

**THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE:
A STORY
OF THE SOUTHAMPTON
INSURRECTION**

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Their Shadows Before: A Story of the Southampton Insurrection by Pauline Carrington Bouvé

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TO

FRANCES GEORGIANA PRESCOTT BELKNAP

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Chapter I.

“UNCLE ISHAM, would you like to be white like me?”

I was sitting in one of the broad-silled windows of the old stone kitchen at Winston Manor. Through the tiny, diamond-shaped panes of glass I could watch the pompous movements of my grandmother's pea-fowls as they marched with out-spread tails and in stately measure over the green sward, where the early hoar-frost lay like a silver veil. In colonial days the manor kitchen had served as magistrate's office, and the time-blackened oaken presses on either side of the enormous chimney were now used as dressers. Bits of broken crockery were visible through the circular openings of the ancient pigeon-holes where once had reposed valuable documents, written and signed by lordly fingers.

On the high-backed, uncomfortable settee in the corner — where of old my great-

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grandfather, Sir Christopher Winston, had sat, dispensing favour and administering justice—sat old Uncle Isham, with his bowl of coffee beside him and his ash-cake on his knee. I gazed down into his wrinkled face from my high perch in the window, and in a vague sort of way my heart was troubled. He was a very old man, and I was a very little girl; yet he belonged to me. There was something strange in the situation.

“Why won’t you tell me?” I persisted, unaccustomed to this reserve on the part of my usually voluble vassal and friend. With an imperious gesture of my small hands I smoothed down the folds of my new black silk apron over my scarlet frock, while my impatient heels beat such a vigorous tattoo upon the wall that Uncle Isham found it expedient to remove himself and his coffee to the other end of the settee in order to escape the shower of plaster that made a mimic snow-storm in my immediate vicinity.