

**GARTH. A NOVEL.
IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

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Garth. A Novel. In Three Volumes. Vol. III by Julian Hawthorne

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JULIAN HAWTHORNE

**GARTH. A NOVEL.
IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

GARTH.

A Novel.

BY

JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



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1877.

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GARTH.

BOOK VIII.

LEAVEN.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE PHYSICIAN.

HE meeting between Mr. Urmson and Professor Grindle had not been outwardly effusive. The professor's bald pate had reddened a little as he strongly griped his old fellow-student's hand, and he had said, "How do, Urmson?" in his usual abrupt, bass tones, perhaps made a little more uncompromising than usual to keep up the good old Anglo-Saxon traditions of unfeelingness. Mr. Urmson had replied, "How do you do, professor?" and after the exchange of a few questions and observations of no less momentous import, the two elderly gentlemen

left the younger people to themselves, and proceeded in total silence up-stairs, Cuthbert leading, and the professor tramping sternly after him. In silence they entered Garth's chamber, and there the professor stood for a moment, motionless but observant, by the bedside. Then, without having touched the invalid, or emitted so much as a single professional grunt, he stepped back to the door, and beckoning to his companion, they went silently out into the hall again.

"Let him sleep," said the professor. "Lead on to your chamber, Urmson. Must smoke a cigar and toast my toes after that drive. The winter's upon us; you'll catch it up here sooner than we shall. Ay, I see; not much desk work for you nowadays. Nursing. And Mrs. Urmson not here to help." Since Mrs. Urmson's marriage this old lover of hers, who had never told his love either to her or to any one else, had refrained from speaking of her by her Christian name; and this not from any unworthy jealousy, but because he derived a stern, unselfish pleasure from the thought that the only woman he had loved belonged to the man whom he loved best, and chose to keep that fact before his mind by always giving her the name she was married to.

"Heaven is too near us, I sometimes think," Cuthbert answered. "The people we want most are so apt to slip into it out of our reach."

"'Tisn't that the boy needed her," said Grindle,

taking a brand from the hearth and lighting his cigar with a series of short rapid whiffs. "He'll do very well—a strong grip of life, sir. 'Twas you I referred to more particularly, Urmson. You're not looking as I'd like to have you. You have that in your face, my man, that—none of your late communications had prepared me to see there. Now as your physician, I'll ask you a question or two. Your mother was a Danver, was she not? What was her constitution?"

"Take off your spectacles, Tom," said Cuthbert, colouring slightly; "you'll be sharp-sighted enough without them. I didn't get you here for this. However— No, nothing was developed in her, God bless her! It came, if anything, from her mother, who belonged to another stock—a poor one. She died of it."

Grindle took off his glasses and rested his elbows on his knees. "Ay, ay," he said slowly, gazing into the fire. "And that has always somewhat posed me, Cuthbert. That old curse—why did the Lord pronounce it against his creatures?—'The children's teeth shall be set on edge.' How often does the children's suffering accomplish the erring parent's reformation? It never can. What knows or cares that dead and buried and forgotten woman—or it may have been *her* father or mother—that you sit there hand in hand with disease, who might have been a vigorous man still, full of health and power?"