

WHAT SO ★ PROUDLY ★ WE HAIL

The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song

A Pretty Story

FRANCIS HOPKINSON

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This allegory was written by the lawyer, statesman, and signer of the Declaration of Independence Francis Hopkinson (1737–91) under the pseudonym Peter Grievous and published in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1774, a year before the outbreak of fighting. It presents, by means of a homey, personal, and familial tale, an accessible—and perhaps unthreatening—account of the grievances that the colonists had with the English king and Parliament, growing from small beginnings and nourished by ordinary human desires and failings. It is also a useful introduction to the following selections in this section, which deal with the events that led up to the American Revolution.

Start by reading the story in its own terms, not yet as an allegory. How and why does disorder creep into this family? Who is responsible for the troubles? Trace the stages of displeasure, resistance, and rebellion among the children? Now consider the story as allegory. Identify each of the characters: the Nobleman, his wife, steward, children, neighbors, Jack, the Padlock, and the Overseer to Jack. What is gained, and what is lost, in presenting the great political struggle as a family quarrel? How apt is the allegorical tale? Why, according to the story, are the children (colonists) so patient and long-suffering? Why is the story incomplete? What is the meaning of its title?

Once upon a Time, a great While ago, there lived a certain Nobleman, who had long possessed a very valuable Farm, and had a great Number of Children and Grandchildren.

Besides the annual Profits of his Land, which were very considerable, he kept a large Shop of Goods; and being very successful in Trade, he became, in Process of Time, exceedingly rich and powerful; insomuch that all his Neighbours feared and respected him.

With Respect to the Management of his Family, it was thought he had adopted the most perfect Mode that could be devised, for he had been at the Pains to examine the Economy of all his Neighbours, and had selected from their Plans all such Parts as appeared to be equitable and beneficial, and omitted those which from Experience were found to be inconvenient. Or rather, by blending their several Constitutions together he had so ingeniously counterbalanced the Evils of one Mode of Government with the

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Benefits of another, that the Advantages were richly enjoyed, and the Inconveniencies scarcely felt. In short, his Family was thought to be the best ordered of any in his Neighbourhood.

He never exercised any undue Authority over his Children or Servants; neither indeed could he oppress them if he was so disposed; for it was particularly covenanted in his Marriage Articles that he should not at any Time impose any Tasks or Hardships whatever upon his Children without the free Consent of his Wife.

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Now the Custom in his Family was this, that at the End of every seven Years his Marriage became of Course null and void; at which Time his Children and Grandchildren met together and chose another Wife for him, whom the old Gentleman was obliged to marry under the same Articles and Restrictions as before. If his late Wife had conducted herself, during her seven Year's Marriage, with Mildness, Discretion and Integrity, she was re-elected; if otherwise, deposed: By which Means the Children had always a great Interest in their Mother in Law;¹ and through her, a reasonable Check upon their Father's Temper. For besides that he could do nothing material respecting his Children without her Approbation, she was sole Mistress of the Purse Strings; and gave him out, from Time to Time, such Sums of Money as she thought necessary for the Expences of his Family.

Being one Day in a very extraordinary good Humour, he gave his Children a Writing under his Hand and Seal, by which he released them from many Badges of Dependence, and confirmed to them several very important Privileges. The chief were the two following, viz. that none of his Children should be punished for any Offence, or supposed Offence, until his brethren had first declared him worthy of such Punishment; and secondly, he gave fresh Assurances that he would impose no Hardships upon them without the Consent of their Mother in Law.

This Writing, on account of its singular Importance, was called THE GREAT PAPER.² After it was executed with the utmost solemnity, he caused his Chaplain to publish a dire *Anathema* against all who should attempt to violate the Articles of the *Great Paper*, in the Words following.

¹ *Hopkinson uses the term mother-in-law, which in English of the period also meant stepmother.*

² *That is, the Magna Carta (1215). Learn more about the Magna Carta at www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/magna_carta/.*

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“In the Name of the *Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, AMEN! Whereas our Lord and Master, to the Honour of God and for the common Profit of this Farm hath granted, for him and his Heirs forever, these Articles above written: I, his Chaplain and spiritual Pastor of all this Farm, do admonish the People of the Farm *Once, Twice, and Thrice*: Because that Shortness will not suffer so much Delay as to give Knowledge to the People of these Presents in Writing; I therefore enjoyn all Persons, of what Estate soever they be, that they and every of them, as much as in them is, shall uphold and maintain these Articles granted by our Lord and Master in all Points. And all those that in any Point do resist, or break, or in any Manner hereafter procure, counsel or any Ways assent to resist or break these Ordinances, or go about it by Word or Deed, openly or privately, by any Manner of Pretence or Colour: I the aforesaid Chaplain, by my Authority, do *excommunicate and accurse*, and from the Body of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and from all the *Company of Heaven*, and from all the *Sacraments* of holy Church do *sequester and exclude*.”

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CHAP. II.

Now it came to pass that this Nobleman had, by some Means or other, obtained a Right to an immense Tract of wild uncultivated Country at a vast Distance from his Mansion House. But he set little Store by this Acquisition, as it yielded him no Profit; nor was it likely to do so, being not only difficult of Access on Account of the Distance, but was also overrun with innumerable wild Beasts very fierce and savage; so that it would be extremely dangerous to attempt taking Possession of it.

In Process of Time, however, some of his Children, more stout and enterprising than the rest, requested Leave of their Father to go and settle on this distant Tract of Land. Leave was readily obtained; but before they set out certain Agreements were stipulated between them—the principal were—The old Gentleman, on his Part, engaged to protect and defend the Adventurers in their new Settlements; to assist them in cha[s]ing away the wild Beasts, and to extend to them all the Benefits of the Government under which they were born: Assuring them that although they should be removed so far from his Presence they should nevertheless be considered as the Children of his Family, and treated accordingly. At the same Time he gave each of them a Bond for the faithful performance of these Promises; in which, among other Things, it was covenanted that they should, each of them in their several Families, have a Liberty of making such Rules and Regulations for their own good Government as they should find convenient; provided

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these Rules and Regulations should not contradict or be inconsistent with the general standing Orders established in his Farm.

In Return for these Favours he insisted that they, on their Parts, should at all Times acknowledge him to be their Father; that they should not deal with their Neighbours without his Leave, but send to his Shop only for such Merchandize as they should want. But in Order to enable them to pay for such Goods as they should purchase, they were permitted to sell the Produce of their Lands to certain of his Neighbours.

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These Preliminaries being duly adjusted, our Adventurers bid Adieu to the Comforts and Conveniencies of their Father's House, and set off on their Journey—Many and great were the Difficulties they encountered on their Way: but many more and much greater had they to combat on their Arrival in the new Country. Here they found Nothing but wild Nature. Mountains over-grown with inaccessible Foliage, and Plains steeped in stagnated Waters. Their Ears are no longer attentive to the repeated Strokes of industrious Labour and the busy Hum of Men; instead of these, the roaring Tempest and incessant Howlings of Beasts of Prey fill their minds with Horror and Dismay. The needful Comforts of Life are no longer in their Power—no friendly Roof to shelter them from inclement Skies; no Fortress to protect them from surrounding Dangers. Unaccustomed as they were to Hardships like these, some were cut off by Sickness and Disease, and others snatched away by the Hands of Barbarity. They began however, with great Perseverance, to clear the Land of encumbering Rubbish, and the Woods resound with the Strokes of Labour; they drain the Waters from the saged Morass, and pour the Sun Beams on the reeking Soil; they are forced to exercise all the powers of Industry and Economy for bare Subsistence, and like their first Parent, when driven from Paradise, to earn their Bread with the Sweat of their Brows. In this Work they were frequently interrupted by the Incursions of the wild Beasts, against whom they defended themselves with heroic Prowess and Magnanimity.

After some Time, however, by Dint of indefatigable Perseverance, they found themselves comfortably settled in this new Farm; and had the delightful Prospect of vast Tracts of Land waving with luxuriant Harvests, and perfuming the Air with delicious Fruits, which before had been a dreary Wilderness, unfit for the Habitation of Men.

In the mean Time they kept up a constant Correspondence with their Father's Family, and at a great Expencc provided Waggon, Horses and Drivers to bring from his Shop

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such Goods and Merchandize as they wanted, for which they paid out of the Produce of their Lands.

CHAP. III.

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Now the new Settlers had adopted a Mode of Government in their several Families similar to that their Father had established in the old Farm; in taking a new Wife at the End of certain Periods of Time; which Wife was chosen for them by their Children, and without whose Consent they could do nothing material in the Conduct of their Affairs. Under these Circumstances they thrived exceedingly, and became very numerous; living in great Harmony amongst themselves, and in constitutional Obedience to their Father and his Wife.

Notwithstanding their successful Progress, however, they were frequently annoyed by the wild Beasts, which were not yet expelled from the Country; and were moreover troubled by some of their Neighbours, who wanted to drive them off the Land, and take Possession of it themselves.³

To assist them in these Difficulties, and protect them from Danger, the old Nobleman sent over several of his Servants, who with the Help of the new Settlers drove away their Enemies. But then he required that they should reimburse him for the Expence and Trouble he was at in their Behalf; this they did with great Cheerfulness, by applying from Time to Time to their respective Wives, who always commanded their Cash.

Thus did Matters go on for a considerable Time, to their mutual Happiness and Benefit. But now the Nobleman's Wife began to cast an avaricious Eye upon the new Settlers; saying to herself, if by the natural Consequence of their Intercourse with us my Wealth and Power are so much increased, how much more would they accumulate if I can persuade them that all they have belonged to us, and therefore I may at any Time demand from them such Part of their Earnings as I please. At the same Time she was fully sensible of the Promises and agreements her Husband had made when they left the old Farm, and of the Tenor and Purport of the *Great Paper*. She therefore thought it necessary to proceed with great Caution and Art, and endeavoured to gain her Point by imperceptible Steps.

³ A reference to the Intercolonial Wars, especially the French and Indian War, 1754–63.

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In Order to [do] this, she first issued an Edict setting forth, That whereas the Tailors of her Family were greatly injured by the People of the new Farm, inasmuch as they presumed to make their own Clothes whereby the said Tailors were deprived of the Benefit of their Custom; it was therefore ordained that for the future the new Settlers should not be permitted to have amongst them any Shears or Sciss[o]rs larger than a certain fixed size. In Consequence of this, our Adventurers were compelled to have their Clothes made by their Father's Tailors: But out of Regard to the old Gentleman, they patiently submitted to this Grievance.⁴

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Encouraged by this Success, she proceeded in her Plan. Observing that the new Settlers were very fond of a particular Kind of Cyder which they purchased of a Neighbour, who was in Friendship with their Father (the Apples proper for making this Cyder not growing on their own Farm) she published another Edict, obliging them to pay her a certain Stipend for every Barrel of Cyder used in their Families! To this likewise they submitted: Not yet seeing the Scope of her Designs against them.⁵

After this Manner she proceeded, imposing Taxes upon them on various Pretences, and receiving the Fruits of their Industry with both Hands. Moreover she persuaded her Husband to send amongst them from Time to Time a Number of the most lazy and useless of his Servants, under the specious Pretext of defending them in their Settlements, and of assisting to destroy the wild Beasts; but in Fact to rid his own House of their Company, not having Employment for them; and at the same Time to be a Watch and a Check upon the People of the new Farm.

It was likewise ordered that these Protectors, as they were called, should be supplied with Bread and Butter cut in a particular Form: But the Head of one of the Families refused to comply with this Order. He engaged to give the Guests thus forced upon him,

⁴ *In order to raise money for its war debts, the British Parliament passed a number of laws forcing Americans in the colonies to buy British-made goods and imposing prohibitive duties on imports. The Wool Act of 1699 prohibited the American colonists from exporting wool, wool yarn, or wool cloth to markets outside the individual colony in which it was produced, and also restricted the import of woolens and linens created in other areas of the British Empire. The Hat Act of 1732 placed limits on the manufacture, sale, and exportation of American-made hats. The Iron Act of 1750 restricted manufacturing activities in British colonies, particularly in North America.*

⁵ *The Molasses Act of 1733 imposed a tax on molasses, sugar, and rum imported from non-British foreign colonies into the North American colonies.*

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Bread and Butter sufficient; but insisted that his Wife should have the liberty of cutting it in what shape she pleased.⁶

This put the old Nobleman into a violent Passion, [insomuch] that he had his Son's Wife put into Gaol for presuming to cut her Loaf otherwise than as had been directed.

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CHAP. IV.

As the old Gentleman advanced in Years he began to neglect the Affairs of his Family, leaving them chiefly to the Management of his Steward. Now the Steward had debauched his Wife, and by that Means gained an entire Ascendency over her. She no longer deliberated what would most benefit either the old Farm or the new; but said and did whatever the Steward pleased. Nay so much was she influenced by him that she could neither utter *Ay* or *No* but as he directed. For he had cunningly persuaded her that it was very fashionable for Women to wear Padlocks on their Lips, and that he was sure they would become her exceedingly. He therefore fastened a Padlock to each Corner of her Mouth; when the one was open, she could only say *Ay*; and when the other was loosed, could only cry *No*. He took Care to keep the Keys of these Locks himself; so that her Will became entirely subject to his Power.

Now the old Lady and the Steward had set themselves against the People of the new Farm; and began to devise Ways and Means to impoverish and distress them.

They prevailed on the Nobleman to sign an Edict against the new Settlers, in which it was declared that it was their Duty as Children to pay something towards the supplying their Father's Table with Provisions, and to the supporting the Dignity of his Family; for that Purpose it was ordained that all their Spoons, Knives and Forks, Plates and Porringers, should be marked with a certain Mark, by Officers appointed for that End; for which marking they were to pay a certain Stipend: And that they should not, under severe Penalties, presume to make use of any Spoon, Knife or Fork, Plate or Porringer, before it had been so marked, and the said Stipend paid to the Officer.⁷

⁶ *The Quartering Acts of 1765 and 1774 ordered local governments of the American colonies to provide the British soldiers with any needed accommodations. It also required citizens to provide food for any British soldiers in the area.*

⁷ *A reference to the Stamp Act of 1765 which imposed a direct tax on the American colonies, and required that many printed materials in the colonies be produced on stamped paper produced in London, carrying an embossed revenue stamp.*

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The Inhabitants of the new Farm began to see that their Father's Affections were alienated from them; and that their Mother was but a base Mother in Law debauched by their Enemy the Steward. They were thrown into great Confusion and Distress. They wrote the most supplicating Letters to the old Gentleman, in which they acknowledged him to be their Father in Terms of the greatest Respect and Affection—they recounted to him the Hardships and Difficulties they had suffered in settling his new Farm; and pointed out the great Addition of Wealth and Power his Family had acquired by the Improvement of that Wilderness; and showed him that all the Fruits of their Labours must in the natural Course of Things unite, in the long Run, in his Money Box. They also, in humble Terms, reminded him of his Promises and Engagements on their leaving Home, and of the Bonds he had given them; of the Solemnity and Importance of the *Great Paper* with the Curse annexed. They acknowledged that he ought to be reimbursed the Expences he was at on their Account, and that it was their Duty to assist in supporting the Dignity of his Family. All this they declared they were ready and willing to do; but requested that they might do it agreeable to the Purport of the *Great Paper*, by applying to their several Wives for the Keys of their Money Boxes and furnishing him from thence; and not be subject to the Tyranny and Caprice of an avaricious Mother in Law, whom they had never chosen, and of a Steward who was their declared Enemy.

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Some of these Letters were intercepted by the Steward; others were delivered to the old Gentleman, who was at the same Time persuaded to take no Notice of them; but, on the Contrary, to insist the more strenuously upon the Right his Wife claimed of marking their Spoons, Knives and Forks, Plates and Porringers.

The new Settlers, observing how Matters were conducted in their Father's Family became exceedingly distressed and mortified. They met together and agreed one and all that they would no longer submit to the arbitrary Impositions of their Mother in Law, and their Enemy the Steward. They determined to pay no Manner of Regard to the new Decree, considering it as a Violation of the *Great Paper*. But to go on and eat their Broth and Pudding as usual. The Cooks also and Butlers served up their Spoons, Knives and Forks, Plates and Porringers, without having them marked by the new Officers.

The Nobleman at length thought fit to reverse the Order which had been made respecting the Spoons, Knives and Forks, Plates and Porringers of the new Settlers. But he did this with a very ill Grace: For he, at the same Time avowed and declared that he and his Wife had a Right to mark all their Furniture, if they pleased, from the Silver Tankard down to the very Chamber Pots: That as he was their Father he had an absolute

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Controul over them, and that their Liberties, Lives and Properties were at the entire Disposal of him and his Wife: That it was not fit that he who was allowed to be *Omnipresent, Immortal, and incapable of Error*, should be confined by the Shackles of the *Great Paper*; or obliged to fulfil the Bonds he had given them, which he averred he had a Right to cancel whenever he pleased.⁸

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His Wife also became intoxicated with Vanity. The Steward had told her that she was an *omnipotent* Goddess, and ought to be worshipped as such: That it was the Height of Impudence and Disobedience in the new Settlers to dispute her Authority, which, with Respect to them, was unlimited: That as they had removed from their Father's Family, they had forfeited all Pretensions to be considered as his Children, and lost the Privileges of the *Great Paper*: That, therefore, she might look on them only as Tenants at Will upon her Husband's Farm, and exact from them what Rent she pleased.

All this was perfectly agreeable to Madam, who admitted this new Doctrine in its full Sense.

The People of the new Farm however took little Notice of these pompous Declarations. They were glad the marking Decree was reversed, and were in Hopes that Things would gradually settle into their former Channel.

CHAP. V.

In the mean Time the new Settlers increased exceedingly, and as they increased, their Dealings at their Father's Shop were proportionably enlarged.

It is true they suffered some Inconveniencies from the Protectors that had been sent amongst them, who became very troublesome in their Houses: They seduced their Daughters; introduced Riot and Intemperance into their Families, and derided and insulted the Orders and Regulations they had made for their own good Government.

Moreover the old Nobleman had sent amongst them a great Number of Thieves, Ravishers and Murderers, who did a great deal of Mischief by practising those Crimes for which they had been banished [from] the old Farm. But they bore these Grievances with

⁸ The *Stamp Act Repeal* was repealed on March 18, 1766 in response to boycotts of British goods by American colonists. The *Declaratory Act of 1766* accompanied the repeal of the Stamp Act, and reasserted Parliament's authority to pass laws that were binding on the American colonies.

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as much Patience as could be expected; not choosing to trouble their aged Father with Complaints, unless in Cases of important Necessity.

Now the Steward continued to hate the new Settlers with exceeding great Hatred, and determined to renew his Attack upon their Peace and Happiness. He artfully insinuated to the old Gentleman and his foolish Wife, that it was very mean and unbecoming in them to receive the Contributions of the People of the new Farm, towards supporting the Dignity of his Family, through the Hands of their respective Wives: That upon this Footing it would be in their Power to refuse his Requisitions whenever they should be thought to be unreasonable, of which they would pretend to be Judges themselves; and that it was high Time they should be compelled to acknowledge his arbitrary Power, and his Wife's *Omnipotence*.

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For this Purpose, another Decree was prepared and published, ordering that the new Settlers should pay a certain Stipend upon particular Goods, which they were not allowed to purchase any where but at their Father's Shop; and that this Stipend should not be deemed an Advance upon the original Price of the Goods, but be paid on their arrival at the new Farm, for the express Purpose of supporting the Dignity of the old Gentleman's Family, and of defraying the Expences he affected to afford them.⁹

This new Decree gave our Adventurers the utmost Uneasiness. They saw that the Steward and their Mother in Law were determined to oppress and enslave them. They again met together and wrote to their Father, as before, the most humble and persuasive Letters; but to little Purpose: A deaf Ear was turned to all their Remonstrances; and their dutiful Requests treated with Contempt.

Finding this moderate and decent Conduct brought them no Relief, they had Recourse to another Expedient. They bound themselves in a solemn Engagement not to deal any more at their Father's Shop until this unconstitutional Decree should be reversed; which they declared to be a Violation of the *Great Paper*.

This Agreement was so strictly adhered to, that in a few Months the Clerks and Apprentices in the old Gentleman's Shop began to make a sad Outcry. They declared that

⁹ *The Revenue Act of 1767 was one of the Townshend Acts, named after Charles Townshend, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, who proposed the program. The purpose of the Townshend Acts was to raise revenue in the colonies to pay the salaries of governors and judges so that they would be independent of colonial rule.*

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their Master's Trade was declining exceedingly, and that his Wife and Steward would, by their mischievous Machinations, ruin the whole Farm: They forthwith sharpened their Pens and attacked the Steward, and even the old Lady herself with great Severity. Insomuch that it was thought proper to withdraw this Attempt likewise upon the Rights and Liberties of the new Settlers. One Part only of the new Decree remained unreversed—viz. the Tax upon *Water Gruel*.¹⁰

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Now there were certain Men on the old Farm, who had obtained from the Nobleman an exclusive Right of selling *Water Gruel*. Vast Quantities of this *Gruel* were vended amongst the new Settlers; for it became very fashionable for them to use it in their Families in great Abundance. They did not however trouble themselves much about the Tax on *Water Gruel*: They were well pleased with the Reversal of the other Parts of the Decree, and considering *Gruel* as not absolutely necessary to the Comfort of Life, they were determined to endeavour to do without it, and by that Means avoid the remaining effects of the new Decree.

The Steward found his Designs once more frustrated; but was not discouraged by this Disappointment. He formed another Scheme so artfully contrived that he thought himself sure of Success. He sent for the Persons who had the sole Right of vending *Water Gruel*, and after reminding them of the Obligations they were under to the Nobleman and his Wife for their exclusive Privilege, he desired that they would send sundry Waggon Loads of *Gruel* to the new Farm, promising that the accustomed Duty which they paid for their exclusive Right should be taken off from all the *Gruel* they should send amongst the new Settlers: And that in Case their Cargoes should come to any Damage, he would take Care that the Loss should be repaired out of the old Gentleman's Coffers.

The *Gruel* Merchants readily consented to this Proposal, knowing that if their Cargoes were sold, they would reap considerable Profits; and if they failed, the Steward was to make good the Damage. On the other hand the Steward concluded that the new Settlers could not resist purchasing the *Gruel* to which they had been so long accustomed; and if they did purchase it when subject to the Tax aforesaid, this would be an avowed Acknowledgment on their Parts that their Father and his Wife had a Right to break through the Tenor of the *Great Paper*, and to lay on them what Impositions they pleased, without the Consent of their respective Wives.

¹⁰ *The Townshend Acts met with fierce resistance from colonists, ultimately leading to the Boston Massacre of 1770. In response, Parliament repealed most of the new taxes, but the tax on tea was retained.*

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But the new Settlers were well aware of this Decoy. They saw clearly that the *Gruel* was not sent to accommodate, but to enslave them; and that if they suffered any Part of it to be sold amongst them, it would be deemed a Submission to the assumed *Omnipotence* of the *Great Madam*.

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CHAP. VI.

On the Arrival of the *Water Gruel*, the People of the new Farm were again thrown into great Alarms and Confusions. Some of them would not suffer the Waggon to be unloaded at all, but sent them immediately back to the *Gruel* Merchants: Others permitted the Waggon to unload, but would not touch the hateful Commodity; so that it lay neglected about their Roads and Highways until it grew sour and spoiled. But one of the new Settlers, whose Name was *Jack*, either from a keener Sense of the Injuries attempted against him, or from the Necessity of his Situation, which was such that he could not send back the *Gruel* because of a Number of Mercenaries whom his Father had stationed before his House to watch and be a Check upon his Conduct: He, I say, being almost driven to Despair, fell to Work, and with great Zeal stove to Pieces the Casks of *Gruel*, which had been sent him, and utterly demolished the whole Cargo.

These Proceedings were soon known at the old Farm. Great and terrible was the Uproar there. The old Gentleman fell into great Wrath, declaring that his absent Children meant to throw off all Dependence upon him, and to become altogether disobedient. His Wife also tore the Padlocks from her Lips, and raved and stormed like a Billingsgate.¹¹ The Steward lost all Patience and Moderation, swearing most prophanelly [sic] that he would leave no Stone unturned 'till he had *humbled the Settlers of the new Farm at his Feet*,¹² and caused their Father to trample on their necks. Moreover the *Gruel* Merchants roared and bellowed for the Loss of their *Gruel*; and the Clerks and Apprentices were in the utmost Consternation lest the People of the new Farm should again agree to have no Dealings with their Father's Shop—Vengeance was immediately set on Foot, particularly against *Jack*. With him they determined to begin; hoping that by making an Example of him they should so terrify the other Families of the new Settlers, that they would all submit to the Designs of the Steward, and the *Omnipotence* of the old Lady.

¹¹ *London fish market known for the loud boisterous calls of the fishmongers.*

¹² *Lord Frederick North (1732–1792), Britain's Prime Minister, stated that he would not withdraw the tax on tea because "a total repeal cannot be thought of, till America is prostrate at our feet."*

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A very large *Padlock* was, accordingly, prepared to be fastened upon *Jack's* great gate; the Key of which was to be given to the old Gentleman; who was not to open it again until he had paid for the *Gruel* he had spilt, and resigned all Claim to the Privileges of the *Great Paper*: Nor then neither unless he thought fit. Secondly, a Decree was made to new model the Regulations and (Economy of *Jack's* Family in such Manner that they might for the Future be more subject to the Will of the Steward. And, thirdly, a large Gallows was erected before the Mansion House in the old Farm, and an Order made that if any of *Jack's* Children or Servants should be suspected of Misbehaviour, they should not be convicted or acquitted by the Consent of their Brethren, agreeable to the Purport of the *Great Paper*, but be tied Neck and Heels and dragged to the Gallows at the Mansion House and there be hanged without Mercy.¹³

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No sooner did tidings of this undue Severity reach the new Farm, but the People were almost ready to despair. They were altogether at a Loss how to act, or by what Means they should avert the Vengeance to which they were doomed: But the old Lady and Steward soon determined the Matter; for the *Padlock* was sent over, and without Ceremony fastened upon *Jack's* great Gate. They did not wait to know whether he would pay for the *Gruel* or not, or make the required Acknowledgments; nor give him the least Opportunity to make his Defence—The great Gate was locked, and the Key given to the old Nobleman, as had been determined.

Poor *Jack* found himself in a most deplorable Condition. The great Inlet to his Farm was entirely blocked up, so that he could neither carry out the Produce of his Land for Sale, nor receive from abroad the Necessaries for his Family.

But this was not all—His Father, along with the *Padlock* aforesaid, had sent an Overseer to hector and domineer over him and his Family; and to endeavour to break his Spirit by exercising every possible Severity: For which Purpose he was attended by a great number of Mercenaries, and armed with more than common Authorities.

On his first arrival in *Jack's* Family he was received with considerable Respect, because he was the Delegate of their aged Father: For, notwithstanding all that had past, the People of the new Settlements loved and revered the old Gentleman with a truly filial

¹³ *The Boston Port Act of 1774 was one of the Intolerable Acts (also known as the Punitive Acts, or the Coercive Acts), passed in response to the Boston Tea Party. Parliament closed the port of Boston until the East India Company had been repaid for the destroyed tea and until the king was satisfied that order had been restored.*

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Attachment; attributing his unkindness entirely to the Intrigues of their Enemy the Steward. But this fair Weather did not last long. The new Overseer took the first Opportunity of showing that he had no Intentions of living in Harmony and Friendship with the Family. Some of *Jack's* Domesticks had put on their Sunday Clothes, and attended the Overseer in the great Parlour, in Order to pay him their Compliments on his Arrival, and to request his Assistance in reconciling them to their Father: But he rudely stopped them short, in the Midst of their Speech; called them a Parcel of disobedient Scoundrels, and bid them go about their Business. So saying, he turned upon his Heel, and with great Contempt left the Room.

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CHAP. VII.

Now *Jack* and his Family finding themselves oppressed, insulted and tyrannised over in the most cruel and arbitrary Manner, advised with their Brethren what Measures should be adopted to relieve them from their intolerable Grievances. Their Brethren, one and all, united in sympathising with their Afflictions; they advised them to bear their Sufferings with Fortitude for a Time, assuring them that they looked on the Punishments and Insults laid upon them with the same Indignation as if they had been inflicted on themselves, and that they would stand by and support them to the last. But, above all, earnestly recommended it to them to be firm and steady in the Cause of Liberty and Justice, and never acknowledge the *Omnipotence* of their Mother in Law; nor yield to the Machinations of their Enemy the Steward.

In the mean Time, lest *Jack's* Family should suffer for Want of Necessaries, their great Gate being fast locked, liberal and very generous Contributions were raised among the several Families of the new Settlements, for their present Relief. This seasonable Bounty was handed to *Jack* over the Garden Wall—All Access to the Front of his House being shut up.

Now the Overseer observed that the Children and Domesticks of *Jack's* Family had frequent Meetings and Consultations together: Sometimes in the Garret, and sometimes in the Stable: Understanding, likewise, that an Agreement not to deal in their Father's Shop, until their Grievances should be redressed, was much talked of amongst them, he wrote a thundering Prohibition, much like a Pope's Bull,¹⁴ which he caused to be pasted up in every Room in the House: In which he declared and protested that these Meetings

¹⁴ *Official document issued by the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. To Protestant colonists, calling a governor's declaration a papal bull would be deeming it tyrannical and arbitrary.*

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were treasonable, traitorous and rebellious; contrary to the Dignity of their Father, and inconsistent with the *Omnipotence* of their Mother in Law: Denouncing also terrible Punishments against any two of the Family who should from thenceforth be seen whispering together, and strictly forbidding the Domesticks to hold any more Meetings in the Garret or Stable.

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These harsh and unconstitutional Proceedings irritated *Jack* and the other inhabitants of the new Farm to such a Degree that *****

*Caetera desunt.*¹⁵

¹⁵ Latin: "The rest is missing."