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## Corianton, Chapter I

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**Abstract:** A fictional portrayal of events in the life of Corianton, one of the sons of Alma the Younger. Korihor is brought forth for judgment in the city of Zarahemla. Corianton and his brother Shiblon discuss the proceedings, with the former taking the side of the Nephite Anti-Christ and dismissing the teachings of his fathers. Instead of accompanying his brother in planning for the upcoming mission to the Zoramites, Corianton goes off on his own to visit Korihor in prison.

Then came the thought, "May I not be under the Thames! Will the swift influx of water flood my cell and bear to them the unwritten story of my struggles?"

I knew that I must be beyond the moat and beyond the double wall, if I had come out on the side with the gates. It was my only hope, and that failing me, death would be welcome, so I pushed upward.

How my heart throbs as I recall that instant, when, pushing through the turf, I felt the air of heaven again blowing across my face! I had come out into the open space diagonally across from the tower gate. The stars were shining in the sky, and now and then a cloud swept over the moon as though to shroud my escape.

Grasping what was left of the broken sword, I climbed up to the level ground. Not a soul was in sight. Lame and weak as I was, some strange, new found power impelled me onward, and I fled, not knowing, not caring whither I was tending. If I met any one I do not know it. My blood seemed on fire. I was free. Let them take me back to-morrow if they would. I had tasted the air of freedom again, and now I could die. On, on I went, until

at last nature, weak, worn and exhausted, left me panting at the door of an inn. I recall the keeper's burly form and red, good natured face, and then my senses must have left me, for I awoke to find myself in this bed where I am writing. I have seen only the little girl who brought me materials for writing and I have sent down the jewels from the sword hilt to compensate the innkeeper for his care. I shall see him to-morrow, and then I shall know if those who love me still live; if those for whom I have cared will now care for this broken reed that the storms of life have blasted. In the seventh house beyond the wooden bridge at Herne Hill road I left my wife and children. Shall I see them again? Shall I ever—

Here the MS. breaks off, incomplete, and in a scrawling hand, probably that of the innkeeper, are these words:

"Written by an old and ragged man with long white hair and beard, who died in the kitchen chamber of the Blue Bird inn. We have, as duty called, sent to the seventh house from the wooden bridge, on Herne Hill road, but a happy family lives therein, who seek no aged, dying man, and know not who he may be.—*James Clarence Harvey.*

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## CORIANTON.

### CHAPTER I.

THE summer's sun was just struggling through the mists that over-hung the eastern horizon, and faintly gilding the towers and house tops of Zarahemla, as a party of seven horsemen, evidently weary with the night's travel, were seen slowly moving along the foot of the hill Manti, in the direction of the above named city.

The manner in which the party traveled was evidently by pre-arrangement, and for a purpose. Two rode in advance and two in the rear, while the other three rode abreast, the one in the middle being guarded by those who rode beside him. A second look showed that his arms were securely bound be-

hind him, and the guard on each side held the powerful horse he rode by means of a strap of raw-hide fastened to the bridle. The prisoner was the most, in fact the only person of striking appearance in the little cavalcade, the others being rather heavy, dull men of serious countenance; the prisoner, however, had an air of boldness and cool defiance which contrasted sharply with the humble aspect of his guards. He sat his horse with an easy grace which gave less evidence of fatigue from the long ride through the sultry night, than that exhibited by his guards; the man, indeed, seemed especially adapted for endurance. The head, too, was massive and the countenance striking;

the brilliancy of the bold black eyes challenged contest or flashed back defiance, while the peculiar expression about the mouth, half scornful smile, half sneer, seemed to breathe contempt for all things on which he looked.

The party now came in full view of the city. "At last," exclaimed he that was bound, with mocked solemnity, "the soldiers of Christ and their prisoner behold the holy city, where dwells the great prophet—even God's high priest, who smites with the words of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slays the wicked!" and the speaker laughed scornfully, but his guards made no reply.

"Methinks ye soldiers of the king that is to be, give scant homage to a shrine so holy as this—why, think men, this is the abode of God's vice-gerent, the head-quarters of heaven on earth, so to speak! And yet ye move on in full view of this holy shrine unbowed! Down slaves, and worship the place of my sanctuary—so runs the words of holy prophets, is it not so?" Still no answer.

"Yet uncovered and unbowed? Ah, I forgot, you are from the land of Gideon, where dwells another of these holy prophets—and, it may be, that to worship at this shrine would be treason to your own high priest. O, thou bright-eyed goddess of liberty, what distraction, what fears must disturb the breasts of the poor, craven wretches who worship aught but thee!"

Further remarks of the scoffer were cut short by the guards in advance urging their horses into a brisk gallop, an example followed by the rest of the party. The good broad road, down which they dashed, sloped gently from the western base of the hill Manti to the gate in the east wall of the city. It had been cut through a primeval forest, and the strips of woodland on either side of it, still untouched by the woodman's ax, made of it a grand avenue. Here and there to the right and left were lanes leading off to the fields beyond, toward which the laborers were slowly moving to begin the toil of the day. These turned to look with unconcealed wonder

upon the strange party as it dashed past them, and some few turned back to the city, bent on finding out who the prisoner was and what was afoot.

As the party drew rein near the gate, two guards armed with heavy swords and long spears, and wearing helmets and breast-plates challenged their entrance, and demanded their business.

"Great God!" exclaimed the prisoner, "and this is the people who boast of their freedom! This is the free city of Zarahemla! and yet here stands the minions of the high priest and the chief judge to question whence ye come and why!"

"We come from the city of Gideon," said one of the guards in charge of the prisoner, in answer to the questions of the guards at the gate, "we have in charge Korihor, the anti-Christ, who seeks to destroy religion and subvert all government; we"—

"Thou liest, almost as well as a high priest," broke in the prisoner, "I seek but to root out of men's minds the false traditions of the fathers concerning God and Christ, and to make them free! I only"—

"You will do well," quietly replied he whom he had interrupted, to make your defense before the high priest and chief judge of the city, and not before your own and the city guards." Then turning to the guards of the gate he continued: "We have brought Korihor from the city of Gideon where he was tried"—

"For his virtues," broke in the prisoner.

"—for his offenses," continued the guard, not heeding the interruption, "but the chief judge at Gideon hath sent him to the chief judge of the whole land in this city, to hear his case, and he"—

"And God's high priest," spoke up the prisoner, "I charge thee, guard, leave not out the holy prophet, I long to meet in sharp contest the vice-gerent on earth of your Christ that is to be 'according to the holy prophets.'"

"Well, then, we seek the high priest and chief judge before whom this man is to be tried," said the guard, evidently

vexed with the mocking tone of the scoffer.

"Pass on" said the guard at the gate, "Jasper" said he to his companion, "conduct these men to the judgment hall, give their prisoners to the keeper of the prison, then direct them to the house of the chief judge; I shall wait until you return; and I pray God that this bold man may be silenced, for before now he hath disturbed the quiet of our city not a little."

As the party passed through the massive gateway, Korihor turned to look back at the guard, and raising his voice, said to the crowd which had gathered there rather than to the one whom he addressed, "Guard, tell your good people as they pass in and out of the city, that Korihor, their friend, who would see them free, is in bonds for liberty's sake, and is soon to be tried before an imperious high priest and a tyrant judge, for honest disbelief in the foolish traditions of their fathers—tell them this, and ask them if the time has come when all men must be slaves to superstition!" There was an instant buzz of excitement in the crowd, for Korihor was not unknown in Zarahemla. A few months before he had been through that city and had spoken boldly against the prophets and the traditions respecting the coming and atonement of Christ. Since then he had been traveling through the land of Jershon among the people of Ammon, there he met with little success; for that people bound him and banished him from their lands. From thence he went into the land of Gideon where he sought as in other places to stir up sedition. He was brought before the high priest and chief judge of that city, and they being in doubt as to what they ought to do with him, bound him and sent him to the high priest over the whole church, and to the chief judge of the whole land, both of whom resided in the city of Zarahemla; the second Alma occupying the former position, and Nephiah the latter. These incidents occurred in the seventeenth year of the reign of the judges, a period corresponding with the year 75 B. C.

Meantime our party passed down

one of the principal streets of the ancient city, into the market square. Here many were engaged in unpacking fruits and vegetables from huge baskets strapped across the backs of asses, and arranging them under awnings to preserve them from the scorching rays of the sun. In the richest profusion were piles of fruits and vegetables, luscious grapes and fragrant bananas, lemons, limes, figs, dates, bread-fruit and a variety of vegetables such as the tropics alone can produce. Purchasers were already thronging to the market, and as our party from the city of Gideon passed on, Korihor shouted to them, as he had done to the crowd at the gate, which resulted in quickly gathering a throng of men who eagerly questioned the guards as to the man's offense—"alleged offense, you mean," he cried, "for I am guilty of no crime, except we have fallen on those evil days to which the idle traditions of our father's tend, when to disbelieve the words of ancient dotards styling themselves prophets, and giving expression to ones honest thoughts has become a crime; or when resisting the oppression of judges, who ever have one ear turned to a priest to learn what superstition teaches is the word of God, be a wrong; and when to be the friend of liberty, a foe to tyranny whether in priest or judge, and an enemy to an enslaving superstition, is considered worthy of bonds and the prison."

This and much more that he said as he passed along, surrounded by his guards, produced no little excitement in the crowd, for in those ancient days and distant climes, as well as in our own day those who persuaded men they were not well governed had many willing followers; and then as now demagogues, blasphemers and the enemies of law and order knew what a tower of strength the cry of freedom gave to a cause, however unworthy or destructive of the very thing in the interest of which, ostensibly, they worked. "O liberty, liberty!" exclaimed Madame Roland as she ascended the blood stained scaffold of France, "how many crimes are committed in thy name!" and how true the words wrung from her agonized heart!

Having passed through the market-square and through a narrow, irregular street, with massive, two-story stone houses on either side, which marked the most ancient part of the city, the guards suddenly turned to the right into a large square, on one side of which stood an immense structure of hewn stone with a wide, high porch, supported by massive pillars, and approached by a broad flight of stone steps. This was the public hall of justice, as indicated in an inscription carved in the stone above the porch. To the right of the building extended a high stone wall in which was hung a heavy wooden door, plentifully studded with iron spikes. To this door the guard who had led the party from the east gate of the city directed his footsteps, and taking a small wooden mallet suspended by a chain fastened to the door post, he struck the door three smart blows, and a moment later a small wicket in the upper part of the door was opened and a harsh voice demanded what was wanted.

"A guard of horsemen from the city of Gideon bring with them to the judgment seat of the high priest and chief judge, one Korihor, charged with seeking to breed sedition and subvert the government; they deliver him to the care of the keeper of the prison—open the door and admit him at once—the people are becoming excited and may raise a tumult." The latter clause of the sentence was delivered hurriedly and in an undertone. There was a profuse rattling of chains, the falling of an iron bar, and the door swung open with a grating sound. Meantime the guards of Korihor had assisted him to dismount, and with their prisoner before them, and leading their horses, passed into the prison-yard. A number of men pressed close after them, but were denied admittance by the gate keeper, who drove them back and closed and barred the door.

Seeing Korihor safely bestowed, and their horses cared for, the guards from Gideon were conducted across the square fronting the hall of justice, to the house of the chief judge, and presented to him

the communication or commitment from the high priest and chief judge of Gideon.

The crowd which had been attracted by the unusual spectacle of the small cavalcade passing through their streets, and the animated speeches of the prisoner, still lingered in the public square, gathered in groups, discussing the events of the morning. "I tell you," said a hard visaged man to a group of listeners standing near the centre of the square, "I tell you there is too much truth in the complaints of Korihor. The high priests and the chief judges are becoming too arbitrary in their rulings; there's too much said about law and order and not enough regard paid to personal liberty."

"Tut, man," said a voice from the outskirts of the group, "whenever has a disturber of the peace, a blasphemer of God, an enemy to religion come amongst us but what he has taken refuge behind the cry of liberty? So did Nehor in the first year of the reign of the judges; so did Amlici five years later; and Korihor is such as they were, and with like cunning adopts their cry of liberty, when in reality his principles lead to the destruction of freedom and all its safeguards. Believe me, friends," he continued, addressing the group, "not every one that cries out against God, religion and the law is a friend to freedom, they are always its enemies. The law stands watch and guard over your rights and liberties; by that Korihor will be judged and justice rendered. In the meantime let not your minds be carried away by the persuasion of men whose business is agitation, who prosper by violence, and thrive on tumults." So saying, the young man, for such he was, putting his arm about a still younger man who stood at his side, walked away. The group also began to break up, the man who had been haranguing it when interrupted, muttering that it could only be expected that the sons of the high priest would defend the oppressions of their father; they themselves were interested.

As the two young men were crossing the square, the younger said to his brother: "Notwithstanding what you

said just now to the crowd, Shiblon, and the truth of it in general, I think this treatment of Korihor is too harsh. Our law protects a man in his belief and in the expression of it; and though Korihor hath a proud bearing and holds what you believe to be dangerous views, still I think the officers at Gideon exceeded their jurisdiction in sending him bound to this city."

"Holds what I believe to be dangerous views! And do not you believe them to be dangerous? Corianton, I fear the spirit of unbelief, the moral and spiritual poison, the orations of this same man infused into your soul when he first appeared in our city, hath not yet been worked out." The hot blood rushed to the temples of Corianton at this accusation, and he replied with some warmth not unmixed with bitterness: "It has not been the fault of brother Helaman or yourself, then, for I have heard little else since his departure from Zarahemla but your lame arguments in support of the shadowy traditions of our fathers about the coming of Messiah and his atonement."

"I am sorry to find you in this mood my brother," replied Shiblon, "and it grieves me to hear you speak so lightly of things that are sacred; but if too much restraint has been thrown upon the liberty of Korihor by the authorities of Gideon, you know full well that justice will be done him in the court of our father and the chief judge—you know that no oppression is countenanced by them."

At this moment the guard from the gate who had conducted those in charge of Korihor to the presence of the chief judge passed them, and in answer to a question from Corianton told them the case of Korihor was appointed to be heard on the morrow.

"It is the time of day appointed for the meeting of the priesthood, to consider the mission about to be appointed to the Zoramites. Our father sent me to find you and bring you to the council, for I think he wishes you to be a party to the undertaking, shall we go?"

"You may go brother, but I will not,"

replied Corianton. "I have no relish for these dull councils, and as for converting the Zoramites, they may be as near right in their theology as yourself or our father, for aught I know; the whole subject is so wrapt in mystery that we can at least afford to be liberal, and not bind men and thrust them into prison for daring to assert their disbelief in these mysterious things."

"But it is the express wish of father that you should attend this council; out of respect for him, will you not come?" said Shiblon.

"Say, to our good father the priest, that I am gone to visit one who is cast into prison for the cause of liberty." Then seeing the pained expression in his brother's face, his manner changed, and placing his hand affectionately on his shoulder he said: "Shiblon, go thou to the council, and give no further thought to me; let me follow the bent of my own mind. Your steady patience; your deep conviction as to the truth of the traditions of our fathers; your wisdom and goodness make you a fitting minister for God, if such a being there is; you are destined to become a pillar in the church; not so with me; my wild love of liberty can ill brook the restraints of the gospel or the priesthood, and the skepticism ingrained in my very nature disqualifies me for the work I could readily believe you were designed to support. But I'll none of it, until I see some manifestation of the power of God, spoken of so frequently by our father, and of which the scriptures speak on nearly every page; so farewell." Turning on his heel, he bent his footsteps in the direction of the prison gate, while Shiblon with a troubled heart stood gazing after him.

"David had his Absalom, Lehi, his Laman, and this my brother, my father's darling son, seems destined to wring my father's heart with anguish, as they did theirs. Oh! why is it, that those formed in the very prodigality of nature—endowed with a heaven-born intelligence—genius—must be cursed with a doubting, rebellious spirit that weighs down all their better parts, and wrecks the hopes,

built on what their talents promise? Oh, that some good angel would my brother meet, as was my father met, shake off his doubting fears, and give him back to us converted to the truth and pledged to its maintenance, as was my father! Then how would shine that master power within him which overawes men's minds or bends them to his purpose! Brother,

flout me, resist me how you will; I'll follow you through all your fortunes, good or ill, and win you yet to God and truth!"

With these words on his lips, and this pious purpose in his heart, Shiblon, the son of Alma the priest, directed his steps to the council chamber.

[To be continued.]

## A WONDERFUL SCHOOL.

IN THAT poverty stricken and malodorous district of the great metropolis of Great Britain rendered, of late, so notorious by the atrocities of "Jack the Ripper" flourishes one of the most noteworthy schools in the world,—one remarkable for its size, unique in many of its characteristics and marvelous in its results. It has lately been described, by one of the highest educational officers in the realm, as "the largest school in the British Empire, the cheapest school in the United Kingdom, and under all circumstances the best school in England," also "one of the best training colleges in the kingdom." This is almost startling praise when we consider how careful European officials are to weigh their public words of commendation, and how strong is the tendency with them to make all their statements as colorless as possible, in order to avoid complications and undesirable comparisons. This remarkable place of learning is none other than the Jew's free school in Bell Lane,—one of the most obscure regions of London.

The school has a roll of three thousand three hundred scholars. Of these the average attendance is ninety-five per cent. This is far above nearly every other school in the land, the average attendance throughout England being only seventy-six per cent. It secures ninety-eight per cent. of passes; the average throughout the kingdom being only seventy-one. These are results that teachers alone can fully appreciate.

Under ordinary circumstances and with none other than the usual difficulties to contend with such a showing would

be worthy of unstinted praise. But what shall be said when it is learned that only about ten per cent.—some terms more, some terms less—of the pupils, when they enter the school, can speak English. Indeed many can scarcely be said to speak any language at all. Their tongue is a patois, almost a jargon composed of many tongues. Who, then, are this multitude that make up this modern Babel? They are the children of the robbed and plundered outcasts of the House of Israel, they who have been expatriated in Russia, driven out of Poland, exiled from Germany, hunted down in the Danubian principalities, and who, by the sacrifice of their all have managed to reach the far famed city of London, in the hope of rest from persecution and the opportunity of finding employment, which will at least keep the wolf from the door. It is three thousand of the children of these poor refugees who day by day, scantily clothed and half fed, assemble beneath the roof of this vast school-house and with astonishing rapidity are made good English scholars; so good that the school stands at the head of all its kind, a marvelous work and a wonder.

To what may we attribute these extraordinary results? Are they to be ascribed to the mental strength and activity of the Jewish race, which, when given opportunity, soon outstrips its fellows? Can we ascribe them to the great proficiency and technical ability of the masters and teachers of the school, or to some wonderful system of organization and school government that has been evolved