

MARTI

APOSTLE OF FREEDOM

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Translated from the Spanish

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With a Preface by GABRIELA MISTRAL
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met—defamation of El Maestro went on for a long time. But the emigré masses were with him. When he returned from a trip to the colonies in the South unharmed by plots, his joy was not of the kind one finds in little agitators, but that of a statesman who has gotten the feel of his substance, the soul of a nation.

"There is in me now such pride for my country that I cannot describe it to you, lest it seem like flattery. For her honor I live; I would die of her dishonor. What does it matter if, like the mason, we see on our working clothes some splashes of lime or mud? We, like the mason, on taking off our working clothes can say: We have built something!"

Chapter Twenty-eight

THE FERNANDINA PLAN

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS seemed to be decisive. With proofs of the Island's impatience, Gómez hurried to put his shoulder to the work of organizing the expedition which he himself was to lead with his people from Santo Domingo. At the year's end a secret agent brought Martí, for his distribution, military orders for preparedness.

But 1894 was born under ominous signs. When tobacco factories at the Key, closed by the financial panic, reopened, a great many of the workers found themselves replaced by Spaniards imported from the Island, their transportation provided free by the Spanish Government, their entry a violation of the immigration laws. The community called a strike. The manufacturers threatened to move the industry to Tampa, which would have made Key West a ghost town. To ward off this danger, the local authorities and business men, at a meeting where the Cubans were denounced as anarchists, decided to bring in more Spanish cigar-makers from Havana.

Naturally, the controversy assumed political aspects. The Cubans were for reviving the old "Big Stick" organization,¹ whose members years before had religiously gone to the dock, each armed with a cudgel for the Spanish "ducks" who dared to set foot on shore at the Key. But this time the strikebreakers were brought in under the protection of guns, and two Cubans who picketed in protest at their entry were jailed. Martín Herrera, founder of the San Carlos Club, indignantly proposed a general exodus of the colony. An appeal was made by telegraph to Martí, who was then in

¹ *La Tranca.*

Tampa. He decided to rush to the Key and summoned Horatio Rubens, a young New York lawyer with whom he had become friendly at City College in New York.

Rubens persuaded Martí not to go to Key West. He must not expose himself in such a way that advantage would be taken of the circumstances to discredit the cause he represented—or worse. Martí had doubted, understood, and kept away. But now in New York he did everything in his power to help the victimized Cubans.

For the revolution the situation at the Key was a calamity. More than eight hundred Cubans were stranded without means of support. Contributions to the patriot cause from Key West were out of the question; the tiny margin of savings was pitifully inadequate to take care of local need. And this, at the moment of greatest economic urgency! While Rubens was making efforts to repair the damage, appealing to Samuel Gompers, head of the cigar-makers union, and taking legal steps to have the Spanish strikebreakers returned, Martí drew some strength from weakness. Indignant at the "Caesar-like and rapacious nature" growing stronger in the United States with luxury and economic conquest, he felt that lamentation and criticism were unavailing; he profited from the adverse situation to point out that since Cubans had no security even in the land of liberty, they ought more than ever to create a free land for themselves. Let that be their New Year's resolution!

In Cuba, the situation was equally difficult and confused. Although the risings at Purnio and Lajas were being cited to show how little revolutionary appetite there was, the Government was very far from being at ease. Scenting danger, it incited discord, harassed separatists to the point of arming themselves, and even arrested Guillermin Moncada in Oriente. Martí saw that it had become necessary to "fall on the Island before the Government could fall on the revolution."

He set in motion the amalgamation of the war funds accumulated in the several clubs. He arranged for the enlistment of military contingents. He checked final agreements with the provincial leaders and with Juan Gualberto in Havana. He worked out techniques for smuggling arms, using a thousand stratagems. To frustrate the espionage of Spanish agents he had to use extreme precaution, creating a public impression that the revolution was something for a vague future, and cloaking feverish movement with apparent inactivity.

Early in May one of Madrid's blunders—of the sort Martí could always count on—ended the vacillating attitudes in Cuba. In the course of a factional fight within Sagasta's cabinet, Maura was ousted from the Overseas Ministry and supplanted by the assimilationist Becerra, which meant the end of the heralded reforms. In Cuba those favoring status quo breathed freely again. The autonomist liberals protested loudly and the Government countered in violent fashion. Disappointment and disgust were apparent throughout the Island. Martí smiled. "Repression will touch off the explosion." What was Gómez waiting for?

With the caution of an old warrior, the General wanted to be certain of his positions and forces. It was very important for him to know, before invading, what would be the attitude of Camagüey, where the Marqués de Santa Lucía, who was representing it, seemed undecided. Also, the cause had just had an inexplicable set-back in Puerto Principe with the seizure of smuggled weapons which Enrique Loynaz—taking advantage of his position as secretary of the street railways—had brought in in a shipment of rolling stock, by arrangement with Martí. Loynaz had barely been able to escape to New York, miraculously enough. This episode reflected on the quality of the conspirators in that central city, through whose indolence the contraband was discovered; but Martí could not permit himself to express his disappoint-

ment and anger. "The failure," he wrote, "will at least serve to show the Island and the emigrés the reality of the work."

From Costa Rica Maceo—more impetuous in temperament than Gómez—was urging haste, although he set conditions. And Betancourt from Matanzas. And Carrillo from Santa Clara. And others from Oriente and Havana. . . . As the center of this nervous system, Martí received stimuli from all; in turn he goaded the parsimonious, curbed blind impetuosity, cleared up suspicions. His correspondence revealed the anguished haste and the tremendous energy of those months. The need for saying much quickly lent to his writing a style of dramatic compression. Tense phrases, taut as a bow-string, tried to communicate his own precision to the rest, and at the same time not reveal too much. He appealed more than ever to faith.

He did not allow for a moment the means of action to becloud the great ends of the republican ideal. When the highwayman, Manuel García—who, making good his title as "King of the fields of Cuba," was keeping the authorities of the Island in check—offered to contribute ten thousand dollars to the revolutionary treasury, Martí declined the offer. The Republic, he insisted, must be born clean from the roots. And as for talk about future white or future Negro supremacy, the struggle was for greater human dignity in Cuba, not to create a national, a racial or a class consciousness. "Political parties are nothing if they are not the expression of social conditions."

In these days of continuous self-denial, in which he was beset by the double-dealings of jealousy, cowardice and egotism, the presence of his boyhood friend, Fermín Valdés Domínguez, was a great consolation. Martí did not have to ask him to take him on faith. With Fermín he could be understood without words. And when Fermín went to Key West to await the great hour, he became Martí's spiritual

deputy. There he was to receive Martí's more intimate revelations:

"there is not a nerve in me that is not a harp-string of sorrow: I cannot move my arms from so much typing and moving and packing . . . and what hard work it is to be intelligent and sincere—and to be energetic and good-tempered—and to be all this in solitude and sorrow! I think I have only seen Carmita once since you went away."

But when sorrow overflowed its bounds, he curbed it stoically.

"Undeserved pain is sweet. It tightens the throat a little, but sheds light within. . . . Steel yourself by doing good, which is now for us the only way to live: to serve, watch and forgive."

In April General Gómez had come North "to check over everything personally" and to decide final details which could not be confided to paper. Accompanying him was his son, Panchito, a resolute young man in whom Martí sensed the stuff of heroes.

In the eyes of enthusiastic exiles, the visible unity of these two men, the war-seasoned Máximo Gómez, the "Old Chinaman" as he was fondly called, scanty of word and uncomfortable in stiff collar and frock coat, and Martí, tense, nervously active, talkative—was an indication that the hour was at hand. Martí had told Fermín that one of the objects of the reunion was "to remove the last obstacles yesterday's revolution might oppose against today's." And it was not a difficult task so far as Gómez was concerned. The Old Man was a big child and Martí had learned how to find the tenderness in him behind the gruff mask.

One afternoon he took Gómez to Barnum's great circus, and that same night they worked out the general plan of the invasion.

"Here is the principal feature," Gómez noted in his diary. "When the decisive moment arrives, a nameless ship will arrive at a known destination on this Island, cautiously chosen, to pick me up, and at least two hundred others, Cubans and Dominicans, and carry us to the lands we propose to set free."

But this "principal feature" was not all. Serafín Sánchez and Roloff would also lead an expedition from the coast of Florida. For both tasks men were ready, arms purchased and two ships chartered. Since Gómez was to land in the south of Camagüey, there remained the problem of Oriente, whose contingents were to be increased by the forces of Maceo, Flor Crombet and their people, coming from Costa Rica.

This phase of the campaign was the only thing remaining to be settled in detail. Relations between Maceo and Gómez were still rather too formal. And what the former's plans of attack were had to be determined. In Central Valley it was decided that Martí should go himself to confer with him. Panchito Gómez was to go along as living testimony of the solidarity of the old and new pines.

The trip might also serve, perhaps, to raise new funds for the revolution. Money was needed above all. Although Rubens had succeeded in having Washington order the return of the imported workers to Cuba, the Key West feud had ended sourly, with an exodus of Cubans to Tampa; confusion in the industry had left the plan for war-chest collections badly weakened. Martí had to knock once more at the doors of the rich before leaving for Central America. His letters drummed out persuasion with an accent so dramatic it would have seemed extreme if it had not been so pro-

foundly sincere—and if later events had not tested it and proved Martí was right.

"I am going to die, if indeed, any life worth mentioning still remains to me. They will kill me with bullets or with some evil deed. But I still have the pleasure of knowing that men like you have loved me. I do not know how to say goodbye to you. Help me now as if you were never to see me again."

Lately his old sense of death had become intensified in an insistent feeling of its imminence. But to his mother he wrote, none the less:

"My life is like that of a glowing carbon filament that burns to light the darkness. I feel that my struggle will never cease. The private man is dead and beyond all resurrection; for that, a real home is essential; therein is the only human happiness or the root of all happiness, and it is an impossibility for me. But the vigilant and compassionate man still lives in me, like a skeleton come forth from the grave; and I know that he can expect nothing but combat and sorrows in the struggles between men, in which it is necessary to take part to console them and to help them better themselves. Death or solitude will be my only reward."

At the beginning of July Martí was on the way back. He had stayed just a few hours in Panama, in San José de Costa Rica, in Jamaica, leaving new clubs behind him to fatten the treasury, and having defined the strategy of Maceo and his men.

There was no rest for him. He took advantage of the interval between his report to Gómez and the latter's completion of plans for a quick trip to Mexico. He had always

believed he could obtain assistance there, where he had so many friends. And, besides, these trips afield kept the Spanish spies guessing; they watched him like a hawk.

What a feeling of youth renewed he had when he saw old places, old friends, again: Manuel Mercado, Peón y Contreras, Justo Sierra . . . celebrities now! *El Universal* greeted him generously: "He no longer belongs to Cuba; he belongs to America." Justo Sierra who, in the shadow of Porfirio Díaz, had lost his old fieriness, tried to persuade him to stay in Mexico and devote himself to literature. Martí answered him in such a way that the illustrious Mexican hugged him excitedly and said, "Go, go make Cuba free!"

In the "shadowy groves" of Chapultepec which long ago had seen his romantic walks and talks with Rosario, new writers such as Gutiérrez Najera and Urbina listened to him enraptured. The Indian poet wrote: "I was astonished to find in him at times a Christlike silhouette. His attitudes were like those of the Sermon on the Mount." . . . On the eve of his departure from Vera Cruz, Peón y Contreras went to find him at an old convent beneath whose arches he had hypnotized his Cuban listeners with a talk both epic and mystic.

The final months of 1894 had, indeed, something of a *Via Dolorosa* about them. When he thought everything was ready and that there was nothing left but "to proceed," unexpected difficulties arose. Maceo, who wanted to mobilize his entire colony of Nicoy, with definite guarantees, asked for more money than could be supplied from the slim treasury. From a money standpoint the trip to Mexico had not been very profitable, and the Delegation now had to provide for the simultaneous distribution of weapons throughout the whole of Cuba. Couldn't Maceo manage to get along with the same amount Gómez had had to work

with? How could anyone say that he needed more when he had less to prepare? . . . And again Martí's requests to the rich were poignant:

"I need every moment to synchronize the work from outside with that within the country. Will I have to throw myself out into these streets, worn out and sick unto death, selling by my desperate begging our secret hour, when you through this great favor can furnish me the means to meet every demand with ease and to cloak my movements with secrecy and serenity? I have lived like an unhappy dog, but I do not complain for myself, since I began this work of salvation; and you who see it all, who know it all, who love Cuba, who see me suffer, will you give me these moments—perhaps the last of my life—of glory and breath, or will you leave me alone in sorrow and responsibility, surrounded by men who have already done everything they possibly can, crawling and begging, in order to save your Motherland, praying in vain, scratching the ground like a dog for a bone?"

The recipient of this letter, Eduardo Gato, complained only of the overwrought tone of the request. His donation arrived just in time; they were already becoming restless in Cuba and certain isolated rash adventures jeopardized the plan. At last, it seemed that the assault on the Island would be possible about the middle of October.

Fearful of his own enthusiasm, Martí abstained from the patriotic anniversary celebration. He was "filled with the great hour," filled with new pleasure and anguish. In the Carrillo home, in New York, one of the girls found him forlornly sitting in the living-room, his overcoat thrown over his shoulder in characteristic fashion, with empty sleeves dangling. The girl was frightened on seeing his wide-open, staring eyes. . . . He spent one of those last nights at

the home of a friend and his friend was awakened in the morning by Martí's wild sobbing:

"War! War! How much necessary sorrow we have to bring to Cuba!"

Gómez's final orders took their time. With the delay, doubt again raised its ugly mask. Martí bore in silence the blame for the General's caution. His own friends in the South reproached him for the delay which was consuming Martí himself. Protests arrived from the Island. Slander was rampant in New York. He suffered and kept silent: "Although they rush to devour my entrails I shall pull them out in my fist triumphant." He knew that he was spied upon. The Island Government had gone to the trouble of establishing an entire family in a New York house so that, through attentions and feigned friendship, they might gain his confidence. But Carmita shielded him, watched over him and decoyed the decoys. She had been his most confidential collaborator all along; the most faithful, since she had given him encouragement when everyone else denied it to him; the most generous, because she sacrificed herself without reward and in spite of an anguishing foreboding. . . .

In his anxious vigil, Martí finished his plan to the last detail. As soon as Gómez's orders would arrive, three ships, the *Amadis*, the *Lagonda* and the *Baracoa*, were to sail from the little port of Fernandina in Florida, where he had ably arranged everything with a local lumber dealer, Mr Borden. To his own docks and in cars exclusively chartered, the weapons were to be shipped, listed as agricultural implements . . . Everything was ready. Even a partial mobilization rehearsal had been held. Trembling, Martí waited like a stage-director for the curtain to rise.

But again clouds darkened this dawn of history. Cables from Costa Rica arrived on November 12, informing him that Maceo had been gravely wounded in a fight provoked by Spaniards at a theatre exit. A few days later, in Madrid,

Abarzuza took the Overseas Ministry, with the Government creating the impression that Maura's discarded reforms would immediately be reinstated. "The promise of fear," commented Martí in *Patria*. But that promise was dangerous, and Enrique Collazo arrived almost at once from Cuba to tell Martí that the Havana underground could wait no longer: they were all of them in danger of being taken.

After the bitter clash of 1892, Martí and Collazo had exchanged letters of political friendship. It was one of fate's ironies that now the veteran of the unforgettable letter should be the one to come to Martí. His arrival in Philadelphia coincided with that of Loynaz del Castillo, expelled from Costa Rica for having shot and killed one of Maceo's assailants in the theatre scuffle. Loynaz was witness to the meeting between Martí and Collazo at the Philadelphia station.

"Martí, no one has attacked you with greater rudeness than I, nor with greater injustice . . . but now, no one loves nor admires you more than I . . ."

"Why, Collazo, what are you talking about? There are so many things we must do! You are just in time for dinner. . . ."

At last, in the first days of December, General José María [Mayía] Rodríguez brought in person authorization from Gómez to synchronize with Martí and Collazo—the latter as representative of the Western zone of the Island—the final instructions for the invasion and rising. The Delegates decided to arrange with Havana for the earliest date in January. The Revolution would be born with the New Year. Martí breathed more easily. "We have had to endure a great deal, but at last we are rewarded."

More than ever his energy was now condensed and distributed in electric activity. With scarcely any food but sandwiches and Mariani wine, or sleep other than that caught

on trains, he worked out arrangements for the final details. Of the three ships under charter, the *Amadis* would have to leave first to pick up Maceo and his men in Costa Rica. To clear the owners, ship brokers and the crew, Martí had to resort to fiction: The ship was going to Costa Rica to pick up workers for manganese mines being developed in Eastern Cuba by a certain Mr. Mantell. Mr. Mantell's son (Manuel Mantilla, Carmita's first-born) would sail with them to give the fiction substance. Weapons would be the cargo, crated under the label of tools. And there would be money and revolvers to "make reason prevail" at the last minute when the *Amadis* was close enough to Cuba to permit Maceo and his men to reach the coast in a boat which would be ready for that purpose . . . The other two ships would sail, chartered under similar pretexts. The Revolution was too poor to purchase them outright, too poor for complete truthfulness.

And did it have to be a Cuban, and no less a Cuban than a Colonel of the Ten Years War, to wrangle over commissions and raise difficulties at this decisive moment? . . . Fernando López de Queralta was the trusted man Serafin Sánchez and Roloff selected to settle with Martí the details of the expedition, and to lead it. At the last minute Queralta refused to go under false clearances and insisted that he was able to procure a ship, as he had already done for the Honduran Marco Aurelio Soto, with warlike intent clearly declared.

Martí opposed this new idea and stated all his objections. But to the end he refused to be inflexible, to try to dominate. Queralta took him to confer "secretly" with his ship broker with whom, he said, he had already talked the matter over. The office was crowded and noisy, and Martí found himself introduced as Mr. Mantell—the same name Manuel Mantilla had used when chartering the *Lagonda* from the same broker for "commercial" purposes!

Immediately he realized the danger: the secret was out! The broker, confused, scrutinized him. Martí took advantage of the fellow's dullness and with extreme agility parried his inferences. Having saved a critical moment, he left with Queralta and angrily forced him to stick to the original plan.

In those fifteen minutes he had drunk the brine of suspicion, of his own feigning, of imminent failure. His companions knew nothing, would know nothing, of what had happened. All his secrecy had not been enough.

That evening, *Mayía*, Collazo, Queralta and Loynaz waited to have dinner with him at the Hotel Marten. On arriving, Martí hung up his coat spattered with snow, and sighed deeply. He lighted another lamp at the table and, after seating himself, sighed again.

"You know, Martí," *Mayía* said affectionately, "I do not like to hear you sigh this way. A man at the head of a people must always show himself strong. As for me," he added with the vanity of an old soldier, "they broke my kneecap in the past war and set it without medical aid and no one can say he heard a single complaint!"

"I know, General," Martí answered, "and that is one of the claims you have to love from Cubans." He paused and added, emphasizing the verbs and accenting the *s*'s in his peculiar way, "But a sigh is not a complaint nor is it weakness. . . . Haven't you been in Yucatán? Well, there are in Yucatán certain subterranean and brackish rivers; at intervals the earth opens and one can hear the noise of the river through the crevasses as it flows with its bitter waters to the sea. They are called *cenotes*. Well, that's what my sighs are!"

On the 25th, the *Amadis* sailed. The other ships were ready. Martí was able to spend Christmas Eve with his beloved ones at the Carrillo home. He arrived late and jokingly noted that he was the thirteenth at the table. The dinner was not a happy one.

And suddenly, catastrophe!

On January 10th, in New York, where he was attending to last-minute shipments of military stores, Martí was thunderstruck by a telegram announcing that the three ships with all their cargo had been seized by the United States Government. The *Lagonda* and the *Amadis* were now in Fernandina; the *Baracoa* had been stopped on her way down from Boston.

False — Martí rushed to Fernandina. He could not show himself because the small port was swarming with Federal agents, police and spies. His arrest would be the final blow. He discovered that Manuel Mantilla had succeeded in avoiding the primary danger of a search. Horatio Rubens, called to emergency action, filed an appeal against the Federal order. Desperate, Martí summoned Collazo, *Mayía* and Queralta to Jacksonville.

They met that night in a room at the Travellers' Hotel, where he had registered under an assumed name. Enrique Loynaz and Tomás Collazo were with him. Livid, a wild look in his eyes, he walked up and down the small room like a madman. Every little while he stopped, and lifting his arms sobbed: "I am not to blame! I am not to blame!" On seeing *Mayía* come in with a frown on his face, he threw himself into his arms.

This was the sudden, inconceivable failure of three years of strenuous work, and all that was feminine in his nature came to the surface in that instant. The visible depth of his sorrow stayed the reproaches that Collazo and Rodríguez had stored up for two months against his secret activity. Now, before that man who wept they had nothing but respect.

When Queralta and Rubens appeared in the room, the consolation of the other friends had restored him to sombre tranquillity. Everything had not been lost. Rubens hoped to save the embargoed weapons. Queralta brought the last

\$1500 in the treasury and a message from his mother-in-law offering to advance the necessary bond money. But Martí was still overwhelmed. He paced the room incessantly, thinking out loud. What will the General think? What will they say in Cuba? Would they see at least that all of it, all that work they had done for three years, so many assurances and promises, had not been a farce? Though the work was tremendous, he had wanted to entrust vital matters to no one, in order to give the least possible opportunity for indiscretion. He had preferred to have himself considered as authoritative, self-centered, ambitious. . . . Only Mantilla, who was like a son to him, had known all his secret plans—and Queralta.

Queralta! . . . Now, at once, he saw clearly the twisted tangent of cowardice, or of betrayal! in all its details. That dispute of Queralta's over commissions at a time for sacrifices. Queralta's insistence upon his own methods. That matter of taking him under the cloak of "secrecy and previous agreement" to brokers who already knew the plan under another aspect and who were the very representatives—only Queralta knew this!—of the owner of one of the ships. But if that suspicion could be overcome, there were certain later careless oversights of the Colonel himself: the shipment of arms for which he was responsible shipped, not by the specific chartered freight car, nor with bills of lading directed to the docks reserved by Borden, but shipped publicly and with the cartridge cases poorly sealed and marked "Military Goods." . . . Wasn't it more than chance that one of them should have opened right in the Cortlandt Street Station, where any spy even slightly observant could see it? But how could he have possibly suspected a man of the Ten Years War whom these good men, Serafín Sánchez and Roloff, had sent to him without any reservation?

With all the bitterness of failure he had to drink this poison, too, at the last minute. He thought he had made an

invulnerable shield of his faith. He had been wounded under the shield.

For a long while he remained in deep silence, with his chin sunk on his chest. Finally he lifted his face, filled with a new light. He would triumphantly hold his entrails in his fist.

*Chapter Twenty-nine**"CUBA LIBRE"*

EVADING THE VIGILANCE of the secret police who had searched for him in every Cuban home in Jacksonville, Martí and his companions succeeded in escaping to New York.

He hid himself at first at Quesada's. Every friendly attention consoled him there, and especially reports of the reactions to the calamity in the South and in New York. The general reaction had been astonishment. And in the United States, exhilarating astonishment.

Only a few intimate co-workers had been in on the secret of Martí's work. The mass of emigrés knew nothing beyond the vague generalities released by the Delegate and *Patria* aiming to have them regarded as substantial information. Due to such generalization there were always those who lost no chance to insinuate that Martí's only revolutionary work consisted of making speeches and asking for money. But now, in the dramatic light of disaster, the exiles discovered that Martí, with a few pennies and courage, had succeeded in achieving something so positive and so obviously difficult as to charter three ships and load them with weapons. Had it not been frustrated by disclosure, his invasion plan would have resulted in a formidable achievement: He would have set revolution free simultaneously throughout the whole Island with an irresistible momentum. The exile centers, which had so many times known deception, now recovered an awareness of their own power and possibilities. A sudden blaze of faith brighter than ever was kindled by the fiasco.

On the Island the surprise was just as great. Not even the people "in the know" had themselves suspected preparations of such magnitude. A fantasy of Martí as a "mere poet," a madman and a visionary, had been painstakingly cultivated. The Government itself had hardly seen in his campaign at first anything but an exploitation of workmen's savings. This unexpected evidence of strength alarmed the Spanish, but it still could not overcome their chronic conviction that Cubans were incapable of anything practical . . . They saw the smoke of the fire now and began to try to put out the blaze.

The predicament of the revolutionaries in Cuba was extremely dangerous. A prompt decision was necessary. Martí's first thought was to "release the Island from the obligation of coördinating its movements with those from outside, which must not cease." The possibility of an immediate joining of forces from outside with those from within having vanished, he let the Island forces decide whether, "extinguishing all fires visible," they preferred to wait for such a union or whether they would rather take to the savannahs at once. As for him, he pledged himself to open "new ways and a new effort."

This letter to Juan Gualberto was dated January 17th. Six days later, in a house on Trocadero Street in Havana, it was agreed to recommend a rising at the earliest possible date. While this resolution was being considered in Havana, Martí was writing to Maceo: "Neither you nor I will lose a man's time in complaining." What was important now was to strike while the iron was hot, to reach Cuba, no matter how. Martí offered to send him \$2,000 to provide a sailing ship and arms. Maceo needed more; he expected much more, to mobilize his colony with certain assurances, but, wrote Martí, "isn't this the hour? Isn't this your spirit? . . . Aren't you the man capable of real greatness?"

Once the agreement reached at Trocadero Street was

known in New York, Martí recalled Collazo from Tampa. And on January 29th, after they both had come together with *Mayía* Rodríguez and Gonzalo de Quesada at Quesada's, Martí carefully outlined the situation. By dawn they had solemnly agreed to authorize the uprising for "the second fortnight in February and not before," leaving it to Juan Gualberto and the others in Occidente to set the actual date in agreement with the rest of the Island.

They could not wait in New York to receive decisions. Martí wanted to go immediately to confer with Gómez, to whom he had already sent a cable: "Business impossible. Wait for me." The S.S. *Atlas* was sailing the next day for Haiti.

His last hours in New York were feverish. In the revolutionary arsenal there remained sufficient military stores for three expeditions; but money was lacking. Quesada, his "spiritual son," left for the South to make an effort to collect a few hundred dollars for Juan Gualberto and Gómez. He carried letters from Martí asking a sympathizer "to pledge for your country's sake the roof that covers you"; asking the Pedrosos to sell their little house if necessary: "Don't ask questions of me. A man like me does not speak this language without reasons."

He knew he would pay them with a free country. Even in those dark moments his faith did not abandon—or even fail—him. Tampa and Key West responded with more than five thousand dollars. He had failed in one material undertaking; but the great work, the decisive work, the union of all Cubans in one single will and doctrine, had been achieved. Awareness of this restored to him his great serenity.

He left instructions with Benjamín Guerra to send Maceo the two thousand dollars as soon as he revealed his decision. Martí had received a letter from him at the last minute by which he could see that Maceo and Flor Crombet were at

odds. One more thorn for him; he had just written to his faithful Serra: "Whether I am here or there, act as if I would always be watching. Do not grow weary of defending or of loving. Do not tire of loving."

He had a foreboding of the definitive nature of his trip and went to say goodbye to all of the friends who had shown him tenderness in his years of exile. The weather was very cold. He departed from the Baralts "into the frozen morning like an arrow." He had forgotten his overcoat, leaving it behind in the living-room.

With *Mayía*, Collazo and Manuel Mantilla he reached Montecristi in Santo Domingo on the 6th of February. General Gómez, brooding over Martí's mysterious and alarming cable, received them with question-marks all over his face. While Martí explained the Fernandina affair to him in minute detail, the Old Man kept fingering his white mustache, erupting frequently in muffled growls of rage. The situation greatly upset him. To attack the Island like this, in an act of desperation, was a thing madmen or children would do. But Martí understood the resiliency in that spring-steel will; Gómez ended by saying that he would go to Cuba in a row-boat if necessary.

Gómez had kept intact the money Martí had sent him. It was not enough, however, to mobilize all his people. The General remembered "*Lilis*,"¹ now President of Santo Domingo, who in 1886 had retained possession of funds for the Cuban cause, and who now was aiding it secretly although passing for a thorough friend of Spain. *Mayía* left, for the capital of the Republic while Gómez and Martí sought ways of arranging embarkation through Samaná.

These negotiations obliged them to travel through the interior of the island on horseback, carefully avoiding the eager espionage of Spanish agents. Contact with this most inner heartland of the Antilles somewhat dissipated Martí's

¹ Nickname given to President Heuraux of Santo Domingo.

melancholy. On the various stops along the road he wrote his impressions in a notebook, dedicating them to his "daughters"—Carmita Mantilla's girls. They were fugitive comments, but written in his most distilled prose and with that earthy tang, raw and fresh, found in men and things inland. With new vigor Nature taught him her age-old lesson. And the palm trees:

In the sugar fields I felt with a son's love the wonder of the eloquent serenity of the glowing night and the palms grouped as if resting one against the other, and the stars shining on their crests. It was like a perfect and sudden cleanness, and the revelation of the universal nature of man. . . .

About the middle of February the news came that Juan Gualberto, replying to the order for the rising sent by Quesada from the Key, had cabled: "Drafts accepted," which meant "Ready."

But the Island—or at least its leaders—would not start the revolution without definite guarantees from outside. From Costa Rica more letters from Maceo had come, "complaining and still angry." Gómez himself, who now saw the impossibility of adequate forces for an assault on the Island, felt "the natural misgivings of a realist upon entering an undertaking so great." But the certainty that Serafín Sánchez and Roloff would be able to succeed in launching their expedition decided him. This would be enough for a beginning, provided that afterwards reinforcements from the North could be maintained.

There was only one man who could be depended on for this: Martí. Only his word, his tenacity, his self-denial, were capable of keeping the fires of generous enthusiasm kindled among the exiles. But Martí objected most strenuously. He had already counted on going to Cuba with Gómez.