

**CARWIN, THE BILOQUIST,
AND OTHER AMERICAN
TALES AND PIECES. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. III**

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Carwin, the Biloquist, and Other American Tales and Pieces. In Three Volumes, Vol. III by
Charles Brockden Brown

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CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

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THREE VOLUMES, VOL. III**

CARWIN, THE BILOQUIST,

AND

OTHER AMERICAN TALES

AND PIECES.

BY

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN,

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WIELAND, ORMOND, ARTHUR MERVYN,

&c. &c.

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STEPHEN CALVERT.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT a state was mine? Sidney's indignation, my cousin's grief, all springing from imputed, but unreal offences of mine; all flowing from the disastrous influence of this stranger! "What can I do," said I, "to shake off this evil?"

"Clelia is said to be criminally connected with another. This assuredly is false. By what illusions could the caution, the discernment, the benevolent reluctance to condemn, of Sidney, have been thus grossly abused? Why did he charge me with deceit and

treachery? I merely asserted that I passed last evening in her company, and this assertion he stigmatized as false!

“ Does a traitor lurk in Miss Neville’s family? It is composed merely of a female negro, who once belonged to Calverton, whom I freed and recommended to my friend, and her servant Margaret, an Irish woman, whom her aunt met with here and took into her family, and whose good sense, modesty, and discretion, her young mistress had warmly commended. Peggy alone is capable or willing to disclose domestic secrets, and betray her lady.”

I proceeded to recollect and revolve all that I had heard of Peggy. I had never directly talked with her. I had merely marked the circumspection and propriety of her silent demeanour. I had questioned Clelia, more than once, as to her character and history, and had been told that she had been some time in America before she had entered Mrs.

Keith's service. That her parents, herself, and one brother, had been Irish emigrants; that the parents were dead, but that the brother dwelt in this city, and pursued the trade of a carpenter.

This brother, whose name was Murphy, and who was a thrifty and honest young man, I was further told, was accustomed to spend his Sunday evenings with his sister in Miss Neville's kitchen, and this was the only associate or acquaintance which Peggy was known to have. Was it possible for surmises and for calumnies to find their way to Sidney's ear through this channel?

No conjecture had more plausibility than this. This man and woman were reported to be honest, but, in this respect, Miss Neville might mistake. Besides, what reason had my heart to rely upon any evidence of Clelia's honesty. I knew my temper to be sanguine, my ignorance and inexperience, to be great.

How should I dissipate this ignorance and restore myself to certainty.

No better scheme occurred to me, none which might be immediately adopted (and my temper could not brook delays) than to seek out Murphy, and, by open or indirect means, endeavour to extort from him the truth. I was personally unknown to him, and might therefore find him unwary and unsuspecting. I might easily so adjust the topics of our discourse as to discover whether he and Sidney were known to, and had any communication with each other. I knew where he lived, and, putting up my horse, hastened towards his work-shop.

Scarcely had I got within sight of it, when I saw at a considerable distance, a person come forth from his house, in whom I instantly recognized Sidney himself. "Ah, ha!" said I, "is not the author of the calumny now discover-

ed? Is not this the channel through which Sidney has obtained his intelligence?"

Sidney did not perceive me, and walked away in a different direction. I proceeded, but on inquiring for Murphy, was informed that he spent the day some miles from town, having a job to execute for Mr. ———, who was building a country house on Delaware. With great reluctance I submitted to defer this desired interview till the evening.

Meanwhile, the impatience of my thoughts was somewhat lightened by indispensable attention to concerns of a general and indifferent nature. I could not but notice the salutary effects of occupation. A vacant mind, a mind¹ that has nothing to divert it from the phantoms of hope and chimeras of fear connected with the future, experiences a kind of insanity. The impulses of love, and freaks of jealousy, are the torments of idleness. They are dreams that affect