Johnny Tremain

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF ESTHER HOSKINS FORBES

Forbes was born in Westborough, Massachusetts, though she spent a lot of time in her youth in Worcester, Massachusetts and in Madison, Wisconsin. She attended Bradford Academy, a junior college, as well as took classes at the University of Wisconsin. While living in Wisconsin, Forbes joined the editorial board for the *Wisconsin Literary Magazine*. Upon returning to Worcester, she began working for Houghton Mifflin Company and wrote articles for the *Boston Evening Transcript*. From 1926 to 1933, Forbes was married to an attorney, Albert L. Hoskins. Though she kept her married name after the divorce, she published under her maiden name. Forbes published her first novel, *O Genteel Lady!*, in 1926, and she wrote several other novels throughout her career. Following her divorce, she returned to Worcester to live with her mother and siblings, and her mother helped her research her novels (all of which were historical fiction, many set in the colonial era or right after the Revolutionary War) at the American Antiquarian Society. She's best known for *Johnny Tremain*, which she began writing the day after Japanese forces bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941. The novel won the Newbery Award, and her biography of Paul Revere earned her the 1943 Pulitzer Prize for History. After Forbes's death of rheumatic heart disease, the royalties for her novels, as well as her research for a novel about witchcraft, were donated to the American Antiquarian Society. She was the first elected female member of the society.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Johnny Tremain takes place in the years preceding the Revolutionary War, during which the 13 New England colonies fought and won their independence from Great Britain, forming the United States of America. The novel touches on a number of real historical figures and events (the edition used in this LitChart includes an illustrated who's who of historical figures like John Hancock and Samuel Adams). Some of the most important events, perhaps, are the Boston Tea Party and what came after it. The so-called tea party occurred on the night of December 16, 1773. As the novel explains, England was attempting to pass taxes on tea along to the colonists, who had no representation in British Parliament (hence the Revolution's famous phrase, "no taxation without representation"). While other colonial cities simply sent tea ships back to England without unloading the tea, Governor Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts refused to let the ships return. Men and boys, many dressed as Native Americans from the Mohawk tribe, boarded the three ships and threw all the tea into the harbor. This resulted in Parliament passing what became known as the Intolerable Acts, which closed Boston's harbor and ended Massachusetts Colony's system of local self-government. Colonists throughout New England protested these acts and in 1774, the First Continental Congress began meeting to petition England to lift the Intolerable Acts. Ultimately, however, England refused, resulting in escalating conflicts and eventually, the beginning of the Revolutionary War with the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Finally, it's worth noting that Forbes began writing *Johnny Tremain* the day after Japanese forces bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941, during World War II. Particularly in James Otis's rousing speech, and in Johnny's thoughts at the end of the novel, it's possible to see Forbes gesturing to American soldiers who have fought in various wars for Americans' freedoms.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Though Esther Forbes's novels were intended almost exclusively for young readers, *Johnny Tremain* is by far her most well-known work—and, perhaps, is one of the most popular young adult novels about the Revolutionary War. It's most often compared to the 1974 novel *My Brother Sam is Dead* by James and Christian Collier, in which the protagonist details his older brother Sam's involvement and eventual death in the Revolutionary War. More recently, authors have tried to show more diverse characters dealing with the Revolutionary War, as in Laurie Halse Anderson's Seeds of America trilogy. In the three novels, an enslaved Black girl spies for the British and for the Patriots, all while fighting for her freedom and her sister's safety. As a wartime spy novel, *Johnny Tremain* is in good company: Avi's novel *Sophia's War* is about a young girl who spies on the British during the Revolutionary War, while *Behind Rebel Lines* by Seymour Reit tells the story of a young woman who dresses as a man to spy on the Confederates during the American Civil War. More generally, though, *Johnny Tremain* shares characteristics with numerous novels featuring young people coming of age against a backdrop of war or major conflict. In Gary Schmidt's *The Wednesday Wars*, a young boy grapples with the Vietnam War, while in *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis, an Afghan girl must help her family during the Taliban's 1996 takeover of Afghanistan.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Johnny Tremain
- **When Written:** 1941–1943
- **Where Written:** Worcester, Massachusetts

- **When Published:** 1943
- **Literary Period:** Twentieth-Century Literature
- **Genre:** Historical Fiction, Young Adult Novel
- **Setting:** Boston, 1773–1775
- **Climax:** Rab dies after the Battle of Lexington.
- **Antagonist:** The British, The Lytes, Pride
- **Point of View:** Third Person

EXTRA CREDIT

A Good Time for Books. Forbes began writing *Johnny Tremain* in 1941, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor also inspired the creation of the Writer's War Board, a propaganda organization that spotlighted modern novels that the Nazis targeted. During this time, reading and buying books—especially modern novels—was taken as a sign of support for the war.

Silver and Dentistry. In addition to being an accomplished silversmith, Paul Revere also learned to make false teeth. In fact, when Dr. Joseph Warren died in battle in 1775 and was buried in an unmarked grave, Paul Revere ultimately identified the body by the false tooth he'd made for Warren. This is believed to be the first instance in which a body was identified by dental records.

PLOT SUMMARY

Fourteen-year-old Johnny is a silversmith's apprentice in Boston. Though he's clever and well-liked, he's cruel to his fellow apprentices, Dove and Dusty. He has a good, if somewhat antagonistic relationship with Cilla, his master Mr. Lapham's granddaughter—the two are going to marry once Johnny finishes his apprenticeship. One night, while Johnny and Cilla are on the wharf with Isannah, the youngest Lapham sister, Johnny shares that he has a middle name—Lyte—and is a member of the influential Lyte family. He later shows Isannah his silver **cup** with the Lyte crest on it, which his deceased mother gave him and told him to keep secret unless he needs help from the Lytes.

Wealthy John Hancock approaches Mr. Lapham about creating an intricate sugar basin. Mr. Lapham charges Johnny with sculpting the handles. Johnny has to ask the esteemed silversmith Paul Revere for help, but he finally gets the handles right. However, after Mr. Lapham overhears Johnny being particularly mean to Dove, he forbids Johnny from working, meaning the basin won't be finished on time. Mrs. Lapham, Mr. Lapham's daughter-in-law, encourages Johnny to work on Sunday to finish—but Dove gives Johnny a cracked crucible, resulting in the molten silver spilling and Johnny burning his **hand**. Johnny's hand heals, but the injury leaves his thumb fused to his palm: he won't work silver again.

Enraged and feeling purposeless, Johnny begins going out to find work. However, he refuses to do unskilled work, and he can no longer perform skilled work. Johnny grows increasingly depressed, though no less arrogant. The one good thing that happens to Johnny is that he meets an older boy named Rab, who works as a printer's apprentice at the *Boston Observer*. After spending a night sleeping on his mother's grave, Johnny approaches Merchant Lyte for help. Johnny takes his cup to Merchant Lyte and tells his story—but Merchant Lyte accuses him of stealing the cup and has Johnny imprisoned. Rab gets Johnny legal representation and procures Cilla and Isannah to speak as witnesses, and Johnny wins his case. However, when Johnny goes to Merchant Lyte and tries to sell him the cup, Merchant Lyte steals it.

Johnny returns to the *Boston Observer*'s office, where Rab and Uncle Lorne, the printer, agree to hire Johnny to deliver papers. Rab teaches Johnny to ride Goblin, a striking but flighty horse. Soon, Johnny is a skilled horseman. He spends several days per week riding and the other half reading in the Lornes' extensive library. Though he occasionally meets Cilla and Isannah at the local well, he goes out of his way to forget his old life—especially since Mrs. Lapham has now brought on an unlikeable man named Mr. Tweedie to be Mr. Lapham's business partner.

It's now the fall of 1773, and New England is in an uproar over the British attempt to pass off taxes on tea onto the colonists, who have no representation in the British Parliament. Johnny now works as a spy for the secret rebel group the Boston Observers. He agrees to participate in the planned protest: a bunch of apprentices are going to throw the tea into the harbor on December 16 if the ships can't return to England. The day comes, and the ships won't be allowed to return to England. So, Johnny, Rab, and hundreds of apprentices board the ships and throw the tea into the harbor.

In retaliation, England closes Boston's harbor the following spring, decimating Boston's economy. The *Boston Observer* gets smaller, but Uncle Lorne refuses to stop printing. With so little to do, Johnny and Rab spend most of their time watching the British soldiers drill. As Rab has begun drilling with the Minute Men in Lexington, he desperately wants a proper **musket**. Johnny also begins carrying mail for British officers (which allows him to spy on them) and reconnects with Cilla. He learns that Miss Lavinia Lyte took an interest in beautiful Isannah and has now taken in both girls as servants (though Isannah is more of a doll than a servant). Dove comes back into Johnny's life as well, as Mr. Tweedie fired him and he's now Colonel Smith's horse boy. Though Johnny still doesn't like Dove, he feels bad that the English boys pick on him—and Rab notes that Dove, as an employee of a British officer, might someday pass on useful information.

When Johnny visits Cilla one Thursday, he gets a good look at how the Lapham girls are faring in the Lytes' household. The Lytes treat Cilla like an unintelligent servant, while Isannah (who now goes by "Izzy") is attention-seeking and acts immorally. From Mrs. Bessie, the Lytes' cook, Johnny learns that the Lytes will be going to their country home—but Whigs plan to mob them. A month after the Lytes leave, Johnny sees them return to Boston. Mr. Lyte is gravely ill, and loyal Cilla insists she must return to the country house to retrieve some silver. Johnny offers to drive her there. At the estate, Johnny looks through Merchant Lyte's papers, pockets some letters for the Observers, and discovers where he thinks he belongs on the Lyte family tree. However, he burns the family tree, for he now realizes his lineage doesn't matter. Later that summer, Cilla and Johnny admit they have crushes on each other.

By the fall of 1774, most of the Observers have left town to avoid being arrested by the British, but Johnny summons the remaining members for a final meeting. James Otis, who was once the group's leader but is now seen as mentally unstable, invites himself and gives a rousing speech about what the Whigs are fighting for: the freedom of all men, everywhere, to "stand up" and live with dignity. Johnny finds it very moving. Following this, Paul Revere starts a spy network of artisans. It's Johnny's job to spy on Colonel Smith, and Johnny successfully uncovers a British plot to seize rebel military stores.

The British are getting antsy: while Johnny can usually ride Goblin on the Common without issue, one day, the British accost him. Johnny escapes by encouraging Goblin to bolt; Goblin races through Boston without a bridle and stops finally in the Lytes' stable yard. There, a British soldier named Pumpkin tells Johnny that many British soldiers will happily read the copies of the *Boston Observer* that Johnny dropped during the altercation; many believe in the rebels' cause—including him. Indeed, he'd like to be a farmer and desert. Johnny helps Pumpkin put together a disguise and leave Boston in exchange for his musket, which Johnny gives to Rab. However, a few weeks later, Johnny witnesses Pumpkin shot for deserting.

In the middle of April 1775, the British soldiers begin acting oddly. Johnny runs around town for Dr. Warren and Paul Revere, gathering intel. Rab insists on leaving town—war is coming and soon, the British will close the gates, and Minute Men won't be able to get out. The following day, Johnny helps Dove polish Colonel Smith's campaign saddle and discovers that Smith is going to lead a regiment of British soldiers across the river and then to either Lexington or Concord. Johnny immediately reports back to Dr. Warren and Paul Revere. The men activate their notification system: Paul Revere will paddle across the river and then ride to notify Minute Men, while Billy Dawes will walk out of Boston and do the same.

The following morning, Johnny wakes up in Dr. Warren's surgery and learns that shots were fired at Lexington—the British won handily and then headed for Concord. Dr. Warren leaves to attend to the wounded, telling Johnny to stick around, gather more info, and then find him later. Johnny watches the British forces move out to support Colonel Smith's regiment. Knowing he needs to get across the river himself, Johnny goes to Mrs. Bessie and Cilla, who still have Pumpkin's uniform—Johnny can use it to sneak across the river. But while he's there, Miss Lavinia tells Johnny that he truly is a Lyte. His mother was the rightful owner of the cup, and after the war, Johnny will be able to put in claims for property. But now, she and Izzy are going to England, where Izzy will train as an actress.

Johnny has no time to think about this new information. Instead, he puts on Pumpkin's uniform, gets it dirty, and arrives around nightfall at the river, where wounded British soldiers are coming back to Boston. He sees many of his friends, but he stops himself from trying to help them—they're his enemies now. After sneaking across the river, Johnny goes from tavern to tavern and town to town, trying to track down Dr. Warren and news of Rab, who would've fought at Lexington. Finally, Johnny meets Dr. Warren in Lexington. Rab is seriously injured, but he gives Johnny his musket. Soon after sending Johnny away, Rab dies.

Seeing how distraught Johnny is, Dr. Warren asks to see Johnny's burnt hand. He says that Johnny's thumb is only held to his palm with scar tissue. Dr. Warren offers to cut the scar tissue, which would enable Johnny to hold a musket and join the Minute Men. Thrilled and hopeful, Johnny thinks of Rab. Though Rab and other brave men like him have died and will continue to die, what they believe in never will.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Johnny Tremain – The novel follows Johnny, its protagonist, from age 14 to 16 as he comes of age during the leadup to the Revolutionary War. At the beginning of the novel, Johnny is an arrogant, prideful silversmith's apprentice. He's cruel to anyone he believes is beneath him—including his master, Mr. Lapham. But when Johnny's pride leads to him burning his **hand** on molten silver, disabling him, Johnny's life turns upside-down. He feels totally alone and even hits rock bottom. However, Johnny's life changes when he meets an older boy named Rab, who works for the *Boston Observer* and hires Johnny to deliver papers. With Rab's mentorship, Johnny becomes empathetic and more thoughtful. Johnny also develops a political conscience and becomes deeply involved in the Patriots' resistance efforts against the British, mostly as a spy (he's a skilled horseback rider and often carries letters for British officers). Johnny comes of age at the end of the novel when he finally gets over his yearslong crush on his wealthy aunt, Miss

Lavinia, and witnesses Rab die after the Battle of Lexington. Dr. Warren also offers to surgically repair Johnny's burnt hand, enabling Johnny to handle a **musket**—meaning that Johnny can join the Minute Men in Rab's place and take on the adult role of fighting for what he believes in.

Rab – Rab is the oldest apprentice at the *Boston Observer*—he's about two years older than Johnny. He has dark hair and moves in an unconcerned, languid manner that makes it seem like he's constantly calm and unconcerned. Rab also has a knack for making people feel heard, cared for, and important—he's the first person Johnny feels comfortable opening up to about his burnt **hand**. For seemingly no reason at first, Rab is very interested in helping Johnny; he arranges for Mr. Quincy to represent Johnny in court and then wholeheartedly welcomes Johnny to work for the *Boston Observer*. Due to his calm, caring nature, Rab is able to help Johnny see that it's better to be kind and thoughtful than rash and arrogant. But Rab is also an ardent Whig and begins training with the Minute Men as soon as he can. Johnny finds it uncharacteristic of Rab that Rab loves fighting so much. Rab spends much of his time attempting to purchase a **musket** off the black market, and Johnny ultimately is able to get him one from a soldier named Pumpkin. However, Rab never gets a chance to use it, as he's shot during the first battle in Lexington. Rab dies of his injuries after passing his musket on to Johnny, thus initiating Johnny's symbolic coming of age.

Dove – Dove is the oldest apprentice in Mr. Lapham's shop. However, because he's lazy and not particularly intelligent, he's not very good at working silver—and Johnny is extremely cruel to both Dove and Dusty because of these perceived slights. Dove, wanting to punish Johnny for being so mean, purposefully gives Johnny a broken crucible in which to melt silver. When Johnny uses the crucible to attempt to finish Mr. Hancock's sugar basin on a Sunday, he burns and severely disfigures his hand. Johnny vows to get revenge on Dove when he gets the chance. However, though Johnny never finds that he likes Dove, he does discover that he feels sorry for the boy. After Mr. Tweedie fires him, Dove begins working for Colonel Smith as a horse boy. Once again, Dove is terrible at his job and extremely lazy. The other grooms, who are from England, beat him up and are mean to him (despite Dove genuinely supporting the Tories), so Johnny begins protecting him. Rab encourages Johnny to stay on good terms with Dove, as Dove has no discretion and regularly passes along British military secrets (which he usually doesn't realize are secrets). Dove also participates in the Boston Tea Party, though he greedily tries to steal tea, and Rab tosses him overboard for this infraction.

Mr. Lapham – Mr. Lapham is Johnny's elderly master. He's extremely religious (in addition to training his apprentices to work silver, he also takes a keen interest in their religious education) and an avowed Tory. In his old age, he relies on Johnny to take notes on customers' orders and basically run the shop. Meanwhile, he spends much of his time sleeping or reading his Bible. Though he was once a fine silversmith, Mr. Lapham now mostly works on simple projects that keep money flowing through the shop without being too technically challenging. So, it's shocking for Johnny when John Hancock visits the shop with a cream pitcher that Mr. Lapham made years ago, asking for Mr. Lapham to recreate the matching sugar basin. Mr. Lapham is able to work on the intricate basin, shocking Johnny. But Johnny is even more shocked and angry when Mr. Lapham, angry with Johnny for being prideful and cruel to Dove, refuses to let Johnny work on the basin, meaning it won't be done in time. Johnny burns his hand when he defies Mr. Lapham and works on Sunday to try to complete the basin. Mr. Lapham dies about a year after Johnny burns his hand and leaves the Lapham house.

Mrs. Lapham – Mrs. Lapham is Mr. Lapham's daughter-in-law. She has four daughters, Madge, Dorcas, Cilla, and Isannah, and she manages her father-in-law's apprentices as well. A coarse, thick woman who's very loud, Johnny appreciates Mrs. Lapham but doesn't like her much. Mrs. Lapham is extremely interested in securing her family's future, so she encourages Johnny to work on the Sabbath so he can finish John Hancock's sugar basin on time. When this backfires and Johnny burns his **hand**, rendering him unable to work silver, Mrs. Lapham becomes cold and cruel to him—she uses the same mean names for Johnny as Johnny once used against his fellow apprentices. She also begins entertaining a Mr. Tweedie to become Mr. Lapham's business partner and marry one of her daughters—though ultimately, she marries him herself. All of this leads Johnny to hate Mrs. Lapham. It's only after he's been out of the Lapham house for a while that Johnny can appreciate how hard Mrs. Lapham works for her family, making sure everyone is fed and that there's enough money coming through the silver shop to support everyone.

Cilla Lapham – Cilla is Mrs. Lapham's daughter; she's about Johnny's age and the two are engaged to be married once Johnny finishes his apprenticeship. As kids, the two find this "mildly offensive," and Cilla loves teasing and making Johnny angry more than anything else. Cilla is prettier than her older sisters and cares deeply for her sickly younger sister, Isannah, which leads Johnny to characterize her as overly sentimental. However, once Johnny burns his hand and leaves the Laphams' house, Cilla quickly grows up and comes of age. Cilla follows Isannah to the Lytes' house to work for Miss Lavinia as a maid, where she both becomes aware of her beauty and develops a political conscience. She and Mrs. Bessie, the cook, are Whigs and support Johnny and the Patriot cause as best they can from within the Tory house: Cilla assists Johnny in helping British soldiers desert, and she later supplies letter paper for Rab to wrap around his bullets and gunpowder. By the end of the novel, Cilla and Johnny have admitted their crushes on each other. Cilla also gives up on trying to protect Isannah and allows

her to go to England with Miss Lavinia.

Isannah Lapham – Isannah is the youngest Lapham sister. According to her mother Mrs. Lapham, due to her being so sickly, Isannah is barely worth the bother to raise. However, Isannah is beautiful, with blond hair and pink cheeks. Cilla , Isannah's older sister, adores Isannah and takes on most of Isannah's care. From a young age, Isannah learns to perform for people on the streets, often religious figures, who are happy to give such an angelic-looking child sweets or her favorite limes in exchange for her reciting Bible verses. Johnny sees that this unattractive habit balloons once Miss Lavinia Lyte takes an interest in Isannah and takes the eight-year-old to live with her. The Lytes treat Isannah like a doll. Isannah goes everywhere with Miss Lavinia and learns quickly to look down on people of lower classes—including Johnny, whom she once adored. Ultimately, Isannah decides to go to London with Miss Lavinia, where she'll train as an actress. The novel frames Isannah's decision as the final step of Isannah's moral downfall: where Johnny learned to control his prideful impulses, Isannah learns to give in to hers.

Dorcas Lapham – Dorcas is the second Lapham sister. She's stout and coarse like Madge, but she "strives for elegance" and goes out of her way to powder her face and otherwise make herself look beautiful. However, she runs off with Frizel, Junior, a leatherworker whom Johnny believes will never be able to give Dorcas the elegant life she wants.

Dusty Miller – Dusty is the younger, smaller apprentice in Mr. Lapham's silver shop. He both admires and hates Johnny, as Johnny is skilled and likeable, but cruel to Dusty and Dove. So, Dusty forms an uneasy alliance with Dove so they can protect themselves against Johnny. In the year after Johnny leaves the Lapham household, Dusty runs away to work at sea.

Mr. Percival Tweedie – Mr. Tweedie is a journeyman silversmith from Baltimore whom Mrs. Lapham brings to Boston to be Mr. Lapham's business partner. Johnny detests him instantly, calling him a "squeak-pig" and a "spinster aunt dressed up in men's clothes." Mr. Tweedie is something of a joke throughout the novel, particularly to Johnny and Cilla: he's particular about the terms of his contract, changes his mind multiple times with regards to which Lapham daughter he wants to marry, and ultimately ends up marrying Mrs. Lapham. However, he nevertheless seems something of a shrewd businessman, as he fires Dove and manages to improve the Laphams' financial prospects with his regular work for Mr. Lyte. Though Johnny never totally gets over his hatred of Mr. Tweedie, he ultimately seems to decide that Mr. Tweedie is a fine craftsman.

Miss Lavinia Lyte – Merchant Lyte's daughter, Lavinia Lyte is one of the most beautiful—and wealthiest—young women in Boston. She splits her time between London and Boston, and she's a fashion icon in Boston. Miss Lavinia is unconventionally beautiful, as she has dark hair, is quite tall, and has an odd scar on her forehead. The scar, however, doesn't stop men from adoring her—Johnny included. Johnny has something of a love-hate relationship with Miss Lavinia. He nurses a crush on her, but he also resents her for being so wealthy and powerful. Indeed, even Miss Lavinia's servants, like Mrs. Becky, aren't very loyal to their cruel, fickle mistress. Additionally, Johnny takes issue with Miss Lavinia's interest in beautiful Isannah; Miss Lavinia spoils the child and turns her against Cilla, her family members, and the working-class people she grew up with. Ultimately, Miss Lavinia becomes something of an ally, as she looks into Johnny's claim that he's a family member and tells him the truth about his mother (who was Miss Lavinia's cousin). She also promises to attest to his relationship to the family in writing. This way, Johnny can attempt to claim land and property after the war. Discovering that Miss Lavinia is actually an aunt dissolves Johnny's crush on her.

Merchant Lyte – Merchant Lyte is one of the wealthiest and most successful men in Boston. The patriarch of the powerful Lyte family, he lives with only his adult daughter, Miss Lavinia (most other family members in Boston are deceased). He has a face like melting tallow, something Johnny later learns is because Merchant Lyte is extremely ill. Johnny has reservations about Merchant Lyte from their first meeting, but Merchant Lyte soon proves himself to be classist, selfish, and greedy—he wrongfully accuses Johnny of stealing a silver **cup** with the Lyte family crest on it and, in court, asks the judge for the death penalty to send a message to impertinent apprentices everywhere. Though Merchant Lyte loses his case, he later steals Johnny's cup from him anyway. After this, Johnny sees little of the old man except when he returns to Boston from his country home, gravely ill after a Whig mob attempted to murder him. Much later, Miss Lavinia tells Johnny the truth (that Johnny's cup truly is his, and that Johnny is a family member) and insists that Merchant Lyte didn't genuinely want to trick or hurt Johnny. Johnny, however, is unconvinced, despite her promise to get this in writing so Johnny can pursue property claims after the war is over.

Johnny's Mother/Vinny – Johnny's mother died just before Johnny was apprenticed to Mr. Lapham, so she never appears in person in the novel. He remembers her as a sickly seamstress who desperately wanted her son to make something of himself—though she was very uninformed about what an artisan's life would be like. Regardless, Johnny remembers his mother fondly and recognizes how much she loved and cared for him. It was she who gave Johnny a silver **cup** with the Lyte family crest on it; she told him he was a Lyte, but that he should only go to the Lytes for help if he could go nowhere else. In fact, Johnny's mother is one of many Lavinia Lytes, though she went by Vinny in her youth. Miss Lavinia, her cousin, later describes young Vinny to Johnny as the most beautiful and headstrong woman in Boston. She married a Catholic surgeon against their family's wishes and became estranged from the Lytes after this.

Johnny was born in a French convent a few months after his father's death and then returned to Maine with his mother.

John Hancock – John Hancock is the wealthiest man in Boston; a merchant and landowner, he owns Hancock's wharf and even the Laphams' home. An ardent Whig and a member of the Boston Observers, he's also one of the ringleaders of Boston's resistance of the British occupation. He initially engages Mr. Lapham to complete a sugar basin for him, a project that ultimately causes Johnny to burn his **hand** to the point that he can no longer continue his apprenticeship. Later, Johnny asks Mr. Hancock for work in his counting house, but Mr. Hancock won't employ a boy who can't write well (Johnny injured his dominant hand.) However, because Hancock feels so bad for Johnny, he generously gives Johnny a bag of money to try to help. The two later connect again at Observers' meetings. Johnny notices that John Hancock, though he's not always the loudest member, always seems to be pulling strings elsewhere. Ultimately, John Hancock leaves Boston to avoid prosecution by the British.

Paul Revere – Paul Revere is one of the best silversmiths in Boston; he's also a member of the Boston Observers and runs a spy network of his own. Johnny greatly admires the silversmith and asks him for help with Mr. Hancock's sugar basin; he's struck not only by Mr. Revere's skill, but his willingness to speak to a young apprentice like he's an equal. This quality earns Mr. Revere Johnny's loyalty, and Johnny continues to carry messages and spy for him over the course of the novel. Mr. Revere cares deeply about the Patriots' cause and is even willing to put himself in danger to support its aims, as when he boards a ship during the Boston Tea Party to supervise. A skilled rider, he often rides out of Boston to warn neighboring towns about the British soldiers' movements. Indeed, on the night before the battles at Lexington and Concord, Mr. Revere manages to warn enough Minute Men about the impending British march that the Minute Men emerge victorious after the first day of fighting.

James Otis – James Otis was one of the original Boston Observers and was one of the group's leaders. However, sometime before the novel begins, he was hit in the head and now suffers intense and unpredictable mood swings. His friends thus see him as unreliable and often exclude him from meetings and planning, something Mr. Otis seems only barely aware of. Mr. Otis invites himself to the final Observers meeting, and he gives a rousing speech about what, exactly, the rebels are fighting for: the rights and the freedoms of *all* Englishmen. He defines "Englishmen" as anyone worldwide who believes in freedom from tyranny, and he hopes that the colonists' fight will inspire other poor people in France and Russia to overthrow their tyrannical governments. He's responsible for coining the phrase "Taxation without Representation is tyranny," which ultimately became the standard Patriot position.

Dr. Warren – Dr. Warren is a prominent figure in the Boston Observers and in the resistance movement against the British. He's a young, kind man. Although Johnny likes him, Johnny is inadvertently rude to Dr. Warren due to his shame surrounding his burned **hand**. Dr. Warren doesn't hold this against Johnny, however, and the two form a trusting relationship over the course of the novel. Paul Revere and Dr. Warren are the last two Observers to leave Boston, so Johnny spends the days and nights before and during the battles at Lexington and Concord spying for Dr. Warren. Later, when Johnny meets up with Dr. Warren to relay information to him at Lexington, Dr. Warren insists on seeing Johnny's hand—and offers to perform surgery on it to free Johnny's thumb, thereby enabling Johnny to hold a **musket**.

Mr. Lorne/Uncle Lorne – Rab's uncle, Uncle Lorne, prints the *Boston Observer*, a seditious newspaper. He lives with his wife, Aunt Jenifer, and their infant son Rabbit in a house across from the *Boston Observer*'s office. He's a thin, "tweedy" man with glasses. He's very shy and awkward. Uncle Lorne feels very strongly about the Patriots' cause and insists that he'll keep printing the *Observer* until he dies or the British hang him for sedition. Uncle Lorne and Aunt Jenifer graciously accept Johnny as a member of their family when he begins working for the paper. They supply him with a library of novels and nonfiction books, as well as snacks—they believe a young man should feed his brain and his curiosity, and they don't see reading as a waste of time. After the Battles of Lexington and Concord, when the British vow to catch any seditious printers, Mrs. Bessie agrees to take in Mr. and Mrs. Lorne and pretend that Uncle Lorne has always been there working as a stable hand.

Mrs. Lorne/Aunt Jenifer – Aunt Jenifer is Rab's aunt; she quickly adopts Johnny as one of the family, too, when he begins working for Uncle Lorne and living with Rab. She's a kind, red-headed woman who encourages Johnny to read, and she constantly supplies him with sweet treats. She helps Johnny to understand Silsbee men, like Rab: they're quiet, and one must either take them or leave them.

Goblin – Goblin is Johnny's horse, though Uncle Lorne owns him. He's a nervous, flighty horse with a light coat, blue eyes, and dark brown mane and tail. Johnny has never ridden before Rab teaches him to ride Goblin, and he finds Goblin is an exceptional teacher. Goblin teaches Johnny to be kind, sensitive, and caring—this is the only way to earn such a nervous horse's trust. In this way, Goblin teaches Johnny lessons that the humans around him have struggled to impart. Because of Goblin's striking appearance, he attracts a lot of attention; at one point, the British army even tries to take him. However, Sergeant Stranger decides that Goblin is too dangerous for the military.

General Gage – General Gage is the lead commander of the British army in Boston. He's generally seen as temperate and

sensible; indeed, his unwillingness to engage, kill, or arrest rebels enrages King George. However, Gage fears that targeting leaders of the opposition will lead to an uprising, so he allows Whig papers to continue printing and suspected leaders to leave Boston. Gage badly fumbles the opening movements of the Revolutionary War, leading the rebels to find out exactly where the British are going and enabling them to pick off many soldiers before reinforcements arrive.

Colonel Francis Smith – Colonel Smith is an overweight, unhealthy officer who lives at the Afric Queen during the British occupation of Boston. Johnny carries post for him regularly, and he also spies on the colonel. This becomes easy once Colonel Smith hires Dove to care for his horses, Sandy and Nan. Dove has no filter and tells Johnny almost everything that he hears his employer say, leading Johnny to discover that the British have chosen Colonel Smith to lead the regiments to Lexington and Concord. Johnny finds this an odd choice, as Colonel Smith is not known for his military intelligence. Colonel Smith is severely injured in the ensuing battles, and Sandy becomes stuck in a pit.

Lieutenant Stranger – Lieutenant Stranger is second in command to Colonel Smith, and he and Johnny become friends over the course of the novel. This is in part because Stranger reminds Johnny of Rab with his dark hair and calm demeanor, but it's also because—at least when horses are concerned—Stranger treats Johnny like an equal. Indeed, Stranger takes it in stride when Johnny makes Goblin spook and dump Stranger in a mud puddle, and he never once exercises his power to take Goblin after the incident. However, whenever they're not on horseback, Stranger treats Johnny like an inferior, which confuses Johnny. Johnny fights his impulse to help and comfort Stranger when Stranger returns from the battles at Lexington and Concord injured, though by this point, Johnny has already realized that Stranger—and the British on the whole—are his enemies, not his friends.

Gran' Hopper – Gran' Hopper is the old midwife whom Mrs. Lapham calls to attend to Johnny's burnt **hand**. Though she's a skilled midwife and has lots of experience with various maladies, burns aren't her specialty—so she allows Johnny's hand to curl in, which is less painful for the burn victim but causes scar tissue to fuse Johnny's thumb to his palm.

Pumpkin – Pumpkin is a British private whom Johnny tries to help desert. Pumpkin is sympathetic to the Patriot cause and wants only to raise cows, so he's thrilled when Johnny offers to help him sneak out of Boston in disguise in exchange for his **musket**. However, the British catch Pumpkin and execute him for desertion two weeks later. Johnny thinks it's awful that the British execute Pumpkin simply for wanting to lead a simple life as a farmer.

Grandsire Silsbee – Grandsire Silsbee is Rab's grandfather. He lives on a farm out in Lexington and hosts Minute Men militia training on his farm. When war finally breaks out, Grandsire Silsbee refuses to hide with the women and children, despite being too old to march with the Minute Men. So, he hitches up his horse and chaise and from the chaise, becomes Major Silsbee.

Sergeant Gale – Sergeant Gale is a British officer who falls in love and marries Madge. He's extremely short, which Johnny finds funny given Madge's height and weight. Though Johnny knows Gale is technically the enemy, he's nevertheless sick with worry when he realizes that Gale has, like other British soldiers, left Boston to fight the Minute Men—and he may be injured or killed.

Mrs. Bessie – Mrs. Bessie works in the kitchen at the Lytes' house. She and Cilla are the only Whig servants. Aside from her divergent political leanings, Mrs. Bessie isn't particularly loyal to the Lytes—she finds Miss Lavinia in particular to be cruel and attention-seeking. However, she nevertheless doesn't want anything bad to happen to the Lytes, which is why she helps the family flee their country estate before a Whig mob can tar and feather Mr. Lyte. Mrs. Bessie often helps Johnny, supplying him with citrus for the Boston Observers and dispensing sage advice.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Madge Lapham – Madge is the eldest Lapham sister. Like her younger sister Dorcas, she's coarse, stout, and red-faced—and like her mother Mrs. Lapham, she isn't fussy about manners. Before Mr. Tweedie can marry her, Madge runs off with a British lieutenant, Lieutenant Gale.

Governor Hutchinson – Governor Hutchinson is the governor of Massachusetts Colony. Rab describes him as a Tory he can respect, as Governor Hutchinson legitimately believes that it's possible and worthwhile for the colonies to continue negotiating with England and remain British colonies.

Jehu – Jehu is John Hancock's personal enslaved boy. He's always well-dressed and polite.

Frizel, Junior – Frizel, Junior is a leatherworker whom Dorcas runs off with and marries.

Cousin Sewall – Sewall is a Lyte cousin who ultimately ends up running away and joining the Minute Men.

Samuel Adams – Sam Adams is one of the leading members of the Boston Observers. He's an older, slightly shaky man, but this doesn't diminish his power or his prestige.

Mr. Justice Dana – Mr. Justice Dana is the judge who presides when Johnny appears in court accused of stealing Merchant Lyte's silver **cup**. Though he's friends with Merchant Lyte, Cilla and Isannah's testimony leads him to rule in Johnny's favor.

Josiah Quincy – Mr. Quincy is a young, nervous lawyer who represents Johnny free of charge when Merchant Lyte accuses Johnny of stealing a silver cup. He's a Whig and is loosely

associated with the rebel movement.

Captain Bull – Captain Bull is a hulking ship's captain whom Merchant Lyte attempts to use to intimidate Johnny.

The Webb Twins – The Webb twins are two little boys apprenticed in Uncle Lorne's printing shop. Uncle Lorne sends them out of Boston after the Boston Tea Party grinds business to a halt.

Rabbit – Rabbit is Aunt Jenifer and Uncle Lorne's infant son. Johnny pretends not to like the baby, but he actually adores Rabbit and gives him his nickname.

William Molineaux – Mr. Molineaux is one of the Boston Observers.

Mr. Rotch – Mr. Rotch owns one of the three tea ships stuck in the Boston Harbor prior to the Boston Tea Party.

Lydia – Lydia is an enslaved Black woman who works at the Afric Queen tavern. Annoyed by the British officers' desire for fresh sheets weekly, she begins helping Johnny spy on them by relaying any potentially important information she overhears.

Colonel Nesbit – Colonel Nesbit is the British officer who catches Rab and a farmer trying to purchase a stolen British **musket**. Though Nesbit tars and feathers the farmer, he sends Rab away and tells him to buy a popgun, as Rab is only a boy.

Dr. Church – Dr. Church is a member of the Boston Observers, but he's an odd man, and by the end of the novel, Paul Revere no longer trusts him.

Earl Percy – Earl Percy is a British officer who leads reinforcements to join Colonel Smith when the British march on Lexington and Concord.

Sandy – Sandy is Colonel Smith's warhorse. He's extremely well trained, calm, and affectionate.

Nan – Nan is one of Colonel Smith's horses. She's favored for riding around Boston, as she has easy gaits to ride.

Billy Dawes – A member of Paul Revere's spy network, Billy dresses as a drunken farmer, pays off the guards at the Neck, and rides north to warn Minute Men that the British are marching the night before the battles at Lexington and Concord.

Robert Newman – Robert Newman is a member of Paul Revere's spy network; he hangs two lanterns in the Christ Church tower, indicating that the British will leave Boston by the river. He's jailed for this.

Major Pitcairn – Major Pitcairn is a foul-mouthed but well-liked British officer. He leads a regiment of marines to back up Colonel Smith at the battles of Lexington and Concord.

TERMS

Tory – Tories were people in the Thirteen American Colonies who supported the Colonies remaining under British rule.

Whig – Whigs were people in the Thirteen American Colonies who resented British rule and believed that the Colonies would be better off governing themselves.

Minute Men – The Minute Men were the New England colonial soldiers involved in various local militias during the Revolutionary War.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

COMING OF AGE

Johnny Tremain follows its titular protagonist as he matures from age 14 to 16 on the eve of the Revolutionary War. At the beginning of the novel, Johnny is apprenticed to an elderly silversmith, Mr. Lapham. As the best and cleverest apprentice in the shop, Johnny figures he has his life laid out for him—until the day he burns his **hand** on molten silver, rendering him unable to use silversmithing tools and throwing his future into jeopardy. Much of Johnny's coming-of-age journey is tied to his changing relationship to his burnt hand, suggesting that Johnny isn't able to fully come of age until he learns to set aside his pride and selfishness—the very things that led to the burn in the first place. Instead, he must learn to accept himself and others as they are, treating people with respect and generosity, no matter their abilities or their station in life.

The Revolutionary War, however, complicates Johnny's coming-of-age journey—indeed, the novel suggests that war in general forces young people to grow up much faster than they might under other circumstances. When asked whether he's a boy or a man at that age, 16-year-old Johnny quips that he's still a boy in peacetime—but a man during wartime. With this, the novel ends on a bittersweet note: Johnny prepares for a surgery that will restore use of his hand, allowing him to handle a **musket** and join the Minute Men as a soldier. While doing this is something the novel suggests is mature and adult, Johnny's earlier insistence suggests that in many ways, he's still a boy at the end of the novel—a boy who, nevertheless, maturely prepares to take on the adult job of being a soldier.

PRIDE VS. HUMILITY

Much of Johnny's development over the course of the novel happens as Johnny gradually sheds his prideful, selfish nature and learns to be humble and

serve others. Being humble and serving others, the novel suggests, is one of the most successful ways to become part of one's community and find one's place in the world. In the beginning of the novel, though Johnny is well-liked, he's also extremely cruel: he purposefully bullies and alienates the other apprentices, Dove and Dusty, and he's not nice to his master Mr. Lapham, either. He's prone to speaking his mind and calling people names if he finds any reason to dislike them. After he burns his **hand** and can no longer work as a silversmith, Johnny continues to behave like this. However, he discovers that without his silversmithing skills to carry him along, he's totally alone in the world. Nobody wants to be around a "useless" boy who's also cruel and arrogant. Johnny's behavior only begins to change when Johnny meets Rab, an older boy who is unwaveringly calm and kind. Rab shows Johnny how fulfilling it can be to be kind and generous to people, even those who have wronged him. Indeed, it's by *not* screaming at an enslaved woman who accidentally douses Johnny with water that Johnny befriends Sam Adams, one of the leaders of the colonial resistance movement. And while Johnny never fully lets go of his prideful nature, as he becomes increasingly entrenched in the resistance, he learns to use his pride as a tool, not as his everyday persona. By the end of the novel, Johnny has become one of the most prominent young spies in the resistance movement, something the novel suggests would not have happened had Johnny remained prideful and cruel. Instead, by putting aside his pride and learning how joyful it can be to serve others, Johnny finds friends, community, and his place in the world.

PATRIOTISM AND THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Johnny Tremain takes place between 1773 and 1775, ending the day after the first shots of the Revolutionary War were fired in Lexington, Massachusetts. As such, the war, the issues that led to war, and the brave colonists who led spy networks and the Patriot opposition color almost every aspect of the novel. Specifically, the novel pays close attention to what it means to be brave and fight for what one believes is right. Within months of injuring his hand, Johnny finds himself working for the *Boston Observer*, a newspaper printing seditious material. The patriotic spirit of the people at the *Boston Observer* captivates Johnny. There's Uncle Lorne, the timid printer who insists that he'll keep printing until he's hanged; and James Otis, a lawyer who insists that the colonists are fighting not just for themselves, but for poor people around the world who will take the Americans' righteous fight against the British as inspiration to topple their own tyrannical leaders.

Still, Johnny doesn't fully internalize what the war is about until he witnesses the British shoot Pumpkin, a British soldier, for desertion. Johnny helped Pumpkin put together a disguise and a plan to escape Boston, and he was moved by Pumpkin's simple desire to raise cows. Pumpkin's violent death, the novel suggests, is senseless and cruel. As Johnny sees it, that a British soldier would take the Americans' side highlights the Patriots' righteousness. Thus, the novel proposes that it's something uniquely American to be willing to stand up, risk one's life, and inspire others to do the same by fighting for what one believes in—especially when doing so might cost a person their life.

VIOLENCE

As a war novel, *Johnny Tremain* contains its fair share of violence—however, the novel goes to great lengths to show that while violence is an expected part of war and can be noble, it's still ugly and undesirable. Though Johnny fully believes in the rebel cause and understands that only a war will free American colonists from British tyranny, violence disturbs him—even when the victims are his enemies. For instance, one night he hears Whig (rebel) supporters beating a Tory (a British supporter). Though Johnny is a proud Whig, he still feels ill as he hears the Tory groaning in pain. And it's still hard for Johnny to witness the many injured British soldiers who return to Boston after the battles at Lexington and Concord—many of whom were almost friends of Johnny's—even as Johnny understands that seeing so many injured British soldiers means that the Minute Men probably won the battle. Seeing his best friend Rab die of injuries he suffered during the battle on Lexington Green is, perhaps, Johnny's most influential brush with violence. Johnny recognizes that Rab's death was senseless and painful—but he also knows that Rab died nobly, defending a cause he believed in. And Rab's death inspires Johnny to take up arms himself and join the Minute Men, thereby opening himself up to suffering—and inflicting—violence himself. With this, *Johnny Tremain* portrays violence as a necessary evil. Though winning battles and wars necessitates violence, the novel also suggests that a noble goal doesn't take away from the steep human cost that war exacts on both sides of a conflict.

MORAL INTEGRITY AND CLASS

Teenaged Johnny is an orphan; his beloved mother died about two years before the novel begins, about the time that Johnny began his silversmith apprenticeship with Mr. Lapham. However, the novel's major subplot has to do with Johnny attempting to figure out where he fits into his family. His mother always told him that they're part of the wealthy, powerful Lyte family—and Johnny has a silver **cup** with the family crest on it to prove his lineage. However, Johnny soon discovers that even though his mother's story ultimately ends up being true, Johnny's lower class prevents him from being believable—Merchant Lyte not only drags Johnny through court after accusing him of stealing the cup, but he also refuses to acknowledge that Johnny might be a legitimate family member. Indeed, Merchant Lyte suggests that

as Johnny has no proof that his middle name is Lyte, he's likely making the story up to swindle the Lytes out of money and valuables. Ultimately, the novel implies that Johnny's dealings with his upper-class family members doesn't give him a sense of belonging within his family—rather, it only cements his relationships with other members of the artisan class. This is because, the novel suggests, Johnny discovers that wealth and status are no guarantees that the Lytes will behave justly or treat people well. Indeed, though the court ultimately rules in Johnny's favor in the theft case, Merchant Lyte later goes on to steal Johnny's cup from him anyway. Additionally, Johnny resents the way that Miss Lavinia Lyte, upon meeting beautiful young Isannah Lapham, essentially takes the child for herself, turns her into little more than a beautiful doll, and teaches her to look down on the working-class people she once called friends. And while Johnny certainly develops friends in the upper classes, such as John Hancock and even the British officers, who do for the most part behave morally, Johnny nevertheless feels way more at home with the overwhelmingly moral and supportive artisans he was raised around, such as Uncle Lorne and Paul Revere. Johnny ultimately discovers that while a person's class might mean they consistently have enough to eat, it's no indicator of character or morality.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

JOHNNY'S BURNT HAND

Johnny's hand is a symbol for Johnny himself; the novel uses Johnny's relationship to his hand to track his coming-of-age journey. At first, Johnny has full use of both hands. He uses them to become the best silversmith apprentice at Mr. Lapham's shop, and he's perhaps one of the most promising apprentices in his Boston neighborhood. However, all of Johnny's hope for a bright future as a silversmith disappears when he burns his right hand on molten silver, rendering it totally unusable. Though Johnny has always been arrogant and self-important, without his hand and his ability to work silver, he becomes even more so: he refuses to accept that he can no longer learn a skilled trade. He also takes to shocking people by revealing his damaged hand to them with a flourish. The way that he uses and weaponizes his hand to disturb people highlights how Johnny sees himself: as someone incapable of being anything but a curiosity, and as someone who can only gain power by frightening others with his disfigured hand.

As Johnny begins working for the *Boston Observer* and befriends Rab, though, he begins to let go of his previous arrogance—and he stops using his hand to frighten and shock people. This highlights Johnny's growing maturity, as well as the fact that he's finding his place in the world. As a prominent Whig spy, Johnny feels useful and appreciated—he doesn't need to seek attention immaturely by frightening people with his hand. By the end of the novel, Johnny has emotionally transformed into a generous, kind, and caring young man, although his hand keeps him from being able to handle a **musket**, something that Johnny believes keeps him from truly becoming a man. Thus, it's significant when Dr. Warren offers to perform a surgery on Johnny's hand that would enable Johnny to handle a musket. This promise of a working right hand allows Johnny to come of age emotionally and physically.

RAB'S MUSKET

Rab's musket represents both Rab and Johnny's coming-of-age. From the moment Rab begins drilling with the Minute Men in Lexington, he desperately wants a better musket. He has an old gun intended for shooting ducks at close range, but because he has a weapon that's technically functional, he's ineligible to get a gun from the networks supplying under-armed Minute Men. Rab's desire for a better gun—one that's capable of shooting another person, potentially taking another person's life—is something the novel characterizes as adult and grown-up. In contrast, at this point, though Johnny wants Rab to have a better gun so that Rab can protect himself, the idea that Rab would use the gun inflict violence upon others (or suffer violence himself) disturbs Johnny. Johnny's apprehensive attitude toward violence shows that he is immature and still a boy. Correspondingly, when Rab does finally get his musket, he symbolically comes of age. However, the circumstance surrounding his coming-of-age suggest that undergoing this transition isn't something to be taken lightly: the British soldier whose musket Rab gets, Pumpkin, is killed by a firing squad for deserting the British army. Coming of age during wartime, the novel suggests, comes with steep consequences.

Johnny discovers much the same thing at the end of the novel when he, too, comes of age. As Rab dies of wounds he sustained at the Battle of Lexington, he tells Johnny to take his musket. Once more, the novel shows how coming of age comes with steep consequences. In this case, Rab must die for Johnny to be able to take ownership of the weapon that will make him a man. And yet, Rab's sacrifice shows Johnny that his coming of age will serve a larger purpose: with the musket, Johnny can continue fighting for what Rab believed in, ensuring that future generations of boys won't have to make such sacrifices to make the transition to adulthood.

JOHNNY'S CUP

Johnny's cup symbolizes Johnny's identity, particularly as it pertains to his feelings about his

Lyte family members. Johnny's deceased mother, who claims that she and Johnny are descendants of the Lyte family, gave him the cup with the Lyte symbol engraved on it before her death. She ordered him to keep the cup and tell no one about it—that is, unless Johnny can't sink any lower and is in desperate need of help. Only then may Johnny take the cup to wealthy Merchant Lyte, explain his mother's story, and ask for help. However, when Johnny hits rock bottom and does as his mother told him to, things don't go according to plan: Merchant Lyte accuses him of stealing the cup and insists that Johnny can't possibly be a family member. While Johnny didn't entirely expect Merchant Lyte to welcome him with open arms, he didn't think Merchant Lyte would treat him like a thief and drag him before a judge in a Boston courtroom. Though Johnny emerges victorious in court, Merchant Lyte later goes on to steal Johnny's cup and threaten him. Merchant Lyte's behavior about the cup shows Johnny that Merchant Lyte's wealth and prestige doesn't make him a nice person. Indeed, it makes him someone Johnny emphatically doesn't want to be around—and never wants to call family.

The Lytes do ultimately accept Johnny as a family member, but Johnny never fully recovers his image of the Lytes as good, kind people with whom he wants to associate. Indeed, he goes so far as to reject taking his cup when Cilla offers to return it to him. Johnny's refusal to accept the cup shows that he no longer wants a physical connection to the Lyte family, even if he is genuinely a Lyte himself. With this, Johnny asserts his independence and expresses his understanding that just because the Lytes are his blood family, it doesn't mean that they're supportive and make him feel welcome and wanted.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Clarion Books edition of *Johnny Tremain* published in 2018.

Chapter 1 Quotes

❝ Fetching water, sweeping, helping in the kitchen, tending the annealing furnace in the shop were the unskilled work the boys did. Already Johnny was so useful at the bench he could never be spared for such labor. It was over a year since he had carried charcoal or a bucket of water, touched a broom or helped Mrs. Lapham brew ale. His ability made him semi-sacred. He knew his power and reveled in it. He could have easily made friends with stupid Dove, for Dove was lonely and admired Johnny as well as envied him. Johnny preferred to bully him.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dove, Dusty Miller, Mr. Lapham, Mrs. Lapham

Related Themes:

Page Number: 4-5

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny is going through his usual morning routine of bullying Dove and the other apprentice, Dusty; the narrator then explains that Johnny thinks very highly of himself and actively chooses to bully and ostracize Dove. This establishes Johnny as extremely prideful, arrogant, and even cruel. He seems not to recognize that tasks like sweeping, carrying charcoal, and helping to brew ale are required to keep the Lapham household and the silver shop working; the labor may be unskilled, but that doesn't make it any less necessary or important.

Still, Johnny believes that because he's already working "at the bench" (that is, he's already working silver himself rather than just facilitating Mr. Lapham's silver work), Johnny has decided he's much better than the other apprentices and therefore has the right to bully them. Indeed, the paragraph after this goes on to describe Dove and Dusty as Johnny's "slaves," highlighting the uneven power dynamic between Johnny and the other two boys.

The narration makes it clear that this is entirely Johnny's choice to do this; Dove would happily be Johnny's friend and not his enemy, if only Johnny would make an overture. This turns Dove into a sympathetic figure, while Johnny looks increasingly unlikeable.

❝ He sat at his own bench, before him the innumerable tools of his trade. The tools fitted into his strong, thin hands: his hands fitted the tools. Mr. Lapham was always telling him to give God thanks who had seen fit to make him so good an artisan—not to take it out in lording it over the other boys. That was one of the things Johnny 'did not let bother him much.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Mr. Lapham, Dove

Related Themes:

Page Number: 8

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny begins the morning's work, and the narrator explains that Johnny "d[oes] not let it both him much" that Mr. Lapham consistently tries to encourage Johnny to be kinder and less prideful. This further establishes Johnny as someone who is extremely talented and is therefore

arrogant and cruel to others who are less talented. The way the narrator describes Johnny sitting at "his own bench" (suggesting Johnny is already skilled enough to earn his own workspace), enjoying how his hands and his tools seem to naturally fit each other, portrays Johnny as naturally good at his job to the point where his gifts seem God-given.

However, Johnny doesn't use his talent or his power for good: instead, he chooses to bully others. And whenever Mr. Lapham tries to talk to Johnny about this, Johnny simply disregards his old master. This establishes Johnny as someone whose pride, arrogance, and cruelty make him unlikeable. It gives Johnny a starting point from which to mature—and become humbler—over the course of the novel.

Chapter 2 Quotes

❝ This was Johnny's world, but now he walked through it an alien. They knew what had happened. They did not envy Johnny's idleness. He saw one nudge another. They were whispering about him—daring to pity him. Dicer's master, the herring-pickler, yelled some kind remark to him, but Johnny did not answer. Seemingly in one month he had become a stranger, an outcast on Hancock's Wharf. He was maimed and they were whole.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dove

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 43

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny burnt his hand on molten silver about a month ago, and now he's wandering Hancock's Wharf, feeling like a total outcast. The "they" in this passage are other apprentices, most of whom used to be Johnny's friends.

This passage highlights how alone Johnny feels now that he's burnt his hand. While he previously described feeling like Hancock's Wharf was his home and a place he loved dearly, now he walks along the wharf and feels as though everyone on it is out to embarrass and insult him. What also shines through here, even if Johnny isn't quite emotionally mature enough to articulate it directly, is how jealous he is. The narration's description of Johnny as "maimed" while the other apprentices "[are] whole" suggests that Johnny is jealous of the other apprentices. He's jealous of their working hands and their secure futures, which are secure because they can still perform their jobs.

This jealousy is an adjustment for Johnny, as he almost seems to feel like the other apprentices used to envy him for his talent and his bright future. Indeed, when the narration notes that "They did not envy Johnny's idleness," it implies that Johnny would probably feel way more comfortable if they did. Because he's built a persona for himself that's prideful and arrogant, he only knows how to be comfortable when people look up to him. Now, nobody looks up to him, so Johnny feels alone and wildly out of place.

Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ So Johnny ate as little as he could, and did not come home at noon. But someone would usually slip a piece of hard bread, cheese, jerked beef, or salt fish and johnnycake in the pocket of his jacket as it hung on its hook. He knew it was Cilla, but he never spoke to her about it. His unhappiness was so great he felt himself completely cut off from the rest of the world.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Cilla Lapham

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 51

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny resents the changes the Laphams make at home following his accident, so he takes to spending his days out wandering Boston. Often, the only food he has to eat is whatever Cilla is able to slip into his pocket. That Johnny is physically unable to talk to Cilla and thank her for her kindness highlights just how sad and depressed Johnny has become as he tries to transition to a new life where he's not going to be the great silversmith he once thought he was.

Without a secure future look forward to, Johnny doesn't know where to go or what to think, so he feels distant from the rest of the world and the people in it—even those who were once his friends. Johnny behaves in this way because he's still arrogant and prideful. His injury has failed to impress upon him that he should eliminate these negative qualities, so for now, he continues to behave pridefully. This prevents him from thanking Cilla and making a connection with her that might make this difficult time easier for him.

Then Johnny began to talk. He told all about the Laphams and how he somehow couldn't seem even to thank Cilla for the food she usually got to him. How cross and irritable he had become. How rude to people who told him they were sorry for him. And he admitted he had used no sense in looking for a new job. He told about the burn, but with none of the belligerent arrogance with which he had been answering the questions kind people had put to him. As he talked to Rab (for the boy had told him this was his name), for the first time since the accident he felt able to stand aside from his problems—see himself.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Rab, Cilla Lapham

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 55

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny has wandered into the office of the newspaper the *Boston Observer*, where the printer's apprentice, Rab, invited him to stay for lunch. Johnny is now telling Rab everything about his burn and how the accident has affected his life

This moment is extremely significant to Johnny's development, as it's the first time that Johnny is able to acknowledge that he's handling his situation poorly. He's can finally voice that he's being rude and isn't taking anything seriously, including the job hunt he's supposed to be on. In Rab's presence, Johnny finally drops the arrogance that he's been using to shield himself from people's pity. Dropping this coping mechanism allows Johnny to step back and see the pitiful kind of person he's becoming. He recognizes how his arrogance and rudeness actively push away strangers and friends who are only trying to help him. Realizing he's not behaving well is the first step Johnny takes to change his behavior and become a more generous, conscientious person.

This passage also establishes Rab as Johnny's mentor, as Rab is somehow able to get Johnny to say these things without making Johnny feel threatened or insecure. Later, Rab will encourage Johnny to change his behavior and become more thoughtful, but Rab's influence begins in this moment, when Johnny sees the older boy treat him with such kindness and compassion.

Chapter 4 Quotes

Rab was obviously a Whig. 'I can stomach some of the Tories,' he went on, 'men like Governor Hutchinson. They honestly think we're better off to take anything from the British Parliament—let them break us down, stamp in our faces, take all we've got by taxes, and never protest. […] But I can't stand men like Lyte, who care nothing for anything except themselves and their own fortune. Playing both ends against the middle.'

Related Characters: Rab (speaker), Johnny Tremain, Governor Hutchinson, Merchant Lyte

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 82-83

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny is preparing to take his cup to Merchant Lyte to prove that he's a member of the family. But when he stops in to tell Rab about his plans, Rab warns him that Merchant Lyte isn't trustworthy, offering an anecdote about Merchant Lyte stymying rebel efforts to resist British taxes as proof of Lyte's selfishness.

From what Rab says about being able to respect Governor Hutchinson despite their differing beliefs, it's clear that what Rab values in a person is that they stick to their principles and act in accordance with their beliefs. Rab, a Whig, does this by printing a "seditious" newspaper (and it's later revealed that he's also a member of the Sons of Liberty, a rebel group). Governor Hutchinson, the British-appointed governor of Massachusetts Colony, does this by genuinely working toward bringing the colonies and England closer to an understanding. (At this point, tensions are high between the colonies and Great Britain, mostly because the colonists don't agree with the British Parliament's attempts to tax them without colonial representation in Parliament).

In contrast, Rab detests men like Lyte who care only for themselves. Merchant Lyte, Rab might suggest, doesn't have principles—he'll say he believes in anything, provided that thing is going to keep him wealthy and powerful. This is why Rab warns Johnny not to trust Merchant Lyte: Merchant Lyte is bound to try to trick or otherwise scam Johnny, which is exactly what Merchant Lyte goes on to do. Johnny, however, is currently prideful like Merchant Lyte, so he doesn't take Rab's warnings seriously. It's only later, with Rab's mentorship, that Johnny manages to shed his prideful nature and become more principled, like Rab.

Chapter 5 Quotes

❝ The idea that Goblin was more scared than he gave him great confidence and so did Rab's belief in him and his powers to learn. […] But one day he overheard Uncle Lorne say to Rab, 'I don't know how Johnny has done it, but he is riding real good now.'

'He's doing all right.'

'Not scared a bit of Goblin. God knows *I* am.'

'Johnny Tremain is a bold fellow. I knew he could learn—if he didn't get killed first. It was sink or swim for him—and happens he's swimming.'

This praise went to Johnny's head, but patterning his manners on Rab's he tried not to show it.

Related Characters: Mr. Lorne/Uncle Lorne, Rab (speaker), Johnny Tremain, Goblin

Related Themes:

Page Number: 108-109

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny has been learning to ride Goblin for several weeks now. Goblin is a fearful horse, which makes him unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Horses like Goblin need riders who will be their friends, not try to scare or intimidate them into behaving. And so, Goblin manages to teach Johnny what many of his human teachers have so far failed to teach him: that kindness and compassion will take him further in life than pride, meanness, and arrogance.

Goblin's lesson is already beginning to stick. However, Rab is also a major influence in Johnny's transformation, as he believes that Johnny can do this difficult thing and doesn't try to get in Johnny's way. Johnny also admires Rab and has spent a lot of time watching how Rab conducts himself. So, as he overhears Uncle Lorne and Rab talking about him, Johnny tries to temper his pride. Before, Johnny would've boasted to someone about how good of a rider he's becoming. But now, Johnny is learning that it's better, and will get him further, if he modestly accepts this praise and doesn't let it affect his conduct. In this way, Johnny begins to change and shed his prideful nature, becoming humbler and more mindful of others in the process.

❝ For the first time he learned to think before he spoke. He counted ten that day he delivered a paper at Sam Adams's big shabby house on Purchase Street and the black girl flung dishwater out of the kitchen door without looking, and soaked him. If he had not counted ten, he would have told her what he thought of her, black folk in general, and thrown in a few cutting remarks about her master—the most powerful man in Boston. But counting ten had its rewards. […] ever after when Johnny came to Sam Adams's house, he was invited in and the great leader of the gathering rebellion would talk with him […] [Adams] also began to employ him and Goblin to do express riding for the Boston Committee of Correspondence. All this because Johnny had counted ten. Rab was right. There was no point in going off 'half-cocked.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Rab, Goblin, Samuel Adams

Related Themes:

Page Number: 116-117

Explanation and Analysis

After Rab asks Johnny why Johnny regularly yells at people and makes them feel bad, Johnny begins to change his behavior. Specifically, when someone angers him, he begins counting to 10 before he responds. In this anecdote, Johnny learns just how important it is to not lose its temper, and he discovers all the good things that can come when he doesn't alienate people.

As this passage explains, Sam Adams is one of the most prominent rebel leaders in Boston. Insulting his enslaved girl wouldn't just have been cruel to the girl (who, as an enslaved person, has little or no power to fight back, so Johnny would just be picking on someone who has no recourse). The implication is that it would have also offended Mr. Adams himself, who likely would've thought less of Johnny for being mean to his enslaved staff. However, because Johnny doesn't lose his temper with the girl, he doesn't offend or alienate Mr. Adams. Instead, he shows Mr. Adams that he's a trustworthy person, and he's later able to make some extra money riding for Mr. Adams.

Johnny is modeling this new, more compassionate behavior after Rab, his friend and mentor. This highlights how much better Johnny fits in in his new life, which has introduced him to people he admires so much that he is willing to change his behavior to please them. And changing his behavior gains Johnny the acceptance of his new people, which in turn makes Johnny feel better about himself, more useful, and more at home.

Chapter 6 Quotes

Of all these things and people Cilla knew nothing, nor could he tell her, yet he tried to show interest in what she had to tell him. Once he would have been very interested. Now he felt like a hypocrite, and because he was uncomfortable he blamed it in some way on Cilla.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Cilla Lapham

Related Themes:

Page Number: 132

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny is out letting Observers know about a secret meeting the rebel leaders are going to hold to plan the Boston Tea Party. He's currently visiting with Cilla at the pump, and he finds that he's not interested in her anymore—or in what she has to say. First, Johnny's disinterest in Cilla shows how much Johnny has changed. He's entered a new, fast-paced life, where he's helping powerful men plan the resistance to British rule. That makes him feel important and necessary. And suddenly, it makes everything that Cilla has to say (mostly comparably small concerns about her family members and the silver business) seem boring and unimportant.

Though Johnny's has changed in some ways, he still finds it difficult to express and understand his feelings—and responds to these shortcomings by lashing out at Cilla. Because Johnny can't quite put his finger on what's making him so uncomfortable about this encounter, he immediately jumps to blaming Cilla for making it weird and boring. It is, of course, not Cilla's fault—the novel says later on that at this point, Cilla has no idea how much Johnny has changed.

Rather, Johnny isn't emotionally mature enough yet to realize what's going on, and because he hasn't fully shed his prideful nature yet, he blames the awkwardness on Cilla rather than realizing that things have just changed. So, while Johnny has matured a lot over the last several chapters, this passage makes it clear that he still has a long way to go before he's a full-fledged adult.

'You don't want me to look at it?'

As long as it might take to count ten, there was complete silence. Then the boy said, 'No, sir—thank you.'

'Was it God's will it should be so?' Doctor Warren meant was it crippled from birth. If so, it would be harder for him to help.

'Yes,' said Johnny, thinking of how had ruined it upon a Lord's Day.

'God's will be done,' said the young doctor.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dr. Warren (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 134

Explanation and Analysis

When Johnny enters Dr. Warren's surgery to inform him about the meeting later, Dr. Warren asks to look at Johnny's hand. Johnny, however, refuses to let the doctor see it and even lies that his hand is the way it is (the thumb is fused to the palm) because of a birth defect, rather than an accident. In this passage, it's again possible to measure how much Johnny has changed—while also observing the ways he's still the same prideful, arrogant boy who burnt his hand not so long ago.

One change this passage illustrates is Johnny's newfound ability to control his temper. Instead of getting angry at the doctor for expressing interest in his burnt hand, Johnny counts to 10, as Rab taught him, and this allows him to get his anger under control. However, Johnny's emotions are still ruled by pride and shame, so he's unwilling to tell the doctor the truth about what happened.

For now, this means that Johnny isn't able to regain use of his hand (Dr. Warren later discovers that he can free Johnny's thumb and enable Johnny to use his hand again.) But having to move through life with this disability is a big part of why Johnny is able to emotionally mature so much over the remainder of the novel—he has to find new ways of doing things and explore new possibilities for his future. Johnny's injured hand teaches him to be humble, in part because it gives him little choice in the matter.

He thought of Doctor Warren. Oh, why had he not let him see his hand? Cilla, waiting and waiting for him at North Square—and then he got there only about when it pleased him. He loved Cilla. She and Rab were the best friends he had ever had. Why was he mean to her? He couldn't think.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dr. Warren, Cilla Lapham, Rab

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 140

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny is in bed after the Observers' meeting, where he learned that he and Rab will participate in what will eventually be known as the Boston Tea Party. Considering his encounters with Dr. Warren and Cilla earlier in the day, Johnny reflects on just how badly he treats his friends.

The simple fact that Johnny is reflecting on his actions suggests that he's changed a lot. It's a sign of his maturity that he can now identify his emotions, consider his actions, and realize that he's not behaving as well as he could. From here, Johnny can begin to make changes that will allow him to become the person he wants to be: one who is kind and generous to Cilla, and one who isn't so prideful that he can't accept help from generous people like Dr. Warren.

Indeed, Johnny goes on to do just that, eventually admitting his crush on Cilla and allowing Dr. Warren to look at and eventually operate on his burnt hand. But the first step required of Johnny to undergo these changes, the novel suggests, is that Johnny finally experiences moments like these, where he feels bad for how he's behaved and then vows to change and do better in the future.

Chapter 7 Quotes

'Uncle Lorne is upset. He says the printers will not be able to go on with the newspapers. He won't be able to collect subscriptions, or get any advertising. He won't be able to buy paper nor ink.'

'He's sending the Webb twins home?'

'Yes. Back to Chelmsford. But he and I can manage. The *Observer* is to be half-size. He won't give up. He'll keep on printing, printing and printing about our wrongs—and our rights—until he drops dead at his press—or gets hanged.'

Related Characters: Rab, Johnny Tremain (speaker), The Webb Twins, Mr. Lorne/Uncle Lorne

Related Themes:

Page Number: 154

Explanation and Analysis

The British Parliament has just closed Boston's harbor in retaliation for the Boston Tea Party, in which men and boys threw thousands of pounds of tea into the harbor rather than pay taxes on it. Closing the harbor, in addition to taking away Massachusetts Colony's right to self-government, became known as the Intolerable Acts. These Acts inspired the First Continental Congress, a legislative body that submitted grievances to the British Parliament. These developments set the stage for the Revolutionary War to come, as they highlight the increasingly intense conflicts between the colonists and the British government.

Rab and Johnny, however, are more concerned with matters closer to home: closing the harbor means that nobody in Boston is working and that paper and ink are practically nonexistent. Both developments put the newspaper in jeopardy, as fewer people can afford a newspaper, and it's now more costly to make the paper in the first place. But Rab insists that Uncle Lorne isn't going to give up. Instead, he's going to stand up for what he believes in and continue printing the *Boston Observer* until he physically can't anymore.

This ferocious dedication to one's principles is something Rab has upheld as an ideal before. But seeing someone like Uncle Lorne—who's usually timid and quiet—stick to his principles like this is a different experience for Johnny. It shows Johnny that everyone can stand up and fight for what they believe in, no matter their station in life.

Rab, for instance, all that spring had been going to Lexington once or twice a week to drill with his fellow townsmen. But he could not beg nor buy a decent gun. He drilled with an old fowling piece his grandsire had given him to shoot ducks on the Concord River. Never had Johnny seen Rab so bothered about anything as he was over his inability to get himself a good modern gun.

'I don't mind their shooting at me,' he would say to Johnny, 'and I don't mind shooting at them... but God give me a gun in my hands that can do better than knock over a rabbit at ten feet.'

Related Characters: Rab (speaker), Johnny Tremain

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 156

Explanation and Analysis

Rab has begun drilling with the Minute Men in Lexington, but it bothers him that he can't secure an effective modern weapon. The Minute Men, the rebel militias set up around the colonies in case of a conflict with the British, are at this point severely under-armed. As Rab finds, as long as a Minute Man has *a* gun—no matter how old or ineffective it might be—then they're at the bottom of the list to get a new weapon.

The novel conflates Rab's desire for a gun with his nonchalant attitude about the violence that precipitates his coming of age. Unlike Johnny, who finds violence disturbing, Rab desperately wants a weapon that will allow him to inflict grave injuries, or even death, on another person. And the prospect of fighting doesn't bother Rab, either—in part because he's so committed to his principles and is fighting for what he believes in. Rab's embrace of violence distances Johnny from his friend, and this distance reflects Johnny's relative youth, innocence, and discomfort with the violence to come.

❝ Even Mrs. Lapham now did not seem so bad. Poor woman, how she had struggled and worked for that good, plentiful food, the clean shirts her boys had worn, the scrubbed floors, polished brass! No, she had never been the ogress he had thought her a year ago. There never had been a single day when she had not been the first up in the morning. He, like a child, had thought this was because she liked to get up. Now he realized that there must have been many a day when she was as anxious to lie abed as Dove himself.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Mrs. Lapham, Dove

Related Themes:

Page Number: 173

Explanation and Analysis

As Johnny rides through Boston one day, he reflects on how much he's changed since he left the Laphams' house. In particular, he focuses on how his perspective on Mrs. Lapham has changed. When Johnny was last living at the Laphams', he and Mrs. Lapham were not on good terms. She made Johnny do menial tasks and help her in the kitchen, things that Johnny resented. Now that Johnny has some distance and some more maturity, though, he realizes that Mrs. Lapham wasn't being mean: she was just doing what she needed to do to keep her family and the apprentices safe, fed, and happy. Realizing that adults and authority figures are people is often a part of becoming an adult, so this shows how much Johnny has matured in the last year. He also now has far more empathy and compassion for Mrs. Lapham than he once did, another sign of his burgeoning emotional maturity.

Chapter 8 Quotes

❝ Johnny liked the old woman all the better that in the end she had been unable to see a considerate master, whom she had served for thirty years, a young woman whom she had taken care of since she was a baby, humiliated, tossed about, torn by a mob. Sam Adams might respect her the less for this weakness. Johnny respected her more.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Mrs. Bessie, Merchant Lyte, Miss Lavinia Lyte, Cilla Lapham, Samuel Adams

Related Themes:

Page Number: 188

Explanation and Analysis

The Lytes have just returned from their country estate in a hurry, pursued by a Whig mob intent on tarring and feathering Merchant Lyte. Mrs. Bessie, the family's cook (who's nevertheless a Whig), got the Lytes out in time to avoid the mob.

The Lytes are the mob's target because they're Tories; that is, they support remaining British colonies (rather than independence) and accept that Parliament has the right to tax the colonies how it sees fit. Whigs, like Johnny, Sam Adams, and Mrs. Bessie, are fighting for independence at this point, as they believe they shouldn't be taxed without representation in Parliament.

Johnny believes that Mr. Adams is so invested in his principles that he'd readily throw Merchant Lyte and Miss Lavinia to a mob to make a point. But Johnny and Mrs. Bessie take a slightly more nuanced view: mobs don't do nice things to their targets, to put it mildly. It's cruel and dehumanizing, Johnny believes, to let a mob beat and "toss[] about" another person—especially when that person has been kind. In this way, both Johnny and Mrs. Bessie acknowledge that there are major consequences to violence, and that if it's possible to protect someone from suffering needless violence, doing so is a good, noble thing.

'It's no good to me. We've… moved on to other things.'

'But it isn't stealing to take back what Mr. Lyte stole from you.'

'I don't want it.'

'What?'

'No. I'm better off without it. I want nothing of them. Neither their blood nor their silver… I'll carry that hamper for you, Cil. Mr. Lyte can have the old cup.

'But your mother?'

'She didn't like it either.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Cilla Lapham (speaker), Merchant Lyte, Johnny's Mother/Vinny

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 188

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny and Cilla are out at the Lytes' country estate to fetch some silver that the Lytes forgot when they fled a mob several hours ago. Cilla is asking Johnny to take back the silver cup that Mr. Lyte stole from Johnny months ago, but Johnny refuses. When Johnny refuses the cup and insists he's better off without the Lytes, it's an important moment in his development. Whereas before, when Johnny was preparing to present the cup to Merchant Lyte, Johnny dreamed of calling the merchant "Grandpa" and of getting to enjoy the Lyte family's riches, Johnny now realizes how silly he was to think those things.

The Lytes are wealthy— this is inarguable—but Johnny now knows that they're not nice people, and associating with them isn't going to get him anywhere he wants to go. Indeed, by noting that his mother didn't even like the cup, Johnny unwittingly touches on a fact he'll only learn later: that his mother didn't fit in well with the Lytes, and that's why she ran off and married Johnny's father against her family's wishes in the first place. She'd hoped the cup would be an insurance policy for her son, but it turned out to get Johnny in more trouble than not. And so, Johnny rejects his blood family for the chosen family and community where he feels more comfortable.

'Rab! How'd you do it? How'd you get away?'

Rab's eyes glittered. In spite of his great air of calm, he was angry.

'Colonel Nesbit said I was just a child. "Go buy a popgun, boy," he said. They flung me out the back door. Told me to go home.'

Then Johnny laughed. He couldn't help it. Rab had always, as far as Johnny knew, been treated as a grown man and always looked upon himself as such.

'So all he did was hurt your feelings.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Rab (speaker), Colonel Nesbit

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 199

Explanation and Analysis

When Rab attempted to purchase a British musket in the market earlier, the British arrested him—and the farmer who tried to sell it to him. Though the British have tarred and feathered the farmer, Rab manages to escape unscathed.

Though Rab thinks of himself as an adult man, Johnny realizes that what saves Rab here is that Colonel Nesbit perceived Rab as little more than an innocent, misguided child. This is why he tells Rab to go buy a popgun—that is, a toy gun that will be entirely ineffective in combat. Still, Rab's desire for a real gun is something the novel characterizes as mature and adult: it's the children in the novel, like Johnny, who are uncomfortable with the violence to come, while adults like Rab and even the Observers are far more accepting of the fact that a deadly war is coming.

Colonel Nesbit also likely dismisses Rab without doling out consequences because he sees Rab as one of the many "yokels and farmers" who, the British believe, couldn't possibly mount an effective resistance to the British occupation. The British overwhelmingly don't believe the rebels were coordinated, smart, or politically savvy enough to be a threat—and yet the rebels will go on to win the first battles of the Revolutionary War handily. Thus, this passage illustrates yet another instance where the British underestimate their adversaries. In this case, Colonel Nesbit's condescension only makes Rab more intent on getting a musket and fighting—that is, it makes him more of a threat to the British.

'...For men and women and children all over the world,' he said. 'You were right, you tall, dark boy, for even as we shoot down the British soldiers we are fighting for rights such as they will be enjoying a hundred years from now.

'...There shall be no more tyranny. A handful of men cannot seize power over thousands. A man shall choose who it is shall rule over him.

'...The peasants of France, the serfs of Russia. Hardly more than animals now. But because we fight, they shall see freedom like a new sun rising in the west. Those natural rights God has given to every man, no matter how humble...'

Related Characters: James Otis (speaker), Rab, Johnny Tremain, Dr. Warren, Samuel Adams

Related Themes:

Page Number: 209

Explanation and Analysis

In a rousing speech to the Boston Observers, James Otis explains exactly why the rebels must fight in the coming war, and what his goals for the war are. First, he establishes that the rebels' first priority will be to ensure that all Englishmen enjoy the same rights that the colonists will earn during the war. It's worth noting that James Otis uses "Englishmen" to refer to anyone who agrees with him, whether or not they're actually English. So, in saying this, he's arguing the rebels will fight for the rights of Englishmen in England, Americans, and anyone else worldwide who believes that people deserve to have political representation before they're taxed.

Unjust taxation is also what Otis is referring to when he says that "There shall be no more tyranny." At this point in history, the thousands of colonists living in the colonies have no representation in British Parliament. As such, they don't have a good way to protest when Parliament tries to levy taxes on them, as there's no one in Parliament to advocate for them. The colonists want to either be able to elect their own representatives to Parliament, or they want to form their own government where their grievances can be heard.

Finally, regarding the final paragraph of this passage, it's worth noting that the American Revolution inspired similar revolutions worldwide, most notably in France (as Otis mentions here) but also in Haiti and Ireland. As Otis notes, other countries saw "a new sun rising in the west." It's worth placing this in context of the time Forbes wrote *Johnny Tremain* as well: she wrote it during World War II, when Americans and their allies in France and England were again fighting for human rights. So, in Otis's speech, it's possible to read the contours of the American Revolution—as well as the guiding principles of conflicts that came much later.

'Each shall give according to his own abilities, and some'—he turned directly to Rab—'some will give their lives. All the years of their maturity. All the children they never live to have. The serenity of old age. To die so young is more than merely dying; it is to lose so large a part of life.'

Related Characters: James Otis (speaker), Rab

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 211

Explanation and Analysis

Near the end of James Otis's speech to the Observers, he turns to Rab, a member of the Minute Men, and suggests that men like Rab will give their lives fighting for what they believe in. With this, Otis unwittingly foreshadows Rab's death. Rab does indeed die in one of the first battles of the American Revolution; he's shot before he can even return fire with the British and dies of his injuries soon after. Rab is only 18 at the time of his death, and as Otis notes here, this means that Rab doesn't get to live out the rest of his adult life. He doesn't get to marry, have children, or enjoy his grandchildren. And while Otis makes it clear that this is a major tragedy and not something to take lightly, he also highlights that this is just one of the expected consequences of going to war to fight for what one believes in.

Chapter 9 Quotes

Johnny knew he longed to own [Goblin] himself. He could, any moment, by merely saying 'commandeer.' And Johnny knew he never would say it.

From that day he and Johnny spent hours together jumping or exercising horses. Johnny almost worshiped him for his skill and almost loved him, because, ever and anon, he looked so much like Rab; but still it was only where horses were concerned they were equals. Indoors he was rigidly a British officer and a 'gentleman' and Johnny an inferior. This shifting about puzzled Johnny. It did not seem to puzzle the British officer at all.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Lieutenant Stranger, Goblin, Rab, Merchant Lyte

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 224

Explanation and Analysis

When Johnny runs to do Dove's job one day, he and Lieutenant Stranger end up going for an impromptu jumping lesson on the Common, further strengthening their relationship. To his surprise, Johnny finds that Stranger, like so many of the other British officers he's spent time with, is a generous, compassionate, and respectful person. Though Stranger could take Goblin for himself with just a word, he respects Johnny's right to his horse. He also respects Johnny as a rider and as a person—which speaks to Johnny's newfound ability to control his pride and arrogance.

From Johnny's perspective, though, this relationship is a bit more complicated. Johnny realizes that part of the reason he admires Stranger so much is because he actually admires Rab, and Stranger reminds him of Rab. Johnny doesn't reflect on this very deeply, but similarities between Rab and Stranger does show that there are good, likeable people on both sides of the conflict.

Finally, what confuses Johnny most about Lieutenant Stranger is his habit of code switching, or changing his behavior depending on the situation. Stranger code switches when he treats Johnny like an equal on horseback and an inferior indoors. This differentiates Stranger from Rab, who behaves exactly the same no matter where he is or how much money he has. By upholding a strict hierarchy indoors, Stranger shows that he does think class is important—and that his higher class status allows him to behave as he likes—a liberty that Johnny's lower status does not afford Johnny. Johnny doesn't seem to hold this against Stranger because they're such good friends elsewhere, but it's worth noting that Stranger still exhibits the same kind of elitism that the Lytes did—an elitism that made Mr. Lyte feel that he could steal Johnny's cup without consequences.

> He took one of [the smocks] from his sea chest in the attic. It was a fine light blue. He had never noticed before how beautiful was the stitching, and it hurt him to think he had been too proud to wear them, for now he was old enough to appreciate the love that had gone into their making. How little his mother had known of the working world to make smocks for a boy who she knew was to become a silversmith! She hadn't known anything, really, of day labor, the life of apprentices. She had been frail, cast off, sick, and yet she had fought up to the very end for something. That something was himself, and he felt humbled and ashamed.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Johnny's Mother/Vinny, Pumpkin

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 229

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny is helping Pumpkin, a British soldier, desert by furnishing him with a disguise: a smock his mother made and a hat and wig. As Johnny pulls out the smock, he's shocked by all the emotions that wash over him as he studies his mother's handiwork. As far as readers know, Johnny has never thought anything ill or negative about his mother; he overwhelmingly thinks of her fondly and knows she did her best for him.

But now, Johnny comes to see his mother in a new light: she was pretty naïve and had no idea what Johnny's life as a silversmith's apprentice—and then as a silversmith—would entail. Smocks, the narrator explained earlier, were worn by tradesmen such as butchers; silversmiths dress nicer than butchers. Johnny doesn't yet know just how wealthy his mother once was, but he'll later learn that this is because his mother grew up extremely wealthy—her family doesn't necessarily work, so she'd have no idea what a working boy was supposed to wear.

And yet, Johnny knows in his heart that his mother did her best to make sure he was going to be okay. Indeed, he uses the same kind of language to describe his mother fighting for him as he uses to describe Rab and the Observers fighting for colonists' freedom. His mother, Johnny realizes now, was noble and good—and when she was alive, he didn't fully appreciate all that she did for him.

Johnny put his hands to his face. It was wet and his hands were shaking. He thought of that blue smock his mother had made him, now torn by bullets. Pumpkin had wanted so little out of life. A farm. Cows. True, Rab had got the musket he craved, but Pumpkin wasn't going to get his farm. Nothing more than a few feet by a few feet at the foot of Boston Common. That much Yankee land he'd hold to Judgement Day.

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Rab, Pumpkin, Johnny's Mother/Vinny

Related Themes:

Page Number: 234

Explanation and Analysis

A firing squad has just shot Pumpkin for trying to desert the British army. Johnny had helped Pumpkin put together a disguise and a plan to escape, so Pumpkin's death hits Johnny especially hard. In particular, Johnny realizes that Pumpkin didn't want much out of life. He didn't want to be a soldier; in fact, he simply wanted to raise cows and live a simple life as a farmer. Now that the British have arrested and shot Pumpkin, Pumpkin is never going to get the opportunity to build a life for himself in the colonies. Instead, as Johnny notes, all Pumpkin has is his small gravesite at the Boston Common.

While witnessing a friend and ally die in this manner would be disturbing for anyone, Johnny's tears highlight that he's still a child who's overwhelmingly uncomfortable with violence. While Johnny's eventual ability to hold back his tears when Rab dies signals his maturity, Johnny has yet to achieve such emotional restraint. However, Pumpkin's death does make the war real for Johnny. It shows him what he and other rebels are fighting for: people like Pumpkin, who just want to live a quiet life and take advantage of opportunities they didn't have in England.

Chapter 12 Quotes

The first two boats were filled with privates. They had been packed in, and now were being tossed ashore, like so much cordwood. Most of them were pathetically good and patient, but he saw an officer strike a man who was screaming.

Johnny's hands clenched. 'It is just as James Otis said,' he thought. 'We are fighting, partly, for just that. Because a man is a private is no reason he should be treated like cordwood.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain (speaker), James Otis

Related Themes:

Page Number: 283

Explanation and Analysis

Johnny, impersonating a British private, is preparing to sneak across the river to Charlestown. He's watching the British unload their wounded after the day's battles.

Once again, seeing the British soldiers' casual cruelty toward their inferiors shows Johnny what, exactly, he and the other rebels are fighting for. He thinks back to James Otis's rousing speech at the final Observers' meeting, when he said they were fighting for the rights of all men, particularly poor men worldwide. Johnny sees here that the British don't treat their poor, underprivileged privates all that well if they're tossing them like "cordwood" (that is, firewood). The British are not treating those privates like people—and Johnny knows that they are people, and they deserve recognition and respect. So, seeing the British disregard these men's humanity makes Johnny feel even more righteous and as though he's on the correct side as he moves on to carry messages to Dr. Warren.

'I'll never forget it. He said… so a man can stand up.'

'Yes. And some of us would die—so other men can stand up on their feet like men. A great many are going to die for that. They have in the past. They will a hundred years from now—two hundred. God grant there will always be men good enough. Men like Rab.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dr. Warren (speaker), Rab, James Otis

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 297

Explanation and Analysis

Rab has just died; Johnny is speaking with Doctor Warren downstairs in a tavern in Lexington. They're discussing James Otis's speech at the final Observers' meeting, where Otis said the rebels were fighting so other men can "stand up."

James Otis's speech foreshadowed Rab's death. Now that Rab is dead, Dr. Warren relates Rab's sacrifice back to Otis's speech and suggests that Rab was a great, noble man for

being willing to die for what he believed in. He sacrificed himself so that other men can live their lives, enjoying all the rights and freedoms that the colonists won over the course of the Revolutionary War.

Dr. Warren's remark also alludes to the men who continued to fight for Americans' freedom long after the Revolutionary War—indeed, it seems likely that Forbes is referring to the American soldiers who fought in World War II here (Forbes wrote *Johnny Tremain* during World War II) as she describes men dying a hundred or two hundred years from 1775. With this, Forbes speaks to what she seems to suggest is a uniquely American quality: a willingness to fight and die for others' rights.

'Will it be good enough to hold this gun?'

'I think I can promise you that.'

'The silver can wait. When can you, Doctor Warren? I've got the courage.'

'I'll get some of those men in the taproom to hold your arm still while I operate.'

'No need. I can hold it still myself.'

The Doctor looked at him with compassionate eyes.

'Yes, I believe you can. You go walk about in the fresh air, while I get my instruments ready.'

Related Characters: Johnny Tremain, Dr. Warren (speaker), Rab, James Otis

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 297

Explanation and Analysis

Finally, after Johnny picks up Rab's musket following Rab's death, Dr. Warren insists on looking at Johnny's burnt hand—and he promises that he can free the thumb, which will allow Johnny to handle a musket. With this to look forward to, Johnny can finally come of age.

Johnny burnt his hand because he was arrogant and prideful. During the time that his thumb has been fused to his palm, Johnny has gradually let go of his arrogance and his pride. Now, he's a generous, compassionate person who knows what he believes in and is willing to fight for it. What kept him from taking up arms, though, was the fact that without a functional right hand, he couldn't operate a gun. So, regaining use of his right hand will allow Johnny to take Rab's musket and continue Rab's fight—something that the novel associates with maturity and adulthood.

Further, it's important to note that Johnny no longer seems bothered by the possibility of suffering or inflicting violence. Rather, he's focused and knows that he must do whatever it takes to join the other Minute Men on the battlefield. And he's even willing to undergo surgery without any assistance. This suggests that Johnny's pride is still intact; it seems like a point of pride that Johnny believes he can withstand the pain of surgery without requiring the assistance of others to hold him down.. However, this is fundamentally different from the pride that Johnny displayed earlier in the novel, as when he insisted on working on the sugar basin on a Sunday. In this earlier situation, Johnny wanted to prove he was the best and continue lording his skills over others. Now, he wants to prove that he's adult enough to take on the role of a soldier, someone who is prepared to sacrifice his own life for the welfare of others.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1

1. The gulls are the first to wake as the sun rises in Boston. When the church bells ring, hundreds of sleepy women wake their households. In a little house on Fish Street, Mrs. Lapham stands at the bottom of the attic ladder, shouting for Johnny to get Dove and Dusty up. The three boys are apprenticed to Mr. Lapham, Mrs. Lapham's elderly father in law—and though Johnny is 14, two years younger than Dove, he rules almost the entire house. Dove resents Johnny for this and so hits him, pretending it's an accident. As the older boys fight, 11-year-old Dusty watches: he worships Johnny and doesn't like Dove, but he and Dove both resent how Johnny lords over them. Secretly, Dove admires Johnny too. The boys could be friends, if Johnny wanted—but Johnny prefers to bully Dove.

From the very beginning, it's clear that Johnny has great power in the Lapham house. He, not Mrs. Lapham, is the one to whip the other apprentices into shape—but he's not a kind leader. Indeed, he's cruel and a bully to Dove and Dusty, though both desperately want Johnny's approval. For now, it's unclear exactly why or how Johnny has so much power. Meanwhile, the scene-setting establishes that the Laphams, in their "little" house and as silversmiths, are members of the artisan class—that is, they're lower-middle class.

Johnny leads the way down the ladder. Mr. Lapham is still in his bedroom reading the Bible, and in the other bedroom, Mrs. Lapham's daughter Cilla is brushing little Isannah's hair. As they do every morning, Cilla and Isannah insult Johnny as he heads to the kitchen, where Mrs. Lapham is hard at work with her two older daughters, Madge and Dorcas. It was decided long ago that in a few years, Johnny will be a great silversmith, marry Cilla (who's "spindly" but better than Madge or Dorcas), and inherit Mr. Lapham's silver business. Beautiful Isannah, on the other hand, is considered not worth the trouble to raise, as she's sickly. Cilla takes on most of the trouble of caring for Isannah.

Though Johnny, Cilla, and Isannah seem to have a well-practiced routine as the girls insult him, Johnny still doesn't think very highly of Cilla or of Isannah. Rather, the girls are annoyances, and the novel frames Johnny's future marriage to Cilla as something of a consolation prize rather than a genuine good thing. Keep in mind that at this time, child mortality rates were much higher than they are now, so it wasn't entirely unexpected that sickly children like Isannah might die. However, the Laphams' cold disregard for Isannah is nevertheless shocking.

Downstairs, Johnny tells Dove and Dusty to get to work and then unlocks the silver shop himself. As he picks up his tools, he thinks of Mr. Lapham warning him to thank God for making him such a skilled artisan, rather than lording his good fortune over the other boys. Johnny doesn't let such warnings bother him, though. Instead, when Dove returns with water, Johnny tells him to remake a spoon he made incorrectly yesterday. Just as Dove gets down a crucible to melt the spoon, Isannah floats in to announce that breakfast is ready.

Finally, the novel reveals why Johnny has so much power: he's already a skilled silversmith, despite still being an apprentice. However, it's also clear that Johnny has let all this praise go to his head, since he disregards Mr. Lapham's warnings to be kind and generous to those who aren't as talented. Indeed, Johnny seems to enjoy lording his power over the other apprentices, particularly Dove.

2. Elderly Mr. Lapham sits at the head of the table at breakfast. When the meal is over, he asks Johnny to read from the Bible; he usually picks verses that try to teach the reader something about their character. Cilla desperately wants to learn to read, so she follows along with Johnny's finger. Mr. Lapham has Johnny read two verses from Proverbs: "*When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom*" and "*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*" His ears burning, Johnny explains that God doesn't like pride and probably wouldn't like him. Mr. Lapham tells Johnny to swear to be humble and modest, and to stop making Dusty and Dove feel bad for being less intelligent. Johnny is incensed.

In addition to teaching Johnny to work silver, Mr. Lapham also takes a keen interest in his apprentices' moral development. Here, he tries to get Johnny to see the error of his ways and encourage Johnny to be kinder to Dove and Dusty. But though Johnny definitely understands what Mr. Lapham is getting at, he feels angry rather than ashamed. This suggests that Johnny doesn't really see a problem with his behavior. At this point, he's unwilling to change because there are few consequences for behaving the way he does (aside from Mr. Lapham's humiliation).

3. Though Johnny tries to be humble, he fails miserably. This is in part because while Mr. Lapham is a fine silversmith, he never writes down orders or listens to customers' requests—so Johnny has to do it, and then he has to tell Mr. Lapham what must happen. So, after setting everyone (even Mr. Lapham) their tasks, Johnny checks the coal stores. He does tidy some spilled coal himself, but he loses himself in dreams of being a master silversmith. Madge and Dorcas interrupt his reverie with news: Mr. Hancock is ordering a sugar basin, and Mr. Lapham will get it wrong if Johnny doesn't hurry to write the order down. Feeling full of himself, Johnny scolds Mr. Hancock's enslaved boy, Jehu, not to let the horse and carriage trample the Laphams' nonexistent flowers. Johnny slips into the shop.

Though Mr. Lapham is trying to rein in Johnny's pride, this passage reveals that he's also a big reason why Johnny is so prideful to begin with—he's not very good at managing his shop, and Johnny has to step in where his master falls short. However, it's also clear that Johnny was likely prideful before he got all this extra power; he'd perhaps be like this no matter what. Further, that Johnny scolds Jehu highlights just how power-hungry Johnny is. Jehu is enslaved, so he has no power to argue with Johnny and defend himself. Johnny is picking on someone who can't fight back at all, just to make himself feel better.

Mr. Hancock is the richest man in New England; he owns Hancock's wharf and even the Laphams' house. His patronage could lift the Laphams out of poverty, and Johnny knows this. Johnny fetches a notebook and pencil, hisses to Dove and Dusty to look busy, and then focuses on recording Mr. Hancock's requirements. Mr. Lapham doesn't acknowledge when Mr. Hancock pulls out the cream pitcher that the new sugar basin should match. It's old-fashioned, but beautiful. The handles are winged women, and it will be Johnny's job to sculpt and cast two matching ones. Without thinking, Johnny asks if John Coney made this piece. But when he looks at the maker's mark, it's Mr. Lapham's. Johnny had no idea his master could make such beautiful pieces.

Mr. Hancock's order is a huge deal for the Laphams. The novel reveals that the Laphams are actually closer to lower-middle class, so the money Mr. Hancock could pay for this project would be hugely beneficial. Still, Johnny continues to take things very seriously and overstep his station, as when he tells Dove and Dusty to look busy. When Johnny is shocked to discover that Mr. Lapham could make such a beautiful piece, it also suggests that Johnny doesn't think highly of his master, either. It may only be that Mr. Lapham is Johnny's master that keeps Johnny from being even ruder to him.

The men reminisce about Mr. Lapham making the original set 40 years ago, and then Mr. Hancock asks if Mr. Lapham can have the sugar basin done by Monday. Mr. Lapham starts to refuse, but seeing Mrs. Lapham peeking into the shop excitedly, Johnny interjects and tells Mr. Hancock they can get it done. Secretly, Mr. Lapham is grateful that Johnny stepped in. A minute after Mr. Hancock leaves, Jehu enters the shop with coins for the apprentices. Mr. Lapham mutters that Mr. Hancock just wants the boys to vote for him when they're adults. He never votes for Mr. Hancock; Mr. Hancock is too busy conspiring with Sam Adams to stir up trouble with England and doesn't read his Bible enough.

It seems as though Mrs. Lapham is running the show at the Lapham house, along with Johnny: together, they keep things running smoothly and force everyone else to obey their orders. For now, this keeps things moving along, but this also creates tension: things can't continue like this forever, especially since the Bible verses Johnny read earlier foreshadow that Johnny might experience a "fall." This is the novel's first mention of politics, which highlights that the Laphams (and Johnny) are pretty apolitical.


4. It's oppressively hot by midday. Mr. Lapham spent the morning working but now, he's napping. Without him around, Dove and Dusty have gone swimming. Johnny is hard at work on an enlarged version of the pitcher handle. He goes to dinner late; everyone knows Mr. Lapham's success on Mr. Hancock's order depends on Johnny, so Johnny can be late if he wants. Cilla serves him and then returns to her drawing slate. She and Isannah announce that she's drawing a maker's mark for when Johnny is a master smith. Johnny scoffs at Cilla's work and says that when he's a master smith, he's going to use all *three* of his initials. Cilla has never met someone with three names and seems impressed, but Johnny won't share what his middle name is.

Again, Mr. Lapham doesn't seem like the most dedicated master: he sleeps and allows his apprentices to goof off. Johnny though, to his credit, is fully engrossed in this task—but he continues to use his importance for his benefit and lord his power over others. His attitude toward Cilla also remains cold and mean; she's trying to do something nice for him, and he rejects her work out of hand. At this time, it wasn't common for working-class people to have middle names; only wealthy people had them. This implies that Johnny may have ties to the upper classes, despite being a member of the artisan class.



5. Johnny goes to bed late, having made an exact replica of the winged woman. Still, it's not right. He decides to sleep on an old mattress in the kitchen, but in the middle of the night, Cilla wakes Johnny up. Isannah is threatening to vomit if she doesn't get some air, so Cilla asks Johnny to help her get down to the wharf. Grumbling, Johnny picks up the little girl and carries her to the end of the wharf. There's a delightful breeze there, and the three sit and enjoy it. After a while, Isannah puts her head in Cilla's lap, and Cilla leans on Johnny's shoulder.

Though Johnny has been mean to Cilla before, at night, he seems far more willing to humor and support her. Their daytime antics, then, may simply be for show—right now, after all, nobody is watching them. That Cilla is even willing to lean on Johnny's shoulder (and that he allows it) highlights that they may be closer than they'd like people to think they are.

When Cilla asks, Johnny reveals his middle name: Lyte. He suspects he's related to wealthy Merchant Lyte (they also share the same first name), but he's not sure. To entertain Isannah, Johnny tells her about how wildly rich the Lytes are: they drink pearls and servants sweep up silver and gold. Then, Johnny tells Cilla about his mother, who died a week before Johnny was apprenticed to Mr. Lapham. He adored his mother, and she wanted Johnny to work hard and be something. She was born Lavinia Lyte, and she told Johnny never to approach the Lytes unless he has nothing left. In that case, Johnny is to show Merchant Lyte his **cup** and beg for help. It's now almost dawn, and Johnny promises to show Cilla his cup when they get back home.

Johnny may well have ties to the upper classes, as evidenced by having a middle name at all and this middle name in particular. He talks about the wealthy Lytes to entertain Cilla, but his tales also highlight how differently the upper and working classes live. Johnny and Mr. Lapham no doubt save any extra silver to reuse; sweeping it up and throwing it away is simply unthinkable for someone in their economic situation. That Johnny's mother gave him this silver cup is an insurance policy for Johnny: he can get help from the Lytes, but it's also a valuable item that he could sell if needed.

6. After putting Isannah to bed, Johnny grabs his **cup** out of his chest in the attic. The silver cup is what inspired him to be a silversmith, but now, he's critical of the chunky cup. It's engraved with the Lytes' crest, an eye rising out of the sea, the eyelashes like rays of the sun. The Lytes put it on everything. Cilla is in awe. She reads the family motto—"Let there be Lyte"—just as the sun comes up, but she ruins the magical moment by suggesting that the eye might be setting, not rising.

That Johnny is already so critical of his cup foreshadows his future disillusionment with the Lyte family—they might be nice in theory to have as family members, but like the cup, they might also be unwieldy and hard to manage.

CHAPTER 2

1. The hot July week wears on. Johnny regularly lets Mr. Lapham sleep for an hour after dinner, then he wakes him up and makes him work. Johnny continues to work on the wax model of the handle, but he's not pleased with it. So, on Friday evening, Johnny takes the pitcher and his model to Paul Revere, one of the best craftsmen in Boston. Mr. Revere already knows Johnny's name and ushers him into his shop. When Johnny offers Mr. Revere his wax model and tells him that Mr. Lapham thinks it's fine, Mr. Revere says that Johnny is correct: the handle is wrong. Mr. Revere sketches out how to remedy it. Then, he offers to buy the rest of Johnny's apprenticeship from Mr. Lapham. Johnny refuses; the Laphams would starve without him.

Right now, a lot of Johnny's pride and arrogance shows up as pride in his work. He desperately wants to do a good job on this sugar basin, both for the satisfaction of a job well done and because it'll make him look good. Paul Revere immediately seems like a better craftsman than Mr. Lapham, since he sees instantly what's wrong with Johnny's handle. It's also notable that Mr. Revere is so kind and generous to Johnny, a boy he doesn't have to even acknowledge—something that prideful Johnny likely wouldn't do in Revere's situation. However, Johnny shows that he's nevertheless loyal to the Laphams when he insists on staying with them.

2. Johnny has finished perfect wax models for the sugar basin's two handles by noon on Saturday. He must finish the basin soon; it's illegal to work on Sunday. After Saturday dinner, Mr. Lapham stretches out in the shop's armchair as Johnny insults Dove and Dusty. Dove announces that there's no charcoal—he didn't say anything earlier because he knows Johnny likes to keep track of that himself. Despite Johnny's demand that Dove hurry, Dove fetches charcoal at a leisurely pace. What's more, the charcoal is poor quality. Johnny spits that Dove's mother should've drowned him.

Dove is clearly doing whatever he can to make Johnny's life difficult—however, given how Johnny treats Dove, it's perhaps not surprising that Dove behaves like this. Still, Johnny saying that Dove's mother should've drowned him is extremely mean-spirited and highlights just how arrogant Johnny is. The narration has implied several times now that Johnny could have Dove's loyalty if he was kind to him, and yet, Johnny chooses to be cruel.

At this, Mr. Lapham stirs and sends Dove outside so he can speak to Johnny. Johnny is so determined to finish the sugar basin that he barely listens as Mr. Lapham scolds Johnny for being cruel to Dove and for being prideful. Then, Mr. Lapham says that work is over for the day, since he wants to revive the old custom of observing the Sabbath beginning at sundown on Saturday. Mr. Lapham insists that God won't care if Mr. Hancock doesn't get his silver on time. Shaking, Johnny goes into the kitchen where Mrs. Lapham, Dorcas, Cilla, and Isannah are cooking. Johnny shares what happened. In a whisper, Mrs. Lapham says that Johnny *will* finish the order on time. Tomorrow afternoon, when Mr. Lapham is at a deacons' meeting, Johnny can finish—it's against the law and against Johnny's religious upbringing, but he agrees anyway.

Finally, Mr. Lapham takes a stand and shuts down Johnny's bullying. He believes it's more important to force Johnny into changing his ways than it is to keep his wealthy customer happy. However, both Johnny and Mrs. Lapham realize that there will be consequences for Mr. Lapham refusing to let Johnny work—the basin won't be done in time, and Mr. Hancock will be displeased. So, the only option seems to be working sneakily on a Sunday. Already there's a sense of foreboding surrounding this plan. Johnny is prideful and arrogant, but he still believes it's wrong to work on Sunday. And yet, he plans to do it anyway.

3. Things are going well on Sunday afternoon. Johnny prepares to cast his handles with Dove and Mrs. Lapham's help. When asked, Dove fetches a crucible—but he grabs one that's cracked. It'd serve Johnny right if it cracks and spills hot silver everywhere. Johnny doesn't notice the crack, and he doesn't notice Dove and Dusty snickering in a corner. And Johnny is in such a hurry that he neglects to clean up some melted beeswax. As the crucible cracks and the molten silver runs, Johnny reaches toward it—and his feet go out from under him. His right **hand** comes down on the silver on top of the furnace. It coats his palm, but Johnny doesn't even feel it. Johnny blacks out and wakes up in the house. Mrs. Lapham tells Cilla to fetch the midwife, Gran' Hopper, rather than the doctor; doctors can't know they broke the Sabbath.

Dove, for his part, seems to simply want to get back at Johnny for being so mean to him; he doesn't want to hurt Johnny. Still though, all of Johnny's actions as he prepares to pour the silver suggest that he's being overly prideful, and that he's in a hurry. Burning his hand is a consequence of Johnny not being careful, checking his materials, or cleaning up after himself. It's also, perhaps, divine punishment for being so prideful and treating Dove and Dusty so cruelly. Immediately, Mrs. Lapham's concern is making sure that as few people know what happened as possible, as she doesn't want to get in more trouble than she's likely already in.

4. Johnny lays in the "birth and death room," a closet off the kitchen. It's been two days since his accident, and his whole arm still throbs. Gran' Hopper, the midwife, might've been hanged for witchcraft not too long ago, but she has years of experience—though not with burns. On the fourth day, after allowing Johnny's **hand** to turn in, she begins dosing Johnny with laudanum and does so until his fever breaks. Then, she comes to unwrap and see what remains of Johnny's hand. Johnny's thumb and palm have grown together. Dorcas screeches in horror, while Mrs. Lapham says that it's a shame Johnny is "ruined." Leaping up, Johnny jams his hand into his pocket and announces that he's going out. He snarls at Cilla and Isannah on his way out.

It creates tension when the narration notes that Gran' Hopper doesn't have experience with burns, and the implication is that she should not have allowed Johnny's hand to turn in. However, keep in mind that Johnny ends up in Gran' Hopper's care only because he sustained this burn on a Sunday—this subpar medical treatment is further punishment for his pride and for breaking the Sabbath. Then, when the novel reveals that Johnny is "ruined," it seems like Johnny's life is over. He no longer has his skills to carry him through, as he can't use his right hand.

5. Slamming the door of the Lapham house, Johnny marches onto Fish Street and walks all over Boston. When he returns, Cilla and Isannah try to apologize and offer their condolences, but Johnny angrily says he'll leave for good if they even mention he has a **hand**. With this, he goes to the shop. Dove is at Johnny's bench, using Johnny's tools. This makes sense, given that Johnny has been out for a month. But Johnny is enraged. He finally tells Dove to hold his crimping iron differently, but Dove innocently asks Johnny to show him how. Knowing he can't and never will show someone how to hold a crimping iron, Johnny walks out—though this time, he doesn't slam the door.

Suddenly, Johnny finds he has almost no power. All he can do is yell at people with less power, like Cilla and Isannah—but when it comes to his former targets like Dove, Johnny no longer has any way to fight back. Dove has two working hands, so even if he's a poor silversmith, he's still more useful than Johnny is. Johnny is likely feeling intense grief for the future he's lost, and fear for his now uncertain future. His grief and fear, though, come out as rage.

Johnny strolls along the wharf and notices John Hancock. He never did get his sugar basin; when Mr. Lapham found out that Johnny broke the Sabbath, he melted the basin, returned the cream pitcher, and said he couldn't make the sugar basin. Up until now, Johnny has been used to working 12 to 14-hour days. He's never had a day off, and he's dreamed of strolling along the wharf. But he's sure his friends are talking about his **hand** and pitying him. At the end of the wharf, Johnny undresses and dives into the water. He feels cut off from normal life. But it's nice to discover that while swimming, his hands work exactly the same.

Mr. Lapham shows how morally upstanding he is when, on principle, he refuses to finish the seemingly cursed sugar basin. Johnny, however, feels like he has nothing right now. Indeed, he suspects that the whole world is talking about him and feels bad for him—something he emphatically doesn't want. This contributes to his feeling "cut off from normal life." He's no longer one of the apprentices, so he's lost his place in the world.

5. At first, Mrs. Lapham humors Johnny and lets him stay in the birth and death room. The only problem is that since he's just off the kitchen, Mrs. Lapham wakes Johnny first thing in the morning to run errands for her. Soon, she's scolding Johnny using the same cruel names Johnny always used for Dove and Dusty. Since Johnny is the least useful apprentice, it's now his job to fetch water, sweep, and carry charcoal. Madge even makes Johnny hold yarn for her while she winds a ball, though he throws the yarn at her head when she mentions his **hand**.

Now, Johnny is getting a taste of his own medicine. Because he can no longer work silver, it's up to him to do menial chores—and it seems like in the Lapham house, whoever performs those chores gets called nasty names. The only way Johnny knows to fight back is with rage, as when he throws the ball of yarn at Madge for mentioning his hand.

One day, Mr. Lapham leads Johnny to a bench outside. He's said nothing about Johnny's Sabbath-breaking. But today, he reminds Johnny that he struck a contract with Johnny's mother, and since she's dead, the contract is now between him and Johnny. Mr. Lapham says he can't keep his bargain anymore, since he can't teach a "cripple-**handed** boy" to work silver. Mrs. Lapham, he continues, thinks it's ridiculous to keep Johnny when the family is so poor, but he won't turn Johnny out. Johnny's job now is to start looking for a trade he can do; then, Mr. Lapham will give the rest of Johnny's time away to his new master. Only two months ago, Mr. Revere promised to pay extra for Johnny's time.

Though Johnny has looked down on Mr. Lapham previously, Mr. Lapham reads as extremely generous here. He levels with Johnny like Johnny is an adult, laying out the facts, offering Johnny support, and telling Johnny what must happen next. In contrast, Mrs. Lapham shows that she's far more interested in looking out for the family's welfare, as she sees Johnny as a drag on the family's finances. All of this, though, is awful for Johnny to hear: he was once a sought-after apprentice, but now, he's worthless.

Mr. Lapham continues that Johnny is welcome to keep loitering and swimming, as long as he does his chores and finds a new trade. And Johnny must forgive Dove, who gave Johnny the cracked crucible to try to humiliate him. Mr. Lapham explains that Dove wanted to teach Johnny a lesson for breaking the sabbath. Johnny vows to get Dove, but he thanks Mr. Lapham for his kindness. Then he walks past the shop window, where Dove and Dusty are hanging out. They ask if Johnny would quickly fetch them drinking water. They love seeing Johnny brought so low.

Particularly when Mr. Lapham tells Johnny to keep killing time doing fun things, he seems attuned and sympathetic to Johnny's emotional turmoil. However, he makes things more difficult for Johnny by revealing that Dove intended to humiliate Johnny. Now, Johnny has someone at which to direct his ire—Dove. And yet, Dove is a more useful apprentice, so Johnny can't get back at him in the way he'd like to.

CHAPTER 3

1. Weeks pass and Johnny continues to wander Boston. Though Mr. Lapham asked Johnny to ask masters for work politely, Johnny is too impatient and scornful. He storms into shops with his **hand** in his pocket and asks if the master wants a new boy. Only then does he pull his hand out with a flourish, at which point they usually send him away. He doesn't look at the signs above shops, so he has little idea what he's even asking to do. He never goes home for dinner, especially once Mrs. Lapham begins negotiating with a Mr. Tweedie to become Mr. Lapham's business partner. Cilla often slips a hunk of bread or cheese into Johnny's pocket, but Johnny is too unhappy to thank her. However, he dreams of buying her nice things when he's grown up.

Johnny is extremely unhappy, and he remains just as prideful and arrogant as he was before his injury. While his pride once helped him somewhat (he was proud of his work and always tried his best), now, Johnny finds that it doesn't help at all. Rather, he comes off to these masters as foolish and attention-seeking, especially when he dramatically reveals his burnt hand. Though Johnny doesn't have the emotional maturity to thank her, his relationship with Cilla does remain constant. At least when it comes to her, he's still thinking about the future.

One day, when Cilla hasn't slipped food into his pocket, Johnny notices a sign with a little man on it peering at Salt Lane through a spyglass. This is where the *Boston Observer* is published; Mr. Lapham calls the paper "wicked," as it tries to get people to revolt against England. The man on the sign looks welcoming though, so Johnny enters the shop. Inside, a boy older than Johnny is writing down a marketwoman's advertisement about her lost pig, Myra. The woman tells the boy all about Myra and Johnny finds himself entranced, too. When the woman leaves, the boy sets the type before acknowledging Johnny. It's an amicable silence though, and finally, the boy pulls out his lunch to share.

Mr. Lapham is what's known as a Tory; that is, he believes the colonies should stay British colonies rather than fight for independence. As Johnny disregards Mr. Lapham's political beliefs and enters the shop, he begins to come of age. Now, he's experimenting and figuring things out for himself, rather than allowing Mr. Lapham to tell him what to do and how to think. And Johnny isn't disappointed; indeed, he seems to enter a whole new world in the shop. In this world, pigs are interesting, and this boy is surprisingly friendly.

Midway through the meal, the boy, Rab, invites Johnny to cut himself more bread. Johnny stealthily takes his maimed **hand** out and struggles a bit to cut the bread, but the boy doesn't acknowledge Johnny's disability. Rab's nonchalant attitude inspires Johnny to open up to him. He explains how he burnt his hand and that he's looking for work he can do—preferably work that he'd actually enjoy doing. For the first time since the accident, Johnny can "stand aside from his problems—see himself."

Though Rab says little, he manages to make Johnny feel like it's finally okay to talk about what happened to him. As Johnny does this, he gains some emotional maturity and intelligence—this is why the novel states that Johnny can only now "see himself." Johnny's new perspective offers hope that, after this experience, he will be able to make some changes to his behavior that will help him move forward.

Soon, Mr. Lorne, Rab's uncle, returns from lunch with the Webb twins, the two smaller apprentices. Rab doesn't move to get up and instead, suggests that the shop might have work for Johnny, riding and delivering papers. It's not skilled, but it's work. Feeling hopeful, Johnny says he'll only come back to share that he's found a *good* job. The boys share that they're both orphans, and then Johnny leaves in good spirits. Rab somehow makes people feel comforted and supported.

As another orphan, Rab is something of a kindred spirit to Johnny. But also note that Rab is far kinder, more practical, and generous than Johnny would likely ever be if their positions were reversed. This sets Rab up to become a potential mentor for Johnny, someone who can show Johnny how to be a good, kind person.

2. Mr. Tweedie, a silversmith from Baltimore, comes to Boston. At first, he stays at a lodging house, and weeks pass before Johnny meets him. Johnny is soon tired of hearing about the man and how indecisive he is about the terms of the contract. Finally, Johnny runs into Mr. Tweedie in the shop one morning. He initially treats the man like a thief and then, upon hearing his squeaky voice, Johnny speaks scornfully to him. Going into the kitchen, Johnny finds total chaos—things went so much more smoothly when Johnny was in charge. In a voice loud enough for Mr. Tweedie to hear, Johnny tells Mrs. Lapham that Mr. Tweedie is a terrible man who's probably just "somebody's spinster aunt dressed up in men's clothes" and a "squeak-pig." Mrs. Lapham cuffs Johnny's ears and tells him to go away.

Johnny's arrogance shines through here—as does his jealousy. Recall that the original plan was for Johnny to marry Cilla and then join Mr. Lapham in the business, so Mr. Tweedie is essentially Johnny's replacement. Finding a new business partner for Mr. Lapham seems like a necessity; Mr. Lapham, after all, struggles to get things done without Johnny's help. But Johnny can't see that the Laphams are acting practically and instead, he rudely insults the man who could improve the Laphams' fortune.

3. Johnny grabs his jacket and hat, which he wears at a "rakish angle" these days. With his right **hand** in his pocket, he looks arrogant. He's always been arrogant, but it used to show up in his pride in his work. Now, Mrs. Lapham is convinced that Johnny is engaging in criminal activity—and some passersby think the same. Johnny wanders through the market and then reaches the lower floor of the Town House, where merchants gather. Johnny hasn't tried to find work with the merchants yet and waits for them to arrive. When he sees John Hancock arrive, Johnny decides to start with him, as he's the most affluent merchant. But he notices the lavish Lyte coach clattering past and decides to go see what the fuss is about first.

The implication here is that Johnny is starting to look more and more like a criminal. As far as readers know, he's not engaging in criminal activity—but the way he's dressing and carrying himself means that people assume he's untrustworthy. With this in mind, it's somewhat ironic that Johnny decides to try to work for the merchants—does he look trustworthy enough to be put in charge of keeping records, or of valuable goods? Again, Johnny fails to see how he's coming off to others, so he's unable to modify his behavior to potentially help himself.

Johnny has been guiltily watching the Lytes for years. Today, Lavinia Lyte is returning from London, and he watches her gracefully disembark the ship. She's a lovely woman with an odd scar on her forehead. Despite being the one who sets fashions in Boston, she throws herself in Merchant Lyte's arms like any country girl. Johnny reminds himself to be unimpressed; she's skinny, bad-tempered, and hopefully she'll kill herself overeating rich food. With this, Johnny returns to Mr. Hancock's counting house. A clerk first asks Johnny whether he can read, and then Mr. Hancock joins in and asks Johnny to do some math. Mr. Hancock is impressed until Johnny reveals his now-terrible handwriting, and he then begs Johnny to leave. But Jehu soon follows with a bag of silver coins for "the poor work-boy in the broken shoes."

The way the narration describes Lavinia Lyte positions her as potentially the most powerful woman in Boston. She sets the fashions (which also means she's wealthy enough to afford new clothes all the time), and she can draw a crowd simply because she's returned to the city. Noting that Johnny has "guiltily" been watching the Lytes for a while now deepens Johnny's connection to them—clearly, he's curious about his possible family members and wants to know what they're all about. Then, Johnny cannot escape what looks like his extremely low status. The tables turn when Jehu—an enslaved boy with no power—gives Johnny this money, as it makes it seem like now, Jehu has the upper hand over white, free Johnny.

4. Johnny has been hungry for hours, so he decides to get lunch at a tavern kitchen. He decides to dine at the Afric Queen, happy to make the "kitten" in his stomach happy. He shows the landlady his money and then purchases several dishes, coffee, and hot chocolate. Though it's all delicious (except the coffee), Johnny's sad to learn how much all his food costs. He feels foolish; Rab would never have gorged himself like this. Johnny realizes the Afric Queen backs up onto the back of the *Boston Observer*. Though he wants to visit, he wants to visit as an equal, not a beggar.

Johnny has only met Rab once, but already Rab is helping Johnny think more critically about his choices and behavior. Here, Johnny realizes he should be more prudent about spending his money—yes he was hungry and needed food, but the implication is that Johnny didn't need to spend so much money on fine food when something less expensive would suffice. It's also telling that Johnny chooses not to visit Rab after this. He wants to impress Rab (by making good choices and getting a good job), not make Rab feel pity for him.

Johnny purchases himself shoes to replace his broken ones, and then buys limes for Isannah. At a stationer's, he buys Cilla a book about martyrs and pastel crayons. He happily enters the Lapham kitchen, but Mrs. Lapham is annoyed and accuses him of stealing his shoes. Once she's gone to tell Mr. Lapham, Dorcas and Madge escape: they're both in love with Frizel, Junior and want to go see him. Alone with Cilla and Isannah, Johnny gives them his gifts. Isannah is thrilled as limes fall from Johnny's pockets, and all three laugh as they chase limes. But as Johnny lifts Isannah up, she screeches for Johnny to not touch her with his "dreadful **hand**." Cilla scolds and slaps Isannah, but Johnny walks out.

Finally, Johnny does with his money what he believes Rab would do: he uses it to help himself and others. Buying himself new shoes makes him look more trustworthy (except to Mrs. Lapham, but she already thinks the worst of Johnny). And buying Cilla and Isannah such thoughtful gifts helps him reconnect with his friends and his community. Isannah, however, ruins this tender moment by screaming in horror at Johnny's hand. It seems like Johnny wasn't thinking about his hand until she brought it up, but now he's forced to acknowledge that other people notice and judge him for it.

5. Johnny is heartbroken. Certainly everyone agrees with Isannah. He wanders Boston, shuddering as he passes the gallows and the unmarked graves. For a while he sits in an orchard and then, in the middle of the night, he finds his mother's unmarked grave. Flinging himself down on it, Johnny sobs. His mother would be so sorry if she knew what happened, but nobody else seems to care. Johnny doesn't know he's fallen asleep until he snaps awake, as if someone called to him. He can almost hear his mother telling him that if all else fails, he should go to Mr. Lyte.

Isannah's unthinking words lead Johnny to believe that everyone hates him because of his burned hand. Being totally cut off from his community, Johnny believes, is what his mother meant when she told him to only approach Merchant Lyte if he hit rock bottom. This highlights where Johnny's priorities are: he does want to fit in and be part of a community, even if he's perhaps not aware that it's his own arrogance and pride that keep him from reintegrating into Boston society.

CHAPTER 4

1. Johnny wakes up after dawn, feeling entirely at peace. Will he be calling Merchant Lyte "Grandpa" later? Mrs. Lapham will be shocked when Johnny drives up in the Lytes' coach. Johnny will take Cilla for a ride, but he'll ignore Isannah. Lost in his daydreams, Johnny bathes in the river and then, passing the *Boston Observer* on his way, heads for the Lytes' counting house. Inside, three clerks refuse to let Johnny in to see Merchant Lyte. But as two of them tease the third about his crush on Lavinia Lyte, the embarrassed clerk tells Johnny to go into Merchant Lyte's office once some captains come out.

Johnny may have hit rock bottom in the graveyard last night, but he hasn't changed his ways at all. His daydreams suggest that he almost expects Merchant Lyte to welcome him with open arms, but Johnny doesn't consider that this might not be the case. Continuing to pass the Boston Observer*'s office creates the feeling that Johnny experiences some sort of pull to the space, and perhaps to Rab, whom he admires.*

Johnny slips into the office. Mr. Lyte would be handsome, except his skin is yellow and sags like tallow. Johnny says that he's Jonathan Lyte Tremain, which elicits no reaction. His voice shaking, Johnny starts to say something about his mother—but Mr. Lyte says he knows the story. She told Johnny he was related to Mr. Lyte and told Johnny to come. Well, Mr. Lyte laughs, any woman can name her son "Lyte," so it's time for Johnny to leave. He calls the third clerk, Sewell, to show Johnny out. Suddenly angry, Johnny spits that even a monkey wouldn't name her child after Mr. Lyte, and he's no longer interested in being relatives. But, Johnny says, he does have a **cup** to prove his story. After he describes the cup, Mr. Lyte tells Johnny to visit after sundown.

The way that Merchant Lyte responds to Johnny suggests that he's seen this before: perhaps other boys really have tried to pose as Lyte family members for money. As such, Merchant Lyte isn't at all willing to consider that Johnny is telling the truth. In Johnny's shock, he lashes out rudely, highlighting his pride and arrogance once again—recall how powerful the Lyte family is. Johnny is playing with fire here. Things seem to change, though, when Johnny mentions the cup, though it creates some tension when Mr. Lyte asks Johnny to visit after sundown.

2. Johnny daydreams about his comfortable future as he walks to the Laphams' house. He'd hoped to sneak in, but Mrs. Lapham calls him into the kitchen. There, she says that Mr. Lapham won't let her kick Johnny out, but he has to move back to the attic. She also tells him he can't insult Mr. Tweedie anymore, and he's not to even look at Cilla. Enraged, Johnny says that he wouldn't marry a "sniveling, goggle-eyed frog" like Cilla. He fetches his **cup** and passes Cilla peeling apples on his way back out. Sweetly, she and Isannah say that Johnny is angry—the best thing Johnny has heard all day. They're not pitying him anymore.

Despite seemingly having every reason to not trust Merchant Lyte, Johnny seems oddly certain that Lyte will welcome him with open arms once Johnny reveals the cup. And again, Johnny lashes out when Mrs. Lapham tells him something he doesn't want to hear, creating the sense that Johnny simply can't be told what to do. Things look up, though, when the girls tease Johnny. This makes him feel like things might return to normal.

For several hours, Johnny daydreams. He decides to stop and see Rab, and he tells Rab the entire story. Rab warns Johnny that Merchant Lyte is "crooked"; he signed the agreement not to import goods until the Stamp Act was repealed, and then he imported things under a different name. Sam Adams had to talk to him. Johnny knows little about politics, but he can tell that Rab is a Whig (they believe "taxation without representation is tyranny"). Rab explains that he can stomach Tories (British sympathizers) like Governor Hutchinson; he at least genuinely believes that the colonies are better under British rule. But he detests men like Lyte, who try to play both sides. Johnny says he doesn't have a choice in relatives, so Rab lends him some nice clothes and offers to let him sleep at the shop if the night doesn't go well.

Rab confirms readers suspicions that Johnny shouldn't trust Merchant Lyte, and he has evidence to support this claim. The Stamp Act of 1765 was an act the British Parliament to levy a tax on many printed materials. Colonists widely disapproved of the act (as the narration states, they thought it violated their rights as Englishmen to be taxed without their consent or without representation in Parliament), ultimately leading to the united colonies' first major acts of resistance. Merchant Lyte, Rab reveals, is selfish and only looks out for himself. He attempted to get the Whigs to think he's a loyal patriot, but he really just cares more about getting his money than about making a political point.

3. Johnny isn't sure whether to go around back or to go to the front door of Merchant Lyte's house. Feeling bold thanks to his borrowed clothes, he uses the fancy brass knocker. A maid shows him into a drawing room, where the Lyte family—including Miss Lavinia and Sewell, all of them like "wax candles"—is assembled. Mr. Lyte studies Johnny and then asks to see the **cup** in the dining room. There, Johnny places his cup next to three matching ones on the sideboard. Quietly, Mr. Lyte notes that the cup matches and wonders how it was separated from the set. Johnny seems like the only one who doesn't know the answer—but then, Mr. Lyte says the cup was stolen in August. He asks the sheriff, who has been there the whole time, to arrest Johnny.

It shows how arrogant Johnny is that he goes to the front door of the Lytes' house. This isn't something a working-class boy would do, so Johnny is stepping far above his station in this instance. However, it quickly starts to look like Johnny was going to get in trouble no matter which door he used, as Merchant Lyte already had the sheriff there ready to arrest Johnny for theft. Because of his prestige and power, Merchant Lyte has full control of this situation. Johnny, on the other hand, as a poor apprentice, has no power to advocate for himself or even tell his side of the story.

The sheriff steps forward and says that Johnny can explain himself to a judge later. Johnny is so afraid (he could hang for this) that he appears nonchalant, which doesn't go over well. The Lyte family members suggest that Johnny stole his coat too, so the sheriff agrees to speak to Rab. Mr. Lyte announces that he sent Sewall to the Laphams' earlier; Johnny was signed to Mr. Lapham as "Johnny Tremain," not "Jonathan Lyte Tremain." Mrs. Lapham also insisted that Johnny owned nothing, while Mr. Tweedie insisted Johnny is "evil." With this, the sheriff takes Johnny to the jail. Kindly, the sheriff offers to call Johnny's family, but Johnny asks him to let Rab know instead.

In this brush with the law, Johnny's arrogance comes back to bite him. Looking unafraid doesn't go over well when the Lytes seem to want Johnny to look scared and deferent. Then, Johnny's bad behavior toward Mrs. Lapham and Mr. Tweedie means that neither of them is willing to vouch for him—indeed, Mr. Tweedie goes so far as to insist that Johnny is flat-out a bad person. Feeling like there's nowhere else to turn, Johnny turns to the one person who makes him feel like he matters: Rab.

4. Johnny sleeps well in jail—he hit bottom sleeping in the graveyard, so he can only go up from there. He's certain he can deal with these accusations, though the thought of the gallows haunts him. Rab arrives the next morning with blankets, food, and some books. Johnny notices that he has a medal signifying that he's a member of the secret Sons of Liberty society. Members of the society terrorize Tories and British officers. The Laphams thought they were evil, but Johnny now thinks it'd be fun to join. Because the jailer is also a "Son," he gives Johnny a private room.

The Sons of Liberty were one of several secret societies during the Revolutionary era; as Johnny observes here, being connected to one of the societies could give someone like Johnny or Rab better treatment. It's another sign that Johnny is beginning to come of age when he expresses interest in the Sons, thereby rejecting the Laphams' assessment of the group. He's beginning to interpret the world for himself.

Rab knows the case will come before Mr. Justice Dana on Tuesday, and he asks if Johnny showed his **cup** to anyone prior to when someone stole the cup from Merchant Lyte. Johnny says he showed it to Cilla on July 3rd, and though he's sure she'll vouch for him, Mrs. Lapham won't. The next day, Rab returns: Mr. Lyte has ordered silver from the Laphams and will order more "if all [goes] well." In response, Mrs. Lapham has refused to let Cilla out next Tuesday. Rab adds that Mrs. Lapham is also trying to please Mr. Tweedie, who hates Johnny for calling him a "squeak-pig." Johnny is annoyed, but Rab says that Josiah Quincy has offered to represent Johnny for free. Rab, meanwhile, is plotting with Cilla.

Merchant Lyte begins to look particularly evil here: he's clearly trying to influence the trial's outcome by intimidating the one witness who could corroborate Johnny's testimony. This isn't something that a person with good character does: Merchant Lyte, despite his wealth, isn't a moral or just person. Though Johnny is beginning to grow up a bit, it's a sign of his immaturity that he's so annoyed when Rab brings up Mr. Tweedie's hatred of Johnny. Johnny fully earned Mr. Tweedie's hatred by calling him rude names—and now he's paying the price for his rudeness.

5. Johnny huddles close to Mr. Quincy, watching Mr. Justice Dana deal with case after case. Mr. Lyte and Sewall arrive first, followed by Miss Lavinia. Rab and Cilla slip in soon after. Then, Mr. Justice Dana calls Johnny's case. In a friendly manner, Mr. Lyte details how his great-grandfather had six identical **cups** made. Four cups came to the colonies, and somebody stole one of them last August. Because the hole in the broken window was small, Mr. Lyte knows the thief was a boy. Sewall brings forward the four cups as Mr. Lyte describes Johnny's visit yesterday. Mr. Justice Dana asks if it's possible that Johnny truly is a Lyte, but Mr. Lyte presents the certificate of Johnny's indenture, listing his name as Johnny Tremain. Then, Mr. Lyte asks for the death penalty—young apprentices are getting out of hand.

The conversation's tone between the judge and Merchant Lyte suggests that the two are friends—and that Merchant Lyte is trying to use that friendship to influence the trial's outcome. Again, he's trying to use his wealth and prestige to pull strings, rather than seeking out real justice. Indeed, asking for the death penalty reads as more of a power grab than anything else; he just wants to intimidate people who have less power (in this case, all apprentices). For his part, Mr. Justice Dana seems far more interested in seeking real justice and finding out the truth, offering hope that Merchant Lyte won't be successful.

With Mr. Quincy's prodding, Johnny tells the story of how his mother gave him the **cup** and what she told him about the Lytes. He describes his accident and the difficult spot he's in now. Then, he says he showed Cilla the cup last July. Cilla steps forward and recounts seeing Johnny's cup. Just as she finishes, Isannah bursts into the courtroom, flings herself at Mr. Justice Dana, and repeats Cilla's story. The little girl is so enchanting that Mr. Justice Dana gives her licorice and dismisses the case, telling Johnny to take his cup. Mr. Quincy suggests going to a tavern to celebrate, but Isannah has slipped away and is holding Miss Lavinia's hand. When Isannah returns to the group, she kisses Johnny's burned **hand**. Johnny almost cries.

Readers, of course, know that Johnny is telling the truth (and in the case of his mother's story, what he believes is the truth) about not stealing the cup. Isannah's testimony, however, is questionable—recall that she was asleep when Johnny showed Cilla the cup, so it seems likely that she was coached to back Cilla up. However, Johnny is in the right in this instance, so it's not a negative thing that Rab and Mr. Quincy brought forth a witness who wasn't actually there—they're fighting for the right thing, so the novel casts their methods as justified and forgivable.

CHAPTER 5

1. Mr. Quincy takes Johnny, Rab, Cilla, and Isannah to the Afric Queen. Several Whigs stop to laugh about how Quincy embarrassed Merchant Lyte earlier, though Quincy also warns Johnny to watch out for proud Mr. Lyte. Isannah goes on about how much Miss Lavinia liked her, which annoys Johnny—Isannah is so full of herself. After dinner, Johnny decides to sleep in a stable and then find work on a ship. The next day he finds a captain who will hire him, but Johnny can't afford to buy the blankets, boots, and warm clothes he'll need. So, Johnny decides to disobey his mother and sell his **cup** to Mr. Lyte.

It should raise red flags that Mr. Quincy is warning Johnny about Merchant Lyte's pride; this suggests that Johnny's conflict with the merchant is far from over. Then, it's also interesting that what annoys Johnny about Isannah is, in fact, Johnny's biggest personal fault: he too is extremely full of himself. At least in some contexts, he recognizes that this isn't an attractive or useful quality, but he's not yet able to see that it's not serving him to act this way.

Johnny slips into Mr. Lyte's office. The man is clearly furious with Johnny, especially when Johnny offers to sell the **cup** for 20 pounds. Mr. Lyte refuses, snatches the cup, and blocks Johnny's exit. He calls for the two clerks outside and tells them they're witnessing Johnny confessing to stealing the cup and returning it. Then, he asks one of the clerks to fetch Captain Bull. Bull, Mr. Lyte explains, is sailing to Guadalupe, and perhaps Johnny should accompany him. As Captain Bull enters and bows, Johnny slips out and runs to the *Boston Observer*. Uncle Lorne is there, and Johnny asks to work delivering papers. Rab, who's making ink in the courtyard, says Johnny can deliver papers and learn to ride. Mr. Lorne tells Johnny the details of the job and that Johnny will sleep here, with Rab.

Without Mr. Justice Dana or other law enforcement officials to protect him, Johnny has almost no way to fight back against Merchant Lyte. Merchant Lyte proves that he's simply a bully who wants to intimidate a boy whom he believes wronged him; now, it's almost laughable that Johnny thought this man would treat him like a beloved grandchild. However, losing the cup in this fashion does catapult Johnny into an entirely new life: one that he spends at the Boston Observer *beside his mentor, Rab. This offers hope that Johnny will be able to learn from Rab how to temper his rude, arrogant impulses.*

2. Rab leads Johnny to the stables to meet Goblin, the horse. Rab assures Johnny that the trick to Goblin is to remember that he's been abused, and he's frightened of everything. In the barn, Rab brings out a pale horse with brown flecks, a rich brown mane and tail, and blue eyes. He shows Johnny how to saddle and lead a horse, and then he borrows the landlady's old horse for Johnny to ride. On the Common, acres of meadow, Rab and Goblin lead Johnny and the nag cantering across the fields. This is Johnny's first and only riding lesson. He begins riding Goblin himself every day and then talking to the horse in his stall. Soon, he overhears Uncle Lorne and Rab talking about how Johnny is doing surprisingly well with Goblin. This makes Johnny proud, but emulating Rab, he tries not to show it.

Goblin, being a horse who needs to learn to trust people, has an opportunity to teach Johnny to be kind and compassionate. As Rab implies, Johnny can't act arrogant and rude to Goblin—this will only frighten the horse more. But Johnny is so intent on learning a new skill (horsemanship) that he fails to fully grasp that he must rethink his entire personality to learn this skill. However, he does show that he's making progress and becoming more aware when he tries not to show how proud he is of receiving a compliment.

The first week, Johnny delivers papers on the landlady's nag. The three-day trip through surrounding towns is confusing at first, but Johnny comes to love it and Goblin—he loves galloping the flashy horse to inns to deliver papers. Before long, Johnny is also well-informed about politics and has become a Whig. He falls off often but discovers that he can coax Goblin back to him with apples.

This passage suggests that Johnny is mostly just thrilled to be doing something new and exciting. He's not cut off from society anymore: he's found community with the Whigs (who supported colonies' independence from Britain) and a purpose (delivering papers to people who believe the same as he does).

Before long, Johnny settles into his new life. He learns that another secret club, the Boston Observers, meet in the loft where he and Rab sleep. He eats his supper with Aunt and Uncle Lorne and their infant, and Johnny also begins caring for Goblin himself. Soon, he's spending the days he doesn't deliver papers delivering post on Goblin. And he learns how to write with his left hand. Some days, Johnny sits in Mr. Lorne's library and reads all manner of books. Aunt Lorne brings him snacks and occasionally asks him to watch the baby, whom Johnny calls Rabbit. Johnny adores Rabbit and tries not to let Aunt Lorne see it, but he's unsuccessful.

The Boston Observers (and the Boston Observer *paper) are fictional, but Forbes based the Boston Observers on the most prominent members of the Sons of Liberty. For now, the novel doesn't reveal what this secret group is all about, though one can surmise that they're likely interested in fighting for the colonies' freedom from Britain. Elsewhere in Johnny's life, he's able to figure out what he likes and use his time as he chooses. He finds that he fits in here, and that he once again has purpose in his life.*

3. Johnny likes his new life, but he misses the Laphams. He's thrilled when one Thursday, he runs into Cilla and Isannah at the town pump. However, seeing Cilla carrying the heavy yoke, something that always humiliated Johnny, makes him sad. She explains that Mr. Tweedie won't let Dove or Dusty go, so it's her job. Johnny offers to carry the water most of the way and suggests that they try to meet at the pump on Thursdays. As they argue about this, Isannah approaches a clergyman who thinks she's beautiful—he gives her sweets intended for his wife for reciting a catechism. Johnny thinks Cilla is letting Isannah be too gluttonous, but he promises to come on Thursdays and Sundays. He loves and misses the girls.

This is a tender, bittersweet meeting between Johnny and the Lapham girls. Johnny is now willing to admit to himself that he loves the girls and wants to see them more, but it's not yet clear if Johnny has the maturity to follow through with this desire. Then, once again, Johnny takes issue with Isannah's willingness to perform and take from others. Johnny, of course, was a performer of sorts prior to hurting his hand, but it's only now that he begins to consider his and Isannah's habit as something unattractive.

4. The only disappointment in Johnny's new life is that Rab seems so self-contained, as though nothing upsets him. Rab would be the same no matter how poor or rich he was. Johnny, on the other hand, changes his personality as his fortunes change. Rab begins asking Johnny about his behavior, such as why he calls people "squeak-pigs." After this, Johnny begins counting to 10 in situations where he would've insulted people before. This leads to him getting to eat apple pie and meet Sam Adams after one of Adams's enslaved girls accidentally throws water on him. After this, Adams often invites Johnny in and employs him to ride.

The novel frames Rab as someone who's morally above reproach. He's kind and generous no matter what—and now, he begins to teach Johnny how to be more generous, too. Almost instantly, Johnny discovers that there are benefits to being generous. Not only does Johnny get apple pie, but he also becomes a trusted employee for one of the most prominent figures in the American Revolution.

Johnny only sees Rab come out of his shell twice. Once, while in Lexington with Rab's folks, Rab's grandfather, Grandsire Silsbee, puts on a post-harvest dance. Rab flings himself into dancing and is quite the ladies' man. At the dance, Johnny forgets entirely about his **hand**. Afterward, Rab says that Johnny has just made things bad for himself by acting like his hand is disgusting. If he doesn't acknowledge it, nobody will care. The other time Rab comes alive is when the Webb twins visit the butcher with their cat. The butcher's boy tries to kill the cat, but Rab and Johnny intervene and return to the press before the constable arrives. Rab clearly likes fighting, though he doesn't have much to say. From Aunt Lorne, Johnny learns that this is just how Silsbee men are.

Essentially, Rab only comes out of his shell when he's trying to impress women, and when he's trying to defend people he cares about (particularly if they're disadvantaged, as the young and naïve Webb twins are in this situation). And now that Rab knows Johnny better, he's in a better position to tell Johnny essentially that Johnny himself was provoking a negative reaction to his burnt hand. That is, Johnny was behaving much like Isannah does, drawing attention to himself just for the attention or to attract pity.

CHAPTER 6

1. By now, it's the fall of 1773. On Sundays, Rab and Johnny go to church with Aunt and Uncle to listen to Doctor Cooper, who talks a lot about "taxation without representation." England is currently taxing tea, figuring that the colonists are "yokels and farmers" rather than political thinkers, and that they'll put their finances ahead of their principles. But in the last week of November, a rap on the attic door wakes Rab. Johnny goes downstairs first and finds Sam Adams: he needs printing done, though it's Sunday. He explains that the first tea ship is entering the harbor, and the tea cannot land. Johnny fetches Mr. Lorne and Mr. Adams fills him in. He says that they must get the Governor to agree to send the ships back. They have 20 days; at that point, unloaded cargo can be seized and auctioned.

Around this time (beginning about a decade before), Whigs were rallying around the idea that Britain shouldn't be able to tax colonists without their consent—so they either wanted Parliament to allow colonial governments to levy taxes, or they wanted representation in Parliament. Readers have already seen this political momentum picking up, so this cuts into the English idea that the colonists are just "yokels and farmers" (that is, are too unintelligent to know or care about what's going on). Interestingly, Sam Adams wants this printing done on a Sunday, but the novel doesn't frame this as a bad thing, as it did when Johnny tried to finish the sugar basin on a Sunday. While this printing aids a worthy cause, working on Sunday only fed Johnny's pride and arrogance.

Mr. Adams adds that the Observers will meet tonight before a mass meeting tomorrow. To let them know about the meeting, Johnny will go around and tell members that they owe eight shillings. At Mr. Hancock's house, the enslaved housekeeper won't let Johnny see Mr. Hancock, but she lets him send a note up. As Johnny sits in the kitchen, he notices the silver set for which he tried to make the sugar basin. The sugar basin that Mr. Hancock now has is done wrong, but Johnny is glad he hurt his **hand** on something "worth while."

That Mr. Adams sends Johnny to deliver news of the meeting is significant: it shows that his new community has accepted him. He's trusted and has responsibilities now, and he's finding his place in the world. When he encounters the sugar basin, it's like stepping back into his old world. Johnny has matured some, but not all that much—he still pridefully maintains that he could've done a better job than the silversmith who ultimately completed the piece.

Next, Johnny goes to the Lytes', who are Mr. Hancock's neighbors, just to see what they do on Sundays. Miss Lavinia gallops into the courtyard, even though it's illegal to ride on Sundays. Nobody is there to help her dismount, so she scornfully tells Johnny to help her. Then, Johnny visits Mr. Molineaux and Josiah Quincy, John Adams, and James Otis. The latter three are vising at the Quincy house, and Mr. Quincy already knows of the meeting. He signals to Johnny to say nothing; he doesn't want James Otis to know about it. Mr. Otis is the most brilliant of the Observers, though since suffering a head injury he's now alternately "crazy and sane." Johnny visits Doctor Church next, whom he doesn't like.

Johnny just wants to feed his curiosity and see what his potential relatives are all about, but what he finds isn't all that flattering. Miss Lavinia clearly believes she's above the law—and can bully any boy she finds in her courtyard to help her. Like Johnny, Mr. Otis has a disability of sorts: his injury causes society to see him as mentally unwell. And like Johnny, Mr. Otis is still a part of the community that (mostly) welcomes him—though they exclude him from the most exciting parts of the Observers' activities.

2. Johnny visits Paul Revere last, looking around for Cilla and Isannah at the pump. Since Johnny hasn't made their last three meetings, he's relieved that they're not there. He continues to Mr. Revere's. When he comes back out, Cilla and Isannah are at the pump. Cilla looks shabby and unwell. Johnny pities her: he's entered a new world, but she used to be his only friend. She knows nothing about the tea and the secret meeting, and nothing she says seems remotely interesting. Since Johnny feels uncomfortable, he blames it on Cilla. She's irritating, as is Isannah, so Johnny leaves for Dr. Warren's house.

It's difficult for Johnny to see Cilla and Isannah now, in part because it's emotionally uncomfortable to see how far the Lapham family has fallen financially. To Johnny, life simply isn't worth living if one isn't involved in the resistance against the British, which helps him justify feeling angry at Cilla. Once again, his pity—and perhaps his shame at his role in the Laphams' fall—comes out as anger and cruelty to other people.

At Dr. Warren's house, Johnny removes his mittens and stretches his fingers in front of the fire. Sensing that the doctor is looking at Johnny's **hand**, Johnny shoves it back into his pocket. He refuses to let the doctor see it. Johnny counts to 10 and then, when Dr. Warren asks if it was "God's will," Johnny says yes. This isn't true—Dr. Warren is asking if it's a birth defect—but Johnny ruined his hand on a Sunday.

At the beginning of this passage, Johnny seems to be taking Rab's advice to heart: he no longer cares so much about his hand. However, that gets somewhat uncomfortable in a doctor's presence, especially when that doctor seems to be implying that he could help Johnny. Just as it did with Cilla in the previous passage, Johnny's shame keeps him from being able to fully understand his emotions and connect with Dr. Warren.

3. All of Boston is excited. Johnny can hear people running and shouting outside—some are Sons of Liberty, tacking up Mr. Adams's notices. Johnny goes to look and sees a Tory chasing Whigs who tried to tack a notice to his house. The men turn on him and begin to brawl, which makes Johnny feel sick. Trying not to listen to the sickening punches outside, Johnny asks Rab how events will play out. Rab says simply that they can fight the British and that they'll know what the Observers decide once the meeting is over. Soon after, Mr. Lorne calls downstairs for Rab and Johnny to bring up the punch. The atmosphere is tense, but Johnny recognizes a look on Mr. Adams's face that Rab described earlier: that of an "old dog fox with a fat pullet in his mouth."

Johnny is a Whig, so on one hand, it would make sense for him to support the Whigs in beating up the Tory. However, the violence (the threat he's hearing outside, and the threat of violence later, depending on what happens with the tea ships) clearly disturbs Johnny. This is something the novel links to Johnny's youth and innocence. Rab, on the other hand, is several years older and way more mature, so he understands better that this violence has a purpose. And Mr. Adams—clearly an adult—understands best of all that a war might be coming, and with it, violence.

The men toast and drink to December 16, which is the day when the tea must either return to England or be destroyed. Johnny realizes that these men don't actually want the tea returned—they want war. Noticing Dr. Warren smiling at him, Johnny feels ashamed for not letting the doctor look at his **hand** earlier. Embarrassed, Johnny turns away. He knows he can never ask Dr. Warren for help now.

This is a moment where Johnny becomes a bit disillusioned with the Observers. He's thought they wanted peace, but now he realizes they, like Rab, want war—and that's not yet something he can totally stomach. And one last time, Johnny's shame keeps him from connecting to Dr. Warren, even just to form a friendship.

Mr. Hancock is sitting with his head in his hands, but Sam Adams stands and announces that Rab and Johnny are exactly the kind of trusted boys they need. Once the men vote to let the boys in on the secret, Mr. Adams explains that on December 16, they need boys to board the three tea ships and dump the tea into the harbor. They need honest boys; if any tea is stolen, it's not a just protest anymore. He asks Rab to join and doesn't ask Johnny, making Johnny wonder if Adams thinks Johnny is too disabled to help.

That Johnny notices Mr. Hancock's clearly upset posture suggests that Johnny is becoming more compassionate—that is, he cares more now about the people around him. However, Johnny goes right back to thinking about himself when Mr. Adams doesn't explicitly ask Johnny to join the protest. Even now, Johnny is afraid that everyone is focusing on his hand and ignoring what else he can do.

4. That night, Johnny asks Rab if he can help dump the tea in the harbor, even with his **hand**. Rab says Johnny has 20 days to learn to use an axe; there are logs in the yard to practice on. When Rab falls asleep, Johnny wonders why he didn't let Dr. Warren see his hand. And why doesn't he go visit Cilla every week when he knows he loves her? He's so mean to her.

Johnny is finally becoming more self-aware. He realizes he's not been polite to Cilla or to Dr. Warren, and he realizes that his rudeness is harming his relationships with both of them. However, note that at this point, Johnny doesn't know how to fix this situation. For now, recognizing that he needs to change is as far as he can take his development.

5. Johnny is up early the next morning and practices splitting logs. When he runs out of logs, he begins chopping for the Afric Queen for free. Meanwhile, people gather daily at Old South Church, angrily arguing about the tea and the taxes. Governor Hutchinson won't let the ships leave Boston without unloading their tea, while Boston won't allow the ships to unload. The owner of one ship, the *Dartmouth*, fears a mob will burn his ship—but civilians guard the ship, including sometimes John Hancock and Paul Revere. By the 15th, all three of the tea ships are in the harbor.

Johnny believes in the protest, but he also wants to take this opportunity to prove show himself and others what he can do, despite having a burnt hand. The ship owner's fears highlight how high tensions are running in Boston right now; people fear violence and theft. This particular conflict arose because, as the narration notes, the ships can't leave Boston but they also can't unload their cargo. Other ships containing tea that were bound for other colonial ports were sent back—but Governor Hutchinson refused to allow this to happen in Boston.

6. Around sunset on the 16th, Rab's boys begin gathering in the *Observer*'s office to put on their "Indian" disguises. After dividing the boys into three groups and assigning them a ship, Rab turns to Johnny. Johnny is to go to Old South Church and listen to Mr. Adams's response to Mr. Rotch. Depending on what coded phrase Mr. Adams says, the group will either disband or, if Johnny blows his whistle, they'll head for the tea ships. Johnny races through the crowds and pushes as far into the church as he can. He watches Rotch arrive, and minutes later, Mr. Adams stands and says, "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." Johnny blows his whistle and races back to the *Observer*'s office. Hopefully Rab hasn't abandoned him.

Some historians believe that dressing as "Indians" (specifically, Native Americans from the Mohawk tribe) was an intentional choice to associate the protestors with America, rather than with the British at all. Put simply, the disguises highlight that the protesters are American, not British. Though the Observers give Johnny a pretty important job, he still fears that they're disregarding him because of his hand. He doesn't yet value jobs like this, which are important but not as showy as dressing up, boarding a ship, and dumping tea into the harbor.

Rab is still at the office, and he helps Johnny dress quickly. They take back alleys to the wharf and line up behind Paul Revere with dozens of other boys—some of whom are clearly acting on the spur of the moment. The group boards the *Dartmouth*, where the captain gives them the keys to the hold and the cabin boy offers to help. Johnny has never worked so hard in his life cutting open the tea chests. He soon notices that one new volunteer on board is Dove—and Dove is scooping tea into his pockets. Rab flings Dove into the harbor. When the work is done, Johnny and other boys sweep the deck, leaving it clean and undamaged.

The implication here is that Rab found a lot of boys he's certain are trustworthy, but there are still many more boys in Boston who feel the revolutionary spirit and want to participate. However, encountering Dove stealing tea highlights that some of these boys might be opportunistic and not involved for moral or political reasons—though the novel frames Rab throwing Dove overboard as a fitting punishment for Dove's transgression. It's also no doubt cathartic for Johnny, who's yearned to get back at Dove for some time now.

As the three groups disembark the ships, a fife starts up in the crowd of onlookers. It's now almost dawn, and a British soldier, Admiral Montague, wryly calls out a window that the colonists will have to "pay the fiddler." Everyone knows this, and everyone knows that England will punish all of Boston, Whig and Tory alike. While everyone else is exhausted the next day, Paul Revere rides to New York and Philadelphia to spread the news of the tea party.

To "pay the fiddler" is to accept the consequences for one's actions, especially if a consequence is punishment of some sort. Admiral Montague is suggesting that what the boys have done isn't something that England will allow to go unpunished. In this passage though, the only consequence the boys suffer is being extremely tired the next day—but there will no doubt be more to come.

CHAPTER 7

1. The "fiddler's bill" is so heavy that it enrages even moderates in Boston—and the other 12 colonies, who hadn't much cared about Boston before this. London votes to close Boston's port to all but British warships until the tea is paid for. Boston will starve. It's now June 1, 1774. Johnny and Rab join everyone else wandering around, swearing angrily. This, everyone agrees, is tyranny. First the merchants and sailors are out of work; then, tailors, silversmiths, and everyone else has no work, either. As he and Johnny stare at the harbor, Rab says that Uncle Lorne is sending the Webb twins home, but Uncle Lorne is going to continue printing a half-size paper until he's hanged.

Again, to "pay the fiddler" is to accept repercussions for one's actions. Now, all of Boston is having to pay for the boys dumping thousands of pounds of tea into the harbor. In addition to closing Boston's harbor, England also ended Massachusetts's system of self-government. Together, these consequences were known as the Intolerable Acts—and as the narration notes, the Acts made people extremely angry and galvanized the Patriots' cause. Even timid men like Uncle Lorne realize that now is the time to be brave and prioritize their principles over anything else.

Hanging is on everyone's mind. The crown orders Governor Hutchinson to England and General Gage is now in charge. Mr. Hancock, Mr. Adams, and Dr. Warren would all be the first to hang if their roles became known. Regiments of British soldiers arrive to quell sedition. There's little work to do now; Rab can set the paper in a day, and Johnny can deliver the Boston papers in a few hours. When they're not working, Rab and Johnny watch the British soldiers drill. Rab focuses on their **muskets**. Like many men and boys, Rab has begun drilling to fight the British. But Rab's only gun is an old duck-hunting gun, and his inadequate weapon bothers him.

Putting Gage in charge is part of ending Massachusetts's system of self-government; now, the colony is essentially under military rule. Not having as much to do gives Rab and Johnny more time to loiter—and it allows Rab to begin drilling for a potential military conflict. Rab believes that a musket like what the British soldiers have would make him a fearsome soldier, capable of fighting for what he believes in. Wanting a real musket symbolizes his burgeoning maturity. Meanwhile, that Johnny doesn't entertain such dreams shows that he isn't quite there yet.

So, one day, Rab does a foolish thing and reaches out and touches a British **musket**. An officer swoops over, hits Rab on the head, and knocks him unconscious. Johnny stays by Rab's side as a British medical officer tends to Rab. The officer laughs when Rab says he wasn't going to steal the musket, but that it's not a bad idea. The officer insists that if they all stay calm, soon this will all be over. As he often does, Johnny finds that he likes this medical officer. The British soldiers are, on the whole, friendly and civil. With Rab's encouragement, Johnny begins carrying notes for the British. Though Whigs tease him for being disloyal, Johnny soon uncovers double agents and feels great about himself.

While Johnny finds the medical officer kind and shockingly generous, it's also worth noting that the officer clearly doesn't take Rab seriously. He seems to believe that the colonists are the harmless "yokels and farmers" described earlier, not principled people willing to fight for what they believe in. However, their friendliness also gives Johnny an opportunity to spy on them and ferry information to the Observers. The fact that they seem not to suspect Johnny of foul play, however, again strengthens the possibility that the British don't take the colonists seriously, or believe them capable of having worthwhile spy networks.

2. Johnny charges British officers a fortune for carrying letters and gives it all to Aunt Lorne. General Gage, meanwhile, tries to keep things civil and doesn't stop men like Uncle Lorne from publishing. And Boston doesn't starve, as towns and villages send shipments of food by land. By now, it's been three weeks since Johnny last saw Cilla. He's been too busy watching Rab and the other Minute Men drill on Sundays to meet her. So, he's shocked when he comes back to the *Observer*'s office to find her sitting and laughing with Rab. She looks extremely happy and explains that she's drawing a political cartoon for Rab. Johnny insults her drawing, but she knows it's actually a compliment. He can't figure out when she got so pretty.

Though the novel doesn't get into it much, General Gage was very concerned that arresting people like Uncle Lorne, Mr. Hancock, or Mr. Adams would cause a revolt. With this added information, General Gage looks politically savvy, as though he's thinking critically about the situation he's in and is doing his best to avoid causing any damage. Meanwhile, Johnny has problems of his own: Rab and Cilla seem far too close to each other for comfort. Unable to maturely express his feelings, Johnny behaves rudely to hide what he really feels.

When Cilla gets up to leave, Johnny begs her for news. She explains that Dorcas ran off with Frizel, Junior just when Mr. Tweedie expressed interest in her—so now, Mr. Tweedie wants to marry Cilla. Johnny protests that Cilla is only 15, but Cilla continues her story. Mrs. Lapham didn't like the idea of Cilla marrying Mr. Tweedie, so when Miss Lavinia Lyte stopped by for some silver work, saw Isannah, and insisted on taking her, the women decided that Cilla would go work for the Lytes for a year. Johnny asks to see Cilla at the Lytes' sometime, but Cilla suggests he talk to Mrs. Bessie, the cook and her friend. Rab then walks Cilla home. Cilla clearly isn't going to wait for Johnny anymore. Though Johnny is wildly jealous, he decides to forgive Rab and cook them both eggs for supper. But Rab doesn't return on time—he returns late, having eaten at the Lytes'.

Cilla only grudgingly gives Johnny what he wants—she may be done putting up with his rudeness. Her story, though, highlights how entitled Miss Lavinia is: she insisted on taking Isannah like one might ask to take an inanimate object, not a living, breathing child. Things have worked out for Cilla, though: she's out of Mr. Tweedie's reach, and she seems to have more freedom than she did at home. When Rab leaps to walk Cilla home, it enrages Johnny—but it shows Johnny what he should be doing, if he wants to win Cilla for himself. Johnny's attempt to forgive Rab is noteworthy, as it shows that Johnny is trying to change. Still, Johnny just isn't quite there yet.

3. These days, Johnny tries to see Cilla on Thursdays and spends most of his time at the stable. The Afric Queen, which owns the stable, has been taken over by British officers, led by Colonel Francis Smith. Goblin is now the only horse in the stable not owned by the British. Johnny mostly ignores the British horse boys, but once when he has to fight a bully, he's surprised that most of the boys demand fair play and congratulate Johnny when he wins. Things take a turn for the worse, though, when Colonel Smith gets a new horse boy: Dove. Dove wants to be friends, but Johnny insults him. Johnny doesn't come to Dove's rescue, either, when the English boys wrestle Dove to the ground and make him swear loyalty to the King—mostly because Dove says that Johnny is a Whig.

Johnny finds the British horse boys to be overwhelmingly civil, much like the British soldiers he encountered earlier. This humanizes the enemy and gives Johnny a chance to get to know the people he and his allies might one day fight. Having Dove reenter Johnny's life like this is difficult, as Johnny now seems to want to leave Dove and his old life at the Laphams' behind. And Dove, he realizes, is just as selfish as Johnny is: he wants to look out for himself, and is willing to throw potential friends under the bus if it means he experiences less pain himself.

Johnny has a letter to deliver for Colonel Smith, so he tacks Goblin up and lets him prance in the courtyard. But Colonel Smith tells Johnny to wait and sends his orderly officer, Lieutenant Stranger, outside. Stranger says he wants to commandeer Goblin for Colonel Smith and would like to ride him. Johnny dismounts and as Stranger—whom Johnny likes—rides Goblin out of the yard, Johnny goes to help Lydia, the Afric Queen's enslaved woman, hang sheets. He asks for her help, and when Stranger and Goblin return to the yard, they let a sheet billow in the wind. Goblin leaps away, dumping Stranger into a puddle.

The British soldiers had the power to take any animal they wanted, so Johnny realizes he doesn't have many options to keep ownership of Goblin in this situation. It shows how far Johnny has come, though, when his method for getting back at Stranger involves helping Lydia. Helping an enslaved woman is something that Johnny would've deemed unthinkable prior to hurting his hand. But now, he sees Lydia as a valid ally, and sure enough, his plan works.

Stranger pretends to be angry, but he really isn't. Johnny confesses to setting him up to fall off, and Stranger orders two beers from the kitchen. They drink to Goblin and discuss that Goblin will never be a gentle, safe horse—but Stranger would happily teach Johnny to jump the horse if he'd like. After this, Johnny has no more trouble with the British stable boys; they even let Johnny use their oats sometimes. Despite being a Tory, Dove has become the target of the British boys' bullying. He clings to Johnny and soon, Johnny begins protecting him. Rab encourages Johnny to keep up the friendship, as Dove might someday have useful information.

Stranger's respect for Johnny and for Goblin is exceptional; he clearly chooses not to abuse his power here and so earns Johnny's respect in return. And though Johnny's situation with the British stable boys improves, Johnny is developing more of a conscience—it no longer feels good to him to watch the boys beat and bully Dove. So, part of the reason why Johnny protects Dove is to make himself feel like a better person, and the other half is that (as Rab notes) Dove might be able to pass on tidbits of information.

4. One day, Johnny realizes how much things have changed since he burned his **hand**. He can barely remember how it felt to hate Dove so strongly. Mr. Lapham recently died. Johnny remembers the man fondly, and even Mrs. Lapham doesn't seem so bad now. These days, Johnny realizes that she wasn't mean—she was just trying to look out for those in her house. Johnny's feelings about Cilla have changed, too. Suddenly, he looks forward to seeing her every Thursday (and he sometimes sees Lavinia Lyte too). He doesn't think highly of Isannah, though: she's becoming snobbish and cold.

Johnny is beginning to come of age: his hatred of Dove has dissolved, and he now thinks highly of deceased Mr. Lapham. And with some distance, he even finds that he respects Mrs. Lapham, though he hated her while he lived under her roof. Essentially, he's learning to see all of these people as people, with their own quirks and good qualities. Isannah, however, grows increasingly distant as Miss Lavinia teaches her to look down on people of lower classes.

After riding back in through Boston's gates, Johnny decides to stop in and visit the Laphams. He proudly asks Mr. Tweedie to mend his spur and then walks into the backyard, where he finds Madge in a tiny British sergeant's arms. Madge laughs (she's glad Johnny isn't Mrs. Lapham) and introduces Johnny to Sergeant Gale. Johnny takes a seat as Madge explains that despite her mother's insistence that she marry Mr. Tweedie, she's going to marry Sergeant Gale. Then, Johnny pays Mr. Tweedie for his work and rides Goblin home. It was a nice visit, but Johnny won't visit again. His old life is over.

Johnny and Mr. Tweedie's relationship has changed dramatically: now, Johnny has more power because he's the customer. However, note that he doesn't really seem to lord his power over Mr. Tweedie—he's learning. Madge seems far more open to speaking with Johnny than she once was, and she even seems to view him as an ally. In every way, Johnny's relationship with the Laphams is changing. This reflects Johnny's growing maturity and the quickly-changing times.

5. When Johnny gets to the Lytes' on Thursday, Mrs. Bessie says that Cilla is busy: Miss Lavinia has lots of officers in the parlor. Johnny knows that Mrs. Bessie isn't loyal to Miss Lavinia, and Cilla seems to know what's wrong with her now, too. Johnny doesn't. But as Mrs. Bessie is explaining that everyone in the parlor is going to a costume party tonight and Isannah—Izzy—is going too, Cilla rushes in. She says they need someone to make a tin scepter, so Johnny should come through. The parlor is a mess, but what catches Johnny's eye is how happy Miss Lavinia is—and that Isannah is wearing only her undershift. Knowing Mr. Lapham would be spinning in his grave, Johnny tells Isannah to get dressed; she was raised better than this.

It's clear from the start of this passage that there's something deeply wrong with Miss Lavinia; in some way, she's not a good or kind mistress. As Johnny enters the parlor and sees what's going on, he thinks he realizes what's going on: she's not raising Isannah to be a proper lady and is perhaps even sexualizing a tiny child for her own amusement. Now that Johnny can recall old Mr. Lapham fondly, he feels more loyalty to the man and his beliefs. This justifies him to command Isannah to get dressed.

Isannah, however, says she's "too young to be lascivious," clearly parroting what she's heard others say. Johnny slaps her, sending her flying and exposing her body further. Everyone laughs as Lieutenant Stranger picks the girl up. Miss Lavinia laughs so hard she calls for Cilla, who waves smelling salts too close to the lady's nose. For this, Miss Lavinia calls Cilla "stupid." Isannah hides her face in Miss Lavinia's lap, clearly loving the attention, while Cilla stands aside like a servant. Johnny is angry. He tells Cilla to leave the Lytes, including "Izzy." Miss Lavinia scolds Johnny for speaking this way, argues with Cilla about whether she asked for Johnny or not, and then sends them both away.

If Isannah has heard this phrase enough times to repeat it so offhandedly, it makes it seem like she gets this critique a lot—suggesting that indeed, Miss Lavinia is encouraging Isannah to behave in an inappropriately mature manner. Indeed, the way that Johnny throws around Isannah's new nickname suggests that Izzy is seen as too mature, low-class, and sexy a name for a little girl. But what really disturbs Johnny here is how cruel Miss Lavinia is to Cilla, and how Miss Lavinia treats Isannah as though she can do no wrong.

In the kitchen, Mrs. Bessie gives Johnny brandy and says that Cilla is mostly happy. She knows Isannah is a lost cause, but it doesn't bother her much anymore. Then, Mrs. Bessie says the household is moving to the country estate for a while, but they'll be back soon: the Whigs are trying to tempt Mr. Lyte to go so they can tar and feather him. She assures Johnny that Cilla and Isannah won't get hurt; she's an ally of Sam Adams and will protect them.

Mrs. Bessie essentially says there's little to be done for Isannah. She's Miss Lavinia's pet now, and she'll only continue to get more unpleasant as time goes on. However, things then get serious as Mrs. Bessie explains what will happen to Mr. Lyte. She makes it very clear that she's on Johnny's side and has a moral compass: she won't allow young girls to get hurt just because they work for a powerful Tory family.

CHAPTER 8

1. It's only by chance that Johnny sees the Lytes' coach leave Boston. Late in August, rumors fly that the Lytes are in trouble and will return to the safety of Boston, so Johnny begins hanging around by the gates. Johnny dozes off after dark and wakes to the sound of a rumbling coach, with a "human wolf pack" howling behind it. The British guards at the gate run out with torches and drag the Lytes' coach, now missing a wheel, through the gates. An officer helps Mr. Lyte out of the coach; the old man is clearly gravely ill. Miss Lavinia asks for Dr. Warren, since he's the best. Then, Cilla approaches Miss Lavinia to say the silver was left—and she's going back to get it.

Keep in mind that the "human wolf pack" pursuing the Lytes is made up of Whigs—Johnny's allies. Describing them in this way highlights that even people who believe the same as Johnny (and who are, within the world of the novel, on the side of good) are capable of violence and of spreading terror. The passage goes on to humanize everyone involved when Miss Lavinia asks for Dr. Warren, despite him being a Whig. This also happens when Cilla insists on going back for the silver, though one would expect she'd have little impetus to protect valuables for a family she emphatically doesn't like.

Miss Lavinia clearly doesn't care about the silver, but Johnny approaches Cilla. Cilla explains that Mr. Lyte had a fit when the mob came earlier than Mrs. Bessie said it would. Johnny finds he admires Mrs. Bessie even more for making sure the Lytes got out safely, even though she detests them—though he knows Sam Adams wouldn't think this noble. Cilla continues to say she must return for the silver, so Johnny says he'll take her. Dr. Warren, after declaring that Mr. Lyte must never get upset about anything again, lends Johnny his horse and chaise and writes him a pass.

As far as Johnny is concerned, it's noble to go out of one's way to protect people, even if the people in question aren't one's favorite. But he also realizes that the higher-up Whigs, like Sam Adams, don't feel the same way. Mr. Adams would, Johnny believes, support the mob in roughing up both Mr. Lyte and Miss Lavinia. Since Mr. Warren comes to see Mr. Lyte, it seems reasonable to assume that he may agree more with Johnny: protecting people and their health is more important and noble.

2. Everything is calm and silent as Johnny and Cilla ride to the Milton estate. They enter through the front gate, which the mob smashed—they were clearly tired of seeing the rising eye. After entering through the back door, Cilla lights candles inside. Though the Lytes left in the middle of dinner, somehow, the estate looks like it's been abandoned for years. As Cilla gathers the silver, Johnny wanders the house. In Mr. Lyte's office, Johnny can tell where Mr. Lyte had his fit. He finds a book hollowed out to form a box, filled with letters. Johnny pockets them for Sam Adams. Then, he opens a heavy Bible the front, where the Lyte genealogy is.

There's an almost otherworldly tone in the passages that take place at the Lyte country estate. This gives the impression that what happens there is taking place somewhere entirely different from Boston, where Johnny can, as he does here, look for where he fits into the Lyte family without worrying about looking bad for wanting to know the truth. Still, though, Johnny remains a loyal Whig when he pockets the letters for Mr. Adams.

Johnny follows the family tree down through several Lavinias, none of them his mother. Finally, he finds a Lavinia born in 1740 scratched out. She married a Doctor Charles Latour and they both died in Marseilles before Johnny was born. Johnny knows he was born in France, but none of this makes sense. If this is Johnny's mother, then Johnny is Mr. Lyte's grandnephew. He cuts the pages out, in case he needs them later. Cilla calls for Johnny; she wants him to take his **cup** back. Johnny insists he is better off without it. Standing by Cilla's fire, Johnny considers that his grandfather built this house. But he realizes the mystery of his lineage doesn't matter. He burns the family tree he cut from the Bible and helps Cilla close the shutters.

At first, it's both confusing and thrilling for Johnny to figure out where he belongs on the Lyte family tree. Taking the family tree with him for later suggests that initially, Johnny does have thoughts of pursuing his claim of being a Lyte family member. However, rejecting the cup and then burning the family tree symbolizes Johnny letting go of any connection to the Lytes. While his lineage is a compelling mystery, Johnny realizes that what really matters is where he fits in and feels at home now: in Boston, with the Whigs and the artisan class.

Now, the house feels haunted by the Lytes, including Johnny's mother. Johnny knows he heard her voice that night in the graveyard. He returns to Cilla, and when she says the house is in good order for the Lytes' return, he says they're not coming back. Johnny thinks of his family members as he shutters the kitchen and then stands outside with Cilla. She observes that it feels like a funeral. As they ride for Boston, they pass Minute Men marching. A young boy plays pathetically on a fife. Johnny's heart lurches: these men haven't seen the British soldiers, with their **muskets** and bayonets.

This trip to the country house impresses on Johnny that things are changing rapidly in the colonies. The Lytes will soon not be as powerful as they once were. So, when Cilla observes that this feels like a funeral, she's referring not just to the end of the Lytes' reign in Boston, but also to the end of the colonial era (American independence is only several years away now). Still, Johnny remains unconvinced that the Patriot soldiers have what it takes to confront the British.

3. It bothers Johnny that Rab doesn't have a proper **musket**. The boys discuss this issue all the time. Rab believes his only chance to get a modern gun is to steal one, and he insists the war won't start and give him a good opportunity until spring. He needs a gun by then. With Aunt Lorne's blessing, Rab arranges to buy a gun from a farmer who purchases them from British soldiers. On the morning the handoff is supposed to take place, Johnny hears a fuss in the marketplace. He runs there, and a woman tells him the British caught a farmer, a soldier, and another man involved in gun smuggling. They're all being taken to the Province House to be dealt with.

Johnny remains uncomfortable with violence, but he cares deeply about Rab and Rab's safety. So, it follows that Johnny is so supportive of Rab getting a musket: this is how Rab will hopefully make it through the coming conflict alive. However Rab's failed attempt to purchase a musket highlights the high stakes inherent to trying to get a black-market gun from the British right now. The British might say, at least, that the colonists are just "yokels and farmers" and aren't scary at all, but even uneducated "yokels" become dangerous when they're properly armed.

At the Province House, Johnny realizes that the British soldier was likely a double agent. The farmer looks cold and money-hungry, and Rab looks shaken. They all go inside and an hour later, Colonel Nesbit leads drummers, soldiers, and a cart containing the tarred and feathered farmer. When Colonel Nesbit begins leading the procession to each of the Whig papers, making threats, Johnny runs ahead to the *Observer*'s office. Rab is there. He explains that Colonel Nesbit said he was a child who needs a popgun, which just makes Johnny laugh. Once the British have passed, Rab observes that the British soldiers will make good targets. Johnny is frightened; he can't yet think of Lieutenant Stranger, Sergeant Gale, or Major Pitcairn as targets.

In describing the three people involved in the handoff, it becomes clear that Rab was the only person involved who genuinely wanted the musket for a purpose—that is, to fight for what he believes in. The farmer reads as far less righteous because he just wanted money. Though the novel associates Rab's desire for the musket with his burgeoning maturity, the fact that Colonel Nesbit sees Rab as a child works in his favor here. The condescension humiliates Rab, but he gets out of this altercation alive and having suffered almost no consequences.

4. It's still summer, but it's starting to feel like fall. Johnny and Cilla are in the Lytes' apple orchard, catching up on the Lapham family gossip: Madge ran off with Sergeant Gale, so Mrs. Lapham married Mr. Tweedie herself. She's Mrs. Maria Tweedie now, which isn't so bad—a girl has to think about who she marries and how his name fits with hers. For instance, Cilla says, she couldn't marry Rab. Johnny is suddenly angry. They agree that Rab is wonderful, and Cilla reveals that he's bought her sweets before. But Cilla says Cilla Silsbee is awful, though Priscilla Tremain is fine. She says she's been thinking about it since they were 11. They were such kids then—but she's so pretty now.

Though Johnny and Cilla are still beating around the bush some, this conversation is notable in that this is the first time that either of them is willing to openly, plainly state that they share a crush on each other. No matter what her mother has to say, Cilla clearly is thinking a lot about marrying Johnny someday in the future, highlighting just how mature she's become over the last year and a half. Johnny hasn't quite caught up yet though. He's willing to admit to himself that he likes Cilla and thinks she's pretty, but he's still letting his jealousy and pride get in the way of expressing his true emotions.

Cilla packs up her sewing to go inside, and a British soldier earning some extra money at the Lytes' leaps to open the door for her. Johnny thinks he's ridiculous, but he now realizes that Cilla is grown-up and beautiful. He begs Cilla to come back outside, refuses to believe her when she says the soldier's name is Pumpkin, and then says that he agrees: Priscilla Tremain is a great name. Cilla says nothing, but she gives Johnny an apple and walks away. Johnny vows to keep the apple forever as a symbol of his love for Cilla. But Rab eats it off the windowsill and, after Johnny starts a fight about it, Rab reveals that it was wormy anyway.

It takes Johnny realizing that he has rivals for Cilla's affection to realize that if he wants to have a chance at marrying her someday, he needs to voice his desires and be genuinely nice to her. Johnny gets so caught up in the apple's symbolism because he's feeling the flush of first love, but Rab quickly brings Johnny back to earth when he eats the apple. The wormy apple could be a sign that things won't go well between Johnny and Cilla—or it could just highlight Johnny's youthful naivete as he reads into everything about his relationship with her.

5. It's fall now, and Mr. Adams asks Johnny to summon the Observers for the last time. He's afraid that Gage knows about and will hang them, and he asks Johnny to make the best punch he ever has. As only British soldiers and well-connected Tories have citrus, Johnny visits Mrs. Bessie for the fruit. She happily fills his bag. They discuss disapprovingly how Izzy pretty much does tricks for limes, and she shares that Cousin Sewall went and joined the Minute Men. Mrs. Bessie warns that things are getting dire. Indeed, 22 of the Observers have left town to avoid arrest.

The class differences between Johnny and the Lytes shine through in this scene, which shows that the Lytes are well-connected enough to have citrus. Further, Mrs. Bessie implies that she has little power to intervene where Isannah is concerned. The little girl now fully embodies the "Izzy" persona, performing for others just so she can get whatever she wants. Finally, Johnny reads as somewhat naive when Mrs. Bessie has to tell him how dire things are, as though he genuinely didn't already know.

Unlike previous meetings, this one starts with the punch bowl, and Rab and Johnny stay for the whole meeting. The men discuss how Gage sent a group to seize weapons and gunpowder in Charleston before any Minute Men could be notified. The issue, Mr. Adams says, is in Boston: had they known sooner here, they could've notified the Minute Men in time. In a side conversation, other men discuss the success at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Johnny hears a man ask if they could still work out their differences with England, but Adams says he's done working for peace. He'll work for war, and a great country will rise out of that war.

By portraying Johnny as simply listening in on various conversations, the novel allows readers get an overview of what's going on in and around Boston. War is now on the forefront of people's minds; the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia worked to find a common cause for the colonies to rally around, and it also encouraged colonies to establish their own militias in case of war. (At this point, the Congress didn't go so far as to insist that the colonies should be independent from England.) There are also issues with the spy network in Boston right now, which poses problems for the under-armored Minute Men, as the British are trying to take their weapons and stores.

Just then, heavy footsteps sound below—it's James Otis, though he was specifically not told about the meeting. Sam Adams grumbles that Otis has nothing new to say, but everyone stays politely as Otis comes upstairs and sits with some punch. After a minute, he asks Sam Adams to continue the speech he interrupted. But when Adams says they'll fight to "free Boston from these infernal redcoats," Otis interjects. He points out that the British have been extremely reasonable. No, they'll fight for Americans' rights, and for the rights of men everywhere. Johnny is entranced by Otis's words; Otis talks about shooting the British for the sake of Americans 100 years from now, and about inspiring the poor in France and Russia to fight for freedom. Even poor Englishmen will benefit.

Johnny himself has seen the British be "reasonable," as Mr. Otis suggests. Indeed, Johnny likes many of the officers he carries messages for at the Afric Queen. Instead, what Mr. Otis describes is a coming revolution that will not only give colonists the right to self-governance but will also create similar revolutions worldwide. Indeed, the American Revolution did inspire the French Revolution that began not long after, in 1789, so Forbes's inclusion of France in this passage is significant. Further, it's worth considering that Forbes was writing during World War II, when Americans were again fighting for their freedoms. It's possible to read Forbes's Otis as talking indirectly about World War II's brave soldiers, as well.

After asking Johnny to refill his tankard, Otis continues. He says that supposedly, he lost his wits when the customs official hit him in the head. Some of them will lose their wits, some will lose their property. They'll all have to make sacrifices, and some will give their lives and their futures. Otis looks at Rab as he says this. Then, turning back to Sam Adams, Otis says that he must go to Philadelphia and pull all the strings he needs to make this war happen. As he stands to go, he says they must all give all they have, "Only that a man can stand up." After Otis leaves Mr. Adams tries to return attention to the spy system, but it takes a minute for Otis's spell to lift. That night, Johnny lies awake, thinking of Otis's words. A new world is coming.

War, Mr. Otis insists, has costs—indeed, he seems to imply that Rab and other young men like him will die in the coming conflict. But though Otis insists it's essential to remember the steep cost of war, he also makes it clear that they're fighting for something good and righteous. They're fighting for the rights of men everywhere, who, after this war is over, will be able to "stand up" proudly. When it takes so long to regain order at the meeting, it speaks to the power and potency of Otis's words. He's touched a nerve and has put the coming conflict in context, giving it a reason and a purpose.

CHAPTER 9

1. That fall, Paul Revere organizes a spy system of 30 artisans, their apprentices, and their friends. Unlike when the Observers met in the *Observer*'s office, it raises no suspicions when 30 craftsmen meet in the Green Dragon inn, especially since it's a Masonic inn and most of the men are Masons. Any intel is reported directly to Sam Adams, John Hancock, Dr. Warren, or Dr. Church. Johnny has his own assignment: to spy on Colonel Smith and the other officers at the Afric Queen. Nobody suspects him since Goblin is still stabled there, and Paul Revere warns Johnny to remain close with Dove. Even Lydia helps. One day, as Johnny helps her hang laundry, she describes how Lieutenant Stranger was sent on a "little business" last night. He spent all night writing letters to Miss Lavinia; Lydia has his torn-up attempts.

Artisans and craftsmen might be of a lower class than the wealthier men who were part of the Observers (such as John Hancock), but this passage shows that they nevertheless have a lot of power. Nobody suspects that they're actually all spying on the British. This is, perhaps, a sign that Revere is trying to weaponize the British perception of colonists as uneducated "yokels and farmers" who pose no threat. Johnny finds even more purpose in his new role, especially when Lydia helps him uncover Lieutenant Stranger's movements.

Johnny takes the torn-up letters back to the printing office, and he, Rab, and Mr. Lorne put them together. The letters are all about a dance on December 15 that he can't attend because he'll be 60 miles north. There's a fort there; they're planning to take more supplies. Johnny rushes to Paul Revere and within 10 minutes, Mr. Revere is galloping north, ostensibly to visit his dying grandmother. Before the British even leave Boston, word arrives that the Americans seized a British fort and stole stores.

Thanks to Lydia and Johnny, the Patriots score a major victory and prove that Mr. Revere's spy system can (and does) work. This no doubt makes Johnny feel even better about himself and his involvement with the spy network; he's doing work he believes in and is genuinely making a difference.

2. It's always been Johnny's fault that he didn't make friends with Dove. But Johnny finds that Dove is lonely, and it bothers him when the British tease and abuse him. So, Johnny cultivates Dove's friendship. Dove begins sneaking to the *Observer*'s office multiple times per day, where Johnny and Rab share their food and let Dove talk. Dove boasts about warning the British officers not to employ Johnny as a rider. He reveals that he knew about Lieutenant Stranger's plan to ride north—Rab and Johnny didn't know Dove knew. When he insinuates that he has more information, Johnny runs to the Afric Queen for a bottle of brandy so they can loosen Dove's tongue.

That Johnny finally begins making overtures to Dove shows that Johnny is maturing. Now, he knows it's up to him to make sure that nobody bullies Dove. He also sees that the best way to protect Dove is to befriend him. Of course, Johnny has ulterior motives here—he wants information for Mr. Revere. But Johnny also seems to have developed a conscience, since he feels bad for Dove and wants to protect him from harm.

Happily drinking, Dove says that in the spring, the British will march and fight. Gage has been told to confiscate rebel stores, and he knows where the stores are. He's targeting Worcester and Concord, but Dove's next big reveal is a wildly inaccurate count of British soldiers in Boston. Suddenly crying, Dove says Rab and Johnny are his best friends, and he's going to bury himself until the war is over. Rab insists that Dove stay until he's feeling better, but it soon comes out that Dove is supposed to have the Colonel's horse Nan ready by 4:30—and it's already four.

Given how drunk and emotional Dove is, it's unclear how seriously to take him. However, Johnny and Rab seem to write Dove off after the count of British soldiers turns out to be so wrong; this suggests to them that Dove has no idea what he's talking about. What is clear, though, is that Dove is struggling and desperately wants friendship and community. He's not finding it with the British, despite being a genuine Tory.

Johnny runs to do Dove's job himself so Dove doesn't get fired. Colonel Smith has two horses: Sandy, his old reliable war charger; and Nan, a mare with smooth gaits who's better for hacking around Boston. When he leads Nan into the yard, Lieutenant Stranger lights up. Colonel Smith is ill, so if Johnny gets Goblin, Stranger will teach Johnny to jump. This only increases Johnny's love and respect for Stranger. On horses, they're equals—so it's confusing for Johnny that elsewhere, he's a strict British officer who looks down on Johnny.

Johnny doesn't want Colonel Smith to fire Dove, because it would cut off Johnny's access to Colonel Smith's whereabouts. But his political move to go tack up Nan for Dove turns almost instantly into a social outing, where Johnny gets to further strengthen his relationship with Stranger. Still, Johnny struggles to code-switch (change his behavior depending on the context) around Stranger, which highlights his youth and innocence.

3. One Thursday, as Johnny tries to deliver his papers, Goblin is being especially frisky. Johnny takes him to the Common planning to work out his kinks, but an officer shouts about sending Johnny away—the British are getting edgy. Several soldiers attack Johnny and Goblin and the sergeant, upon seeing Johnny's dropped seditious newspapers, says Johnny will get 30 lashes. But Johnny notices that Pumpkin is holding Goblin's bridle, and Pumpkin mouths, "spurs." Johnny kicks Goblin, who gallops off, dragging a British soldier. Johnny has to cut the bridle to get rid of the soldier, so he clings to Goblin's neck as the horse weaves through Boston and turns in at the Lytes', expecting a carrot.

Pumpkin, despite being a British soldier who presumably believes in the British cause, shows here that he doesn't want to see a kid like Johnny hurt. He doesn't want to (or have the power to) stand up for Johnny overtly, but he can encourage Johnny to act out on his own. Johnny's ride sounds terrifying, but he also seems to trust his horse to get him safely away from the British. This speaks to the strong bond Johnny has formed with Goblin over the last year—something the novel attributes to Johnny becoming more compassionate.

Pumpkin is in the yard, grooming a horse. He tells Johnny that the papers will still get to an eager readership: lots of British soldiers are Whigs, and that's why there've been so many deserters. Still, though, they'll "fight like hell" when the time comes. Johnny asks a few questions and ascertains that Pumpkin would happily desert—he dreams of being a farmer and having cows. The colonies offer opportunities for poor men like him, unlike in England. Johnny offers to get him a disguise and smuggle him out of Boston in exchange for his **musket**. Pumpkin agrees. That evening, Johnny pulls out the smocks his mother made him. She had no idea that silversmiths don't wear smocks—she was so naïve, but she fought for Johnny. Johnny feels "humble and ashamed."

Pumpkin suggests that the British soldiers will do as they're told, but that many soldiers' hearts aren't really in the fight. Indeed, many, like Pumpkin, would rather stay in the colonies and build their lives there. Recall James Otis saying that a war would benefit even poor Englishmen: that's what Pumpkin echoes here, as he insists that the colonies offer opportunities that England doesn't. As Johnny examines his mother's smocks, he takes another step forward in his maturity. He now can appreciate his mother for what she tried to do for him, even though he knows she was misguided.

Though Pumpkin never meets Rab's uncle to ride out of Boston, it soon seems like he disappeared, and Johnny stops worrying about him. Rab's eyes glow as he takes Pumpkin's **musket**, and he and Johnny begin secretly casting bullets at night. Like all other Whigs in Boston, they're melting pewter from family members—Aunt Jenifer gives hers to Rab. People make gunpowder secretly, and each Minute Man rolls powder and bullets into paper cylinders to fit his own gun. Rab wraps his in discarded invitations and love notes that Cilla steals from Miss Lavinia.

Finally, Rab gets his musket—a sign that he's come of age and is now a soldier and a man. That Rab rolls his bullets in Miss Lavinia's love notes is bittersweet, but it also speaks to how resourceful the Minute Men are (as well as how few supplies they have available to them). Cilla furnishing the love notes strengthens her relationship to Johnny, and it also shows that she too is fighting for what she believes in.

4. It's now April, and everyone knows that General Gage will soon strike. He knows the "provincials" have been preparing, and King George is furious about how cautious Gage has been. Minute Men are drilling everywhere, despite the British order to disband. Johnny continues to watch Colonel Smith and listen to Dove, and despite his fears, he continues to ride at the Common. He exercises Sandy and Nan for Smith and is shocked that most horses are quiet and tame.

Tensions are ramping up in Boston—and the Minute Men are getting bolder if they're disobeying orders to continue drilling. Still, though, the British continue to think of the colonists as being uneducated, unthinking, and unprepared, hence calling them "provincials." Even as the Minute Men look more dedicated and threatening, the British refuse to acknowledge that they might actually be a threat.

5. Johnny is riding Sandy and leading Nan around the British camp, doing Dove's work for him. Earl Percy is parading his brigade on the Common, which is normal. Skirting the soldiers, Johnny heads for the river, where the horses can nibble some sweet grass. Then, he hears the drums rolling somberly. Regiment after regiment marches onto the Common, trapping Johnny. Finally, Johnny realizes what some soldiers are doing by the river: there's a chaplain, a coffin, a grave, and a firing squad. They're going to execute a deserter: Pumpkin. Johnny doesn't watch, but he cries and shakes. Pumpkin just wanted to be a farmer, and now he's dead. As the firing squad passes Johnny, Johnny thinks the ends of their **muskets** look like eyes. He doesn't see how he or anyone else could willingly face those eyes.

Johnny's innocence and youth shine through in this chapter. Nothing raises any concern for him until he's trapped and has no choice but to look away as the soldiers shoot Pumpkin. But this incident does make the war real for Johnny in a way that nothing else has. Pumpkin wanted a simple life; he just wanted to farm and raise cows. And for wanting that and trying to achieve it, he's now dead. To Johnny, this makes the British look wildly inhumane and cruel—and unstoppable. Referring to the end of the firing squad's muskets as eyes also draws a connection to the Lyte family crest, which symbolizes another group whom Johnny thinks of as invincible. However, whether the British and the Lytes really are invincible is yet to be seen.

CHAPTER 10

1. Spies that General Gage sent out return on April 14, 1774. The next day, a Saturday, Gage posts orders everywhere that grenadier and light infantry companies (which are part of larger regiments) are off duty for special training. Lieutenant Stranger, a light infantry officer, laughs that this "looks like something." Altogether, this accounts for 700 men. Johnny notices men sharpening bayonets and polishing cannons, but is that noteworthy? He seeks out Paul Revere at Dr. Warren's; the men have no new information.

It's difficult for Johnny to tell if he should be worried about the developments in the British army. Lieutenant Stranger seems to believe that this is the real deal, but Johnny has seen soldiers drilling and probably polishing weapons before. This creates tension, and it means that Johnny and Paul Revere's other spies are going to have to work extra hard to figure out what's going on.

Johnny stays on a sofa there into the evening, listening to the chatter about what the British might be planning. He wakes from a dream and learns that Mr. Revere is planning to row to Lexington, where Mr. Hancock and Mr. Adams are hiding, to warn them—and to warn men in Concord to hide weapons. Mr. Revere and Dr. Warren come up with a plan to alert a messenger, Billy Dawes, who will relay whether the British will move out by land or over the river. Johnny follows Mr. Revere out, and Dr. Church appears out of nowhere and asks what's going on. Mr. Revere refuses to say—he no longer trusts Dr. Church.

For now, it seems pretty well established that the British are going to move soon, but it's just a question of whether they'll move by land or over the river. That Johnny is allowed to stay at Dr. Warren's surgery and listen to all of this shows how integrated he is in the spy network—he's found his place in the world. Dr. Church was a real person, and he did end up being a spy for the British—so Mr. Revere's instinct to not trust him here is correct.

2. It's now April 16th, a Sunday. As usual, Boston is at church. But Rab thinks that there will be fighting within the week and insists on going to Lexington. Johnny feels ill as he studies his friend, now 18 and a man. Johnny offers to come along, hoping Rab will accept. But Rab says Johnny must stay in Boston and keep listening to Dove. Johnny snappily tries to get Rab to say that he'll miss him, but Rab just laughs. Thinking of the firing squad, Johnny doesn't want Rab to go. He doesn't look up as Rab puts a hand on Johnny's shoulder, says Johnny is bold, and then leaves. From the window, Johnny watches Rab say goodbye to Aunt Jenifer and Uncle Lorne, but by the time he runs to say goodbye himself, Rab is gone. Everything is silent, except for the men drilling—even on a Sunday.

Johnny has come to love and rely on Rab over the last year and a half that they've lived together. He doesn't want his best friend to get hurt, or worse. But Rab, as usual, remains unconcerned about the dangers and refuses to play into Johnny's attempts to get a rise out of him, highlighting his maturity in contrast to Johnny's immaturity. With a conflict so close, it's now acceptable for men to drill on a Sunday. Unlike when Johnny tried to finish the sugar basin on a Sunday to feed his pride, the novel implies that these men are fighting for something just and noble, so it's acceptable to continue working on a Sunday.

3. After a quiet Monday, things pick up on Tuesday. Sergeants tell the grenadier and light infantry companies to be ready for an expedition at moonrise. So, everyone knows the men will move, but not in what direction they'll go. Johnny spends the day at the Afric Queen, helping serve officers in the dining room. He can't interpret any of Colonel Smith's behaviors, but he is certain that Dove knows less than he does (Dove is too wrapped up in his own misery to pay attention). But, before heading out for the evening, Johnny checks on Dove one last time. Dove is polishing a saddle. He complains that Colonel Smith hit him because he polished the wrong saddle—Dove had no idea Smith even *had* a campaign saddle. It's only now been unpacked.

Dove, true to form, seems not to grasp the importance of Colonel Smith asking him to polish a saddle that's Smith has only just unpacked, on the eve of a known British expedition. As Rab and Johnny hoped would be the case, Dove may turn out to be an important source of information for Revere's spy network. Still, Dove reads as a sympathetic, pitiable figure, especially since he's so unobservant because he's so miserable. Unlike Johnny, Dove hasn't been able to find his place in a community.

Realizing this could be important, Johnny offers to help. As he polishes the stirrups, he notices that this saddle has an extra girth and lots of places to attach maps, flasks, and other kits. Johnny invites Dove (who's lying in the hay now that Johnny is helping) to join him for dinner, but Dove says he's way too busy. He's supposed to have the saddle ready by six and Sandy ready by eight. With a few more questions, Johnny learns that this won't be a peaceful ride—and that the troops will be moving by boat. They're not going far, either to Lexington or Concord, and Smith is in charge. Johnny pets Sandy while Dove presents the saddle to Smith. Dove returns jubilant—he'll have the day off tomorrow, since Smith will be gone until evening.

Recall that Johnny wasn't an experienced horseperson before learning to ride Goblin; he, like Dove, is learning now what a campaign saddle is. But while Dove is incurious, Johnny immediately realizes that this is the kind of saddle an officer uses to ride to war, with all the supplies they might need. This, coupled with the fact that Colonel Smith needs to have Sandy (his reliable warhorse) ready, points to the distinct possibility that Colonel Smith is leading the British to the first battle of what will become the Revolutionary War.

4. Johnny reports directly to Dr. Warren. Dr. Warren and his men are very interested to hear that the British troops expect to be back in Bostin within a day—and that Smith, an unintelligent colonel, is in charge. Outside, the men can hear soldiers marching, and a spy arrives to say he's seen the soldiers boarding boats for Cambridge. Dr. Warren sends Johnny to fetch Billy Dawes and Paul Revere. At Billy's house, Johnny says it's time. Billy is dressed like a drunken farmer, and his wife spills rum on him and giggles. He'll pay off a guard at the Neck. As soon as he's gone, his wife stops laughing—she clearly knows how serious this is.

The implication here is that the British are well on their way to making fools of themselves by putting Colonel Smith in charge—as the rebels see it, Smith should not be the go-to person to lead an important military campaign. However, this humor aside, Johnny can't escape how serious this night is. Even as Billy Dawes's wife giggles, she still understands that her husband could lose his life if he's caught or discovered. The stakes are getting even higher.

Johnny runs for Paul Revere's house, the light infantry and grenadier companies getting in his way. Mr. Revere sends Johnny to see if there's more than one warship in the river, and then to Robert Newman—Newman is to hang two lanterns. Johnny observes only one warship in the river, but he knows men across the river in Charlestown are waiting for the signal. They'll saddle a horse for Paul Revere, who will summon the Minute Men. Then, he runs for the Newmans'. He follows Mr. Revere's instructions and meets Newman in a back alley to give the instructions.

Hanging two lanterns in the Christ Church tower signaled to rebels in Charlestown that the British would move over the river rather than leaving Boston via the Neck. This begins to activate the spy network north of Boston, and it alerts the Minute Men to be ready for conflict soon. That Revere trusts Johnny with such important tasks is, again, evidence that his new community has accepted him.

When Johnny returns to Dr. Warren's surgery, the doctor and Mr. Revere are seriously discussing Dr. Warren's safety. Then they start laughing and part happily, not like they might never see each other again. Johnny sneaks down to watch the British embark, joining many others. He watches Sandy step onto a boat and notices that Major Pitcairn, who's a marine, is also boarding the boat. This could be important, so Johnny decides to tell Dr. Warren. Back at the surgery, he learns that Billy Dawes made it past the guards on the Neck and is now riding a fast horse. Dr. Warren tells Johnny to go to sleep, and Johnny sleeps soundly. As dawn arrives, shots are fired in Lexington—but still, Johnny sleeps.

For now, Johnny has done all he can possibly do. He's accomplished his job and falls asleep knowing he did his part to help a cause that he believes in. Now, all he can do is get some rest and let others—like Billy Dawes and Paul Revere—take up the torch and continue notifying rebel forces. The Revolutionary War officially begins on April 19 with these shots fired in Lexington. That Johnny has yet to discover this speaks to his innocence and youth.

CHAPTER 11

1. Johnny sleeps until Dr. Warren wakes him. Moving to the back of the house so they can speak freely, Dr. Warren tells Johnny that it started in Lexington. It was 700 against 70, and the British won—it was target practice for them. They're headed for Concord now, as are thousands of Minute Men. Gage, though, doesn't know the war has started. As soon as Colonel Smith learned that Paul Revere had been able to alert everyone, he sent back for Earl Percy and reinforcements. So, almost no one knows that it's begun. Johnny and Dr. Warren wonder whether Rab was at Lexington, and then Dr. Warren says he needs to go attend to the wounded. Johnny is to stay here and gather information, and then slip out and find him later.

Dr. Warren paints a picture of a bloodbath in Lexington—still, he also insists that the British response to the rebel mobilization hasn't been as good as it could be, if General Gage has no idea the war has started. If he doesn't know the war started, he can't effectively decide what to do next. So, for now, the rebels have the upper hand—and with Johnny in Boston to gather information, the rebels can hopefully maintain the upper hand.

2. Everyone seems excited, but no one knows what they're excited about. At the Province House, Johnny can see that General Gage is still asleep—he clearly sent Earl Percy out and went back to bed. At the Common, he sees the "head of [the] scarlet dragon," the British reinforcements, waiting for marines to arrive so they can cross the river. The marines arrive momentarily—and Madge follows them and flings himself on Johnny, as Sergeant Gale is with the marines. She explains that the marines are late because they didn't know Major Pitcairn left last night—Johnny knew this last night, but the British didn't.

Describing the British reinforcements as a "scarlet dragon" allows readers insight into how Johnny still sees the British army: as invincible, like a dragon. He doesn't yet have faith that the rebels can beat them. However, things start to look up for the rebels when Johnny discovers that there have been major communication breakdowns between the British officers. Without good communication, the British "dragon" won't be very effective.

Suddenly, everything goes quiet as Earl Percy and four other men canter across the Common, flying the English flag. Johnny is an Englishman, as are all the others watching the spectacle. The flag stands for liberty, but liberty means something different in the colonies. Johnny hasn't removed his hat for the British flag for some time, and he does so now without thinking. This will probably be the last time. Earl Percy gives the command, and the "scarlet dragon" starts off. Every soldier and horse is perfect, and Johnny feels sick. The British are playing "Yankee Doodle," which they hope will insult the Yankees.

This is a significant moment in Johnny's development, as it's where he fully commits to the rebel cause and comes to support colonial independence from Britain. Removing his hat for the British flag is a sort of last hurrah before Johnny fully makes this transition. Still, Johnny doesn't feel entirely at ease with his side's prospects; the British still seem invincible and like they know exactly how to insult and best the rebels.

3. The gathered crowd watches the soldiers go, and a man says angrily that "They go out by 'Yankee Doodle,' but they'll dance to it before night." People repeat this phrase and soon, everyone knows about the shots at Lexington. The British soldiers hanging around seem to know what happened, too. About midday soldiers attempt to arrest rebel printers and leaders, but nobody is home. They do arrest Robert Newman. Johnny sends a message to Uncle Lorne after observing the jail, and then he heads for Salt Lane. He finds the *Observer*'s office trashed and Aunt Jenifer sitting in her kitchen, sewing an enormous feather bed. When Johnny says the soldiers are gone, Uncle Lorne emerges from the mattress, delighting little Rabbit.

What the gathered crowd is saying is essentially that before long, the rebels will win—and they'll reclaim "Yankee Doodle" as a victorious song, rather than a taunting one. (This is, in fact, what happened.) In Boston, Johnny finally witnesses Gage attempt to arrest those he believes are spreading seditious material, such as Uncle Lorne. Uncle Lorne's job has always been dangerous, but with the war started it's become even more so. Rabbit, as a toddler, has no idea that what's going on is so important, adding some levity to an otherwise somber scene.

Johnny and Aunt Jenifer discuss the frightened, angry soldiers. Johnny takes their fear as a sign that the colonists are winning, and he's pretty sure that he'll be able to see the British fleeing the Minute Men from Beacon Hill soon. Outside, British soldiers are saying that they're going to kill the rebels—everything has changed. On Beacon Hill, Johnny joins others who assumed, like him, that they'd be able to see Smith's troops. Sure enough, he can see "a scurry of red ants." And as night falls, the crowd sees flashes of **musket** fire.

While Johnny found the British soldiers civil before, now, it's unthinkable that a soldier would be as kind to a rebel as, for instance, the British medic was when Rab touched a musket. Johnny's perspective in the British has changed, too. That he now describes them as "a scurry of red ants" rather than a fearsome dragon suggests that he no longer sees them as invincible.

4. As Dr. Warren promised, getting the injured British soldiers back across the river to Boston will give Johnny an opportunity to sneak across in the opposite direction. Johnny goes to the Lytes' in search of Pumpkin's uniform and finds the Lytes moving out. Mrs. Bessie and Cilla, though, are sitting idly in the kitchen. Mrs. Bessie says the Lytes are afraid, and Cilla adds that she and Mrs. Bessie are the only two Whig servants and so are refusing to go. Izzy will go with the Lytes, though Cilla argues about this—she insists that Mrs. Lapham won't give Isannah away to Miss Lavinia like a kitten.

The Lytes are wealthy Tories the Whigs have targeted once before, so they have good reason to be afraid now that the war has begun. Cilla believes that this represents an opportunity for her to save her sister from Miss Lavinia's influence, showing that she hasn't entirely given up on Isannah (or, for that matter, on her mother). As she sees it, letting Isannah go with the Lytes damns the child, while also depriving Isannah of any agency and hope for her future.

Just then, Miss Lavinia appears in the doorway in a black cloak. She reveals that Mrs. Lapham is letting her take Isannah, who appears from behind Miss Lavinia's skirts. Cilla gently tells her sister not to go, but Miss Lavinia says it's Isannah's choice—Isannah has to choose who she loves more. Johnny can tell that Izzy loves how dramatic this all is. She'll go. Isannah cries, but says she wants to be a fine lady with a pony and a cart—she'll go. Miss Lavinia explains that she'll marry in London and then make sure Izzy gets the best care and training; Izzy will be an actress. Then, Miss Lavinia tells Cilla to help Izzy pack her things while she speaks privately to Johnny.

Miss Lavinia ostensibly gives Isannah a choice. Still, Isannah is just a child—and a spoiled one at that. She doesn't have the emotional maturity to understand what she's giving up; instead, she focuses on the fine things she'll enjoy in London and continues to selfishly enrich herself. In this passage, Isannah also completes her transformation from Isannah to Izzy, something that suggests she's no longer morally upstanding. While actresses of the era often sought respectability, they were often conflated with sex workers, which negatively affected their reputations.

Calling him Jonathan Lyte Tremain, Miss Lavinia says that Merchant Lyte honestly thought Johnny tried to swindle him out of the **cup**—but he also never mentioned that five cups did come to Boston. Johnny interjects angrily, but Miss Lavinia tells him to be quiet and listen. Merchant Lyte had no idea that his niece, Vinny Lyte, had a child; she married a French Catholic naval surgeon against her family's wishes and moved to France. When the surgeon died, his family sent word to the Lytes informing them of the surgeon *and* Vinny's deaths. Johnny was born in a convent in France. Miss Lavinia says that Vinny, Johnny's mother, was the wildest, most beautiful girl in Boston. This sounds nothing like the mother Johnny remembers: she was sad and sick.

Finally, Miss Lavinia redeems herself somewhat by acknowledging that her father did indeed try to trick Johnny and didn't tell the whole truth in court. Still, her entitlement shows through, as she expects Johnny to listen attentively and not get upset when he learns that his suspicions about Merchant Lyte were correct. Recall that Johnny's mother was sickly and died just before he was apprenticed to Mr. Lapham. It's a shock to hear Miss Lavinia describe his mother as being so vivacious and wild. It adds yet another layer to Johnny's understanding of who his mother was as a person, which helps Johnny come of age.

Miss Lavinia explains that she began looking into all this when she noticed Johnny's widow's peak. She discovered that Johnny's father said his last name was Latour, not Tremain, as he was ashamed of being a prisoner of war. Merchant Lyte also wants Johnny to know that he didn't try to cheat Johnny; the **cup** was Vinny's. He's promised to write everything out so that after the war, Johnny can try to claim property. Then, Johnny asks what Miss Lavinia is to him. She says she's a sort of an aunt. This dissolves Johnny's crush on Miss Lavinia—one can't love one's aunt.

Finally, Miss Lavinia clears up the mystery of why Johnny couldn't find his parents in Merchant Lyte's Bible: his father gave a pseudonym out of shame, so nobody knew that he, Vinny, and Johnny's mother were actually all Tremains. Though Merchant Lyte's offer to allow Johnny to try to claim property later is pretty generous, Johnny doesn't seem entirely sold. He's unwilling to fully believe Miss Lavinia that her father is as good and kind as she insists he is.

5. Pushing aside all this new information, Johnny asks Mrs. Bessie for Pumpkin's uniform. She refuses: Johnny will get shot, and she and Cilla need a man around to care for the horses (General Gage has promised the Lyte house won't be damaged). Johnny suggests that Goblin come to the Lytes' and that Uncle Lorne and his family come and pretend he's always worked here. Mrs. Bessie agrees; they can even hide Uncle Lorne's press. As Cilla runs to get Pumpkin's uniform, Mrs. Bessie asks if Johnny, now 16 years old, is a boy or a man. Johnny laughs that he's a boy in peacetime and a man during war. The uniform is a bit big, but Mrs. Bessie braids Johnny's hair like the British.

In this passage, there's a lot of tension surrounding Johnny's age and whether he's technically an adult. Mrs. Bessie's first instinct is to try to protect him by refusing to hand over the uniform, though she ultimately relents. And Johnny even acknowledges that really, he's still a boy—but the war is forcing him to grow up faster than he would otherwise. Donning Pumpkin's uniform allows Johnny to experiment with being an adult; he's essentially playacting and figuring out what it's like to have others treat him like an adult.

When Cilla asks, Johnny says he's been spying for Dr. Warren and now, he has to cross the river to find the doctor and Rab. Johnny hasn't spoken Rab's name since Rab left, and he's tried hard not to think about him so he doesn't lose control of his emotions. So, Johnny collects himself and salutes the ladies. He feels confident in the uniform and Rab is probably alright—bullets can't kill him. He kisses Cilla and struts off, thinking that small men like him strut more. What happened to Sergeant Gale?

Whether or not Johnny truly feels like an adult is a bit beside the point here, as Johnny recognizes that it's most important to pull himself together and act like a competent adult. This helps Cilla and Mrs. Bessie feel good about lending Johnny the uniform and letting him do something dangerous. Still, Johnny can't shake his knowledge that terrible things have happened, and people he cares about on both sides of the conflict (Rab and Sergeant Gale) may be suffering—or dead.

CHAPTER 12

1. Johnny hurries along back roads to get to the ferry slip, where wounded British soldiers are coming over from Charlestown. Only doctors and soldiers are allowed by the wharf, so Johnny is thankful for Pumpkin's uniform—until he realizes that Pumpkin's regiment has been out getting shot at for the last 12 hours, and Pumpkin's uniform is far too clean. Johnny feels better after rolling in mud and mussing up the uniform a bit. Johnny speaks briefly with an officer on the wharf as townsfolk, hidden in the shadows to watch, begin whistling "Yankee Doodle."

Over the course of the novel, Johnny has learned to be observant and to make himself fit in, rather than stand out. This highlights how mature he's become—he no longer feels the boyish need to be the center of attention. Instead, he prioritizes his goals, which he can only accomplish if he blends in. When the townsfolk start whistling "Yankee Doodle," it suggests that the men on the Common yesterday were right: the Yankees are reclaiming the song and are now using it to taunt the British.

Creeping further out, Johnny watches soldiers unload boats filled with wounded privates. The men doing the unloading treat the injured men like firewood rather than people; one officer even hits a screaming man. Johnny thinks of James Otis. This is why they're fighting: so all men, even lowly privates, receive fair treatment. The third boat bears a gray-faced Colonel Smith and Lieutenant Stranger, who's seriously injured. Johnny fights his desire to help his sort-of friend. Major Pitcairn is the last to return. Johnny learns that Earl Percy and his brigade are still in Charlestown to resume fighting in the morning, so he realizes that now is his chance to cross. He asks two sailors to take him over, insisting he has a message for Percy. The soldiers argue, but an officer tells them to obey.

In Johnny's vision of America, all people, no matter their station, will be treated with compassion and dignity. Thus, seeing the wounded privates is difficult for Johnny, but it also impresses upon him again what exactly he's fighting for. It makes the fight seem more righteous. It's even harder seeing Colonel Smith and Lieutenant Stranger injured, as Stranger was Johnny's friend—at least on horseback. Also, readers and Johnny can infer that such heavy casualties on the British side means that the Minute Men were successful and won the battle. Yet, Johnny isn't able to take joy in that inference yet, as he cares too much about his friends to celebrate their suffering.

In Charlestown, Johnny sheds his uniform, washes his face, and begins wandering. Everyone is terrified to go to sleep, especially since British soldiers are sleeping in every tavern. At one tavern owned by a prominent Son of Liberty, Johnny learns what happened after Lexington. Colonel Smith marched to Concord, destroyed stores, and then there was a small battle at North Bridge. Minute Men began arriving in droves, though, and Percy's reinforcements didn't show up until the Minute Men had picked off many British soldiers. The British withdrew to Charlestown. Dr. Warren, the man explains, has been fighting and dressing wounds. And though seven or eight men died at Lexington, nobody knows their names.

Thanks to Johnny's close ties to Mr. Revere's spy network and the Observers, he's able to find people he knows he can trust and who know they can trust him. Again, this highlights how integrated Johnny is in his community now, a consequence of him letting go of his prideful nature. Additionally, though it's arguably good news that the Minute Men were so successful, Johnny doesn't celebrate or get too excited. It's hard for him to square this success with the cost of this success: people's lives.

2. Johnny waits until the soldiers have moved out of Charlestown the next morning and then begins walking. He marvels that he almost believed the British were invincible—but the Yankees beat them. As he walks, he notices signs of the retreat. He passes men trying to pull Colonel Smith's Sandy out of a pit, and then he passes a burial party. When he comes to a tavern, he buys some food and someone tells him to try to find Dr. Warren in Cambridge. In Cambridge, Johnny finds hundreds of Minute Men, poorly outfitted and not sure what to do now. A colonel with handmade epaulets sewn to his shirt shares that Dr. Warren is at a house in town, but when Johnny gets there, Paul Revere says Dr. Warren is in Lexington.

Initially, Johnny is elated: he never thought the rebels could win, and yet, they did. However, as he continues along, he's forced to witness the cost of the rebels' success: death, fear, and even a horse he knows and loves suffering and in danger. There seems to be widespread confusion among the Minute Men about what comes next; this highlights how rough and ready the rebel army remains. However, they've already proven that their informality doesn't keep them from being effective.

Walking back toward Lexington, Johnny passes six grenadiers who have surrendered to an old woman out picking dandelions. He passes burial parties and houses with bullet holes. Finally, Johnny sees a young woman drawing water from a well. He asks her for a drink and from her, he learns that he's reached Lexington—and she shares the names of the eight dead at Lexington. Rab isn't one of the names, so Johnny smiles. She says the Silsbee women hid, but all the men fought. Grandsire Silsbee sat at home.

As Johnny continues walking, he sees more of the damage done last night. The scene of the grenadiers surrendering to the old woman is particularly poignant: it suggests that the tables truly have turned, and those once thought to be unintelligent and incompetent (the rebels) are now the ones in charge of the colonies.

3. Finally, Johnny approaches Lexington Green, where the eight young men died. Recognizing Dr. Warren's horse and chaise, Johnny approaches the doctor. He hands over the lists he made last night and then asks about Rab. Rab, Dr. Warren says, stood here when the British returned to Lexington. He refused to follow Major Pitcairn's order to disperse, and he was wounded badly. Rab is at the tavern now, and Dr. Warren can take Johnny to see him. He cautions Johnny not to expect much and orders him to honor Rab by being mature and not crying.

Though the last passage made Johnny very happy because it seemed like Rab made it out of the battles unscathed, Dr. Warren makes it pretty clear that Rab is in tough shape and is perhaps not going to make it. This again impresses upon Johnny the cost of this war: men like Rab will give up their lives and their futures, just as James Otis predicted earlier in the novel.

4. Johnny follows Dr. Warren into the tavern and to a second-floor bedroom, where Rab is propped up in an armchair. He's pale, but he looks alright. As Johnny explains that the British in Boston are furious, blood trickles from Rab's mouth. Rab says he's had a lot of time to think about his first meeting with Johnny. He's silent for a bit, remembering things, and then says that a popgun would've done him as much good as his **musket**. He never got to fire his. Now, blood is streaming out of Rab's mouth. After Dr. Warren settles Rab, Rab tells Johnny to take the musket and go see if the Silsbee women and Grandsire Silsbee are safe. Rab smiles as Johnny leaves the room.

Though Rab is putting on a good show, he's clearly suffering from internal bleeding and isn't doing well. While he did the noble, adult thing and stood up to the British, he also recognizes that war hurts and kills people no matter how mature or well-prepared they are: he would've been just as successful had he had something other than his musket. By passing the musket onto Johnny, though, Rab allows Johnny to finish his own coming-of-age journey by accepting his ability to defend his beliefs.

5. Johnny finds no Silsbees at Silsbee's Cove, but he finds several farm animals, Grandsire Silsbee's favorite cat, and two hungry farm dogs. Picking up the cat, Johnny enters the house. It's empty. Johnny feeds the cat and dogs and then notices that Grandsire Silsbee's antique gun is gone. Heading back to the village, Johnny finds Dr. Warren outside the tavern. Dr. Warren says that Rab died; someday, they'll know how to fix injuries like what killed him. Rab sent Johnny away because he knew it was his time to die. A woman brings a tray of food for Dr. Warren and sinking into a chair, Dr. Warren says that James Otis's last speech gave him goosebumps. He'd said that "a man can stand up," and they'll stand up and die, like Rab did, so others can "stand on their feet like men."

Not finding Grandsire Silsbee, and discovering that the old man's gun is gone, offers a clue that Grandsire Silsbee might have joined the fighting despite his old age—perhaps he was able to succeed where his grandson wasn't. Rab's death shocks Johnny, as now Johnny cannot ignore the cost of fighting for his beliefs. Still, Dr. Warren continues to reference James Otis's words because he, like Johnny, found Otis's speech stirring. Otis's speech acknowledged that there's a huge cost to war, but it also cast fighting for one's deeply held beliefs as something noble that a person should do.

Dr. Warren asks the woman to fetch Rab's **musket** and turns to his food. Johnny paces, unable to sleep or think. He picks up the musket, inspecting the changes Rab made to it. But Dr. Warren tells Johnny to put the gun down and let him look at his **hand**. Dr. Warren says the burn isn't so bad; all that's holding Johnny's thumb to his palm is scar tissue. If Johnny wants, Dr. Warren can cut his thumb free. He can't promise that Johnny will be able to do silver work again, but Johnny will be able to hold Rab's musket. Johnny asks if Dr. Warren can do it now and says that he's courageous enough to hold his hand still himself. Dr. Warren sends Johnny outside while he prepares.

When Johnny first picks up the musket, he can admire what the weapon can do—but his hand keeps him from fully coming of age, as he can't work the weapon himself. But Dr. Warren's offer to free Johnny's thumb gives Johnny the opportunity to finally come of age. Now, Johnny isn't the prideful, headstrong boy he was at first. Regaining use of his hand won't make him prideful and arrogant—rather, Johnny now knows that he must use his skills and his hand to fight for a cause he believes in.

Outside, Johnny looks around and listens to the people milling around, caring for their farm animals. "This [is] his land and these his people." It feels like nothing can hurt him today, not even Rab's death. From far away, Johnny hears drums. Somebody is playing "Yankee Doodle" on a fife. The village falls silent as 30 ragged, bloody men, without uniforms and with assorted weapons, march into town. Rab had been one of them. Hopefully, these men will always be willing to fight. Then, Johnny notices a chaise coming after the men—Grandsire Silsbee is in it, as he's too old to ride or walk. Johnny almost runs to tell him that Rab is dead, but he knows Grandsire Silsbee must get his men to join the siege of Boston. Rab and other men died, but the thing they died for never will.

In the novel's final passage, Johnny completes his coming-of-age journey as he begins to feel truly American, not English. This land—North America—is his land, and the people who inhabit it are his fellow countrymen. For now, the "ragged, bloody men" in mismatched uniforms, like Rab—and like Grandsire Silsbee—are defending them. That Grandsire Silsbee has gotten up to fight and is taking his duty so seriously highlights the importance of fighting for what he believes in. He and Johnny will be able to mourn Rab later; for now, they must focus on the task at hand and fight for their freedoms—and for the rights of Americans generations down the line.

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