

quicken our steps lest we be overhauled by the patrol, and were not minded to linger any longer than was necessary to greet Master Schuster in respectful fashion, when he said in a cautious tone, so unusual with him, that our curiosity was quickened at once :

“I would have speech with you, lads, and in private, on a weighty matter. If it so be you can come to the sign of the Black Horse in half an hour, I will have ordered a lunch spread for the three of us.”

The tavern he spoke of was where the post-stage from Boston put up, and we should have been well pleased to go there under any pretext, for much was always doing at the inn, and gossip was plenty as fleas on a cur.

“We will be there, Master Schuster,” I said boldly; “but first it is right our mothers should be made acquainted with the favor you propose doing us.”

“It is well to remember the mother, Oliver