

## CHAPTER XI

### IN WHICH I MEET AN ITALIAN DOCTOR

THE summer slipped away, and autumn came, with the purple of the grape and the yellowing corn, the nuts within the forest, and the return of the countless wild fowl to the marshes and reedy river banks, and still I stayed in Jamestown, and my wife with me, and still the Santa Teresa rode at anchor in the river below the fort. If the man whom she brought knew that by tarrying in Virginia he risked his ruin with the King, yet, with a courage worthy of a better cause, he tarried.

Now and then ships came in, but they were small, belated craft. The most had left England before the sailing of the Santa Teresa; the rest, private ventures, trading for clapboard or sassafras, knew nothing of court affairs. Only the Sea Flower, sailing from London a fortnight after the Santa Teresa, and much delayed by adverse winds, brought a letter from the deputy treasurer to Yeardeley and the Council. From Rolfe I learned its contents. It spoke of the stir that was made by the departure from the realm of the King's favorite. "None know where he hath gone. The King looks *dour*; 't is hinted that the privy council are as much at sea as the rest of the world; my Lord of Buckingham saith nothing, but his following — which of late hath somewhat decayed — is so increased that his antechambers cannot hold the throngs

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that come to wait upon him. Some will have it that my Lord Carnal hath fled the kingdom to escape the Tower; others, that the King hath sent him on a mission to the King of Spain about this detested Spanish match; others, that the gadfly hath stung him and he is gone to America, — to search for Raleigh's gold mine, maybe. This last most improbable; but if 't is so, and he should touch at Virginia, receive him with all honor. If indeed he is not out of favor, the Company may find in him a powerful friend; of powerful enemies, God knows, there is no lack!"

Thus the worthy Master Ferrar. And at the bottom of the letter, among other news of city and court, mention was made of the disappearance of a ward of the King's, the Lady Jocelyn Leigh. Strict search had been made, but the unfortunate lady had not been found. "'T is whispered that she hath killed herself; also, that his Majesty had meant to give her in marriage to my Lord Carnal. But that all true love and virtue and constancy have gone from the age, one might conceive that the said lord had but fled the court for a while, to indulge his grief in some solitude of hill and stream and shady vale, — the lost lady being right worthy of such dole."

In sooth she was, but my lord was not given to such fashion of mourning.

The summer passed, and I did nothing. What was there I could do? I had written by the Due Return to Sir Edwyn, and to my cousin, the Earl of Northumberland. The King hated Sir Edwyn as he hated tobacco and witchcraft. "Choose the devil, but not Sir Edwyn Sandys!" had been his passionate words to the Company the year before. A certain fifth of November had despoiled my Lord of Northum-



berland of wealth, fame, and influence. Small hope there was in those two. That the Governor and Council, remembering old dangers shared, wished me well I did not doubt, but that was all. Yeardley had done all he could do, more than most men would have dared to do, in procuring this delay. There was no further help in him; nor would I have asked it. Already out of favor with the Warwick faction, he had risked enough for me and mine. I could not flee with my wife to the Indians, exposing her, perhaps, to a death by fierce tortures; moreover, Opechancanough had of late strangely taken to returning to the settlements those runaway servants and fugitives from justice which before we had demanded from him in vain. If even it had been possible to run the gauntlet of the Indian villages, war parties, and hunting bands, what would have been before us but endless forest and a winter which for us would have had no spring? I could not see her die of hunger and cold, or by the teeth of the wolves. I could not do what I should have liked to do, — take, single-handed, that King's ship with its sturdy crew and sail with her south and ever southwards, before us nothing more formidable than Spanish ships, and beyond them blue waters, spice winds, new lands, strange islands of the blest.

There seemed naught that I could do, naught that she could do. Our Fate had us by the hands, and held us fast. We stood still, and the days came and went like dreams.

While the Assembly was in session I had my part to act as Burgess from my hundred. Each day I sat with my fellows in the church, facing the Governor in his great velvet chair, the Council on either

hand, and listened to the droning of old Twine, the clerk, like the droning of the bees without the window; to the chant of the sergent-at-arms; to long and windy discourses from men who planted better than they spoke; to remarks by the Secretary, witty, crammed with Latin and traveled talk; to the Governor's slow, weighty words. At Weyanoke we had had trouble with the Indians. I was one who loved them not and had fought them well, for which reason the hundred chose me its representative. In the Assembly it was my part to urge a greater severity toward those our natural enemies, a greater watchfulness on our part, the need for palisades and sentinels, the danger that lay in their acquisition of fire-arms, which, in defiance of the law, men gave them in exchange for worthless Indian commodities. This Indian business was the chief matter before the Assembly. I spoke when I thought speech was needed, and spoke strongly; for my heart foreboded that which was to come upon us too soon and too surely. The Governor listened gravely, nodding his head; Master Pory, too, the Cape Merchant, and West were of my mind; but the remainder were besotted by their own conceit, esteeming the very name of Englishman sentinel and palisade enough, or trusting in the smooth words and vows of brotherhood poured forth so plentifully by that red Apollyon, Opechancanough.

When the day's work was done, and we streamed out of the church, — the Governor and Council first, the rest of us in order, — it was to find as often as not a red and black figure waiting for us among the graves. Sometimes it joined itself to the Governor, sometimes to Master Pory; sometimes the whole party,



save one, went off with it to the guest house, there to eat, drink, and make merry.

If Virginia and all that it contained, save only that jewel of which it had robbed the court, were out of favor with the King's minion, he showed it not. Perhaps he had accepted the inevitable with a good grace; perhaps it was but his mode of biding his time; but he had shifted into that soldierly frankness of speech and manner, that genial, hail-fellow-well-met air, behind which most safely hides a villain's mind. Two days after that morning behind the church, he had removed himself, his French valets, and his Italian physician from the Governor's house to the newly finished guest house. Here he lived, cock of the walk, taking his ease in his inn, elbowing out all guests save those of his own inviting. If, what with his open face and his open hand, his dinners and bear-baitings and hunting parties, his tales of the court and the wars, his half hints as to the good he might do Virginia with the King, extending even to the lightening of the tax upon our tobacco and the prohibition of the Spanish import, his known riches and power, and the unknown height to which they might attain if his star at court were indeed in the ascendant, — if with these things he slowly, but surely, won to his following all save a very few of those I had thought my fast friends, it was not a thing marvelous or without precedent. Upon his side was good that might be seen and handled; on mine was only a dubious right and a not at all dubious danger. I do not think it plagued me much. The going of those who had it in their heart to wish to go left me content, and for those who fawned upon him from the first, or for the rabble multitude who flung up

their caps and ran at his heels, I cared not a doit. There were still Rolfe and West and the Governor, Jeremy Sparrow and Diccon.

My lord and I met, perforce, in the street, at the Governor's house, in church, on the river, in the saddle. If we met in the presence of others, we spoke the necessary formal words of greeting or leave-taking, and he kept his countenance; if none were by, off went the mask. The man himself and I looked each other in the eyes and passed on. Once we encountered on a late evening among the graves, and I was not alone. Mistress Percy had been restless, and had gone, despite the minister's protests, to sit upon the river bank. When I returned from the assembly and found her gone, I went to fetch her. A storm was rolling slowly up. Returning the long way through the churchyard, we came upon him sitting beside a sunken grave, his knees drawn up to meet his chin, his eyes gloomily regardful of the dark broad river, the unseen ocean, and the ship that could not return for weeks to come. We passed him in silence, — I with a slight bow, she with a slighter curtsy. An hour later, going down the street in the dusk of the storm, I ran against Dr. Lawrence Bohun. "Don't stop me!" he panted. "The Italian doctor is away in the woods gathering simples, and they found my Lord Carnal in a fit among the graves, half an hour ago." My lord was bled, and the next morning went hunting.

The lady whom I had married abode with me in the minister's house, held her head high, and looked the world in the face. She seldom went from home, but when she did take the air it was with pomp and circumstance. When that slender figure and exquisite



face, set off by as rich apparel as could be bought from a store of finery brought in by the Southampton, and attended by a turbaned negress and a serving man who had been to the wars, and had escaped the wheel by the skin of his teeth, appeared in the street, small wonder if a greater commotion arose than had been since the days of the Princess Pocahontas and her train of dusky beauties. To this fairer, more imperial dame gold lace doffed its hat and made its courtliest bow, and young planters bent to their saddlebows, while the common folk nudged and stared and had their say. The beauty, the grace, the pride, that deigned small response to well-meant words, — all that would have been intolerable in plain Mistress Percy, once a waiting maid, then a piece of merchandise to be sold for one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco, then the wife of a poor gentleman, was pardoned readily enough to the Lady Jocelyn Leigh, the ward of the King, the bride to be (so soon as the King's Court of High Commission should have snapped in twain an inconvenient and ill-welded fetter) of the King's minion.

So she passed like a splendid vision through the street perhaps once a week. On Sundays she went with me to church, and the people looked at her instead of at the minister, who rebuked them not, because his eyes were upon the same errand.

The early autumn passed and the leaves began to turn, and still all things were as they had been, save that the Assembly sat no longer. My fellow Burgesses went back to their hundreds, but my house at Weyanoke knew me no more. In a tone that was apologetic, but firm, the Governor had told me that he wished my company at Jamestown. I was pleased

enough to stay, I assured him, — as indeed I was. At Weyanoke, the thunderbolt would fall without warning; at Jamestown, at least I could see, coming up the river, the sails of the *Due Return* or what other ship the Company might send.

The color of the leaves deepened, and there came a season of a beauty singular and sad, like a smile left upon the face of the dead summer. Over all things, near and far, the forest where it met the sky, the nearer woods, the great river, and the streams that empty into it, there hung a blue haze, soft and dream-like. The forest became a painted forest, with an ever thinning canopy and an ever thickening carpet of crimson and gold; everywhere there was a low rustling underfoot and a slow rain of color. It was neither cold nor hot, but very quiet, and the birds went by like shadows, — a listless and forgetful weather, in which we began to look, every hour of every day, for the sail which we knew we should not see for weeks to come.

Good Master Bucke tarried with Master Thorpe at Henricus, recruiting his strength, and Jeremy Sparrow preached in his pulpit, slept in his chamber, and worked in his garden. This garden ran down to the green bank of the river; and here, sitting idly by the stream, her chin in her hand and her dark eyes watching the strong, free sea birds as they came and went, I found my wife one evening, as I came from the fort, where had been some martial exercise. Thirty feet away Master Jeremy Sparrow worked among the dying flowers, and hummed: —

“There is a garden in her face,  
Where roses and white lilies grow.”

He and I had agreed that when I must needs be ab-



sent he should be within call of her; for I believed my Lord Carnal very capable of intruding himself into her presence. That house and garden, her movements and mine, were spied upon by his foreign hirelings, I knew perfectly well.

As I sat down upon the bank at her feet, she turned to me with a sudden passion. "I am weary of it all!" she cried. "I am tired of being pent up in this house and garden, and of the watch you keep upon me. And if I go abroad, it is worse! I *hate* all those shameless faces that stare at me as if I were in the pillory. I *am* pilloried before you all, and I find the experience sufficiently bitter. And when I think that that man whom I hate, hate, hate, breathes the air that I breathe, it stifles me! If I could fly away like those birds, if I could only be gone from this place for even a day!"

"I would beg leave to take you home, to Weynokene," I said after a pause, "but I cannot go and leave the field to him."

"And I cannot go," she answered. "I must watch for that ship and that King's command that my Lord Carnal thinks potent enough to make me his wife. King's commands are strong, but a woman's will is stronger. At the last I shall know what to do. But now why may I not take Angela and cross that strip of sand and go into the woods on the other side? They are so fair and strange, — all red and yellow, — and they look very still and peaceful. I could walk in them, or lie down under the trees and forget awhile, and they are not at all far away." She looked at me eagerly.

"You could not go alone," I told her. "There would be danger in that. But to-morrow, if you

choose, I and Master Sparrow and Diccon will take you there. A day in the woods is pleasant enough, and will do none of us harm. Then you may wander as you please, fill your arms with colored leaves, and forget the world. We will watch that no harm comes nigh you, but otherwise you shall not be disturbed."

She broke into delighted laughter. Of all women the most steadfast of soul, her outward moods were as variable as a child's. "Agreed!" she cried. "You and the minister and Diccon Demon shall lay your muskets across your knees, and Angela shall witch you into stone with her old, mad, heathen charms. And then — and then — I will gather more gold than had King Midas; I will dance with the hamadryads; I will find out Oberon and make Titania jealous!"

"I do not doubt that you could do so," I said, as she sprang to her feet, childishly eager and radiantly beautiful.

I rose to go in with her, for it was supper time, but in a moment changed my mind, and resumed my seat on the bank of turf. "Do you go in," I said. "There's a snake near by, in those bushes below the bank. I'll kill the creature, and then I'll come to supper."

When she was gone, I walked to where, ten feet away, the bank dipped to a clump of reeds and willows planted in the mud on the brink of the river. Drooping on my knees I leaned over, and, grasping a man by the collar, lifted him from the slime where he belonged to the bank beside me.

It was my Lord Carnal's Italian doctor that I had so fished up. I had seen him before, and had found in his very small, mean figure clad all in black, and



his narrow face with malignant eyes, and thin white lips drawn tightly over gleaming teeth, something infinitely repulsive, sickening to the sight as are certain reptiles to the touch.

"There are no simples or herbs of grace to be found amongst reeds and half-drowned willows," I said. "What did so learned a doctor look for in so unlikely a place?"

He shrugged his shoulders and made play with his clawlike hands, as if he understood me not. It was a lie, for I knew that he and the English tongue were sufficiently acquainted. I told him as much, and he shot at me a most venomous glance, but continued to shrug, gesticulate, and jabber in Italian. At last I saw nothing better to do than to take him, still by the collar, to the edge of the garden next the churchyard, and with the toe of my boot to send him tumbling among the graves. I watched him pick himself up, set his attire to rights, and go away in the gathering dusk, winding in and out among the graves; and then I went in to supper, and told Mistress Percy that the snake was dead.

## CHAPTER XII

## IN WHICH I RECEIVE A WARNING AND REPOSE A TRUST

SHORTLY before daybreak I was wakened by a voice beneath my window. "Captain Percy," it cried, "the Governor wishes you at his house!" and was gone.

I dressed and left the house, disturbing no one. Hurrying through the chill dawn, I reached the square not much behind the rapid footsteps of the watch who had wakened me. About the Governor's door were horses, saddled and bridled, with grooms at their heads, men and beasts gray and indistinct, wrapped in the fog. I went up the steps and into the hall, and knocked at the door of the Governor's great room. It opened, and I entered to find Sir George, with Master Pory, Rolfe, West, and others of the Council gathered about the great centre table and talking eagerly. The Governor was but half dressed; West and Rolfe were in jack boots and coats of mail. A man, breathless with hard riding, spattered with swamp mud and torn by briers, stood, cap in hand, staring from one to the other.

"In good time, Captain Percy!" cried the Governor. "Yesterday you called the profound peace with the Indians, of which some of us boasted, the lull before the storm. Faith, it looks to-day as though you were in the right, after all!"

"What's the matter, sir?" I asked, advancing to the table.