

THE BELHAVEN REPUBLIC (A DELTA BLUES), 1793-1795



Text and artwork by Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers)

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The War Between the Rivers had come to a violent finish in Frenghish North America. The Kingdom of Holland and Zeeland (Overseas Department) had been destroyed and its people scattered throughout the lands. Agents of the Dutch East India Trading Company or V.O.C. had managed to stay relatively neutral throughout the conflict and moved to the agricultural regions further south to ply their trade in furs, tobacco, indigo, cotton, and rice. But Novum Eboracum (New York) was descending into chaos in the aftermath of the brutal conflicts that had taken place there. The Bonnie Prince Johnnie Sidney was deposed by a military coup, rendering the fate of Frenghish North America quite uncertain and very susceptible to the predations of aggressive Prussian, and Spanish piracy from the sea. The land trading routes were ravaged by mutinied Dutch soldiers backed by Spanish gold and highly organized tribes working in the employ of the Spanish who at the time were trying to rebuild their empire after years of Frenghish domination. To make matters worse, Horace, the Guyanese King of Harlem and his wife Isabel was assassinated by his guard serving

as agents for the senior members of the V.O.C. Horace wanted to restructure the trade agreements and did not want to deal with any Europeans in this regard. And though he fought bravely in the service of Frenghland during the Battle of Manhattan, he did not allow his Bartican Liberation Brigade to engage in the Hudson River Campaign. Instead, he fortified his position in Harlem and created a viable city-state that flourished for the brief year that it existed. The vacuum left by his untimely death and the deposing of the Bonnie Prince cleared the way for the ascent of Field Marshall Jeroen Van Der Zee, hero of the Hudson River campaign. Jeroen, because of his Dutch roots and Frenghish allegiance was the perfect candidate to lead the people of Frenghish North America but he was a military man and had no idea how to defeat the forces that operated from the shadows without arms. And those forces descended upon this most chill kingdom with a voracious appetite and created what would become known as 'the Warring States Period of New Frenghland.'



Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers), *"I'll crush you with my coin purse. I built all this. I own all y'all. Trust."*, 2016. Ink, coffee, and tea on paper, 30 x 22 in. Courtesy of the Artist and Johannes Vogt Gallery.



Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers), *"Miss me with all that noise. I'm trying to get this money and freedom for all my people."*, 2016. Ink, coffee, and tea on paper, 30 x 22 in. Courtesy of the Artist and Johannes Vogt Gallery.

With Jeroen preoccupied with a bloody civil war on his hands, he managed to reach out to a most unlikely ally, Major Robert Sidney, 1st Earl of Belhaven. Robert was the first cousin of the Bonnie Prince Johnnie and had gone to war in Zanzibar against the Colubrid Empire. He was a decent fighter but a better statesman and administrator. He negotiated several concessions from the Colubrids, thus called because they were rumored to worship venomous snakes and tip their edged weapons with snake venom. In reality the majority of them were Afro-Arab Muslims who controlled 90 percent of the trade in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Frenland and their nominal Ottoman allies wanted to wrest control of this lucrative trade from them and a great deal of the 50 Years War was spent in this region to that end. Belhaven was injured in cavalry raid he instigated and took a serious fall from his horse. Several vertebrae and a portion of his pelvic bone were crushed. His loyal and best soldiers continued to fight and the war there ended with the slaying of their king and the capture of his daughter. Though the victory did not fully belong to him, one of Robert's most promising captains, Amadou, a tall and handsome West African cavalryman led the charge that crushed the remaining Colubrid

ground forces, opening their fortress to effective artillery bombardment. Amadou came from a noble house of cavalymen, tracing his illustrious lineage to Askia the Great of the mighty Songhai Empire. He however grew restless with the life of a pastoralist and yearned to see the world. More importantly, the Europeans intrigued him. He wanted to see the cities that they came from and learn their ways of war in a hope to one day return to his homeland and instruct his people in their ways. He knew then that the Europeans with whom he reserved much curiosity and admiration for would one day turn their instruments upon him and his people. He played to win. He traveled throughout Europe and went to many of the great centers of learning. He learned to speak Spanish, French, and English fluently in his time there. He met Robert in London in the middle of the 50 Years War. Since the fanatical Emperor Francis III forbade large groups of Black soldiers to fight in the European theater, many were relegated to small regiments or sent to fight wars in the colonies or other places of interest. Amadou didn't mind that much; his first mission with Robert placed them in Cairo in an effort to suppress rebel activity sponsored by the Catholic League to disrupt the trade between Egypt, the Levant, and Europe. He was so skilled in battle that the Egyptians gave him the name "al-mansour" (the victorious). Robert's company of men was called the

Delta Force as they fought their way down the cataracts of the Nile and then to the east to Colubra. In the time that they had spent together they had grown quite fond of each other and slowly Amadou forgot about his promise to return to his people and teach them what he had learned. His faith waned and became more syncretic along the lines of the Frenghish pseudo-religious practices of the time. Robert tired of the war and constantly spoke of moving to the New World and starting a new life there with a land grant in the colony of Virginia he had inherited from the 3rd Lord Belhaven. But he could not leave if the war was to continue and he asked Amadou to accompany him on the journey. Amadou agreed, having completely forgotten about that promise he had made to himself and the fate of his people. Neither Robert, nor Amadou knew that a crippling injury, looted gold from a conquered mercantile empire, and a severe turn for the worse in the martial gains of Frenghish domination would land them in the city of Alexandria in the Frenghish colony of Virginia.

Belhaven Manor was a classic home built in the Greek revivalist style. Robert was well received there. Though he could walk a little, it caused him great pain and he usually was pulled around in a rickshaw, a remnant from his days in the Orient. Amadou however was conflicted from the start. Though he truly loved and admired his friend Robert, he was

appalled at the chattel slavery of the colony and protested it whenever he could. Belhaven Manor was the seat of the greatest tobacco empire the world had ever known and much human power was employed to ensure that it stayed this way. Robert listened to Amadou's complaints but conveniently reminded Amadou of his slave-raiding past in his own homeland whenever he threatened to leave. He also pointed out that many of the laborers were Dutch POWs, debtors, Native American captives from "hostile" tribes, and so on. And so began Amadou's conversion from a man of "conscience" to man of "convenience" and their influence spread throughout the region and their coffers burst from fullness. And it could not have been a more opportune time to exploit the chaos of the continents. A popular revolution in Frengland destroyed the empire (in name only) and ushered in the Frenglish Republic. The Prussians and their allies, the Spanish handled the Frenglish naval blockade that severely crippled the Frenglish as a continental economic power. This coupled with the loss of control of the trade from the Horn of Africa to India, now divided by the Ottomans and the Catholic League, led to an increase of and a dependence on smugglers, pirates, and other such "undesirables." Yet, the greatest blow to the empire was the loss of the island of Sainte Domingue (Haiti) to well organized, and brilliant rebels. And with the loss of Haiti, came a sharp decrease in the control

of the sugar trade upon which the empire was founded. Despite these "hardships and setbacks" the Frenglish Republic was a farce and the "real power" of the empire had entered a chrysalis stage, spearheaded by the Sidneys in their bubble in London. The restructuring of the empire was intended to shift the power of Frengland from the French sphere to the British one. The colonial possessions of Frengland prospered greatly during this period. The Dutch in North America and South Africa had been decisively defeated militarily but secret treaties had been made with the Dutch East India trading company to carry Frenglish colonial goods in exchange for land-lease agreements in the colonies. This ingenious move by the House of Sidney allowed the nobility to prosper and enjoy all the finery of the age and parcel out just enough of their excess to keep the citizenry distracted, and uninspired to revolt. This so called "Riot Shield" policy was only instated in the Frenglish homelands in Europe but the party raged on in the colonies due to direct access to resources, luxury goods, labor, a powerful and skilled military unable to return home, and moderately competent governors on the average. Robert and Amadou oblivious to the conflicts in Novum Eboracum and even the fall from grace (and deposing) of his cousin, the Bonnie Prince Johnnie Sidney, met with the major governors of the colonies of Maryland, the Carolinas, and Georgia, and offered them

a chance to enter in a new political union operating with very little oversight from the mother country, and promised them military aid in the event of foreign, or “hostile Indian” attack. The aforementioned colonies only needed to accept the suzerainty of Virginia and the House of Sidney. All agreed except for the South Carolinian delegation who due to their great wealth in indigo and rice had made certain arrangements with the Spanish colonial government. Robert and Amadou agreed that this arrangement could not stand and not desiring a lengthy

arbitration process, simply dispatched a team of especially brutal assassins to kill the governor, and his family. With the deed carried out expeditiously, a puppet governorship was awarded to a wealthy Carolinian planter who agreed to the terms proposed initially. Thus, the Belhaven Republic was born and the “nasty business” with South Carolina would become its eventual undoing.

The Belhaven Republic flourished so quickly it could not resist expansion and did so



Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers), *Come inside my house and know forever.*, 2016. Acrylic and ink on panel, 11 x 14 in. Courtesy of the Artist and Johannes Vogt Gallery.

rapidly due to the natural river arteries that intersected it and by the benevolence of the “civilized tribes” of the Cherokee, Creek, and the Chickasaw. The Choctaw however had allied with the Spanish and conquered New Orleans for themselves and their Spanish allies effectively sealing the Mississippi river at its mouth and forcing anyone who wished to use this magnificent waterway to pay heavy tariffs or else. The Spanish were not able to colonize upriver because to do so would put them at a disadvantage, as they were unable to effectively use their new warships. Their gulf fleet was severely damaged in the Battle for New Orleans but they eventually triumphed over Frenghland due to the fierce resistance put up by their Choctaw allies. The ruler of the “City Choctaw” was a mestizo named Alphonse. Alphonse was the son of a mulatto Frenghish trapper and a Choctaw woman. His father was killed in a tavern during a brawl in the city of Mobile and his mother took Alphonse to be raised amongst his people. Alphonse however enjoyed the city life and would sneak away often in his teenage years. He was quite handsome, intelligent, and a skilled fighter but he could also be quite cruel. His tall stature and martial prowess earned him a loyal following amongst his peers. He engaged in petty theft when not leading Frenghish expeditions upriver to the place of mounds, which one Frenghish scholar called Memphis. The name stuck and Frenghish

colonization took place soon afterwards. But the people of the area were not Choctaw but Chickasaw and though closely related culturally, there was a bitter rivalry that only intensified as the colonial powers expanded their ambitions. It was around this time that Alphonse pledged his services to the Spanish general Lazaro de la Cruz. Lazaro, recently recalled back to Mexico City after helping to suppress the slave rebellions in Cuba inspired by the Haitian Revolution, simply wanted his reward for his service: land. And no lands were as wealthy and cosmopolitan than the city of New Orleans. In order to receive his “prize” he had to get rid of the rather large Frenghish garrison stationed there and endear the Frenghish citizenry operating and living there to his rule. This was a nearly impossible feat as most Frenghish citizens had no desire to become Spanish citizens and had been in an almost perpetual war with Spain for fifty years. But Lazaro found his Trojan horse in Alphonse and the Choctaw. Alphonse could not care less for the old alliances as his people were forced into whatever treaty the Frenghish demanded and if he could join in a formal alliance with Spain as “equals” he would be able to create his own empire and ultimately subdue the Chickasaw whom he so despised. Lazaro also understood the gravity of the situation and even though he knew that the Spanish army would not send many soldiers to participate in this “fool’s errand” if he could succeed, his station and wealth

would improve significantly. He even went as far to propose turning New Orleans and its environs into a Spanish client state, ruled by him, having no real desire to share power with Alphonse for any prolonged period of time. And though Alphonse equally mistrusted Lazaro, once he established his own state north of New Orleans by capturing Memphis and destroying his traditional enemies, the Chickasaw, he would be in a better position to negotiate terms from the rich lands on the banks of the Mississippi. And so it happened, a brief and brutal war ravaged the French, Spanish, and Choctaw alike but in the end Alphonse and Lazaro emerged triumphant and the Choctaw Empire was created.

Unbeknownst to Lazaro and Alphonse was the inclusion of Memphis into the Belhaven Republic under a treaty with the Chickasaw in exchange for protection and trade revenue. Lazaro was also reluctant to join the siege of Memphis, as he wanted to consolidate his position in New Orleans, especially after losing so many men, boats, and horses in the battle. Alphonse agreed with this but would only wait a winter to resolve this setback. He secretly wanted to use Spanish troops instead of his own warriors as the main body of the force to weaken Lazaro's position should he try to renege on their union.

The city of Memphis was the tarnished jewel of the Mississippi Delta. Essentially a planter's town, the city contained many lavish

plantations that went virtually uninhabited for most of the year. The rich waters of the Mississippi responsible for the wealth of that city made it almost impossible to live there. The few taverns, and service buildings were of poor quality when compared to the sophistication of New Orleans and when the Choctaw and Spanish captured that place, the conditions in Memphis worsened. The waters would rise and inundate the marshy plains bringing a great many diseases in its wake. The only people who were unaffected by the deluge were the slaves sent from South Carolina who had worked similar marshy plains back home in the Niger Delta and the Chickasaw who had migrated to the region so long ago they became tolerant of the viciousness of nature. Tempered only by the cruelty of their rulers, the slaves turned the marsh into a goldmine. Planting corn for whiskey, cotton, and tobacco, Memphis had become a frontier boomtown although it was technically still a department of the Carolina territory. Another aspect of the city that dazzled visitors, inspired wonder, and even the name was the presence of large pyramidal earthworks built by an ancient tribe of Mississippians and maintained and continued by the Chickasaw. The French Empire had cultivated a cultish affinity for all things Egyptian. All of the major houses within the empire had an Egyptian god as their patron. For the House of Sidney it was Apep or Apophis, the primordial god

of chaos. But the expats from New Orleans established the crocodile god Sobek, the lotus Nefertem, and the sacred bull Apis as the trinity of Memphis, and when combined with Christianity, the cosmology of the Chickasaw, and the beliefs of the various Africans who toiled in the fields, the character of the city took on a certain magnificence. However, when New Orleans fell, the planters began to worry about the allegiance of their allies and with very few soldiers to protect them, they feared of massive slave uprisings as well. They were not wrong. And so, they sent a dispatch up the Cumberland to ask Robert for aid. Lord Belhaven was unable to make the arduous trip into the interior so he asked his friend Amadou to go in his stead and “restore order and the flow of monies.” By this time Amadou was living in a private hell. Unaccepted by most people outside of Belhaven Manor and sickened by the conditions of “people of his color” toiling away in the fields ate away at him day by day and he wasn’t too thrilled at the prospect of journeying into the interior to keep this system alive and thriving. Surely in the time that he lived and worked with Robert, Amadou was quite possibly one of the handfuls of richest men in all of the colonies in FrenGLISH North America. Conflicted though he was about his charge, he deferred to convenience in the hopes that his position within the “court” of Belhaven and his status as a wealthy and landed man

would allow him to do more for the slaves, a naïve and convenient fantasy. A second dispatch uncovered reports of Choctaw and Spanish scouts near the city. This disquieted Robert greatly for his pacifying force would be enough to prevent the city from consuming itself but would do nothing against an actual siege. And so, a deal was struck with Jeroen Van Der Zee, King of Novum Eboracum (New York). Jeroen did not like slavers but he had known them through his Dutch father and understood that they were generally uncaring about what people thought about them or their “business” but whether or not they could turn a profit. The war against the Dutch was costly and another civil war between the various minor polities in the area seemed to be looming. Due to the troubles with production in the north, Jeroen needed money to keep his kingdom together. So, he agreed to send 700 veterans comprised of infantrymen, cavalrymen, artillerymen, engineers, and a few assassins provided to him by Red Arm, principal chief of the Huron. Jeroen even sent a fife and drum unit, a division of the famous Major Tom’s Tom Tom Club known for their bravery, fantastic signaling, and lively musicianship. The money he received in this exchange was more than sufficient to prepare for whatever was to happen in the north and Robert had a magnificent army at his disposal. Repurposed as the Army of the Cumberland, they marched to Memphis

under General Amadou with glee, thankful to escape the northern winter. Probing his new recruits for their skills and battle experience along rivers, Amadou recruited a new Delta Force that would act as reconnaissance and light skirmishers if a theatre of war presented itself. Jamila, a West African slave from the north of the Bight of Biafra left with Amadou's army hoping to escape her daily torment in the harem of Robert Sidney. She wasn't a skilled fighter but she had mastered all of the talents of statecraft and had been initiated into the Order of Bast by Lucretia Theroux herself. Lucretia was in the process of bringing her to Novum Eboracum to join her retinue there when she was assassinated

by her husband, the Bonnie Prince Johnnie. And although Jamila was present at Belhaven Manor long before Robert returned home from the war, Robert saw no need to change the tradition of keeping a harem and kept her there. Amadou was quite fond of her and would visit the harem often to speak of things beyond the Atlantic. Jamila was also fond of him and so when the day arrived that Amadou would be sent to the frontier she asked to go with him. He could not say yes, but he also didn't say no. Jamila learned a great deal in her journey to Memphis. She would even learn to kill.



Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers), *Delta Force*, 2016. Ink on tile mounted to wood, 12 x 12 in. Courtesy of the Artist and Johannes Vogt Gallery.

The Chickasaw kingdom was quite egalitarian and had rapidly advanced culturally and technologically to be on par with the French and the Dutch traders that would trade with them. Ever since encountering the scouting party of Hernando De Soto in the sixteenth century, they made sure that they would be prepared for whomever entered into their lands, friendly or otherwise. However, due to the ravaging of European and African diseases, many succumbed and could not be replaced. Their matrilineal system of ownership allowed European and African men to marry the wives and attain status within the council. During that time however, most of these men were fur trappers and had lived among the tribe for very long periods of time and the New Orleans planter society found them “hardly distinguishable from their red counterparts save for their names.” They adopted the clothing and lodgings of their European “neighbors” but also maintained a separate identity outside of the cities. They engaged in trade, played their deadly game of stickball regularly and even owned slaves. They treated their slaves like members of their tribe and were not as harsh or cruel as the planters and overseers from the south. Nonetheless, the abhorrent practice of human bondage permeated the upper echelons of their society. Not all of the Chickasaw agreed that mimicking the Europeans was the way to salvation and wanted nothing to do with it, any of it. One

such person was the beautiful and fierce Artemis and her devotees of the Sorors of Sint Holo, the horned serpent. Artemis was not her real name but bestowed upon her by a traveling ethnographer from Calais. She came from a different band of Chickasaw in to the south but her and her followers moved north to escape the growing Choctaw presence as well as the Spanish. Artemis was an expert trapper and had traveled all over the territories trading and moving goods from here to there. On one such expedition into the Great Lakes area she met the Haitian trapper Jacques Charbonneau and listened attentively to his war stories and tall tales. He told her of the patriotic war being waged against the Dutch in the northeast and how one day, the entire land would be at peace united by the French emperor. He told her of the House of Sidney and of Apep/ Apophis the god that they worshipped not so dissimilar to her own. He was moving guns from east to west to various tribes on the fringes of Spanish territory. He thought a better day was on the horizon. He was wrong. A Choctaw/Spanish scouting party killed Jacques in 1793. So many arrows that his body could not touch the ground pierced him. Artemis would never know the fate of Jacques but she wanted to do her part to bring about the “good times.” She helped divorcees and outcast women learn to trap and over time, many of them stayed with her permanently. The frontier was dangerous for

anyone but she and her “sisters” managed it wonderfully without much misfortune until she came to the city of Memphis seeking the seat of Apophis. When she arrived, all that she saw were Europeans fouling the sacred sites of the Chickasaw and her own people enamored with the barbaric customs of the European, like the keeping of slaves for life and the drinking of whiskey and the flippant smoking of tobacco. She had seen plenty, but nothing on such a decadent scale. Yet, she stuck around as she heard that an agent of the mighty Apophis would come one day and restore the land. That day unfortunately happened to be the day after Alphonse and Lazaro struck the city hard from war canoes, on horseback and on foot. It was chaos.

The Siege of Memphis happened in an instant. The majority of the Chickasaw warriors had retreated into the interior to mount an effective counterattack knowing that they could not face the combined Spanish/Choctaw attack head on. More importantly, the Chickasaw war council believed that the siege would be brutal but eventually the invaders would have to make terms rather than face a sustained guerilla war in the hinterlands. They would have been correct in their assumption if Alphonse weren't so hell bent on revenge and extermination. Alphonse managed to pressure Lazaro to using the majority of his forces and some Choctaw auxiliaries.

Moving the attack up to the winter of 1795 despite Lazaro's protests was a smart move. The grain stores would be full and the slave workforce would quickly revolt against their masters if faced with death and starvation. Alphonse was so sure of immediate capitulation he didn't place the siege batteries along the outskirts of the city, as was the plan. Instead he and Lazaro ordered the infantry to kill-on-sight and give no quarter to any able bodied man. The women were to be corralled and detained. The wealthy planters feared the wrath of the enslaved more than they feared the rapidly advancing army and some went to the front lines to offer their unconditional surrender. Those planters that did not surrender either out of haughtiness or naiveté remained in their lavish homes, hosting holiday balls until their servants murdered them. The plantations on the outskirts of the city formed a militia and in some instances, armed the slaves they felt they could trust. The free people of color were torn. Whatever the outcome, they knew that they would suffer greatly and so some went to join the militias, others surrendered and offered to provide intelligence, and some fled into the wilderness with the Chickasaw. The mighty southern horde encircled the city in a matter of hours and pushed toward the center where they were met with fierce resistance from the solders that had not fled. The Spanish/Choctaw invasion force numbered 1,000 strong were

not worried about the threat posed by the center column and waited for them to simply run out of ammunition. The center column was stationed inside of the city's armory and had Lazaro and Alphonse moved up the cannon they would have taken the square quickly. Instead, the day turned into night and back into day again. The courageous and fatigued defenders of Memphis fought for three days and nights without rest until Lazaro finally had the cannons placed to take the square once and for all. Surely, the invaders would lose valuable munitions if they simply destroyed the armory instead of capturing it. But they had begun to receive reports of sporadic Chickasaw attacks on their flanks and needed to end the defense. But as the sun rose behind the great mound of Memphis on the fourth day, the Army of the Cumberland poured into the field with such force it obliterated the invaders' right flank. Alarmed by this surprise attack, Alphonse tasked the artillery corps to fire on the relievers. A pianist and free person of color, turned defender in the city square, broke off amidst the chaos of battle and wrote 'In Gloriam Proteus,' a song that would later become the anthem of the Belhaven Republic. Proteus had been a minor god that was worshipped in the river colonies during the wars against the Dutch. He was so worshipped because in addition to being the god of rivers he also represented change and transformation. And with the arrival of

Amadou from the east, things had definitely begun to change.

The attack on the right flank was a smashing success for Amadou but the siege would not be lifted so easy as buildings and other obstructions prevented the use of cavalry, which protected the invaders. The river itself also proved to be a great obstacle due to the fleet of war canoes operated by the invaders prevented any crossing and thus denied the saviors any flanking options. Amadou then broke the siege and ordered his army to make camp. He sent for the Chickasaw elders and the plantation militias. The Chickasaw elders, upon seeing this mighty Frenglish force were reluctant to come fearing a double-cross and the plantation militias were also wary of this large force of mostly non-whites coming to the aid of a slave-owning plantocracy. It was in this moment that Amadou saw his destiny. If he could eliminate this threat from the south, perhaps he could change the way things existed. He could alleviate all of the suffering he had seen and had done nothing about. He could become the military governor of the area and find a balance between commerce and liberty. All he had to do was win, or so he believed. The next day, Artemis arrived with her followers, the Sorors of Sint Holo. She expressed her gratitude to Amadou and told him that he had reminded her of her old friend Jacques. She also pledged her small but capable unit

great speed and deadly efficiency. The enemy fell back towards the river as the Army of the Cumberland dealt swift death upon them as they had done to the Memphians days earlier. As they neared the river, Amadou noticed that he didn't see Lazaro or Alphonse and a great many of the invaders were not present. Yet, they continued to punish the invaders with death and destruction until they had taken the entire city and secured the river. However, sensing something off about the ease of taking the city, Amadou took fifty of his best cavalymen and set out into the hinterlands. After riding for an hour, they came upon a gruesome sight. The plantation militia had made a deal with the invaders and attacked the Chickasaw villages in the forests and allowed Lazaro and Alphonse to escape back to New Orleans. Amadou and his cavalry tracked the plantation murderers down and killed them all but they could not abandon the town they had just won and did not pursue. And so the Battle of Memphis ended, wrought with sadness, confusion, and maddening duplicity and cruelty. The city was still intact save for the armory and some adjacent buildings. The ruling class was either dead or fled. The Chickasaw guerilla fighters who had not escaped north went back to their villages to bury their dead and the slaves, and pleaded with Amadou to allow them to accompany him, their liberator. He promised them a better life if they would help to rebuild the city and asked their forgiveness

for profiting off of their misery. He would send a dispatch to his friend Robert stating that the city of Memphis would continue to produce corn for whiskey, and grow cotton, and tobacco for trade but by free hands.

The message arrived in Alexandria two weeks later but Robert Sidney had been poisoned and was dead. A South Carolinian assassin took credit for his death admitting that he did the deed because of the way the governorship of South Carolina was culled during Robert's ascendancy. The Belhaven Republic, founded on blood and misery remained but its future was uncertain. The shadows of ill tidings to come danced all about them. The gentry sipped their wine again and the slaves did their time, again. A little worse for some, and slightly better for most, but none could escape those shadows. O' how they danced.

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GALLERIES OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

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