

go to church. I want to go to the Governor's house. I want to buy a many things. I have gold in plenty, and but this one decent dress. You'll take me with you, won't you?"

"There's not your like in Virginia," I told her. "If you go to town clad like that and with that bearing, there will be talk enough. And ships come and go, and there are those besides Rolfe who have been to London."

For a moment the laughter died from her eyes and lips, but it returned. "Let them talk," she said. "What care I? And I do not think your ship captains, your traders and adventurers, do often dine with my lord bishop. This barbarous forest world and another world that I wot of are so far apart that the inhabitants of the one do not trouble those of the other. In that petty village down there I am safe enough. Besides, sir, you wear a sword."

"My sword is ever at your service, madam."

"Then I may go to Jamestown?"

"If you will it so."

With her bright eyes upon me, and with one hand softly striking a rose against her laughing lips, she extended the other hand.

"You may kiss it, if you wish, sir," she said demurely.

I knelt and kissed the white fingers, and four days later we went to Jamestown.

## CHAPTER VI

### IN WHICH WE GO TO JAMESTOWN

It was early morning when we set out on horseback for Jamestown. I rode in front, with Mistress Percy upon a pillion behind me, and Diccon on the brown mare brought up the rear. The negress and the mails I had sent by boat.

Now, a ride through the green wood with a noble horse beneath you, and around you the freshness of the morn, is pleasant enough. Each twig had its row of diamonds, and the wet leaves that we pushed aside spilled gems upon us. The horses set their hoofs daintily upon fern and moss and lush grass. In the purple distances deer stood at gaze, the air rang with innumerable bird notes, clear and sweet, squirrels chattered, bees hummed, and through the thick leafy roof of the forest the sun showered gold dust. And Mistress Jocelyn Percy was as merry as the morning. It was now fourteen days since she and I had first met, and in that time I had found in her thrice that number of moods. She could be as gay and sweet as the morning, as dark and vengeful as the storms that came up of afternoons, pensive as the twilight, stately as the night, — in her there met a hundred minds. Also she could be childishly frank — and tell you nothing.

To-day she chose to be gracious. Ten times in an hour Diccon was off his horse to pluck this or that

flower that her white forefinger pointed out. She wove the blooms into a chaplet, and placed it upon her head; she filled her lap with trailers of the vine that swayed against us, and stained her fingers and lips with the berries Diccon brought her; she laughed at the squirrels, at the scurrying partridges, at the turkeys that crossed our path, at the fish that leaped from the brooks, at old Jocomb and his sons who ferried us across the Chickahominy. She was curious concerning the musket I carried; and when, in an open space in the wood, we saw an eagle perched upon a blasted pine, she demanded my pistol. I took it from my belt and gave it to her, with a laugh. "I will eat all of your killing," I said.

She aimed the weapon. "A wager!" she declared. "There be mercers in Jamestown? If I hit, thou 'lt buy me a pearl hatband?"

"Two."

She fired, and the bird rose with a scream of wrath and sailed away. But two or three feathers came floating to the ground, and when Diccon had brought them to her she pointed triumphantly to the blood upon them. "You said two!" she cried.

The sun rose higher, and the heat of the day set in. Mistress Percy's interest in forest bloom and creature flagged. Instead of laughter, we had sighs at the length of way; the vines slid from her lap, and she took the faded flowers from her head and cast them aside. She talked no more, and by and by I felt her head droop against my shoulder.

"Madam is asleep," said Diccon's voice behind me.

"Ay," I answered. "She 'll find a jack of mail but a hard pillow. And look to her that she does not fall."

"I had best walk beside you, then," he said.

I nodded, and he dismounted, and throwing the mare's bridle over his arm strode on beside us, with his hand upon the frame of the pillion. Ten minutes passed, the last five of which I rode with my face over my shoulder. "Diccon!" I cried at last, sharply.

He came to his senses with a start. "Ay, sir?" he questioned, his face dark red.

"Suppose you look at me for a change," I said. "How long since Dale came in, Diccon?"

"Ten years, sir."

"Before we enter Jamestown we 'll pass through a certain field and beneath a certain tree. Do you remember what happened there, some years ago?"

"I am not like to forget, sir. You saved me from the wheel."

"Upon which you were bound, ready to be broken for drunkenness, gaming, and loose living. I begged your life from Dale for no other reason, I think, than that you had been a horse-boy in my old company in the Low Countries. God wot, the life was scarcely worth the saving!"

"I know it, sir."

"Dale would not let you go scot-free, but would sell you into slavery. At your own entreaty I bought you, since when you have served me indifferently well. You have showed small penitence for past misdeeds, and your amendment hath been of yet lesser bulk. A hardy rogue thou wast born, and a rogue thou wilt remain to the end of time. But we have lived and hunted, fought and bled together, and in our own fashion I think we bear each other good will, — even some love. I have winked at much, have shielded you in much, perhaps. In return I have demanded

one thing, which if you had not given I would have found you another Dale to deal with."

"Have I ever refused it, my captain?"

"Not yet. Take your hand from that pillion and hold it up; then say after me these words: 'This lady is my mistress, my master's wife, to be by me revered as such. Her face is not for my eyes nor her hand for my lips. If I keep not myself clean of all offense toward her, may God approve that which my master shall do!'"

The blood rushed to his face. I watched his fingers slowly loosening their grasp.

"Tardy obedience is of the house of mutiny," I said sternly. "Will you, sirrah, or will you not?"

He raised his hand and repeated the words.

"Now hold her as before," I ordered, and, straightening myself in the saddle, rode on, with my eyes once more on the path before me.

A mile further on, Mistress Percy stirred and raised her head from my shoulder. "Not at Jamestown yet?" she sighed, as yet but half awake. "Oh, the endless trees! I dreamed I was hawking at Windsor, and then suddenly I was here in this forest, a bird, happy because I was free; and then a falcon came swooping down upon me,—it had me in its talons, and I changed to myself again, and it changed to—What am I saying? I am talking in my sleep. Who is that singing?"

In fact, from the woods in front of us, and not a bowshot away, rang out a powerful voice:—

"In the merry month of May,  
In a morn by break of day,  
With a troop of damsels playing  
Forth I went, forsooth, a-maying;"

and presently, the trees thinning in front of us, we came upon a little open glade and upon the singer. He lay on his back, on the soft turf beneath an oak, with his hands clasped behind his head and his eyes upturned to the blue sky showing between leaf and branch. On one knee crossed above the other sat a squirrel with a nut in its paws, and half a dozen others scampered here and there over his great body, like so many frolicsome kittens. At a little distance grazed an old horse, gray and gaunt, springhalt and spavined, with ribs like Death's own. Its saddle and bridle adorned a limb of the oak.

The song went cheerfully on:—

"Much ado there was, God wot:  
He would love and she would not;  
She said, "Never man was true."  
He said, "None was false to you.""

"Give you good-day, reverend sir!" I called. "Art conning next Sunday's hymn?"

Nothing abashed, Master Jeremy Sparrow gently shook off the squirrels, and getting to his feet advanced to meet us.

"A toy," he declared, with a wave of his hand, "a trifle, a silly old song that came into my mind unawares, the leaves being so green and the sky so blue. Had you come a little earlier or a little later, you would have heard the ninetieth psalm. Give you good-day, madam. I must have sung for that the very queen of May was coming by."

"Art on your way to Jamestown?" I demanded. "Come ride with us. Diccon, saddle his reverence's horse."

"Saddle him an thou wilt, friend," said Master Sparrow, "for he and I have idled long enough, but

"I fear I cannot keep pace with this fair company. I and the horse are footing it together."

"He is not long for this world," I remarked, eyeing his ill-favored steed, "but neither are we far from Jamestown. He'll last that far."

Master Sparrow shook his head, with a rueful countenance. "I bought him from one of the French vigneron below Westover," he said. "The fellow was astride the poor creature, beating him with a club because he could not go. I laid Monsieur Cra-paud in the dust, after which we compounded, he for my purse, I for the animal; since when the poor beast and I have tramped it together, for I could not in conscience ride him. Have you read me Æsop his fables, Captain Percy?"

"I remember the man, the boy, and the ass," I replied. "The ass came to grief in the end. Put thy scruples in thy pocket, man, and mount thy pale horse."

"Not I!" he said, with a smile. "'T is a thousand pities, Captain Percy, that a small, mean, and squeamish spirit like mine should be cased like a very Guy of Warwick. Now, if I were slight of body, or even if I were no heavier than your servant there" —

"Oh!" I said. "Diccon, give his reverence the mare, and do you mount his horse and bring him slowly on to town. If he will not carry you, you can lead him in."

Sunshine revisited the countenance of Master Jeremy Sparrow; he swung his great body into the saddle, gathered up the reins, and made the mare to caracole across the path for very joy.

"Have a care of the poor brute, friend!" he cried genially to Diccon, whose looks were of the sulkiest.

"Bring him gently on, and leave him at Master Bucke's, near to the church."

"What do you do at Jamestown?" I asked, as we passed from out the glade into the gloom of a pine wood. "I was told that you were gone to Henricus, to help Master Thorpe convert the Indians."

"Ay," he answered, "I did go. I had a call, — I was sure I had a call. I thought of myself as a very apostle to the Gentiles. I went from Henricus one day's journey into the wilderness, with none but an Indian lad for interpreter, and coming to an Indian village gathered its inhabitants about me, and sitting down upon a hillock read and expounded to them the Sermon on the Mount. I was much edified by the solemnity of their demeanor and the earnestness of their attention, and had conceived great hopes for their spiritual welfare, when, the reading and exhortation being finished, one of their old men arose and made me a long speech, which I could not well understand, but took to be one of grateful welcome to myself and my tidings of peace and good will. He then desired me to tarry with them, and to be present at some entertainment or other, the nature of which I could not make out. I tarried; and toward evening they conducted me with much ceremony to an open space in the midst of the village. There I found planted in the ground a thick stake, and around it a ring of flaming brushwood. To the stake was fastened an Indian warrior, captured, so my interpreter informed me, from some hostile tribe above the falls. His arms and ankles were secured to the stake by means of thongs passed through incisions in the flesh; his body was stuck over with countless pine splinters, each burning like a miniature torch; and on his shaven

crown was tied a thin plate of copper heaped with red-hot coals. A little to one side appeared another stake and another circle of brushwood: the one with nothing tied to it as yet, and the other still unlit. My friend, I did not tarry to see it lit. I tore a branch from an oak, and I became as Samson with the jaw bone of the ass. I fell upon and smote those Philistines. Their wretched victim was beyond all human help, but I dearly avenged him upon his enemies. And they had their pains for naught when they planted that second stake and laid the brush for their hell fire. At last I dropped into the stream upon which their damnable village was situate, and got safely away. Next day I went to George Thorpe and resigned my ministry, telling him that we were nowhere commanded to preach to devils; when the Company was ready to send shot and steel amongst them, they might count upon me. After which I came down the river to Jamestown, where I found worthy Master Bucke well-nigh despaired of with the fever. Finally he was taken up river for change of air, and, for lack of worthier substitute, the Governor and Captain West constrained me to remain and minister to the shepherdless flock. Where will you lodge, good sir?"

"I do not know," I said. "The town will be full, and the guest house is not yet finished."

"Why not come to me?" he asked. "There are none in the minister's house but me and Goodwife Allen who keeps it. There are five fair large rooms and a goodly garden, though the trees do too much shadow the house. If you will come and let the sun shine in," — a bow and smile for madam, — "I shall be your debtor."

His plan pleased me well. Except the Governor's

and Captain West's, the minister's house was the best in the town. It was retired, too, being set in its own grounds, and not upon the street, and I desired privacy. Goodwife Allen was stolid and incurious. Moreover, I liked Master Jeremy Sparrow.

I accepted his hospitality and gave him thanks. He waved them away, and fell to complimenting Mistress Percy, who was pleased to be gracious to us both. Well content for the moment with the world and ourselves, we fared on through the alternating sunshine and shade, and were happy with the careless inhabitants of the forest. Oversoon we came to the peninsula, and crossed the neck of land. Before us lay the town: to the outer eye a poor and mean village, indeed, but to the inner the stronghold and capital of our race in the western world, the germ from which might spring stately cities, the newborn babe which might in time equal its parent in stature, strength, and comeliness. So I and a few besides, both in Virginia and at home, viewed the mean houses, the poor church and rude fort, and loved the spot which had witnessed much suffering and small joy, but which held within it the future, which was even now a bit in the mouth of Spain, a thing in itself outweighing all the toil and anguish of our planting. But there were others who saw only the meanness of the place, its almost defenselessness, its fluxes and fevers, the fewness of its inhabitants and the number of its graves. Finding no gold and no earthly paradise, and that in the sweat of their brow they must eat their bread, they straightway fell into the dumps, and either died out of sheer perversity, or went yelping home to the Company with all manner of dismal tales, — which tales, through my Lord War-

wick's good offices, never failed to reach the sacred ears of his Majesty, and to bring the colony and the Company into disfavor.

We came to the palisade, and found the gates wide open and the warder gone.

"Where be the people?" marveled Master Sparrow, as we rode through into the street. In truth, where were the people? On either side of the street the doors of the houses stood open, but no person looked out from them or loitered on the doorsteps; the square was empty; there were no women at the well, no children underfoot, no gaping crowd before gaol and pillory, no guard before the Governor's house, — not a soul, high or low, to be seen.

"Have they all migrated?" cried Sparrow. "Are they gone to Croatan?"

"They have left one to tell the tale, then," I said, "for here he comes running."

## CHAPTER VII

### IN WHICH WE PREPARE TO FIGHT THE SPANIARD

A MAN came panting down the street. "Captain Ralph Percy!" he cried. "My master said it was your horse coming across the neck. The Governor commands your attendance at once, sir."

"Where is the Governor? Where are all the people?" I demanded.

"At the fort. They are all at the fort or on the bank below. Oh, sirs, a woeful day for us all!"

"A woeful day!" I exclaimed. "What's the matter?"

The man, whom I recognized as one of the commander's servants, a fellow with the soul of a French valet de chambre, was wild with terror.

"They are at the guns!" he quavered. "Alackaday! what can a few sakers and demiculverins do against them?"

"Against whom?" I cried.

"They are giving out pikes and cutlasses! Woe's me, the sight of naked steel hath ever made me sick!"

I drew my dagger, and flashed it before him. "Does't make you sick?" I asked. "You shall be sicker yet, if you do not speak to some purpose."

The fellow shrank back, his eyeballs starting from his head.

"It's a tall ship," he gasped, "a very big ship!"