

Forbearance

In the chapter titled "Forbearance," dated January 9–12, Major Anderson and his men at Fort Sumter witness the departure of the ship, the *Star of the West*, after it is fired upon by Fort Moultrie. Despite the provocation, Anderson orders his gunners not to retaliate, which frustrates Captain Doubleday, who believes firing back was their duty to defend the American flag. Doubleday recalls that such inaction may have endangered their position and was shocking to Southern forces.

Anderson convenes his officers to discuss whether to use Fort Sumter's artillery to block the harbor. While some, including Doubleday, advocate for immediate bombardment, Lieutenant Meade cautions against escalating the conflict, emphasizing the need for defensive conduct to avoid civil war. Ultimately, Anderson decides against firing and instead sends a protest letter to Governor Pickens, wishing to understand the motivations behind the attack on the *Star of the West*.

Quartermaster Hall delivers the protest in Charleston, where his reception is icy due to rumors of impending violence. Anderson's letter asserts that firing upon an unarmed vessel was unjustified and seeks clarity on whether this was authorized by the governor. Pickens responds defensively, justifying the act on the basis of South Carolina's changed political relationship with the United States, which Anderson still chooses to ignore in favor of maintaining his defensive posture.

Following further exchanges, Anderson decides to send Lieutenant Talbot north for consultation with the War Department, as tensions mount. A second communication arrives from Pickens demanding the fort's surrender, which Anderson refuses, advocating instead for diplomatic resolution.

In preparation for another round of discussions with the governor, he proposes sending his aide, Lieutenant Hall, along with South Carolina's attorney general, Isaac W. Hayne, to speak directly to President Buchanan. This decision leads to more unease among the officers at Sumter, particularly for Captain Doubleday, who foresees dire consequences of delay, as South Carolina strengthens its military capabilities while the fort remains underprepared. The chapter captures a moment filled with tension, decisions cloaked in restraint, and an impending sense of conflict looming over Fort Sumter.