows and gross cares of common clay.

But she was clearly not at ease. She moved about, singing sometimes as before, then silent, glad, pensive, hopeful, despairing, as a scholar's mistress, in this land of ours, well may be.

Then she came to the window and looked abroad; counting no doubt, from afar, each step that echoed through the street; and then falling back into the shadow of the room, was lost in gloom.

Big Abel and the Little Manhattan passed on.

There is a yellow house, not far from the Parade Ground, famous for the cider that he draws; Newark cider, fresh and latest, a full supply; and you may go there and drink when you choose, and that little public-house is always at home, with a glass for you. Thither Lankey and Big Abel repaired; and there they supped, with many a draught, now that they were in for work, of that same golden drink; and then they chambered themselves up stairs. But not asleep quite so soon as you might think, for this was a cart-street in which they lodged; in other words, an avenue patronized by those lay-bishops, the carting gentry, in their morning and evening trips up and down town; and,



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returning now from the day's work, they kept up a buzz of wheels for hours. Sometimes a slow cart, they could tell each one by his sound, sauntering along with a tired horse; then a fast cart, heard in his approach far off, thundering by the door, and rattling away, for whole squares. Then three or four carts in company, with a talk of cartmen; these were moderate movers; to each other as they jogged along. Then a couple of racers; full speed after each other; tearing up the street, and shaking the windows, nay, the very houses to the foundation. Then long, long after these, a cart going home late (there was a ship in down town somewhere, that night, I know), having the whole street to himself, and keeping up his melancholy song till the ear ached, and would not believe he could ever go out of hearing. And by that time (whenever it came), the Little Manhattan and Big Abel were asleep.

### **CHAPTER IV. The City Head–Foremost in Business; and the Second Day's Work.**

An early breakfast (cider again, for he cuts in at this house at every turn) and out again. There's a keen day's work before you, Lankey! Big Abel! They aimed at once for the North River; passing the old State's Prison, with its four sad columns and yellow front, they soon had evidence that the river was not far off, for in the front of a cooper's shop, beyond, they discerned jutting from a window half–bricked up; that was all his allowance; a wedge–fashioned sign, bearing on it in alternate stripes of red and white, "The North River Temperance Benevolent Society," which society was clearly a conjuror in a bottle from the small scope they had allowed him with his blinking eye. Now, along the river as fast as they can move, with stacks of lumber cutting out the view of the water, quite often, and lumber–yards at the back of these, with cool, shady recesses: idle hay–bales sleeping out on the pier in the sun: stone–cutters: coal–yards painting the neighborhood about with a touch or two of their free brush: and presently, as they speeded along, they were hailed by a man from the bows of a weather–beaten boat, lying against the wharf. He was in a faded tarpaulin with nankins faded to match; coatless, but with a blue cloth waistcoat of homespun texture.

"Look out there where you goin' to!" This was his outcry.

The Little Manhattan knew him at once. Barskin, the boatman (who had been summoned by Lankey more than once to court as having some knowledge, got up the river, of his old Indian title).

"It's all settled!" said Lankey, when he had gone near to the boatman.

"It is?" said the boatman. This was evidently a matter of considerable wonderment to Mr. Barskin, and he denoted by his manner a vehement desire to know the particulars, it having occurred to him that it might not be so very easy a case to dispose of, as it involved the proprietorship of all New York. And when Lankey made known to him, with the aid of Big Abel, the manner of the adjustment, he kept his surprise and astonishment at the same point.

"Really, now!" This was what the boatman said. "You don't say so."

What was better still; this was Big Abel speaking; they were going to celebrate the settlement on Thursday evening next, at the old Banking–House, at the head of the city, and would be glad to see Mr. Barskin there. He'd be there.

Big Abel and Lankey hurried on, passing now great numbers of old boilers, rusty dogs, and long gone out of use, lying alongside of the river (with a very uncomfortable feeling, one would think, towards all that good water): a Dutch woman in a door–way mending a sail: coils of tarred rope at chandlers' shops: when, farther down, the little negro–boy coming out of a side street with plenty of kite tackle in his arms, and at his side a little white, a delicate, fair–eyed little fellow, bearing kite tackle too.

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Pompey Smith (that was his name), and his white young friend come over from the east side to catch a breeze; and if you would but look that way, how still the city lay. No breath among the steeple-vanes; no fluttering of the rosy flags; and the long straight streets, with houses stretching on and on in calm upright lines, suggested to the mind not a thought of shouting masons, clattering bricks, or ringing trowels; but stood there, as if there they had stood for ever. The wind brought no mention of the far-off carts or jolting stages, but they passed as pictures to the eye, and nothing more. But here where Pompey and the white boy had come, a little gust, just an infant in his modest way of drawing on, crept in from the sea; and the white boy, as being readiest, set his kite on end, in Pompey's hand, who running back a score of yards, gave her a slide up into the air; the white boy sped away, and up she flew! The house-top first; that was no feat at all; then, with another gentle leap, over the liberty-cap, near by; then, with her tail raking the very steeple's point; and off she shot, beyond all city heights, away! Then Pompey, planting his on end, against a post; to go by herself; pulled such a foot, that, ere a minute could be born to follow it from earth, she elbowed white boy's in the very bend of heaven; and now a gallant show it was; what coaxing of the string, what humoring of the tail, what paying out. A flight of pigeons, set forth from an old brewery some quarter of an hour before, hanging, like motes against the sun, were children to these two eager kites. Who has it? Pompey now and now the other: and now no mortal eye can tell, for both are gone from sight. A twanging snap, a wriggling of the skirt (a snake dropped out of heaven!), a mad plunge, twenty yards or so, and down she goes: Pompey's: and all through the neighborhood there springs a countless cry of boys, "Broke loose kite loose!" and quick eyes having gauged her falling-place, quick feet make after; boys, short and tall, great and little, from all streets about; but Pompey's friend, his kite put in hand of a stander-by, swiftest and foremost of all.

Below this, a great number of people in gay dresses, many with ribbons about them, and children at their side, came pouring down the street, their eyes shifting from a little house at the river-side to a green walk beyond the river. They made for the little house first, which kept up, by aid of a bell hung in a cover to shield his precious voice from the weather, and a red-faced, bulky body of a man at the end of it, a great racket; and the more desperate grew the red-faced man, the more they rushed upon him, and the more he begged them, through the bell, to keep rushing. Now, among these there came down two you would have known in a thousand, or in ten thousand, because they were beautiful in person to begin with; but that was nothing; because they were making for the red-faced gate-man with great speed, that wasn't much; because they were young and pure of heart, clearly: but let us hope there were many such seeking the free air of the green fields beyond the river: but most of all, and all in all, because they were evidently bound for pleasure, as two spirits in one, making up into a little bank all the hopes and fears and joys of two, as a common fund to draw upon when days should grow dark and hours creep wearily, and the pale trouble should run upon and try to break them some bleak November afternoon, far on in time.

William and Mary! It was they, and no other!

The Poor Scholar, with his inky finger, white for once; and his mistress, with nothing but angels sitting in her eyes, or dancing about there whenever she turned on him.

The book was written! That was it. That little rounded Life which he had discerned lying in the midst of many things; that plan of a Book unborn, which might grow to beauty in his brain; which had risen as by magic day by day out of nothing; which had borrowed a color of the morning light, and a whisper from the wind, and a golden substance from the very stones under foot. It was done. Ah, happiness, who knows its like? The child is born; womb, cradle, mother's arms and father's smiling, all in one. The book was done! Old Trepidation, that said it could not be written, thou'rt a weazen, shivering, good-fornothing fool! And friendly Doubt, that picked a blemish in you at the very thought of your conceiving, sit with cripples evermore, and go not, thou, henceforth among true-shapen men! The book was writ! And what an afternoon was that to Mary and the Poor Scholar. Was there ever such a sun sent to shine of an afternoon before! And such a ferry-master to take the pay; the jolliest of all tax-gatherers, depend upon it! And such a charm of a boat; and the Fields; that afternoon they took the name, Elysian, and rightfully have held it ever since!

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That book was doing wonders this very afternoon; and these were nothing to the miracles it was going to do in the way of wedding-garments, and parson's fee, and housekeeping, down an everlasting perspective of purest domesticity. There was a cloud came flying across the sun just then, and they stepped upon the boat.

Lankey Fogle might have set up a claim here, as being a cove or creek, which in old time the Indians used to make with their canoes in crossing, to and fro, the river; but he had his glimmering eye elsewhere.

The afternoon steamboats were coming out; with the bridle off, it was quite clear at the first view; a herd of them. The Arrow first; darting like a ray along the water; the Troy, the brave old Albany. What fellows they were for speed! And all so easily swinging their long walking-beams as a gentleman swings his cane in an easy promenade, when the world goes well with him after dinner. Flags in great plenty flying from long staves: music too (two or three bands on their way to the Springs): and how cheerfully packed they seem in the bows, at the stern, on the upper deck: with people too who are, to innocent lookers-on from shore, all bent for a vague wonder and curiosity hangs, even yet, about the people that go a voyage for pleasure-land, somewhere ahead, without a thought of care to cross their track. Here and away with a breath, these swiftsure steamers flew; each cheered, from the pierheads, by swarming boys; they are at the pains to execute this piece of goodness every sunny afternoon; with a whirl of caps and a piping shout. Seen for an instant; then out of sight. After these, with flags too (hinting at nothing), came boats for Dobb's Ferry, Hastings, Sing-Sing; slow coaches creeping on, with twilight at their backs before they're out of sight. Then a staggering old hulk that aims for somewhere over the river, and has been this many years; but whether he ever gets there, no traveller has ever come back that way to tell. And now, with quite another look, though built the same; down the river, with a racer's leap between them the people all aghast on board, and quite awe-stricken at coming on the city at his evening meal three others; and sweltering the river with glowing coals let drop in haste, they round upon him, and hug-to with panting breath. By the fiery light he makes in wheeling round Lankey espies on one an Indian, all of paint, upon his side; the old canoes come back upon his thought, the dusky oarsmen, and their early rule along this water. Lankey! These are yours!

A mighty street now they came to, running back with a start at the river as though he'd carry the city all before him!

As they passed across this, both Lankey Fogle and Big Abel had a vision; of a sudden. It was of an endless series of deepdown cellars, with gloomy small-coal fires alight therein, tended by men in sleeves, each with the handle of a black iron noggin in one hand, and with the other feeding them from time to time, from countless streaked bowls. The Canal-street plan of oyster-stewing that was it! And there swung, as far as eye could see, high in air, rising one upon the other, the redwhite oyster-moons; to light the seeker down, and look shrewdly after what goes on below. Many a revel has he seen that faded, swinging, half-extinguished oyster-moon! The tales he has to tell, up there rolling to and fro, about his pole; of wilful, wicked men who sell their souls, almost, to keep his company from night to night; of watchmen off the guard to pass their hours, with no upbraiding from the bitter wind and pelting rain; of jolly players there carousing, wet and dry; of parsons even who have changed their stocks from white to black to get an interview of these white-armed ministers below; of aldermen, and magistrates of high degree: ah, who has seen the half, or who can tell the third of what he knows, that wicked, staring oyster-moon!

These are the Little Manhattan's all of these the only planets he can see shining in his faded firmament!

But there's more business forward, beyond; waggons of every order; garden-carts; barrows; all full, all tending one way, and pressing upon the great market on the river as though they would smother him. Every variety of driver, too; dusty men, with hats apparently dug out of the earth; boys; women, in rusty bombazines and dirty strings about their waists. A wild, tumultuous rush of eager men bearing hats, of a second-hand, you might say a twenty-second hand, complexion, in long crates, with which they push in and out among the crowd of people who fill up all the intervals between the carts.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

And now the market himself; a low, broad-backed spread with alleys, running hither and thither, and little platforms up and down, and swarms of dealers of every kind, borne down, too great for any mortal market to get along with, by great ribs and haunches and slabs of bright red beef; and hung all about, till he almost stooped in the shoulders, with poultry, chicken, duck, turkey. Then upon the floor great heaps of apples, and baskets of melons; and again upon the walls rabbits dangling by their legs; and deer; and strings of pigeons; and bird-cages, all alive with bobolinks and blackbirds and quails and canaries.

That market had as much on his mind as he could carry, I know; and seeing all he owned came fresh, with scarce a hand between, out of the old dark mould of the very earth his fathers were laid in, the Little Manhattan would have claimed it for himself. But Big Abel had a word to say. Leading Lankey to a pier-head before the market, he drew from his box, which he planted on a spile, a part of his documents, and would have it that his great-grandfather Hudson had made a landing there, and had an understanding with the tribe by which it became his fee. It didn't appear very clearly, but there was an old parchment for it, which (to tell the truth plainly) Lankey Fogle couldn't read, and Big Abel took it, one might say, by default. But going back, on an errand they had there, when the Little Manhattan saw how weather-beaten this poor market was, and tumbling and moss-covered, and what noble promise it gave of returning, so to speak, to the very grass that grew there once, again, he went aside and chuckled like a very Indian, at the thought. The errand was yet to do, and going to the very heart of the place, they came upon a mighty huckster-woman, Mrs. Saltus by name, the mightiest of her tribe.

She sate in the very lap of the deep shade cast by the market her back to it, her face toward the river at that hour; within a world of greens, dewy from the fields, in baskets, in bunches, spread on a table before her, heaped about her on the ground. And how she glowed upon that cheery summer's afternoon, with her broad, happy face, as though she it was that ripened all with her beaming look; she had: they got from her the ripeness and the flavor (touches of good heart) dearest to the buyers, I am sure. How she talked on, savoring in her rustling speech, and sparkling eyes and waving motion, of the corn-field, the brook, and garden-life, where all these things took their growth. She was waiting on a bachelor of the old school, who always bought of her; silver-buckled at the knee, clean-hosed, and with a maple cane upon the ground.

"Your turn next, Sonny!" to a little white-headed fellow, lingering bashfully near the table's edge, with a couple of coppers in his fingers. "What'll *you* have this afternoon. Now, my dear. Well, Dick." This was a serving-man with a basket. "Lankey! Bless me, this is a cure for sore eyes. Chickweed?" This was the white-headed little fellow's order. "Well. What can you want? Canary-seed: ah, my Beauty, there's trouble in your eye; one of them is gone, I see. Sweet Jack or Bob which was it?"

It was Bob, Mrs. Saltus; that died upon his perch this morning: he came out of this corner of the market, you know!

Diving to her pocket-bottom, in her gown, from time to time; a strange cavern, that! what merry music of the little coin crept out upon the air.

Mrs. Saltus! That market knew well his place, and held his breath each morning 'till she came in. Then off at the very top of his speed! Who knew the bills, the ragged, tattered, dingy bills so well as she; when butchers rushed, whiteaproned, on her, these flying in their hands? Who kept the news so well from all the country, east, north, south, west, as she? Whose bank of change so deep? Whose pitcher dewy always, with draughts so clear and cold? Stories, too! In all the pauses of the market, aye, over all its din as well, at times, the murmur of the water-wheel that throws off brightness at his every bound, could fill the air about not half so freshly! The great snow-storm she loved to dwell on in these glowing summer-days, when bells did all the talking of the town, and people glided to and fro like magic to the eye! The season short of greens! The famous wild-pigeon flights over the city, that played the mischief with the sun and moon!

Would she come to Big Abel's, Lankey Fogle's entertainment (she was friend of both)?

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

Bless their dear hearts, wouldn't she! 'Zekiel, that was her grandson, should bring her in the garden waggon. Be there! If there were stairs to the house (she hoped there was), and the walls could hold her up. Good-bye, my son (to Big Abel); good-bye, dear old Indian.

With which god-speed they proceeded to a little cabinet or tin, about the size of a bird's cage, standing on four thin legs, in the skirts of the market, where coffee was served in white cups, out of the tin kept a-glow by the coals under him, and cakes out of his top, along with it.

While they were busy at the tin, there came to them from Mrs. Saltus by a little boy, a hanger-on of the place a couple of dainty pot-cheeses; taking which in hand, they looked towards her gratefully, and were met; she was evidently waiting for it; with a broad, kindly smile, that said plainly enough, "There's something nice for you!" which acted as a delicious grace before cheese, and answered in the place of small gold dishes, and knife and fork of solid silver.

Now, what a time there was, a little below this! How they howl! Men with whips and sticks, and long eager arms, stretched through the steam-boat gates; raging like evil spirits kept out of Paradise. And all for the sake of certain little leathern rolls and square boxes, borne in hand or guarded by well-dressed persons within, as though they had come long journeys just to vex and torment and hideously agitate the gentlemen outside, by the sight of them! The afternoon boats, in! When that shout goes up, what a din fills all the streets about; how they run, rush, scamper, tattered fellows, white, black, dingy (chiefly), boys, men. And if they fail to make a meal, by their manner, of these evil-disposed men who unrighteously and cruelly keep them out of their own, in the way of trunks and carpet-bags, they're more Christian than I am willing to allow them to be, just now.

But the day settles by degrees over even so fierce a tumult as this, and night comes on, bringing out lights upon the water, twinkling; lights on land, streaking the water far away; a gloomy sound of plashing boats along the shore, coming to or scudding along close in. One sound after another, of all the busy week, dies away; and by the time Big Abel and the Little Manhattan are housed in the well-behaved little cottage across the Battery ground, silence has taken the city in his lap, and holds him there to nurse him to such quiet thoughts as Sunday has a right to meet him with.

### **CHAPTER V. It strikes Three; and the City takes his Comfort.**

Lankey! Big Abel! Awake! awake!

See! see! the Day creeps through the windows, and filling all the chamber, gently tells you to arise.

They sleep; Lankey like a dark old wood, whose leaves are still, and all at once! Big Abel, as a giant boat who takes in slumber for a week to come, against the river-shore! There is no sound astir; the silence walks about and wears his cloak of Sabbath air, that no man knows or sees or feels he is abroad. There's something moving through this house at least: entering now where Lankey and Big Abel lie: not silence, but his twin, a sleek, calm, white-coated man (civil as the dawn itself).

"Will the gentlemen be good enough to take breakfast?"

To be sure they will; in the little room, next. Breakfast served. Each has a window to himself; and now the Battery begins to rouse a little, slowly, and, clearly with a will against it. But he hears some bells far up the city, and there enters at his upper gate; first faint sign of coming life! a little man, quite a little man, with a cane, and gaiters and small whiskers, evidently out of health all round, who creeps along the railing by the water; ah, how his constitution pines for salt! and gets to a bench half way along, and there stops to smell the sea.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

After him, a couple of stouter gentlemen, in gaiters too, and checkered pantaloons, arm in arm, up and down with rapid pace, taking in the fresh air, and using it as a delicate steam to keep them in this good motion. Then an old gentleman, questionable as to legs, wheeled in, in a red sulky, by a servant, and run up and down briskly for ten minutes or so, and then left by the servant, with his face towards the water, looking quite comfortable, but a little out of breath. Several other whiskered gentlemen hurrying in, a drove of them, and getting under way very promptly, and losing no time on the course.

That Battery; near as you may think it; was a great way off to Big Abel and Lankey that day: and it was by slow degrees alone they ever reached it. Beginning with a look out taken at the windows, sleepily and at full length, by both; then, after a long while, chairs in the little balcony (he was getting nearer, clearly); then a descent to the ground, a long pause in the door-way, taking minutes idly of the people going up and down; with a very confused notion, however, of their number and destination; an actual passage of the street, opening of the gate, and inside they are! Not so fast, either. When the gate is closed behind them, they stop to take in the Battery for himself; all round, up and down. Well: that's quite to their mind. Then a little way up the right walk, to see what comes of that part (this is lazy work for you, Big Abel, with your iron Safe at home; and Lankey but Little Manhattan, I believe, is in a dream or maze, and Big Abel has caught it of him); a turn back again, over toward the water; against the rail, looking into that element, after an idle sort, and not making much out of it either. Then sitting on a bench, under a broad tree, at about the Battery's heart, the better part of an hour; perhaps two, or three; for time doesn't count with them to-day. People pass quietly about them; there are more now; the fast walkers have all gone away, and everybody takes the day for what he finds him.

And a lazy summer's day was that (as you have found by this time); so lazy and sleepy in his look, the wonder is that he got abroad at all, and hadn't lain behind the clouds for ever. There was the old fort, sitting as settled and solid on his base as if he'd never speak a word again, though twenty thousand British ships should run their beaks directly in his face; and far away other forts on Governor's Island, and Bedloe's, and Gibbet's, quite as sleepy as he. And farther still, high in the soft haze, Staten Island dozing as though he belonged to another world, beyond the cares and tribulation of this; and the soft, broad, slumbrous Bay, stretching like an idle Leviathan off toward the Narrows. Nearer by, Jersey City, low-lying and humbled under the rule of a single great chimney that peers about, high up in the air, as if he were specially delegated to stretch his neck for a view of New York. And on the other hand, Gowanus, moving lazily along the road toward Bath and Rockaway.

And how bore the old Battery this far-and-wide repose? Settled in the midst of it like a smooth-backed duck in the water! He held his breath and listened for the Bay to speak, and the ships, and the islands. The great trees; not a whisper from them! The grass; not the rustling of a blade! And up and down the paths there moved stout old gentlemen, and thin young gentlemen with canes under their arms, and masters and 'prentices, and shop-keepers and shopboys, throngs of them; and, the very Spirit of the whole thing, there went along, close to the railing, as near the water as he could, an old sea-dog of a grizzled captain, who snuffed the salt air and caught a flavor of the oakum and the tar that lingers round about, and seemed to hush within himself the thousand storms he knew of, off Bahamas and the Capes, and down the hot Gulf Stream. There was a packet-captain for you! Not a word of the sea, nor of fine company on ship-board, nor wrecks, nor great north-westerners, nor strange appearances far from shore, nor spouting whales, cutting voyages, men overboard. But all about a little plot of ground, he mentioned, in Westchester: a few acres only: the soil was good, the plough went always twenty inches in the mould; sufficient for a horse and cow. So much for land. The house (this was his vision of a house), red-roofed, one-storied, with a dainty balcony before (for smokers in long summer afternoons); a grassy green; some sea-thought there, no doubt! and then, roving there, as easy and as kind and soft in glossy beauty for the eye to dwell on as the summer's day itself, a smooth, snug, cobby horse. Not far off, a gig; at rest now; but out upon the road once with that cobby horse, they'll play the mischief all the country round! And, as for drivers, where's to match that grizzled seaman with his cunning hand! Climbing far away the winding roads; there are such roads there; they get, a truth to tell, a look-out to the sea. Ah, there it is again, old sea-dog; all the salt is in you still, and keeps fresh that stormy heart, though beating in the very bloom of silent fields!

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

The Packet-Captain took Big Abel by the hand as he passed, and was asked to the old Banking-House. Nothing better for him than a walk the city's length. He'd bring his telescope along. Very good, Mr. Captain. You shall have a welcome, with a jolly company!

Big Abel and Lankey had no thought of going in-doors to dinner, but made their meal at a stand at the east gate. Quite a number were doing the same thing. And about this time there came a pause, when the Battery was clear of everybody but Lankey and Big Abel, who loitered up and down the ways; and getting towards the lower side, looked off into the great business streets. How still they were! The stillness, too, of mere idiots and fools, with no business in the world whatever: you laughed at them they seemed so simple-witted and purposeless, on this quiet Sabbath-day; and all their properties partook of this. The boxes lying there, heaped on each other, sheer absurdities! the hogsheads, great-bodied nothings! and as for the coils of chain, they lay so heavy on the ground you would have thought no soul nor circumstance nor chance could ever, by possibility, put the breath of life in them again. And the great stores stood there, long-sided gawkies, looking about as though they had their hands in their pockets, and would be obliged to somebody to tell them what to do next. Idle boys without hats or coats, going about there, gathering odds and ends of tarred rope, and picking old nails, had them in contempt.

And now at the east gate there began to set in a heavy tide: it had got past supper-time some how or other, in an idle way: from Broadway, troops of young gentlemen and young ladies; seamstresses, some; clerks; worthy small-tradesmen, with their wives; and proceeding to certain eligible benches, ranged themselves as if in presence of some pleasant show or other, now exhibiting, or drawing on quite rapidly. It wasn't long before the benches were full, when there came across the green where the Little Manhattan and Big Abel stood under a low-branched sycamore, two who seemed to have a heart with all these in what was happening; and yet withdrawing, now again, into a world of their own, of which they two had the key, and no one could follow.

It was the Poor Scholar and his mistress.

"Well, now," said Mary, turning towards him with both hands stretched out, as now they paused, too, not far from Big Abel and Lankey. "Where is it?"

"Why, Mary, you're beside yourself. What do you mean?"

"I know you've got it about you, somewhere?"

"Got what?"

"Why, a little bag of gold, to be sure!"

"A little bag of gold!" His voice grew ghostly at the very mention of it.

"I am not paid yet; but it's all right."

"They accept it?"

"Not that either. You have such a fancy!"

"They have read it?"

"How fast of thought you are! How could they, now?"

"Why nothing easier in the world; and nothing pleasanter. I should think they'd be glad to spend their time in some snug little upper chamber, reading just such books, accepting them, and paying the writers."

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

"Mary! There's a great book just arrived from England!"

"Well!"

"Well! Why, don't you know what that means? It must be printed; it must be published; it must be circulated; and all for the benefit of the people of the United States, who'd complain if they were neglected. Don't you see that?"

The book then; the book of William's brain and Mary's hope, wasn't printed yet; not quite bought and paid for, come to that. But it was in a fair way. There wouldn't be another great book from England under a month, and there was a fine time to lay his egg in the sun and have it hatched. It'll chirp merrily, I warrant you, when it's once out!

Big Abel and Lankey were as well disposed for a little cheap and cheerful entertainment as any one, and when several excellent rockets went up from within the Garden (admission twenty-five cents, United States currency), they gave immediate attention to them. These were followed by several other equally authentic and undoubted rockets; genuine to these people outside, as well as to those within; which performed in the air a vast number of feats in the way of going up and coming down in straight lines; or throwing somersets in the air, backwards; or breaking out all over in a wild inflammation; or changing color; or coming to an end before their time, in a most painful fashion. This put the people on the benches, all along, in excellent spirits; they began to grow quite lively, and to look on with a marked approval of the enterprise of the lessees. Then there was a ghastly light over the Garden. Great numbers made haste to the railing; some fell back, as commanding a deeper view of the proceedings. It was the general feeling that in less than two minutes Moscow would be in blaze. The excitement outside, for so quiet a day, was quite painful. The children in arms could scarcely contain themselves. An old patron of these entertainments gave it as his opinion (he had seen it burned to the ground nine-and-twenty times during the season), that Moscow would not be fired that night. He took occasion to remind them they were at a point of expectation where it was hard to bring it home to them that this was Sunday night. As for the rockets, they saw how softly they went up: but as for Moscow that would never do, and they'd better make up their minds to it. After a time they came to the steady patron's view of the matter: the twinkling haze of the Garden-lamps fell down: the Garden grew dark and gloomy, taking his station for the night in a settled melancholy way, and the crowd went off, without even a cheer in behalf of the spirited proprietors.

A foolish crowd! For by the time they had got well away, there crept over the water from down the Bay, a sound, with music in it; faint at first, then rising, rising, and coming on towards the green old Battery, that Lankey Fogle seemed to hear the voices of another land, and deluded himself for a little while with the belief that the islands, showing now like shadows in the far-off water, had gone from this, and were the mansions, in another world, of spirits akin to his. A boat moved through the distance, not far from these, plashing with her wheel as gently as she could; and in her breast she seemed to bear the magic harmony that troubled Lankey so. A singing-school made nest within her decks; and that it was that on this peaceful evening blessed the waters with the shower of cheerful notes they scattered as the wheel went round.

A pause now! And now again it springs afresh, that tuneful tempest on the Bay, bearing into the heart of lonesome night such sounds, that he must grow like day, and smile at thinking that so sweet a comfort may be his! And now it has gone away so far, no mortal ear from shore may follow it. Nothing comes to fill this dreary blank, which seems to hold the very world.

What was the Little Manhattan claiming, that he sate so silent? Was it the Bay the Islands the Battery himself, perhaps? He kept his eye long fixed upon a spot toward the point, and there sprung up after a while to his fancy, in its visionary way, a red blaze; and, gathering round it, in its dusky light, there sate a score of men who seemed to have come out of the darkness, and brought a tinge of it upon their cheeks, and in their soft black eyes and sombre brows. They inclined their eyes upon the ground; or, lifting them, peered within the blaze.



## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

Big Abel felt how it was going with poor Lankey's heart. "This is yours, of course!" he said. "And must be yours for ever. No street shall cross: no shop shall sit upon this ground. The trees are speaking for you, Lankey; and are always telling Heaven of the council-fires that used to burnish up their leaves. Yours, Lankey; yours for ever!"

The Little Manhattan smiled at that; the bay-girt Battery thus made forever Lankey Fogle's Ground; and rising up, they made for rest.

### **CHAPTER VI. The City at his Crimes; the Little Manhattan and Big Abel still busy.**

The city wide awake again! Nimble, serpent-eyed, fresh, how he bears his crest this Monday morning, as though he had got back somehow to his prime, without a thought of all his cares and crosses and riots! Clear and wide awake! Everybody abroad, with a new face born of Sunday! Everybody with a sprightly good-morrow! Everybody at a higher rate of speed! People coming in from the Islands, from Jersey, from down the Bay, ripe for new traffic on the keenest edge! The cartmen hurrying to the wharves in clean frocks; collars even, snow-white, twinkling among the whiskers of omnibus-drivers!

"Up Broadway? Right-up! Right-up!" This was the cry, passing the Bowling-Green.

Presently a gouty old gentleman, from one of the hotels, is got in.

"Up Broadway? Right-up! Right-up!"

How the great square stage rolls about, like a heavy fellow as he is, upon his wheels. He's in no hurry you may be sure of that.

A confused grumbling in his bowels, and the gouty old gentleman seen, through the windows, to be growing red in the face. A voice down the money-hole, and silence; followed by a motion, on the part of the stage, of six paces; a pause; and still the cry goes on

"Right-up! Up Broadway! Right-up!"

Wall-street, now. Plenty pouring down, neat-dressed, trimwhiskered, but none coming out; a fine full flow of smoothlyshaven, well broad-clothed, sprightly gentlemen as eye can light upon. Not frightful, and blood-seeking, and cruel-eyed as the story goes out of doors; but nice, comfortable persons, as ready for a good turn, when their hand is in, as though their business lay in Rose-street, where the Quakers live!

Big Abel and Lankey came to a pause here, too, and pitched their eye against the very head of the street. Big Abel saw rising there a massy house, stone upon stone, high in the air, with carvings and crosses, and doors and niches. The Little Manhattan, not one of these; but a great mound of earth swelling in the sun, green at the top, and prouder, in his rugged look, than the massy house itself. Big Abel looked upon New Trinity: the old earth that stood there, many a year before, as high as he, that was what Lankey (wicked Lankey!) saw.

The cheerful chirrup of the drivers still kept up; the pale, quick men, whose fingers change all to gold they touch, still poured down the street. The flood of porters, clerks, and masters, increased and deepened as they went on; but, a little further on, the stream was ruffled with a sudden cry, and there came tearing through it, as for life or death, a line of ragged boys. With what watchful faces everybody listened: with eager hands clutched out from underneath the arms of these, the sheets they bore: and on they sped, more furious in their cry as they neared Wall-street.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

Extra Sun! Extra Tribune! Extra Herald!

The Great Western steamship was in, of a Sunday (always of a Sunday!), and the news-boys laid themselves out in a big hour's work to make it known.

Barnum's now; Barnum's Museum, with the Giant, full-length upon his canvass, going to take the dwarf: you see the little fellow quite well if you carry a spy-glass: by way of a pinch of snuff. The band hard at work in the balcony; that patriotic band, whose wind will blow nothing but "Hail Columbia" and "The Star-Spangled Flag" for a hundred years, if they hold out so long. The moose, the elk, the buffalo; these were all up stairs; almost as good as life.

Barnum's was Lankey's that was clear!

Then there rolled past the fork of the Park, in a good deal of dust which it was at the pains to raise for itself, by help of two great coach-horses, fed up to the last oat, a carriage all in blue, a crown all of gold (no doubt some near kinsman of good Queen Victoria within!) upon the panel, a couple of live boys holding on behind, in blue too. Lankey Fogle was taken strongly with the paint, although he had a notion that pure red; as being more according to his honest Indian taste; would have been a shade or two nearer the thing. Big Abel a strange fellow, he! burst out with a laugh so quick, so hearty and tempestuous, one would have thought dashing against its side it must have shattered blue-coach all to naught, but blue-coach rolled away, and Big Abel, with Lankey, recollecting dinner, stepped back a square or two, and were at a door where, at this hour, a broad stream of busy-looking men poured in and out, without a pause.

And well they might! There was a Saloon for you! Where the eagle that spreads his wings above it, whets his beak every morning (it is said) upon a carving-knife; where flags fly at the house-top to make known to all the town about that Dinner's ready; where, without end, along the floor small tables stand and call for company, with salt-cellar, pepper-box, and black-bottle, with his quill, for pepper-sauce (or some such thing); where young gentlemen, all alike as twins, in white jackets and aprons (white once, it is said, and since the Flood), run to and fro, in answer to a hubbub on every side, from every one and all at once, interpretable by them alone; where strange dishes float along the air, sometimes a bowl, steaming high with nothing to prompt him, inside; then a yellow ball (pudding, it is said) upon a plate; then a cup, with a faded spoon upright therein, waxing sadder day by day, till some day or other he will go off, as has his element of chocolate before, in dregs; then, gasping with great eyes, swimming through the room, a fish (this is tradition, for who that lives can tell when he has seen the sea?).

There was a time for Lankey and Big Abel! Cheap, too! Anything you choose to call for, and no charge worth mentioning, and it was sure to come out of a mysterious cavern somewhere in the earth thereabouts, in some shape or other; and when the door which led back into the cavern opened with a waiter, what a rush of steams and odors. Five thousand dishes inside, all in a hurry to get out; and coming out so fast, in such a confused way, I guess that saloon ought to keep a chemical gentleman to call 'em by name. Anyhow, the Little Manhattan and Big Abel (thank Heaven for that!) got forth with their lives; and proceeded up the city again by way of Park Row; and as they passed along, the doorways of the Row, they saw, were held by men who were all nicely shaven as to the face, and in a high state of embellishment, with well-cut coats, new hats, striped pants, great chains across their breast, and heavy rings upon the finger. These were butchers, tradesmen, and others of that stamp, who, having fallen in with fortune one day: the acquaintance came about through a little rattling box: stand at leisure on these steps when off duty at the green table up stairs, serenely ignoring their old professions; and looking abroad from the cleanest shirt-collars, and with the reddest of well-fed gills, upon their world of old acquaintance.

Neither Lankey nor Big Abel made any claim to these persons, but allowed them to stand just as they did; striving to look innocent and child-like, with all their might.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

Looking beyond the Park, upon its other side, a little while, sundry appearances came out, like, and yet unlike, to these. These were thinner in person, than the members of the Row; mostly pale of aspect; who seemed to have no business, calling, occupation, craft of any name or kind; who having struck, some hour ago, and at the sunny time of day, out of a side-street far up town, where they had set themselves in an attitude, proceeded now at the gentlemanliest pace in the world; tapping the ground daintily with the point of a light stick; ranging their eyes about in a smooth semi-circle; or greeting, occasionally, the blue sky overhead, with a look of complacent regard.

A better gentleman, in his way, by far, than these; with twenty tricks, to one of all Park Row; who is it now that shows himself? A bubbling smack, as when a genial cork is drawn; then out of water with his smooth bald head, the Fountain! Coming slowly out not tired, not he, with eight-and-thirty miles of travel on this hot summer's day; but modest, and proud, too, for he knows his worth. Now another spring, and head and shoulders out. Now how swift he grows tall as any alderman: now as Barnum's Giant, there: and now a grenadier, his feather flying high, beyond all mortal measurement! He's not on the treadmill, I am sure, for any sins of his; but how he seems to climb the air. And what a frizzled pate he shakes to every passer-by, beyond the rail! He has their confidence, each man's; and whispers something to him, going up or down the street. Be of good heart! Be of good heart! He always says that; this cheerful, unfeed city Counsellor.

"A good thing for health," Big Abel says, "to have such fountains at the city's core."

But Lankey thinks of dark old trees; of shadowy deer between; and cataracts falling, falling, not ascending like this idle youngster here, down the air. The Park is his, though railed with twenty tons of iron; a hunting-ground of old; and Lankey's eyes are wild and far away, pursuing game about its walks.

Big Abel seizes on all the squares of houses round about, as before, preferring them by great odds to trees.

There were two looking at the fountain beside Big Abel and Lankey; looking at it keenly; reading it to the very heart; following it with their eyes up and down again; up, always with a hope; and down with something, why was this? something of a sinking spirit.

The Poor Scholar and his mistress! There by accident, or by choice? By accident, no doubt; and when their eyes glanced once past the leaping stream, they smile, by chance again; and then when they meet, why does Mary chirrup so?

"I'm sure of you, now!" she said, at once. Sure of what?

"There it is!"

Mary listened; it was a little while before she could make anything out of a news-boy uproar which raged about the fork of the Park, and spread itself on either hand through the two great thoroughfares.

"That's not it!"

"Why yes it is step, a little way, from the fountain, and you won't fail to make it out!"

"I do make it out; but it's not *your* book!"

"Bless you! Had you that in your head. How could you have that in your head? No, to be sure that's a great book just come in from "

"Not from England, again!"

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

"No, no. This is from France; by a very great writer. What hearts must beat in men, in those elder lands, where great books grow like precious weeds!"

"And perish, too!" How scornful Mary was in saying that.

"Don't say that! I feel that I am but "

It wouldn't be easy to state nicely what the Poor Scholar's feeling was, for at that moment there was a horrible outcry with the news-boys, a fresh detachment having broken out by way of Ann-street; and what with this, and the altogether gratuitous dinner-summons at the hotel over the way, there was nothing left for the Poor Scholar and his mistress but to hang their heads and take their way, whithersoever they would, in silence.

Full to the door the stages all went by, now; rolling off on either hand, as fast as they could; clambering the far declivities, toward a world of dust which they pierced, like so many toiling bugs, and disappeared. And yet the old City Hall stood there, elbowing Broadway on one hand, and on the other nudging the Records' Office, to bring him books and papers (for a claim of title that's always going on within), with all his might and main. Sleep or banquet as all others will, he's wide awake, at least, and will not go to dinner till somewhere toward midnight. Lawyers a great many of them knew Big Abel and Lankey, and smiled sideways on them as they passed climbing in, with clients at their heels; officers; witnesses, jaded and worn down, coming out; a pale clerk toiling up with two arms-full of law-calf-bound books, making such a face over them, as no doubt the suitors will when, one day, they come to eye the costs; and, by and by, crossing the Park, towards a small court beyond, a little old man, withered with breathing many a year the close air of the ward courts. He was grizzled, and wrinkle-eyed, and bent not with carrying too many cases, I will warrant! and wore his coat buttoned by way of waistcoat. This gentleman would have undertaken Lankey Fogle's suit, but he hadn't the seven-and-sixpence wherewith to pay the opening fees. A few words passed with him and Lankey, and he was asked to come to the entertainment.

Spreading his hand upon his breast in act of executing a sort of gentlemen-of-the-jury cough he had, he said he would; by all means; and went away very feebly to the small court.

They were now setting toward the Tombs, and passed on their way a rusty, full-chopped fellow, in charge of an officer, whose story it was, over and over again as he was borne along that a man, unknown to him, had met him in a certain street, and placed the little bits of hardware, in question as of a larceny, in his hands. The officer, when he had told this a dozen times or so, turned his eye upon him; and the great fellow turned his, but not quite so boldly, too. All in the eye. That was all that passed, and they went on after that with a better understanding. The shadow of a cloud was flying up the city, leaping streets, houses, steeples, every barrier that man builds to make secure community; but not swifter than the spirit of a man they led in irons toward the Tombs, hurried on to where no shadow of his should ever fall upon the sunny street again.

Another officer came in from a bye-way. That was a wicked devil *he* had in charge make up your mind to that. A murderer? Why, no. A wronger of orphans in their pale and tender youth? Not that either. A cutter to the quick of honest fame? I can't say that. Suspected that's all. A wicked devil, you see. His coat shows that, by its thin, shivering way of sitting about the shoulders. His spindle limbs that just keep him up; his face, colored with no memory of a sufficient meal, even a long way off. Suspected? Who better or more than he? Of all the men that run or walk or ride within the city bounds, he is the guiltiest-suspected wretch. Thrust him in a cell: the ground must be damp: on bread and water; where rats, if any are to be had thereabout, may have free resort to him; and in a few days a very few days Suspicion, at a touch almost, will become fearful certainty. He will be dead! Lawgivers and magistrates you know he will be dead!

Big Abel would have passed the Tombs, in something of a hurry, I believe; but the Little Manhattan, from a whim he had, halted and went in.

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

The Sessions were packed close that afternoon. It was a case of life and death, or near that, that was up; or meant to be. But it had very little chance just then, for the two lawyers were setting to at each other over a reporter's table; the three judges were on their feet, on the bench, bending down to appease the fray; the clerk had put his hat on in the confusion; and all the officers of the court, busy as they could be, thrusting their staves at the combatants. This was at its height when Lankey and Big Abel entered, for the gallery was just going off, along the whole line, in an explosive accompaniment, in regular succession. There was a chirping laugh (this was by a little man of a weazen look), then a shrill one (from a smooth-faced boy), a rough one (from a coarse fellow), and so on, till it ended in an overwhelming burst by a huge black with a trombone in his chest. This was too much for the court, and an order went out immediately to have the gallery cleared; and cleared it was, by the tumbling down the corkscrew stairs upon the street, of the whole orchestra of laughers.

Big Abel and Lankey went out, too.

Big Abel would not have claimed the Tombs, but it was clear in Lankey Fogle's mind that they had come over in the same ship as his great-grandfather Hudson; and, with a twitch of the face, Big Abel acknowledged them.

They found supper that evening at a tavern near by: the old Seventy-Six, I think, it was: and proceeded toward the great thoroughfare of Broadway, for a little mirth in the way of a theatre, and they had a part of it before they reached the house. For, going by the Horse-Sales-Room, they discovered the chamber-maid, with the Spanish prince, and first walking gentleman, waiting in the stable-way till the crowd about the house got in, having a fear that the piece would go off tamely if such high characters in it should be seen plunging (as they must) down the cellar-way, to come up in the green-room. The house was in a capital humor! There was a white-wigged old gentleman in a striped waistcoat and small-clothes, with knee-buckles, very particular about a young lady, his ward, in a book-muslin dress and long blue waist-ribbon, who was sought by a young gentleman in an entire suit, new, of black, with a hat which he kept brushing up all through the courtship; and a rival young gentleman in a frock-coat and riding-whip (the nag being an invisible runner, out of sight always!); and at the top of the whole a little, crop-haired valet, with the cunningest eyes in the world, and who shook the house every time he winked. His bob-tailed coat, when he turned about, was too much for several gentlemen in the first tier, and they went out and came back regularly as long as he kept doing it.

To close the day, they resorted to a refectory, hard by: a spruce, elegant, fashionable, that's-your-sorts, refectory: where they were allowed, at tip-top prices, to embower themselves in a genteel stall, and to be shut in by gorgeous blue curtains, in company with a castor all of silver; when there came to them, at tip-top prices, a gentlemanly man of a mulatto aspect, who was good enough (still on the same terms) to request their pleasure; which, being known, he returned presently at tip-top speed, to answer to the prices, with a dish of birds (quails, he called them; that was the dialect of the place), very much crisped up, very much be-saged and be-seasoned and be-condimented; and the quails flew away presently for there was a good appetite between them tip-top, from the first moment to the last. Then wine of the same family. Then the genteel stall fell in and lost compass, and was altogether too narrow for Big Abel and Lankey, who, putting their heads forth from time to time, made discovery of numbers of elegant young gentlemen coming in, bringing with them little black smutches upon the lip, and cocked hats, and small canes, which all together proceeded to a white marble bar, and were impertinent. But, still, at tip-top prices, everything being allowed, on these terms, at that shop.

Neither Lankey Fogle nor Big Abel went out, as you may guess, to find lodgings that night, but made the best of the refectory, picking out a downy spot, and dreaming, one of them, all night long of a hideous man (the civilest man in the world!) with a bill, bearing a strong family likeness to the silent man in the bar.

## **CHAPTER VII. The Fifth Day of it; and the City disporting himself in a very Low Way.**

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

When they got forth to-day, they had not gone far before they came to where a street plunged abruptly on the left hand, and was away with a thought.

They paused on the edge of the great thoroughfare, fine with silk, and oily whisker, and the canes of idle walkers, and looked down. A ragged cloud, big with a summer shower, raked the hollow on which they fixed their eye; the soil was dank throughout, with ooze of slimy mud; and now that they walk down, who claims this region, wild, and dark, and dreary to the heart and sense? The Little Manhattan? Or is it Big Abel's? Old houses all the way; with all the doors open, all the casements shattered, all the chimneys broken-cornered; and how green and yellow rages through the street, with signs and half-doors and basements and shutters, all of their complexion. Then, miraculous stair-ways starting in the very street, springing up stairs on end (not ladders with ropes for rails, but genuine bold-faced casings); meagre, yellow, longnecked bottles and red-curtains, at windows, without number; crazy balconies overhanging the way, with idle women leaning over, and looking up and down the street; then about the door-ways, on the ground, heavy fellows in roundabouts and flat-rimmed hats, loitering, with no sign of business or employment, past, present, or to come, to be read of anywhere in all their idle limbs or empty looks. Women, too, among them, all of a ruddy aspect, a slow flame-color burning silently neck, face, and arm as though they stood in the very glow and focus of some fiery furnace that blared in the neighborhood, and would in due time, perhaps, have them for creatures of his hungry element. Yet women still (the men no longer men!); for who ever looked upon them kindly not in bending pride, but pure, true love of heart they did not make it known to him there lived in every ruin of them all a woman still? Black, portly, little jugs in the windows now. Two or three men sallying forth, one of these was black, with round rings in his ears; a little fellow in a door-way, with uncombed hair, in his bare feet, one trouser's leg hoisted, one arm in his pocket, the other swinging by its loops a boot. And they stood at the Points, the very Five; and when they looked back, they saw how on the crown they had come down from, a waggon, passing, stood out, so high it was above this flat, in every spoke and line of harness and button almost of the driver's coat, against the sky.

At the Five Points; for, toward the spot they stood upon, opposite the little park, Cross-street came down his hill with a sharp, quick trot, bringing a great church with him, some scaly tenements of brick, and some of wood, these being shaken no little by the way; and Anthony, with a long rolling gallop, which gave his houses more leisure to keep their place (but they were all tipsy, and none the better for his considerate speed); and Orange-street creeping lazily along the mud, taking his own time too, and miring himself dreadfully by the way. And there you had the Points! Who claims them now? Lankey, looking off, espied swinging at his ease, as if he felt the torture not the least, a tawny Indian on a sign, with a store of herbs at the window just under his nose, for him to cheer himself with at glaring noon-time; standing out with his bow in hand, an end touching the ground, as calmly as you please. And then he recollects that once in this hollow was kept a famous Indian revel, with dances wild and strange, outcries through all the moonlight night, and many games, where the rough hand bore the sway. Lankey's it was, no doubt; and still his title holds, for still that revel rules the spot, although the dark faces are all in the ground, and the white above it. Big Abel, seeking privilege of Lankey Fogle first, looking sternly on the little park, there at its very heart; for the souls' sake of the poor wretches swarming round it, ordered, it is said, a chapel there, but I guess nobody heard him, for the chapel isn't there to this day.

The Little Manhattan, for himself, thought the Points might yet go back to the swamp they grew from how his dark, sleepy eye lighted up at that! and that fixed his claim like iron.

And now the rain fell finely; pattering and splashing, spouting from the gutters, settling in pools, and having everything his own way with these; but then nobody went in doors, or stopped business, or hurried in their talk. It was as comfortable as heart could wish the good understanding of the shower and the Points. There was one, an unshaven man, standing in a cellar-way, one step down, who seemed to think it the best thing the shower could do, to pour away (this, it should be known, was a gentleman that entertained a mean opinion of mankind as well, oysters being out of season); and he curled his lip and looked upon the pattering pools with quite a sullen eye.

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There was a man, too, in a glazed hat and roundabout, who crossed the Points at the head of a vagabond black horse; having given him the reins upon his back to carry for himself; with a low cart, heaped in a corner with glossy wet apples, whistling a martial air which he had imported on ship-board, from the southern country; being a sailor once on a time; making a pleasure of the drizzling shower and the wet middle of the street.

Passing on, they came to the Sign, where they found standing at the door, a sort of gentle twin to the chieftain, a meek man, the Indian doctor himself, with less of dusk in his aspect, less of autumn in his slumbrous eyes, than the Little Manhattan, by far. This was a friend of Lankey's; and being bidden to the Thursday evening's entertainment, promised to be there (having a patient, an aged lady, of a nervous turn, in that neighborhood, whom he was carrying, softly, through a course of herbs, with great advantage, he thought).

From the hill-top toward the east, there rose a sound the sweetest in all nature's many melodies, save one, of little voices, children's voices, in farewell of their day's tasks; suppliant, tiny, clear as thoughts that know no taint of earth, and floating out at the windows over that dark valley of the Points, they seemed to bear a blessing that made it less dreary to the eye. And all the wonder is they do not, by a heavenly magic in them, raise these sad creatures to be Blest Spirits, and leave the darkling path they walk, for ever.

As they climbed the street now, they came upon little Neddy Mellish (that was the little white-boy's name) again, at the corner; his hands in his pocket, a green school-bag over his shoulder; looking about, from minute to minute, through the street the other way.

Little Neddy Mellish was not at ease, that was clear. What was he lingering for in that strange way? They passed a little farther on Big Abel and Lankey and when, presently, they came to the Public School; the nest of all these happy voices; they were overpowered by two streams of boys that poured out of the two gates, and nearly took them off their feet. It was Public School No. 7, and all black; all but the teeth and the wide-awake eyes, and they flashed as so many ripples or whirlpools in the current. They shook their ears in the rain, and spread themselves through the streets all about, coloring them with a dingy streak as far as the eye could follow. Wild laughers, and boisterous as the wind that whistled in the school-house eaves, all! till one came, slower than the rest, and about him there fell a silence. They couldn't have much heart for play, so near him, I am sure. Pompey, it was; but not that Pompey that made mirth so fast, a little while ago. Not Pompey who bore his deep green bag as though it had been a feather's weight upon a restive colt. Nor Pompey who coaxed his kite to carry earthly news to heaven, by swiftest mail. Slow, mournful-eyed, poor Pompey crept forth from the school a great heart that day he had, to speak his lessons as he did; and all confessed it! and looked off to the corner where little Neddy stood, and then he smiled from under all the trouble of his pain. The very colors in the streaked handkerchief that bound his brow brightened up, or seemed to, and in a minute little Neddy had Pompey by the hand, took from him with a faint resistance on the part of Pomp the satchel: panniered, one portly bag on either side, and holding still his hand, Pompey and his friend took the great thoroughfare beyond, and, seeking the awnings from the shower, crept, hand-in-hand, towards Pompey's door. Lankey Fogle's heart went after them, with a good will; and if it were but liverwort of sovereign cure, then all might yet go well with Pompey! The school-house now is still and secret as a tomb, and Big Abel and the Little Manhattan have passed on.

Turning, at a bend, they found, in the heart of the bend itself, the very thing they looked for, a little garden or house of refreshment. Not much of a garden; a slip of the size of a handkerchief; green, too; and a fountain (something very small in the way of a fountain); and bowers, ever so many of them, at least three in number. And here, while they were getting served by a nice mistress of the place, as busy in all her motions as though she had opened that morning, and heard a couple of hundred calling her all at once, with cream, and cakes, and fruit (Lankey's part was fruit alone), there drew near to a bower; it was the centre, and pride of the garden that was waiting for them; two young persons, one of them very pale, the other all a-glow.

Was ever a Poor Scholar's mistress in such spirits before! And then the way in which she took possession of the bower; if the green chair had been of solid gold she couldn't have treated it more grandly. Three raps of the

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knuckles, and there was a banquet not much of a one, to be sure but what of that! William had something to say, that was clear; but such spirits as Mary's why the stoutest man living would have quailed before them, much less a poor scholar.

"The Book's to be printed, Will? I believe you admit that at last!"

"To be sure it is they've accepted it."

"A happy time of it for the printers, now! turning all your gentle fancies out upon the page; making your mirth laugh, your sorrow weep; your little men and women grow again in light, and take a shape to every human eye, all the wide world over! Oh what dreams they'll have the first night. They'll not sleep a wink, I fear, with thinking all your magic over!"

Foolish Mary!

"And then the binder's girls, who have the folding of them daintily! Many a clipping of wages will they lose this very week, lingering, as they should not, naughtily about that wicked Book!"

Mary, too fanciful by half.

"Tuesday, now! By Friday, at the latest, that little bright-eyed, clean-apparelled gentleman (your Book, I mean, Will) must come down stairs, and begin to see company! Oh for the first look at his sweet and cheerful face!"

In the young Scholar's heart that was settled long ago.

"The show-bills, now! All over town, speaking up, with fresh, clean looks! Coaxing every one to stop and read! Every one to hurry in and buy! and then away to taste the dainty to his core!"

Was there ever such a foolish, thoughtless mistress to a Poor Scholar, all the world over?

She stopped, and looked at Will as though she saw a Blessed Spirit, stepped out from the sun, and not a mortal man. But he was very pale, and still had something to say, and now could say it.

"You forget Germany, Mary!" That was what he had to say.

No: she didn't. She recollected it perfectly well; it was in all the maps, upon the globes, and hung up in the windows. But in this connexion she didn't recollect it, she confessed. What was Germany to this?

She hadn't heard of a famous Rendering or Translation out of that country, that was talked about, a mighty book, with such a power of chains, by way of binding up and riveting the reader; such a thrilling, enchanting, wonderful and miraculous book? Strange, she hadn't heard of that! That was the Book!

What, to come betwixt this Book of William's and the light of day?

William was pale, I said, and Mary now, too. Had those men who played these changeful tricks stood there, or sate within that bower, they must have been torn piece-meal, limb by limb, by little angry devils, leaping out of Mary's eyes, a score at once, and many score!

When they had got forth, Big Abel and Lankey (how Poor William and his mistress got away, heaven, whence it came from, knows!), the shower was deepening, and they made quickly for a house not far away. And there it was. That little, tidy, shining palace; palace it is in all the spirit within; of brick; sitting by itself, in cleanliness and



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purity, and through all the falling rain eyeing calmly all passers-by with his little winking knob and bell-pull.

At home? The ladies of this mansion are always at home, and have been any time these fifty years. A snug parlor, everything tidy, everything in a high state of polish, everything demure and settled calmly in his place. The plaster-rabbits on the mantel, not zoologically perfect, inasmuch as the necks are movable, and have no visible appurtenance to the bodies; and yet, to the mind, all that could be reasonably expected of rabbits under such circumstances. A little door is slided open, and out of a back room a nice, comfortable, smiling body Seventy! Yes; this was the youngest of the two maiden sisters, Big Abel's friends, living here. Pretty good, for Seventy! Cheerful, quick of speech and gait, and cordial, too, as the days of hearty June are long. Another appearance out of the back room Eighty! Not so tall, nor quite so stout, but more cheerful, quicker of motion, decidedly more cordial. There was a great shaking of hands, I tell you, there! No difference made between fair-looking Abel and the swarthy Lankey not the least! Talk! Plenty of it; and after that there came, out of the back room, too, a little square table, which was suddenly clothed (by Eighty) with a snowy cloth, and put in possession (by Seventy) of a little family of cups and saucers, then of a dainty pile of toast, then of a cold ham, then of a steaming pot, and the little table was set up in the world, and ready to do business.

The two sisters and Big Abel had the table to themselves, the Little Manhattan declining tea, being furnished out of a closet with a small bag of delicate Indian corn, his hat thrown off, and shoes, sate with his bare feet on the red brick hearth, and by aid of a brazier, with a furnace, parched it to his heart's content.

Then when the tea was fairly flowing, the toast a-wing, what stories they had to tell of this shrewd city's early day, how small he was. (How out of his dusky corner, like an ember, glowed Lankey Fogle's eye at this!)

Seventy had to tell of that old Negro Plot, when all the blackness of the city roused, and like an angry tempest rising from the earth not now, from heaven! threatened every life. Then, that other, of the Doctor's Riot. It was clear that in the Little Manhattan's heart there grew a thought or wish that riot even yet the city not grown too great for him might strangle him one day, and make it all his lair. Then of huge fires that came upon him in his youth, and singed him to the ground like straw.

The longest tales were Seventy's, by far. Eighty's were the best, for memory in her was a quick furnace-light in which all these past old things lived, like sacred children, moving there in brighter glow, and losing not a hair of all their precious heads. And now to-bed; up-stairs, with candles, one to lead and one to follow, they wait on Lankey and Big Abel. Tidy chambers, and in half a minute Big Abel sound asleep. But still the rain kept pattering down, and stirred poor Lankey's Indian heart with strange effect. In this humor, as he lay awake, he heard in a far-off street the doleful cry from some late-tarrying man, "Oysters!" on a wet drizzly summer's night the melancholiest sound, delivered to his ear as though it was sung in a far-off world.

Then, as Lankey thought of turbulent rivers, swelled by this heavy fall of rain, and the roar of the angry Bay stretching far out to sea, there sprung upon the air, from down the dreary hollow they had rambled through that day, a quick, sharp cry for life; a woman's voice; a fearful cry for dead midnight! Lankey was troubled. He could not sleep; and going to the window, he bent himself upon his hands, and looked abroad. While yet his eyes glowed strangely upon the dark, there came gliding along a woman's shape, with hair streaming back with the little light that was abroad from lamps about, and eyes glistening-wet with sadness or joy too great to keep its fountain in the heart. Ah, what a cry shot up just then against the sky! She spread her hands. There was no one near to see her, save Lankey, none besides, nor far away; all the wide city's eyes were shut; and she possessed the night alone, with sorrow, for another night, within her breast. For ever so! The keenest hurts, the deadliest wrongs life lays on human souls, have none, save God and the poor heart, to know of them!

Following this dim figure through the perilous night along the winding way, the Little Manhattan called to mind how once an ancient path that led into the hills ran there before it, and how in sadness deep as this the dusky maiden took her way, so long ago, up towards the calm, blue heaven, and sought to soothe her spirit with the

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silence of the woods, the sight of stars, and whispering of the winds of night!

When he sought sleep again, he had a troubled dream in which, by some strange magic in his thoughts, the city passed back out of all his squares and streets and stony flats into his fresh, fair, lovely island—youth; of hill, stream, valley, wood. Ah, how he pined to have them by the hand, his kinsmen, as he saw them now, silent in the lodge, or swift at chase, or shining from the ruddy fight! But morning came, and took them all away.

### **CHAPTER VIII. Big Abel and the Little Manhattan busy as ever: the City in his Working Jacket.**

Up with the light; and forth before the two good sisters could know it, they crossed the city; tarrying for breakfast by the way; and entered a long, winding, narrow way (Pearl street, I guess), choked with bald, high-headed stores that kept tumbling great square boxes out, as though they had a hundred hands a-piece: or swallowing them with throats that gulped them up, like giants. (Big Abel, as they went along, kept seizing up stores, streets, squares, by the score.) Men hurrying up and down: some reading signs to help them on their journey; others dashing in and out as though they had the whole street at their fingers' ends. Then, at about one o'clock of the day, the street gave a great roar; this was the Auction—Stores going off into a large sale, with a number of deep-chested gentlemen to encourage them by shouting at the top of their lungs; and how he packed 'em, close and hot and plenty of 'em, up—town merchants, and country merchants, and Brooklyn merchants, and Jersey City merchants; the sight of a green vine at the back window was decidedly refreshing: and if that breeze, that was idling his time away with a church—vane, had only looked in, he'd have been received with a cheer, I know. Then, from time to time, as noon was turning down towards three; young gentlemen in shoals, coming abroad with flying skirts, and rushing to and fro, with soiled leather—books crushed in the hand; and then, again, a portly man, this was the silent partner, no doubt, coming out from a very thrifty shop, benignant in his look and quiet in his gait, as though he had nothing to do with the concern, nothing whatever though he went in there at times to give the boys (he called the two spare, middle-aged gentlemen inside, boys, by way of defining his own position as a man in his prime) a little counsel in their affairs. That was all. But further down they came to a Slip, filled brim—full of dingy boats, chiefly of the order of sloops; and girt with stores that were clearly, by their cast of countenance being battered a good deal in the windows, and tumble down about the ground, and greatly out of color near of kin to the boats. The way in which the tall, smooth, shaven poles, they called 'em masts raised themselves on end out of the mud, and kept toying and dallying with bits of bunting at their tops, was enough to vex a patient man going there to look on. And then the Old Slip himself: was there ever such an ugly monster; old, decayed, in his long, slimy logs, that showed their moss hideously when the tide went down; idle too; and making the greatest ado in the world, with the boats that kept his company, whenever he had occasion to go out to sea for a few hours or so. A vile Old Slip, I must call him; and coming upon him in the dark night wind you'd surely see some bloody-minded man stalking about there, with a lantern in his hand: and presently, in spite of yourself, hear a plashing in the water, and have in mind, before you could break away, an ugly, white body, water—bleached, swinging by a cord against the Old Slip's ribs. I see comfort, though. There's an old fellow lodges near this: a stout, hearty, free, boisterous fellow: a neighbor of the slip's, but no way related: a manly, bold, gentlemanly fellow: prosperous but free-handed, hospitable as the day.

And when they came out upon the water, there he stood, South Street! Plenty of good warehouses, plenty of ships, plenty of pierheads! And seeming to say all the time, "Here am I, South Street: and here I mean to be for many a day to come. Don't be afraid to come along, ship, brig, schooner, sloop, perogue, long—boat, cock—boat, jolly—boat; English, French, Dutch, Russian, Norwegian, Kamschatkan I'm ready. I've looked into the matter a little, and know the state of this harbor pretty well. There's a great variety of tonnage, I can tell you; and you may lay as deep as you please without going to China. Come along!" And then he cocks his eye toward the Narrows, on a sharp lookout for more sail: and how he rattles his cordage and waves his streamers when a spanking wind comes in! All the ships in harbor with their noisy canvass talking at once; and he listening to every one; and understanding them all. Now they 're still again! And the old Street, as he measures himself in the river before

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him, takes on a grave and earnest look, with such a weight of thought about his head and ears, it makes one tremble almost to look at him! Just then he lets out from one of his sumptuous houses, a smooth man, of a wholesome and a hearty look, with a touch or two of care about the eye when he looks on the water: altogether a very pleasant and well-seeming gentleman; who comes to where Big Abel (who has seized the shipping to half a ton, with a boastful reference, I can tell you, to old Captain Hudson, who first of all the many ships lay in this port, you know), and Lankey stand: a South street merchant of the highest grade; a tip-top merchant of South street; and better than that, an old friend of Big Abel's.

"Well, Abel," the South street merchant said: this was his friendly way "How goes the lawsuit?!"

Big Abel smiled; and looked majestically about upon the ships, the stores, the wharves.

"We've taken the matter into our own hands," that was Big Abel's answer. "The Little Manhattan and I; you see him here; and are now dividing the property."

The merchant being an upright and well-intentioned man, was evidently pleased that it had been got along with so easily.

"We shall be through by to-morrow night; and then we wind up with a little celebration with our friends: You'll come, will you not? At the Old Banking-House; you 'll come?"

The merchant knew the Old Banking-House well; he had business there many a day gone by. He would come, certainly, with great pleasure: and shaking Big Abel and Lankey warmly by the hand, he went away to help in naming a bran-new ship, just put in water. But Lankey Fogle and Big Able tarrying still about the spot, espied, standing out upon a pier-head, a figure; that drew their look upon him as though he had been a beacon-light. Comely and young, and fair; but pale as water at his greatest trouble: standing there, his hair in motion by the wind that grew now to a gale as conscious more of something far away and suffering, than of the cheerful vessels safely harbored round him.

Sometimes he cast his eyes upon the ground: and when, in some other motion of his spirit, he looked up again, his eye flew off with eager fearful speed to the far, endless fading of the Narrows, toward the sea.

He was not one who feared a ship would never come: who lingered long upon the farthest sky to see her smoke or sail ascending. No, no; this was the Poor Scholar, who trembled lest too happy speed in her should bring some fatal ship to blight his hope; bearing from far lands some other book to take the place of his. She was not due; but he leaped in spirit, through the waves before her prow: and saw her cut the sea like light, in speed no ship had ever made, could ever make. Oh, blame him not; that he in thought would cast a chain about her way, and hold her back a day or so. Play other tunes than those you pipe on now, good Wind, for that Poor Scholar's sake two days. A day is all he asks. Another day, and he will have his little hope embarked; then come, as sharply as you will! Good Wind another day!

Going on, Big Abel and Lankey came to a street which oppressed them; with mighty leaden hats; copper serpents coiling about at the doors; cauldrons; bells; but chiefly stoves: wherever the eye went, up or down, it was troubled with the sight of cones, and squares, and columns, and pyramids, but all with a trick in them, stoves. Patent too! To cook with, to sleep with, to sit with, to travel with you could do anything in that street, in the way of stoves! And, if it should so come about at night, when a few old fellows, rusty dogs, are left without in the lonesome street, with no one to watch or check their gambols (the young ones being all fast-locked in inside), what a frolic and a tussle they must have among themselves these Patent Stoves! How they must, with all the wit that's in them, fight and quarrel with each other for the upper hand! There's high work, late at night, I'll warrant, in that street!

## Big Abel and the Little Manhattan

Now Big Abel, prompted by the striking of two o'clock at a watchmaker's, recollected an Old House (a house of his: having clearly the very heart and soul of the Old English Captain in it) not far away. Trotting up a hilly street; out upon Franklin-Square; and there he was. Old Walton House! Not quite so grand as when he had his scores of waiters pouring in and out; liveried footmen mounting and dismounting at the door; fine gentlemen and fine ladies alighting or taking carriage; and that Great Man, whom all men love and honor, now, walking the long garden down to the very river's edge.

Not grandly: but soberly: and with a decent gravity as conscious of what he was once. Not in so high a line of life as then: for now he furnishes drinks at his bar; and sends out stages (ignominious, this) to Oyster Bay, Cold Spring, and Hempstead. And yet, through all, he carries the same old front with his heavy eye-brows, iron-pitted doors, and a knocker that speaks out in as high a key as ever. Here Big Abel and Lankey sought to dine. There was no table spread in the cellar, as is the usage in some houses: nor in the parlor: nor the drawing-room: nor bed-room: nor garret: but going to the great hall of the second floor, you found a goodly banquet stretched out: disdaining the rooms all about: up stairs and below. What a company the Old House has to meals! As though his sturdy old heart, by some magic in it, could draw them out wherever they lurked, all through the city: whoever has a touch of his quaint humor in them. These were old men and old women; faded bachelors; faded spinsters; not in one costume by any means: but all with a whim in their bearing; and a trick in the fashion of a cap, or neck-cloth, or shoe-buckle, or wristband that told plainly enough these were the Old House's friends; and that they stood by him to the last.

They knew the Little Manhattan and Big Abel well: this strange old company: and gave place to them; and entertained them, to the end of the feast, with ancient courtesy. In the midst of an antic, hobnobbing or philandering, or some such whim, Big Abel and the Little Manhattan took their leave; carrying their hats in hand till they reached the door.

Returning toward the river, they passed numbers of Bars or lodging-houses: with green or yellow doors: with red curtains sometimes in the windows, with tall pale bottles or small portly glass decanters, crowned with lemons: sometimes a coil of close tobacco in one corner: and, hanging at the door (this was regular), a green parrot in a cage. The doors were all open; and about them stood women, chiefly in plain bombazine, with some ribbon or other about the waist, and men, duck-trowsered, in low tarpaulin hats. Big Abel's heart leaped up to these. They all seemed to know him there, too; and well they might, for, in the very midst of all, there stood upon a board, Henry Hudson, the brave old navigator himself: couldn't you catch a trick of Big Abel in his look and bearing?

Then the signs that swung above these Bars. Oftenest, a maiden lady, in a new white gown, smiling: always smiling: and leaning on an anchor, as though it had been a divan. And about the Bars, keeping as close to them as they could, great swarms of red-shirts, and pea-jackets, and glazed hats, at corners; spreading themselves about, and disporting in the air on sticks and dangling strings: as though they were impatient to get at the Bars, if the Bars didn't make haste to come to them. And a Hat-store: where the hats were all gone out of ordinary black wear into newspapers: in which they were corded up, from one end of the year to the other, coming out only, one by one, and on special demand.

It was at a Bar, the quietest little Bar they could find, that Lankey Fogle and Big Abel went to lodge. But, to tell the truth, Lankey Fogle and Big Abel got little sleep that night. All through the neighborhood, there was perpetual tuning of fiddles; scraping of sanded floors by shuffling feet; clattering of glasses; uproarious draining of tankards and dashing down; mingling of men's and women's voices in high and keen discourse; with rattling to the door, at most extraordinary hours, of hackney-coaches, and tumbling through entry-ways of bulky unsteady bodies. Then off in a concerto, or performance of their own, went all the creaking signs: the wind had been mischievously disposed all that day; shaking some with a quick clatter, and putting *them* to sleep, somehow or other; keeping others busy with a slow, long, troubled, moaning sound. The uproar grew; the sanded floors in high commotion; the red curtains at the windows fiercer in their glow; the bottles wild and pale with lack of drink (all drawn to keep the mirth at tip-top pitch). How like to their own rugged sea these sailors were! who brought with them,

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from far away, his rolling motion, in their gait; his uproar, in their boisterous speech; the hours he keeps, unlike the sober land, of night and day to have his gambols in: and yet who bears the world in all his climes, and tongues, of high degree or low, with a good heart, and without partial stint, to where they will! A single hour before the break of day, there came a lull, in which Old Jollity took boat, or legs, or what you will, and made such port as that rough region had to lend.

### **CHAPTER IX. They are in the Seventh Day; and where the City finds his Children.**

When, at morning, Big Abel and the Little Manhattan set forth from their lodging-house, there was a great turmoil of waggons about the Ferry; a long, lazy man taking money at the gate, at his leisure, with incidental pulls at a bell; an array of horses, with their heads in the street, and their carts against the market a piebald range of heads: they were, in a word, entering the wild and wonderful region of East Bowery; of which Catherine-street makes the southern boundary, and the Great Bowery the western line. People who live in the West and the South have strange notions, I am told, of all this vicinage: and have more than once made it over in fee to the Little Manhattan as a land of Savages. Dark rumors prevail as to the diet, dress, and habitation of its denizens: children are seen there not sparely, too and grown men and women. This is the report: and when, from time to time, some wild, adventurous Broadway gentleman takes cab, and allows himself to be carried by a most desperate driver, thither: he comes back, it is said, with hair on end, and talks in such a way of plain, simple-witted, honest Republican folks, that listeners lift their hands on high, and coming down, take toddies all around, and lifting them again, find comfort in their horror. A perilous day was this, then, on which Little Lankey and Big Abel now were bound: the last: and when they looked along the street, the very air they saw was red, and blue, and yellow, with long stripes shot from housetop to walk, from windows to awning-posts, up out of cellars, and across the way: so that you would have said a devil's darning-needle must have lost his wings in any attempt to fly through. And yet through all there was a steady rush of butchers' carts, lively and frisky as young lambs: and market-waggons, driven up and down by strange old women, who were tossed about, with their faded black bonnets tumbling about their ears, in a manner you would suppose no old woman would ever submit to: a constant scamper of people to the Ferry: shoppers, cheapening from shop to shop: and altogether a street as full as it could hold, and wonderfully gloomy and dispirited in his look, 'spite of all the good company he kept, and all the business he was doing. Nevertheless, Lankey Fogle and Big Abel made their way to a part towards the head, where they heard a tradition of a great kite that had been once sent up, swinging a man at his tail, over the roofs: also of an Indian squaw, who had sojourned thereabout, to a marvellous old age: and then they were at Division-street, setting due eastward.

Here was a cheerful street for men to walk!

The dainty milliners! What tidy caps, enticing little hats and bonnets (of no kin to those the market-women wore, I warrant you!) perched on sticks. Inside, the gentle milliners themselves their clerks in little rooms beyond and keeping up through all the neighborhood a pleasant sound of ribbons drawn through the hand and clicking scissors; keeping time with the dainty minutes as they hopped over the garden fence, just at the back-door, you see! at the invitation of the young gentlemen in the study-windows they all have studies, there of East Broadway. Brim-full of little shops! Everybody taking breakfast one step up in the world: with a glass door by way of provocation to strange gentlemen passing by without privilege of stopping to say good morning. Well: this was Big Abel's, if you could believe the story that he told of just such a dainty body as one of these sent up into the Island from the Captain's ship two hundred years before and settling hereabout, had fixed the fashions, downward from that time. But then no one claimed certain tall, spare, grizzled, useless old gentlemen, who are always seen lounging about these shops; making believe keep the accounts; and going forth from day to day, and coming back too, with baskets on their arms. These are said to be husbands to the dainty milliners; but don't believe a word of it; they're evil spirits appointed, for some wicked deeds in youth, to pass their grey old days in tending on these milliners: in sight of Beauty ever, no nearer, though they linger there as long as old Methusalem!

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When they had got beyond this pleasant pass; and reached the little square where Hester street, I think it is, shakes hands with him (a trick the sideways all about here play) the Little Manhattan, being put in countenance by a fierce and gloomy little Indian, in autumnal costume every color in the rainbow and some not in that pattern who watches that neighborhood from his pedestal; came to a dead pause and set up peremptorily, quite peremptorily for Lankey, a claim to all East Bowery without reservation.

Big Abel came to a halt, too: and demanded proofs. It was then that Lankey Fogle, with an emphasis of manner unknown in all their past rambles, called Big Abel's attention, distinctly and pointedly, to what was going on around them. All over the neighborhood, up street, down street, on the long walk of the square, in doorways, windows there was but one business forward: every man of them pulling away, with a face of intense employment, at a little dark roll he carried in his mouth: men passing in carts, in waggons, on horseback, all smoking for life.

The Little Manhattan thought there was evidence for him: they both knew *whose* Weed it was they wore. Big Abel, to tell the simple truth, was staggered at the sight: but recovering as soon as ever he could, he moved forward a pace or two, to where, at the very heart of the Square, there springs a tall and stately Pole; bearing high upon his top a golden cap.

"This came over with the old Navigator, I think!"

Big Abel's manner was quite oppressive in saying this.

"That was the very cap it wore, on ship-board!"

Could Lankey deny that? A Pole of Liberty: a brave big Pole: that looked about the neighborhood high over house-tops and church-steeple too: while Lankey's little Indian (RedLegs, so he called him) cowered upon the ground. Big Abel pointed to the East. Another Pole. West. Another. They sprung so thick and looked so proud no tree of his old faith had such a life as these! he hung his head; and claimed no more that day.

Crossing a great street now where, far as the eye can reach, an everlasting show of Goods: piled, spread, hung about: and great-eyed windows staring, out between. The Town is all one shop! And if Big Abel threw his net for Trade he has it clear as day. Wild with trade; inflamed to scarlet, yellow, every direful hue, with feverous trade. So it looked: yet in the midst of all this show there was one humble man, at least, who did his work; and murmured not; though profit never came to him. A coffee-grinder in a corner-window hard by there: a negro, to be sure, check-trowsered and close-bodied in redflannel, hard at his crank. How must he have sweated on that hot summer's day, if he had been made of anything but English pasteboard of the best!

And now, silently, they came upon a region where there were a great number of little sooty shops; plump poultry, hopping about on sheds, half-asleep in grocers' waggons under cover from the sun or loitering near little rickety feed-stores, waiting the chances of business. But chiefly infested by idle dogs (genuine idle dogs) standing in slaughter-house doorways, looking off at nothing, basking on stoops, or sauntering through entries; with nothing in the world to do. A region where, intending, with the truest heart, to enter one store alone, you find yourself (there's something marvellous in the doors that open thereabout) in two; going up stairs to a family of your own chosen friends, as you suppose, you are visiting, in the spirit of a wide philanthropy, a neighborhood; all ear to any alms you have to give in way of talk or gossipry.

Through all these parts, traversing the streets to East and West, to North and South; there went a constant voice whose cry was "Ung-yins!" (oh, why will he not that painful man take time and breath to make it On-i-ons, like an honest Christian soul!) accompanied always with a bunch of scaly red, borne in hand, beside a shaking cart.

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A little farther on; a chapel; a neat little house! no brave he to overawe the way with iron gates and massy steps and towers of stone; a little wooden church; and going in at this the busiest hour of day they had some heart for Heaven, even then! many plain, poor people meek as he. And two of these, Lankey Fogle and Big Abel saw, radiant among all the rest; no better clad, perhaps; no greater fortune in their purse or anywhere; but gold, pure gold, in every look, and step and motion that they made. Arm-in-arm these two drew near; looking, sometimes, on the ground ah, how they blessed the earth by such looks as these they gave him! Then deep into each other's eyes, so deep they seemed, in spirit, to pass each one into the other in its long intensity. Then up to where the warm, blue sky, was melting with a look as calm, as deep, as full of love as theirs! Ah, thankful hearts they bore that day, Poor William poor no longer in his humble gauge of wealth and his mistress, Mary. That little child of all their yet unwedded hopes, the Book, was walking through the world, as suited his Estate: That Book, whose birth was watched with so much hope, with so much fear, was now gone forth (thank God!) to bless the world! Among the poor and sad to scatter fancies dear as gold: to bear a promise of his Native Land to every clime: to make this Home of his (for that it meant) grow bright and shine anew, to all mankind! It was unto this young Book's march about the world, they measured now their grateful steps. Abel: Lankey: lingered how could they fail to? And presently there rose from out the bosom of that little house: a song: a simple, sacred song. Hearts in it, too. But over all, the old, the young: whatever voices strive to plead thanksgivingly: the two went up, with tears, it seemed almost in every thrill. Poor little Roof, you could not stay these praises from the place they sought. Heaven had them ere they were a minnute-old!

Hurrying along, they caught some pickled garlics in their hands (popular and prevailing everywhere in East Bowery, I am told): and with a rusk or two, made meal as on they sped.

And now they were fairly in East Bowery; at its very heart; and there Big Abel, making with the Little Manhattan great speed to accomplish their work by night-fall, were hailed from a distance.

"Hallo, my worthy!"

And there came down the street two broad-shouldered, broad-chested, flushed men carrying pinkeys each in his little finger the little finger of the other a custom believed to be endemical in East Bowery; each man being, by a figure of speech, the Pinkey of the other. They were both in light-colored coats, with great, round, staring white metal buttons, pantaloons intensely striped, round, flat-rimmed hats, and oily locks dashed in little patches on either side of the head. One was at least a head higher than the other in person, and in bearing and deportment several heads. This one it was that cried out: and as he drew nearer, he renewed the cry,

"Well, old boy how goes that 'ere suit?"

Big Abel took him warmly by the hand as a friend of his, and made known the terms he had come to with the Little Manhattan.

"What do you say to that?" he asked, turning to the lesser gentleman at his side.

"That's the feature!" he made answer.

Big Abel mentioned the entertainment and hoped to see him there: nobody but friends to be on hand.

Be there, to be sure, and he'd bring somebody with him to shove it along; to wit the interesting gentleman at his side who again remarked that, *that* was the Feature.

A sweltering day was this; and the two Pinkeys, who never uncover to anything, having taken off their hats to the sun quite civilly to the sun to stand aside in the shade and hold this talk with Big Abel; clapped them back again, with a knock on the top, and moved off.

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Now, down again towards the East River, they came to a cemetery; and along its walls of brick a choice company of boys were met, some at play, throwing somersets against its side; some at marbles; some hop-scotching: among them all was one who, standing near the iron gate, wrought out with chalk, a name, letter by letter, slowly. Big Abel and Lankey fell back and watched him as he worked. He stood close up against the wall and holding in one hand with which he partly scratched his head, by the leather front, a cap that fell down behind, worked with the other, in a slow and troubled way. He wrote it down, then rubbed it out again then down and out again: and down and out again, and every time 'twas Pompey Smith, or Pomp'.

This was little Neddy Mellish, no doubt.

"Why, what's the matter, little Neddy?" said Big Abel, as he paused and looked about upon the other boys.

"It's all up, sir, I'm afraid!" answered Neddy, whose face, to tell the truth, was very white.

"What, with him?" pointing to the name upon the wall.

"He'll not hold out till morning, they say!" and little Neddy took Big Abel's hand and wrung it hard, as though some comfort was to be got that way.

"Dear heart!" Neddy spoke up again, "I wish the doctors would let him stay, and send me off."

The doctors! they knew little Neddy Mellish well; for now, for many days, while this pale trouble followed Pomp' he had followed them to the sick boy's door, and from the door, questioning their calm faces for a hope aye, even leaping to the stirrups of their gigs as on they sped, to get a word from them, for Pompey's sake. Believe it whether you will or no, white Neddy Mellish watched, for many days, and nights too, come to that, nor would be driven off beside black Pompey's bed!

But now he was not there. He hung his head and looked up with a fear to Big Abel's face.

"I couldn't stay to see him die!" said little Neddy, with bitter self-reproach. "Oh, what a cruel wretch I am I couldn't though. To see him writhing in his bed, when they told me that he fought for life, was hard enough. Play-fellow! I've seen you work at many games." Pompey was before him in spirit even then. "But this was one, where all your skill and mirth and speedy foot would go for nothing, once for all! Pomp', Pomp', by this time poor Pomp' is dead!"

What could Big Abel say? What Lankey? To that little wounded, heart-sore child? Not a word. They looked through the grated gate, upon the grave-yard within. Clearly there was no property of theirs. The dead had it to themselves. A few white stones; a little grassy green; a few mouldering bodies. Nothing more. Nothing to claim and Big Abel and Lankey Fogle walked in silence many streets (little Neddy Mellish was fading at a swift pace, like a ghost, far, far away), until they came to the river himself; and there they found a little old ferry; faded as to his house; with a broken bell; a gate-keeper gone to seed long, long ago; and, altogether, keeping the breath in his body by being very humble, and obsequious and obliging to a number of old, Long-Island market-women, for the sake of the baskets they had to carry. But now, what magic sweetened all the air to Big Abel, who grew in bulk, his bright, blue eye, brighter, his foot more firm upon the ground. A sound of hammers, all in chorus! a cheery shout! and, how they heave in sight and cut great hollows in the air ships on stocks! And busy under them, as moles, what brisk and sturdy men! A whole company of ships on stocks; but one had the heart, that afternoon, of all about. By some wonder in him drew the eye of men and boys who, gathered in a swarm near by, looked on with curious eyes. Some sought to know him better, mounted to his back, and rode him as a gentle beast astride; but how they toiled, the brisk and sturdy men, to knock away his pins, and let him take the water as he should.



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In the very glow and zenith of their work, Big Abel stood there; tall and stout you know he was; and when they caught a sight of him, they came and put within his hand the launching-sledge (she now was near her time); with a stroke he brushed away the lingering prop, and with a leap she took the stream. A shout!

And back through all the streets the city took it up! A shout that had the city's heart and soul in it! A shout that always goes with that stout ship through every sea, to every land! Lives in her timbers, fills her sails, and keeps her keel aright!

Big Abel shook his ears as though he too had taken water; and crowed in spirit at the sight. All Henry Hudson in him stirred to life; and with a voice he claimed those mighty yards, and who gainsayed him?

Fine ships, no doubt (this was what came into the Little Manhattan's head); clear in the hull; oak-ribbed; arrows for speed. But when he cast back an eye, although the liberty-pole was still like a great splinter in his head; and though he claimed no more that day; how his look brightened, too, on all around at sight of tumbling houses, tumbling fast; poor broken ways; and in some pier heads, falling off, he even saw or thought he saw, the old Island pushing out his sandy strength, as when no house was on him, to keep him down.

Then out upon an open square, they got, bestrown with oyster-shells, or piled on every hand in little stacks, and, standing all about, sea-faded men; men gone to seed; a toping fry, who always wear a rusty tarpaulin, and roundabout of knotty blue, with beards uncut. Through all this region linger too upon the walls stray posters, idly babbling there until some pelting shower shall roll them down of concerts long since sung; lectures spoken and silent, long ago; and plays whose names are out of mind to all beside. Then sauntering home, with little greasy, empty boxes, strapped across the breast, a drove of match-boys, weary in the leg, without a single cry in all their throats. The day was hot indeed, and melted every gambol, every scampering whim or thought of speed, out of the soul and body of these sauntering boys; at best, to tell the truth, an idle, slow and dreamy race beside the news-boys of the other side. A fair and gentle girl; yet pale how pale, and poorly clad! accosted Big Abel, a sempstress and a city girl returning home from work. She bore a pile of garments on her arm a horse (at charge of that gilt-lettered, gorgeous firm she worked for) had better have been there to carry.

And yet she spoke to Big Abel cheerfully.

He had a heart; Lankey, silent as night, looked on and had a heart too; and told her there was, in his belief, in the breast-pocket of a great white coat (she had to touch again some error in a thread or so) he pointed to: a wonder that would take her breath away: (He had shrewdly sunk a little mine of silver there): and when she got it back again, to take that little dainty hat of hers, the cheerful creature of dark over-hours of work, and that light snowy frock, of the same lineage with the hat; and make good speed up to the old Banking House, as for a ball or feast, or something of that kind. Her burthen grew as light as air. A minute she was out of sight; and in that minute the old Banking House became a piece of fairy-land, and Big Abel took the part of first fairy at a bound.

Why, what a spot is this they've come upon? Far as the eye can reach on every side, the stoops, the walks, the area-steps, are pattered thick with children, as though they had been sprinkled there, in some strange freak, out of a boundless watering pot; a little shower on every side. When the old city looks for children, he comes here I know. Out at windows idle women lean, and talk to neighbors near at hand, or hail across the way. Men, heavy in their walk and fat of look, plunge down; ducking beneath blue signs; and in the beer shops, everywhere, quench and put out the glowing day. The sturdy foundries by the river, too, are tired at last, and make it known to all the world by ringing out a peal upon their bells. Through all that world of Eastern Bowery, work is done; and everything, till daylight come again, is sport, in name, whatever it may be. And moving on, there approached Big Abel and Lankey, what seemed a small swarm of glowing fire-flies, burning their way through the dusk with an even wing, which always kept them at a certain height above the earth. But, drawing nearer, these lights helped them to see behind them the sallow faces of a body of fire-boys, smoking their path through the street. Presently a watchman's rattle was sprung; the constellation knew it at once; broke up chaotically, and went round the

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neighboring corners in several pieces. Shortly after this, an overwhelming shout in a neighboring street; and in less than a minute there came tumbling back, a square box on wheels (a fire-engine, no doubt); and tore away, in the very teeth of the sturdy watch, and made merry, in its rough way, for miles.

And now, in Tompkins' Square; the trees sickly, and thin; the benches rude; the walks, ill-tended but what a sight, off toward the East! The river, with its smoothest bay, and all it had of gentleness and calm, in that fair summer hour, seemed floating to the eye on towards this silent Square, and blessing it. Serene! The children stopped, in all their frolics stopped, to look at it, as on a picture in a pleasant book; old men thought over all their lives gone by, however dark and rough, with something of a holy calm; and women drew into their gentle hearts the spell of all it showed, to nurse their gentleness yet more. That Square, abuse him as you may, and treat him to as poor a culture as you will, can never grow a base, or low, or worthless square, while he may look out on the River, as now he looks. The Prison, too, upon the Island (Lankey and Big Abel knew him well), no more a Prison, but softened to a palace and an ark of rest, lingering there some fairy changes of the tide, to glide away; or silently go off in silver mist, up into the sky! They cannot loiter now for company is forward at the old Banking-House, and Big Abel, with Lankey, make new speed out at a gate on the west; and crossing a nimble thoroughfare, they come upon a street that makes them pause again.

The heart of little Neddy Mellish guessed aright. Poor Pomp' was dead! Who else could be so calmly borne away: this was his procession passing now! No hearse, no horse, no coach; a little coffin borne by men; and after it a line of poor black women in kerchiefs crossed upon the breast. How silently they moved! was death nearer in the thought of these poor women, now that little Pomp' was borne away with quiet tread, than when there is a tramp of hoofs, and rolling wheels, and talkers scaring him? One white mourner only. Gliding on oh what a peace there is about that little coffin borne by friendly hands; as like to life as death may be in all the gentle, tender bearing of it up. One white mourner! The street is still there is a hope of human hearts as yet and children hang about its path; and wonder with their little simple eyes what gentle show this is that moves so deftly on. But little Neddy Mellish. He is in the line, as calm, as orderly as any. Behind them all alone! Although they speak to him the poor black women with their looks, and tell him softly to bear up. Away from that he must be nearer to his old, dear, little friend! Nearer? He ought to lie, now, by his very side. Close to the coffin, helping in his feeble way to hold it up; although he weeps, there's comfort in the burthen that he bears. Who thought that he should ever carry Pompey so! And once or twice the fancy came into his little foolish head to knock upon the coffin lid as though poor Pomp', so summoned, might arise and come again to play with little Neddy. Not to the churchyard where little Neddy Mellish wrought his name (no, not there for there white people lie alone in all their ashen splendor!) but toward a country-field they're moving with poor Pomp': good-bye thou little negro-boy; perhaps there is a Heaven for thee after all who knows? And at the suburb, Lankey and Big Abel (who had kept it company all along) part with it, and take their way how pale they saw that little Neddy was!

## **CHAPTER X. It all winds up with an Entertainment: a Bird's-Eye View of the Whole, and where the City's Moving to.**

Upon the Roof: whither they have been climbing now, to speak so, for seven busy days. The old Banking-House Roof that bears him high and calm, or used to, at the head of Union Square; under a canvass wigwam, camp or awning, as you choose. Big Abel and the Little Manhattan; two Figures brought out by the friendly dusk that half the city, looking that way, might know them well. A quiet hour is this for Lankey and Big Abel: talking over all their past rambles; Abel, with a high and cheery spirit; Lankey, I must confess it, with a tinge of sadness in his voice.

By and by; as they sat talking thus; there came out at the scuttle way, a handle-basket: for a time the light below was all cut off, and then, emerging slowly, and yet cheerfully, Mrs. Saltus! There was an arm-chair set for her, in a choice corner of the Roof; and when she took it, folding her broad ruddy hands upon her lap, how heartily she glowed an extra cheerful summer's evening in herself. And after her the old Attorney, with his grizzled hair

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(some show of brushing it put on). If that Old Banking–House had been a mighty coffin he could not have come from it more like a ghost. He seemed to think there might be Judges of some high court there; by his manner. Mrs. Saltus spoke a word of comfort to him at once; she knew his father well; a worthy man, pains–taking in his craft! (he had been a smith): and she never looked to see his son a great lawyer. A penetrating woman, a keen–eyed woman, that Mrs. Saltus; to find anywhere in that torn dress and ghostly shell, a lawyer of the least degree. The poor Attorney took his seat humbly though; and had no motion to make at all; none whatever. Presently, a gush of mint (it wasn't the Indian Doctor with his herbs!) came up the scuttle; a playful scuffling by the way; followed by the two Pinkeys (Great Pinkey and Small Pinkey, Lankey in his humor called them): who executed impromptu, on arriving on the roof, an Oriental Saraband (out of East Bowery); in which they went off, impromptu again, into the two sexes; turning each other; forwarding; and deporting altogether as though this was a regular thing, in the way of a dance, and no mistake. To the huge delight of Mrs. Saltus, who rolled in her chair; and put them in countenance whenever the course of their proceedings brought them that way. By the time they had subsided into a playful fist–fight, in a corner; with a solid tread, but gentlemanly withal, and self–sustained, there came along the South Street Merchant; the South Street Merchant of the highest grade; the tip–top Merchant of South Street; and better than that, an old friend of Big Abel's. And now the Indian Doctor! A quiet man, with not a word to say; who settled like a piece of shadow, far over on the roof, under a corner of the canvass; by a pole, as though he had some faint notion of a wigwam, in his head, and meant to stand by it, that night. As one who ascends a companion ladder, as the best of stairs; bearing in his hand, as having worlds within it, his great glass; out came the good old Packet Captain; and shook himself, once on the Roof, as though he stood upon the deck of some brave ship, and saw far out to sea. A proud man was the old Packet Captain; but when he saw quite close at hand, green fields and trees, he softened down, and talked with his old crony, the great merchant of South Street; of many things, born under both their eyes, far in the past. What a scrambling fellow he is, that Boatman, Barskin, by name! He's used to sloops, and their way of coming on deck, you may see at once. The great company on the roof, they're apple dealers to Barskin, and country people with firkins to freight down the river, that's all they are to him; or can ever be. But like a streak of gentle light, coming not from Heaven, as it should; one who meant to be the first of all that company; but who was crossed, most sadly crossed in an iron she had to deal with (a little, wicked, perverse, over–fiery iron!) the young Sempstress! There was a blessing for Big Abel he could never outgo (in all his thousand, thousand city friends) when that young sempstress took his hand, in what a grasp for one so young and pale; and smiled on him. She had brought this kept her back a little, too, a favor a bright red ribbon of the color of true heart's blood with a quaint device; for Big Abel to wear.

The company all assembled; and what have we here? A table spread (Big Abel had this in his mind as long ago as when he met Lankey at the Tower) with every city growth, with every city dainty; piled high, stretched out, and deep with row on row. Take to! take to! you are all welcome. Big Abel has a good heart for you all (for it is he that gives the feast; though the Little Manhattan in his poor way is one of the entertainers). A joyous time, a cheerful time; for, though unlike, how Big Abel drew them all together, and had them move, through that good feast, as one. You don't know the half as yet, though! For there was Big Abel's health to drink; and a speech from Big Abel.

Big Abel was very grateful (this was his speech as I have been told): that his friends were with him there that night. He loved them; every one. For many a day he had known them, every one; and watched them grow out of the very city's heart. They had a soul in them, all of them, that would never die. (He meant this in a way of his own.) The time could never come, in this great city, when Mrs. Saltus should cease to be, for one: the great Packet Captain for another: the two Pinkeys for two more: the boatman, Barskin: the Indian Doctor, with his home–grown herbs: the young Sempstress always.

How their hearts sunk at that!

A pale young Laborer, like this, always; a poor Attorney: and yet a mighty merchant, for the water–side, to bring the city up again.

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"And a Big Abel!" They cried in chorus, "Always a Big Abel!" He cast his eye upon the oblong iron box that stood before him; and could not deny it.

At this juncture Mrs. Saltus, with a mighty smile that had a mystery in it, I am sure, brought forward the handle-basket: and presently there leaped out of it quite a number (I'll not undertake to count them) of stout, short-necked, apoplectic bottles cherry bounce of choice make for Big Abel! After this a small roll of leaf tobacco for the Little Manhattan: reared at Bloomingdale in her own garden, tended by her own fruitful hand, from first to last. Everybody had a fresh start, with a brimming glass of cherry bounce! And then, there was a time! What stories Mrs. Saltus had to tell! To the Indian Doctor, of a sovereign herb that grew once by this same old Banking House: To the Packet Captain, of a sloop that was wrecked in a gale, in a September long ago, under very trying circumstances: To the Poor Attorney, of a famous law case that raged once between two farmers, one a Staten Islander, the other of Westchester, who, running, full force, one down the city, the other up: this seems apocryphal: came against each other in the City Hall, with a crash, and both fell dead, leaving their estate, with all their deeds and vouchers, for the two Attorneys to pick and come again.

Then, to the Sempstress, a most moving story, which she fetched with her spick-and-span new out of Bloomingdale, of a Blighted Heart, that brought the very tears into her foolish eyes. It was all about a tin-smith, too, I believe. Then there was no end to what she had to say to Barskin: of up the river, and down; and freights; and crops: and here she got off to the Packet Captain and made his eyes roll with the description of a prize Ox fattened at West Farms, to her knowledge, till he couldn't leave the stable, and (the old story!) had to go back again, and get out that way, and take to his growth in a great meadow; the only place to give him scope. And as to the two Pinkeys: it was as much as she could do to get a word with them: they were busy as two great bumble-bees about the pale, little Sempstress; pressing their suit with vehemence and spirit, and a mighty resolution that made her shake like a willow twig: the Small Pinkey always giving way, always, when it came to a crisis, and deferring to the Great. The number of times the poor Sempstress' health had to go about was beyond belief. Arms' length, drunk once; then from the crown of the hat; then over the left shoulder (the cherry bounce was playing the mischief with the wits of these two Pinkeys); then from two glasses at once: and finally out of the bottle: they had to take to that at last. By which time Mrs. Saltus had brought home to the South-street Merchant, that tip-top gentleman, an account of a great fish that, as she described him, was in the habit, the quite constant habit, of coming up the North River, directly abreast of the market (her market) and, by the most unseemly references to others of his tribe, who were there carred-up, putting the whole market to the blush. I am afraid the cherry bounce was going home rapidly to Mrs. Saltus.

And under the cherry-bounce; I think it was at its height; Big Abel walked the Roof as though it had been the very top and ridge of all the world. He called the company to look upon the city (his city, now; in the full stream of his brisk spirits); spread below. Could any eye there, take all in? Southward! Thick and dark, with houses; of all shapes, and heights, and schools. Westward! Another city back of that. East! He took up Brooklyn in his thoughts, even as a little child; and bade him look into his Father's face the city's! Then Williamsburgh. Then wheeling round What more? A score of towns; who watched his steps, and walked with him. And twinkling houses, dotting here and there, the Island through and making head against the darkness. Then suddenly he started all unto their feet and bade them to behold! A light far, far away upon the heights of Harlaem (kindled there at Big Abel's prompting). Towards that the city springs, and leaps, and takes such mighty strides, that nothing can be or make a bar to him. To Harlaem! on to Harlaem! That was Big Abel's cry (still friendly to the cherry bounce); and when his eye had wearied of this work, the Packet Captain brought his glass to bear, and showed him still other clusters all about; where, in the fields, at roadsides, on the hills, the city gathered strength, and seized the Island in his arms.

The Little Manhattan drawing from some nook or recess or other about his person, a long, brown pipe; and runing it out at full arm's length upon the rail, smoked (out of Mrs. Saltus' friendly roll) silently. As he, Big Abel, looked abroad, so boastfully; did no thought then cross thy spirit of the little part thou heldst in all that shadowy and lighted world? That all thy share in it, was in thy old heathen fancy of things gone by, many and many a day; and

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in the visionary rule of here and there, a gloomy hollow (worth naught to none but thee), a crooked way, a few dumb Indians at a trader's door.

Then sprung afresh Big Abel's boast. He counted up his stores, his streets, his ships, his goods of every clime, his piles on piles of every mortal ware; His shops of iron and brass; His steeple-stacks; His gates; His squares; His roads that run through all the Island's length; His aqueducts; His stages, thousand fold and doubling day by day; His Rail-Tracks, swift as light and shot as far; then swelling up he talked; without a check from any one of all his company; of Bridges cast to Brooklyn, with a thought; another, with scarce less dispatch, to Jersey shore; and then he spanned the Islands of the Bay, and caught them in his vasty net. What wonder then, there grew in Lankey Fogle's heart (poor sad Manhattan); a hope that downfall yet would come upon the city's head; that yet he would be led against his will, oh sorely now against his will, back to his old drear wilderness; and lose himself in dusky lodges and by silent paths as though never he had been. It cannot be, I fear as yet, poor Lankey! No, No. The city grows; but you decline, I fear. (They never thought to drink your health!) You still will wander as a shade, the city-hills, the city-slopes; sit sadly down by mile-stones as the city grows; stand by the river's side, seeing there, what no other eye may see; dwindling like a spirit to the city's eye, while he, Big Abel, waxes on sturdier by every street he walks; by every square he builds. They say that you it is (but I for one will not believe it), that through the city light, unseen, great fires at night: and threaten with red overthrow the town from end to end. I know you love the grass that grows at times (by chance only, Lankey!) under horses' hoofs in swift thoroughfares. That often in the market-house, you sleep alone; or in a rolling boat upon the river; or underneath a tree out of the city's hateful breath, where you may get a sight of ancient stars. Often withdrawing too, into that little village of Manhattanville at the Island's farthest point it is said for long, long spells.

Happiest, perchance, in that calm season of your own, the Indian summer-time, when air and earth, and all things in and on them, share the gentle melancholy of your spirit, and nature shades her beauty and the brightness of her eye, in sympathy with you. Then Little Manhattan walks about, more master of the city for a little while, than sturdy Abel, even.

There is a light; of all the lights that burned that night; winking near by at this high revel; a cheerful light; not star-light, nor moon-light, nor sun-light, nor candle-light altogether; but wedding-light; made up of the best, choicest beams of all the other. You see them moving in its broad ray as though it were their element, for ever; the two. An old aunt's house; a kindly and a hospitable old aunt's house; and this is William and Mary, linked with that chain that brightens every day, at every season of the year, in every place, once forged aright; a second since. A blessing be in all your days, young Scholar and fair Wife! Let winds blow swift or slow; seas run rough or smooth; though all the world take arms against thy gentle craft, the fortress thou art in, will keep them off.

Still on the revel runs, on that high Roof how long, who knows, or who will dare to guess (Big Abel with the heart of twenty giants, the leader of it all)?

Good night! Good night! Little Manhattan, Packet Captain, Boatman, Great Pinkey and Small, pale Sempstress (happy, now awhile); thou Indian herbalist, poor Attorney, tip-top Merchant of South Street, Mrs. Saltus, Big Abel, Good Night! In the suburbs far beyond hark, the swift beating of a cheerful band. The marching song, it seems, of the Great City setting forth toward the mighty Future he is called to fill!

THE END.